Agenda

Cabinet

This meeting will be held on:

Date: **Wednesday 18 March 2026**

Time: **6.30 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.

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 Culture
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.

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	**Minutes of the previous meeting** **Recommendation:** That Cabinet resolves to **approve** the minutes of the meeting held on 11 February 2026 as a true and accurate record.	17 - 28
4	**Addresses by members of the public** Public addresses relating to matters of business for this agenda, up to five minutes is available for each public address. **The request to speak accompanied by the full text of the address must be received by the Director of Law, Governance and Strategy by 5.00 pm on Thursday the 12th of March.**	
5	**Councillor addresses on any item for decision on the Cabinet agenda** Councillor addresses relating to matters of business for this agenda, up to five minutes is available for each address. **The request should be received by the Director of Law, Governance and Strategy by 5.00 pm on Thursday the 12th of March.**	
6	**Councillor addresses on Neighbourhood Issues**	
7	**Items raised by Cabinet Members**	

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.

8 Reports from the Scrutiny Committee

9 Measures to meet growing demand for Temporary Accommodation

29 - 70

The Director of Housing Services submitted a report to Cabinet seeking approval to implement measures to meet demand and bring down cost of Temporary Accommodation.

Cabinet is recommended to:

1. Approve the latest set of mitigations the Council is taking, as summarised in paragraph 6 of this report, to increase the provision of temporary accommodation, to improve quality, and decrease cost.
2. Delegate to the Director of Housing Services, in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Housing and Communities, the Director of Law, Governance and Strategy, and the Group Finance Director:
    a. subject to the parameters as set out in paragraph 19, authority to agree the properties to be acquired and the detailed terms for the acquisition of properties and enter into all necessary documentation to effect the acquisition of each property into the Housing Revenue Account for the use of Temporary Accommodation; and
    b. authority to enter into necessary agreements or contracts required, and to authorise expenditure, for any works required to convert or carry out works to (a) any new properties acquired by the Housing Revenue Account or (b) to suitable existing properties from the General Fund to enable them to be used for Temporary Accommodation and to ensure compliance prior to occupation Provided all such expenditure is within the £32 million capital budget as contained in the MTFP.
3. Note the additional measures as set out in paragraphs 21 to 26 of this report.

10 Allocations Scheme Review

71 - 214

The Director of Housing submitted a report to request that Cabinet approve the new draft Social Housing Allocations Scheme for Oxford, following public consultation.

Cabinet is recommended to:

1. Recommend that Full Council approve the new draft Social Housing Allocations Scheme for Oxford;
2. Delegate authority to the Director of Housing, in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Housing and Communities, to authorise the date on which the Allocations Scheme is implemented, noting the explanation and timelines in paragraph 23;
3. Delegate authority to the Director of Housing, in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Housing and Communities, to make minor changes to the Allocations Scheme in order to comply with changes to legislative and statutory guidance, related Council policies (approved by Cabinet) and to make technical changes to ensure the effective and efficient functioning of the scheme.

11 **Jericho Wharf** 215 - 230

The Deputy Chief Executive – Place submtited a report to Cabinet to put in place a process for this council to assist in bringing forward the Oxford Plan proposals for development at Jericho Wharf.

Cabinet is recommended to:

1. Seek to procure a development partner / operator, with a viable business plan, to try to acquire the Jericho Wharf site by agreement and deliver the requirements set out in Policy SP33 and to indemnify the Council for the associated costs; and
2. Confirm that if the Jericho Wharf site cannot be acquired by agreement, then, as a last resort it would be willing subject to compliance with all relevant legal and policy requirements, if necessary consider the use of its Compulsory Purchase Order (CPO) powers to acquire the site; and to
3. Note that if an option to use CPO powers was to be pursued a further report would need to be submitted to Cabinet to seek approval for a detailed scheme for the redevelopment of this site demonstrating that the legal and policy tests for the use of its CPO powers had been satisfied. This would need to be accompanied by a recommendation to Council to seek authority to set up a budget for any additional costs for the implementation of its CPO powers, which would be redeemed from the development partner.

12 **More Leisure Annual Service Plan (Year 3) and Update** 231 - 290

The Director of Communities and Citizens Services submitted a report

to Cabinet to update Cabinet on the highlights of the second year of the new leisure contract and approve the Annual Service Plan 2026-27, which is an annual requirement of the operator, aiming to align outcomes to the Council's priorities and to address health inequalities.

Cabinet is recommended to:

1. **Approve** the Leisure Annual Service Plan 2026-27 and delegate authority to the Director of Communities and Citizens Services in consultation with the Cabinet Member for a Healthy, Fairer Oxford, to make any necessary amendments.

13 Disposal of City Centre Property

291 - 302

The Director of Property and Assets submitted a report to Cabinet to approve the disposal of the freehold titles of Floyds Row and Old Mortuary in Oxford.

Cabinet is recommended to:

1. **Delegate authority** to the Directory of Property and Assets, in consultation with the Director of Law, Governance and Strategy and the Group Finance Director and Lead Member for Finance and Asset Management to agree the final sale terms and enter into the final agreement and any other documents necessary to effect the transfer of the freehold titles of Floyds Row and Old Mortuary. The delegation will be on the basis that the sale will meet the requirements of s123 of the Local Government Act 1972 (which states that a council shall not dispose of land otherwise than by way of a short tenancy, for a consideration less than the best that can reasonable be obtained).

14 Oxford City Council annual Business Plan 2026 to 2027

303 - 352

The Director of Law Governance and Strategy and the Transition Director submitted a report to Cabinet to seek approval for the Council's annual Business Plan priorities 2026 to 2027; and to provide an update on delivery of the 2025 to 2026 Business Plan.

Cabinet is recommended to:

1. Agree the draft Oxford City Council annual Business Plan priorities 2026 to 2027, which set out the Council's priority work for the next financial year beginning 1 April 2026;
2. Delegate authority to the Director of Law, Governance and Strategy and Transition Director in consultation with the Council Leader to make any further minor amendments to the Business Plan priorities before implementation, provided that such amendments do not materially affect the substance of the Business Plan;
3. Note the progress made delivery against the actions set out in the Business Plan 2025 to 2026.

15 Integrated Performance Report for Quarter 3 2025/26

353 - 374

The Group Finance Director submitted a report to Cabinet to note the update to the Cabinet on Finance, Risk and Corporate Performance matters at 31st December 2025.

Cabinet is recommended to:

1. Note the financial position for quarter 3 (Q3) 2025/26 including forecast outturn, as well as the current position on risk and performance at 31st December 2025.

16 Additional HMO licensing scheme renewal

375 - 412

The Director of Planning and Regulation submitted a report to Cabinet to approve the designation of the whole of the City of Oxford as subject to Additional HMO Licensing under section 56(1)(a) of the Housing Act 2004 for a further five years commencing from June 2026 and following expiry of the 3-month statutory notice period.

Cabinet is recommended to:

1. Having considered the outcome of the statutory consultation and the evidence previously considered by Cabinet in October 2025, confirm that the statutory tests set out in sections 56 and 57 of the Housing Act 2004 are met and that a renewed Additional HMO Licensing Scheme is required.
2. Designate the whole of the City of Oxford as subject to Additional HMO Licensing under section 56(1)(a) of the Housing Act 2004 for a period of five years commencing from June

2026 and following expiry of the 3-month statutory notice period.

3. Delegate authority to the Director of Planning and Regulation to finalise and sign, publish and implement the designation and take all necessary steps to give effect to the renewed scheme.
4. Approve the Additional HMO Licensing Scheme as set out in Appendix 2 including the simplified licence condition relating to waste management.
5. Note that the Additional HMO Licensing Scheme will continue to operate on a full cost-recovery basis, with licence fees set through the Council's annual budget and fees and charges approval process.

17 **Grant of Easement** 413 - 440

The Director of Property and Assets submitted a report to Cabinet to Request approval to enter into an Option Agreement in relation to granting an Easement in relation to land at Blackberry Lane.

Cabinet is recommended to:

1. Delegate authority to the Director of Property and Assets in consultation with the Director of Law, Governance and Strategy, the Group Finance Director, and the Lead Cabinet Member for Finance and Assets to agree the final commercial terms for the Option Agreement as set out in Exempt Appendix 1.
2. Delegate authority to the Director of Property and Assets in consultation with the Director of Law, Governance and Strategy, Group Finance Director, and Lead Member for Finance and Assets, to approve the final form of the Option Agreement and enter into it on behalf of the Council.
3. Delegate authority to the Director of Property and Assets in consultation with the Director of Law, Governance and Strategy and the Group Finance Director and Lead Member for Finance and Assets t to agree the final disposal price for the easement and to ensure that the disposal is compliant with the Council's statutory duty to obtain Best Consideration reasonably obtainable pursuant to Section 123 of the Local Government Act 1972.

18 **HRA Policies: Compliance, Gas Safety, Decant, Permit to Work, Radon, Health and Safety** 441 - 548

The Director of Housing submitted a report to Cabinet to approve the following policies: compliance, decant, gas safety, health and safety, permit to work and radon to ensure the maintenance and good management of the housing stock.

Recommendation: That Cabinet resolves to recommend the following policies for Council approval:

1. The draft Compliance Policy
2. The draft Decant Policy
3. The draft Gas Safety Policy
4. The draft Health and Safety Policy
5. The draft Permit to Work Policy
6. The draft Radon Policy

19 **Project Approval and Delegations for the Harebell Road affordable housing scheme** 549 - 560

The Director of Economy, Regeneration and Sustainability submitted a report to Cabinet to seek project approval and delegations in relation to the affordable housing scheme at the former garage site on Harebell Road. The report seeks approval to commence the appropriation of land from the current purpose of garages to a planning purpose, within the General Fund. The report also notes the future intent to appropriate land from the General Fund ("GF") to the Housing Revenue Account ("HRA") where necessary, prior to completion of the scheme.

Cabinet is recommended to:

1. Grant project approval noting Full Council allocation of the £863,000 budget for this scheme within the Housing Revenue Account Capital Programme as part of its budget setting in February 2026, to develop this scheme, as set out in this report, within the allocated Housing Revenue Account capital budget and business plan, for the purpose of delivering more affordable housing in Oxford on the Harebell Road former garage site;
2. Delegate authority to the Deputy Chief Executive - City and Citizens' Services in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Housing; the Group Finance Director/Section 151 Officer; and the Council's Monitoring Officer, to enter into design and build contracts and any other necessary agreements to facilitate the delivery of the scheme within the identified budget, except where there is an existing officer delegation within the Council's Constitution;
3. Agree to commence the process for the appropriation of this site

(as per the red line shown at para 5) to a planning purpose;

4. Note the intent to take a report to the Full Council to approve the appropriation of land from the General Fund (GF) to the Housing Revenue Account (HRA) at a later date (prior to scheme completion).

20 **Project Approval and Delegations for Redbridge Paddock affordable housing scheme** 561 - 574

The Director of Economy, Regeneration and Sustainability submitted a report to Cabinet to seek project approval and delegations to enable the continued delivery of more affordable housing at the Redbridge Paddock site.

Cabinet is recommended to:

1. Give project approval for the development, including the land sale and acquisition of affordable dwellings developed by Oxford City Housing (Development) Ltd (OCH(D)L) for which budgetary provision has been made in the Council's Housing Revenue Account (HRA) in respect of Redbridge Paddock;
2. Delegate authority to the Deputy Chief Executive - City and Citizens' Services, in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Housing; the Head of Financial Services/Section 151 Officer; and the Head of Law and Governance/Monitoring Officer, to finalise the scheme design and financial appraisals and enter into any necessary agreements and contracts to facilitate the agreed purchase by the Council of the affordable housing (to be held in the HRA) and any associated land, within the identified budget, for the provision of the affordable homes, as set out in this report, on the Redbridge Paddock development, within the project approval;
3. Delegate authority to the Deputy Chief Executive (Place), in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Finance and Asset Management; the Head of Financial Services/Section 151 Officer; and the Head of Law and Governance/Monitoring Officer, to approve the final terms, which will be S123 compliant, and enter into the sale agreement for the Redbridge Paddock site from the General Fund to OCH(D)L;

21 **Project Approval and Delegations for Sandy Lane Recreation Ground affordable housing scheme** 575 - 600

The Director of Economy, Regeneration and Sustainability submitted a report to seek project approval and delegations in relation to the

affordable housing scheme at the Sandy Lane Recreation Ground, together with the relocation of football pitches and providing changing facilities and storage as set out in the report. The report also seeks approval to commence the process for the appropriation of the land from its current purpose (including recreation ground and open space) to a planning purpose, within the General Fund. The report further notes the future intention, subject to separate decision of Full Council, to appropriate land from the General Fund ("GF") to the Housing Revenue Account ("HRA"), prior to completion of the scheme.

Cabinet is recommended to:

1. **Grant project approval** noting Full Council allocation of the £97,551,302 budget for this scheme within the Housing Revenue Account Capital Programme as part of its budget setting in February 2026, to fund the development of this scheme, as a proposed Housing Revenue Account ("HRA") project, as set out in this report, within the allocated HRA capital budget and business plan, for the purpose of delivering more affordable housing in Oxford on the Sandy Lane Recreation Ground site;
2. **Delegate authority** to the Deputy Chief Executive – City and Citizens' Services in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Housing; the Group Finance Director/Section 151 Officer; and the Council's Monitoring Officer, to enter into design and build contracts and any other necessary agreements to facilitate the scheme development within the identified budget, except where there is an existing officer delegation within the Council's Constitution. Facilitating the scheme development includes the relocation of football pitches and providing a pavilion as set out in the report;
3. **Agree** to commence the process for the appropriation of this Site (as per the red line shown at para 12) to a planning purpose, following completion and handover of the replacement playing pitch facilities at Herschel Crescent and **note** the intention to bring forward a further report for Cabinet to consider the appropriation of the Site from recreation/open space purposes to planning purposes and the potential to rely on *section 203 of the Housing and Planning Act 2016* in the event of interference with private rights;
4. **Note** the intent to take a report to the Full Council seeking approval for the subsequent appropriation of the Site from the General Fund (GF) to the HRA (prior to practical completion of the scheme or delivery of the first phase, if delivery of the units is phased).

22 Making of a new parking order at 1 car parking site and introduction of a tariff

601 - 644

The Director for Property & Assets submitted a report to Cabinet to request that Cabinet approve making of a new off-street parking place order as well as implementing charges at one car park.

Cabinet is recommended to:

1. Approve the making of new off-street parking places order covering Car Park off Meadow Lane
2. Approve the introduction of charges at Meadow Lane Car Park as set out in Appendix 1
3. Delegate authority to the Director for Property & Assets in consultation with relevant Cabinet Members to follow due procedure as set out in the Local Authorities' Traffic Order (Procedure)(England and Wales) Regulations 1996 and in the Road Traffic Regulations Act 1984 including required public consultation and consideration of objections and responses to them.
4. Delegate authority to the Director for Property & Assets in consultation with relevant Cabinet Members to approve Notice of Making and Making of Orders.

23 Dates of future meetings

Meetings are scheduled for the following dates:

- 15 April 2026
- 17 June 2026
- 08 July 2026

All meetings start at 6.00 pm.

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.

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 Registerable 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.

Minutes of a meeting of the Cabinet on Wednesday 11 February 2026

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OXFORD CITY COUNCIL

Committee members present:

Councillor Brown
Councillor Arshad
Councillor Hollingsworth
Councillor Railton
Councillor Turner
Councillor Chapman
Councillor Munkonge
Councillor Linda Smith

Officers present for all or part of the meeting:

Caroline Green, Chief Executive

Nigel Kennedy, Group Director Finance

Tom Hook, Deputy Chief Executive - Citizen and City Services

Tom Bridgman, Deputy Chief Executive – Place

Emma Jackman, Director of Law, Governance, and Strategy

Gail Malkin, Head of People

Laura Bessell, Local Taxation and Benefits Service Delivery Manager

Roo Humpherson, the Regeneration Manager

Pedro Abreu, Principal Air Quality Officer

Bill Lewis, Financial Accounting Manager

Dan Bond, Leasing & Letting Surveyor

Stephanie Nichols, People Operations Manager

Rocco Labellarte, Chief Technology and Information Officer

Dr Brenda McCollum, Committee and Member Services

Jonathan Malton, Committee and Member Services Manager

Apologies:

No apologies were received

136. Declarations of Interest

None.

137. Minutes of the previous meeting

Cabinet resolved to approve the minutes of the meeting held on 21 January 2026 as a true and accurate record.

138. Addresses by members of the public

None received.

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

None received.

140. Councillor addresses on Neighbourhood Issues

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

I would like to speak on the inclusion of Littlemore as a Local Centre.

The initial assessment appears to have missed key frontage along Sandy Lane West, Ledgers Way, the Kassam Stadium and the Vue. When these are included, the scale and function of Littlemore are much clearer and more comparable to other designated Local Centres.

Littlemore is also strategically located. It sits close to Cowley Centre and stands to benefit from the proposed Cowley Branch Line. It is near significant employment areas, including R&D sites, and major community assets such as the Kassam Stadium. These connections strengthen its role as a sustainable local hub.

The area promotes healthy lifestyles. Littlemore has four allotment sites, important green spaces, and established cycling routes running parallel to Grenoble Road and the A34. County plans include improvements to cycling and pedestrian infrastructure along Oxford Road, Sandford Road and St Nicholas Road. A new pharmacy further supports access to essential services within walking and cycling distance.

When compared with Blackbird Leys, which has less frontage yet holds Local Centre status, it is reasonable to question why Littlemore should not be recognised in the same way.

Designating Littlemore as a Local Centre would not be symbolic. It would help guide investment, strengthen grant applications, and provide clearer planning protection for shops and services. Most importantly, it would recognise the role Littlemore already plays and support its long-term sustainability.

I urge Cabinet to reconsider Littlemore's designation as a Local Centre.

Thank you.

Councillor Alex Hollingsworth provided the response from Cabinet to this address:

The content of the Regulation 19 Consultation version of the Local Plan is a matter for Full Council and was fully determined by the Full Council meeting on 26th January 2026. It is not possible for Cabinet to make amendments to the Local Plan as decided by Full Council.

Following the request of Scrutiny Committee Planning Officers reviewed their advice that Littlemore did not meet the specific and nationally set requirements for the technical term 'Local Centre'. This further review confirmed the judgement, as was set out in pages 25 and 26 of the *Briefing Note and Supplementary Papers* published for both Members and the public for the Full Council Meeting on 26th January 2026.

As this made clear, there are facilities and services in Littlemore, but these are dispersed across a wider area and do not form enough of a cluster of uses where a 'local centre' which would be suitable for town centre uses - as defined in the NPPF - or where an active frontage could be defined that has more than a neighbourhood significance.

Existing facilities would be protected and supported by other policies of the Local Plan. 'Local centre' status would not confer any additional benefits in terms of attracting investment or grants. The absence of a technical 'local centre' designation has no impact on the status or local pride in a community.

141. Items raised by Cabinet Members

None.

142. Reports from the Scrutiny Committee

The Scrutiny Committee met on 03 February 2026 to consider the following items.

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

Jonathan Malton, Committee and Member Services Manager, presented Scrutiny's discussions and recommendations regarding the Debt Recovery Procedure.

- **Recommendation 1:** That a summary report on council debt recovery activities at all stages is provided to Scrutiny and Cabinet at a future meeting to ensure there is awareness in this area of the council's work.
- **Recommendation 2:** That Cabinet considers incorporating clear, plain language summary within letters issued to individuals in addition to links to further information online, given the prevalence of digital exclusion and unfamiliarity with local government terminology. This would reduce reliance on residents needing to follow online links to understand the purpose and implications of the letters.
- **Recommendation 3:** That the timescales of meetings with advice centres is revisited to ensure they correspond to their capacity and availability, noting that critical role of advice centres as both a key contact point for residents and a source of specialist advice and support.

Councillor Turner responded to Scrutiny's recommendations. He said that Cabinet accepted the first and third recommendation and would accept the second recommendation in part.

The Committee and Member Services Manager presented Scrutiny's discussions and recommendations regarding the AI Strategy. He noted that no recommendations were raised from the Scrutiny Committee's consideration of this issue, but that the Committee was supportive of the adoption of a strategy.

The Committee and Member Services Manager presented Scrutiny's discussions and recommendations regarding the Noticeboards Update.

- **Recommendation:** Subject to the agreement that Council will commit to actively managing and operating the noticeboards as recommended in the budget review process, that clear guidelines are developed for the use of noticeboards, including how new items and updates are managed, and the responsibilities of key holders.

Councillor Chapman responded to Scrutiny's recommendations and discussions. He said that they'd had a good discussion on this issue at Scrutiny Committee. He noted that Cabinet had accepted the recommendation in part and that it would be dependent on the Council's budget discussions over the next few weeks. Cabinet discussed the importance of notice boards for communities and how locality working could address this matter.

The Committee and Member Services Manager presented Scrutiny's discussions and recommendations regarding the Budget Review Group Report.

- **Recommendation 1:** To freeze the garden waste concessionary rate in this year and instead raise the standard rate by 5.2% (an additional 0.2% on the consultation budget) in order to cover the income that would have been generated by the proposed concessionary rate rise.
- **Recommendation 2:** That cancellation form for garden waste collection and other paid Council services include reason-based tickboxes for discontinuing the service, to enable the Council to understand better whether a decline in usage is driven by costs, service performance, or other factors.
- **Recommendation 3:** To assess the cost of offering compost bins at a discounted rate to support residents in composting on their own site, particularly for those who find an offsite garden waste collection service unaffordable.

- **Recommendation 4:** That HMO licence fees incorporate a pre-payment (or a levy) to cover bulky waste disposal to help offset costs incurred by the Council to remediate flytipping, and that a mechanism be introduced where HMO licensing services notify ODS of forthcoming end-of-tenancy periods. This allows timely collection of bulky waste and reduce instances of fly-tipping of mattresses and other broken furniture.
- **Recommendation 5:** That the Council works jointly with the County Council (as the highways authority), neighbouring districts, and ODS to coordinate the gritting of well-used pedestrian and cycle routes when icy conditions are forecast, including the ring-road cycleway and southern bypass, and manage the associated costs through cross-authority cooperation.
- **Recommendation 6:** That the Museum of Oxford offer paying customers options to make entry more attractive. In particular, by offering joint MOX/Café tickets that provide a hot drink as well as entry to the Museum to have the added benefit of increasing the number of customers at the café; in addition, that paying customers receive a 10% discount on purchases in the MOX shop with a wider range of products to make gift purchasing in the shop cheaper than in souvenir shops.
- **Recommendation 7:** That the closure of the Oxpens and/or Worcester Street car parks is pushed back for one year to preserve revenue, unless development is imminent.
- **Recommendation 8:** That Council introduce a permitted long-stay parking option at Park & Rides, such as one or two weeks, designed to encourage parking outside the city centre such as for tourists staying for several days in city centre hotels, with pricing set above standard short-stay charges; and for this rate to be adjustable if there proves to be more demand to manage the spaces taken by long-term users, preventing displacement of spaces needed for regular Park & Ride users.
- **Recommendation 9:** That Council counteracts the loss of officer capacity for twinning by supporting voluntary groups maintaining vital twinning links by creating a £20,000 annual budget, managed by the Civic Office, to be used to support these links.
- **Recommendation 10:** To proceed with Option 3 (Continue with noticeboards, with City Council actively managing and operating the boards) as the preferred approach for the management and maintenance of community noticeboards costed at £75,000 one-off capital investment for the resurvey, installation, replacement or repair of noticeboards, and an annual budget of £35k for ongoing management and maintenance. In implementing this, existing arrangements led by parish councils or neighbourhood association should not be discouraged nor discontinued. Should Option 3 not be achievable due to budgetary constraints, it is recommended that no further action is taken (Option 1).

Councillor Turner presented Cabinet's response to the recommendations from Scrutiny. He said that Cabinet agreed the second, third, fifth, and ninth recommendations. He said that Cabinet agreed in part the first, seventh, and tenth recommendations. Councillor Turner noted that Cabinet did not agree the fourth, sixth, and eighth recommendations. He said that the recommendations would be picked up in full in the Council budget discussion to come. He thanked the officers for their work in the review of the budget.

143. Pride in Place Programme

The Deputy Chief Executive - Citizen and City Services submitted a report to request that Cabinet accept grant funding of up to £20m and to accept role as accountable body for the Greater Leys Pride in Place programme.

Councillor Smith presented the report. She outlined how local areas would receive money from central government to improve disadvantaged areas from the proposed scheme. She noted that there was a preapproved list in the funding program which the money could be invested into. She said that these investments would have a significant positive impact on the Greater Leys area. She emphasised the importance for the investment to be led by the voices and needs of local residents. Councillor Smith outlined how local residents would lead the decision-making process of allocating these investments into their area.

Roo Humpherson, the Regeneration Manager, added that whilst this is a community led program, the Council would have a role as the accountable body. He said that in accepting the role of accountable body, the Council accepted responsibility related to the management of scheme funds, as well as legal responsibilities. He noted that the program would last for over ten years and that over the duration of the scheme the position of accountable body could change.

Councillor Brown welcomed the report and said that this was a fantastic opportunity for the community.

Cabinet resolved to:

1. Approve proposals to support the Ministry of Housing, Communities & Local Government (MHCLG) Phase 2 Pride in Place Programme (Greater Leys) (PiPP (Greater Leys)), accept receipt of MHCLG funding of up to £20m for the same, and accept role as accountable body for the PiPP (Greater Leys) funds.
2. Delegate authority where not already delegated under the Council's constitution to the Director of Communities and Citizens' Services and Director of Economy, Regeneration and Sustainability, in consultation with the Council's Section 151 Officer and the Director of Law, Governance, and Strategy, and the Cabinet member for Housing and Communities to work with the PiPP (Greater Leys) Chair and Neighbourhood Board to:
    a. Enter into the Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) as required by MHCLG on behalf of the Council as accountable body;
    b. Make all necessary arrangements to receive the funding as provided by MHCLG under the MoU;
    c. Agree with MHCLG any extensions to the 'default' area boundary of PiPP;
    d. Allocate the funding to third parties as required by the PiPP (Greater Leys) and enter into any necessary agreements to enable this;
    e. Undertake the necessary procurements; and
    f. Enter into contracts as required to support the PiPP (Greater Leys).

144. Council Tax Reduction Scheme

The Group Finance Director submitted a report to request that Cabinet delegate responsibility for the local Council Tax Reduction Scheme for 2026/27 to the Section

151 Officer. To note that the current 2025/26 scheme has been through a public consultation and the report sets out the proposed changes with an Equality Impact Assessment.

Councillor Turner presented the report. He said that this was a scheme to lower council tax fees for people on lower incomes. He discussed the increasing cost of living and why they were keeping this scheme in place to support lower income residents of the city. He outlined their engagement with advice agencies concerning this scheme and how this influenced their approach to hardship funding.

Councillor Brown said that she was delighted that they were able to maintain this scheme. She thanked the officers for their work on the report.

Cabinet resolved to:

1. Recommend to Council to agree the change to the existing Council Tax Reduction Scheme to the income bandings in accordance with Option 2 listed at paragraphs 32-37 within the report.
2. Recommend to Council to delegate authority to the Group Finance Director (Section 151 Officer) to draft the details of the new Council Tax Reduction Scheme for 2026/27.

145. Air Quality Action Plan 2026-2030

The Director of Economy, Regeneration and Sustainability submitted a report to request that Cabinet approve adoption of Oxford's Air Quality Action Plan (2026-2030, as amended) following public consultation.

Councillor Railton presented the report. She outlined how the report had progressed through consultation and the positive feedback they had received. She discussed how air quality had improved through the previous Air Quality Action Plan and how the proposed plan would continue this work. Councillor Railton presented the list of measures which they would be undertaking and noted that some of the measures in the report were outside of the control of the City Council. She said that this was a fantastic piece of work and thanked the officer for their excellent work.

Pedro Abreu, Principal Air Quality Officer, said that the public consultation responses had shown strong support for the plan. He noted that 71% of respondents either agreed or strongly agreed with the new targets and that 69% of respondents fully endorsed the priority areas of interventions. He said that they had received very positive feedback from the public consultation.

Councillor Brown acknowledged the successes they had in this area already and those measures in the plan which were outside of the control of the City Council. She said that the work of air quality in the city was one of significant success thus far.

Councillor Smith said that she welcomed the report. She said that it was right for the report to evaluate measures by other authorities and their impacts on air quality in the city. She emphasised that by supporting the report, they were not voting for the measures which were outside of the control of the City Council.

Councillor Hollingsworth noted the plan's reference to the Local Plan. He asked if there was any work beyond 2045 in the action plan that they would need to reconsider in light of the new local plan which was undergoing consultation.

The Principal Air Quality Officer responded that there was no significant impact and that he would amend the dates in the covering report to reflect the dates of the new local plan.

Cabinet resolved to:

1. Approve the adoption of Oxford's Air Quality Action Plan 2026-2030

146. Capital Strategy

The Group Finance Director submitted a report to present the Capital Strategy for recommendation to the Council for approval.

Councillor Turner presented the report. He said that the council had gotten better at avoiding items of slippage over time and this was because of their pipelines and good work streams. He said that any changes between the new and former report were minor and that this was primarily an update.

Cabinet resolved to:

1. Recommend that Council approves:
   The Capital Strategy attached at Appendix A.

147. Treasury Management Strategy 2026/27

The Group Finance Director submitted a report to request that Cabinet approve the Council's Treasury Management Strategy for 2026/27 together with the Prudential Indicators for 2026/27 to 2029/30 for recommendation to full Council for its approval.

Councillor Turner presented the report. He said that the report was largely unchanged from the previous version of the report. He said that the report sets out the Council's approach to investment and risks. He noted the other policies, including the ethical investment policy, which formed part of the report.

Bill Lewis, Financial Accounting Manager, said that the report ties into the budget and sets out what officers can do in terms of borrowing and investments. He said that they tend to do a lot of internal borrowing, so that they can avoid more expensive external borrowing.

Councillor Munkonge said that he was happy with what they had achieved on treasury management. He discussed the transparent investment policy and how this showed a responsible approach to treasury management. He said that he hoped a similar approach would be taken by the future authority which would result from Local Government Reorganisation.

Councillor Turner discussed how they had progressed to their current position and the positive impacts that their approach had for the city's residents.

Cabinet resolved to:

1. Recommend that Council approves:

a. The Treasury Management Strategy 2026/27 as set out in paragraphs 11 to 56 of this report and the Prudential Indicators for 2026/27 – 2029/30 as set out in Appendix 2;
b. The Borrowing Strategy 2026/27 at paragraphs 32 to 33 of this report;
c. The Minimum Revenue Provision (MRP) Statement at Appendix 3 which sets out the Council's policy on charging borrowing to the revenue account;
d. The Investment Strategy for 2026/27 and the investment criteria as set out in paragraphs 37 to 55 of this report and in Appendix 1;
e. The Treasury Management Scheme of Delegation at Appendix 4

148. Long Leasehold Disposal of 16-17 Turl Street, Oxford

The Director of Property & Assets submitted a report to seek Cabinet's approval for the disposal of a long leasehold in 16-17 Turl Street, Oxford.

Councillor Turner presented the report. He thanked the officers for their work in actively managing the Council's property portfolio. He noted the commercial sensitivity of the decision and the importance of the property.

Cabinet resolved to:

1. Approve the disposal of a long leasehold interest in 16-17 Turl Street, 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.

149. Procurement of a new HR and Payroll System

The People Operations Manager submitted a report to Cabinet to request that Cabinet approve the procurement of a new HR and Payroll management system to replace the Council's current iTrent platform provided by Midland HR.

Councillor Chapman presented the report. He outlined the need for the Council to procure the management system and that another paper would come to Cabinet at a later date to award a contract to a supplier. He noted the impacts that Local Government Reorganisation could have on this and how this had influenced the approach they were taking.

Stephanie Nichols, People Operations Manager, said that they had built in flexibility to account for the impacts of Local Government Reorganisation.

Councillor Hollingsworth noted the context they were facing with Local Government Reorganisation. He asked at what point they would draw together a brief statement of principles for the authority as they approach Local Government Reorganisation.

The Chief Executive responded that the Council and officers were applying that sense check to their discussions and decision-making. She said that they were balancing the need to continue work for the next few years and which may be needed in the future authority. She said that they do have questions they consider to ensure that their decisions are sensible, given the current context. She noted that they would have further clarity once they had received the decision from central government later in the year.

Cabinet resolved to:

1. Approve the initiation of a competitive procurement process for a modern HR and Payroll management system to replace the existing platform, noting that final contract details (including duration and value) will be confirmed in a future report and will take account of Local Government Reorganisation (LGR).
2. Note a further 'Recommendation to Award' report will be presented to Cabinet following the conclusion of the procurement process, detailing the proposed supplier, confirmed contract duration, contract value, and award rationale, for approval prior to entering into any contract.
3. Delegate authority to the Chief Executive, in consultation with the Group Finance Director (Section 151 Officer) to:
    a. Determine the final form and content of the procurement exercise;
    b. Determine the duration of the contract; and
    c. Delay or halt the procurement, if necessary, due to developments in respect of Local Government Reorganisation.
4. Note the anticipated financial commitment and resource implications associated with the procurement and implementation of a new HR and Payroll system, as set out in this report and approve the inclusion of an additional £250k to cover implementation costs in addition to the £75k already approved.

150. Medium Term Financial Strategy 2027-28 to 2029-30 and 2026-27 Budget

The Group Finance Director submitted a report to Cabinet to present the outcome of the budget consultation and agree the Council's Medium Term Financial Strategy for 2027-28 to 2029-30 and 2026-27 Budget for recommendation to Council.

Councillor Turner presented the report. He noted that they had received their funding settlement from government at a late stage. He said that the settlement proved beneficial to the city and that they would be receiving additional funding to address areas such as homelessness. He said that they had reflected on where best to invest the additional funds which had been released and that the changes they were proposing would have significantly positive impacts on the lives of people in the city, including investments to tackle anti-social behaviour and additional gritting. He thanked the officers for their work on the budget. He invited opposition members to discuss their proposed changes and amendments to the budget in cooperation with officers and himself.

Nigel Kennedy, the Group Finance Director, said that the three-year settlement was good for their financial planning. He noted the difficulties they had faced due to the late receival of information from central government. He noted the changes in funding made possible through the settlement and the positive aspects of the budget.

Councillor Brown thanked Nigel and his team for their work on the budget. She noted that they welcomed the three-year settlement, which they had advocated for several years. She said that it was good news that they had been given additional allocation to address areas such as homelessness.

Cabinet considered the outcome of the public consultation, agreed the amendments to the Consultation Budget and recommended that Council resolves to:

1. Note the approval by Cabinet on 21 January 2026 and subsequently agreed by the Council on 26 January of an increase of 4.8% i.e. CPI+1% in line with the recent Government announcement referred to in paragraph 28 from 1st April 2026, giving an average weekly increase of £8.47 per week, and a revised weekly average social rent of £143.40 as set out in Appendix 5 based on a HRA budget as set out in Appendix 4;
2. Approve the 2026-27 General Fund and Housing Revenue Account budgets and the General Fund and Housing Revenue Account Medium Term Financial Strategy as set out in Appendices 1-9, noting:
    a. the Council's General Fund Budget Requirement of £32.185 million for 2026/27 and an increase in the Band D Council Tax of 2.99% or £10.66 per annum representing a Band D Council Tax of £367.38 per annum; and
    b. the General Fund and Housing Revenue Account Capital Programme as shown in Appendix 6;
3. Agree the fees and charges shown in Appendix 7;

151. Award of Contract for the Provision of Microsoft Enterprise Licensing

The Chief Technology and Information Officer submitted a report to Cabinet to request that Cabinet approve the procurement of a three year contract for the provision of Microsoft enterprise software licensing for Oxford City Council, by calling off under Lot 3 (Software) of the Crown Commercial Service Framework Agreement ref RM6098 - Technology Products & Associated Services 2 , to ensure continuity of core digital, productivity, and cyber security services.

Councillor Chapman presented the report. He outlined the Council's need for the contract and their need for the services outlined in the report. He noted the positive implications of their approach to procuring the contract. He noted that they were pursuing a three-year contract, despite Local Government Reorganisation, because the new authority would need this contract and services as well and this would give support to the new authority.

Rocco Labellarte, Chief Technology and Information Officer, said that Microsoft was the de facto standard for authorities across Oxfordshire. Regardless of the outcome of Local Government Reorganisation, he noted that the future authority would need such a contract and that it was more financially responsible to do it in this way. He said that the licensing would include all of the cyber security licenses that the Council requires and would allow them to enhance their security stature.

Cabinet resolved to:

1. Approve the procurement of a three-year contract for Microsoft enterprise software licensing called-off under Lot 3 (Software) of the Crown Commercial Service Framework Agreement ref RM6098 - Technology Products & Associated Services 2.
2. Approve an initial contract value of up to £1.8m, with an additional allowance of £400,000 over three years, for inflationary uplifts and controlled licence growth.
3. Delegate authority to the Deputy Chief Executive - City and Citizens' Services, in consultation with the Monitoring Officer, Section 151 Officer and Cabinet Member for Citizen Focused Services and Council Companies, to award the contract and finalise contractual arrangements.

152. 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 19:13.

Chair …….. **Date: Wednesday 18 March 2026**

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

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OXFORD CITY COUNCIL

To:	**Cabinet**
Date:	18th March 2025
Report of:	Nerys Parry, Director of Housing Services
Title of Report:	Measures to meet growing demand for Temporary Accommodation

	Summary and recommendations
Decision being taken:	Seeking approval to implement measures to meet demand and bring down cost of Temporary Accommodation
Key decision:	Yes
Cabinet Member:	Councillor Linda Smith, Cabinet member for Housing and Communities
Corporate Priority:	Good, affordable housing
Policy Framework:	Housing, Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy

Recommendation(s): That Cabinet resolves to:

1. **Approve** the latest set of mitigations the Council is taking, as summarised in paragraph 6 of this report, to increase the provision of temporary accommodation, to improve quality, and decrease cost.
2. **Delegate** to the Director of Housing Services, in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Housing and Communities, the Director of Law, Governance and Strategy, and the Group Finance Director:

   (i) subject to the parameters as set out in paragraph 19, authority to agree the properties to be acquired and the detailed terms for the acquisition of properties and enter into all necessary documentation to effect the acquisition of each property into the Housing Revenue Account for the use of Temporary Accommodation; and

   (ii) authority to enter into necessary agreements or contracts required, and to authorise expenditure, for any works required to convert or carry out works to (a) any new properties acquired by the Housing Revenue Account or (b) to suitable existing properties from the General Fund to enable them to be used for Temporary Accommodation and to ensure compliance prior to occupation

   Provided all such expenditure is within the £32 million capital budget as contained in the MTFP.

3. **Note** the additional measures as set out in paragraphs 21 to 26 of this report.

Appendix No.	Appendix Title	Exempt from Publication
Appendix 1	Risk register	No
Appendix 2	Equality Impact Assessment	No

Introduction and background

1. Temporary Accommodation (TA) is short-term housing the Council must provide for households whom the authority has reason to believe are eligible, homeless and in priority need as prescribed under housing legislation. Its purpose is to assist homeless families and vulnerable households as they seek suitable long-term accommodation. This is a statutory obligation that the Council is required by law to fulfil.
2. The Council provides TA through properties it owns (via the Housing Revenue Account and General Fund), as well as through private sector leases. If required, accommodation may also be sourced on a nightly paid basis in B&Bs, hotels or self-contained short-term leases to meet demand.
3. Since 2022 the Council has experienced a significant and sustained increase in placements into TA, due to increased levels of homelessness in the city. This is in line with national trends, but is particularly acute in expensive urban areas in the south of the country.
4. The placement rate into TA in Oxford now averages over 10 households per week, significantly higher than before the current crisis, and means the number of households in TA has been gradually climbing for several years now. The Council has been successful in growing its TA stock to help meet demand, but has been unable to keep pace with demand, with the expansion of council owned and managed stock requiring investment and time to source. This means the Council still has between 130 and 150 households in a combination of hotels, and B&B and expensive nightly charge self-contained accommodation.
5. This use of short-term accommodation is putting significant financial strain on the Council, expenditure on hotels and nightly charge accommodation is projected to be around £2.4m in 25/26 and forecast to rise further unless the Council puts more mitigations in place. Therefore, Housing Services have developed a new package of measures to seek to decrease the use of expensive and lower quality forms of TA to

reduce cost, both through the prevention of homelessness and by further increasing housing supply.

6. Due to these pressures, as part of a larger package of measures, this paper seeks approval and delegations to enable officers to deliver the following mitigations in order to ensure the cost of TA is reduced:

    - Use of the identified £32m investment to:

        a. Acquire up to 150 additional temporary accommodation units.

        b. Review, and where suitable properties are identified, bring forward the appropriation of Council's assets identified that could be converted in to TA

        c. Undertake all works required to convert any existing General Fund properties; convert any new properties acquired; or enter into advance purchase agreements for properties being developed; and undertake any other works required prior to occupation.

7. The paper also updates on a number of other crucial projects to increase the prevention of homelessness and increase the move on from TA, all part of a package of measures to bring down TA costs. These do not require additional approvals or delegations, and are only for note. They include:

    - The creation of a new Face-to-Face centre, focused on the prevention and assessment of homeless households, to increase the quantity and quality of homelessness prevention work, and help ensure accurate assessment of homelessness applications.
    - Investment into new ICT infrastructure for the Housing Needs team
    - The piloting of a new move on scheme from temporary accommodation.

Temporary Accommodation demand and supply

8. Oxford City Council continues to experience sustained and significant pressure on its TA services. The number of households requiring TA has more than doubled over the past several years, rising from 116 in March 2023 to 309 in November 2025. This increase reflects a combination of factors, including the cost-of-living crisis, rapidly rising private sector rents, and the ongoing shortage of affordable private and social housing in Oxford and surrounding areas. These trends are being seen across the Country, and in particular in more expensive housing markets in the south of England.

9. The Council has made considerable progress over the last 12 months to respond to demand and increase the supply of temporary accommodation, since the last package of TA mitigation measures was agreed by Cabinet in July 2024. The Council has invested in prevention services, grown its TA stock, and maximised move on from TA. The Council TA stock has grown from approximately 100 units in 2023, to 212 in November 2025, and on course to reach 300 by December 2026. This has been achieved via long term leasing from private landlords and Housing Associations, purchases enabled through the governments Local Authority Housing Fund, and conversions of units from general needs to TA in Housing Revenue Account. The Council is also in the process of decanting two former sheltered housing blocks, enabling their conversion to TA.

10. Despite proactive measures to increase TA supply, the demand for TA continues to outpace delivery of new TA units. This has resulted in continued reliance on out-of-area placements and the use of bed and breakfast accommodation, particularly for single-person households and some with complex needs. This has resulted in significant TA cost increases and overspends as we pay providers of hotel/ B&B and nightly charge agents, as outlined in the finance section. The Council is on track to own or directly manage 300 TA units next year, but already has 309 households in TA, growing week by week. Forecasts suggest this number could reach to between 500-600 households in 2 years time, which would expose the Council to millions of pounds in additional overspends.
11. In this context, it's crucial that the Council takes steps now to mitigate this risk, by increasing the supply of temporary accommodation, and taking other steps to lower TA use such as through further improving prevention and move on.

Households in Temporary Accommodation

Financial Year	Total Households
March 2023	116
March 2024	246
March 2025	275
November 2025	309

Average weekly Temporary Accommodation placement rate

Financial Year	Weekly average
April 2022 to March 2023	4.38
April 2023 to March 2024	9.38
April 2024 to March 2025	9.42
April 2025 to March 2026	10.21 (Average by November)

Additional new supply of temporary accommodation

12. The Council's 26/27 budget and MTFP has made provision for £32m investment from the HRA into additional temporary accommodation provision, over the next three years.
13. This paper proposes to seek project approval from Cabinet to utilise the monies to allow it to be used to undertake a range of mitigation measures. Firstly it is proposed that the project will utilise the funds and target the acquisition or conversion of up to 150 units. These will be a range of acquisitions and appropriations of properties as they are identified and due diligence is undertaken.
14. The speed of delivery needed, targeting 25% delivery in financial year 26/27, means a major part of this programme is likely to be property acquisitions from the market. Singular acquisitions alone would not be able to deliver the number of units required

fast enough, with single property transactions generating significant work slowing the programme down, so it's also planned that larger transactions with multiple units that can still deliver at pace will be considered. Examples of this type of transaction include the purchase of former student blocks, former keyworker accommodation, hotels etc, and could include office to residential conversion, but the conversion time would have to be factored into plans. Any works required to convert properties to TA or other general works required prior to occupation are to be included within the £32m total investment.

15. Units and sites have yet to be identified, although work to identify these opportunities is underway. The preference for location for units will be Oxford, allowing homeless households to stay close to work, schools, services and networks. However, its expected to not be possible to source sufficient accommodation in Oxford, so locations in the wider county will be considered as well, while ensuring that the next nearest areas are considered first, and that anywhere we use has good, regular and affordable transport links to Oxford. This will also ensure we stay compliant with homelessness legislation which requires this consideration when considering the suitability of accommodation.

16. In general, the Council favours “additionality” when adding to the Council’s housing stock, growing the overall housing available to everyone in Oxford, this would however be a challenge in this project, as initial scoping, through to planning and then construction takes typically longer than the three year acquisition programme we require, with the first units aimed to be acquired in 26/27, however as we proceed any opportunities to deliver new accommodation at pace will be considered.

17. These new plans to acquire 150 units, combined with the existing plans to reach 300 units, and other plans to increase private landlord and housing association leasing, and continuing with some conversions from the HRA, means the Council can re-forecast and now expects to own or directly manage 560 units by financial year 28/29. This would meet projected demand, and allow us to end long-term hotel and B&B use. This would generate a combination of £5.2m in annual savings and cost avoidance by 28/29.

18. Officers require delegations in order to progress at pace with the programme and not being required to return to Cabinet for each transaction. Without this, the timescales outlined would not be obtainable, and savings in the MTFP would not be delivered. It should be noted however this will only be for acquisitions, and not any appropriations, however acquisitions will make up the bulk of the planned supply.

19. It is appropriate for Cabinet to set clear parameters to officers when using the delegation to purchase properties or land for use as TA. The parameters where officers can use the delegation are as follows:

    - For acquisitions from £750,000 up to and including £5,000,000 (Under £750,000 a general delegation already exists for officers. For acquisitions over £5,000,000 Cabinet approval will need to be obtained.)
    - Property and land must be located within Oxfordshire
    - Any property or land must provide vacant possession on completion

- Any property or land must be Freehold or Leasehold (with no restrictive clauses on occupation for Temporary Accommodation)

20. We have built in flexibility in the programme if demand and forecasts of future TA demand changes over the years of the programme. If this occurs in the next three years while the programme is still rolling out it would be possible to pause acquisitions, using less of the budget, if that's assessed as the right approach. If demand drops in future years once the units have already been bought, the Council will have different options in terms of ending privately leased TA saving additional budget, or converting homes used as TA back to general needs social housing to meet wider housing need. This flexibility, and the positive options it could open for the Council for the future, means we assess the risk of the Council having excess TA as low.

New client Face-to-Face offer

21. The Council is also focused on the prevention of homelessness and bringing down the placement rate, building on our previous investments into additional prevention services over the last couple of years. Looking at best practice in other Councils, our next proposed step is to increase our in-person offer to homeless households. Currently 20% of homeless clients are assessed at Central Library, with a further 5-10% via home visits, with the rest over the phone. Speaking to other Councils and central government homelessness advisors, this is not the typical approach in urban authorities, and most offer more assessment and prevention services face to face.

22. The argument for this is that face-to-face homelessness services are more personal and tailored to households, with officers better able to explore opportunities to prevent homelessness and assess health and other needs, leading to better support and decision making. The Council has a relatively high rate of single homelessness individuals with support needs, and this approach in particular could benefit them. Face to face assessment will also help officers with decision making on homelessness applications, to ensure we only place into temporary accommodation those households who qualify, which can be more difficult over the phone. Only a small increase in prevention rates, and resulting decrease in placement rate could generate significant savings for the Council.

23. A site for a new face to face offer has been identified on George Street in the City Centre, it has the necessary room and accessibility to function well as a centre to support homeless households. The Council will continue to offer home visiting and phone-based services for those unable to access face to face services at the new centre. Its currently expected the Council’s current customer services offer in Central Library will also move to the new centre, after it was confirmed they did not have the capacity to host the new offer at the library. We hope to collocate with other services at the new sites, subject to negotiation with them.

24. Work is underway to establish the new offer, with the aim it will launch in the spring of 2026. Capital and revenue budget for the offer has been made available via the Council budget/ MTFP.

Other measures to further lower Temporary Accommodation use

25. ICT upgrades are being procured within Housing Services, to provide additional homelessness prevention tools for staff, and to increase efficiency in the service area so that staff can spend more time working with clients to prevent and relieve homelessness. Functionality being procured includes new online tools to allow clients to self-serve and access documents and housing plans online, better interfaces for staff to do their work to help save time, and online forms integrated directly into the Council system ending the need for burdensome admin for data input from forms. The costs for this work are below Cabinet thresholds, and budget for them has been secured via the MTFP.

26. The Council will also launch a new move on pilot in the coming months, and as a result is currently procuring a new support contract to help single adults living in temporary accommodation or a risk of being placed into temporary accommodation, to provide support to help rehouse them into the private renter sector. This is to directly address the high numbers of single adults living in the Councils temporary accommodation, and the insufficient affordable one-bedroom units becoming available to rehouse them. The contract will both involve support to ready individuals for living in private accommodation, with support to ready clients to have a tenancy and access to benefits/ employment support, but also work to directly procure more private tenancies for clients, through working with landlords and offering deposits/ rent in advance and guarantees. The pilot will run for an initial 12 months, with ongoing assessment of its effectiveness to inform if its extended and/ or made business as usual. The cost for this pilot is below Cabinet the threshold, and budget for them has been secured via the MTFP.

Options

27. **Option one - To proceed with the recommendation, acquiring accommodation to increase the councils TA stock (recommendation).** This is the recommended package, due to the arguments made in this paper. While different measures can be taken by local authorities to bring down TA costs, these measures as part of a wider package have been developed using insight of the Oxford housing market and information held on our clients, best practice elsewhere, and building on successful measures implemented by the Council. Cabinet will need to approve the requested permissions and delegations to enable this work to proceed.

28. **Option two – Do nothing, and don't proceed with measures.** Officers assess this as not a viable option. The recommendation is to undertake work to increase the TA stock, a different package is unlikely to deliver sufficient TA stock to meet demand. The Council would need to budget for millions of pounds in additional TA costs through the MTFP as hotel and B&B use increases further, and therefore consider other options to increase income or reduce cost in order to set a balanced budget.

Financial implications

29. The budgets for both the acquisition / construction of TA units (£32m), and the capital works for the creation of a bespoke face to face centre (£75k) have been included in the proposed MTFP capital programme for 2026/27 to 2029/30.

30. The revenue savings in respect of the external TA costs are up to £560 per week per property – a total saving of up to £4.368million per year. This compares to the

estimated annual interest cost of £1.598million - an estimated net annual saving of £2.770million per year.

Legal issues

31. The Council's constitution delegates decisions to approve acquisition of freehold or leasehold properties of up to £750k to officers. These recommendations are potentially significantly above this threshold and therefore an express delegation of authority for acquisitions within the parameters set out in paragraph 19 is required so that officers may approve them. The alternative would be to return to Cabinet on a case-by-case basis for approval. This would not only increase the amount of work for the Cabinet but potentially cause delays in delivery of the acquisition programme.
32. Any appropriations of property held by the Council must be compliant with the Council's statutory duty to obtain best consideration reasonably obtainable pursuant to Section 123 of the Local Government Act 1972, and this will be reviewed when any appropriation is brought forward to Cabinet

Level of risk

33. Please see attached risk register.

Equalities impact

34. Please see attached Equality Impact Assessment.

Carbon and Environmental Considerations

35. There are few environmental considerations arising directly from this report. Any property purchased into the HRA will need to comply with the Decent Homes Standard, Housing Health & Safety Rating System (HHSRS) and meet EPC rating of C or above. The properties will go through voids process to ensure they are brought up to a lettable standard in line with other allocations of housing. Each site will be assessed independently on carbon and environmental considerations

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Risk Register

Temp Acc Mitigations 2026

As at: 21/1/26

									Gross		Current			Target							
Ref	Title	Risk Description	Opp / Threat	Cause	Consequence	Risk Treatment	Date Raised	Owner	P	I	P	I	Score	P	I	Comments	Control / Mitigation Description	Date Due	Action Status	% Progress	Action Owner
	Spend on hotels/B&B/nightly charge escalates to unsustainable levels	If the Council has insufficient direct TA stock, we increasingly depend on hotels and NC to meet demand, causing costs to escalate exponentially.	Threat	Rapidly rising demand, and insufficient supply.	Significant cost to Council, reductions in other services to fund overspending, ultimately inability to set a balanced budget	Reduce		Housing Needs and Strategy Manager	4	5	3	4	12	2	3		Continued implementation of existing and new mitigations		In Progress	50%	Housing Needs and Strategy Manager
	Operational Delivery Failure	Unable to source enough temporary accommodation to deliver statutory homelessness services	Threat	Rapidly rising demand, and insufficient supply. An inability to source enough hotels/ NC to meet demand	Major reputational damage, ombudsman interventions, central government intervention	Reduce		Rapid Rehousing Manager	4	4	2	2	4	1	2	Existing mitigations and new procurement approach significantly lowered risk already	Continued implementation of existing and new mitigations		In Progress	80%	Rapid Rehousing Manager
	Poor Citizen Experience	Clients spend too long in hotels and B&B	Threat	Long stays in hotels and B&B are a very poor client experience.	Major reputational damage, ombudsman interventions, central government intervention	Reduce		Housing Needs and Strategy Manager	4	4	3	3	9	2	2		Continued implementation of existing and new mitigations		In Progress	50%	Housing Needs and Strategy Manager
	Failure to deliver mitigations	Unable to deliver mitigations to timescales	Threat	Officer capacity, housing market unable to deliver sufficient units, other barriers such as legal/ procurement/ governance etc	Delays in mitigations will add further pressure to overspends	Reduce		Housing Needs and Strategy Manager	4	4	3	4	12	2	3		Additional staffing approved to deliver projects, cross council priority clear, CLT and Communities Board overseeing progress		In Progress	20%	Housing Needs and Strategy Manager
	Too much TA is procured, supply "overshoots" demand.	Demand drops, and we have too much TA stock	Threat	Demand drops	Risk of excess stock, wasting resource and creating voids issues	Reduce		Housing Needs and Strategy Manager	3	4	1	2	2	1	1		Built in flexibility into plan, will be possible to pause acquisitions if needed, and could transfer TA stock to use as general needs council housing.		In Progress	50%	Housing Needs and Strategy Manager
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THE RISK REGISTER IS FORMATTED AS A TABLE. PRESS TAB ON THE LAST TABLE CELL TO INSERT A NEW ROW.

Risk Identification

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

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

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

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

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

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





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

The description of the risk should include the following elements:

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

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


ance

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

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

Risk Evaluation and Prioritisation

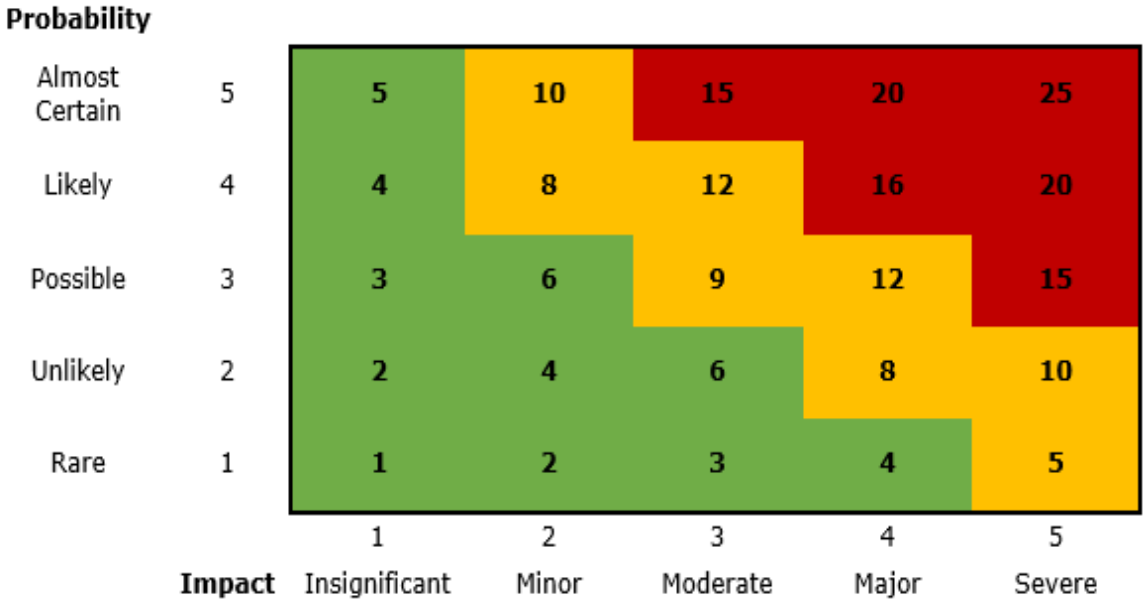
Once risks have been identified the risk matrix is the main tool for prioritising risks so we can establish which risks are most significant and therefore are in need of greater attention and resources. It also allows us to compare different types of risk with each other across the council.

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

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

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

Each identified risk should then be plotted onto the risk matrix.



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

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

Risk Probability Assessment Criteria

Scale	Description	Likelihood of	Probability of Occurrence

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

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

Risk Impact Assessment Criteria

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

Risk Treatment

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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.**	Temporary Accommodation Mitigations 2026	**2.**	**The implementation date of the activity under consideration:**	From now.
3.	**Directorate/Department(s):**	Housing Services	**4.**	**Service Area(s):**	Housing Needs
5.	**Who is (are) the assessment lead(s):** **Please provide:** -Name -Email address	Richard Wood, rwood@oxford.gov.uk	**6.**	**Contact details, in case there are queries:** **Please provide:** -Name -Email address	Richard Wood, rwood@oxford.gov.uk
7.	**Is this a new or ongoing EqIA?**	New	**8.**	If this is an extension of a previous EqIA, please indicate where the previous EqIA is located and share the link to the said EqIA.	N/A
9.	**Date this EqIA started:**	Jan 2026			
10.	**Will this EqIA be attached to** Cabinet **reports/updates, which will be published online?**	Yes	**11.**	**Give a date (tentative or otherwise) when this assessment will be taken to Cabinet**.	March 2026

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

12.	**Type of activity being considered:** Check the most appropriate.				
			Others. Please specify: Policy implementation		
13.	**Which priority area(s) within Oxford City Council's Corporate strategy (2024-2028) does this activity fulfil?** Please check as needed.	Good, affordable homes		Thriving Communities		Well run council
14.	**Which priority area(s) within Oxford City Council's Equality, Diversity & Inclusion Strategy (2022) does this activity fulfil?** Please check as needed.	Responsive services and customer care.		Leadership & organisational commitment.	Understanding and working with our communities.
15.	**Outline the aims, objectives, & priorities of the activity being considered.**	Maximise the provision of good quality temporary accommodation for homeless clients, decrease hotel and B&B placements. Increase ability of homeless clients to access support and advice face to face.			
16.	**Please outline the consequences of not implementing this activity.** **For example,**	• Risk of legal challenge and reputational damage • Failure to meet statutory housing duties			

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	-Existing activity does not fulfill Corporate Objectives, -existing activity is discriminatory and not fulfilling Council's PSED, … to name a few.	• Increasing spend on B&B and hotel accomedation

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.	Not for this project, but aligned to Housing, Homelessness and RS Strategy, which went through public consultation.
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, -articles, -reports, -briefs.	• Homelessness Code of Guidance • Oxford City Council homelessness data (2022–2025)
19.	**If you have not done any consultations or collected data & information, are you planning to do so in the future?**	Ongoing service user feedback and quarterly monitoring

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	Please list the details – -when, -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		
		Members of staff	Yes		
		General public	Yes		
		Partner / Community Organisation	Yes		
		City Councillors	Yes		
		Council suppliers and contractors	Yes		

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21.	Does the activity impact positively or negatively on any protected characteristics as stated within Equality (Act 2010)?					
Protected Characteristic	**Positive**	**Negative**	**Neutral**	**Don't know**	**Data/information/evidence supporting your assessment**	**Analysis & insight** **Mitigations**
Age	Y				As of 23/07/2025, there were **69** homeless applicants **aged 16-24** in temporary accommodation. This does not include dependent children within the households of adult homeless applicants. As of 23/07/2025, there were **12 care leavers aged 18-20** and **3 care leavers aged 21-24** in temporary (self-contained and bed and breakfast) accommodation. As of 23/07/2025, there were **10** homeless applicants **aged 60 or over** in temporary (self-contained and bed and breakfast) accommodation.	Efforts to maximise self-contained and shared temporary accommodation provision, and decrease hotel and B&B use will improve the accommodation offer for homeless clients. All provision we have cooking facilities, unlike hotel rooms. Therefore, this is an improved offer, including for younger and older people in TA. As a general principle, applicants must be aged 18 or older to make an application for homelessness assistance. Homeless individuals aged 17 or less should be

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59						supported and, if necessary, accommodated by Statutory Children's Services. Young people aged 18–20 will be assessed in partnership with the Young People's Pathway and Statutory Children's Services. While temporary accommodation is not age-restricted, applicants over 65 will be assessed for more suitable housing options, such as sheltered or extra care housing. Where temporary accommodation is used, a clear move-on plan will be developed in partnership with Adult Social Care and other relevant agencies.
Disability	Y				As of 23/07/2025, there were **61** homeless	Efforts to maximise self-contained and

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(Visible and invisible)					applicants with a **physical disability**, **115** applicants with disclosed **mental health problems**, and **13** applicants with a l**earning disability**, in temporary (self-contained and bed and breakfast) accommodation.	shared temporary accommodation provision, and decrease hotel and B&B use will improve the accommodation offer for homeless clients. All provision we have cooking facilities, unlike hotel rooms. People with physical and mental health disabilities and needs can struggle with longer stays in hotel and B&B, despite the fact we do take consideraiton of these needs into account with any placement and source adapted rooms when needed. Therefore minimising hotel and B&B use for this client group with be a positive change.
Gender re-assignment	Y					Efforts to maximise self-contained and shared temporary accommodation provision, and decrease hotel and

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						B&B use will improve the accommodation offer for homeless clients. All provision we have cooking facilities, unlike hotel rooms. Therefore, this is an improved offer, including for clients who have had their gender reassigned.
Marriage & Civil Partnership			Y			No identified impact
Race, Ethnicity and/or Citizenship	Y				As of 23/07/2025, only 32.8% of homeless applicants in temporary (self-contained or bed and breakfast) accommodation identified themselves as White British. According to the 2021 census, White British people make up 74.4% of the population of England and Wales. This indicates people from ethnic minority backgrounds are disproportionately represented in the homeless population of Oxford.	Efforts to maximise self-contained and shared temporary accommodation provision, and decrease hotel and B&B use will improve the accommodation offer for homeless clients. All provision we have cooking facilities, unlike hotel rooms. Therefore, this is an improved offer. People from ethnic minority backgrounds are disproportionality represented in the

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						number of people placed into temporary accommodation compared to the overall population, and therefore by investing in better temporary accommodation they will benefit from this.
Pregnancy & Maternity	Y				As of 23/07/2025, there were **7 pregnant women** in in temporary (self-contained or bed and breakfast) accommodation.	Efforts to maximise self-contained and shared temporary accommodation provision, and decrease hotel and B&B use will improve the accommodation offer for homeless clients. All provision we have cooking facilities, unlike hotel rooms. Therefore, this is an improved offer. Pregnant women can be disproportionaly impacted by homelessness, and therefore increases in the councils provision of good temporary accommodation will benefit pregnant women.

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Religion or Belief			Y			No specific impact identified
Sex 63	Y				As of 23/07/2025, **166** homeless applicants identified as **female** in temporary accommodation. **45** applicants had been made homeless as a result of **domestic abuse:** although it is not possible to disaggregate this figure by gender, it is recognised that domestic abuse disproportionately impacts women and girls.	Efforts to maximise self-contained and shared temporary accommodation provision, and decrease hotel and B&B use will improve the accommodation offer for homeless clients. All provision we have cooking facilities, unlike hotel rooms. Therefore, this is an improved offer. A significant number of clients the Council supports are women, and many were made homeless due to DA, so increasing our provision of good TA accommodation, and decreasing use of hotels and B&B will

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						positively impact this group. Oxford City Council recognises that women experiencing homelessness may face distinct risks and vulnerabilities, including domestic abuse, sexual exploitation, and trauma. Where possible, women will be placed in women-only or women-preferred accommodation.
Sexual Orientation	Y					National reporting indicates that lesbian, gay and bisexual people are disproportionality impacted by homelessness. Therefore an improved offer for temporary accommodation is likely to benefit this group of people.

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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.	Y				As of 23/07/2025, **209** homeless applicants in temporary (self-contained or bed and breakfast) accommodation were in receipt of **Universal Credit**. **71 applicants were in work** (full time, part time, or on paid parental leave). The majority of homeless applicants have a sufficiently low income as to qualify for welfare benefits, indicating socio-economic inequalities within the homeless population in Oxford.	Efforts to maximise self-contained and shared temporary accommodation provision, and decrease hotel and B&B use will improve the accommodation offer for homeless clients. All provision we have cooking facilities, unlike hotel rooms. Therefore, this is an improved offer, including for those on lower incomes and those who are unemployed.
Other (voluntary consideration) **For example:** Migrant, refugee, or asylum seekers.	Y				As of 23/07/2025, **13 former asylum seekers** (i.e., those with refugee status) were in temporary (self-contained or bed and breakfast) accommodation. There were **12 care leavers aged 18-20** and **3 care leavers aged 21-24** in temporary (self-contained and bed and breakfast) accommodation.	Efforts to maximise self-contained and shared temporary accommodation provision, and decrease hotel and B&B use will improve the accommodation offer for homeless clients. All provision we have cooking facilities, unlike hotel rooms. Therefore, this is an improved offer, including for those with

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					30 homeless applicants in temporary (self-contained or bed and breakfast) accommodation had a **history of criminal offending**.	characteristics that make them more likely to be homeless.

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

22.		**Conclusions.**							
				Having considered equality of treatment towards service users, residents, employees, partners, council suppliers and contractors, and Council Members, and considered any	☒	No major change(s) or adjustments			

				potential and real impact of the introduction of this work to maximise the Council's temporary accommodation stock upon these stakeholders, it is concluded that no protected characteristic or PSED will be impacted negatively by this work. It is anticipated that the protected characteristics of Age, Disability, Race, Ethnicity and/or Citizenship, Gender Reassignment, Sexual Orientation, Pregnancy and Maternity, and Sex will be positively impacted by improved accommodation to place people in to. Individuals experiencing socio-economic inequalities will also be positively impacted and the provision supports vulnerable groups experiencing homelessness, including refugees, care leavers, and prison leavers.		and continue with activity but continue to monitor.		

23.	**Please explain how you have reached your conclusions above.**		Having considered the protected characteristics as defined in the Equality Act (2010), it is concluded that the project to deliver more self-contained and shared temporary accommodation in Oxford, aiding efforts to reduce use of hotel and B&B accommodation, will have a net positive impact because improves access to housing for vulnerable groups, ensures a better housing offer than a hotel room, for example

			with kitchen facilities, and ensures legal compliance. Vulnerable groups, including those with protected characteristics, are disproportionality impacted by homelessness and therefore will benefit from this investment, they will also benefit from the expanded provision for face-to-face services for support and assessment. No protected characteristic will be directly negatively impacted by the introduction of the Policy and so mitigations in this respect are not required, but monitoring will be ongoing to ensure that negative impacts do not arise during this work.

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.

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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.	Housing Needs Team, Housing Services
25.	**Who (individual, team, or service area) will be responsible for carrying out the EqIA review?**	Housing Needs and Strategy Manager

26.	**How often will the equality impact be reviewed for this activity?** **For example-** -quarterly, -yearly, etc.	EIA impacted will be considered throughout project, for example with the forms of accommodation purchased.	**27.**	**Date when the EqIA will be reviewed again.**	**Aligned with the next scheduled policy review or earlier if amendments are made.**

Section 7: Sign-off

Name: Nerys Parry

Job Title: Director of Housing Services
Signature:

Name: Richard Wood

Job Title: Housing Needs and Strategy Manager
Signature:

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To:	**Cabinet**
Date:	18th March 2025
Report of:	Nerys Parry, Director of Housing
Title of Report:	Social Housing Allocations Scheme

Summary and recommendations	
Decision being taken:	To approve the new draft Social Housing Allocations Scheme for Oxford, following public consultation.
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

Recommendation(s): That Cabinet resolves to:

1. **Recommend** that Full Council approve the new draft Social Housing Allocations Scheme for Oxford;
2. **Delegate** authority to the Director of Housing, in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Housing and Communities, to authorise the date on which the Allocations Scheme is implemented, noting the explanation and timelines in paragraph 23;
3. **Delegate** authority to the Director of Housing, in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Housing and Communities, to make minor changes to the Allocations Scheme in order to comply with changes to legislative and statutory guidance, related Council policies (approved by Cabinet) and to make technical changes to ensure the effective and efficient functioning of the scheme.

Appendix No.	Appendix Title	Exempt from Publication

Appendix 1	Draft Allocations Scheme	No
Appendix 2	Allocations Scheme Review Equality Impact Assessment	No
Appendix 3	Allocations Scheme Proposals Survey Response	No
Appendix 4	Risk Register	No

Introduction and background

1. The Allocations Scheme is the housing policy used to assess and prioritise Council tenants and other residents in housing need for offers of social housing available in Oxford. Demand for social housing is significantly greater than the supply, so the policy seeks to balance local needs and priorities with current legislation, guidance and best practice.

2. This policy has an important role in helping to prevent homelessness and housing those in the greatest housing need in Oxford, including households who are homeless, at risk of homelessness, living in overcrowded or unsuitable homes, or needing to move for health or welfare reasons.

3. Following a review of the Allocations Scheme to identify improvements to the existing policy, and a consultation with Council tenants, including prospective Council tenants in temporary accommodation, other residents and partner organisations a final version of the new policy has been drafted (see **Appendix 1 Draft Allocations Scheme**) taking into account the feedback received and is being submitted for approval.

4. The Allocation Scheme supports the Corporate Priority of ***Good, affordable homes*** and aims to:

    - Balance competing priorities, helping existing Council tenants seeking to move and new customers in housing need applying for social housing in Oxford.
    - Make the best use of the limited new and existing social housing becoming available in the city owned by Oxford City Council (OCC) and the Registered Providers participating in the Oxford Register for Affordable Housing (ORAH) partnership.
    - Help facilitate the churn of existing social housing to increase the supply becoming available to re-let to existing tenants seeking to transfer and new housing applicants in housing need applying for social housing in the city.

Legal Requirements

5. The proposed new policy is OCC's statutory Allocation Scheme issued under s.166A of Part VI of the Housing Act 1996. Pursuant to s. 166A(1) of Part VI of the Housing Act 1996. All housing authorities must have an allocation scheme for determining priorities, and for defining the procedures to be followed in allocating housing accommodation; and they must allocate in accordance with that scheme (s.166A(14)). All aspects of the allocation process must be covered in the scheme, including the people by whom decisions are taken. When framing or modifying their scheme, authorities must have regard to their current tenancy and homelessness strategies (s.166A (12)).

6. The new draft Allocation Scheme has been developed in accordance with the legal requirements set out in the Housing Act 1996 (as amended), including amendments made by the Homelessness Act 2002, the Localism Act 2011, and the Homelessness Reduction Act 2017. It also reflects duties under the Equality Act 2010, Welfare Reform legislation, and relevant statutory guidance. A comprehensive list has been added in Appendix VI of the scheme.

7. The new Allocations Scheme and its proposed changes from the previous scheme meet these legal requirements, while also supporting the aims of the Council's Housing, Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy 23-28 and Tenancy Strategy. The Allocations Scheme also has a role in complying with the amendments introduced by the Social Housing Regulation Act 2023 and revised consumer standards, specifically the Tenancy Standard and Transparency, Influence and Accountability Standard which set out requirements on providers of social housing on how they allocate social housing, and states Registered Providers of social housing (including OCC as a social landlord) should treat tenants and prospective tenants with respect and take into account tenants' views. Council tenants' views, as well as the views of prospective tenants currently in our temporary accommodation (and other housing applicants responding the consultation), have informed and shaped the development of this policy.

Work to develop a new allocations policy

8. The Allocations Scheme is reviewed periodically to ensure it is kept up to date, reflects current guidance and best practice and helps meet current and emerging trends such as rises in homelessness or overcrowding affecting families with younger children. An internal review of the Allocations Scheme has been completed, including a review of current legislation, guidance and best practice and the approach of other Local Authorities with similar high housing need challenges to identify any improvements to be made.

9. While improvements have been identified, having considered the schemes of other Councils, officers have concluded that much of the existing Allocations Scheme is considered to be working well, including the existing housing qualification criteria, use of five housing need priority bands and Choice-Based Lettings to advertise and let social housing. The policy has been operating for some time, and service users on the register and officers have a relatively good level of understanding how the Council's banding system works, which supports transparency and knowledge of how social housing is allocated in Oxford. Choice Based Lettings continues to offer the most transparent and fair system for social housing allocations, maintaining an

element of client choice while being perceived as fairer than direct allocations used in some other councils. However, a number of keys areas were identified to improve the existing Allocation Scheme to better meet current priorities and help tenants and other residents in housing need, while delivering better operational efficiency.

10. An Equality Impact Assessment has been completed as part of this process (see **Appendix 2 Allocation Scheme Review Equality Impact Assessment**). The new Allocation Scheme has been developed in accordance with OCC's duties under the Equality Act 2010, with commitment to eliminating unlawful discrimination, advancing equality of opportunity between different groups (e.g. disabled and non-disabled people, men and women) and fostering good relations between communities.

11. OCC has due regard to the protected characteristics as defined in Section 4 of the Equality Act 2010, which are age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation. The Council is also required by law to give Reasonable Preference to households meeting categories set out within s66A(3) (a) to (e) of the Housing Act (as amended) - including priority to those who are homeless/at risk of homelessness, living in overcrowded or unsuitable homes, or needing to move for health or welfare reasons and award additional preference to those with urgent housing needs.

12. Following the review a consultation was undertaken on the proposals with Council tenants, other residents and partner organisations seeking their views and feedback on what was proposed to change and was proposed to stay the same which was used help to draft the final proposed Allocations Scheme.

Proposed changes to the Council's scheme

Change Summary	**Rationale**	**Implementation**
Increased Priority for residents at risk of Homelessness with Multiple Housing Needs	**Maximise homelessness prevention and to stop residents with multiple needs, from becoming homeless:** The Council and our partners seek to help prevent residents in Oxford from becoming homeless. A large number of housing applications are received each year from residents who are at risk of homelessness and can no longer stay in their current home. This includes households living with friends or relatives, or in private rented or tied	To award urgent priority to housing applicants with multiple needs at risk of homelessness, through no fault of their own, who are already living in overcrowded or otherwise unsuitable housing, or those with additional health or social and welfare needs, to improve their chances of being offered housing before they become homeless.

	accommodation, who have been asked to leave through no fault of their own and are unable to find alternative housing at risk of homelessness.	
Help for Homeless Residents from Oxford Housed Outside of the City by OCC	**Help for Oxford residents housed out of area in the private rented sector (PRS) /reduce the disincentives to move into private housing:** The Council aims to rapidly re-house residents that are homeless living in temporary accommodation into suitable social or private rented housing. Homeless residents are sometimes re-housed in private rented accommodation outside of the City. Due to the high demand for housing in Oxford, it is sometimes necessary for the Council to offer homeless households private rented accommodation outside the city. The Council recognises that while some homeless residents are happy to move to a home outside Oxford — particularly to nearby districts with good links to the city — others may be reluctant to do so and would prefer to live in Oxford, where they have stronger connections and support networks**.** This can act as a disincentive for people to move and accept PRS offers, increasing stays in temporary accommodation.	To introduce a new significant priority award for housing applicants who are owed a homeless duty by Oxford City Council and who are: • Threatened with homelessness or currently homeless and living in Temporary Accommodation, and • Re-housed by the Council into private rented accommodation outside the city to discharge a homeless duty owed by Oxford City Council. This priority would be time-limited for up to 2 years, to give households the opportunity to continue to apply for social housing in Oxford for a reasonable period of time after they have moved and ensure that reasonable preference continues to be given to groups including those who are homeless, overcrowded, living in unsuitable housing or need to move on health or social and welfare grounds.
Freeing Up More Bungalows and Adapted Homes and Helping Existing Tenants	There are social tenants living in bungalows or adapted homes who request to move because they no longer require this type of accommodation and want a different type of home. There are also many tenants and other residents with urgent health needs who require a	The Council is proposing to introduce a new urgent priority award to help tenants who are requesting to move to another more suitable home and free up a higher demand property for another resident in housing need where they are living in a:

	bungalow or an adapted property.	• Bungalow and would like to move to another type of property (excluding a move to another bungalow). • A significantly adapted flat or house they no longer require and would like to move to another property without adaptations.
Freeing up More One-Bedroom Homes and Helping Existing Tenants	There are social tenants aged 55 or older living in one-bedroom flats suitable for younger residents who sometimes request to move to older persons housing. There are also high numbers of younger residents in housing need aged under 55 requiring one-bedroom properties, including those who are homeless living in temporary accommodation, existing tenants needing to move and other residents living in unsuitable housing.	To introduce a new urgent priority award for Council and other social tenants aged 55+ requesting to move where they are currently living in a one-bedroom general needs flat (without an age restriction) and would like to move to lower demand 55+ older persons' housing which is more suitable for their needs.
Making the Best Use of Family Housing	There is a high demand for family housing in Oxford and there are a large number of residents with children in housing need who are homeless living in temporary accommodation, in overcrowded conditions or otherwise unsuitable housing who need to move. Only a small number of family housing becomes available to let each year and unfortunately many families with children wait a long time before they are re-housed living in very difficult circumstances. We seek to make the best use of the scarce family housing becoming available and will normally only allocate family properties to households with dependent children under 18 or where it has been accepted it is	To strengthen the existing approach of prioritising offers of family housing to residents with children under 18 by introducing changes where there are older household members still living with a housing applicant to explicitly state: • Any adult child aged 22 or older will be excluded from their parents' housing application and not count towards the number of bedrooms they require and their priority to move (unless an exception is agreed). To also: • Allow exceptions where following an assessment of the households housing need it is accepted that is reasonable to include them, for example adults with

	reasonable to include an adult on another's housing application unless an exception has been agreed – including established household members.	health needs needing full-time care who cannot live alone, former care leavers or a full-time student living at home and still studying. • Advise adults they can make their own housing application and will have their housing need assessed based on their individual circumstances – for example a single adult sharing a room while living with their parents will have a one-bedroom housing need and be awarded priority for being overcrowded.
Making the Best Use of Supported Housing	There is a high demand for supported housing in Oxford. This includes young parents, single homeless people, care leavers, and residents in the Mental Health Pathway. The Council aims to make the best use of the limited supported housing in the city. Priority is awarded to help residents who are assessed as ready to "move on" who no longer require supported housing freeing up spaces for those who need this help. The Oxford Register for Affordable Housing currently has 3 housing lists: • Transfer List – for tenants of the Council and other social landlords in Oxford • Homeless List – for residents owed a statutory homeless duty by the Council living in Temporary Accommodation • General Register List – for all other applicants, including residents living in the private rented sector, with friends or family (and currently	To Keep the existing Housing Lists and create a new "Move On" list on the Oxford Register for Affordable Housing for residents living in supported housing assessed as ready to move on (and to remove them from the General Register List). This will help: • Residents move to settled suitable social housing or private rented housing and free up more supported housing for residents not yet ready to live independently. • Ensure only properties suitable for households moving on from supported housing are offered to this list and minimise lettings times. • Increase transparency by providing clearer information to housing applicants on each Housing List what properties are available to them. • Make the allocation process more efficient and reduce

	residents living in supported housing) At present, residents living in supported housing are included on the General Register List. However, not all properties becoming available to let are suitable for many households moving on from supported housing. This can create confusion and disappointment and slow down re-let times for other housing applicants when a resident in supported housing is advised they will not be offered a property because it is not considered suitable for their needs. If housing applicants from supported housing are transferred from the General Register List to a new Move On List this will help ensure that only suitable properties are advertised to those leaving supported housing.	offer times to households in housing need.
Guidance on Health and Housing Awards	Residents and support agencies can find the council's process to determine additional priority due to health or disability hard to understand, and the lack of additional information can make it difficult to manage expectations.	Additional guidance has been included in the Allocations Scheme (Appendix V) to provide more detail on how housing applications are assessed when a resident is requesting to move on health grounds. This aims to give the public clearer information on how decisions are made, increasing transparency

Key Areas to Remain the Same

13. **Housing Register Qualification Criteria, Priority Bands and Choice-Based Lettings** - Social housing in Oxford is in very high demand and far more people apply than can be housed. Housing applicants must qualify for inclusion on the Oxford Register for Affordable Housing (ORAH) to be considered for any offer of social housing. The new Allocations Scheme proposes to keep existing qualification criteria and exceptions for housing applicants around Local Connection, Income and

Savings, Rent Arrears and Anti-Social Behaviour. The new Allocations Scheme also proposes to continue using five priority bands to assess housing need, and Choice-Based Lettings to advertise and offer most properties, to make this process as fair and clear as possible.

14. **Freeing up More Family Homes and Helping Existing Tenants** - there are social tenants living in larger properties seeking to downsize to smaller, more manageable homes. At the same time, there are also a large number of families with children in housing need who are homeless, overcrowded, or living in unsuitable accommodation urgently need re-housing. The current Allocations Scheme gives high priority to tenants of the Council and other social housing tenants who are under-occupying a family home and requesting to move, this will continue in the new scheme. The Council also offers support and financial assistance to help council tenants move to homes better suited to their needs and free up larger homes for families in housing need.

Consultation

15. A public consultation has been completed to ensure the views from residents, including OCC tenants (and prospective tenants), Registered Providers of social housing and other key stakeholders, including the County Council, other Local Districts, local advice/support agencies and staff, have been taken into account in the drafting of the proposed new Allocations Scheme.
16. The consultation on the proposals included engagement through an on-line survey asking to what extent respondents agreed or disagreed with each key area and proposed change (see **Appendix 3 Allocations Scheme Proposals Survey Response)**, and feedback from a series of focus group meetings with Council tenants covering each area in detail. A sample of homeless applicants living in Temporary Accommodation were also asked by staff to provide their views too, as prospective tenants. Housing applicants were also able to respond to the survey. The consultation was promoted through a range of mediums, including social media, tenants in touch, the Choice-Based Lettings website (used by tenants and other residents applying for social housing) and targeted contact by staff to tenants and residents they were working with. Registered Providers of social housing and other partners within Oxford were also asked for views.
17. The responses to the survey can be broadly split between residents and other organisations working in housing. Almost 75% of responses were completed by residents living in a range of tenures, including Council and Housing Association tenants, private sector tenants, friends and family, people living in supported housing and temporary accommodation or their own homes. Most of the remaining 25% of responses were on behalf of organisations including Registered Providers of social housing operating in Oxford and other key stakeholders.
18. The majority of respondents to the survey supported the proposals for the new Allocations Scheme and strongly agreed or agreed. Every proposed change was supported by a majority of the respondents. This supports the recommendation to Cabinet to approve the new strategy and policy. **Allocations Scheme Proposals Survey Response in Appendix 3** show a breakdown of the response to each proposal and and additional details regarding each proposal.

19. Following feedback received during the consultation engagement activities with tenants, residents and stakeholders the following changes will also be completed to improve outcomes:

    - The new draft Allocation Scheme has been updated to confirm tenants and other housing applicants who are survivors of domestic abuse and owed a homeless relief or main duty by OCC will qualify for priority to move.
    - The new draft Allocation Scheme has been updated to ensure that rent arrears accrued by tenants or other residents due to domestic abuse will not be taken into account, thus stopping a survivor of domestic abuse being allocated another home.
    - Greater promotion of the help offered by the Council and other Registered Providers of social housing to under-occupying social tenants wanting to move, including information on the existing help and incentives available for Council tenants to move to more suitable homes, thereby freeing up more family housing for families with young children in housing need.
    - A review of whether any help with removals and/or incentive payments can be made available for qualifying social tenants seeking to move from high demand bungalows, adapted homes or general needs one-bedroom properties they no longer require/need to lower demand housing, thus freeing up more homes for households needing this type of housing.
    - A review of the information available to residents to help prevent homelessness where possible.
    - A bibliography has been included in Appendix VI of the Allocations Scheme including key legislation relating to the Allocations Scheme.

Local Government Reorganisation

20. Local Government Reorganisation is due to change Council structures in Oxfordshire in 2028, raising the possibility that the Council could choose not to proceed with changes to allocations schemes until the new Council forms. While this has been considered, it's been rejected, due to the current high demand in Oxford for social housing and homelessness services. The Council would be taking a significant risk of doing nothing for two years in light of rising housing demand; as well as ensuring our ongoing compliance with the Social Housing Consumer Standards in terms of council housing allocations. It is also likely that the successor Council for Oxford will continue to use this scheme within the current boundaries of Oxford City at least initially, ahead of agreeing any further changes/a new scheme.

Options

21. **Recommendation** – approve the new draft Allocations Scheme to ensure the Council is compliant with current legislation, guidance, best practice and feedback from tenants and residents taken into account in the drafting of the policy and support housing priorities in this area.
22. **Do nothing** – under this option, the Council would not approve the new draft Allocations Scheme. The Council would risk being non-compliant with legislative

requirements under key legislation such as the Social Housing Regulations Act and Consumer Standards by not taking into account the views of tenants and also other residents and stakeholders – including partner Registered Providers of social housing who support these changes. This would also impact on the ability of the policy to support housing priorities effectively.

Implementation of the new Allocations Scheme

23. This paper also requests the delegation to officers to only activate the new scheme once the Council is ready to implement it fully. This is because the policy changes require changes to the Council's online Choice Based Lettings system, so time is required to amend the Council's housing IT system. Once changed, residents, staff and key stakeholders will be informed of the start of these changes. It is not anticipated this will take any more than 6 months, and in the meantime the current scheme will still be in effect.

Financial implications

24. There are no financial implications in respect of this allocations policy. There should be no increase or decrease in budgeted expenditure through the implementation of this policy.

Legal issues

25. The key piece of primary legislation in respect of the allocation of social housing is section Part VI of the Housing Act 1996 ('the HA 1996'). This details the law in relation to the allocation of housing, eligibility, housing registers, applications and allocation schemes. The HA 1996 was amended by Part VII of the Localism Act 2011 and the Homelessness Reduction Act 2017. As detailed within this Report, s.166A of the HA 1996 requires the Council to have an allocation scheme which determines priorities and the procedure to be followed.

26. As detailed above, the Council has a responsibility as a Local Authority and social landlord to have an Allocation Scheme in place to meet statutory requirements and local priorities. The updated draft Scheme ensures that the Council continues to meet its duties under the Localism Act 2011. Further, it also ensures compliance and alignment with associated legislation including the HA 1996 and the Homelessness Reduction Act 2017. A public consultation has been completed to ensure the views from residents including tenants, and others have been considered; it supports the twin roles the Council has as a Local Authority and Social Landlord, and further demonstrates that the Council is committed to the responsibilities it has for tenants and other residents.

27. The changes proposed to the Allocations Scheme seek to ensure the policy is up to date with current legislation, guidance and best practice and reflects the priorities of tenants, other residents and stakeholders in the City. Thus, it appears that the changes are fit for purpose. This does not mean that it will be immune to challenge, and it may be necessary to update it further if these are successful. However, in the meantime, the is changes are well-drafted, thorough, detailed, transparent and clear.

Level of risk

28. A risk register has been completed and can be seen in **Appendix 4**. The Allocations Scheme needs to be changed to reflect currently legislation, guidance, best practice and feedback from tenants, residents and other key stakeholders.

Equalities impact

28. The Allocations Scheme seeks to balance local needs and priorities with current legislation, guidance and best practice as well as local housing conditions. The Allocations Scheme is a key housing policy supporting the priorities of the Housing, Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy which include *great homes for all, preventing homelessness and adopting a rapid re-housing response, ending rough sleeping* benefitting all households with protected characteristics in housing need.

29. A draft Equality Impact Assessment (EQI) was completed and shared as part of the consultation on the proposals. To reflect part the Council's housing related commitments within the Equality Impact and Diversity Strategy to provide Responsive Services and Customer Care for those with protected characteristics and to improve engagement with tenants and residents in housing policy development. The EQI has been updated following the consultation and is available in **Appendix 2 Allocations Scheme Review Equality Impact Assessment**.

30. The proposed revised Allocations Scheme will benefit the majority of residents including households in housing need with protected characteristics, applying for social housing. However, with a finite supply of housing and increasing demand any changes to the relative priority awarded to applicants applying for housing will have an impact on others on the Oxford Register for Affordable Housing. These have been kept to a minimum.

31. The relative merits of keeping the Allocations Scheme unchanged or making the proposed changes have been carefully considered and the proposals aim to get the balance right to continue to help house Council tenants and other residents in the highest housing need in the City including those in housing need with protected characteristics under the Equality Act.

Carbon and Environmental Considerations

33. There are no expected carbon or environmental impacts from changing the Allocations Scheme.

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Oxford City Council Housing Allocations Scheme

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Effective from TBC

1. Introduction - Allocations Scheme

1.1. Preamble

Oxford is an area of high demand for social housing. There is a scarcity of affordable housing and a high number of people who wish to be housed. There is also a substantial level of homelessness in the City. Oxford City Council aims to allocate the resources available fairly, objectively and systematically.

Oxford City Council has formed a partnership with the major Private Registered Providers of Social Housing operating within the City. This is the Oxford Register for Affordable Housing Partnership (ORAH Partnership). The Council maintains a common register of social housing on behalf of the Partnership. There is a single application process for housing allocated by OCC.

Oxford City Council works within the legal and regulatory framework governing the allocation of social housing. This scheme also takes into account local need and demand as well as local housing conditions.

Oxford City Council operates a Choice Based Lettings scheme for most housing applicants. This allows applicants (with some exceptions) to have as much choice as possible over where they live, within the limits of what types of accommodation they are eligible for. It is also a system which gives a range of information to applicants,

allowing their choices to be informed and realistic, based on the limits of what stock is available.

This Allocation Scheme is subject to periodic review to ensure that the allocation of properties continues to be fair, objective and systematic whilst meeting local need and statutory obligations.

1.2. Definition of Terms

An Allocation

a. the selection process by which a person becomes a secure or introductory tenant of accommodation held by a housing authority; or
b. the nomination process by which a person becomes a secure or introductory tenant held by another housing authority; or
c. the nomination process by which a person becomes an assured tenant of accommodation held by a Private Registered Provider.

The term ‘assured tenant’ includes a person with an assured shorthold tenancy, including of an Affordable Rent property. ‘Secure tenant’ includes a person with a flexible tenancy granted under s.107A of the Housing Act 1985.

Bidding

The process of applying for a property advertised as available to let through Choice Based Lettings. An applicant must be eligible for that type of property.

Choice Based Lettings

The advert-based system that Oxford City Council uses to let properties. Applicants are assessed, properties are advertised and applicants bid for them.

Oxford Register for Affordable Housing (ORAH)

Also known as the housing register, consists of three separate lists; the General Register List, the Transfer List and the Homeless List. Instead of the Council and PRPs keeping their own different housing registers, applicants can join a single housing list within Oxford City (ORAH). Social housing in the city owned by the Council and its partner PRPs is let through the Oxford Register for Affordable Housing. It is administered by Oxford City Council and managed by Oxford City Council and its partners.

Priority Band Start Date

The date on which an applicant is eligible to be included in Priority Bands 1 to 4. and the date used for prioritising order within each of these bands

Registration Date

The date on which an applicant is eligible to be included within Band 5. For assessed applications added to the Housing Register, this is the date the application was received. This is the Priority Band Start Date for applicants placed in Band 5.

PRP

A Private Registered Provider of social housing. The official name for housing associations, housing cooperatives and housing companies that are registered with the Regulator of Social Housing.

REMS

The Removal Expenses and Mobility Scheme is an incentive scheme available to Council tenants living in family accommodation seeking to downsize to a smaller property or move to older persons' accommodation.

Social Housing

Low-cost housing that you rent from a council, PRP, charity or faith organisation.

Transfer Applicant

A secure tenant of Oxford City Council or an Assured tenant or Secure tenant of one of our partner PRPs living in the city and whose application has been accepted onto the ORAH Transfer List. Tenants of OxPlace living in social housing are also eligible to be included. This includes qualifying secure tenants with a flexible tenancy granted under s.107A of the Housing Act 1985.

1.3. Oxford City Council's Principal Housing Objectives

- To allocate housing fairly, consistently and carefully
- To allocate suitable accommodation to households in housing need
- To work to meet the Council's responsibilities to homeless households in Oxford and to work to prevent homelessness
- To provide a high-quality service with courteous and efficient staff
- To make the best use of the Council and our partner PRPs' stock, and any other stock available to us
- To ensure that empty properties are let quickly and efficiently
- To promote the widest possible access to housing to residents of Oxford or those assessed as having qualifying connection to the City, including directing applicants to private rented stock in appropriate circumstances
- To allow applicants to express choice in selecting their accommodation wherever possible, with some exceptions including applicants owed a duty under Part 7 of the Housing Act 1996 who may be made a Private Sector Offer outside of the Allocations Scheme by the Housing Needs Team or be made a direct offer (and applicants accepted on to the move on scheme)
- To provide clear and easy to understand information to allow applicants to make informed choices

- To set out clear standards so that applicants know what to expect
- To offer appropriate advice to applicants who we are unable to house, including accurate and timely referrals to other agencies
- To promote sustainable communities
- To act legally and adopt best practice
- To review the advice and allocation service with the intention of producing continuous improvement
- To treat members of the armed forces/former members of the armed forces in housing need, equally with regard to a qualifying connection to Oxford (see section 3.3.5.)

2. Responsibilities - Allocations Scheme

2.1. The Council's Responsibilities

2.1.1. The Legal Framework

In framing this allocation scheme, Oxford City Council complies with the relevant legislation, including, but not exclusively: the 1985 and 1996 Housing Acts, as amended by the Homeless Act 2002; the Equality Act 2010; The Localism Act 2011, the Homelessness Reduction Act 2017, the Domestic Abuse Act 2021, the Social Housing Regulation Act 2023 (and relevant consumer standards) and other Acts specified within this document (see **Appendix VI Bibliography** for more details)

The Council also takes due account of case law, best practice and government regulations and guidelines, such as the Codes of Guidance on Allocations:

- Allocation of accommodation: guidance for local housing authorities,
- Providing social housing for local people
- Right to Move and social housing allocations
- Improving access to social housing for victims of domestic abuse
- Improving access to social housing for members of the armed forces.

The scheme also has regard to other Oxford City Council Strategies, including the Housing, Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy and Tenancy Strategy and complements the objectives set out in the Council's Corporate Strategy.

2.1.2. Reasonable Preference

The Council is required to give reasonable (but not over-riding) preference to the following categories of person:

- Those who are homeless within the meaning of Part 7 of the 1996 Act (including those who are intentionally homeless and those not in priority need)
- Those who are owed a duty by any housing authority under section 190(2), 193(2) or 195(2) of the 1996 Act (or under section 65(2) or 68(2) of the Housing Act 1985) or who are occupying accommodation secured by any housing authority under s.192(3)

- Those in insanitary or overcrowded housing or otherwise living in unsatisfactory conditions
- Those who need to move on medical or welfare grounds, including grounds relating to a disability
- Those who need to move to a particular locality in the district, where failure to meet that need would cause hardship to themselves or others.

These categories are not discrete, and applicants can fall under different categories.

2.1.3. Additional Preference

Under Section 167 (2) of the Housing Act 1996, the Council can give additional preference to applicants in urgent need. This means the Council can decide which applicants within a particular category should be given the greatest priority for housing, and which of the groups should be prioritised over others.

The Council's Allocations Scheme must also give "additional preference" to a person who falls into a reasonable preference group and is considered to have urgent housing needs where the person:

- is serving in the regular forces and is suffering from a serious injury, illness or disability which is attributable (wholly or partly) to the person's service, or
- formerly served in the regular forces, or
- has recently ceased, or will cease to be entitled, to reside in accommodation provided by the Ministry of Defence following the death of that person's spouse or civil partner who has served in the regular forces and whose death was attributable (wholly or partly) to that service, or
- is serving or has served in the reserve forces and is suffering from a serious injury, illness or disability which is attributable (wholly or partly) to the person's service.

2.1.4. Information Provision

The Council is required to provide information about Allocations Scheme.

The Council will provide a free summary of the Allocations Scheme to any member of the public who asks for one. The Council will provide a full copy of the Allocation scheme, which can be inspected at our offices. The Council will provide a full copy of the Housing Allocation Scheme (at a reasonable cost) to any member of the public who asks for one. The full Allocations Scheme and summary are available on the Council's website.

Personal Information

Applicants have the right to see the information held about them, and receive a copy of information held on computer, or on paper file. This is a "subject access request". Personal information will be handled in accordance with the General Data Protection Regulations and will be subject to appropriate confidentiality.

Additional Information

Applicants have the right to be told in writing if they are considered ineligible for housing or do not qualify for inclusion on the Housing Register.

2.2. Equality and Diversity

Oxford City Council:

- Acknowledges and values the diversity of people who live in Oxford
- Is committed to the promotion of equality of opportunity for all and the prevention of discrimination. Oxford City Council aims to promote equal opportunities to contribute to a fair and socially inclusive City
- Recognises the importance of delivering services and running facilities that are accessible to all, and where these are managed by the Council directly, aims to ensure that no-one will be prevented from accessing services and facilities
- Has produced a Housing, Homeless and Rough Sleeping Strategy whereby it has committed to improve its monitoring of take up of housing services by different groups.

2.3. Targets and Monitoring

2.3.1. Annual Lettings Plan

The Housing Register consists of four-separate housing lists:

- **The Homeless List** for applicants to whom Oxford City Council has accepted a statutory homeless duty and placed in temporary accommodation who are waiting an offer of accommodation
- **The Transfer List** for Council Tenants and eligible OxPlace and Housing Association Tenants living in Oxford applying for a move to alternative accommodation
- **The General Register List** for all other households applying for social housing in Oxford
- **The Move On List** for housing applicants living in supported housing in Oxford assessed as ready to move on by the Council (see section 4.3.4. Move-On)

A housing applicant will normally only be expected to be on one housing list or application at the same time.

The Annual Lettings Plan is designed to set allocation percentages, which are targets set by the Council to determine the proportion of social housing offered to different lists within the Council's Housing Register, in order to best balance their competing demands and needs. The Director of Housing will approve the Annual Lettings Plan setting out the percentage of allocations to be made to each group. (see Appendix II).

Factors taken into account in setting the Annual Lettings Plan each year will include:

Supply

- The number of properties that are expected to become available to let during the year (consisting of re-lets and new build properties)
- The proportion of properties expected to become available to let for single-applicants and couples, including designated elderly and older persons accommodation
- The proportion of two-bedroom, three-bedroom and four-bedroom properties or larger that are expected to become available to let.

Demand

- The number of applicants in assessed housing need on each Housing List waiting for one-bed, two-bed, three-bed and four-bedroom properties or larger.

2.3.2. Local Lettings Plans

From time-to-time Oxford City Council may decide to develop Local Lettings Plans for specific blocks or areas, in order to develop balanced and sustainable communities, particularly where there are new developments of 100 units or more. The decision to implement a local lettings plan will be approved by the Cabinet and be made available for members of the public.

Where local lettings plans are introduced, clear evidence will be required of the need to vary the usual policy. The decision will always take into account the implications for equal opportunities and consider the “reasonable preference” & “additional preference” criteria. A local lettings plan will generally be expected to be part of a wider action plan to address the issues in that locality.

Local lettings plans are designed to be time limited and will be monitored to ensure that the plans do not discriminate directly or indirectly on racial or other equality grounds and that reasonable preference is given overall to applicants in the reasonable preference categories.

2.3.3. Monitoring the Allocation Scheme

Oxford City Council will monitor the allocation outcomes so that targets can be altered, should there be a risk that the reasonable preference requirements will not be adequately met. The Allocations and Lettings requirements included in the Tenancy Standard will also be monitored to ensure continued compliance.

2.3.4. Statistical Records

Statistical records by ethnic origin, gender and disability of those applying for and being allocated housing are essential for a proper examination of allocation systems, to enable analysis in terms of the type, age, location and quality of accommodation applied for and subsequently obtained. Such monitoring will demonstrate whether

housing resources are distributed according to need and will highlight any inequality in the allocation of particular property types, or within particular areas of the City.

This information is collated on an anonymous basis from data recorded on housing application forms.

Records are kept and monitored of the entire allocation process. The purpose is to identify how different groups are receiving and taking up offers and to highlight the quality and type of accommodation. This information will provide an indication of the length of time people wait, according to band, bidding patterns and refusal rates after viewing.

Diversity and equality monitoring is by self-assessment by the applicant as part of the application process. This includes disability but does not necessarily mean that the applicant will be considered for accommodation suitable for disabled people. Such property is usually allocated on the recommendation of the Council's Health and Housing Assessment Panel, or by using other assessments, for example, an Occupational Therapist report, and is dependent on the type of property and the level of adaptations an applicant is assessed as requiring.

2.4. Verification

All documents should be verified in line with the Council's verification processes and anti-fraud processes as appropriate.

2.5. Confidentiality

Confidentiality is about having a professional and lawful approach to handling disclosed information.

Information passed on to officers will be handled sensitively. All information provided by customers will be held securely under the provisions of current General Data Protection Regulations.

The purpose of information sharing is to:

- Assist in addressing housing need
- Enable the provision of appropriate assistance and support
- Combat fraud
- Improve risk assessments
- Help create sustainable tenancies
- Improve communities

Information will be passed on in the following circumstances with the customer's consent. Disclosure of any sensitive information will have to be authorised by an Allocation Officer and will be provided on a need-to-know basis only.

Oxford City Council is under a duty to protect public funds and may use the information provided and match it against other information held by the Council and

other public bodies, or similar external agencies, for the purpose of the prevention or detection of crime and fraud, and to verify the information provided.

Oxford City Council and other ORAH partners will have consent to make such enquiries as is considered necessary in order to assess the application, and all other departments, organisations and agencies are authorised to provide such information as requested.

Oxford City Council and other ORAH partners have consented to share information on the application form between themselves, with other statutory and voluntary agencies, including other housing providers, health trusts, support providers, police, probation, social services and other local authorities, where deemed necessary, and/or to provide the applicant with advice or assistance regarding their re-housing, or other services that may assist the applicant. The Council and other ORAH partners will not give information about an applicant to anyone else unless the applicant provides written authorisation to do so.

Customers should note that, where consent is refused, it may not be possible to process a housing application and they will not be included on, or will be removed from, the housing register.

Information may be passed on in the following situations **without** the customer's express consent:

- For the purpose of the prevention or detection of crime and fraud
- Where not passing on the information is reasonably considered to constitute a safeguarding issue and there is considered to be serious risk to the customer or a third party. In such cases a risk assessment will be conducted and any actions must be proportionate.

2.6. Applicants' Responsibilities

2.6.1. Supplying Information

- Applicants are responsible for giving full and accurate details on all forms and correspondence and in all other communications about their application for housing.
- Applicants must inform the Council of any change in circumstances straight away, especially those which may affect their needs for re-housing.
- Applicants should reply to any correspondence/requests from the Council or ORAH partnership which needs a reply, within the specified time scales
- Applicants who are made an offer should let the Council know their decision about whether to accept it within the timescale specified.
- If information is not supplied, the Council or an ORAH partner may cancel an application, defer it until the information is provided, or withdraw an offer of housing.

2.6.2. False Statements

An applicant who either omits to provide information that is requested or gives false or misleading information will be treated as behaving unacceptably.

Consequently, they will either:

- not qualify for inclusion on the housing register; or
- will be removed from the housing register, and
- will lose any time that they have already accrued on the housing register.

Furthermore, they may be liable to prosecution. Tenancies obtained as a result of false or misleading statements can be terminated. If in the future an applicant re-applies and is allowed to be included on the Housing Register, they will be issued with a new registration/housing need Priority Band Start Date.

2.6.3. Deliberately Worsening Circumstances

Applicants have a responsibility not to deliberately worsen their circumstances in order to progress to a higher band by an action or inaction. They have the responsibility to make best use of the accommodation they have and will be assessed as if this is the case.

Where an applicant is considered to have deliberately deprived themselves of capital or assets they will be treated as having “notional capital” to the value of those disposed of and this will be taken into account in the assessment of their application.

Should an applicant give up more suitable accommodation, or where a deliberate act, or omission to act, results in the worsening of circumstances without good reason, the Council may assess the application based on the applicants housing need in their previous accommodation, prior to the “deliberate” act. Furthermore, if an applicant is not using accommodation that they could reasonably be expected to use to improve their housing situation, their housing need and priority will be assessed as if they are occupying this accommodation.

Applicants considered to have lost previous accommodation due their own actions or behaviour, or that of a member of their household or a visitor, may also be excluded from qualifying for inclusion on the Housing Register.

The following applicants will normally be considered to have deliberately worsened their circumstances:

- Homeless applicants found to be intentionally homeless who still qualify for inclusion on the Housing Register
- Former homeless applicants removed from the Homeless List who have refused an offer of suitable accommodation resulting in an end to the Council’s homeless duty in the last 12 months since the duty ceased.

In such circumstances applicants will be referred to the Exceptional Circumstance Panel for consideration and are unlikely to be an award higher priority than a moderate Band 4 social and welfare award (see section 4.5.1).

3. Application and Assessment - Allocations Scheme

3.1. Applying for Social Housing through the Oxford Register for Affordable Housing (ORAH)

The ORAH is a single housing register operated by Oxford City Council, together with partner Private Registered Providers of Social Housing with stock in the City. The standards and expectations on all parties are set out in a Partnership Agreement. A Partnership Board comprising of senior representatives from the City Council and the partner Housing Associations manages the partnership.

There is a single application process with information available to guide applicants. These are available from local offices of the ORAH partners. Applicants can go to any of these offices for information, advice and support. Further information is also available on the Council website including information about the Housing Options available in Oxford and how to apply for inclusion on the housing register.

3.2. How to Apply

Applicants will be required to complete a housing application and to supply any additional information required for the assessment of their application before they can be included or to remain on the Oxford Register for Affordable Housing.

Before applying for housing, applicants are advised to consider other housing options that may help improve their housing situation. Applicants can also seek advice on the range of housing solutions that may meet their needs from the Housing Options team at the Council.

Older Applicants

There are some Older Persons Schemes in Oxford that are only considered suitable for older applicants aged 55 or 60 years or older (see section 5.5 Sheltered/Older Persons Accommodation).

Transfer Applicants

Applicants living in social housing seeking to move, who are already tenants of Oxford City Council, Ox Place or tenants one of the Council's partner Housing Associations living in Oxford can apply for inclusion on the Transfer List. Transfer applicants are also encouraged to apply for a mutual exchange.

Joint Applicants

Applications from partners who are cohabiting may be registered as joint applicants giving both parties joint and several rights and responsibilities for any future tenancy. Partners include same sex couples.

In some cases, one partner may be ineligible due to their immigration status. In this case the other partner will be registered as the sole applicant. Dependents, family

members or other adults who are not partners of the applicant (such as residential carers) cannot usually be joint applicants. If joint applicants wish to change to sole applicants (for example due to a relationship breakdown) they will need to notify the Council and one of the applicants will need to make a sole application. Normally the application will continue in the name of a partner with residency and/or parenting responsibilities. The remaining applicant can make a new application and may be issued with a new registration date/housing need priority band date.

3.3. Eligibility and Qualification

Only applicants who are eligible for housing and who qualify for an allocation of housing will be included on the Council's housing register and considered for offers of accommodation. Applicants who are not eligible or do not qualify for housing will not be included on the housing register. If an applicant has already been included on the housing register and is found to no longer be eligible for housing, or to no longer qualify for housing, they will be removed from the housing register and notified.

3.3.1. Who is not Eligible

Persons from abroad

A person may not be allocated accommodation under Part 6 if he or she is a person from abroad who is ineligible for an allocation under s.160ZA of the 1996 Act. There are two categories for the purposes of s.160ZA:

i. a person subject to immigration control - such a person is not eligible for an allocation of accommodation unless he or she comes within a class prescribed in regulations made by the Secretary of State (s.160ZA(2)), and

ii. a person from abroad other than a person subject to immigration control - regulations may provide for other descriptions of persons from abroad who, although not subject to immigration control, are to be treated as ineligible for an allocation of accommodation (s.160ZA(4)).

The regulations setting out which classes of persons from abroad are eligible or ineligible for an allocation are the Allocation of Housing and Homelessness (Eligibility) (England) Regulations 2006 (SI 2006 No.1294) ('the Eligibility Regulations'). The law on eligibility is subject to change and OCC will apply current legislation. The eligibility provisions do not apply to applicants who are already secure or introductory tenants or assured tenants of a Private Registered Provider if that applicant has a 'reasonable preference' for an allocation. Persons who are able to produce evidence of an in-time appeal of their leave to remain will be treated as though they continue to have leave to remain.

Age of Eligibility

Applicants under the age of 18 who are eligible can only be considered for some supported properties held by our PRP partners unless accepted as statutory homeless (usually if they have a guarantor) and in other exceptional circumstances.

3.3.2. Who Qualifies for Inclusion on the Housing Register?

The sections below provide information on who will normally qualify to be included on the Oxford Register for Affordable Housing. Once on the Housing Register, applicants are prioritised in terms of housing need and waiting time. However, inclusion on the register does not guarantee an offer of housing, as there are many more applicants than properties available.

3.3.3. Qualification For Inclusion on the General Register List

Social housing is a scarce resource and there are many more people applying for housing in the City than can be housed. Only applicants who have a connection to Oxford through residence, employment or close family associations, with some exceptions, will normally qualify to be included on the Housing Register.

A qualifying connection is established by way of one or more of the following:

1. The applicant or joint applicant is permanently resident in Oxford and that residence is of their own choice and has been continuously so for at least 6 months.
2. The applicant or joint applicant was previously resident in Oxford as a matter of choice and the period of residence was either:
    - At least six out of the last twelve months or
    - Three out of the last five years
3. The applicant or joint applicant is employed in Oxford for a minimum of sixteen hours per week and the work is not short-term, marginal or of a temporary nature. Employment ancillary to work in another District outside of Oxford and voluntary work is excluded.
4. The applicant or joint applicant has close family associations with Oxford. Family association will normally be defined in relation to close relatives (i.e. parents, adult children or siblings) and where there is no estrangement. However, other family associations, wider than immediate family, may be taken into account (for example dependent children, grandparents, grandchildren and step relations) where there is evidence of frequent contact, commitment or dependency. To qualify, the relatives must live in Oxford now and have been continuously resident for a minimum of five years.

With the exception of:

- Existing or former members of the regular armed forces;
- Bereaved spouses and civil partners of members of the regular armed forces who are no longer entitled to reside in Services Family Accommodation and the death of the spouse or civil partner was attributable (wholly or partly) to service; or
- Serving or former members of the reserve forces who need to move because of a serious injury, illness or disability attributable (wholly or partly) to that service.
- Applicants aged 60 years or older with no qualifying connection to the City assessed as eligible and suitable for sheltered housing;

- Care leavers (see below for more information) aged up to and including 24 who have spent a period of, or periods amounting to, at least 13 weeks in care in England or Wales since their 14th birthday, of which at least one day was since attaining the age of 16.
- A person who is or has been a victim of domestic abuse carried out by another person and who has been assessed as needing to move for reasons connected with that abuse, including from accommodation initially occupied on a temporary basis.
- "Life and Limb" and other exceptional cases, who need to move away from another area to escape violence or harm, or that have moved to Oxford and approached the Council for housing assistance who are considered to be in high housing need by the Exceptional Circumstance Panel. Such applicants, and others on a case-by-case basis, may be allowed to qualify for inclusion on the Housing Register at the discretion of the Allocations and Assessment Team and notified whether or not they are treated as if they have a qualifying connection. It is expected these cases will be very rare due to the high levels of applicants in housing need with a connection to Oxford already on the Housing Register.
- Homeless clients within the single homeless accommodation commissioned by the Oxford City Council and Homelessness Alliance accommodation in the City awarded an exemption prior to entering the pathway in relation to Rough Sleeping who have no qualifying connection with any area may at the discretion of the Allocations Manager be included on case-by-case basis.
- Residents in Homelessness Alliance accommodation living in Oxford with only a pathway connection to Oxford that have continuously lived there (normally for at least 12 months) may be included at the discretion of the Assessment and Allocations Team.
- Long term residents in Mind or Response Housing (normally for a minimum of 2 years) without a qualifying connection to Oxford or elsewhere may be included at the discretion of the Allocations Manager and awarded a qualifying connection to Oxford.
- Long term residents of other "temporary" accommodation (normally a minimum of 2 years), including Emmaus, without a qualifying connection to Oxford or elsewhere, maybe included at the discretion of the Allocations Manager and awarded a qualifying connection to Oxford.
- Qualifying tenants living in social housing outside of the City who work or need to move to Oxford to take up an offer of work and if they are unable to do so it would cause them hardship. Any such applications will be assessed under Right to Move legislation and guidance (see Appendix IV for more information).

Care Leavers

Where a Care Leaver does not have a qualifying connection to Oxford through residence, employment or close family associations - an exception to this will be applied where they are an eligible child, a relevant child or former relevant child. These are defined as follows:

(a) eligible children as set out in paragraph 19B of Schedule 2 to the Children Act 1989. These are children who are: (a) currently being looked-after;

(b) aged 16 or 17; and (c) have been looked after by a local authority in England or Wales for a period of 13 weeks, or periods amounting in total to 13 weeks, since the age of 14, at least one day of which must have been since attaining age 16.

(b) relevant children as set out by section 23A(2) of the Children Act 1989. These are children who are: (a) no longer a looked-after-child; (b) aged 16 or 17; and (c) a former eligible child

(c) former relevant children aged under 25 as set out by section 23C(1) of the Children Act 1989. These are children who are: (a) aged 18 to 24; and (b) either a former relevant child or a former eligible child.

* From *The Allocation of Housing (Qualification Criteria for Victims of Domestic Abuse and Care Leavers) (England) Regulations 2025 SI No 706*

Care Leavers aged under 18 should refer to the section on Age of Eligibility for more information.

A qualifying connection through residence is not established in situations, that include, where the applicant is:

- In prison, a probation hospital or similar accommodation within Oxford
- Detained in Oxford under the Mental Health Act;
- Living in temporary or supported accommodation, which would normally be able to access the "Move-on" scheme within City but whose only connection to Oxford is established through residence in such accommodation. This includes, but not exclusively, residents living in accommodation that forms part of the Homeless Alliance, Mental Health Pathway or the Sapling Project.
- Living in any other form of accommodation considered "temporary" in nature, including hospital accommodation, halls of residence and other forms of supported accommodation not normally able to access the "Move- on" scheme and emergency or interim accommodation provided by an authority in fulfilment of a homeless duty.

Due to the acute shortage of housing in the City and the high demand for housing the Council reserves the right to determine what accommodation is considered permanent accommodation within the City for the purposes of assessing a qualifying local connection through residence and what accommodation should be excluded.

An applicant on the General Register List or applying to be included on the General Register List who would normally fall into to a qualifying group can be disqualified under certain circumstances in accordance with Section 3.4.

3.3.4. Qualification For Inclusion on the Transfer List

The ORAH Transfer List is open to secure tenants of Oxford City Council, Ox Place and secure/assured tenants (including tenants on fixed term tenancies that have successfully completed the first year of their tenancy) of one of our partner PRPs living in Oxford. Tenants with an introductory tenancy or starter tenancy may also be included on a case-by-case basis where there is an urgent need for them to move.

Tenants of our ORAH partners not living in Oxford are not eligible to be included on the Transfer List, but they can apply for inclusion the General Housing Register if they meet the qualification criteria.

Transfer cases are given priority for an allocation of housing on the same basis as General Register applicants, each applicant being awarded a band according to housing need and taking into consideration both the statutory requirement to give reasonable preference to particular groups, and the locally established additional preferences, if any, which apply.

Where an applicant is an existing secure tenant of the Council or a secure/ assured tenant of a PRP the tenant cannot be disqualified from receiving an allocation of housing on the basis of their immigration status - section 160ZA of the Housing Act 1996.

There are a number of locally determined additional preferences that, because they relate to specific rights of secure and assured tenants, or to the management needs of the Council, are applicable only to applicants on the Transfer List. These include additional preference for tenants who are currently under-occupying Council or PRP family properties and who want to move to a smaller home and free up a larger home for a family in need and are dealt with in Section 4.

See also section 7.2 on “under occupation” for details of the Removal Expenses Moving Scheme (REMS) for Council Tenants applying for a transfer to downsize.

An individual applicant on the Transfer List, or applying to be included on the Transfer List, who would normally fall into to a qualifying group can be disqualified under certain circumstances in accordance with Section 3.4.

3.4. Who May Not Qualify

Individual Applicants Who May Not Qualify for Inclusion on the Housing Register

The Housing Act 1996 s.160ZA states that social housing may only be offered to qualifying persons and the Council is given the power to determine what classes of person are or are not qualified to be allocated social housing under s.160ZA.

Where the behaviour of an applicant or a member of the applicant’s household is unacceptable, as described below; or where the applicant has not demonstrated financial responsibility; the Council may not register the application or remove them from the Housing Register.

A member of the Allocations and Assessment Team may exclude an applicant whose behaviour has been unacceptable. The reasons can include rent arrears and anti-social behaviour.

3.4.1. Applicants Unlikely to be Re-Housed due to Financial Circumstances

The Council may take into account the financial circumstances of housing applicants (including existing tenants living in social housing) and/or those who fall into one or more of the reasonable or additional preference groups within the Allocations Scheme, when considering whether an applicant qualifies for inclusion on the Housing Register. Social housing in Oxford is a scarce resource, and those applicants with sufficient resources to secure alternative forms of accommodation without undue hardship may be excluded from the Housing Register. (See Appendix III).

3.4.2. Rent Arrears

The Council and the other ORAH partners treat the non-payment of rent very seriously.

Rent arrears are defined as including any money owed to Oxford City Council, another Local Authority, a PRP or a Private Landlord in the form of non-payment of rent, former tenant arrears, hostel charges, chargeable repairs (including any deductions from deposits paid for by the Council's Private Sector Team where the damage is considered to be wilful or unreasonable) and associated Possession Order court costs. Amounts under £400, when combined, may be disregarded for this purpose.

Housing applicants with rent arrears will fall into one or both of the categories below:

- Former tenants – with property related debts relating to a property/or properties where they have previously lived
- Current tenants – with property related debts relating to where they currently live.

Where a housing applicant has rent arrears, they may be excluded from qualifying for inclusion on the Housing Register.

3.4.3. Individual applicants that have previously held a tenancy and meet one or more of the following criteria will not normally qualify for inclusion on the Housing Register and will be excluded where they are:

1. **A former tenant of the Council, another Local Authority or a PRP** and have been evicted from, or given up their former property, owing rent arrears and still have unpaid rent arrears outstanding (which are legally recoverable) and have not been re-paid in full.
2. **A former tenant of a Private Landlord** and have been evicted from, or given up their former property, owing rent arrears in excess of 2 months or more (which are legally recoverable) and have not been re-paid in full. This includes the loss or partial loss of a deposit paid for by the Council due to re-charges caused by wilful or unreasonable damage to a property (not due to reasonable wear and tear).

NB Criminal damage to a property is covered under ASB.

Where a former tenant has been excluded from the housing register and still owes rent arrears that have not been re-paid in full, they will not usually qualify for inclusion on the housing register until the Council is satisfied that they have proved they are suitable to become a tenant. Suitability can be demonstrated by the applicant making a reasonable re-payment agreement with the landlord and adhering to it consistently for at least 12 months. The exclusion may be re-imposed where an applicant who has kept to a re-payment arrangement later defaults after being included on the housing register.

3.4.4. Individual applicants that currently hold a tenancy and meet one or more of the following criteria will not normally qualify for inclusion on the Housing Register and will be excluded where they are:

1. **A tenant of The Council, another Local Authority or a PRP** where a Court Possession Order has been issued regarding rent arrears, the tenant is in breach of the Court Order and/or on-going action is being taken to evict the tenant.
2. **tenant of a private sector landlord** where a Court Possession Order has been issued regarding rent arrears, the tenant is in breach of the Court Order and/or on-going action is being taken to evict the tenant.

If an applicant with rent arrears has been allowed to join, or remain on, the Housing Register they will not normally be considered for an offer of housing until they have demonstrated they are suitable to be a potential tenant and have paid their arrears in full or maintained a satisfactory payment arrangement for a reasonable period of time (see section 5.8.3).

3.4.5. Unacceptable Behaviour

Oxford City Council and its ORAH partners take unacceptable behaviour, particularly, anti-social behaviour (“ASB”) very seriously.

Individual applicants where they, or members of their household, meet one or more of the following criteria will not normally qualify for inclusion on the Housing Register and will be excluded:

- Applicants who have been evicted from a Council, PRP or private rented property, for illegal subletting or antisocial behaviour;
- Breach of tenancy for behaviour which is a nuisance or annoyance to those in the locality of the dwelling; or a conviction for using the dwelling for immoral or illegal purposes, or committing an indictable offence in the dwelling, house, or in the locality of it;
- Domestic abuse causing a partner or other family member to leave the property/or loss of an applicant’s accommodation due to this;
- Deterioration of the dwelling house or furniture provided for use under the tenancy due to waste, neglect or fault;
- Tenancy induced by false statement or false statements (see section 2.6.2)
- Housing applicants or members of their household who are considered by the Council responsible for serious ASB including abusive or threatening behaviour to others;

- Applicants or household members who permit visitors that cause serious ASB; or.
- Where they have assaulted a member of staff.
- False or misleading statements or omissions, in connection with a housing application, benefit claim or award.

The list above provides examples only; other forms of unacceptable behaviour may lead to exclusion too. The Council will not tolerate abuse, threats or assaults to staff and will involve the police where appropriate. If an applicant or member of their household is considered responsible for such unacceptable behaviour and their case is referred to the Council's Anti-Social Behaviour Investigation Team. Their case will be assigned an Anti-Social Behaviour Investigator and they will be notified of the outcome. Depending on the seriousness of the incident they may receive a warning, or they may be advised they will not qualify for inclusion on the housing register or they will be excluded and removed.

Exceptions may be made by the Allocations Manager if there is persuasive evidence that behaviour has been amended and another tenancy has been successfully maintained.

3.4.6. Duration of Exclusion for Unacceptable Behaviour

Where an applicant has been dis-qualified for inclusion on the Housing Register:

1. For unregistered applications the sanction for un-acceptable behaviour will normally last for a minimum period of 5 years, after which the applicant must be able to prove that the exclusion is no longer valid.
2. If after a minimum of a year an applicant's circumstances change significantly and there is persuasive evidence, they have successfully modified their behaviour for a satisfactory period of time they may reapply. This is only expected to be in exceptional circumstances due to the serious nature of unacceptable behaviour and the impact and risk it has to others.

Where an offence has been committed which potentially compromises another person's safety, this condition may be indefinite pending review.

3.4.7. Applicants Not Meeting the Eligibility &/or Qualification Criteria

Applicants that do not meet the eligibility &/or qualification criteria to be included on the Housing Register will be notified of the reasons in writing. Applicants no longer meeting the eligibility or qualification criteria will be removed from the register and notified in writing of the reason(s) why their application has been cancelled.

Applicants have the right to a review of this decision (see reviews and appeals).

3.5. Household Make-up/ Households with Dependants

3.5.1. Children in Care

Where care is:

- Compulsory: children are treated as though at home, subject to written confirmation from Social and Community Services that the children are to live with the parents on a permanent basis should they be allocated a suitable property. Failing such confirmation, children should not be included on the application.
- Voluntary, children are treated as though at home.

No offer should be made in either case without confirmation from Social and Community Services that the children are to live on a permanent basis with their parent(s)

3.5.2. Day To Day Residence and Parenting Responsibilities

In making an assessment of whether a child can legitimately appear on an application, officers will seek to determine who the child normally lives with by looking at the circumstances. The courts have held for instance that where children have social housing available with one parent it would only be in exceptional circumstances that another unit of accommodation would be made available. A child could live with its parents on a split week basis. The same child may therefore legitimately appear on two applications, but this would be exceptional.

In such cases, the tests below should be used, evidence for this must be available, for example a written agreement and/or sanction of Social and Community Services, or a Residence Order from the Courts. However, these are not determinative. The assessment can for example “look behind” a Residence Order to establish what the practicalities of the childcare are such as taking the children to school, looking after them in school holidays and so on.

In the absence of documentary evidence an investigation would be required to determine who cares for the child, takes them to school etc. A similar test to that contained in part 7 of the Housing Act 1996 should be used:

- Does the child currently reside with the applicant?
- Is the child dependent on the applicant?
- Is it reasonable in the circumstances for the child to reside with the applicant?

Generally, weekend access will not count as day-to-day residence. The applicant must have significant day-to-day parenting responsibilities. As a rule of thumb, this would be for a minimum of three days and nights.

Possible types of documentary evidence which will be considered are:

- A Parental Responsibility Order from a court
- A Residence Order

- Proof of receipt of current Child Benefit
- Legal guardianship

Generally, there is a distinction between married /divorced parents and those formerly cohabiting.

- Where parents are or have been married there will often be a Residence Order settling the arrangements as to where a child will live.
- Unmarried fathers may acquire parental responsibility by inclusion on the child's birth certificate, Residence Orders or making a written Parental Responsibility Agreement with the mother. This should be formalised by completing a signed agreement via a solicitor, which is then registered with the Family Division of the High Court.

Officers may discuss individual cases with senior officers in the first instance and seek guidance from Oxford City Council Legal Services if required.

3.5.3. Extended Families - Minors

In cases where a minor is to be included in, or added to an application, but no parental responsibility exists within the household (e.g. grandchildren, nieces, nephews), satisfactory proof of the reasons for this must be obtained – for example proof of legal guardianship or confirmation from Children and Family Services that this action is necessary and permanent.

3.5.4. Adult Households Members

The Council seeks to make the best use of the very limited amount of family properties becoming available and will normally only offer family properties to households with dependent children.

Adults aged 18 years or older requesting re-housing will normally be expected to apply separately for inclusion on the Housing Register and not be included on another applicant's housing application as a household member unless they are applying as a joint applicant with their partner. This includes adult students studying and living elsewhere.

Established Household Members

Persons may request to continue to be considered as part of the household after they reach the age of 18 years of age, if they still reside with the applicant, and wish to continue to do so, and have continually resided within the household as a child up to that point. However, the Council reserves the right to exclude adult household members where they are not considered to be a permanent member of the household, are considered to have sufficient funds to resolve their own housing situation (see Appendix III), have been responsible for Anti-Social Behaviour or where it is not considered reasonable by the Council for the adult to continue to be included on the applicant's housing application. For example, older adult members, adult children who are pregnant or have their own children, who would normally be

expected to apply for housing separately and not be included on their parent's or another adult's housing application.

Existing adult children aged 22 years or older will be removed unless there are exceptional circumstances to remain in the household, including, where there is medical evidence an adult must to live with their parent to provide or receive 24 hour care and other exceptions – for example tenants seeking to downsize to a smaller home, full-time students living at home still studying and care leavers (now living in stable home and wishing to remain).

Any adults excluded from an applicant's household will not be "counted" for the purposes of assessing the size of property they require or when assessing their housing need, such as any overcrowding they may be experiencing.

Persons aged 18 years or older may be required to provide a statement/evidence regarding their financial circumstances on request – failure to do so will result in them being excluded from applicant's housing application.

3.5.5. Adding Adults to an Application

Adults should not be added to an application where this results in the need for larger accommodation than for which the applicant's household was originally eligible, unless an over-riding need such as ill health or disability can be shown (for example, where an applicant needs to look after an elderly parent and live with the parent to provide full-time care, or where a new partner requires a separate bedroom). Such cases must be thoroughly investigated, and discretion rests with the Options/Assessment/Allocation Officers in the first instance.

The desire to be part of the household is not sufficient reason for inclusion on the application in these circumstances. Adults requiring an extra bedroom must only to be added to an application if they have a demonstrable need to live with the applicant and if they plan to make their long-term home on a permanent basis with the applicant.

Applicants who require a full-time residential carer may include the carer on their application. Proof of the requirement should be sought from Social and Community Services or a primary health care professional. The carer should be assessed as part of the household even if not resident (i.e. lack of bedroom priority may be due) if 24-hour care is required. The requirement for a separate bedroom should be recorded so that the household is eligible for the correct size of property.

3.5.6. Expectant Mothers

Expectant mothers should provide a MATB1 form or other adequate proof of pregnancy from a health professional (followed by a MATB1 form). Expectant mothers will be placed in an appropriate band based on their current housing circumstances. The unborn child will not be 'counted' as a member of the household, for assessing over-crowding, until proof is received by the Council that the child has been born.

3.5.7. Fostering

Families undertaking long term fostering may be able to include foster children as part of their application to ensure that they are eligible for the appropriate sized property. Long term fostering is normally defined as being fostering for a period in excess of three years (not necessarily involving the same child or children). In exceptional circumstances fostering for less than 3 years will be considered where a long-term relationship is evidenced – in such cases the Exceptional Circumstance Panel will consider whether to allow the child to be included on the housing application. It is essential that written confirmation of the fostering arrangement be obtained from Children and Family Services.

Consideration will be given to this in assessing the application. This does not apply to households living in temporary accommodation to which the Council has accepted a statutory homeless duty. Short-term fostering is discounted.

Due to changes introduced by the Welfare Reform Act and the bedroom under occupation charge ("bedroom tax"), before an offer of family accommodation is made to an applicant on a low income with foster children, the Council will need to be satisfied that the applicant is able to pay any shortfall in rent that may be due from the applicant due to the "bedroom tax". Foster children are not normally "counted" as household members under the "bedroom tax" rules (but this may change).

3.6. Assessment of Housing Need and Priority for Housing

All applications require officer assessment before being entered onto the Housing Management Information System (HMIS). This section gives information and guidance on matters relating to the assessment process. It is important that such assessments are carried out correctly, as an incorrect assessment could affect an applicant's banding position, and therefore the applicant's priority.

As a general principle, applicants/household members can only be registered on one application at any given time. However, there may be situations relating to the care of children where individuals are recorded on two applications. Household formation will be determined on the basis of evidence provided (it is the responsibility of applicants to make such evidence available).

If an applicant moves address, it is their responsibility to notify the Council as soon as practicably possible, and usually within 28 days. In such cases, a new application form should be completed, and the application re-assessed.

All applicants within Oxford City are expected to have their housing circumstances verified and may been visited, at least once, by an ORAH officer or another member of staff from the Council, before an offer of permanent accommodation is made. Applicants applying from outside Oxford City will usually have their circumstances verified by their own Local Authority, or if they are a tenant in Social Housing, by their current landlord.

3.7. Calculation of Overcrowding and Under-Occupation

Definition of Bedroom Usage

Assessing bedroom usage is a major element in determining an applicant's current circumstances and determines what the situation could be, rather than how resources are currently being used. An award of priority is given for each bedroom lacking in the applicant's current accommodation, based on this assessment. The two key aspects that must always be considered are:

The Best Use Principle - the best use should be made of the bedroom resources available so that, for example, a bedroom used for storage should be counted as a bedroom available for use as defined by this principle.

The Control Principle - there may be sufficient bedrooms in a property, but the applicant cannot control how the bedrooms are actually used. They may, for instance, be lodgers or living with a family who control how bedrooms are used.

The most common issues relating to bedroom usage are listed below:

- Studios - Count as having a bedroom, lacking a living room.
- Bedroom availability - Bedrooms available must be counted, even if not used. If claimed not used because unfit for use, this must be verified and advice of the Residential Regulation Team may be sought.
- Sharing a bedroom with non – applicant(s) - Counts as lacking a bedroom.
- Size of bedrooms - Bedroom under 4.2 square metres (45 sq ft) are discounted.
- Best Use (mixture of sexes) - If bedrooms can be better used, assume they are for assessment purposes.
- Need for carer - Where there is a recognised need for a full-time residential carer, then notionally a second bedroom may be lacking for the carer in the current accommodation. Priority can be awarded for the lack of this bedroom.
- Under-occupiers - Under occupying transfer applicants in two bed or larger family properties, may be eligible for incentives to transfer to smaller properties.
- 'Exceptional' cases* – Some cases that have been awarded a priority award by the Exceptional Circumstances Panel may be made eligible to under-occupy a property, by decision of the panel, where the panel considers that the existing housing circumstances of a transfer applicant should not be disadvantaged by having to move.

Decant cases* – Transfer Applicants requiring a permanent decant move will normally only be able to apply for the size of property they are assessed as requiring due to the shortage of housing in the City.

Succession cases* – Where a legal successor is required to move to smaller accommodation, they will normally only be able to apply for the size of property they are assessed as requiring due to the shortage of housing in the City.

* Due to the introduction of the bedroom under occupation charge (also known as the "bedroom tax") by the Welfare Reform Act, applicants including the cases above will not normally be able to move to a property where they are under-occupying a

property unless they are exempt from the “bedroom tax” or the Council is satisfied they will be able to afford the shortfall in rent.

The following rules will be used to decide whether a household has either too many or too few bedrooms available for its use when assessing priority.

Each of the following will be considered to require their own bedroom

- Each couple or a single applicant;
- Each additional adult (aged eighteen and over) considered eligible to be part of the household;
- Two children of the same sex aged under 16;
- Two children of the opposite sex aged under 10;
- Any other child.

3.8. Exceptional Circumstances Panel (ECP)

The Exceptional Circumstances Panel for the ORAH partnership is the body responsible for making priority awards to applicants whose circumstances are not otherwise adequately covered by the Banding Scheme (see Section 4). The Exceptional Circumstances Panel will hear evidence about exceptional cases of housing need.

The banding scheme has been devised to take account of most circumstances, but there will sometimes be applicants in exceptional circumstances, or whose needs are complex and cannot be accommodated by the banding scheme.

The objectives of the Exceptional Circumstances Panel are as follows:

- To make evidence-based assessments of exceptional cases of housing need.
- To make evidence-based assessments of cases of complex need.
- To award additional priority within the banding scheme, where appropriate
- To make decisions on whether to give a “commitment to re-house” to previous ORAH partner tenants within Oxford who have surrendered, or tenants who are about to surrender, their tenancies.
- To ensure a fair and transparent process.
- To comply with the statutory requirement to give reasonable preference to particular groups.
- To assist in making the best use of the housing stock available to the ORAH partnership.
- To assist in achieving the aims of thriving communities and sustainable tenancies.

The Exceptional Circumstances panel will:

- Hear and assess evidence about applicants on the Oxford Register for Affordable Housing.
- Make awards as appropriate.
- Impose conditions on awards as appropriate.
- Give advice as appropriate, including alternatives to be pursued.

The Exceptional Circumstances Panel will usually meet monthly. In cases of emergency, where there is a threat to 'life and limb' the panel will be available to convene within 24 hours.

Referrals, in the first instance, can be made by officers within the Housing & Property Team including the Housing Needs Team or by their equivalents in our partner PRPs. Self-referral by applicants or their representatives is not possible.

Applicants should provide evidence to the referring officer, in the first instance, to support their application to the Exceptional Circumstances Panel. This can include (though not exclusively): a summary of events which led up to the application being made; reports from police; education professionals; social and community services, or other agencies involved with the case; details of any action being taken against alleged perpetrators, if applicable, and a proposal for future action to resolve the situation. Independent evidence must be produced for the Panel to be able to review the case. If the officer is not satisfied that there is adequate evidence the officer may decide not to make a referral to the panel (or until such time there is).

Any additional priority awarded by the Exceptional Circumstances Panel will normally be made for a minimum of 3 months in the first instance, with a date set for review by the panel. The Panel can impose other conditions, for example, ensuring that survivors of domestic abuse are not re-housed in areas where there they are at risk. The applicant's circumstances will be monitored and the award can be renewed if appropriate, or withdrawn where the applicant's circumstances have changed, making them ineligible for the award. In cases where suitable properties have been advertised but the applicant has failed to place a bid, or has withdrawn a bid, a direct offer may be made or the case referred back to the panel, for the panel to consider removing the original award. If an applicant is made a reasonable offer of accommodation and refuses the case may also be referred back to the Panel to consider whether the award should be moved.

The Exceptional Circumstances Panel will consist of one senior officer in the Rapid Rehousing team or Housing Needs team (usually the Rapid Rehousing Manager, Allocations and Assessment Team Leader or Senior Assessment officer) and an Assessment or Allocations officer. The only exception to this is for Exceptional Priority Band 1 decisions, where a second senior officer will need to sign off the decision.

The Exceptional Circumstances Panel can make the following awards:

- Exceptional Priority (Band 1)
- Urgent Social or Welfare Needs Priority (Band 2)
- Significant Social or Welfare Needs Priority (Band 3)
- Moderate Social or Welfare Needs Priority (Band 4)

An Assessment or Allocations Officer may make a Band 4 Moderate Social or Welfare Needs Priority award based on evidence provided without referring a case to the ECP (see Appendix II).

3.9. Commitment to Re-house

This ‘award’ may be made by the Exceptional Circumstances Panel as part of a ‘negotiated surrender’ of a social tenancy by the tenant. Applicants awarded a commitment to re-house are likely to be awarded an Urgent Social & Welfare Award and placed in Band 2 by the Exceptional Circumstance Panel. Conditions may be imposed on the award. The award will not normally be open ended and time restrictions will normally be placed on any commitment to re-house.

The purpose of this, is to give tenants, who may be unable to sustain their tenancy in the short term, the assurance that if they surrender the tenancy, they can be given increased priority on the housing register should they reapply when they are better able to manage a tenancy again. Such an agreement may be appropriate where elderly or unwell tenants are struggling to maintain a tenancy, and need a period of hospitalisation, respite care, or residential rehabilitation.

Should the Panel make this award, the Manager Responsible for Allocations is delegated to apply the award should the person subsequently apply for housing to Oxford City Council, and if the Manager Responsible for Allocations is satisfied that the applicant is ready to take up and sustain a tenancy again.

3.10. Health and Housing Assessments

The Health and Housing Assessment Panel (HAHA) is the body responsible for making priority awards to applicants whose health is either detrimentally affected by their housing or where it is likely to affect their future housing need, and whose circumstances are not otherwise adequately covered by the Banding Scheme (see Section 4).

The objectives of the Health and Housing Assessment Panel are as follows:

- To make the best use of the social rented housing stock
- To make evidence-based assessments of priority for housing where it is affected by health or disability
- To ensure a fair and transparent process
- To improve efficiency
- To improve partnership working
- To reduce the number of letters received from health care professionals.

Oxford City Council and the Primary Health Care Trusts have an agreed method of assessing health and housing and all applications with a potential impact on health will be assessed through this. This process seeks to determine both housing requirements as well as relative priorities of applicants, and to consider whether any other options could address the issue.

The Health and Housing Assessment Panel can make the following awards:

- Urgent Health or Disability Need(s) (Band 2)
- Significant Health or Disability Need(s) (Band 3)
- Moderate Health or Disability Need(s) (Band 4)

Housing Needs Officers, using the set protocols, may also make an award of a Significant (Band 3) or Moderate Health (Band 4). See Appendix II.

Where a household has more than one person with a health need, the HAHA Panel (or Housing Needs Officers following the HAHA protocol) should award the applicant's household the highest appropriate band. Applicants may not move up to another band because more than one person is suffering a housing-related health issue. If Housing Needs Officers, or the HAHA Panel, feel that this award is inadequate given the multiple needs of the applicant's household, the matter may be escalated to the ECP. If the applicant requests a review based on multiple housing-related health needs of the household, the matter should also be escalated to the ECP.

3.11. How Applications are Processed

Housing applicants are required to normally apply on-line and advice/assistance will be available should help be required to do this. Once an application has been accepted it is sent through to the Housing Needs Team. Once received in the team, applications are logged on to the database system and assessed by a Housing Needs Officer. The form includes a number of 'trigger' questions that may prompt, for example, a support needs assessment or health and housing assessment. Once the Housing Needs team has received an application and any supporting information required the Council will seek to assess an application within 10 working days. Where a housing application is incomplete, submitted without all of the required information or if further information is required this will increase the time it takes for the application to be assessed. The application may also need to be returned for it to be fully completed or cancelled.

Once assessed, applications are put into a Housing Need Priority Band (see Section 4) and the applicant will receive notification of their banding, the reason for it and the Registration Date (and Priority Band Start Date, if the applicant is placed in Bands 1 to 4). Applicants not considered eligible and/or to qualify for inclusion the Housing Register will be notified. If in the future an applicant is no longer considered eligible and/or to qualify for inclusion on the Housing Register they will be notified and removed from the Housing Register.

The Housing Needs team will maintain the database until the applicant is housed or resolves their housing situation, or they no longer qualify. This includes updating changes of circumstance and carrying out regular reviews of the list.

3.12. Re-registering and Change of Circumstances

Applicants must re-register periodically when they are asked to complete a review form. If the form is not returned/completed by the date stated on the review form the application will be cancelled.

Applicants have a responsibility to ensure they inform the council of any changes in their circumstances, such as, moving or someone joining or leaving the household, by notifying the Housing Needs Team in writing. If an applicant moves house, they

need to complete a new application form so that their housing need can be re-assessed or their application will be cancelled.

Where applicant's circumstances change, they should inform the Council promptly within 28 days (or as soon as practicably possible if they have exceptional circumstances where it is not possible to inform the Council sooner) so their housing need can be re-assessed based on their new circumstances. If an applicant is unsure whether a change in their circumstances needs to be reported, they should contact the Housing Needs team.

Where an applicant on the General Register List moves and notifies the Council within 28 days their Housing Application will be treated as continuous and they will retain their original registration date. However, the Priority Band Start Date may change if their housing need has changed and they move into/or within one of Bands 1 to 4 (see section 4.10).

Any applicants that move will have their housing need re-assessed based on their new circumstances and their priority band may change. General Register applicants who fail to notify the Housing Needs Team within 28 days of a change of their address, will have their Housing Application cancelled and will be removed from the General Register unless they have exceptional circumstances (see above). In such circumstances if an applicant re-applies for housing in the future (after 28 days of moving) their registration date and Priority Band Start Date will be the date their new application is received and the application will not be treated as continuous.

4. The Banding Scheme – Allocations Scheme

4.1. Banding

Once accepted as eligible and qualifying for inclusion on the Housing Register by the Council, applicants will be placed in one of the five bands, which have been designed to reflect broad categories of housing need. The Banding scheme enables the Councils and other ORAH partners to meet their legal responsibilities for housing and also provides a fair and easily understood way of selecting applicants to receive offers of accommodation.

An applicant's circumstances may make them eligible to be placed in more than one band. In this case, they will normally be placed in the highest band for which they are eligible.

4.2. Band 1 (Exceptional Housing Need)

4.2.1. Exceptional Circumstances

Any applicant awarded this priority by the Exceptional Circumstances Panel, where there is an immediate risk to health and safety, complex needs cases, 'place of safety' cases or other exceptional or emergency needs.

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This category is intended to be reserved for only the most urgent cases. This includes cases where rehousing is needed to protect the health or safety of the applicant or a member of their family, where there are complex needs, 'place of safety' cases etc. This could include the immediate threat of domestic violence and any other "life and limb cases".

The award of Exceptional Circumstances priority will normally be time limited (to 3 or 6 months) and priority will be reviewed at the end of the period.

4.2.2. Under-occupying by Two or More Bedrooms

Tenants of the Council, OxPlace or other ORAH partner tenants living in Oxford with an assured or secure tenancy, who will be giving up permanent family accommodation with at least two bedrooms more than they require.

Applicants should check whether they are eligible for any incentive schemes to assist with the cost of removals and associated expenses being operated by their landlord. See section 7.2 for more details and the assistance available to downsizing Council tenants through the Removal Expenses & Moving Scheme.

4.2.3. Decants and other Housing Management Moves

Priority is awarded for Council tenants, or tenants of partner Private Registered Providers living in Oxford, who need to move because of refurbishment, re-development or repairs* are due to be carried out, which cannot be done with the tenant living there and who have been awarded a 'decant' status by the Manager Responsible for Allocations.

Awards of this priority will be time limited. Transfer applicants would normally qualify for this status 6 months (or earlier for larger blocks requiring decanting) before they are required to vacate the property. At the end of the 6 months the Council may decide to make a direct offer, if the applicant has not been successful in bidding for a suitable property. This would not prevent an applicant from registering for a transfer at any time before this and being assessed on their current circumstances. *Emergency decants – relating disrepair, for example due to damp or mould treatment requiring an urgent move may be arranged outside of the Allocations Scheme by the landlord (Council or PRP) by a management move.

4.2.4. Successor Tenants

These fall into two categories:

- Legal successors other than spouses or civil partners
- Policy successors i.e. Applicants (close family members) who would have been entitled to succeed to the tenancy but for the fact that one succession has taken place already.

In both instances priority will usually be awarded where:

- they are occupying a property with adaptations for a disabled person which they do not need, or
- they are occupying a property larger than they would qualify for under the allocation scheme, or
- where occupying the property gives the benefit of facilities and or services for which they would otherwise not qualify.

Legal successors will qualify as transfer applicants and policy successors will be classified as general register applicants for the purposes of the Allocations Scheme.

4.3. Band 2 (Urgent Housing Need)

4.3.1. Urgent Social or Welfare Needs

Applicants assessed as having an urgent need to move on social or welfare grounds and awarded this priority by the Exceptional Circumstances Panel. This includes applicants assessed as being in urgent housing needs and is a:

- former member of the Armed Forces
- bereaved spouse or civil partner of members of the Armed Forces leaving Services Family Accommodation following the death of their spouse or partner

&

This may also include applicants assessed as:

- serious harassment cases
- having multiple needs not already covered by other band categories
- urgently needing to move to give or receive care or support.

4.3.2. Urgent Health or Disability Needs

Applicants assessed as having an urgent need to move because of a health problem or disability and awarded this priority by the Health and Housing Assessment Panel.

Including applicants assessed as being in urgent housing need where the applicant is a:

- serving member of the Armed Forces who needs to move because of a serious injury, medical condition or disability sustained as a result of their service
- serving or former member of the Reserve Forces who needs to move because of a serious injury, medical condition or disability sustained as a result of their service

4.3.3. Under-occupation by One Bedroom

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Tenants of the Council, Ox Place Housing Company or of another ORAH partner living within Oxford, with an assured or secure tenancy, who will be giving up permanent family accommodation with one bedroom more than they require.

Applicants should check whether they are eligible for any incentive schemes to assist with the cost of removals and associated expenses being operated by their landlord. See section 7.2 for more details and the assistance available to downsizing Council tenants through the Removal Expenses & Moving Scheme (REMS).

4.3.4. Move-On

Applicants who have been assessed as ready to move-on* from supported accommodation, including:

- Applicants from voluntary sector hostels and move-on projects, including the Homeless Alliance, Mental Health Pathway, Young Persons' Pathway (including the Oxford Young Parents Project)
- Care leavers: applicants who are former "relevant children" as defined by the Children (Leaving Care) Act 2002
- Any other similar housing in Oxford agreed by OCC

Applicants will be awarded this band category by the Council, when it is satisfied that the applicant has a qualifying connection to Oxford, is ready to move to secure independent housing and that on-going support will be in place where this is needed to sustain the tenancy. Applicants living in supported/move on accommodation within the City with a connection elsewhere, for example living in Homeless Alliance accommodation, will not normally be considered for Move On priority in Oxford and be expected to apply to the District where they have a connection – for example the District they had a connection to at the time they were accommodated in Oxford. Move On applicants are expected to consider all housing options including suitable Private Rented Sector accommodation too.

The Council reserves the right to remove Move On priority from an applicant at any time, for reasons including but not exclusively, refusal of a suitable offer, where they are not considered to be engaging, bidding realistically, have refused a suitable of social housing or private rented accommodation and/or are no longer considered ready to move on by OCC.

Quota arrangements may be used on the number of cases awarded move on priority at anyone time to balance demand against the supply of suitable properties becoming available each year for those ready to move on from supported housing and the needs of others on the Housing Register.

*Normally applicants with a qualifying connection to Oxford, including Care Leavers, will need to be resident in recognised supported/move on housing in the City to be considered for Move On priority. Exceptions may be agreed on a case-by-case basis but only rarely and in the most exceptional situations due to the very high demand for housing in Oxford - particularly 1 bedroom accommodation. Applicants will normally be expected to apply to the Local Authority where they are living.

4.3.5. Overcrowding by 2 or more Bedrooms Short

Families assessed as being overcrowded and two or more bedrooms short of their needs.

4.3.6 Special Circumstances Transfer (for Council and Social Housing Tenants only)

For existing social tenants qualifying for inclusion on the Transfer requesting to move where they are living in a:

- Bungalow and would like to move to another type of property (excluding a move to another bungalow)
- A significantly adapted flat or house they no longer require and would like to move to another property without adaptations.
- 1-bedroom general needs flat (without an age restriction) and would like to move to lower demand 55+ older persons housing

4.3.7. Band 3 Upgrade

Any applicant who qualifies for two or more compoundable categories in Band 3.

4.4. Band 3 (Significant Housing Need)

4.4.1a. Priority Homeless (not compoundable)

Existing applicants living in homeless temporary accommodation accepted as homeless and owed a main housing duty by the Council under s.193 of Part 7 of the Housing Act 1996.*

Existing applicants living in private rented accommodation accepted as homeless by the Council under s.195A of Part 7 of the Housing Act 1996 where:

If within two years beginning with the date on which an applicant accepts an offer under section 193 the applicant re-applies in the first incidence of homelessness for accommodation, or for assistance in obtaining accommodation, and the Council is:

- satisfied that the applicant is homeless and eligible for assistance, and
- satisfied that the applicant did not became homeless intentionally, regardless of whether the applicant has a priority need and
- a valid notice under section 21 of the Housing Act 1988 (orders for possession on expiry or termination of assured shorthold tenancy) has been given the applicant will be awarded this priority from the date the section 21 was issued.

*With the exception of restricted cases who may be awarded lower priority as set out in legislation.

Including tenants of the Council and other survivors of domestic abused owed this duty by OCC.

4.4.1b. Homeless Prevention Duty (compoundable)

Applicants* who have formally been assessed by OCC as being owed a prevention duty under Part 7 of the Housing Act 1996 as amended by the Homelessness Reduction Act 2017 (time limited)

4.4.1c Homeless Relief Duty (not compoundable)

Applicants* who have formally been assessed by OCC as being owed a relief duty under Part 7 of the Housing Act 1996 as amended by the Homelessness Reduction Act 2017 (time limited). Including tenants of the Council and other survivors of domestic abused owed this duty by OCC.

4.4.2. Significant Social or Welfare Needs

Applicants assessed as having a significant level of social or welfare need arising from their housing situation and awarded this priority by the Exceptional Circumstances Panel. Including qualifying housing applicants on the General Register List:

- With dependent children who are assessed as being of no fixed abode or sofa surfing.

4.4.3. Significant Health or Disability Needs

Applicants assessed as having a significant level of housing need as a result of health problems or a disability and awarded this priority under the Health and Housing Assessment protocols.

4.4.4. Unsatisfactory Housing: Level 1

Applicants living in sub-standard accommodation that a qualified officer has assessed as a category 1 hazard, where repair is not possible or it is not practical in a reasonable timescale.

Applicants living in homes lacking the use of one or more of:
A kitchen (or cooking facilities)*, a bathroom, an inside WC, running water, or electricity will usually be deemed to meet this criterion.

Applicants whose existing housing is of a low standard will have their need assessed against the Housing Health and Safety Rating System (known as HHSRS). In the most urgent cases, or where an inspection is needed, the assessment will be carried out by a member of the Residential Regulation Team or other qualified officer.

A Category 1 Hazard is a defect where the consequences could include serious harm to applicants. For example: accommodation lacking any bathroom facilities, cooking facilities, or a water supply. The band category will not be awarded, if it is possible for repairs or other remedial action to be carried out within a reasonable timescale. Where a landlord has been served with an improvement notice, but remedial work has not been carried out, the Council may decide to award priority at its discretion.

Category 1 hazards can also exist due to overcrowding (the space and room standard). The Allocations Scheme already gives priority to households who are overcrowded in sections 4.3.5 and 4.4.5. Due to the scarcity of housing in Oxford and the high level of overcrowding it is sadly not unusual for category 1 hazards to exist under the HHSRS due to the level of overcrowding in the City. Where a prohibition notice has been issued, the Council may decide to award priority at its discretion (if the prohibition order is suspended and for example will not be enforced until the applicant moves from the property no additional priority will normally apply).

* Persons living in Move-on Hostel accommodation, where meals are available, are excluded from this category unless a qualified officer has assessed as a category 1 hazard. If a demolition notice has been issued priority will be awarded accordingly.

If a tenant of the Council or Housing Association living in social housing needs to be urgently decanted temporarily, for example due to repairs to be completed on their home, this will normally be arranged by the landlord outside of the Allocations Scheme via a management move.

4.4.5. Overcrowding by One Bedroom Short

Applicants assessed as being overcrowded and one bedroom short of their needs where they permanently reside.

4.4.6. Insecure Tied Accommodation (compoundable)

Applicants who are living in accommodation tied to their employment and who have received a formal notice to quit from their employer and where the loss of employment is through no fault of the applicant. This category includes members of the armed forces in married quarters and agricultural workers.

Priority category will only be given where there is clear documentary evidence that the employer is terminating the employment and the use of the accommodation in the near future.

4.4.7. Insecure Private Rented Accommodation (compoundable)

Tenants of private landlords where the landlord is taking action to recover possession of the property and has demonstrated a real intention to proceed to eviction.

Before priority for priority for living in insecure accommodation can be given documentary evidence of the date of eviction will be needed by the Council, depending on the type of tenancy or licence held. The landlord must have shown a real intention to proceed with an eviction. Evidence of Court proceedings for Possession may be required to establish a genuine intention.

4.4.8. Private Rented Sector (PRS) Retained Priority (compoundable and time limited)

Existing applicants on the Housing Register owed a Prevention Duty who are threatened with homelessness or are homeless living in Temporary Accommodation owed Relief or Main housing duty by OCC who are assisted into PRS housing outside of the Oxford by OCC will be able to retain their existing Band 3 priority on the General Register List for up to 2 years from the date their new tenancy starts if they remain in the same property (and re-apply for housing within 28 days of moving). While circumstances remain the same.

4.4.9. Band 4 Upgrade

Any applicant who qualifies for at least two compoundable categories in Band 4.

4.5. Band 4 (Moderate Housing Need)

4.5.1. Moderate Social or Welfare Needs

Applicants assessed as having a moderate level of social or welfare need arising from their housing situation and awarded this priority under the Exceptional Circumstances Panel protocols. Including:

- Qualifying social housing tenants living outside of the City applying for inclusion on the General Register List who are assessed as needing to move to Oxford for employment. Where being unable to move to Oxford would otherwise cause hardship (see Appendix IV Right to Move) and similar employment is not available closer to their current location and they do not fall into a higher reasonable preference group/priority band and they would otherwise fall into Band 5.
- Applicants considered to have Deliberately Worsened their Circumstances by an action or inaction who would normally fall into a reasonable preference group in a higher band and still qualify for inclusion on the housing register (see Section 2.6.3 for more details).
- Homeless applicants found to be intentionally homeless who still qualify for inclusion on the Housing Register and former homeless applicants on the homeless list who have refused an out of area offer without good reason in the last 12 months since the homeless duty was discharged (see Section 5.13.1 for more details).

4.5.2. Moderate Health or Disability Needs

Applicants assessed as having a moderate level of housing need as a result of health problems or a disability and awarded this priority under the Health and Housing Assessment protocols.

4.5.3. Homeless or of No Fixed Abode and Not in a Priority Group (not compoundable)

- Applicants who have been assessed as being of No Fixed Abode (NFA) including those assessed “sofa surfers”, or
- Applicants who are Homeless but have been given a decision that they are not in Priority Need (or are Intentionally Homeless and allowed to remain on the Housing Register where the Prevention or Relief Duty has ceased) or
- Applicants living in Move-on Homeless Alliance accommodation in Oxford who could otherwise access the Move-on Scheme and other similar supported housing. Normally applicants with a qualifying connection to Oxford including Care Leavers will need to be resident in recognised supported/move on housing in the city to qualify for this priority.
- Applicants that have been assessed as having left their last accommodation due to domestic abuse and unable to remain in the District they left living in a refuge in the City.

This category is given where a formal assessment has been carried out under the homelessness legislation and the applicant is found to be homeless but not in a defined priority group. The category will also be given without a formal assessment, where it is clear that the applicant has No Fixed Abode. This includes those living in voluntary sector Move-on Projects within the City.

This category does not include applicants who have been assisted to access the private rented sector, for example through a rent deposit scheme.

This category is not compoundable with other factors. Those who are homeless and have other priority needs will be assessed in accordance with the Homelessness legislation and, if they qualify, will be given a Band 3 priority.

4.5.4. Unsatisfactory Housing: Level 2

Applicants living in sub-standard accommodation that is deemed to have a category 2 hazard and where repair is not possible or it is not practical in a reasonable timescale.

Applicants living in homes lacking a fixed heating system will usually be deemed to meet this criterion. The band category will not be awarded if it is possible for repairs or other remedial action to be carried out within a reasonable timescale. Where a landlord has been served with an improvement notice, but remedial work has not been carried out, the Council may decide to award priority at its discretion.

If a tenant of the Council or Housing Association living in social housing needs to be urgently decanted temporarily, for example due to repairs to be completed on their home, this will normally be arranged by the landlord outside of the Allocations Scheme via a management move.

4.6. Band 5 (Low or No Housing Need)

4.6.1. Adequately Housed

- Applicants who are adequately housed
- Applicants with no immediate need for rehousing
- Applicants sharing where the accommodation is of sufficient quality and there is no overcrowding
- Applicants who do not meet any other category.

This category includes applicants who may have a low level of housing need, but where the circumstances do not give rise to any exceptional problems. This includes:

- formal and informal house-sharing arrangements where the size and standard of the accommodation is adequate for the needs of those living there
- those living with family or friends where the size and standard of the accommodation is adequate for the needs of those living there
- families living in flats where the internal accommodation is adequate for the family's needs but where there is no private garden.

4.7. Compound Needs

Where applicants in Bands 3 or 4 have compound needs (that is, they qualify for more than one compoundable category in the band) they will usually be upgraded to the next band. Compounding is not available for those placed in Bands 2 or 5 because Band 1 is reserved only for the most exceptional cases and Band 5 has no compoundable categories.

Those applicants in Band 4 with a category of 'Homeless and not in a Priority Group' cannot compound this category to move up to Band 3 because the assessment of their homelessness takes into account all other relevant circumstances. If they have additional needs, then this would be reflected in a decision to award either an Exceptional Need category placing them in a higher category band or a Priority Homeless category (Band 3).

4.8. Time Limited Priority

In certain cases priority will be time limited. This includes but not exclusively, circumstances where priority has been awarded because the applicant is:

- Living in supported housing, such as in the Oxford Young Parents Project, Homeless Alliance, Mental Health Pathway or Young Persons Pathway and has been assessed as ready to move on.
- Homeless or threatened with homelessness and owed a prevention, relief or main homeless duty under the Homelessness Reduction Act 2017
- Living in a social housing suitable for a larger family and been awarded priority as a policy successor or another reason and needs to move.

Another example is where a decision to grant a higher band on the grounds of an urgent social or welfare need might be for a limited period. This will normally be three to six months.

In all cases the applicant will be given a reasonable amount of time to bid for alternative accommodation, and the length of time may be adjusted according to the availability of suitable accommodation. Priority will be re-assessed at the end of the period or earlier if the applicant is not considered to be engaging or has refused as suitable offer of housing.

4.9. Date Order

The time an applicant has been in housing need is taken into account when prioritising applicants for an offer of accommodation. Where two or more applicants in the same priority band have bid for the same property, through choice-based lettings scheme, the applicant who is considered to have been in housing need for the longest period of time will be normally be offered the property. In some circumstances there are exceptions (see 5.8).

4.9.1. Priority Band Start Date

The Priority Band Start Date is the date used for comparing applicants who are in the same band and who have bid for the same property.

The Priority Band Start Date is normally the date an applicant is placed into a particular band. Most applicants who apply for housing remain in the same band, so their Priority Band Start Date does not change and is the date they first applied to be included on the housing register (also known as the Registration Date). If an applicant's circumstances change and their housing need changes their Priority Band Start Date may change.

4.10. Change of Circumstances

Changes of Circumstance & Priority Band Start Dates.

Where an applicant's circumstances have changed, they should notify the Housing Needs team within 28 days to check whether this has affected their housing need and whether they need to supply any further information.

If the change in an applicant's circumstances (including a change of address) has resulted in:

- Their priority band going up because of an increase in their housing need and they have moved to a higher band they will be issued with a new Priority Band Start Date from the date the change took place, or they were awarded additional priority to move.
- Their priority band going down because of a decrease in their housing need if they move down to Bands 2 to 4 their Priority Band Start Date will normally

remain the same. However, if they go down to Band 5 their Priority Band Start Date will change back to their registration date (the date they first applied for housing).
- Their priority band staying the same the applicant should retain their original priority band start date.

Where an applicant has failed to notify the Housing Needs Team of a change of their circumstances within 28 days without good reason, if the change in the applicant's circumstances has resulted in:

- Their priority band going up because of an increase in their housing need and they have moved to a higher band they will be issued with a new Priority Band Start Date from the date the Housing Needs Team were notified of the change and not the date the change took place.
- Their priority band going down because of a decrease in their housing need they will be issued with a new Priority Band Start Date from the date the change took place and not keep the same date.
- Their priority band staying the same the applicant will be issued with a new Priority Band Start Date if they have moved. If the applicant has not moved their Housing Needs Priority Band Start date will remain the same.

5. Choice Based Lettings - Allocations Scheme

5.1. Statement on Choice in Allocation

The Council operates a Choice-Based Lettings Scheme to advertise the limited number of properties becoming available to let each year for those who are eligible and qualify for inclusion on the Housing Register. The Choice Based Lettings Scheme increases the choice available to most applicants (with some exceptions including restrictions for homeless applicants and time limited priority from some other applicants - see section 4.8) but cannot make more social housing available, which will remain a scare resource. The availability of feedback on previous lettings enables applicants to make informed choices about their future housing options; including whether to look at alternatives to social rented housing, and what types of properties are available.

Below is Oxford City Council's Choice Based Lettings Scheme. This applies to permanent social housing in Oxford; it does not apply to temporary accommodation.

5.2. Assisting Vulnerable Applicants

Staff from Oxford City Council (and its partner PRPs where technology allows) may assist applicants to view property advertisements and to make bids through the website.

Oxford City Council may make information available to staff at support agencies on how the scheme works, and may provide updates when changes happen, so that they are able to offer the most appropriate support to their clients.

Oxford City Council is aware that some applicants with support needs may need longer to obtain advice or support and will endeavour to work with them to help to participate in the scheme.

5.3. Advertising

All the members of the ORAH partnership are committed to advertising their properties as widely as possible. Empty properties will normally only be excluded from the CBL scheme for exceptional reasons, for example when the property is needed to deal with an emergency or is particularly suitable for a household assessed as in high housing need for a direct match – such as an adapted property suitable for a disabled person or another applicant in high housing need such as an applicant on the Homeless List needing to move on from Temporary Accommodation.

- Properties will be advertised in a regular lettings cycle. The length of the cycle may be reviewed periodically.
- Properties will be advertised on the Choice Based Lettings website.
- All advertisements will carry a deadline by which the bids for the property must be received. It is not possible for an applicant to make bids after the lettings cycle closes.
- The advertisement will carry a photograph of the type of property, where available.
- Each advert will provide details of the property including (where available):
    - The type of property
    - The number of bedrooms/number of people the property is suitable for
    - The location (street and area)
    - Any adaptations or a description of the level of accessibility for people with mobility difficulties
    - The heating type
    - Type of entrance – communal/own entrance
    - Floor level (for flats)
    - Availability of a garden if any
    - Parking
    - Rent
    - Service charge
    - Landlord
    - Property reference number
    - Expected tenancy start date where available
    - Tenancy type and conditions (for PRPs this will include details of whether the property is being let as a Fixed Term Tenancy or at an “Affordable Rent” where applicable).

5.4. Properties advertised on Choice Based Lettings

As far as possible all properties will be entered into the Choice Based Lettings scheme and will be available for applicants to make bids. However, at certain times, and in order to meet our objectives of assisting in the development of sustainable communities and meeting the Council’s letting targets, some properties will be labelled as being available to certain categories of applicant only; or with initial

preference being given to certain categories of applicant. See section 5.14 on properties not in the Choice-Based Lettings scheme. The Council may in the future advertise private rented properties too which will be let outside of the Allocations Scheme.

5.5. Advert Labels

The following labels will be used for certain properties. The Council uses these labels to ensure the Council meets the letting plan targets to distribute social housing fairly amongst different groups of applicants. The descriptions used below will be represented by symbols in the property advertisements. A key to the symbols will be provided in the scheme guide available on the Council website.

Statutory Homeless Applicants: The label will say preference will be given to the 'Homeless List"' – icon "H" on the advert.

To qualify applicants will need to have confirmation that Oxford City Council has accepted a statutory duty under the homelessness legislation (normally a main housing duty) and placed them in temporary accommodation and included them on the Homeless List (see 4.1 The Banding Scheme). Exceptions to be included on the Homeless List may be agreed by the Allocations Manager on case-by-case basis too.

General Register Applicants: The label will say preference will be given to the General Register List – icon "G" on the advert.

To qualify applicants will need to have been included on to the general register, and not to have been accepted as homeless and in priority need and placed on the General Register List.

Transfer Applicants: The label will say preference will be given to the Transfer List – icon "T" on the advert.

Move On applicants: The label will say preference will be given to the Move On List – icon "M" on the advert.

To qualify applicants will need to be a secure tenant or an Assured tenant of the Council, Ox Place or another ORAH partner and living within Oxford. They will have been verified as eligible to be on the transfer list through the application process.

This label is used to ensure the Council and other ORAH partners, can make optimum use of the stock. When a tenant transfers this creates a further vacancy which will normally be available for letting. This helps ensure there is mobility within the stock.

Sheltered/Older Persons Accommodation

The label will say ‘Sheltered”. For applicants assessed as suitable for and eligible for sheltered accommodation. Sheltered accommodation is self-contained housing for older persons often with some communal facilities – usually this includes a communal common room, a laundry and a guest room. Some properties may be linked to 24-hour emergency call centres for total cover 365 days a year. A property that is designated as Sheltered Housing will be clearly indicated on the advert label.

This housing is usually let to people aged 60 or over who have an identifiable support need. Some properties have an age restriction of 55+. This housing may sometimes be let to younger applicants who would benefit from the support provided. There is an ageing population in Oxford and in order to help meet this demand some Council owned older persons accommodation may be allocated with preference to older applicants in similar housing need to younger applicants (for example those aged 70 years or older).

Older persons properties are let to applicants who would like to move to this type of accommodation and who have been assessed as having suitable support needs by a member of the housing needs team or a member of staff at one of our PRP partners, and/or who meet the age criteria for the scheme. Support needs are assessed by carrying out a standard support needs assessment at the application stage or where an applicant’s support needs have changed.

Some housing is suitable for people with disabilities and this will be specified in the advert label. The guide to older persons’ accommodation in Oxford provides more information about the different schemes available in the City. A copy can be requested by contacting the Housing Needs Team, from local housing offices or the Council website.

Designated Elderly Housing

The level of support required to be considered for this type of housing is generally lower than that for sheltered housing.
This is housing that is let to people aged 55 or older with no dependent children. There is no support provided although tenants can be assessed for a community alarm if they require this.

Disabled Adapted Properties

Disabled adapted properties are defined as properties that have been specially built or adapted for people with disabilities. The level of adaptation will be specified in the property advertisement. An adapted property is one containing one or more of the following features:

- A level access shower or wet room
- Ramps/Level access
- A stair lift or through floor lift

- A walk-in Bath.

Assessment of a need for an adapted property will be based on medical evidence such as an Occupational Therapist assessment and may also need validation through the Health and Housing Assessment process. Oxford City Council will attempt to make the closest match between the applicant's housing need and the level of adaptations needed from short listed applicants. The reason for this is to match customers to suitable properties, ensure these properties are used to their maximum potential and to make best use of resources by not having to adapt properties elsewhere (unless necessary).

Applicants choosing to live in disabled adapted properties should not expect to have adaptations removed or to reinstate properties to their original condition, (for example remove a level access shower and install a bath again).

There are a number of properties which have been specially built or adapted for people with disabilities. Where these met the Mobility Standard or Wheelchair Standard, Oxford City Council will attempt to match these most closely to applicants that specifically require this type and standard of accommodation and will specifically label these properties as such. The Council may allocate some adapted Mobility 3 and 4 standard properties outside of Choice-Based Lettings, to applicants in high housing need requiring an adapted property by offering an applicant a property as a direct match when a particularly suitable property becomes available.

Advert labels/preferences for Ground Floor or Adapted Properties are shown below:

- Mobility Level 1: Level Access. Level access into the property (from the street to the front door) and level access throughout the property (no internal steps).
- Mobility Level 2: Mobility Standard. Level access into and throughout the property, although all rooms may not be accessible by a wheelchair. Meets part M of the Building Regulations (e.g. minimum door widths).
- Mobility Level 3: Disabled Adaptations. The property may not meet the other standards, but it has a significant adaptation, such as a level access shower; a stair-lift; or a walk-in bath. Specific details available.
- Mobility Level 4: Wheelchair Standard. The property is specifically designed for wheelchair users. Design features include parking and level access; enhanced circulation space; and specialist fixtures and fittings.

Other Properties that may carry an Advert Label/Preferences

Advert labels may also be applied to properties where a Local Lettings Plan is in operation in order to comply with its requirements, or where a priority may be given to larger families.

Bungalows will normally only be allocated to applicants aged 55 years or older, or to applicants under 55 who have been assessed by the Housing Needs Team as requiring a ground floor level access property (or an adapted property if the bungalow is adapted) or existing older tenants on the Transfer List seeking to downsize from their current accommodation.

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5.6. Bidding

Applicants who are eligible for a property advertised as available to let can apply for the property by placing a “bid” through the Choice-Based Lettings scheme. Applicants will normally only be able to bid for a property suitable for their needs and for which they are eligible. This means that applicants will not normally be able to bid for more bedrooms than they need or for properties specifically designated for other groups of applicants (such as the elderly or disabled). Applicants will be provided with details of how to bid when they are included on the Oxford Register for Affordable Housing (see the Choice Based Lettings guide on the Council website).

Property Size Eligibility

The rules used to calculate the number of bedrooms an applicant is eligible to apply for are set out in section 3.7. Applicants will be notified in writing of the size of property they are eligible to apply for and will not normally be able to bid for a smaller or larger property.

5.7. Lettings Cycle

A letting cycle will normally consist of the following:

- The Council and other ORAH partners upload properties available to let onto Choice Based Lettings website in a pre-agreed format;
- The Council advertise the properties with any relevant preferences on behalf of the partners in the next available lettings cycle;
- The lettings cycle starts and customers can bid for properties;
- The lettings cycle closes and customers can no longer bid for properties;
- The Council generates final shortlists;
- Council officers check shortlists for eligibility and verification purposes and make an offer or nomination for each property to the successful applicant and notify the landlord;
- Landlords arrange a viewing;
- Landlords offer a tenancy;
- If the successful applicant refuses the property (see section 5.10 Refusals) or is rejected by the landlord, the offer or nomination is made to the next suitable short-listed applicant. This continues until the property is let.

Where no tenancy is agreed the property normally goes back into the next available letting cycle.

5.8. The Selection Process

The successful applicant for each property will normally be the one who is eligible for the size and type of property being offered, and who is in the highest band. Where there is more than one applicant in that band, priority will normally be by date (see below). However, the council and ORAH partners reserve the right not to offer the property to the person highest on the short-list, if the property offers a better match

with the needs of another high priority applicant. The property may be offered to another housing applicant in such cases.

Applicants will be able to bid for up to three social rented properties in a lettings cycle (and any number of shared ownership or private rented properties if any are advertised). Applicants can withdraw bids and add new ones in the course of the cycle but should bid realistically and not withdrawn a bid if one has been placed for them by OCC. The Council may place bids for some applicants (including applicants on the Homeless List and other high needs cases) if a property is identified as potentially suitable.

5.8.1. Priority Order

Short-lists will be created with the following priority order:

1. Applicant Type (only if an applicant type preference is specified for property);
2. Mobility Level (only if a mobility level preference is specified for the property);
3. Band – Band priority order is: 1, 2, 3, 4, 5;
4. Local Connection;
5. Age Preference (only if preference is used for older persons accommodation);
6. Size of household (only if a preference to larger families is specified for the property) – larger household has priority;
7. Priority Band Start Date (when applicants in the same priority band are compared).

The Council reserves the right not to offer an applicant in Band 4 or 5 with a need for a ground floor level access (Mobility 1) or Mobility 2 or 3 property if another applicant in higher housing need in Band 1, 2 or 3 has bid for the property. Even if the applicant in Band 1 to 3 does not require a Mobility 1, 2 or 3 property.

5.8.2. Shortlists

Each potentially successful applicant will be checked to ensure they are eligible and suitable for the property and an applicant will only be offered a property where they meet the criteria.

Allocations Officers will investigate whether or not the property matches all the needs of the applicant in first place on the resulting shortlist. There may, for example, be a good reason not to offer an otherwise suitable property to an applicant because health advice has been received that the applicant needs a property in a quiet location and the property on offer is adjacent to a major road, or that the person cannot sustain the tenancy without adequate support arrangements and these arrangements are not able to be set up before the proposed start of the tenancy – such issues cannot be catered for in the generation of the shortlist.

If it can be demonstrated that the property does not match the needs of the applicant, then this is recorded, and the decision verified by the manager responsible for allocations. The allocating officer then proceeds to investigate the suitability of the property for the next applicant on the list, and the process continues until a suitable match is found. If an applicant is successful for more than one property, they will be

contacted where possible and asked to express their preference over which property they would like to be offered.

The Manager Responsible for Allocations is responsible for:

a. Checking paperwork relating to all allocations and nominations, to ensure that correct procedure has been followed;
b. Authorising offers and nominations, including decisions as to the reasonableness or otherwise of an allocation or nomination;
c. Deciding whether to make an allocation of housing where the applicant has been guilty of anti-social or unacceptable behaviour;
d. Decisions relating to the authorisation of “like-to-like transfers, outside the Allocations Scheme, in sheltered accommodation and other schemes; and
e. Authorising the making of a Direct Offer to an applicant (see Section 5.14).

5.8.3. Housing Applicants with Rent Arrears on the Housing Register

This section is concerned with making an allocation of a property to applicants who have made a bid.

Where a housing applicant has rent arrears and/or a poor payment history they will not normally be considered suitable for an offer of housing. In order for an applicant to successfully maintain a tenancy they must be able to comply with the terms of the tenancy and to pay the rent regularly and keep up to date with the rent. When considering whether a housing applicant is suitable for an offer of housing their ability to pay the rent and their rental payment history will be taken into account.

Housing applicants who owe rent to their current landlord or a previous landlord can be excluded from qualifying for inclusion on the Housing Register (see section 3.4.2 and the definition of “rent”).

Where a housing applicant with rent arrears has been allowed to remain on the Housing Register and they bid for a property and shortlist for a potential offer, an Allocations Officer will make further enquiries into the applicant’s ability to sustain a tenancy before considering them for an offer of housing. If a Transfer Applicant has rent arrears covered by a Court Possession Order and has not been excluded from the Transfer List, no offer will usually be made, unless:

- the tenant has an Exceptional Band 1 Social & Welfare award sanctioned by the ECP & payments have been received in line with the order made, or
- the tenant is seeking to downsize from a general needs property suitable for a family and any compensation due through the REMS (or a similar scheme provided by another ORAH landlord) will clear the debt in full or
- the debt is cleared in full by the tenant.

If a housing applicant is allowed to be included on the Housing Register but has any outstanding rent arrears (but no Court Possession Order), they will not usually receive an offer of accommodation unless:

- either the debt is cleared in full, or
- they have made an agreement to repay the debt and kept to it for a minimum of 6 months.

The following cases will usually be exempt from this:

- Applicants awarded an “Exceptional” Band 1 Social and Welfare award and permission to apply for a move with rent arrears has been sanctioned by the ECP panel and agreed by the landlord of the property the applicant is applying for
- All Temporary Decants, or Permanent Decants where the Council may incur a significant expense if the person is not moved
- Transfer applicants under-occupying a family home eligible for assistance through the Council’s REMS (or the tenant’s landlord) where the compensation will clear the debt in full.
- Technical arrears, where it is confirmed that a Housing Benefit/a Universal Credit award is due that will clear the arrears
- Persons accepted as statutory homeless and housed in temporary accommodation where a satisfactory payment arrangement is in place and the housing applicant is considered to be engaging and suitable for an offer of housing in order to minimise temporary accommodation costs to the Council (unless possession action is being taken due to a breach of tenancy).

The Manager responsible for Allocations may also exempt other cases. This discretion might be exercised where the applicant has made an agreement to clear the debt and has made consistent payments for a period of time (usually for a minimum of 6 months) or where the situation was deemed to be out of the applicant’s control, for example due to domestic abuse; or relates to physical, mental or learning disability.

The Allocations Manager may also consider authorising an offer in other exceptional cases where an applicant has fallen into rent arrears as a direct result of the introduction of changes introduced by the Welfare Reform Act including the “bedroom tax” or “benefit cap”. An exception may also be agreed where an applicant is in high housing need and considered to be taking reasonable steps to pay their on-going rent and the rent arrears they have accrued. In such cases an offer may be considered where the Allocations Manager and landlord of the property the applicant has applied for agree that the housing applicant is considered suitable for an offer and the accommodation is more affordable.

Where a former tenant has been evicted by a PRP within the ORAH partnership and allowed to re-join the Housing Register, they will not normally be nominated to the same PRP once they have demonstrated they are suitable to be a tenant, without prior agreement with the PRP.

5.9. Feedback

Feedback on previous bidding rounds will be available to help applicants assess whether accommodation appropriate to his or her needs is likely to be made available and, if so, how long this is likely to take.

General information about the profile of the stock will be made available, including: the type, size and location of the stock, whether it is accessible or could be adapted, and how old it is. In the case of stock, which is in short supply, an indication of how frequently it is likely to become available will also be included.

Specific information will be published each cycle about accommodation, which has been let through the CBL scheme. This will specify the number of bids received for the property, the band and priority band start date of the applicant who finished first at the end of the cycle. The information will be available on the CBL website.

Applicants who have expressed an interest in the particular vacancy but are unsuccessful may request more personalised feedback on why they were unsuccessful.

Periodically, Oxford City Council will extract generalised information from feedback data to help inform applicants' bidding strategies. This may include tables giving estimated waiting times by area, bedroom size or property type.

Oxford City Council will process all personal data in line with the General Data Protection Regulations and relevant successive legislation. Where information is published about particular accommodation that has been allocated, the information shall not enable a member of the public to ascertain the identity of the individual applicant who has been allocated the accommodation, or to put them at risk of violence or intimidation by other individuals or members of the public. In some cases, the Manager responsible for allocations may make the decision not to publish the fact that a property has been let.

Oxford City Council will provide more detailed feedback to unsuccessful bidders at regular intervals, particularly after they have made a number of unsuccessful bids. This will involve advising applicants about the need to change their bidding strategy or providing them with advice about alternative housing options available to them.

Applicants will be able to review their own bidding history through the website or ask a member of Oxford City Council or its partner PRP to help them do so.

5.10. Refusals

Oxford City Council acknowledges that a "bid "is an application for a property and that applicants may not be in a position to make a firm decision until the property has been viewed. However, there is a high demand for social rented accommodation and the Council and its partner PRPs want to let homes advertised through Choice Based Lettings as soon as possible so applicants should choose carefully before making a bid. If an applicant refuses an offer after a bid has been placed on the property without good reason the Council reserves the right to apply a penalty (see 5.13).

5.11. Failure to Bid

Oxford City Council will look at who is bidding and how often. If an applicant in a high priority group is not bidding despite properties being advertised that are considered

suitable by Council, they may contact the applicant to make sure that they have understood the CBL system and that they have found a method of bidding that suits them. If they are struggling with the system, we may be able to offer help ourselves or we may be able to refer the applicant to a support agency.

Where a customer is on the Homeless List and living in Temporary Accommodation a bid may be placed for the customer by OCC at any time. Furthermore, where a customer is not considered to be bidding enough, realistically or withdrawing bids their access to Choice-Based Lettings may be withdrawn and bids placed for them by OCC staff.

The Council may also place a bid for an applicant or make a direct offer of accommodation in some circumstances, such as, but not exclusively, for tenants on the Transfer List requiring a decant, or where a “legal” or “policy” successor is required to move, and is not bidding, despite suitable accommodation being advertised and help being offered (see 5.13).

5.12. Bidding Time Limits

Most applicants will have no time limits placed on how often they should bid in recognition of the scarcity of social housing in Oxford, although all applicants are encouraged and expected to actively engage with the scheme once they have registered. If they no longer wish to be included on the Housing Register, they should contact the Housing Needs Team to inform them so their housing application can be cancelled.

There will, however, be some exceptions where housing applicants in high priority bands are given time limits in which to bid for a property and penalties may be applied (see section 5.13). Including:

- Applicants accepted as homeless and placed in temporary accommodation (in Band 3) may have bids or direct offers of housing made at any time in order to ensure customers rapidly move on to suitable accommodation as soon possible;
- Applicants assessed as ready to “move-on” from supported accommodation (placed in Band 2) in order to ensure supported housing becomes available to those that require it within the City;
- Applicants awarded “policy successor” priority (placed in Band 1) in order to ensure that they move out of the accommodation they are occupying promptly so the property to can be re-let to another applicant in housing need.

5.13. Penalties for Unreasonable Refusals or Non-bidders

Before imposing a penalty, the applicant may be contacted by a member of the Housing Needs Team, Tenancy Management Team or an equivalent ORAH officer to ensure they are satisfied the applicant understands the process. Where an applicant is not considered to understand the process, they may be given a further opportunity to bid at the discretion of a senior member of the team.

Penalties will only be imposed where, after checks, it appears that either:

- An applicant is deliberately failing to bid (or withdrawing bids placed on their behalf) when suitable properties have been advertised, or
- An applicant has turned down a property when they are deemed to have no valid reason for refusing the property when offered.

5.13.1. Offers to Statutory Homeless Applicants to whom the Council has accepted a duty and placed in temporary accommodation

The Council recognises that it is not desirable for households, particularly the vulnerable and families, to spend long periods of time in temporary accommodation. Therefore, households to whom the Council has accepted a homeless duty are offered secure accommodation as quickly as possible. The Council is only able maintain a limited amount of temporary accommodation due to the high cost. In order to ensure that temporary accommodation is available for other homeless singles and families it is important that households move as quickly as possible.

Applicants on the homeless list will normally be made one suitable offer of accommodation – this could be an allocation of social housing through the Allocations Scheme or an offer of suitable accommodation within the private rented sector made outside of the Allocations Scheme. Homeless applicants may be given a time-limited priority to bid for properties through CBL. During this time, they could also be made a direct offer of housing at any time. This could include an offer of suitable private rented accommodation to discharge the Council's homeless duty by a member of the Housing Needs Team (outside of the Allocations Scheme).

Homeless applicants who have not been made a direct offer, may be given up to 3 months to successfully bid for a property, or longer, if for example a household requires a very large property, an adapted property or the Council accepts that they cannot go to certain areas within Oxford or elsewhere. If a homeless applicant has not successfully bid for a property or been offered a suitable property in the private rented sector they may have bids placed for them automatically on all suitable properties becoming available (all suitable property types and in all areas) by the Allocations Team and will be offered the first property they shortlist for an offer on, irrespective of whether they have bid for the property or not. Furthermore, if a homeless applicant is not considered to be bidding realistically, bids may be withdrawn and placed for them and access to bidding may be removed altogether and a direct offer may be considered by OCC.

Penalties for an Unreasonable Refusal

If a homeless applicant refuses a suitable offer without good reason the Council will no longer have a duty to accommodate them and ask them to leave their temporary accommodation and to resolve their housing situation themselves. If the applicant does not move out the Council will take action to take possession of the property.

Homeless applicants who are considered to have unreasonably refused an offer by the Council because they consider the property is not suitable for them or a member of their family will continue to have the right to appeal. The Council will not normally be able to end the duty to accommodate the applicant unless they lose the appeal.

5.13.2. Penalties for Applicants on the other lists (General Register & Transfer Lists) Unreasonable Refusals

Unreasonable refusals delay other applicants in housing need moving into a property, cost the Council and other landlords in lost staff time and can result in the landlord losing rental income from having longer void periods.

Applicants on the General Register or Transfer Lists who are considered to have unreasonably refused two suitable offers of accommodation within the last 12 months will be suspended from bidding for 12 months. With the exception of tenants on the Transfer List occupying a property suitable for a family and seeking to downsize to a smaller property. Other exceptions may also be made on a case-by-case basis by the Allocations Manager.

If the applicant is suspended from bidding and disagrees with this decision, they have the right to request a review of this decision (see Reviews & Appeals). If the appeal is successful, they will be able to continue to bid. If the appeal is unsuccessful, they will remain suspended for 12 months.

Policy “successors” will normally be given up to 3 months to bid for a suitable property, after this time, if they have failed to bid or failed to successfully bid for a property the Council will place bids for them on all suitable properties becoming available and may make a direct offer outside of CBL. Policy “successors” will normally be made only one suitable offer of accommodation. If they are made an offer and refuse without good reason the Council will ask them to leave the property and resolve their own housing situation and take action to gain possession of the property if they fail to leave.

5.14. Properties not advertised through CBL (Direct Offers)

Oxford City Council may choose not to advertise certain properties if they are needed for management reasons including temporary decants of existing Council Tenants for repairs to be completed where they cannot stay in their present home. This may include temporary lettings as emergency accommodation for homeless families, housing first accommodation, some types of supported housing, direct lettings to national mobility schemes, or permanent decants (where the properties are being sold, demolished or otherwise disposed of, or where tenants have been given the choice of not returning to a property following refurbishment or re-modelling, and it is not practicable to allocate the property through CBL).

In other cases, for example, very highly adapted properties or for applicants with very individual needs and homeless applicants needing to move on from Temporary Accommodation, it may be necessary to make a direct offer of a property in order to make the most effective use of the scarce resource of social housing and to obtain best value for money for the Council and its ORAH partners.

Oxford City Council will monitor the impact to ensure that it continues to comply with its duty to give reasonable preference to applicants in the reasonable preference categories and choice to General Register and Transfer List applicants wherever reasonably possible.

5.15. Temporary Decants

Where a temporary move is required while modernisation, refurbishment, or repair work is undertaken to any property of Oxford City Council, or its partner PRPs, and the tenant cannot remain in the property for a temporary period while this is being undertaken, the Manager responsible for Allocations may award a Decant category (a tenant may be decanted by the landlord outside of the Allocations process too).

This category is authorised by the Manager responsible for Allocations, and only at such time as the need for the move and its programming has been confirmed by a senior manager in Housing or a partner PRP, as appropriate.

Officers seeking or authorising these categories must be assured that the move is necessary and that appropriate timescales are in place for work to begin on the vacated property, in order to minimise disruption for existing tenants.

Tenants must complete a transfer application where practicable and sign an undertaking to confirm that they will return to their original home once the work is completed, prior to transferring.

The Manager responsible for Allocations may make a Direct Offer outside of the CBL scheme to help facilitate such moves.

5.16. Hard to Let Properties

There are very few “hard to let” properties within Oxford. However, from time to time a sheltered property only suitable for an older applicant may have to be advertised more than once before a suitable applicant is offered the property.

A property will be declared “hard to let”:

- If it has been advertised over 2 consecutive bidding cycles and received no eligible bidders, or
- if it has been advertised over 3 consecutive cycles without a tenancy being created, or
- if an identical property (type, size & area) has been declared ‘hard to let’ within the previous 4 bidding cycles.

At the discretion of the Manager responsible for allocations, such properties may be let on a “first come, first served” basis; that is, any suitable applicant may be granted a tenancy. The Manager responsible for allocations has the discretion to change eligibility criteria (including allowing under-occupation) in these circumstances. “Hard to let” properties will be advertised with other properties but may also be let outside of the advertising cycle.

5.17. Inter-District Moves

The Council may from time to time agree a reciprocal arrangement with another District Council within Oxfordshire, or elsewhere, so that an applicant in high housing

needs from Oxford can be housed outside of the City in another District in return for the Council housing another similar case within Oxford. Even if the applicant does not have a qualifying connection to Oxford. Any such allocation would need to be agreed by the Allocations Manager and the other District authority and normally be made outside of CBL as a direct match.

5.18. Priority for Households with a Qualifying Connection

As part of the allocations scheme priority will also be given to applicants who have a qualifying connection to Oxford over applicants in similar housing need without one. Normally only applicants with a qualifying connection with be allowed to be included on the Housing Register; however, there are some exceptions (see sections 3.3.3 & 3.3.4).

6. Housing Options - Allocations Scheme

6.1. Housing Options Information

Oxford City Council will give all home-seekers and applicants information on other housing options that may be available to them, to assist the applicant in making a reasonable choice as to their best prospect of securing suitable accommodation. This will include information on low-cost home ownership, private sector rented property (including any rent deposit schemes which may be operated by Oxford City Council) mutual exchanges and key worker accommodation, as appropriate.

6.2. Private Rented Sector Access Schemes

The Housing Needs Team provide a range of schemes to people who might otherwise become statutorily homeless with advice, support and financial assistance to be able to successfully secure tenancies in the private rented sector in and outside of Oxford. Private Rented Sector Access Schemes are normally only offered to applicants towards whom the Council has or would have a statutory duty to re-house (i.e. statutorily homeless or threatened with homelessness applicants).

6.3. Private Renting

From time to time there may be opportunities to advertise privately rented properties, with the agreement of the landlord. These are most likely to be properties being made available for lettings with the help of rent deposit assistance from the local authority for those threatened with homelessness or homeless in Temporary Accommodation. The properties may be advertised on Choice-Based Lettings in such instances.

6.4. Affordable home ownership schemes (Low-Cost Home Ownership Options)

Lower cost home ownership includes a number of schemes designed to enable people who wish to buy a property and cannot afford to do so. It is targeted at people on housing waiting lists, social housing tenants, key workers as defined by current government legislation and those on a low income unable to purchase a home without assistance.

The Government **GOV.UK website** provides up to date information on the different affordable home ownership schemes available and how they work. There are a number of different scheme types. Depending on your individual circumstances, and subject to availability, you may find that one or more of these are available to you. Customers interested in applying for Shared Ownership properties in Oxford should enquire directly with the marketing agents for the homes for details on how to apply and the eligibility criteria. As well as financial criteria other factors considered may include an applicant's current circumstances, whether they live or work in Oxford and the size of the property.

7. Special Circumstances - Allocations Scheme

7.1. Reviews and Appeals

The Right of Review

An applicant has the right to request an internal review of a decision taken where the Council has decided:

1. That an applicant is not a qualifying person for an allocation;
2. Not to register the application even if the applicant is in a reasonable preference group;
3. Not to allow applicants to bid for a specific period of time, or to overlook them in shortlists while an outstanding issue is being resolved (for example investigations into certain circumstances or the agreed payment of tenancy arrears);
4. Not to make an offer to the highest bidding applicant, where information is available that would make the new tenancy unsustainable or unsafe (for example where an applicant has been allowed to register and has been given a priority, there may be certain properties or areas where it is inappropriate for them to be housed) –- also see section 5.8.2;
5. They are ineligible for an allocation by virtue of being a person subject to immigration control who is ineligible for a housing allocation; or
6. They do not qualify for inclusion on the Housing Register.

Where an authority decides an applicant is ineligible, by reason of their immigration status or serious unacceptable behaviour or any other reason that they do not qualify for inclusion on the Housing Register, it must notify them of the decision and grounds for it in writing.

An applicant has the right on request (under Housing Act 1996 s167 4A(c)) to be informed of the facts which will, or will likely, be taken into account in considering whether to make an allocation and has the right to request a review of the facts of

their case. An applicant also has the right to request a review of any adverse allocation decision.

Review of Material Facts (Reassessment)

Any decision may be reassessed at any time on the following basis:

- The applicant's circumstances have changed materially since the decision was made, meaning that their eligibility has changed;
- Substantive new information has become available, not previously available to the Allocations Team, meaning that the new information changes the applicant's eligibility;
- The Council has made an administrative error, which is substantially detrimental to the applicant.

Process for Internal Reviews

1. The original officer will first consider the review, and in light of any new information, may wish to reverse the original decision. If not, the case will be passed to another officer to review.
2. The reviewing officer must not have been party to the original allocation decision and should be senior to the original decision maker.
3. A request for a review must be made, in writing, within 21 days of the date that the applicant is notified of the Council's decision
4. The review must be considered on the basis of policy, law and known fact at the date of review.
5. Reviews should be completed wherever practicable within a 56-day time limit. If the review exceeds 56 days, the applicant must be notified of the delay, in writing.
6. The applicant should be notified that s/he, or a representative acting on their behalf, may make representations in writing in connection to the review.
7. The applicant will be asked for any further information needed in order for the assessment to be completed.
8. Any adverse material must be put to the applicant for their comment.
9. The outcome of the review decision must be notified in writing, with reasons, to the applicant.

An applicant who has been accepted as statutorily homeless by the Council also has the right to request a review of the 'suitability' of a final offer of permanent accommodation. However, such reviews are authorised under the regulations that apply to Homelessness decisions which are similar to the process described above, but are not the same, for example the factors to be taken into account are prescribed by the Regulations.

The Right of Appeal

If the applicant believes that Oxford City Council has not acted reasonably or in accordance with its set procedure, they may have the right to seek a Judicial Review of the decision.

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7.2. Under Occupation (and the Removal Expenses & Mobility Scheme)

Under Occupation

Under occupation of properties is a concern for Oxford City Council, due to the high demand for larger properties in the city from families in housing need – including families who are homeless living in temporary accommodation, overcrowded or living in unsuitable accommodation. Under occupation is listed in the Code of Guidance on the Allocation of Accommodation as an important area and the Council awards priority to social tenants seeking to downsize through the Banding Scheme to help make the most of the limited social housing becoming available in Oxford.

In addition, the Council has the power (under the Housing Act 1996, Schedule 18, Part I, section 2) to make payments to encourage local housing authority tenants to move to other accommodation within the authority's stock, or accommodation supplied by a registered social landlord such as a Housing Association. (Powers are also provided for in sections 21 and 26 of the Housing Act 1985 and section 111 of the Local Government Act 1972.) PRPs may have their own expenses and other incentives schemes in place as above, and each PRP should be contacted for details of current schemes. These may also be supported by the Council.

In order to encourage under occupiers to move to smaller accommodation, the following arrangements are in place:

- Oxford City Council tenants, or tenants of partner PRPs within the City, who have 2 or more bedrooms than they need, and who currently live in family accommodation, will be placed in Band 1.
- Oxford City Council tenants, or tenants of partner PRPs within the City, who have 1 bedroom more than they need, and who currently live in family accommodation, will be placed in Band 2.

This excludes successor/"policy successor" tenants who are required to move to a smaller home (who are prioritised separately) and do not qualify for assistance through the REMS as they need to move and the incentives are used for tenants who do not need to move but choose to. Under-occupation priority is not awarded to homeless applicants placed in temporary accommodation. For example, if a homeless applicant has a change of circumstances, they will be required to move to smaller temporary accommodation to free up the property for a larger homeless household in need.

Permitted Under Occupation

There are situations where a degree of under-occupation may be permitted in making an allocation of accommodation including:

- 'Trading down' from larger accommodation to two bed accommodation
- medical recommendation
- tenancy successions to a spouse or civil partner

- Urgent or exceptional moves (e.g. on moving a victim of harassment) (at the decision of the Exceptional Circumstance Panel)
- Decants (at the decision of the Exceptional Circumstance Panel) where permitted by the provisions of a Local Lettings Plan.

The Removal Expenses and Mobility Scheme

Oxford City Council operates a Removal Expenses and Mobility Scheme (REMS). Oxford City Council Tenants who are granted REMS status are eligible for compensation based on the number of bedrooms released by any move, and expenses covering costs associated with moving. Details of the levels of compensation and expenses payable to tenants under this scheme are available on the Council website or on request by contacting a member of the Furnished Tenancy (and Under Occupation) Team who administer the scheme.

8. Tenancies which are Treated Separately from the Normal Allocation Process - Allocations Scheme

8.1. Succession

The Housing & Planning Act 2016 changed the rules to succession. The government has decided that some tenants who succeed to a tenancy will no longer be eligible for a lifetime tenancy.

Secure Tenancies for Oxford City Council tenants

Existing tenants at 15 September 2014

The rights of occupiers of council housing to succeed to a secure tenancy are governed by sections 87 and 88 of the 1985 Housing Act. Secure tenants are able to pass on their tenancy to a spouse, civil partner, co-habiting partner (of either sex) or specific family members on the death of the tenant. Assured tenants can pass their tenancy on to a spouse or civil partner.

There is only one legal right to succession per tenancy. Those entitled to succeed by law are:

- spouses and civil partners (secure and assured tenants)
- family relatives (including blood and step relatives but not cousins)
- co-habiting opposite sex couples
- co-habiting same sex couples

The following conditions apply:

- A spouse, civil partner or co-habiting partner (of either sex) must have occupied the property as their only or principal home at the time of the tenant's death.
- A family member must have resided with the tenant continuously for 12 months as their only or principal home before the tenant's death.

- There can only be one successor to a tenancy.
- A spouse or civil partner will take precedence over a family member.

Where more than one person is entitled to succeed. If the tenant was a successor, there is no right to succeed. A succession will also have been deemed to be created by: A Right of survivorship (where one joint tenant remains on a tenancy after a death)/An assignment to a person qualified to succeed.

Mutual exchanges are not successions unless the tenant was a successor in relation to the tenancy being assigned by way of exchange (s88 (3) 1985 Act).

Tenants after 15 September 2014

The Localism Act 2011 amended the succession rights of new tenants for tenancies that began on or after 1st April 2012 unless specified in the tenancy agreement. The Oxford City Council tenancy was amended to take account of the legislation on 15 September 2014.

Now only the following have the legal right to succeed to a secure tenancy:

The tenant's:

- Spouse; or
- Civil partner; or
- Cohabiting partner (of either sex).

The successor must have been living with the tenant at the time of her/his death and the property must have been her/his only or main home.

A landlord may wish to provide additional rights in the tenancy agreement which would allow a family member to succeed, such as the tenant's son or daughter.

The law says that other people can only succeed to a secure tenancy which began on or after 1 April 2012, if, when the tenant dies:

- there is no spouse, civil partner or cohabiting partner living in the property as her/his only or principal home; and
- the tenancy agreement allows for someone else to succeed.

Oxford City Council's position is set out in the Tenancy Agreement for secure tenants. From time to time the Council may revise the terms of the tenancy agreement and tenants are therefore strongly advised to check with the Council to confirm their position on succession and whether they are eligible to succeed.

Housing Association Assured Tenants/PRPs

Housing Association tenants' right to succeed is laid down in the Housing Act and advice should be taken from the Housing Association

Points to Note on Successions

Where a succession results in the successor, other than a spouse or civil partner, or a co-habiting partner living in a property which:

- is too large; or
- has significant adaptations for disabled persons which are not required by the successor; or
- is otherwise inappropriate to their needs.

The Council may require the successor tenant to move to alternative, more appropriate accommodation. A spouse, civil partner or co-habiting partner may be required to move from a property which has significant adaptations for

disabled persons which are not required by the successor. If a successor refuses to move from the property, the Council will pursue possession proceedings in the County Court.

Where a succession results in the successor occupying a property of the appropriate size for their needs and has not been adapted for disabled persons, they will normally be allowed to remain as a tenant of that property.

Otherwise Excluded Successors

In addition to legal successions, the Council may also agree to "policy successions".

"Policy successions" generally apply to people who would have been entitled to succeed but for the fact one legal succession has happened. Band 1 priority may be awarded to a close family member who would have been entitled to a legal succession, but is not, because one previous succession has already taken place, by authorisation of the Manager responsible for Allocations, based on the recommendation of the Tenancy Management Manager or equivalent ORAH officer.

If under the affordability guidelines a housing applicant is considered to be able to resolve their own housing situation, they will not normally be included on the Housing Register.

A potential "policy successor" (persons potentially entitled to a new offer of accommodation through the Allocation Scheme) can be asked to move immediately to more appropriate accommodation where a "policy succession" would result in the occupation of a property, which, is more extensive than their needs; or has significant adaptations for disabled persons, which are not required by the occupant.

In this case if the "policy successor" refuses to move then the Council will treat them as an unauthorised occupant and pursue possession action. Civil partners and co-habiting partners of either sex are treated the same as spouses.

"Policy successions" are not successions in law, but new tenancies, which bring their own rights of succession.

8.2. Assignment

Assignment of a secure tenancy can take place on the following grounds (s91(3) of the Housing Act 1985 Act). These are:

- The assignment is pursuant to a Property Transfer Order under Section 24 of the Matrimonial Causes Act 1973.
- The assignment is to a person who would be qualified to succeed if the tenant had died immediately before the assignment.
- mutual exchange.

8.3. Mutual Exchange

Mutual Exchanges are exchanges by way of Assignment. All permanent social housing tenants are able to go onto the register (Assured Shorthold Tenants or Introductory Tenants or demoted tenants are excluded). The Council encourages all eligible tenants who want to move to consider applying for an exchange. Exchanges are possible between multiple tenants – for example, a three-way exchange.

Secure tenants have a right to exchange under section 92 of the Housing Act 1985. Assured tenants have a right to exchange under the 1988 Housing Act Mutual exchanges may be refused in accordance with the Housing Act 1985 (for Council properties) or the Housing Act 1988 (for RSL properties). Consent will only be made conditionally on the breaches of tenancy being rectified. All mutual exchanges can only proceed with the written consent of both landlords.

8.4. Joint To Sole and Sole to Joint Tenancies

Joint to Sole

On receipt of written notice (normally 4 weeks' notice) that one party wishes to end the tenancy, a new sole tenancy for the same property may be granted at the discretion of the Tenancy Management Manager. This will only be considered where the property remains suitable to the needs of the tenant.

Sole to Joint

On written notice by the sole tenant, a new, joint, tenancy for the same property may be granted at the discretion of the Tenancy Management Manager. This will only be considered where the property remains suitable to the needs of the tenants and there has been no previous succession to the tenancy.

Other Properties Within the ORAH Partnership

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It is at the discretion of each landlord how they treat applications to transfer from either joint to sole, or sole to joint tenancies. Tenants of Registered Providers should contact their landlord to find out what their policy is.

9. Appendices - Allocations Scheme

Appendix I - Classes of Person Ineligible for an Allocation of Housing by Reason of Their Immigration Status

The following classes of persons are not eligible for an allocation of housing by reason of their Immigration status or lack of habitual residence, unless they are already a secure or introductory tenant of a housing authority, or an assured tenant of accommodation allocated to them by a housing authority. The requirement to be habitually resident in the UK does not apply to “qualifying” EEA nationals such as those working lawfully in the UK. Non-qualifying persons such as EU nationals who are not economically active or exercising their initial 3 month right of residence are ineligible.

a. A person registered with the Home Office as an asylum seeker.
b. A visitor to this country (including an overseas student) who has limited leave to enter or remain in the UK granted on the basis that he or she will not have recourse to public funds.
c. A person who has a valid leave to enter or remain in the UK which includes a condition that there shall be no recourse to public funds.
d. A person who has a valid leave to enter or remain in the UK which carries no limitation or condition and who is not habitually resident in the Common Travel Area.
e. A sponsored person who has been in this country less than five years (from date of entry or date of sponsorship, whichever is the latest) and whose sponsor(s) is/are still alive.
f. A person who is in the United Kingdom illegally, or who has overstayed his/her leave.

The Secretary of State may make regulations which allow allocations to be made to prescribed classes of persons subject to immigration control within the meaning of the Asylum and Immigration Act 1996, but such prescribed classes of persons shall not include any person who is excluded from housing benefit by Section 115 of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999 (exclusion from benefits).

Further information and assistance on these matters is available on request.

The Council will refer to the relevant UK Border Agency Guidelines to ensure compliance with current immigration legislation.

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Appendix II – Officer Roles in Relation to the Allocation of Housing and Associated Processes

1. General. The power to operate the Allocation Scheme is a power delegated by full Council in accordance with Oxford City Council's Constitution
2. The Director of Housing may further delegate operation of the Scheme to officers within the service (or on occasion to other officers).

Officer Roles and Responsibilities

Housing Application Officers (and members of the Housing Needs Team as directed by the Rapid Re-Housing Manager or another Senior Member of the Team)

a. Provision of advice and assistance in accessing appropriate accommodation for all applicants;
b. Inputting data relating to individual applications onto the HMIS computer system;
c. Answering general queries by telephone, in writing, and in person;
d. Verification of documents relating to applications for housing;
e. Home visits to applicants for housing.

Assessment Officers, Allocations Officers, Senior Assessment Officer and Allocations and Assessment Team Leader (And other members of the Housing Needs Team as directed by the Rapid Re-Housing Manager or a senior member of the team)

a. Assessment of incoming applications, including application forms and any additional material, carrying out home visits, verification, and any additional investigations required to ensure that those applications truthfully reflect the housing situation of the applicants concerned, and to determine eligibility and qualification for inclusion on the housing register and an allocation of housing;
b. Drawing up shortlists for allocations of housing, and nominations to PRP properties, investigation of suitability of short-listed applicants for such allocations and nominations, and ensuring that the most suitable allocation or nomination is made, in line with policy;
c. Provision of general housing advice and assistance to applicants, including signposting and referral to internal and external sources of further advice and assistance, and home visits to applicants;
d. Initial determination of the reasonableness or otherwise of a refusal of an allocation of housing/nomination to a PRP property;
e. Awarding Band 3 or 4 priority based on a HAHA assessment as directed by a Senior Officer/Manager in the Rapid Re-Housing Team;
f. Awarding Band 4 on an ECP assessment;

g. Answering general queries by telephone, in writing, and in person, and

h. Decisions as to whether or not an applicant is eligible and/or qualifies for an allocation of housing in light of previous unacceptable behaviour (including outstanding rent arrears);

i. Decisions as to whether or not an applicant should be excluded from qualifying for inclusion on the Housing Register, in light of previous unacceptable behaviour (including outstanding rent arrears), or in light of their financial resources.

Manager Responsible for Allocations (including the Rapid Re-Housing Manager, Allocations and Assessment Team Leader and Senior Assessment Officer)

a. Checking paperwork relating to all allocations and nominations, to ensure that correct procedure has been followed, and authorising offers and nominations, including decisions as to the reasonableness or otherwise of an allocation or nomination;

b. Monitoring allocations and nominations to ensure that the correct percentage of lettings are made to each re-housing list, in accordance with the allocations percentages set by Oxford City Council;

c. Decisions as to whether or not an applicant is eligible and/or qualifies for an allocation of housing in light of previous unacceptable behaviour (including outstanding rent arrears);

d. Decisions as to whether or not an applicant should be excluded from qualifying for inclusion on the Housing Register, in light of previous unacceptable behaviour (including outstanding rent arrears), or in light of their financial resources;

e. Decisions relating to the authorisation of 'like-to-like' transfers, outside the Allocations Scheme, in sheltered accommodation and other schemes;

f. Authorisation of over-riding categories to applications where:
    - a previous commitment to re-house has been made by the Exceptional Circumstances Panel;
    - a status of permanent or temporary decant is required to facilitate works to the applicant's home;
    - a successor or 'policy successor' award is required to Band 1 may be awarded to expedite this move;

g. Decisions to make Direct Offers of accommodation.

h. Decisions to vary the Housing Need Priority Band Start Date for an applicant in exceptional circumstances.

Exceptional Circumstances Panel

Responsible for review of cases in which circumstances not dealt with by the banding Scheme may have an impact on an applicant's housing need, and the award of increased priority, or other condition or restriction, as appropriate to reflect the applicant's situation.

The panel does not have a fixed membership but will be drawn from officers within the Housing Services/ORAH partners who have sufficient knowledge and experience to contribute to the Panel's effectiveness. The Panel will be chaired by a Senior Officer from the Housing Needs Team. The panel will consist of one Senior Officer (usually the Rapid Rehousing Manager, Allocations Team Leader or Senior Assessment officer) and an Assessment or Allocations officer. The only exception to this is for Exceptional Priority Band 1 decisions where a second senior officer will need to sign off the decision.

The Director of Housing Responsibilities

Resolution of disputes between officers regarding interpretation of the Allocations Scheme and decisions arising from that interpretation.

The Director of Housing has delegated authority to:

Authorise minor amendments to the Allocations Scheme proposed by the Rapid Re-Housing Manager where:

- Legislation changes and the Allocations Scheme needs a minor change to comply with new legislation and the change will have a low impact on those on the housing register.
- Best practice or new guidance is introduced that needs to be reflected in the Allocations Scheme and the change will have a low impact on those on the housing register.

Authorise offers of accommodation outside of the banding priority scheme for "management cases" to make the best use of stock for existing tenants, or other applicants (on an exceptional basis). To include:

- Adapted properties no longer required by the tenant
- To facilitate a move as an alternative to adapting a property
- To maximise bedroom occupation and ensure affordability.

Approve the annual lettings plan targets proposed each year by the Rapid Rehousing Manager. Change the annual lettings plan targets during the year if the demand on the housing register has changed significantly and corrective action is required.

Tenancy Management Manager, Area Housing Managers & Area Housing Team Leaders (or equivalents in partner PRPs)

a. Approval and counter signature of submissions to the Exceptional Circumstances Panel, and Health & Housing Assessment Forms.
b. Decisions on Joint to Sole and Sole to Joint tenancy applications (Tenancy Operations Manager)

c. The authority to make a recommendation to award a succession status to an applicant.

Senior Furnished Tenancy Officer/ Furnished Tenancy Officer

Responsibility for administering cases under the Removals Expenses Moving Scheme.

Tenancy Management Officers (or equivalent role within the Council or partner RSLs)

a. Approval, inspections, and tenancy changes relating to requests for Mutual Exchange of Tenancies
b. Home visits to some transfer applicants
c. Landlord references for tenants.

Residential Regulation Officer/OCC Surveyor

Assessment of disrepair and award of priority for a housing condition, where requested by an applicant or member of OCC.

Customer Service Officers/ORAH equivalents

General advice and verification of documents provided by applicants.

Health and Housing Assessment (HAHA) Panel

Responsible for awarding priority and assessing cases in which the health of the applicant, or their household, is worsened due to their current housing circumstances, in accordance with this Allocation Scheme. The award of increased priority, as appropriate, should reflect the applicant's situation.

The panel does not have a fixed membership. This will be drawn from officers from Housing and ORAH partners, and may include a health professional, who have sufficient knowledge and experience to contribute to the Panel's effectiveness. The panel will comprise of a minimum of 2 persons, including 1 manager and health professional or 1 manager and another officer. The Panel will be chaired by a Senior Housing Needs Officer. Officers referring cases to the Panel may make representations but may not sit on the Panel for cases they have referred.

Reviews and Appeals Officer

a. Responsible for carrying out all internal reviews of allocations decisions;
b. Advice and assistance to all officers in respect of, technical, policy, or other matters which may affect the progress of an application, including decisions regarding eligibility or the lack of it, for whatever reason.

Appendix III – Guideline Calculations for Affordability

Social housing is a scarce resource. New Applicants applying for housing or existing housing applicants may be excluded from the Housing Register, regardless of their housing circumstances, if there is evidence to suggest that they have sufficient income or assets to resolve their housing situation through the housing market by renting or buying a suitable home. Furthermore, other adult members (including their partner's where applicable) may also be excluded from being included on an applicant's housing application if there is evidence to suggest that they have sufficient income or assets to resolve their own housing situation (or if they refuse to provide this information when requested). Each case will be considered on its merits and where there would otherwise be hardship, priority may be awarded in accordance with the policies and protocols of the Allocations scheme.

Property

Housing applicants who own a property in the UK or overseas that is considered suitable for their households housing needs will not normally qualify for inclusion on the Housing Register. However, the property must be physically and legally accessible. If the equity in the property is £16 000 or more and this would provide sufficient funds to resolve their housing situation, then the applicant would normally be expected to make their own housing arrangements.

Adult household members of housing applicants who own a property in the UK or overseas that is considered suitable for their housing needs will not normally qualify for inclusion on an applicant's housing application. Property can include narrow boats and caravans as well as other dwellings that are suitable for occupation and reasonable to occupy.

Savings / Investments / Assets

Housing applicants with savings/investments or assets of £16 000 or more will not normally qualify for inclusion on the Housing Register. Adult household members with savings/investments or assets of £16 000 or more may also be excluded from an applicant's housing application if they are considered to have sufficient funds to resolve their own housing situation.

Income

Applicants with sufficient income to resolve their own housing situation may be excluded from the Housing Register. An applicant's income combined with savings of less than £16000 could be taken into account when making this decision.

Exceptions

The Manager responsible for Allocations can agree exceptions in appropriate cases.

Those applicants to whom the Council has accepted a duty under Homelessness Legislation may not be included in this policy as it would not be in the best interests of the Council to delay getting such persons housed due to the high cost of

temporary accommodation. However, adult household members meeting the criteria for exclusion under the guidelines could still be excluded from an applicant's homeless application for the purposes of assessing the size of property they require.

Those applicants applying for Shared Ownership will be included on the Shared Ownership Register for the purposes of assessing their housing need, but they will not normally be included on the General Housing Register or another applicant's housing application.

Exclusion from the Housing Register

Should a decision be made to exclude an applicant, or a member of their household, they will be informed of this, with the right to request a review, and will be given information as to how to source alternative accommodation and resolve their own housing needs through the open market or private sector.

Verification

Applicants and their household members can be asked to provide evidence of their income, savings and assets in order to verify the affordability assessment. If an applicant fails to provide sufficient evidence, then their registration may not be able to proceed and they will not be included on the Housing Register or they will be removed if they are an existing applicant. If a member of their household fails to provide sufficient evidence, they will not be "counted" as a member of their household for re-housing purposes or assessing their housing need.

Appendix IV – Employment and Right to Move

This guidance on Right to Move relates to existing social housing tenants seeking to move for work and who are assessed as needing to move to Oxford for work and need this take into account the assessment of their housing need. This will not normally apply to social tenants living in Oxford or who live outside of Oxford but who are considered able to commute to Oxford. This is because there are excellent transport links to Oxford and within the City and many people commute to work within Oxford or from outside of the City.

The Allocation of Housing (Qualification Criteria for Right to Move) (England) Regulations 2015 (SI 2015/967) ('the qualification regulations 2015') provides that local authorities must not disqualify certain persons on the grounds that they do not have a local connection with the authority's district. Specifically, a local connection may not be applied to existing social tenants seeking to transfer from another local authority district in England who:

- have reasonable preference under s.166(3)(e) because of a need to move to the Local authority's district to avoid hardship, and
- need to move because the tenant works in the district, or
- need to move to take up an offer of work.

Need to move

The Qualification Regulations 2015 apply to transferring tenants who have reasonable preference under s.166A(3)(e), that is to say the local authority is satisfied that they need to move to a particular locality in the district of the housing authority, where failure to meet that need would cause hardship (to themselves or others).

The local authority must ensure, therefore, not simply that the tenant needs to move for work, but that, if they were unable to do so, it would cause them hardship.

Local authorities must be satisfied that the tenant needs, rather than wishes, to move for work related reasons.

Factors to be taken into account in determining whether a tenant needs to move to be closer to work or to take up a job offer include:

- the distance and/or time taken to travel between work and home;
- the availability and affordability of transport, taking into account level of earnings;
- the nature of the work and whether similar opportunities are available closer to home;
- other personal factors, such as medical conditions and childcare, which would be affected if the tenant could not move;
- the length of the work contract; and
- whether failure to move would result in the loss of an opportunity to improve their employment circumstances or prospects, for example, by taking up a better job, a promotion, or an apprenticeship.

Work

The Qualification Regulations 2015 only apply if work is not short-term or marginal in nature, nor ancillary to work in another district. Voluntary work is also excluded.

Short-term

In determining whether work is short-term, factors considered will include:

- whether work is regular or intermittent (particularly if a person is self-employed) and;
- the period of employment and whether or not work was intended to be short-term or long-term at the outset (if a contract of employment is a zero hours contract or is intended to last for less than 12 months this will normally be considered short-term).

Marginal

In determining whether the work is marginal or not consideration will include both:

- the number of hours worked (employment of less than 16 hours a week could be considered to be marginal in nature. This is the threshold below which a person may be able to claim Income Support and the threshold for a single

person's entitlement to Working Tax Credit. However, the level of earnings will also be considered); and
- the level of earnings (and whether it is regular).

Ancillary

Work must not be ancillary to work in another local authority's district. This means that, if the person works occasionally in the local authority's district, even if the pattern of work is regular, but their main place of work is in a different local authority's district, the work will not meet the qualification criteria for the Right to Work regulations

A further relevant consideration would be whether the tenant is expected eventually to return to work in the original local authority district. If the Council has reason to believe this is the case further verification will be sought from the tenant's employer.

A person who seeks to move into a local authority to be closer to work in a neighbouring authority – for example, where the transport links are better in the first local authority's area – is also excluded from these Regulations.

Voluntary work

The Regulations exclude voluntary work. Voluntary work means work where no payment is received, or the only payment is in respect of any expenses reasonably incurred.

Apprenticeship

The term 'work' includes an apprenticeship. This is because an apprenticeship normally takes place under an apprenticeship agreement which is an employment contract (specifically a contract of service). A copy will be requested in such instances.

Genuine intention to take up an offer of work

Where a tenant has been offered a job and needs to move to take it up, they must be able to demonstrate to the Council's satisfaction that they have a genuine intention to take up the offer. A letter of acceptance may be requested and the employer will normally be contacted to verify the circumstances. Additional information may also be required including:

- a contract of employment;
- wage/salary slips covering a certain period of time, or bank statements (this is likely to be particularly relevant in the case of zero-hours contracts);
- tax and benefits information – for example proof that the applicant is in receipt of working tax credit (if eligible); and
- a formal offer letter.

Appendix V

Health and Disability Awards/Priority

For an applicant, or a member of their household, to qualify for priority to move on health grounds, there must be satisfactory evidence from a recognised health professional, such as a GP, Health Visitor or CPN, that their current property is having a direct and serious impact on their physical and/or mental health. The Council will need to be satisfied that a move to alternative accommodation will alleviate/resolve the problem or be a major improvement before any priority award is granted. Without evidence, a case cannot be considered for any additional priority.

Many health issues will not be related to the property where a person lives and applicant or household member may have an existing health condition regardless of where they live. While a person may perceive a move elsewhere may help with the health issue – no priority additional priority will be awarded where there is little or no evidence that this is the case.

Where an applicant has a health issue and their accommodation is not impacting on their health or a move to alternative housing will not alleviate the health issue/or make a major difference no additional priority will normally be awarded.

Where an applicant is requesting a permanent move due to a health issue – this is expected to be a long term or permanent health issue. Short-term illnesses or injuries, or convalescence from surgery/or a stay in hospital (or similar such as following childbirth) where recovery is expected within a reasonable period of time will not be considered for a Health and Disability award and any additional priority to move.

The Assessment and Allocations Team has experience of assessing a large number of housing applications from households with a range of housing needs including various health issues and ensuring priority for housing is awarded consistently. Where medical information is provided which has little or no direct relation to the current housing of the applicant or a household member (or is out of date), an Officer may decide it is not necessary to complete further inquiries and consideration for a health and disability award is not appropriate. It is not practical, nor a good use of an officer or health professional's time (such as a busy GP) to complete health and housing assessments or request information for large numbers of housing applicants or their household members, where it is unlikely they will qualify for any additional priority based on the evidence available.

When considering if an applicant or a household member qualifies for a Health and Disability award. The evidence and level of health needs will be considered and where appropriate one of the following awards may be granted following the protocols within the Allocations Scheme depending on individual circumstances of the case:

No award – no additional priority	**A moderate health and**	**A significant health and**	**An urgent health and disability award – Band 2**

	disability award – Band 4	**disability award – Band 3**	
The health problem is not related to the person's current housing conditions and cannot be improved by alterations or moving to other accommodation.	*A health problem is exacerbated directly by the current housing conditions and requires some priority over a person living in the same circumstances whose health is not affected.*	*The current accommodation cannot be altered or improved to resolve the health problem and there is considerable risk of deterioration in the person's health that can only be resolved by moving to other accommodation.*	*There is a very high risk to the health of the person that makes the current accommodation totally unsuitable and they need to move to other accommodation as soon as possible.*

There are a large range of health issues that may affect an applicant or a member of their household's housing need and each will be assessed based on the individual circumstances. The list below provides examples, for illustrative purposes of when an award may or may not be granted and is by no means comprehensive or exhaustive.

Health and Disability - No award or additional priority – examples:
An applicant or member of their household with an existing medical condition – relating to their mental and/or physical health - where there is little or no medical evidence the current accommodation is having a serious impact on their health condition and/or a move would be unlikely to result in a substantive improvement in their health.
An applicant or member of their household with medical evidence that they require a ground floor property who is already living in a suitable ground floor property. Priority to move to ground floor accommodation will be awarded but not additional priority as their current home is not affecting their health.
An applicant or member of their household with an existing mental health condition which would be largely unchanged by a move to another property. A desire to move to alternative housing because of a perception this would improve the health condition would not be sufficient to award any additional priority to move and other options to help with the health condition should be considered.
An applicant or member of their household has a medical condition and there is satisfactory evidence they require a separate bedroom because they cannot share a bedroom with others. If it is accepted that an applicant or member of their household requires their own bedroom, they will be awarded priority through the Allocations Scheme to reflect any overcrowding they are experiencing. No additional priority through a health and disability award will normally be awarded as the priority band for overcrowding priority has already taken into account the impact of the person being unable to share a bedroom.

Moderate Health and Disability – Band 4 priority – example:
An applicant living in shared accommodation with a long-term health condition where there is medical evidence that they cannot share a bathroom or kitchen and need to move to accommodation with sole access to these facilities and there are no other realistic housing options available. For example, where there is a medical recommendation an applicant with a stoma requires use of their own bathroom because they use a colostomy bag and cannot do this in the facilities available in their current home.
Significant Health and Disability Award – Band 3 priority – example:
An applicant or member of their household is in receipt of the Enhanced Rate of PIP for mobility or Medium or High Rate of DLA and living upstairs in a house or in a 1st floor flat or above without a lift and there is evidence from a health professional they are struggling with the stairs and need to move to a ground floor property without any stairs.
Urgent Health and Disability Award – Band 2 priority – examples:
Example an applicant or member of their household has provided medical evidence of needing to urgently move to alternative accommodation due to: • An advanced and chronic or progressive medical condition, such as Motor Neurone Disease, Multiple Sclerosis, Advanced/Stage 4 Cancer, AIDS and their current home is no longer suitable and cannot be adapted and moving to alternative adapted accessible housing is the only alternative available and they have been assessed as urgently needing to move. • Being in hospital and ready to be discharged and assessed as not being able to return home due to long term health needs as their home is no longer physical suitable for their housing requirements, it cannot be adapted and moving permanently to alternative housing is the only alternative available.* • Being household bound and a full-time wheelchair user and their current home is no longer suitable and cannot be adapted/is not suitable to be adapted and moving to alternative adapted accessible housing is the only alternative available. **This priority will not be awarded where a property is only temporarily unsuitable in the short-term where the person affected is expected to recover in due course following recovering from a short-term illnesses or injury, or after convalescence from surgery/or a stay in hospital (or similar such as following childbirth) where recovery is expected within a reasonable period of time*

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Appendix VI Bibliography

The Allocation Scheme has been developed in accordance with the legal requirements set out in the Housing Act 1996 (as amended), including amendments made by the Homelessness Act 2002, the Localism Act 2011, and the Homelessness Reduction Act 2017. The legislation and statutory guidance relating to the allocation of social housing includes but is not limited to the following:

Statutory Provisions

Housing Act 1996
Housing Act 1985
Housing Act 2004
Homelessness Act 2002
Homelessness Reduction Act 2017
Localism Act 2011
Immigration Act 1971
Immigration Act 1988
Asylum and Immigration Act 1996
Asylum and Immigration Act 2002
Immigration Act 2016
Human Rights Act 1998
Children Act 1989
Children Act 2004
Family Law Act 1996
Domestic Abuse Act 2021
Equality Act 2010
Welfare Reform Act 2012
European Union Withdrawal Agreement Act 2020
Social Housing (Regulation) Act 2023 (and Regulatory Consumer Standards)

Regulatory Provisions

- The Allocation of Housing (Qualification Criteria for Armed Forces) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2024
- The Allocation of Housing (Qualification Criteria for Right to Move) (England) Regulations 2015/967
- Allocation of Housing (England) Regulations 2002/3264
- Allocation of Housing and Homelessness (Eligibility) (England) Regulations 2006 (SI 2006/1294)

- The Housing Act 1996 (Additional Preference for Armed Forces) (England) Regulations 2012 No. 2989
- The Allocation of Housing (Qualification Criteria for Victims of Domestic Abuse and Care Leavers) (England) Regulations 2025 No 705

Allocations Statutory Guidance

- Allocation of accommodation: guidance for local authorities 18/7/25
- Providing social housing for local people 10/7/25
- Right to Move and social housing allocations 27/3/15
- Improving access to social housing for victims of domestic abuse 27/3/15
- Improving access to social housing for members of the Armed Forces 18/12/24

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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)**
	NEW- Sanctuary seeking status leading to intersecting 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.**	Proposed changes to improve the Allocations Scheme for residents in housing need. .	**2.**	**The implementation date of the activity under consideration:**	This is an EqIA on proposed changes to the Allocations Scheme. Following analysis of the responses to the consultation with tenants, other residents, Registered Providers of social and other key stakeholders a final draft of the proposed new Allocations Scheme has been completed with a summary of the responses to the survey, a copy of this EqIA and final recommendations to be approved by the Cabinet and Council ahead of being implemented at date to be determined in 26/27.
3.	**Directorate:**	Citizens and City Services	**4.**	**Service Area:**	Housing Services
5.	**Who is (are) the assessment lead(s):** **Please provide:** -Name -Email address	Tom Porter Senior Service Development Officer tporter@oxford.gov.uk	**6.**	**Contact details, in case there are queries:** **Please provide:** -Name -Email address	Tom Porter Senior Service Development Officer tporter@oxford.gov.uk

7.	**Is this a new or ongoing EqIA?**	New	**8.**	If this is an extension of a previous EqIA, please indicate where the previous EqIA is located and share the link to the said EqIA.	Not Applicable
9.	**Date this EqIA started:**	Nov 25			
10.	**Will this EqIA be attached to** Corporate Management Team (CMT) **reports/updates, which will be published online?**		**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.

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12.	**Type of activity being considered:**	Review of an existing housing policy and the proposed changes to improve the Allocations Scheme for residents in housing need.

13.	**Which priority area(s) within Oxford City Council's Corporate strategy (2024-2028) does this activity fulfil?** Please check as needed.	Good, affordable homes	Strong, fair economy	☐ Thriving Communities	☐ Zero Carbon Oxford	☐ Well run council

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14.	**Which priority area(s) within Oxford City Council's Equality, Diversity & Inclusion Strategy (2022) does this activity fulfil?** Please check as needed.	Responsive services and customer care.	☐ Diverse and engaged workforce.	Leadership & organisational commitment.	Understanding and working with our communities.
15.	**Outline the aims, objectives, & priorities of the activity being considered.**	The Allocations Scheme is the policy the Council uses to allocate social housing within Oxford to those in housing need. It seeks to balance local needs and aspirations with current legislation, guidance and best practice as well as local housing conditions. The Allocations Scheme has a key role in helping to prevent homelessness and to house those in the highest need into the scarce social housing becoming available in the city. As a Local Authority OCC is required to have an Allocations Scheme under Part 6 of the Housing Act 1996. The Allocations Scheme is reviewed periodically to ensure it is kept up to date and to meet any emerging trends such as a rise in homelessness/increase demand for housing. A review of the Allocations Scheme has been completed to help meet current housing challenges the Council is facing and how could the scheme be simplified to increase operational efficiency. Best practice in many other local authorities has been considered as part of this. This has led to proposals which have been consulted on with tenants, other residents and other key stakeholders, these include the following: • Increasing priority to help residents need with multiple housing needs at risk of homelessness • Help for residents threatened with homelessness or homeless living in Temporary Accommodation re-housed into Private Rented Sector outside of Oxford through the creation of a new time limited retained priority band. • Introducing changes to help existing tenants requesting to move to more suitable homes and freeing up more high demand social housing; one bed general needs, adapted and family accommodation for households in need.			

		• Changes to supported accommodation move on to help increase throughput from this high demand housing in the city and make the best use of the limited supported housing becoming available for residents who are unable to live independently. • Strengthening the existing approach to make the best use of family housing becoming available for children in housing need and excluding older adult children/non-dependents aged 22+ from inclusion a parent or another's housing application unless they meet an exception and need to remain – for example to give or receive care etc. • Greater clarity on health and housing assessments within the Allocations Scheme to provide greater transparency, help customers and reduce queries.
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.	The consequence of not updating the Allocations Scheme impacts its effectiveness in helping to deliver key priorities for the residents and the Council.

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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?**	Following a review of the Allocations Scheme to identify improvements to the existing policy a consultation has taken place with tenants, other residents, Registered Providers of social housing and other key stakeholders requesting feedback and comments on the key areas of the Allocations Scheme which are: • Proposed to change • Proposed to stay the same

	Please provide details— -when, -how many, and -the approach taken.	The responses to the consultation have been reviewed and considered in the drafting of the new Allocations Scheme. A report has been produced providing a summary of the responses and the proposed new Allocations Scheme with recommendations will be submitted to the Cabinet and full Council requesting approval. The new Allocations Scheme will be available to residents on the Council website, housing applicants on the Oxford Register for Affordable Housing and other key stakeholders will be notified This EqIA was shared in a draft form as part of the consultation, helping inform the views of residents/organisations replying to the consultation. Following the closure of the consultation and the feedback received the EqIA has been reviewed.
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, -articles, -reports, -briefs.	Analysis of key data, legislation, guidance and best practice has been undertaken as part of the review of the Allocations Scheme and used to identify areas proposed to keep or change to help the Council deliver housing priorities for residents. Including a review of the: • Demand for housing in the city from tenants and other residents in need on the Oxford Register for Affordable housing. • Limited supply of social housing becoming available to let in the city for tenants and other residents in housing need. • Emerging trends – including the rise in homelessness and households in Temporary Accommodation and increase in residents applying for social housing on the Oxford Register for Affordable Housing **Responses from tenants, other residents and staff have been considered following the feedback from the consultations on the proposals and this EqIA updated to reflect the responses.**
19.	**If you have not done any consultations or collected data & information, are you planning to do so in the future?**	Not applicable see above.

	Please list the details – -when, -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	**Service Users**	Yes
		Members of staff	Yes
		General public	Yes
			Yes

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[redacted]	or unknown.	**Partner / Community Organisation**	
		City Councillors	Don't Know
		Council suppliers and contractors	No

21.	**Does the activity impact positively or negatively on any protected characteristics as stated within Equality (Act 2010)?**		
Protected Characteristic	**Activity Impact: Positive/Negative/Neutral/Don't know**	**Data/information/evidence supporting your assessment**	**Analysis & insight** **Mitigations**
Age	Activity Impact: Positive	The Allocations Scheme continues to aim to make the best use of the limited family housing becoming available and ensure households with children who are homeless, overcrowded, needing to move on health, social and welfare grounds or living in otherwise unsuitable housing are given priority for the limited social housing becoming available in the city. While ensuring exceptions are allowed for older adult children/members who need to	The Allocations Scheme is kept under review to ensure: • family housing continues to be allocated to families with children – except where older adults need to be re-housed with parents because they cannot live alone.

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Disability **(Visible and invisible)**	Activity Impact Positive	The Allocations Scheme continues to aim to make the best use of the limited housing becoming available suitable for households with a disability and ensure priority is awarded to take into account the needs children or adults with a disability affecting their housing. Checks are completed to understand the housing requirements of a household to ensure they are considered for suitable homes.	The Allocations Scheme priority bands ensure that the housing need of households with a disability is take into account when assessing housing need. Where a household's housing requirements change due to a disability this is reflected in the priority for housing awarded and the type of accommodation they require.

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		Adapted accommodation continues to be prioritised for households requiring this type of housing. Including properties with level access shower/stair lifts and wheelchair accessible housing.	The housing needs/priority of housing households with a disability are kept under review to reflect any new information received including recommendations from health professionals affecting their housing requirements.
Gender re-assignment	Activity Impact Positive	The Allocations Scheme continues to aim to make the best use of the limited housing becoming available and prioritise all households in housing need. If a household member is proposing to undergo, undergoing or having undergone a gender re-assignment and this affects the size/type of housing they require this will be taken into account in the assessment of their housing need to ensure they are only offered suitable housing.	The Allocations Scheme priority bands ensure the housing need of households is taken into account and offers of social housing are made to those in the highest need. Including if a household member is proposing to undergo, undergoing or having undergone a gender re-assignment and this affects the size/type of housing they require.
Marriage & Civil Partnership	Activity Impact Neutral	The Allocations Scheme continues to aim to make the best use of the limited housing becoming available and prioritise all households in housing need - including couples who are married or in a civil partnership.	The Allocations Scheme priority bands ensure the housing needs of households is taken into account and offers of social housing are made to those in the highest need. Including those who

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			are married/in a civil partnership.
Race, Ethnicity and/or Citizenship	Activity Impact Positive	The Allocations Scheme continues to aim to make the best use of the limited housing becoming available and prioritise households in housing need for all residents of Oxford. The Council's housing and homelessness evidence base (2023) identifies that the black community is disproportionally homeless in Oxford compared to the size in the community. The same evidence base also highlights that Bangladeshi, Pakistani, Mixed White and Asian, and Other Mixed households are more likely to be overcrowded than other households. Therefore, the provisions in the allocations policy given preference to homeless and overcrowded households should benefit these groups.	The Allocations Scheme priority bands ensure the housing need of households is taken into account and offers of social housing are made to those in the highest need. Housing advice and support is provided to all residents in housing need requiring advice on their housing options and information provided in appropriate format/language if needed. Bangladeshi, Pakistani, Mixed White and Asian, and Other Mixed households are more likely to be overcrowded. These households, if they contain children, will benefit from the changes proposed to the assessment of households with adult non-dependants aged 22+ by the policy, while those households made up of more Non dependants will be negatively impacted.

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Pregnancy & Maternity	Activity Impact Positive	The Allocations Scheme continues to aim to make the best use of the limited housing becoming available and prioritise all households in housing need - including households who include pregnant women. This includes all single and family households who are homeless, need to move on health or social and welfare grounds, overcrowded or living in otherwise unsuitable housing.	The Allocations Scheme priority bands ensure the housing need of households is taken into account and offers of social housing are made to those in the highest need. Including where a member of the household is/has been pregnant.
Religion or Belief	Activity Impact Neutral	The Allocations Scheme continues to aim to make the best use of the limited housing becoming available and prioritise households in housing need for all residents of Oxford. This includes all single and family households who are homeless, need to move on health or social and welfare grounds, overcrowded or living in otherwise unsuitable housing.	The Allocations Scheme priority bands ensure the housing need of all households is taken into account and offers of social housing are made to those in the highest need.
Sex	Activity Impact Positive	The Allocations Scheme continues to aim to make the best use of the limited housing becoming available and prioritise households in housing need for all residents of Oxford.	The Allocations Scheme priority bands ensure the housing need of all households is taken into

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		This includes all single and family households who are homeless, need to move on health or social and welfare grounds, overcrowded or living in otherwise unsuitable housing. Women are disproportionally impacted by domestic abuse, the allocations scheme prioritises people fleeing domestic abuse.	account and offers of social housing are made to those in the highest need. Including priority awarded homeless survivors of domestic abuse of which a disproportionate number are women.
Sexual Orientation	Activity Impact Neutral	The Allocations Scheme continues to aim to make the best use of the limited housing becoming available and prioritise households in housing need for all residents of Oxford. This includes all single and family households who are homeless, need to move on health or social and welfare grounds, overcrowded or living in otherwise unsuitable housing.	The Allocations Scheme priority bands ensure the housing needs of all households is taken into account and offers of social housing are made to those in the highest need.
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.	Activity Impact Positive	The Allocations Scheme continues to aim to make the best use of the limited housing becoming available and prioritise households in housing need for residents of Oxford. This includes single and family households who are homeless, need to move on health or social and welfare grounds, overcrowded or living in otherwise unsuitable housing affected by socio-economic inequalities unable to secure affordable housing in the city.	The Allocations Scheme qualification criteria and priority bands ensure the housing needs of households is taken into account and offers of social housing are made to those in the highest need.

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Other (voluntary consideration) **Sanctuary seeking status leading to intersecting inequalities experienced by** **For example:** asylum seeker, refugee, person with insecure immigration status Oxford City Council became a local authority of sanctuary in December 2024, thereby committing to learn from our experiences, embed inclusive practices and share efforts to create a culture of welcome and safety for all.	☐	Activity Impact Positive		☐	The Allocations Scheme continues to aim to make the best use of the limited housing becoming available and prioritise households in housing need for residents of Oxford and those needing to move to the Oxford as a place of safety, including survivors of domestic abuse, conflict and refugees.	The Allocations Scheme qualification criteria and priority bands ensure the housing needs of households is taken into account and offers of social housing are made to those in the highest need.
Other **For example:** - Unpaid carers - Prison population - Homeless population -Council suppliers & contractors -Cabinet Members	☐	☐		☐		

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Section 5: Conclusion(s) of your Draft 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.	☐	No major change(s) or adjustments and continue with the activity. No need to monitor in the future.
23.	**Please explain how you have reached your conclusions above.**			**Benefits of Implementation**: The Allocations Scheme seeks to balance local needs and priorities with current legislation, guidance and best practice as well as local housing conditions. The Allocations Scheme is a key housing policy supporting the priorities of the Housing, Homeless and Rough Sleeping Strategy which include *great homes for all, preventing homelessness and adopting a rapid re-housing response, ending rough sleeping* benefitting all households with protected characteristics in housing need. A draft EqIA was completed and shared as part of the consultation on the proposals. To reflect part of the Council's housing related commitments within the Equality Impact and Diversity Strategy to provide Responsive Services and Customer Care for those with protected characteristics and to improvement engagement with tenants and residents in housing policy development. The proposed revised Allocations Scheme will benefit the majority of residents including households in housing need with protected characteristics, applying for social housing. However, with a finite supply of housing and increasing demand any changes to the relative priority awarded to applicants applying			

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for housing will have an impact on others on the Oxford Register for Affordable Housing. These have been kept to a minimum.

The relative merits of keeping the Allocations Scheme unchanged or making the proposed changes has been carefully considered and the proposals aim to get the balance right to continue to help house Council tenants and other residents in the highest housing need in the City including those in housing need with protected characteristics under the Equality Act.

Balancing Competing Priorities

Awarding higher priority to households threatened with homelessness/living insecure housing with multiple needs will help house residents who would otherwise become homeless and move into temporary accommodation arranged by the Council and require housing. This priority will help vulnerable singles and families to be housed more quickly and avoid the disruption and impact of being required to move to Temporary Accommodation before being housed. The additional priority will only be awarded to applicants with high housing need who would need housing anyway so will have a low impact on other housing applicants. Homeless people in Oxford are disproportionally female, Black, pregnant women, and disabled, compared to the general population, therefore there will be a positive equality impact from these changes for people with these characteristics.

A new priority award, for households at risk of homelessness or homeless living in temporary accommodation, housed by the Council into the private rented accommodation outside of the city will help these residents and increase the number of housing applicants on the Oxford Register for Affordable Housing. However, existing housing applicants in significant, or higher, housing need with an earlier priority date will not be affected and as the award is time limited for 2 years only a low number of housing applicants will qualify for this priority at any point in time having a low impact on others on the housing register. This change will have a positive impact for homeless households with protected characteristics if a move outside of the city is suitable for their needs.

Awarding a new priority award to Council tenants, and other social tenants, requesting to move from high demand housing to homes that better suit their needs will help these tenants – including those who need to move on health or social and welfare grounds or with other protected characteristics. Although this will increase the number of tenants in urgent housing need, this will free up more housing for others housing applicants urgently needing to move to higher demand housing and reduce the time they wait to be re-housed. Existing applicants in urgent need, including those with protected characteristics, with an earlier priority date will not be disadvantaged and there are only expected to be

[redacted]			a low number of tenants requesting to move for this reason at any point in time so the impact on others on the housing register will be low. The Allocations Scheme seeks to make the best use of the scarce family housing becoming available and will normally only allocate family properties to households with dependent children under 18 or where and exceptions has been agreed that it is reasonable to include an adult on another's housing application – including established household members. Strengthening the existing approach to explicitly state adult children aged 22 or older will be removed from their parent's housing applicant will benefit children in housing need. There are 259 housing applicants with adult children aged 22+ on the Housing Register – 156 are in high housing need (Bands 1 to 3) and 103 are in lower housing need (Bands 4 to 5). Due to the demand for housing only the 156 in the highest priority bands are likely to qualify for an offer and be affected by the change and many will qualify for an exception. Before implementing this change and to mitigate the impact on the highest priority cases who could be affected a full review of each case in the higher bands will be completed to check whether an exception applies and housing applicants will be given the opportunity provide relevant supporting information. While some housing applicants with older adult children could be affected – many more families will benefit. There are 1579 families on the housing register with children who would benefit from this change including 1052 in high housing need in (Bands 1 to 3) - including families with children who have been living in unsuitable housing for over 5 years. These changes to increase priority to households with children will have a strong positive impact on those households with children. There will be a mixed impact on other protected characteristics, overcrowded households with children will be prioritised, while overcrowded households made up of non-dependants will be deprioritised, so negatively impacted. The relative benefits and impact of this proposal have been carefully considered and while some households will be impacted – there are exceptions in place to protect those in the highest housing need, including those who with health needs. Changes to the Housing Register to create a new move on list to help residents to move on from supported housing who no longer require this support will benefit residents, including those with protected characteristics, to move on to settled accommodation and free up spaces for residents requiring support. The impact on other housing applicants will be low. Changes to the Allocations Scheme to provide clearer guidance on housing and housing awards will help benefit all residents – including those with protected characteristics

			The proposals to continue to use qualification criteria to ensure social housing continues to be offered to residents in the highest housing need with a local connection and suitable to be tenants. Exceptions are available to ensure the most vulnerable households, including those without a local connection with protected characteristics are not disadvantaged. The use of priority bands and Choice-Based Lettings will ensure all housing applicants are provided with clear information on the assessment of their housing need, the properties becoming available to let and when they may be made an offer of housing. Tenants requesting to downsize will continue to benefit from high priority to move and support to downsize to more suitable homes and families will benefit from more housing becoming available. Feedback from the responses received from tenants, other residents, Registered Providers of social housing and key stakeholders will be reviewd and influence the final draft of the new Allocations Scheme and Equality Impact Assessment.

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**? **For example-** - team, -directorate, -service area, -Equalities Steering Group,etc.	Housing Needs Team
25.		Housing Needs Team

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26.	**Who (individual, team, or service area) will be responsible for carrying out the EqIA review?** **How often will the equality impact be reviewed for this activity?** **For example-** -quarterly, -yearly, etc.	Periodically, including when any future changes are made to the Allocations Scheme	**27.**	**Date when the EqIA will be reviewed again.**	

Section 7: Sign-off

Name: [OBJ]Tom Porter

Job Title: Senior Service Development Officer
Signature:

Name: Richard Wood

Job Title: Housing Strategy and Needs Manager
Signature:

Name: Full Name

Job Title: Type here

Signature:

Name: Gail Malkin

Job Title: Head of People

Signature:
G Malkin

Name: Full Name

Job Title: Type here

Signature:

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

Name: Full Name	Name: Full Name	Name: Full Name
Job Title: Type here	Job Title: Type here	Job Title: Type here
Signature:	Signature:	Signature:
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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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Appendix 3 Allocations Scheme Review Survey Response

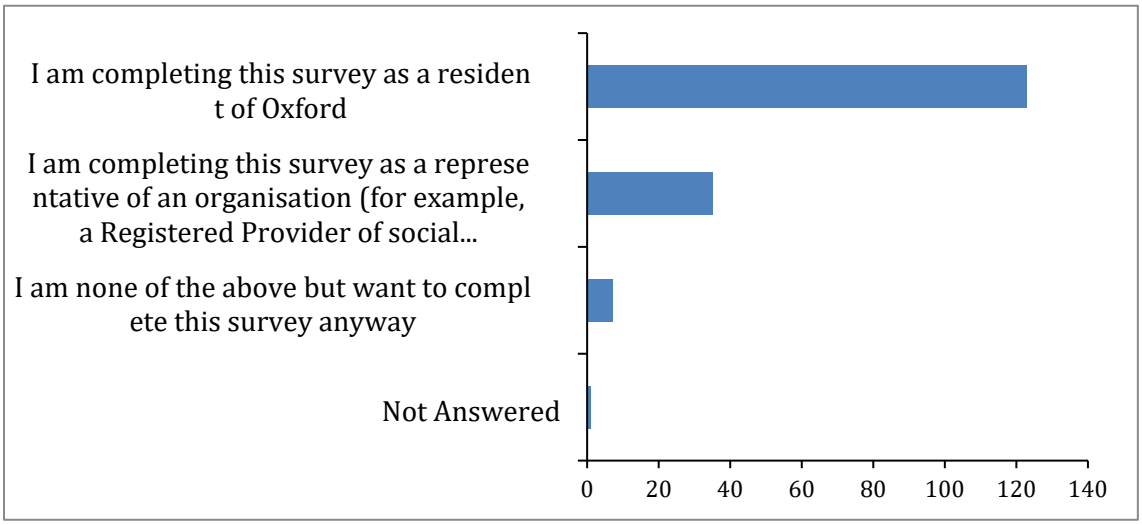
The Allocation Scheme Review

The activity ran from 11/12/2025 to 15/01/2026

Responses to this survey: **166**

1: Please select the option that best describes you:

There were 165 responses to this part of the question.



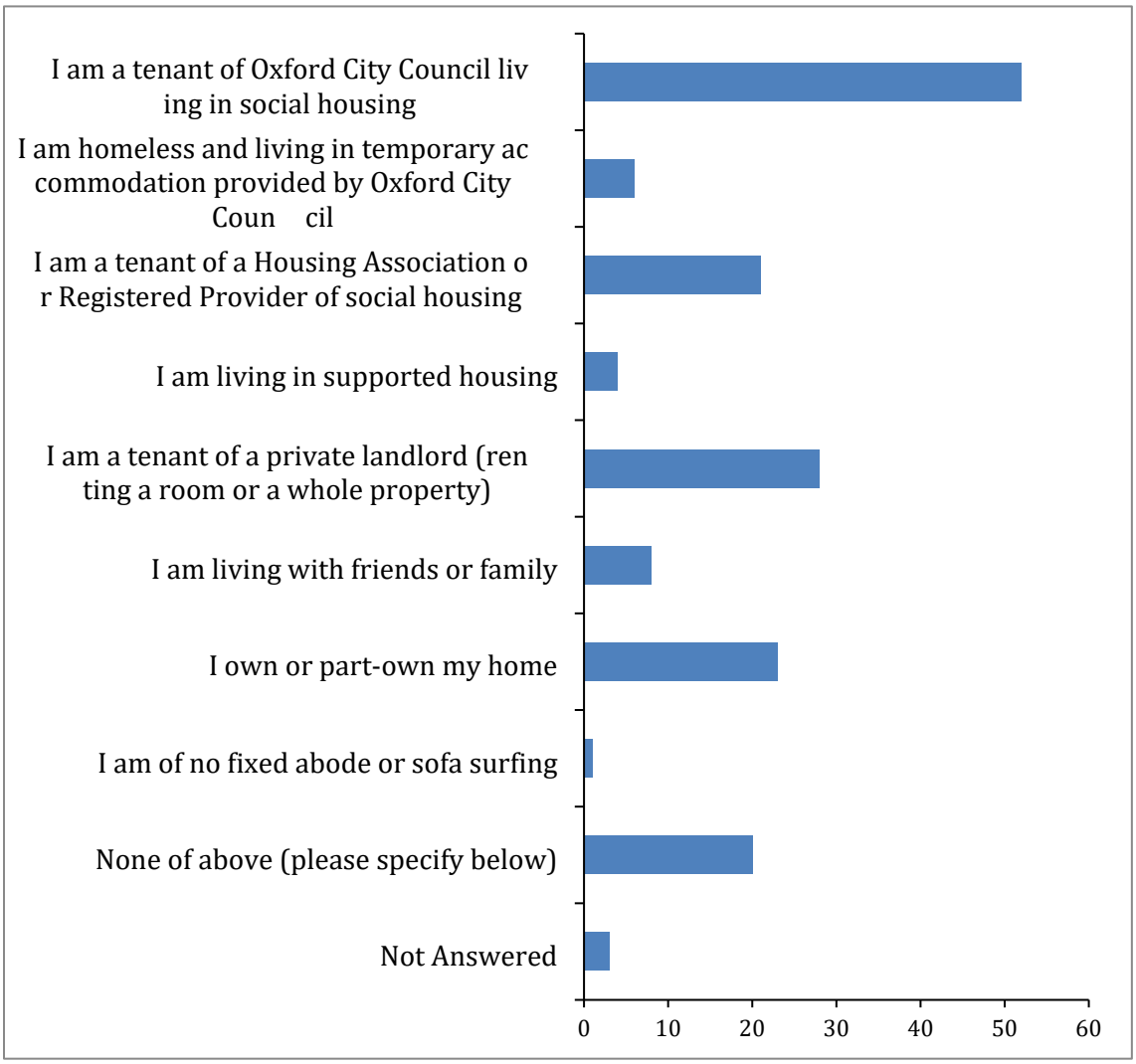
Option	Total	Percent
I am completing this survey as a resident of Oxford	123	74.10%
I am completing this survey as a representative of an organisation (for example, a Registered Provider of social housing, a Supported Housing Provider, an Advice Agency or another service)	35	21.08%
I am none of the above but want to complete this survey anyway	7	4.22%
Not Answered	1	0.60%

2: If applicable, which organisation or service do you represent in Oxford?

There were 50 responses to this part of the question.

3: What is your housing situation?

There were 163 responses to this part of the question.

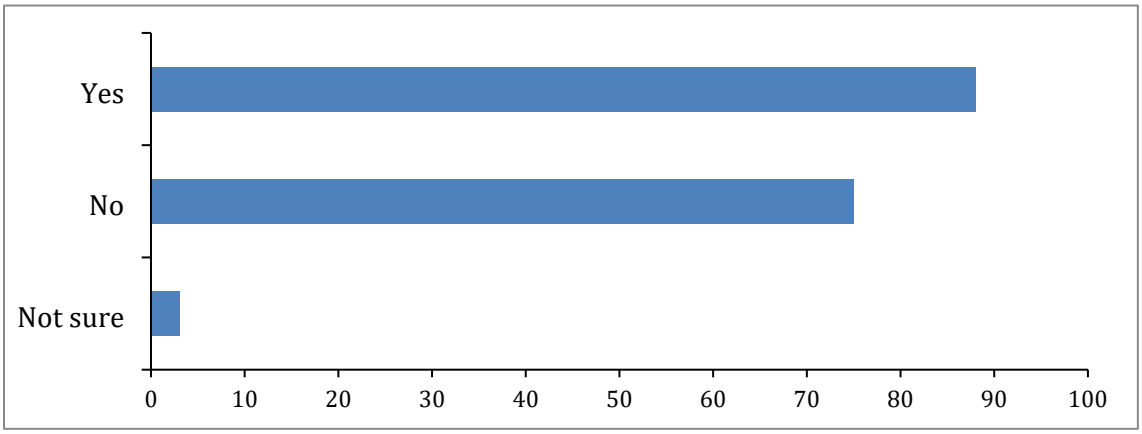


Option	Total	Percent	
I am a tenant of Oxford City Council living in social housing	52	31.33%	
I am homeless and living in temporary accommodation provided by Oxford City Council	6	3.61%	
I am a tenant of a Housing Association or Registered Provider of social housing	21	12.65%	
I am living in supported housing	4	2.41%	
I am a tenant of a private landlord (renting a room or a whole property)	28	16.87%	
I am living with friends or family	8	4.82%	
I own or part-own my home	23	13.86%	
I am of no fixed abode or sofa surfing	1	0.60%	
None of above (please specify below)	20	12.05%	
Not Answered	3	1.81%	

4: Are you currently on the Housing Register* in Oxford, or have you applied to join?

***The Housing Register is referring to applicants applying for an offer of social housing from the Council or a Registered Provider of Social Housing/Housing Association (not Shared Ownership or a Mutual Exchange).**

There were 166 responses to this part of the question.

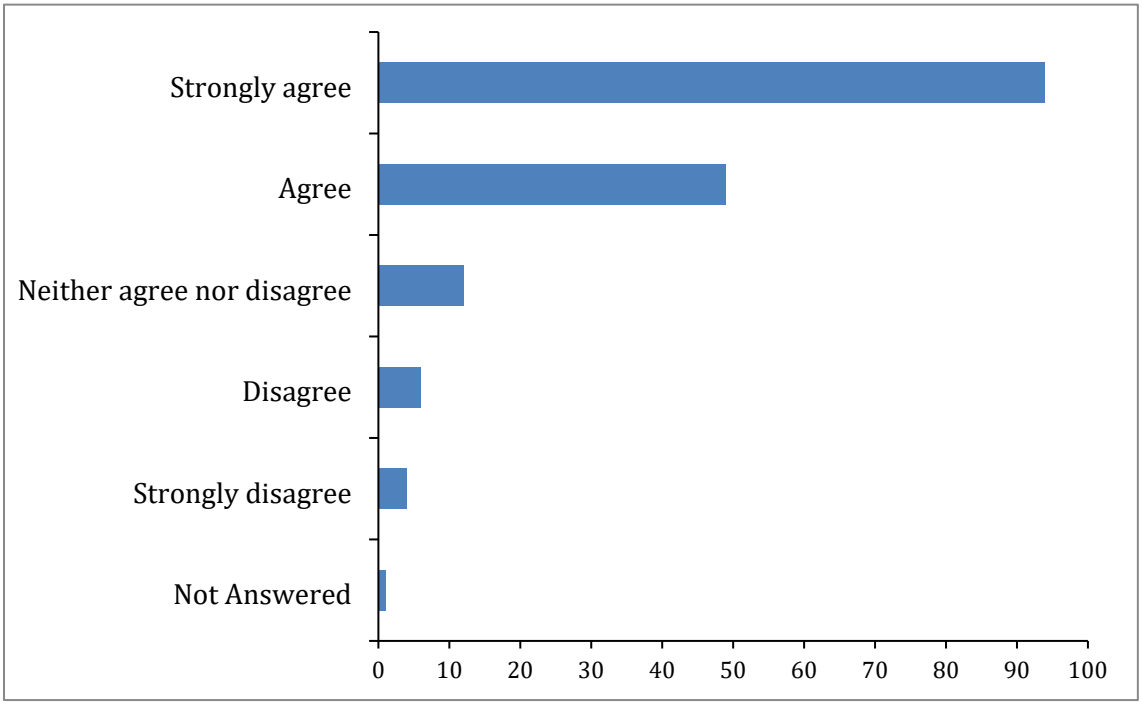


Option	Total	Percent
Yes	88	53.01%
No	75	45.18%
Not sure	3	1.81%
Not Answered	0	0.00%

5: Local Connection

The Council is proposing to keep the current qualification Local Connection criteria and exceptions to ensure social housing is offered to existing tenants, other residents and households who need to live in the city. To what extent do you agree or disagree with this proposal?

There were 165 responses to this part of the question.

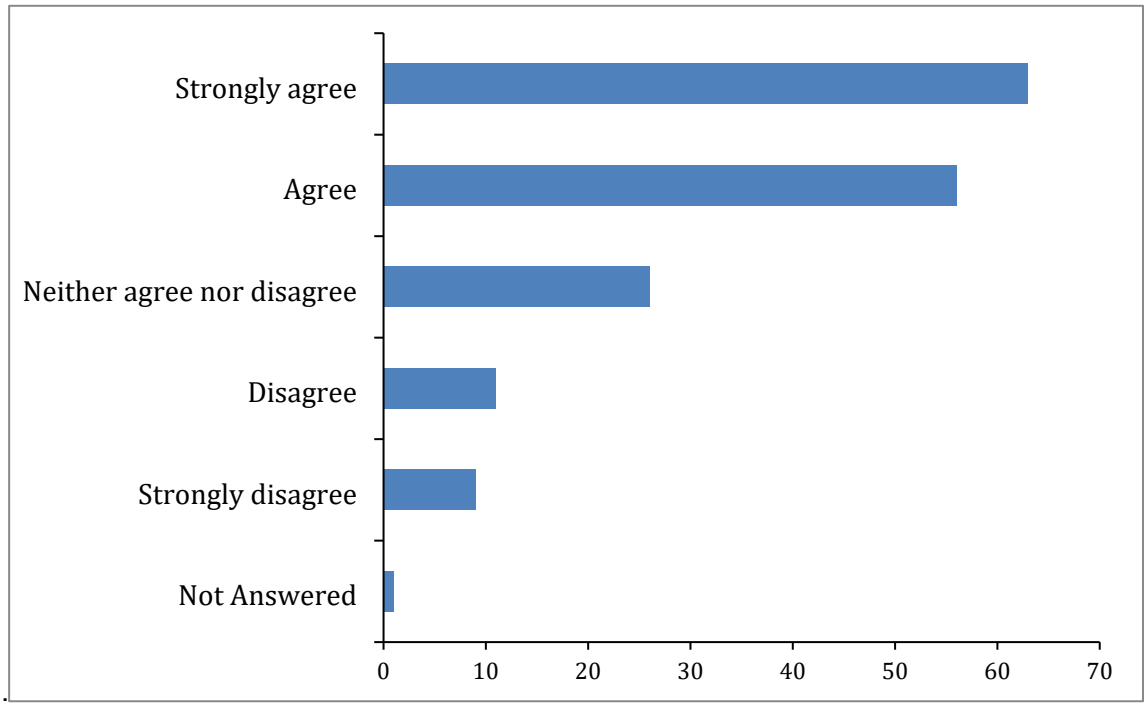


Option	Total	Percent
Strongly agree	94	56.63%
Agree	49	29.52%
Neither agree nor disagree	12	7.23%
Disagree	6	3.61%
Strongly disagree	4	2.41%
Not Answered	1	0.60%

6: Income and Savings

The Council is proposing to keep the existing qualification criteria and exceptions to ensure social housing is offered to residents in housing need unable to secure their own housing in the city. *To what extent do you agree or disagree with this proposal?*

There were 165 responses to this part of the question

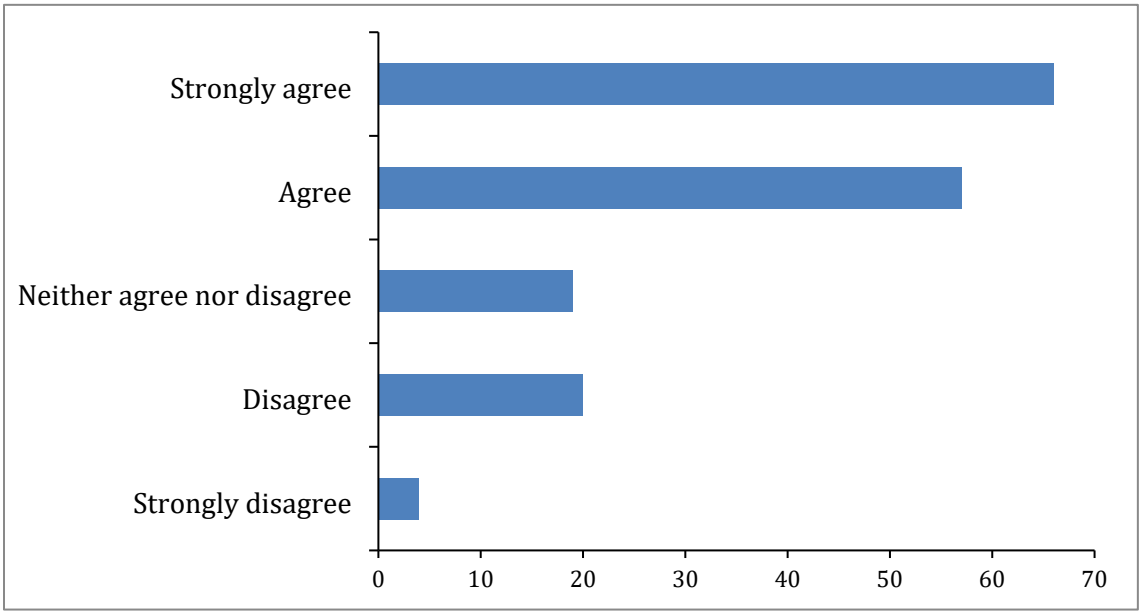


Option	Total	Percent
Strongly agree	63	37.95%
Agree	56	33.73%
Neither agree nor disagree	26	15.66%
Disagree	11	6.63%
Strongly disagree	9	5.42%
Not Answered	1	0.60%

7: Rent Arrears

The Council is proposing to keep the existing rent arrears qualification criteria and exceptions to ensure social housing is offered to residents in housing need who are able to successfully maintain a tenancy with appropriate support in place where required. To what extent do you agree or disagree with this proposal?

There were 166 responses to this part of the question.

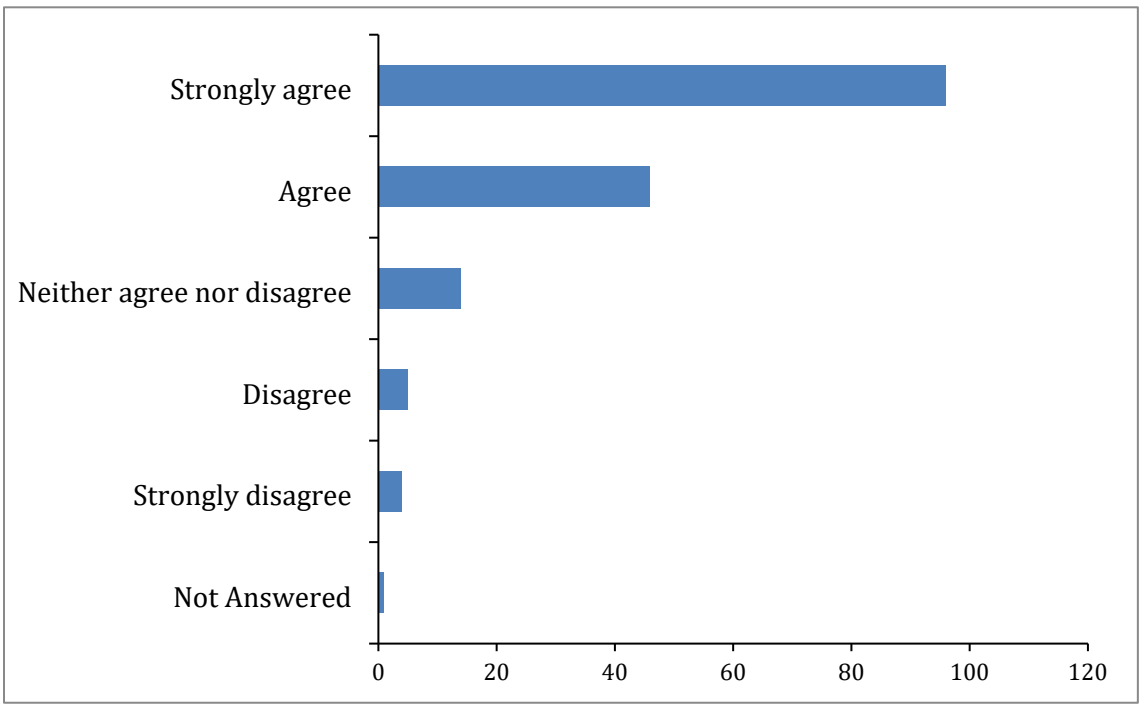


Option	Total	Percent
Strongly agree	66	39.76%
Agree	57	34.34%
Neither agree nor disagree	19	11.45%
Disagree	20	12.05%
Strongly disagree	4	2.41%
Not Answered	0	0.00%

8: Anti-Social Behaviour (ASB)

The Council is proposing to keep the existing qualification criteria on ASB and be able to exclude housing applicants responsible for serious ASB. To what extent do you agree or disagree with this proposal?

There were 165 responses to this part of the question.



Option	Total	Percent
Strongly agree	96	57.83%
Agree	46	27.71%
Neither agree nor disagree	14	8.43%
Disagree	5	3.01%
Strongly disagree	4	2.41%
Not Answered	1	0.60%

Qualification Criteria Response Summary

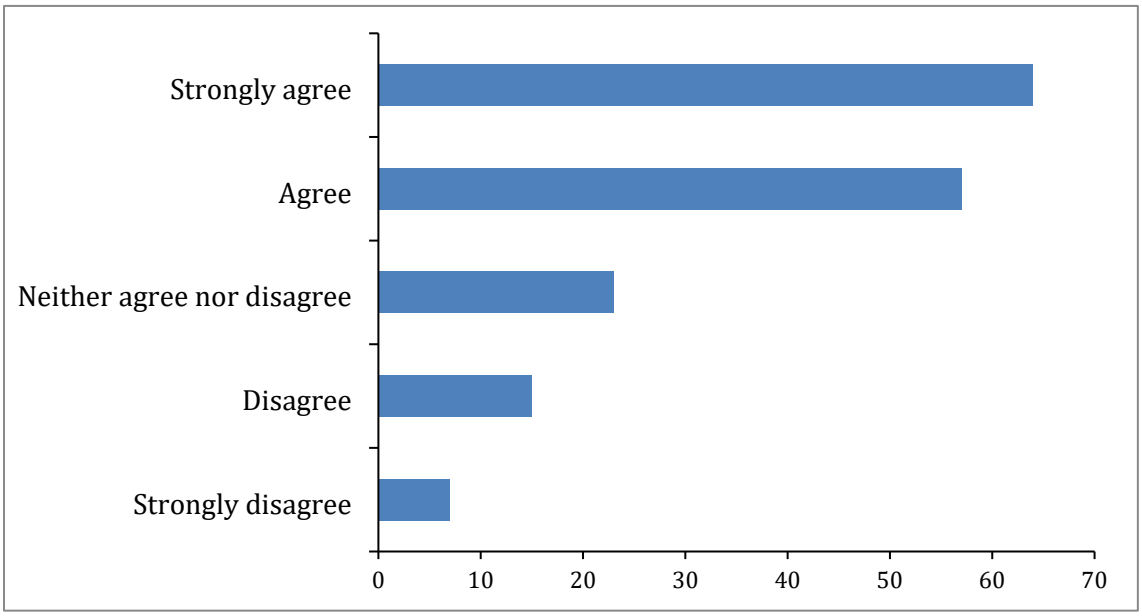
There was strong support for the proposal to keep the existing qualification criteria around Local Connection, Income and Savings, Rent Arrears and Anti-Social Behaviour (ASB) with over 80% of respondents supporting this approach for each area and only a low percentage disagreeing. Where concerns were raised these were largely covered by the exceptions within the policy to provide safeguards and avoid causing hardship. For example, the proposed Allocations Scheme allows for exceptions to ensure survivors of

domestic abuse and care leavers are not disadvantaged by local connection criteria and can apply for social housing in Oxford. Similarly, residents with higher income and savings who are unable to secure suitable housing elsewhere, such as adapted accommodation due to a disability, will not be disqualified if they need social housing. Housing needs assessments are also designed to ensure the individual circumstances behind any cases with a history of rent arrears or ASB, including a decline in health, lack of support, unaffordable housing or a change in circumstances are considered carefully when determining who will qualify for inclusion on the housing register and an offer of housing.

9: Priority for Housing & Choice-Based Lettings

The Council is proposing to continue using 5 priority bands to assess housing need and Choice-Based Lettings to advertise and offer properties to make this process as fair and clear as possible. To what extent do you agree or disagree with this proposal?

There were 166 responses to this part of the question.



Option	Total	Percent
Strongly agree	64	38.55%
Agree	57	34.34%

Neither agree nor disagree	23	13.86%
Disagree	15	9.04%
Strongly disagree	7	4.22%
Not Answered	0	0.00%

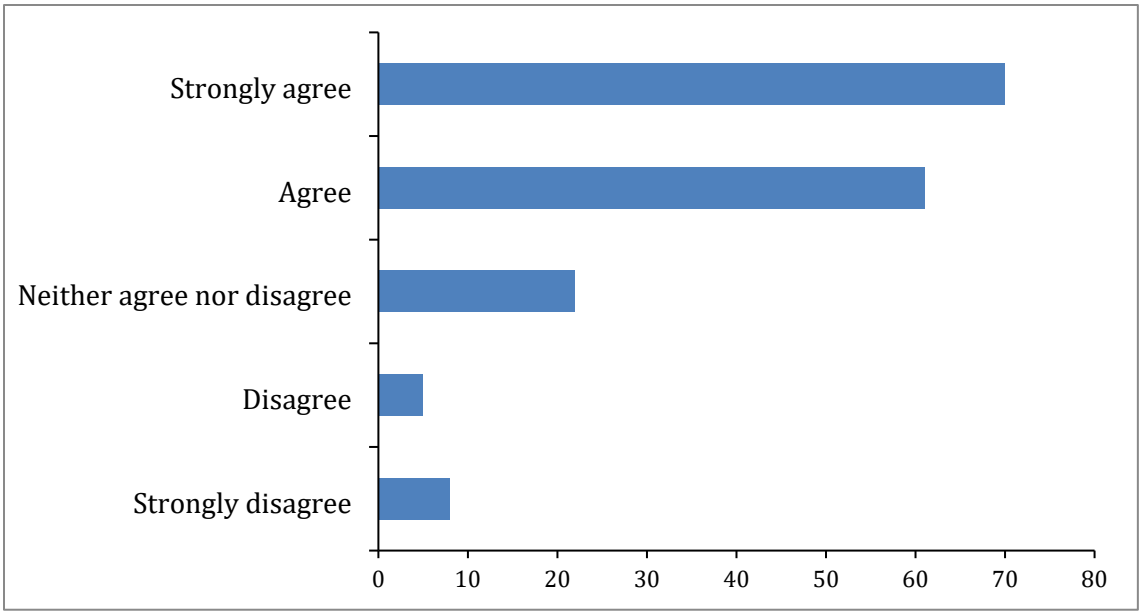
Response Summary

There was support for the continued use of Choice-Based Lettings and five priority bands used to assess housing need with 73% of respondents agreeing with this approach and only a low percentage disagreeing. Responses varied and included some who are understandably frustrated at the long waiting times caused by the high demand for housing and insufficient social housing becoming available in the City and the limited affordable options elsewhere in the private sector. The proposed new Allocations Scheme seeks to make the best use of single and family housing becoming available and to prioritise those in the highest housing need to minimise the time households in wait for an offer of suitable housing. However, with over 3500 households on the housing register and less than 500 properties becoming available last year – there is a long wait for housing and not all those applying can be offered social housing.

10: Homelessness Prevention for Residents with Multiple Housing Needs

The Council is proposing to increase the priority given to housing applicants with multiple needs at risk of homelessness, through no fault of their own, who are already living in overcrowded accommodation or otherwise unsuitable housing, or those with additional health or social welfare needs. To improve their chances of being offered housing before they become homeless. To what extent do you agree or disagree with this proposal?

There were 166 responses to this part of the question.



Option	Total	Percent
Strongly agree	70	42.17%
Agree	61	36.75%
Neither agree nor disagree	22	13.25%
Disagree	5	3.01%
Strongly disagree	8	4.82%
Not Answered	0	0.00%

Response Summary

The proposal to increase the priority for households threatened with homelessness with multiple needs was strongly supported by 82% of respondents agreeing with this approach and on a low percentage disagreeing. Some respondents reflected this would impact on the priority/waiting times of other households on the housing register and circumstances would need to be verified before awarding this priority. Under the proposed new Allocations Scheme this new priority will help the most vulnerable from becoming homeless, however, the number of housing applicants meeting this criterion is likely to be low, so the impact on overall waiting times for others will be limited and circumstances are checked as part of the assessment process.

11: Help for Homeless Residents from Oxford Housed Outside of the City

The Council is proposing to introduce a new significant priority award for housing applicants who are owed a homeless duty by OCC where they are:

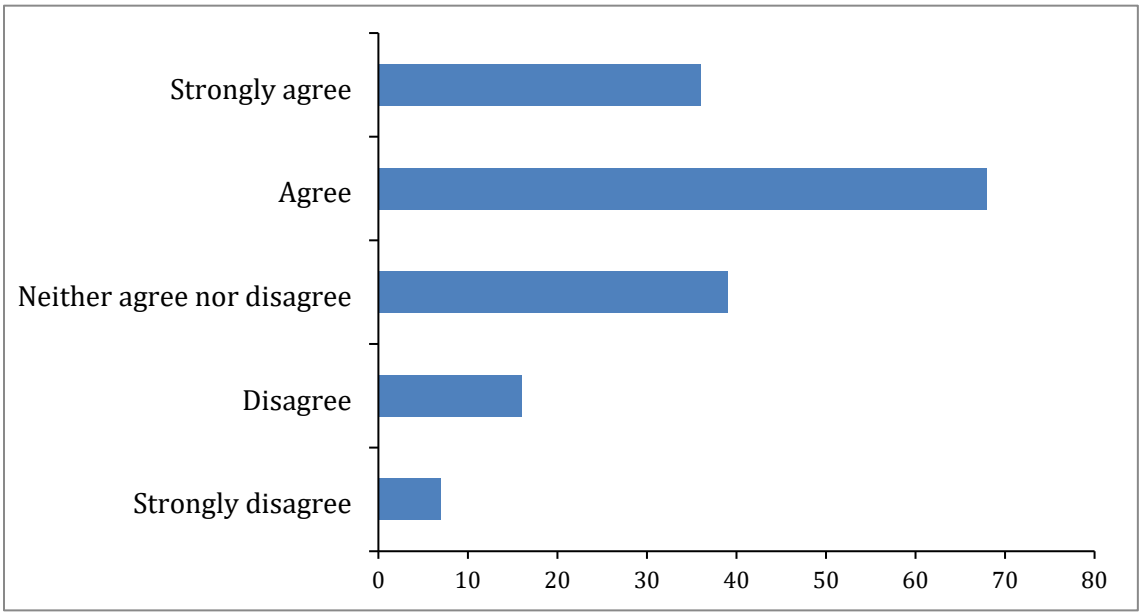
1. *Threatened with homelessness or homeless living in Temporary Accommodation*

And

2. *Re-housed by the Council into secure private rented sector housing outside of the city to discharge a homeless duty owed by OCC.*

This priority would be time limited for up to 2 years to give the opportunity to continue to apply for social housing in Oxford for a reasonable period of time after they have moved. To what extent do you agree or disagree with this proposal?

There were 166 responses to this part of the question.



Option	Total	Percent
Strongly agree	36	21.69%
Agree	68	40.96%
Neither agree nor disagree	39	23.49%
Disagree	16	9.64%
Strongly disagree	7	4.22%
Not Answered	0	0.00%

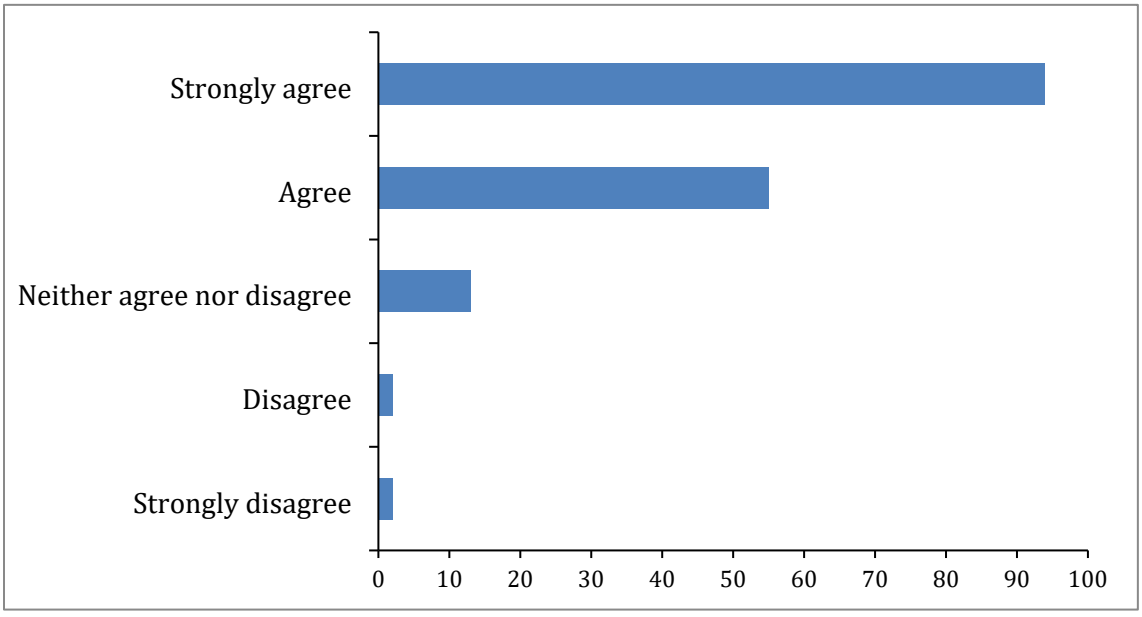
Response Summary

The majority of respondents supported the proposal to introduce a new time limited priority award for homeless Residents from Oxford housed outside of the city with 63% agreeing and only 15% disagreeing. The responses largely indicated that residents understandably would prefer to be offered social housing in Oxford and if private rented housing were offered elsewhere, checks should be made to ensure it was suitable. Some residents also reflected that this would impact on the priority/waiting times for applicants in housing need. The Council already has in place a separate *Homeless Discharge into the Private Rented Sector Policy* (PRS) to ensure that suitability assessments take into account the circumstances of each household before offering a home in the PRS outside Oxford. The number of housing applicants meeting this criterion each year is likely to be low, and the award is time limited for 2 years so the impact on overall waiting times for others will be limited.

12: Freeing up More Family Homes and Helping Existing Tenants
Helping tenants downsize

The Council is proposing to continue to provide help and award high priority to Council tenants (and other social housing tenants) who are under-occupying larger homes and wish to downsize. To support tenants requesting to move to more suitable homes and help free up more properties for families with children urgently needing housing. To what extent do you agree or disagree with this proposal?

There were 166 responses to this part of the question.



Option	Total	Percent

Strongly agree	94	56.63%
Agree	55	33.13%
Neither agree nor disagree	13	7.83%
Disagree	2	1.20%
Strongly disagree	2	1.20%
Not Answered	0	0.00%

Response Summary

The proposal to continue seeking to free up more family homes and to help Council and other social tenants wishing to downsize to a smaller home was strongly supported with over 90% of respondents agreeing and only a very low percentage disagreed. Responses agreed with continuing to encourage under-occupying tenants wishing to downsize to move while ensuring tenants who were happy in their homes were not put under pressure to move. The proposed new Allocations Scheme continues to ensure the wishes of under-occupying social tenants are respected and they are only offered priority to move if they want to. Feedback from respondents encouraged the Council and partners to continue to promote the help available to any under-occupying tenants wishing to move.

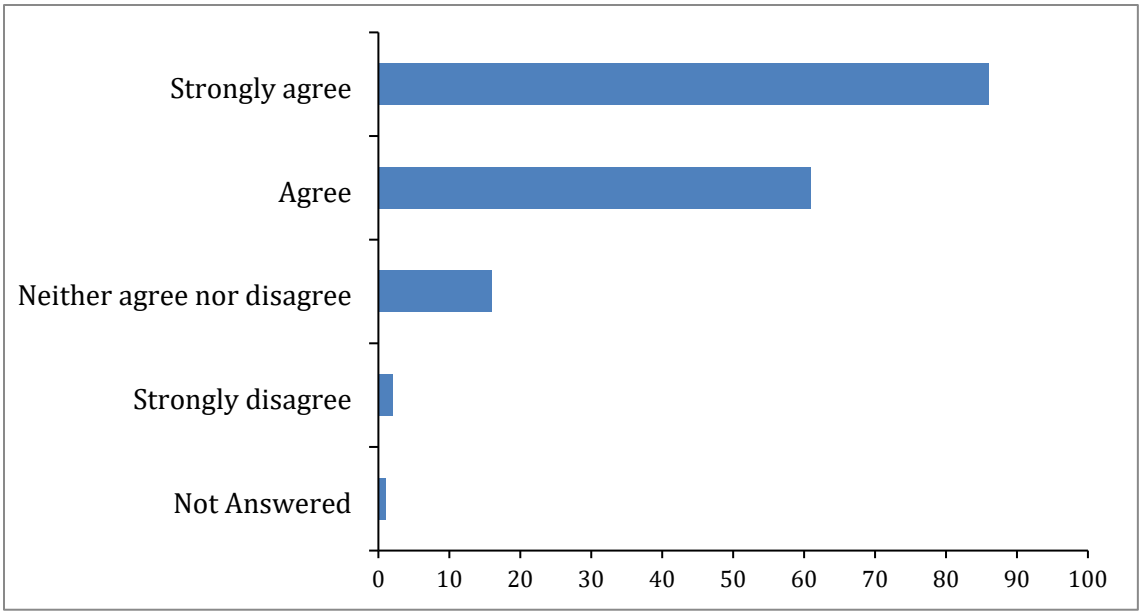
13: Freeing Up More Bungalows/Adapted Homes and Helping Existing Tenants

The Council is proposing to introduce a new urgent priority award to help tenants who are requesting to move to another more suitable home and free up a higher demand property for another resident in housing need where they are living in a:

- *Bungalow and would like to move to another type of property (excluding a move to another bungalow)*
- *A significantly adapted flat or house they no longer require and would like to move to another property without adaptations.*

To what extent do you agree or disagree with this proposal?

There were 165 responses to this part of the question.



Option	Total	Percent
Strongly agree	86	51.81%
Agree	61	36.75%
Neither agree nor disagree	16	9.64%
Disagree	0	0.00%
Strongly disagree	2	1.20%
Not Answered	1	0.60%

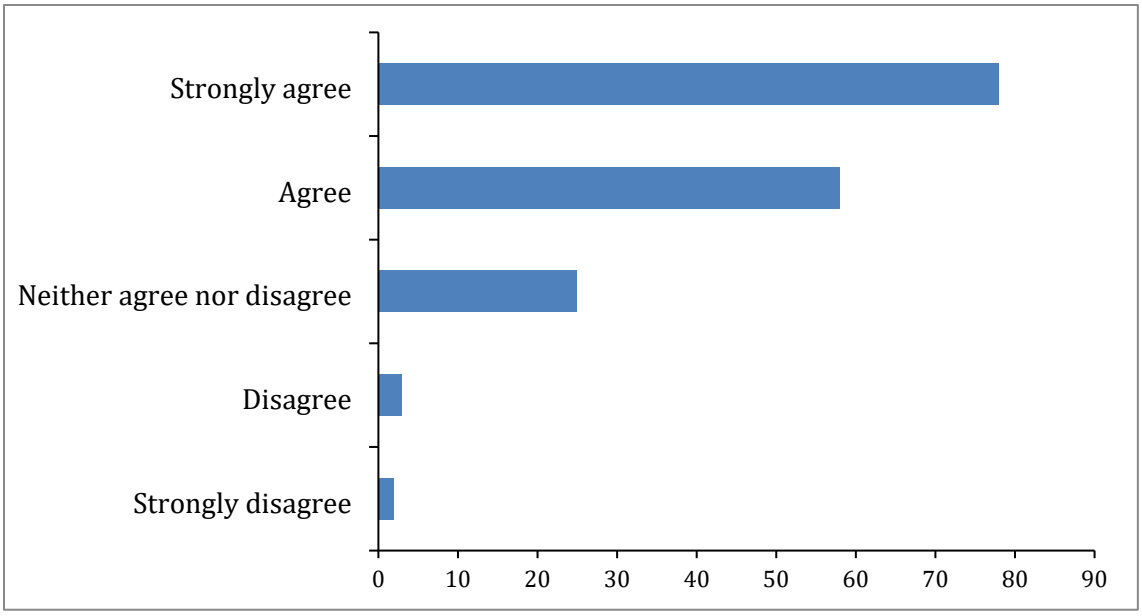
14: Freeing up More One-Bedroom Homes and Helping Existing Tenants

The Council is proposing to introduce a new high priority award for Council and other social tenants requesting to move where they are living in a:

- *1-bedroom general needs flat (without an age restriction) and would like to move to lower demand 55+ older persons housing which is more suitable for their housing needs*

To what extent do you agree or disagree with this proposal?

There were 166 responses to this part of the question.



Option	Total	Percent
Strongly agree	78	46.99%
Agree	58	34.94%
Neither agree nor disagree	25	15.06%
Disagree	3	1.81%
Strongly disagree	2	1.20%
Not Answered	0	0.00%

Response Summary to Freeing Up More Bungalows, 1 Beds and Adapted Homes

The proposal to free up more bungalows, adapted homes, one-bedroom general needs housing for existing Council and other social tenants wishing to move to lower demand homes was supported agreed by 82% of respondents and only a very lower percentage disagreed. Responses sought re-assurance tenants would only be moved if they requested to move and any housing offered should be suitable for their needs. Feedback also supported help being offered to Council tenants on a low income/needing help and support to move home (similar to the help already offered to downsizing Council tenants) and asked whether any financial incentive could be offered. The proposed new Allocations Scheme will ensure the wishes of qualifying tenants are respected and they are only offered the opportunity to move if they want to. Further consideration will be given to whether additional assistance can be provided to help facilitate these moves to Council tenants.

15: Making the Best Use of Family Housing

The Council is proposing to strengthen the existing approach on prioritising offers of family housing to residents with children under 18 by introducing changes where there are older household members still living with a housing applicant to explicitly state:

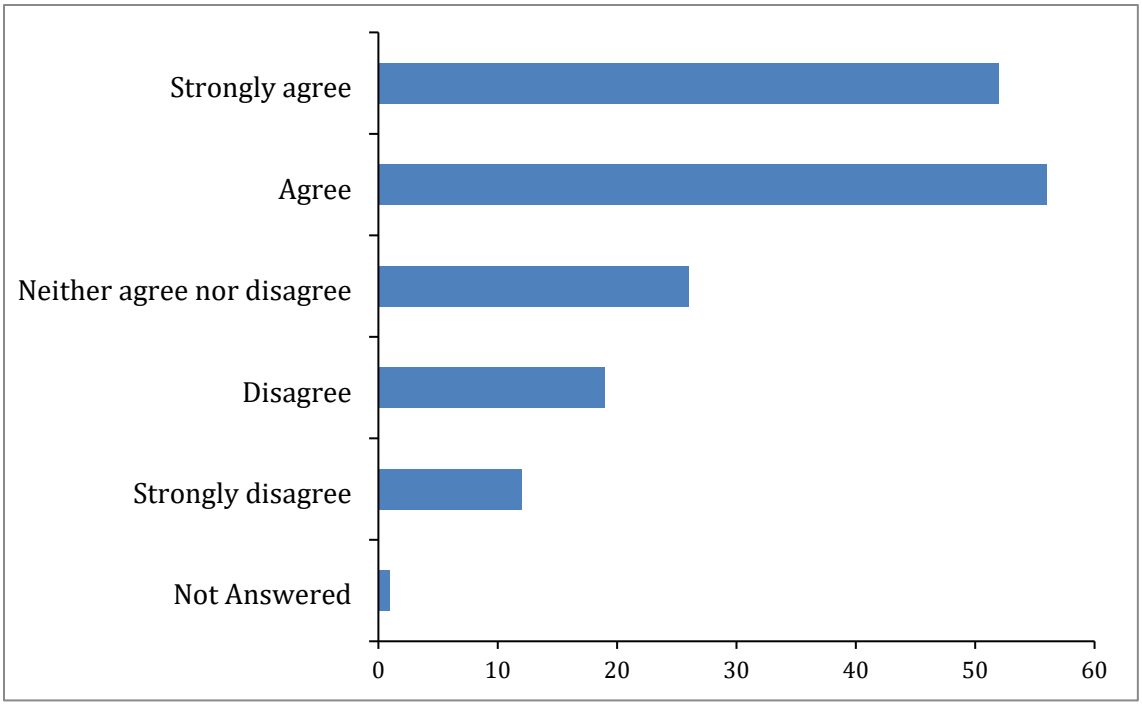
- *Any adult child aged 22 or older will be excluded from their parents' housing application and not count towards the number of bedrooms they require and their priority to move (unless an exception is agreed).*
- *Any other adult (excluding partners) aged 22 or older will be excluded from another person's housing application and not count towards the number of bedrooms they require and their priority to move (unless an exception is agreed).*

The Council is proposing to continue to:

- *Allow exceptions where following an assessment of the households housing need it is accepted that is reasonable to include them for example adults with health needs needing full-time care who cannot live alone, former care leavers or a full-time student living at home and still studying.*
- *Advise adults they can make their own housing application and will have their housing need assessed based on their individual circumstances – for example a single adult sharing a room while living with their parents will have one-bedroom housing need and be awarded priority for being overcrowded.*

To what extent do you agree or disagree with this proposal?

There were 165 responses to this part of the question.



Option	Total	Percent
Strongly agree	52	31.33%
Agree	56	33.73%
Neither agree nor disagree	26	15.66%
Disagree	19	11.45%
Strongly disagree	12	7.23%
Not Answered	1	0.60%

Response Summary

The proposal to continue to make the best use of family housing by strengthening the existing approach in the new Allocations Scheme towards assessing housing applications including adult children and other adults (excluding partners) aged 22+ was supported by the majority respondents – with 65% agreeing and only 19% disagreeing. Responses included supporting the need for more family housing for younger children balanced against ensuring exceptions could be applied and taking into account the potential impact on families with older children, lack of alternative housing options in the City and the long wait for housing could lead to more single adults approaching the Council for assistance.

The proposed new Allocations Scheme seeks to balance the competing priorities of housing households in the highest housing need and a range of exceptions are in place for those still needing to live at home, including adults providing support parents with health needs, or their own health needs requiring full-time care who cannot live alone, former care leavers or full-time students living at home and still studying. Existing Council and other social tenants seeking to downsize will also qualify for an exception.

Before implementing this change and to mitigate the impact on cases who could be affected a full review of each case will be completed to check whether an exception applies and housing applicants will be given the opportunity provide relevant supporting information.

16: Making the Best Use of Supported Housing

The Council Oxford Register for Affordable Housing uses Housing Lists to ensure that a fair number of properties are allocated to existing tenants and other residents.

The Council proposes to:

1. Keep the existing Housing Lists:

- *The Transfer List for tenants of the Council and other social landlords*
- *The Homeless List for residents owed a statutory homeless duty by the Council living in Temporary Accommodation*
- *The General Register List for everyone else – including residents living in the private rented sector and friends and family (and currently residents living in supported housing).*

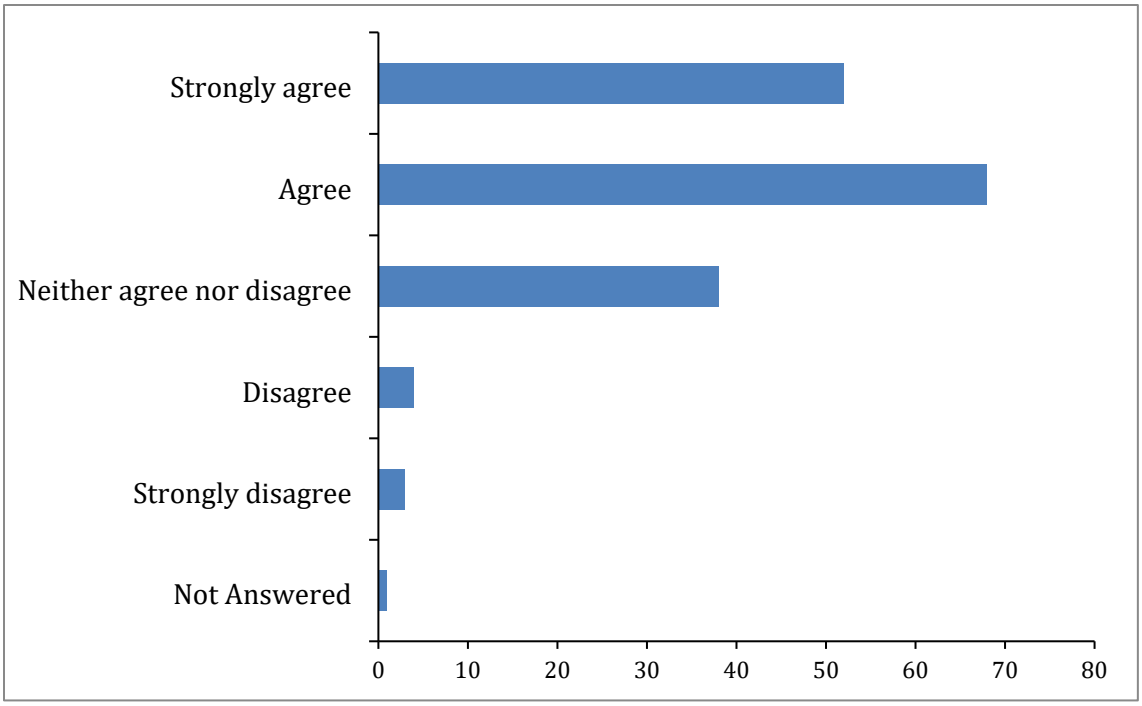
2. Create a new "Move On" list on the Oxford Register for Affordable Housing for residents living in supported housing assessed as ready to move on (and to remove them from the General Register List).

This will help:

- *Residents move to settled suitable social housing or private rented housing and free up more supported housing for residents not yet ready to live independently.*
- *Ensure only properties suitable for households moving on from supported housing are offered to this list and minimise lettings times.*
- *Increase transparency by providing clearer information to housing applicants on each Housing List what properties are available to them.*
- *Make the allocation process more efficient and reduce offer times to households in housing need*

To what extent do you agree or disagree with this proposal?

There were 165 responses to this part of the question.


Strongly agree
Agree
Neither agree nor disagree
Disagree
Strongly disagree
Not Answered
0
10
20
30
40
50
60
70
80

Option	Total	Percent
Strongly agree	52	31.33%
Agree	68	40.96%
Neither agree nor disagree	38	22.89%
Disagree	4	2.41%
Strongly disagree	3	1.81%
Not Answered	1	0.60%

Response Summary

The proposal to make changes to ensure the best use of supported housing was agreed by 72% of the respondents and only a low percentage disagreed. Responses included ensuring households were offered suitable housing, approving moving on residents no longer needing support to avoid long periods in housing not needed and better used for some-one else and reflected this could impact on re-housing times to others in housing need. The proposed Allocations Scheme has processes in place to ensure suitability checks as part of the offer process. The impact on other housing applicants on the housing register will be limited because move on applicants are already higher priority under the existing Allocations Scheme. The changes proposed are to improve processes and house applicants from support supported housing to suitable homes more quickly.

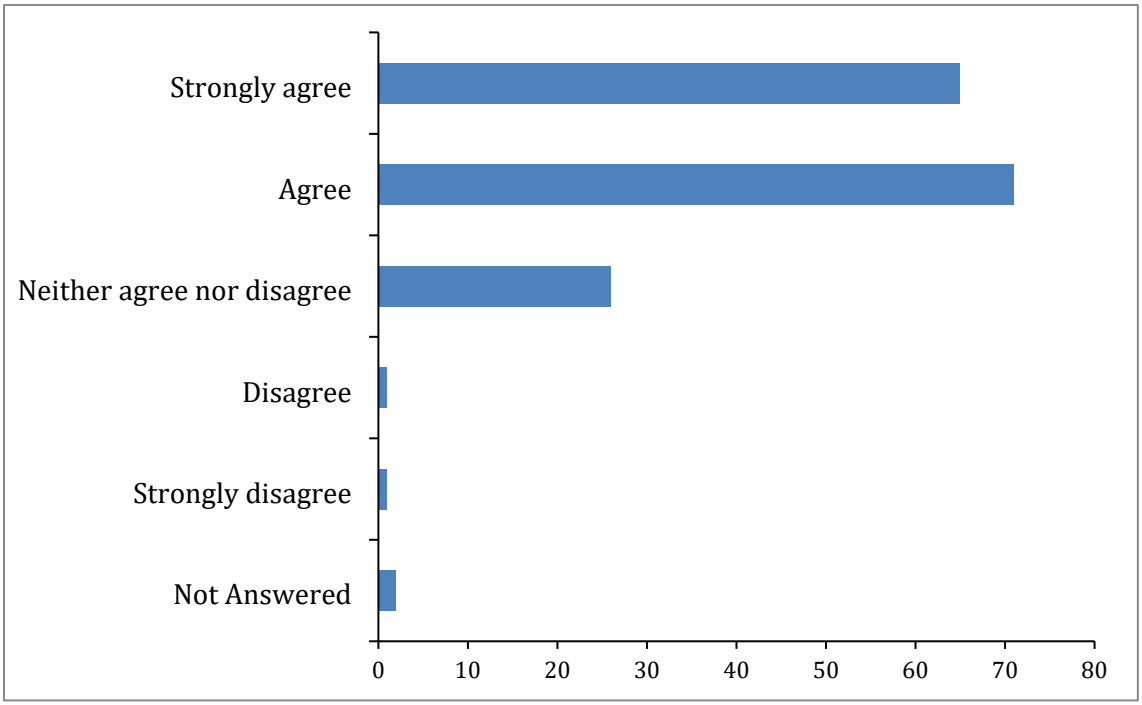
17: Guidance on Health and Housing Awards

The Council is proposing additional guidance is included in the Allocations Scheme in Appendix V to provide more details on how applications for housing are assessed when a resident is requesting to move on health grounds.

This is to provide more information to the public on how decisions are made, increasing transparency.

To what extent do you agree or disagree with this proposal?

There were 164 responses to this part of the question.



Option	Total	Percent
Strongly agree	65	39.16%
Agree	71	42.77%
Neither agree nor disagree	26	15.66%
Disagree	1	0.60%
Strongly disagree	1	0.60%
Not Answered	2	1.20%

Response Summary

The additional guidance on health awards was strongly supported by 82% of respondents with very low percentage disagreeing. Responses included ensuring evidence supplied by customers from health professionals is taken into account in this process and responsible for health and housing assessments are suitably trained in this area. The draft Allocations Scheme proposes to continue to use evidence provided by health professionals to assess housing applications and ensure staff are trained in these processes. Staff training will continue to be monitored and reviewed to seek to provide the best outcomes for service users.

Risk Register

Allocations Scheme

As at: (DATE)

									Gross		Current			Target						
Ref	Title	Risk Description	Opp / Threat	Cause	Consequence	Risk Treatment	Date Raised	Owner	P	I	P	I	Score	P	I	Comments	Control / Mitigation Description	Date Due	Action Status	% Progress	Action Owner
1	Sudden significant changes in local and national context	Allocations Scheme fails to comply with changes in legislation/guidance	Threat	Changes in government legislation and guidance	The Allocation Scheme fails comply with changes in legislation and/or best practice and runs the risk of legal challenge/failing to contribute to strategy housing priorities to support meeting local needs.	Avoid	22/1/26	Nerys Parry	3	3	1	3	3	1	3		The Allocations Scheme will be kept under review to reflect changes in legislation and best practice. The Director of Housing will continue to have delegated authority under the new Allocations Scheme to approve changes to ensure compliance with legislation and best practice to continue to reflect strategic priorities.		Ongoing		Nerys Parry
2	Failure to Comply with current Housing Legislation and Regulatory Requirements	OCC, in its role as a strategic housing authority and a landlord, fails to meet it's requirements under legislation and regulatory requirements	Threat	Allocations activities and processes fail to comply with requirements legislative requirements including Part 6 of the Housing Act and Social Housing (Regulations) Act 2023 and Consumer Standards 2024.	OCC could face challenge legal challenge if it fails to follow current legislation and guidance when applying the allocations scheme and fails to meet the Tenancy Standard on Allocations and Lettings required by the Regulator of Social Housing	Avoid	22/1/26	Nerys Parry	1	4	1	4	4	1	4		Effective Performance monitoring will continue to be in place to ensure compliance and make the best of housing stock to meet resident priorities.		On-going		Nerys Parry
3	Local Government Re-organisation	Changes relating to the implementation of Local Government Organisation	Threat	Central Government are reforming local government structures where there are two tier Authority's (such as within Oxfordshire) which have a County Council and District Councils to create bigger unitary Authority's.	The consequence of future Local Government Re-organisation will be significant as Council's statutory responsibilities are merged and Local Authority boundaries are re-drawn. Specifically for the Allocations Scheme there will be changes related to the merging of related teams delivering housing services and the need to consider new boundaries and the new registered providers that operate within the new boundaries.	Reduce	22/10/2025	Nerys Parry	3	3	3	3	9	3	2		The Council has a dedicate team working on Local Government Re-organisation. 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 of the strategy		Ongoing	20%	Nerys Parry
4																				

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

Risk Identification

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

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

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

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

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

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





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

The description of the risk should include the following elements:

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

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


ance

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

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

Risk Evaluation and Prioritisation

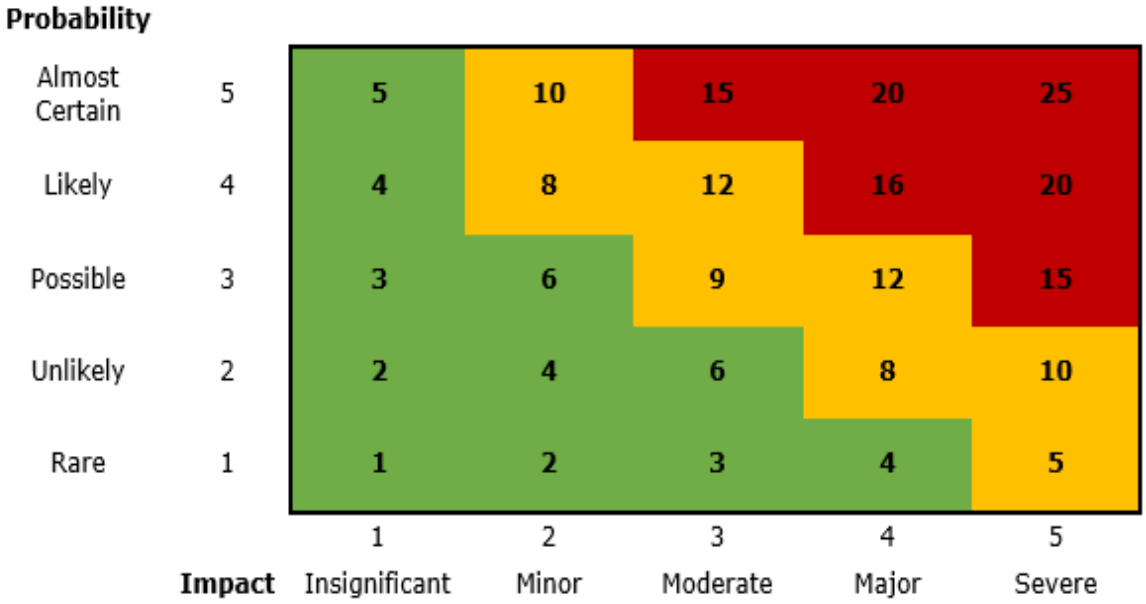
Once risks have been identified the risk matrix is the main tool for prioritising risks so we can establish which risks are most significant and therefore are in need of greater attention and resources. It also allows us to compare different types of risk with each other across the council.

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

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

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

Each identified risk should then be plotted onto the risk matrix.



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

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

Risk Probability Assessment Criteria

Scale	Description	Likelihood of	Probability of Occurrence

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

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

Risk Impact Assessment Criteria

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

Risk Treatment

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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OXFORD CITY COUNCIL

To:	**Cabinet**
Date:	**18th March 2026**
Report of:	**Deputy Chief Executive - Place**
Title of Report:	**Jericho Wharf**

	Summary and recommendations
Decision being taken:	To put in place a process for this council to assist in bringing forward the Oxford Plan proposals for development at Jericho Wharf.
Key decision:	No
Cabinet Member:	Councillor Ed Turner, Deputy Leader (Statutory) – Finance and Asset Management
Corporate Priority:	Good, affordable homes, Strong, fair economy, Thriving communities.
Policy Framework:	The Oxford Local Plan 2016-2036 Policy SP33: Canalside Land. Planning permission will be granted for a mixed-use development at the Canalside Land that includes all of the following uses: a) residential b) a sustainably sized community centre c) public open space/square d) replacement operating boatyard and winding yard e) a new bridge over the Oxford Canal for pedestrians and cyclists

Recommendation(s): That Cabinet resolves to:

1. **Seek** to procure a development partner / operator, with a viable business plan, to try to acquire the Jericho Wharf site by agreement and deliver the requirements set out in Policy SP33 and to indemnify the Council for the associated costs; and
2. **Confirm** that if the Jericho Wharf site cannot be acquired by agreement, then, as a last resort it would be willing subject to compliance with all relevant legal and policy requirements, if necessary consider the use of its Compulsory Purchase Order (CPO) powers to acquire the site; and to

3. **Note** that if an option to use CPO powers was to be pursued a further report would need to be submitted to Cabinet to seek approval for a detailed scheme for the redevelopment of this site demonstrating that the legal and policy tests for the use of its CPO powers had been satisfied. This would need to be accompanied by a recommendation to Council to seek authority to set up a budget for any additional costs for the implementation of its CPO powers, which would be redeemed from the development partner

Appendix No.	Appendix Title	Exempt from Publication
Appendix 1	Local Plan Policy SP33: Canalside Land	No
Appendix 2	Ownership Plan	No
Appendix 3	Risk Register	No
Appendix 4	Equalities Impact Assessment	No

Introduction

1. This report seeks to facilitate development at Jericho Wharf which has been vacant for around two decades. The Council and local community including Jericho Wharf Trust have become increasingly frustrated at the lack of progress and the latest planning consent granted in February 2023 has now lapsed with no sign that development is coming forward.
2. The Council has met with the landowner several times to seek assurances that they will bring forward development in a timely fashion. Such assurances have not been forthcoming. As such, to stimulate development the proposal is to work to try to identify potential alternative development partners for the site and for them to seek to acquire the site from the current landowner.
3. Approval is therefore sought from Cabinet that, in the circumstances that if development is not brought forward by the landowner in line with the policy requirements the council would seek to procure an alternative development partner, with a viable business plan, to acquire the site by agreement. In addition, approval is sought to confirm that if necessary and as a last resort, in the event that the site cannot be acquired by agreement, the council would be willing to use their powers under a Compulsory Purchase Order (CPO) if satisfied that the legal and policy tests were met.
4. If CPO powers were needed, a further report would need to be submitted to Cabinet for approval which demonstrates the details of the redevelopment scheme and that the relevant legal and policy tests for the use of CPO powers are met, having regard to the circumstances as they exist at that time together with a recommendation to Council for the setting up of a budget for any additional costs for the implementation of its CPO powers, which would be redeemed from the development partner.

Planning

5. The site is currently majority owned by Cheer Team Corporation (CTC) Ltd and with some of the land owned by Oxford City Council, Diocese of Oxford and the Canal & River Trust.

6. The Oxford Local Plan 2036 Policy SP33: Canalside land states that Planning permission will be granted for a mixed-use development at the Canalside Land that includes all of the following uses:
    a) residential
    b) a sustainably-sized community centre
    c) public open space/square
    d) replacement operating boatyard and winding yard
    e) a new bridge over the Oxford Canal for pedestrians and cyclists
7. CTC secured a planning consent in 2016 (14/01441/FUL) including: 23 residential units together with a new community centre, restaurant, boatyard, public square, winding hole and public bridge across the Oxford Canal. This development had the support of key stakeholders including JWT and the Diocese but is now expired.
8. A further planning application by Cornerstone, working with CTC, was approved on appeal 9th February 2023 (20/01276/FUL) to provide mixed residential, community centre and boatyard uses, including associated works for the provision of new public realm but excluding a new bridge and replacing this with a financial contribution towards a replacement bridge at Mount Place, located close to the site. This application is now also expired.
9. The emerging draft Local Plan 2045 currently under consultation includes Policy SPCW3: Canalside Land, Jericho sets out the following requirements: Planning permission will be granted for a mixed-use development at the Canalside Land site that includes the following:
    - Residential dwellings.
    - A community centre to replace the existing Jericho Community Centre on
    - Canal Street.
    - Public open space.
    - Replacement operating boatyard.
    - Electric charging points for mooring boats.
10. Latest guidance from the EA shows an increased flood risk for the site and a draft level 2 Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (SFRA) has been undertaken specifically for the Canalside site. The level 2 SFRA indicates that it should still be possible to locate uses within the remaining FZ2 area. However, the site does face additional barriers to development.
11. The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) provides a framework for planning policies in England, which includes guidance on the use of compulsory purchase orders (CPOs). The NPPF aims to facilitate sustainable development and includes guidance on CPO's designed to help local authorities in the process of acquiring land for development purposes.

Appoint development partner

12. In the absence of any progress from the developer approval is now sought from Cabinet to take on a facilitating role in bringing the site forward. Officers are therefore proposing to seek a development partner / operator with a realistic and

viable business plan to try and acquire the site by agreement and deliver the requirements set out in the submitted policy, and to ensure that the financial implications for the Council are limited.

13. In the first instance, the Council would seek, with its development partner, to acquire the land by agreement. However, recommendation 2 makes it clear that if it is not possible to secure the site by agreement, the Council would as a last resort and if necessary be prepared to use its Compulsory Purchase Order (CPO) powers and seek approval from Council for any associated budgetary expenditure to acquire the site. Any costs incurred by the Council would be expected to be covered by the development partner / operator through a development agreement.

14. The Council will continue to engage with the current landowner however, the procurement process to secure a development partner will commence concurrent with the landowner engagement and is anticipated to take 6-9 months to complete.

Compulsory purchase process

15. The Council considers that in the event of no agreement being achieved with the landowner that the option to use its CPO powers to help assemble the land would, as a last resort, be pursued. The power to make a CPO which would be relied upon is s.226 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990. This power can be relied on inter alia where acquisition is required for a purpose which it is necessary to achieve in the interests of the proper planning of an area in which the land is situated. Section 226 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 provides the powers for a local authority to seek the compulsory acquisition of land, subject to the confirmation by the Secretary of State. It is considered that given the derelict nature of the site, the strong policy framework advocating development, and its location within a Conservation Area it is expedient to pursue the CPO of the site in the interests of the proper planning of the area, subject to compliance with all relevant legal and policy requirements and the need to strike a fair balance against the impact on the human rights of those with an interest in the land affected.

16. The CPO process requires the local authority to fully justify the use of CPO powers. There are several legal and policy tests which must be shown to be met. These include setting out a compelling case in the ‘public interest’ for use of such powers, as well as the need to consider the ‘public sector equality duty’ and ‘human rights’ in respect of the use of CPO powers. There is a requirement to show that adequate resources are available to implement the scheme within a reasonable time period and that there are no likely impediments to the delivery of the scheme. It is necessary to show that there is no alternative means by which the same purposes could be achieved and that the CPO measure being pursued is a ‘last resort, following reasonable efforts to acquire the land by agreement. Recommendation 3 makes it clear that before CPO powers are formally engaged, that a further report would be presented to Cabinet to demonstrate that the relevant legal and policy tests for a CPO have been satisfied.

Environmental Impact

17. Planning Policy SP33 in the Oxford Local Plan 2036 requires that a planning application must be accompanied by a site-specific flood risk assessment and development should incorporate any mitigation measures. A Comprehensive Flood Risk Management Strategy should be produced in support of the Flood Risk Assessment (FRA) for this site. This Flood Risk Management Strategy should be

developed in consultation with Category 1 organisations as defined by the Civil Contingencies Act 2004.

18. The majority of the site is located within Flood Zone 2 with areas of Flood Zone 3 located along the boundary with the tow path and extending into the central parcel of the site adjacent to the church. The emerging Local Plan guidance will require a sequential approach to locating development on the site, and may need a raised floor level for some of the site, to be informed by the FRA.

Financial implications

19. There is a £200,000 budget line in the capital programme for the redevelopment of the Jericho Wharf site, which will be used for any initial costs associated with a future procurement of a development partner, or costs associated with bringing the site forward for redevelopment. This money will be drawn down in line with the Scheme of Delegation.

20. A further report would need to be submitted to Cabinet with a recommendation to Council to seek authority to seek approval for budget for any additional costs required for the procurement and for the implementation of its CPO powers, which would be redeemed from the development partner.

Legal Issues

21. A further report The Council has statutory powers to acquire land compulsorily under section 226 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990. This power enables the Council to make a compulsory purchase order where it considers that the acquisition will facilitate development, redevelopment or improvement and where that development is likely to contribute to the economic, social or environmental wellbeing of the area and is necessary in the interests of the proper planning of the area.

22. Recommendation 2 seeks approval from Cabinet to confirm a willingness to, if necessary, and as a last resort, use its Compulsory Purchase Order (CPO) powers to acquire the site with the appointed development partner. The development partner / operator would be required, as part of the agreement, to indemnify the Council for any cost/ liability associated with the use of these CPO powers.

23. Before any CPO process is instigated, a further report would need to be submitted to Cabinet to set out the details of the proposals and that the relevant legal and policy tests are met on the basis of the circumstances as they exist at that time, together with a recommendation to Council to seek approval for a budget to be redeemed from the development partner (Para 17).

24. Nothing in these recommendations prejudges any future decision as to whether a compulsory purchase order should be made, which would only be taken following consideration of a detailed report addressing the relevant legal, policy, funding and human rights considerations as they apply at that time.

Alternative Options Considered

25. The alternative is for the Council to leave development in the hands of the current developer with the risk that without any change in the strategy the site will continue to remain derelict with the loss of opportunity for much needed additional residential and community facilities.

Level of risk

26. The risk register is attached as Appendix 3.

27. The financial risk related to the cost of promoting a CPO and possible compensation is to be offset by the requirement for a third-party developer to indemnify the Council for costs incurred and secured via a development agreement.

Equalities impact

28. The Equalities Impact Assessment is included as Appendix 4.

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Background Papers:
1 None

Appendix 1 – Local Plan Policy SP33: Canalside Land

Policy SP33: Canalside Land



Planning permission will be granted for a mixed use development at the Canalside Land that includes all of the following uses:

a) residential
b) a sustainably-sized community centre
c) public open space/square
d) replacement operating boatyard and winding yard
e) a new bridge over the Oxford Canal for pedestrians and cyclists

Other complementary uses will be considered on their merits.

A planning application must be accompanied by a site-specific flood risk assessment and development should incorporate any mitigation measures. A Comprehensive Flood Risk Management Strategy should be produced in support of the Flood Risk Assessment for this site. This Flood Risk Management Strategy should be developed in consultation with Category 1 organisations as defined by the Civil Contingencies Act 2004.

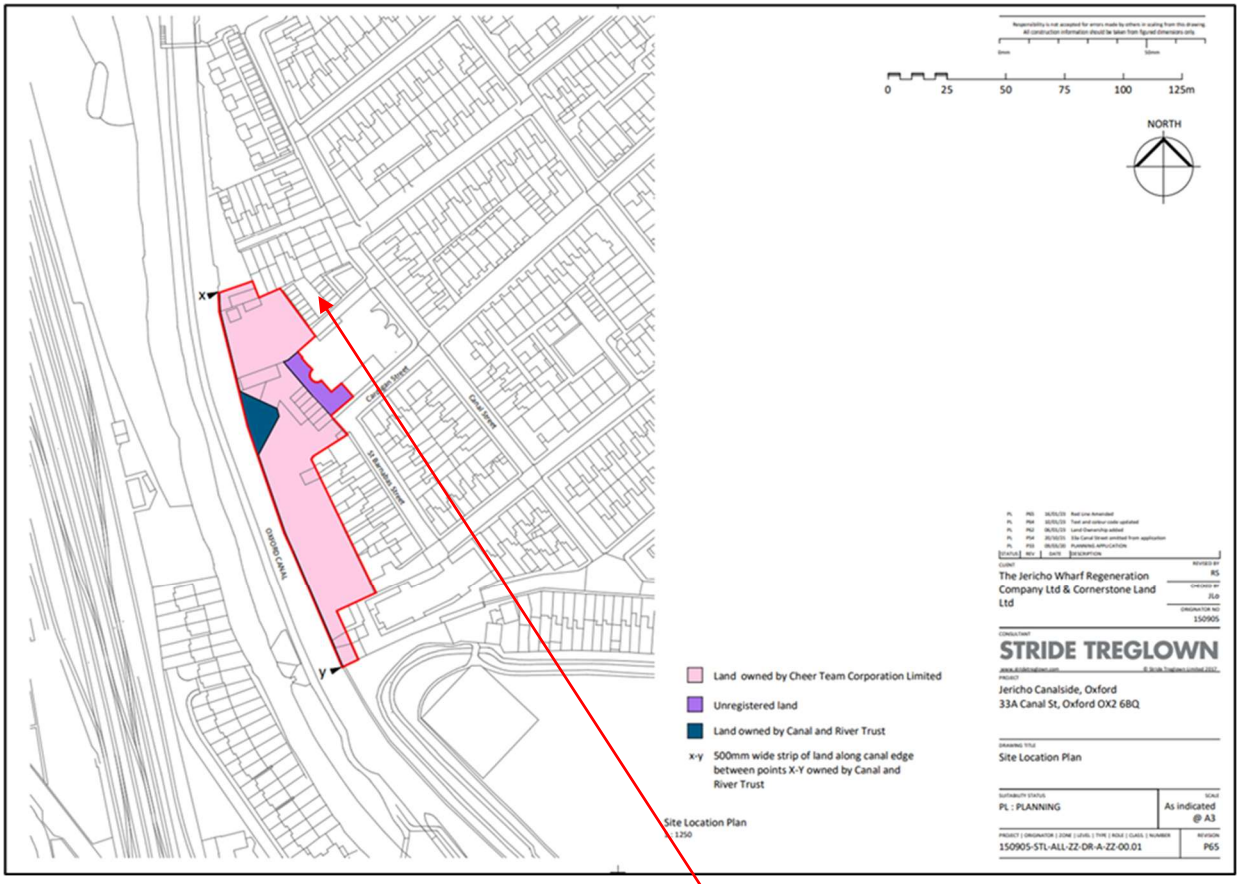
Development proposals should be accompanied by an assessment of potential recreational pressure on the immediate setting and the Oxford Meadows SAC that may arise from increased numbers of visitors, along with plans to mitigate this impact as necessary.

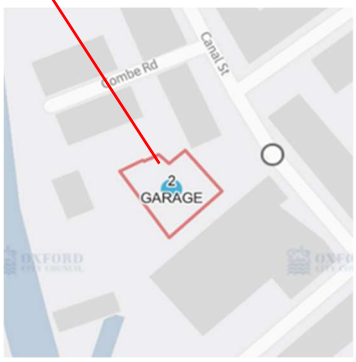
All proposals should minimise impact on air quality during construction phase.

The on-site boatyard may need some sealed storage areas if fuels, paints and chemicals are being used.

A planning application must be accompanied by a site-specific flood risk assessment and development should incorporate any mitigation measures.

Appendix 2 – Ownership Plans





OCC garage site

Risk Register

Jericho Wharf - Appendix 3

13 March 2026

						Gross			Current			Target					
Ref	Risk Title	Risk Description	Risk Cause	Risk Consequence	Name of Risk Owner	P	I	Score	P	I	Score	P	I	Risk Control/Mitigation Description	Risk Control Date Due	Progress on Risk Control/Mitigation	Action Owner
1	Financial	Financial liability for costs including compensation	Failure to secure alternative developer and development agreement	Council liability for costs	Director	1	4	4	1	4	4	1	2	Development agreement to indemnify Council and further Cabinet report	30/08/2026	Process confirmed in Cabinet report	Director
2	Development	Site not developed	Lack of action by Council	Site remains vacant	Director	4	4	16	3	4	12	2	3	Cabinet approval to commence CPO review	30/06/2026	Cabinet report pending approval	Director
3	Political	Adverse publicity due to continued lack of development	Lack of action by Council	Site remains vacant	Director	3	3	9	3	3	9	2	2	Cabinet approval to commence CPO review	01/07/2026	Cabinet report pending approval	Director
4	Legal	Legal challenge and Council liability	Failure to comply with CPO requirements	Council liability for costs/ compensation	Director	2	4	8	1	4	4	1	2	Additional report and approval to proceed requiring legal review	02/07/2026	Cabinet report pending approval	Director
								0			0						
								0			0						

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

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Section 1: General overview of the activity under consideration

1.	**Name of activity being assessed.**	CPO process to facilitate development of Jericho Wharf	**2.**	**The implementation date of the activity under consideration:**	13/03/2026
3.	**Directorate/Department(s):**	Regeneration	**4.**	**Service Area(s):**	Economy, Regeneration & Sustainability
5.	**Who is (are) the assessment lead(s):**	Roo Humpherson	**6.**	**Contact details, in case there are queries:**	anhumpherson@oxford.gov.uk
7.	**Is this a new or ongoing EqIA?**	New	**8.**	If this is an extension of a previous EqIA, please indicate where the previous EqIA is located and share the link to the said EqIA.	NA
9.	**Date this EqIA started:**	06/02/2026			
10.	**Will this EqIA be attached to** Corporate Management Team (CMT) **reports/updates, which will be published online?**	No	**11.**	**Give a date (tentative or otherwise) when this assessment will be taken to the CMT.**	NA

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

12.	**Type of activity being considered:**	☐ Decommissioning	☒ Commissioning	☐ Others. Please specify:		
13.	**Which priority area(s) within Oxford City Council's Corporate strategy (2024-2028) does this activity fulfil?**	☒ Good, affordable homes	☒ Strong, fair economy	☒ Thriving Communities	☐ Zero Carbon Oxford	☐ Well run council
14.	**Which priority area(s) within Oxford City Council's Equality, Diversity & Inclusion Strategy (2022) does this activity fulfil?**	☐ Responsive services and customer care.	☐ Diverse and engaged workforce.	☒ Leadership & organisational commitment.	☒ Understanding and working with our communities.	
15.	**Outline the aims, objectives, & priorities of the activity being considered.**	To bring a vacant site back in to use enabling opportunity for new mixed use, housing and community facilities and employment.				
16.	**Please outline the consequences of not implementing this activity.**	Site remains derelict with loss of potential development opportunities				

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?**	Yes. Ongoing consultations with Jericho Wharf Trust through dialogue and meetings
18.	**List information and data used to understand who your**	NA

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	residents or staff are and how they will be impacted.	
19.	**If you have not done any consultations or collected data & information, are you planning to do so in the future?**	NA

Section 4: Impact analysis.

20.	**Who does the activity impact?**	**Service Users**	Yes ☐	No ☒	Don't Know ☐
		Members of staff	Yes ☐	No ☒	Don't Know ☐
		General public	Yes ☒	No ☐	Don't Know ☐
		Partner / Community Organisation	Yes ☒	No ☐	Don't Know ☐
		City Councillors	Yes ☒	No ☐	Don't Know ☐
		Council suppliers and contractors	Yes ☐	No ☒	Don't Know ☐

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

Protected Characteristic	Positive	Negative	Neutral	Don't know	Data/information/evidence supporting your assessment	Analysis & insight Mitigations
Age	☐	☐	☐	☒		

Disability	☐	☐	☐	☒		
Gender re-assignment	☐	☐	☒	☐		
Marriage & Civil Partnership	☐	☐	☒	☐		
Race, Ethnicity and/or Citizenship	☐	☐	☒	☐		
Pregnancy & Maternity	☐	☐	☒	☐		
Religion or Belief	☐	☐	☒	☐		
Sex	☐	☐	☒	☐		
Sexual Orientation	☐	☐	☒	☐		
Socio-economic inequalities such as: • income and factors that impact income. • access to jobs	☒	☐	☐	☐		
Other (voluntary consideration)	☐	☐	☐	☐		

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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.	☐	No major change(s) or adjustments and continue with the activity. No need to monitor in the future. ☒
23.	**Please explain how you have reached your conclusions above.**				**Benefits of Implementation**: Opportunity for new community facilities, housing and economic development		

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**?	Regeneration, Economy & Sustainability
25.	**Who (individual, team, or service area) will be responsible for carrying out the EqIA review?**	Regeneration
26.	**How often will the equality impact be reviewed for this activity?**	On completion of CPO review
27.	**Date when the EqIA will be reviewed again.**	Not known

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Section 7: Sign-off

Name: Regeneration Manager	Name: Full Name	Name: Full Name
Job Title: Regeneration Manager	Job Title: Type here	Job Title: Type here
Signature:	Signature:	Signature:
Roo Humpherson	----------	----------

You have now reached the end of the assessment.

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

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To:	**Cabinet**
Date:	18 March 2026
Report of:	Director of Communities and Citizens Services
Title of Report:	Leisure Contract Annual Service Plan (2026-27) and Year 2 (2025-26) Update

	Summary and recommendations
Decision being taken:	To update Cabinet on the highlights of the second year of the new leisure contract and approve the Annual Service Plan 2026-27, which is an annual requirement of the operator, aiming to align outcomes to the Council's priorities and to address health inequalities.
Key decision:	No
Cabinet Member:	Councillor Chewe Munkonge, Cabinet Member for a Healthy, Fairer Oxford
Corporate Priority:	Thriving Communities
Policy Framework:	Thriving Communities Strategy

Recommendation(s): That Cabinet resolves to:

1. **Approve** the Leisure Annual Service Plan 2026-27 and delegate authority to the Director of Communities and Citizens Services in consultation with the Cabinet Member for a Healthy, Fairer Oxford, to make any necessary amendments.

Information Exempt From Publication
N/A – no exempt documents

Appendix No.	**Appendix Title**	**Exempt from Publication**
Appendix 1	Oxford Annual Service Plan 2026-27	No
Appendix 2	Active Communities Plan	No

Appendix 3	Oxford Leisure Upgrades (Photos)	No
Appendix 4	Risk Register	No
Appendix 5	Equalities Impact Assessment	No

Introduction and background

1. The Cabinet agreed on 24 January 2024 to receive annual reports on the performance of leisure services and the contractor and agree the business plan priorities for the following year.
2. The Council appointed its new leisure contractor Serco Leisure Operating Limited on 27 March 2024, and provision officially started on 30 March 2024. More Leisure Community Trust acts as Serco's delivery partner, responsible for day-to-day operational management and community engagement, while Serco retains contractual accountability.
3. This report provides an update on the second year of the contract and an overview of the Annual Service Plan for Year 3 (2026-27).
4. The Annual Service Plan will be reviewed in monthly client meetings and the quarterly meetings of the Strategic Partnership Board which includes officers from the Council and More Leisure's senior management teams, and key partners such as Active Oxfordshire, Public Health, Integrated Care Board (ICB), alongside user representation.

Second year performance

5. A summary of the second year's performance of the leisure contract is highlighted below. Please note that, due to reporting deadlines, the data covers only nine months (April to December 2025).
6. Targets set last year (largely 3% increases) have all been exceeded. Headline figures include:
    a. 377,974 recorded visits (compared to 280,311 visits in the previous year)
    b. 13,169 pay as you go members (compared to 12,803 visits in the previous year)
    c. 5,257 total members, of which 801 are concessionary members (compared to 4,611 and 678 members in the previous year)
    d. 2,332 swimming lesson members (compared to 2,268 in the previous year)
    e. 333 membership referrals for people experiencing homelessness and supported by the Council's commissioned homeless pathway services (compared to 162 in the previous year)
    f. An average Net Promoter Score customer experience rating of -11 (compared to -44, where the service ended under the previous operator); disruption from leisure investment works such as the Leys Youth Hub may have contributed to the low score and we expect this to improve in the year ahead (also note the leisure sector's average Net Promoter Score stands at 22 – source: Moving Communities, 2025)

7. As of January 2026, £36,000 of in-kind funding has been allocated, supporting a number of activities such as:
    a. Barton Utd FC half term club swim sessions (75 children)
    b. 250 free soft play sessions (vouchers distributed to local partners)
    c. Youth Ambition activities including ice skating and swimming (funding for 250 children and young people)
    d. South Oxford Family Triathlon at Hinksey Pool (an inclusive, untimed and non-competitive event for families to enjoy together)
    e. Enabling pulmonary rehab courses at Leys
    f. Activity sessions and classes for members of My Life My Choice (self-advocacy organisation for people with learning disabilities)
8. The Council's leisure centres have continued their period of significant transformation and are continuing to improve. Key investments and achievements over the last year include:
    a. Partnership working and community development by More Leisure's Active Communities Manager, who has been working with communities to improve accessibility of the leisure centres and develop new programmes to reach a wider audience (see more in Appendix 1)
    b. Opening of the new Leys Youth Hub, which is providing positive activities for young people including a climbing wall, music room, cooking, group activity areas and quiet space; 184 individual young people have engaged to date
    c. Continuation of the Council's under 17s free swimming programme, which currently offers 37 hours of free swim sessions across its pools, at no cost to the Council (16,135 free swims were enjoyed in April to Dec 2025, compared to 9,737 in the same period in 2024)
    d. Continuation of the Council's excellent concessionary scheme, which offers low cost pay as you go and monthly membership to residents on low incomes
    e. Full refurbishment of changing facilities at Ferry Leisure Centre (with Barton and Leys to follow in Spring 2026)
    f. New active zone at Leys Pools and Leisure Centre (soft play and tag arena)
    g. A commitment to healthier food in our facilities, with a vending trial commencing from February 2026 (working in partnership with Public Health)
    h. Fairtrade, organic, Rainforest Alliance-certified and Soil Association-accredited tea and coffee are now served at all sites; 30p discount for bringing a reusable cup
9. A summary slide deck that highlights some of these key achievements and photos is available in Appendix 3.
10. We maintain strong oversight of health and safety through monthly client reporting, contract meetings, and regular compliance checks; any urgent concerns are immediately raised by the operator. In April to December 2025, 3.15 accidents were recorded per 10k visits (compared to 3.82 in the same period in 2024).

11. One incident to note was a pool rescue at Barton Leisure Centre in November 2025, after which the individual was taken to hospital and sadly passed away a few days later. While the fatality did not arise from an incident within the leisure centre or as a result of any shortcomings, we have undertaken further assurance checks with the operator, alongside our regular compliance monitoring, to confirm that all required safety processes and controls remain robust.
12. The Council's relationship with More Leisure continues to be a positive one, with good communication and regular formal meetings to track progress. The operator is flexible and keen to work in partnership with the Council.
13. Formal complaints received and handled by the Council directly relating to our leisure operator have reduced from 30 in 2024/25 to 14 in the period April to December 2025. The complaints handled primarily relate to issues at Ferry Leisure Centre that are now resolved or actively being addressed (service disruptions and inconsistent service delivery).
14. For the year ahead the Council will look to build on this relationship, work to complete the remaining investment works and continue to work together to improve how repairs and maintenance are managed.

Annual Service Plan

15. The Annual Service Plan ("ASP") (Appendix 1) outlines the priorities and actions to enhance leisure services in Oxford, including key capital investments. It focuses on improving health and wellbeing across target groups including children, young people, women, people with disabilities, and older adults.
16. The ASP aligns with key Council strategies such as the Thriving Communities Strategy and wider ones such as Oxfordshire County Council's Health and Wellbeing Strategy, Sport England's Uniting the Movement and the NHS Fit for the Future: 10 Year Health Plan for England.
17. The ASP cross-references More Leisure's Active Communities Plan (Appendix 2) and includes initiatives for physical activity, mental health support and community engagement, aiming to create inclusive and accessible leisure opportunities for all Oxford residents.
18. Focus areas are derived from national physical activity priorities, which are then translated into Oxford-specific actions to tackle local health inequalities. This ensures that our local priority groups and interventions dovetail naturally with the overarching national framework.
19. Some of the key themes from the Active Communities Plan are outlined below:
20. <u>Embedding national programmes across the contract</u>
21. The plan sets out a series of national initiatives that Oxford's leisure contract is expected to deliver consistently across all sites. These programmes collectively strengthen quality, safety, inclusion and wellbeing. This suite of national programmes showcases a clear organisational commitment to standardised, evidence-based and socially inclusive leisure provision, with a particular emphasis on safety, early years support, and addressing gender imbalances in activity participation. Highlights include:
    a. Leisure to Active Wellbeing – moving away from a traditional leisure approach to more preventative and integrated services strongly aligned to

reducing health inequalities. We will continue work with Sport England and the leisure operator to maximise opportunities in this area.

b. Early years programme – the “Baby Welcome” policy is already embedded, signalling an established commitment to improving experiences and support for families with infants.

c. Water Wellbeing – accreditation has been secured, and teams have been trained in motivational interviewing and behaviour-change techniques to better support local residents with health needs.

d. UK Active Safer Spaces – training to reinforce the safety and inclusiveness of leisure environments.

e. Warm Welcome Hubs – provision promoted throughout winter, contributing to wider social-support networks for vulnerable residents.

f. Lift the Curfew – supporting the safety and independence of women and girls in accessing physical activity spaces.

22. Tackling local health inequalities through targeted priority groups

23. A broad spectrum of local priority groups have been identified, directly reflecting the JSNA, NHS and City Council strategic priorities. The breadth of priorities demonstrates a strong focus on reducing health inequalities, particularly in communities experiencing deprivation.

24. The plan highlights the intention to direct services where need is greatest, using insight from Community Health Insight Profiles to guide this work. This positions leisure as a mechanism for addressing systemic inequalities in health, wellbeing and access. Local priority themes include, but are not limited to:

    a. Residents with long-term health conditions

    b. People with mental health needs

    c. Women and girls, addressing gender-specific barriers (including female-only swimming sessions)

    d. Disabled people, including SEN and neurodivergent residents

    e. Refugees and asylum seekers

    f. Children and young people

    g. Multicultural communities

25. Strengthening and expanding health and community partnerships

26. Across the identified focus areas, the Active Communities Plan outlines a wide network of partnerships that the leisure contract will work with, and complement, to deliver improved health and social outcomes.

27. The plan envisages a connected ecosystem of health and community partners, embedding leisure within wider clinical pathways, neighbourhood wellbeing systems, and youth support networks. This reflects an ambition to ensure leisure services act not only as activity providers, but as integral contributors to health improvement, social care prevention and youth development. Partners include:

    a. The NHS, ICB and GP surgeries (including social prescribers and pathways such as Move Together and You Move)

b. Local charities and local organisations
c. Local and national disability and sports organisations
d. Leys Youth Hub

28. Supporting community safety and positive pathways for young people

29. Within the priority area for Children and Young People, the plan highlights a preventative community-safety dimension. The clear linkage between physical activity, positive engagement and reduced antisocial behaviour gives a strong narrative about the dual social and health benefits of an active leisure partnership.

30. The focus for this includes increasing opportunities for children and young people living in areas of deprivation and contributing to the decrease of anti-social behaviour and crime by creating constructive, accessible activity pathways.

31. Targeted key focus areas for the year ahead

32. Three core focus areas for development during 2026 are identified:

a. Long-term health conditions
b. Disabilities
c. Children and young people

33. Across each focus area, three common threads emerge:

a. Targeting deprived areas identified in the community insight profile.
b. Building strong partnership frameworks tailored to each priority group.
c. Expanding opportunities, whether through new sessions, supported pathways or improved accessibility.

34. The clarity and consistency across these areas show a strategic, insight-led approach, ensuring that next year's priorities are coherent, intelligence-driven and rooted in community-level evidence.

Financial implications

35. The Council receives monthly finance reports as part of the Client monitoring report pack, which is reviewed and any questions communicated to Serco for response. BDO are also conducting a review of the contract. All management fee payments in accordance with the contract, up to and including December 2025, have been received.

Legal issues

36. The Annual Service Report is a contractual reporting mechanism through which Serco formally accounts to the Council for its performance under the contract and sets out proposed priorities and actions for the forthcoming year. The report is required to be submitted annually and must contain the information required as set out in the contract.

37. The Council must review the Annual Service Report to ensure that it is satisfied with the information provided, that the report accords with the contractual requirements.

38. Subject to the Council being satisfied with the contents of the Annual Service Report, there are no additional legal issues or implications arising. Should any aspect of the Annual Service Report require clarification or give rise to potential

legal, contractual, or governance concerns, further legal advice should be sought as appropriate.

Level of risk

39. The level of risk is low. A Risk Register is shown in Appendix 4.

Equalities impact

40. The Equalities Impact Assessment is shown in Appendix 5. The Annual Service Plan incorporates equalities at its core and there are no implications arising from this.

Carbon and environmental considerations

41. Not required, as for key decisions only.

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Background Papers:
None

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Oxford Leisure Annual Service Plan
April 2026 to March 2027 (Year 3)

An introduction to More Leisure and our Oxford partnership

More Leisure Community Trust is a solutions organisation whose vision is:

To inspire all individuals to engage in activity and to be at the heart of improving health and wellbeing in the community.

And our mission:

Working with strategic partners to promote active and healthy lifestyles for all, in a safe, warm, clean, friendly and fun environment.

Our partnership with Oxford City Council

We started our 10 year (plus 5 year option to extend) partnership with Oxford City Council in March 2024. Our values align with key Council strategies such as the Thriving Communities Strategy, Health and Wellbeing Strategy and wider ones such as Oxfordshire County Council's Health and Wellbeing Strategy, and Sport England's Uniting the Movement. Our National Active Wellbeing Strategy supports community development and integration with the health sector, recognising the need for strong partnership working and pivoting from a traditional leisure model to active wellbeing.

Health inequalities in Oxford

Oxford City faces notable health inequalities, with life expectancy varying significantly across different areas. Men in the most deprived areas live up to 13 years less than those in the least deprived areas, while women face a gap of around 9 years. Four of Oxford's neighbourhoods are in the top 20% most deprived neighbourhoods in England (IoD, 2025). After housing costs, 28.4% of Oxford's children live in poverty (DWP, 2022-23).

Data gathered by Local Community Health Insight Profiles suggests that people living in Oxford's deprived communities experience higher rates of child and fuel poverty, unemployment, and disability, which contribute to poorer health outcomes than the

England average. Notable issues include elevated emergency hospital admissions, preventable mortality, obesity (especially among children), diabetes, and mental health challenges such as anxiety and loneliness. Barriers to healthy living – like limited access to affordable healthy food, costly sport and leisure activities, transport difficulties, and lack of childcare – further exacerbate these inequalities.

Our partnership plays a crucial role in addressing these inequalities, supporting residents to lead healthy lifestyles and connecting with the health and voluntary sectors. In alignment with the NHS 10-year plan, we aim to strengthen collaboration and prioritise their focus on the transition from hospital to community care. We will also be looking to work closely with the Council and Sport England on the emerging grassroots and facilities external funding stream to look at how we can continue to move from leisure to active wellbeing.

Achievements and highlights from last year (Year 2, 2025/26)

Some of the key achievements and highlights from the second year of the contract include:

Barton

- Pool inflatable
- Lift replacement
- Assisted lifeguard technology implementation

Ferry

- Changing room refurbishment wetside
- Changing room refurbishment dryside
- Indoor cycle studio
- Air handling unit (ventilation system) replacement x3
- Squash court refurbishment x2
- Dryside & wetside inflatables
- Assisted lifeguard technology implementation
- Replacement fire doors

Leys

- Active zone (soft play and tag active) including brand new café & toilets/party room
- Sports hall redecoration including fire doors/shutters/complete replacement of lights
- Assisted lifeguard technology implementation
- Youth Hub implementation
- Climbing wall
- Reopening of café including redecoration & furniture

Hinksey Pool

- New in-house catering
- New seating
- New tannoy system & security system
- Extensive plant room works continued into new season

Ice Rink

- New in-house catering
- Brand new dehumidification units
- Redecoration of meeting rooms
- New rack system for skates
- New locker system
- Ice pit grit replacement

Key active communities highlights from 2025

- MECC training for front of house staff

Active Communities Manager completed training in October 2025. Will deliver training in early 2026 to coincide with Exercise on Referral Scheme

- Exercise referral pathway (including social prescribing)

Links created with social prescribers and GP medical centres in general. Exercise on Referral scheme to be launched in 2026 and be part of the Move Together Pathway.

- Launch of Leys Youth Hub

Official launch party was 17th September 2025

- Increased participation of all demographics

Partnership working across all sectors of the community, utilising the community fund to work with groups including:

- Disability/ SEN/ Neurodivergence
- Mental Health
- Low Socioeconomic families
- Multicultural
- Refugees and asylum seekers
- Women and girls
- Youth aged 11 to 21
- Over 50's
- Those experiencing homelessness

- An Increase in early years, parents/carers and young people engagement
- Increase in active zone opportunities, that are diverse and inclusive
- Swimming opportunities for young people and their families
- SEN specific sessions across the contract

- An Increase in women and girls' provision
- Female specific sessions partnered with Dancin' Oxford – the offering is a low impact creative dance movements (imagine seated exercise but more creative) and a young people's creative dance session.
- Let's Lift the Curfew – free guided walks for females from Leys Leisure Centre

- Implementation of a wellbeing programme of activities across all sites
- Wellbeing ice skating session – we have a wellbeing skate session once a week, which aims to support those that are lonely, have mental health issues and want to increase their social network. It is open to anyone.
- Chatty café – this is a national initiative that supports people to engage socially using our facilities. We have a chatty café at the Ice Rink as part of the mums and toddlers session, plus a drop in coffee and chat after the wellbeing session.

- An Increase multi-cultural communities' engagement

- Partnership work with groups such as Syrcox, Oxford Community Action (OCA) and Name it Youth to increase opportunities.
- 22x leisure membership for asylum seekers and refugees.

- An Increase in specific activities and initiatives for those with a long term health condition, neurological disorder, disability and neurodivergence
- Special Educational Needs (SEN) or disability specific sessions in all centres

- Physical activity programme delivered alongside NHS education and support schemes
- Pulmonary rehab course

- Concessions for You Move/Move Together participants - programmes that help families facing barriers and inactive adults (including those with health conditions) access free or low-cost activities and personalised support to get active, improve wellbeing, and enjoy moving more together.
- You Move fees aligned with Bonus concessionary prices (293 members as of Nov 2025)
- Move Together patients to be introduced to Exercise on Referral pathway in 2026

Key deliverables for this year 2026/27 – capital works and active communities

Capital works

Leisure facility	Capital work to be undertaken	Programme completion
Barton Leisure Centre	Wet & dry changing room refurbishment	May 2026
All sites	Continuous redecoration plan	Ongoing
Leys Pools & Leisure Centre	Dry changing refurbishment	March 2026

Wellbeing Strategy National Priorities

The Wellbeing Strategy National Priorities will focus on 9 key areas, developing programmes and initiatives within More Leisure Centres. These include the following,

which will be delivered alongside the key local priorities outlined within the Annual Service Plan:

- Early Years established programme
- Baby Welcome policy embedded
- Water Wellbeing - Accreditation achieved
- Teams trained in MI / Behaviour Change
- UK Active Safer Spaces Training
- "Women Who Lift" gym floor programme
- Warm Welcome Hubs - promoted throughout winter
- Lift the Curfew
- Health Campaigns embedded & promoted

Local Priorities

- The Active Communities Annual Delivery Plan 2026 for Oxford (Appendix 2) will focus on the priority areas listed below; these complement Oxford City Council's priorities and the Community Health Insight Profiles

Key priority areas

1. Long Term Health Conditions
2. Children and young people
3. Physical inactivity
4. Disabilities
5. Mental health

Active Communities Manager to:

- Engage with local community groups to increase participation and utilise the community fund
- Attend quarterly reviews on local engagement with the Active Communities National Lead
- Liaise with Oxford City Council to ensure the plan is delivered effectively to key priority demographics

Partner Engagement

- Continued partnership work with local and National organisations to deliver activities
- Create links with new local organisations to develop opportunities within the priority areas
- Enhance opportunities through You Move and Move Together pathways

Key performance indicators

Measures taken and updated from the leisure contract. Please note that, due to reporting deadlines, figures for Year 2 represent 9 months of data (April to December 2025).

Measure	Baseline (Year 1, 2024/25)	Target This Year (Year 2, 2025/26)	Actual (Apr to Dec 2025)	Target Next Year (Year 3, 2026/27)
Total members	4,716	4,857	5,032	5,085 (+3%)
Total participation	289,081 (revised)	297,753	377,974	389,313 (+3%)
Participation of users with disabilities	1,068	1,100	1,675	1,725 (+3%)
Age breakdown (where data is known): - Under 18s - Adults (18 to 64) - 65+	**U18s:** 11,955 **18-64:** 128,585 **65+:** 39,070 NB: baseline has been updated based on revised reporting	**U18s:** 12,314 **18-64:** 132,443 **65+:** 40,242	**U18s:** 20,302 **18-64:** 135,573 **65+:** 28,290	20,911 (+3%) 139,640 (+3%) 29,139 (+3%)

Strategic Objectives

Measures taken and updated from the leisure contract. Please note that, due to reporting deadlines, figures for Year 2 represent 9 months of data (April to December 2025).

No	Description	Baseline (Year 1, 2024/25)	Target This Year (Year 2, 2025/26	Actual (Apr to Dec 2025)	Target Next Year (Year 3, 2026/27)
1.	Reduce the number of children leaving primary school from 4 to 2 who can swim 25 metres	4 out of 10	2 out of 10	3 out of 10* *Data from 17 schools who responded to Active Oxfordshire's 2025 survey	2 out of 10
2.	Increase the number of young people taking part in activities at Leys Youth Hub (NB this is a measure directly controlled by Youth Ambition)	No baseline as Youth Hub was not open in 2024/25	N/A	184 individuals	250 individuals
3.	Increase satisfaction levels within the leisure centres (Net Promoter Score)	-44 (NB this was as of March 2024, under the previous operator)	-10	-11	0
4.	Achieve Quest accreditation	Leys: Good NB: no Quest assessments took place in Year 1 at other sites so baselines unavailable for those	Excellent at all sites	Awaiting results of assessments	Excellent at all sites
5.	Contribute to the Council's commitment to zero carbon in Oxford	No existing Environmental standard 14001:2015 accreditation.	To be achieve next year	To be achieve next year	Achieve Environmental standard 14001:2015 accreditation.
6.	Providing wider social value through strong positive engagement with partners	Social value: 0.8% of income for in-kind community fund	At least £30k allocated	£36k allocated as of Dec 2025	At least £38k allocated by Dec 2026

Risks

In order to manage risk please refer to the Business Continuity Plan (Appendix 1).

Active Wellbeing

Priorities within Leisure

These are the priorities which have been identified accross a number of Local Authorities - local priorities will identify a number of these based on local need.

Priority	Notes	Statistic / information
Children aged 0-11	To ensure that children have the best start in life, with good habits being developed from a young age. Frequently identified are low levels of activity and obesity.	There are currently seven million children aged five to 15 in England and more than half are not doing the recommended daily amount of exercise. [Sport England website, Nov 25].
Children and young people aged 12-19	To ensure that children and young people maintain/develop good habits from a young age and into adulthood. Frequently identified are low levels of activity and obesity.	In our November 2019-20 Active Lives Adult report we saw the activity levels of 16-34-year-olds decrease - with a sharper decrease more evident in the 16-24 age group. [Sport England website, Nov 25].
Older people	To help people age in good health, reducing the level of support needed by external organisations.	As you get older, you're far more likely to become inactive. Our research shows that 42 per cent of people aged 55 and over are inactive compared to 29 per cent of the adult population. [Sport England website, Nov 25].
Women and girls	In many areas, women and girls have reduced participation in physical activities - often with a variety of barriers. Activities specifically targetted to these groups help females access activities improving	39% of women aged 16 and over are not active enough to get the full health benefits of sport and physical activity, compared to 35% of men. [Sport England website, Nov 25].
Multicultural communities	In many areas, people from multicultural communities have reduced participation in physical activities - often with a variety of barriers. By engaging with these communitities and p This group often has cross-over with the women and girls category with many women from multicultural	Analysis from our latest Active Lives Adult Survey shows that Mixed and White Other adults continue to have the highest activity levels, while South Asian, Black and those with other ethnic origins are the least likely to be active. [Sport England website, Nov 25].
Disabilities and long term conditions	Physical activity can have many benefits for people with disabilties or long term conditions e.g. easing / improving symptoms, preventing symptoms getting worse, improving general health, improved mental health associated with their condition, improving self-confidence and	We know that people with a long-term health condition, and disabled people are twice as likely to be physically inactive than those without a disability or health condition. [Sport England website, Nov 25].
Low socio-economic communitities	People in low socio-economic groups are less likely to participate in organised physical activity due to barriers related to cost. Ensuring there are opportunities to access activities will help improve wellbeing within this priority group. On a local level there are typically idenified areas/wards.	It found that people in lower socio-economic groups (LSEGs) are the most likely to be inactive (33%) and the least likely to be active (54%). And with nearly a third of the adult population in England - around 12 million people - in a LSEG, that is a significant number of people who could reap huge benefits from being more active. [Sport England website, Nov 25].
Physical health	To ensure all communtites are able to live well and be healthy. This includes weight management, obesity, smoking cesation.	One in four people in England do less than 30 minutes of physical activity a week. But our research also shows that those who do the least activity stand to benefit the most, even if it's just small changes like gentle jogging, swimming or playing rounders in the park. [Sport England website, Nov 25].
Mental health	Mental health has been identified as improving with physical activity. People have become comfortable with discussing mental health and engaging with opportunities to improve their mental health. This has enabled leisure facilties to provide opportunities for people to improve their overall	We published a report in October 2024 that shows there is "strong and consistent evidence that sport and physical activity interventions had positive effects on the diagnosed mental health problems of children and young people". [Sport England website, Nov 25].
Referral schemes	To provide a route for medical professionals to prescribe 'exercise on referral' to those people whose conditions would benefit from physical activity.	People who do regular physical activity have a lower risk of: coronary heart disease and stroke, type 2 diabetes, bowel cancer, breast cancer in women, early death, osteoarthritis, hip fracture, falls (among older adults), depression, dementia, including Alzheimer's disease. [NHS website, Nov 25].
Those in care, care leavers and carers	Those in care and care leavers are likely to have reduced access to physcial activity - access can help improve care leavers self-confidence. Carers are often time poor leading to reduced physical	
All (other) inequalities	Other communties/groups who experience inequalities which may/may not impact them accessing physical activities. The aim is to include the whole community and for members of that community to feel comfortable and welcome at the leisure centres. These communtities include, but are not exclusively LGBTQ+, veterans, specifc localities, inclusion groups such as those experiencing	Our research show that people who state they have no religion are more likely to be physically active compared to those that belong to a faith group.

	Starting Well	Starting & Growing Well	Growing Well	Growing & Living Well	Growing & Living Well	Living Well	Living Well	Living & Aging Well	Living & Aging Well	All	All	All	All	Other notes captured throughout	Ambitions for 2026
	Early Years Sessions	**Children (aged 5-11)**	**Young People (aged 12-18)**	**Carers, those in care & care leavers**	**Women & Girls**	**Behaviour Change Support for healthy lifestyles (e.g. activity, obesity, smoking, substance misuse)**	**People with disabilities & SEN Sessions**	**GP Referral & Cardiac Referral**	**Older people (Inc. Veterans)**	**Multicultural Communities**	**Low SE Groups**	**Mental Health**	**Other**		
Core contract delivery	Adult and toddler swim sessions. Active zone soft play at the Leys. Parent and toddler group at ice rink.	Swim school. Looking to do kids camps, Tag X, soft play, under 17s free swimming	Tag X and junior gym.	Looking to offer membership for children in Foster Care with Council. Offer Bonus membership for people who are carers.	Lift the Curfew, Women's only swimming at the Leys,	GLP-1 Pathway	Disability swims. Quiet Hours. SEN Soft Play, SEN Swimming at Hinksey. SEN & Disability Ice Skating session. British Ice Skating support the Disability session and want to do more.	Type 2 Diabetes will be a referral pathway into GP ref. About to launch GP referral, Barton and their Leys.	E-Gym at Leys & Ferry, 50+ Badminton, Good Boost in Barton. Planning to introduce Forever Fit programme of activities. 50+ Swimming.	Muslim Prayers Friday evening at the Leys. Church sessions on a Sunday in a studio. African Families of United Kingdom. Skating and swimming with Syrian refugee and Syrcox & OCA is a Muslim families organisation. Memberships offered to Refugee's	You Move Partnership with council. Children on free school meals are entitled to discounted membership rates and now under 5's. Homeless Pathway Scheme, entitled to 6months free membership for anyone referred on Homeless pathway, work done with Refugees placed in hotels.	Wellbeing Ice Skating & Social session at the Ice Rink, linked with the chatty café. Oxfordshire MIND send people to these sessions.	Community Fund in partnership with the council. Whatever profits Serco make 0.8% go into a community fund. This targets under represented groups they can apply for small grants, facility hire, swimming, memberships, soft play and Gym. Lots of additional one off activities as well e.g. over half term. Community fund funds this. Up to £1k also ask		Looking to get kids camps up and running. Have a children's community coordinator active zone, parties, and kids camps. would like to replicate this across other centres. Lots of gymnastics kit in Ferry. Get the P referral up and running. Also to have some condition specific groups, cancer, post surgery etc. Neuro pathway, falls prevention.

Partners delivering	Mums & babies class.	Dance club, Tw Kondo, Swim club, Footstall, Blackbirds FC football club.	Youth Ambition football and basketball and do sessions in Youth Hub. Similar as young groups. Embed football and cricket academy. Youth Ambition CIC - Looking to use		Women only football groups on 3G. Empowered sisters dance group through community fund will become a regular session. 70+ ladies hire studio to run own yoga session		Disability school provision use pool for swim session. "Keen" disability group hire facilities to do multi sports sessions. Home Education group hire facilities	Cardiac Rehab external provider. Parkinsons group looking to come back to centre.	Age UK looking to hire again to so a social session in the café and activity session in sports hall. Walking Football with Oxford United.			Dad's V Dads - blokes football session.			

Active Wellbeing
Annual Delivery Plan 2026 - Oxford

National Initiatives

Initiative	Notes	RAG
Early Years established programme		
Baby Welcome policy embedded		
Water Wellbeing - Accreditation achieved		
Teams trained in MI / Behaviour Change		
UK Active Safer Spaces Training		
"Women Who Lift" gym floor programme		
Warm Welcome Hubs - promoted throughout winter		
Lift the Curfew		
Health Campaigns embedded & promoted		

National Initiatives: These are a number of bigger pieces of work that we will look embed accross all contracts. More may be added to list as year

Local Priorities
As identified in key strategic documents locally (e.g. JSNA, ICS, NHS priorities, Local Authority Plans)

	2026 focus area?
Long Term Health Conditions	Yes
Mental Health	Yes
Women and Girls	
Disabilities	Yes
Refugees and Asylum Seekers	
Low Socio-economic Disadvantaged People	
Children and Young People	Yes
Over 50's	
Under 5's	
Multicultural Communites	

Local Priorities: These have been taken from your local JSNA, LA Plans and NHS health data. Please add any additional priorities in here your client has specifically asked we work on.

Focus Areas: For 2026 we are asking you to pick 3 key priority areas you are looking to develop across your contract. Use your "Gap Analysis" picture including the priority areas to help guide your choices.

Local Priorities - Chosen areas of focus for 2026

Long Term Health Conditions

Specific details or areas we would like to address?	Focus on areas of deprevation highlighted within the community insight profile.
Who are the local partners will we look to work with?	NHS, surgeries, social prescribers, client representatives, ICB, local charities, Age UK
Anything else?	Launch the Exercise on Referral Scheme and link with Move Together Pathway

Disabilities	
Specific details or areas we would like to address?	Focus on areas of deprevation highlighted within the community insight profile. Increase opportunities with a network of disability, SEN and neurodivergent sessions
Who are the local partners will we look to work with?	Local charities and national and local sports specific organisations
Anything else?	Link to Move Together and You Move Pathways

Children and Young People	
Specific details or areas we would like to address?	Increase opportunities for people in areas of deprevation, with a focus on contributing to the decrease of anti social behaviour and crime
Who are the local partners will we look to work with?	NHS, CAMHS, social prescribers, client representatives, local charities and organisations, Leys Youth Hub,
Anything else?	Ages 0 to 5 early years and 6 to 18

Other	
Specific details or areas we would like to address?	Mental Health
Who are the local partners will we look to work with?	You Move, Move Together, local charities and NHS
Anything else?	

Oxford Leisure Upgrades

Highlights from 2025-26

Appendix 3 to 18th March 2026 Cabinet Report

Barton Leisure Centre

- Pool inflatable
- Lift replacement
- Assisted lifeguard technology

Barton Leisure Centre





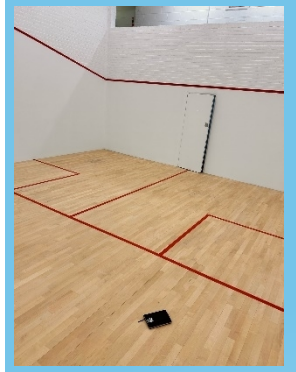
Ferry Leisure Centre

- Changing room refurbishment wetside
- Changing room refurbishment dryside
- Indoor cycle studio
- Air handling unit (ventilation system) replacement x3
- Squash court refurbishment x2
- Dryside & wetside inflatables
- Assisted lifeguard technology
- Replacement fire doors

Ferry Leisure Centre

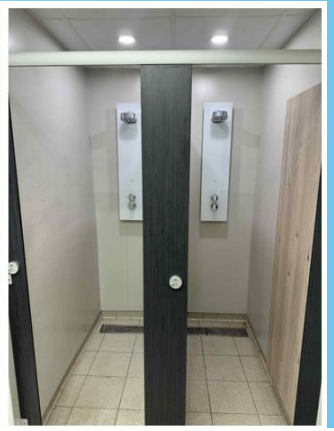




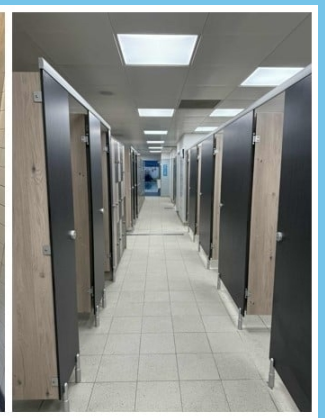




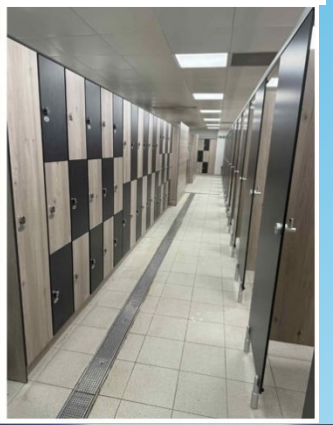




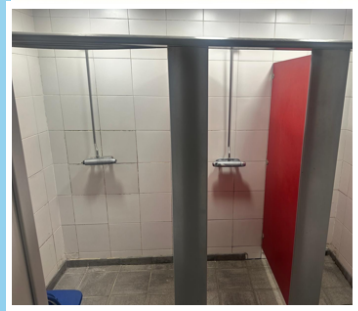








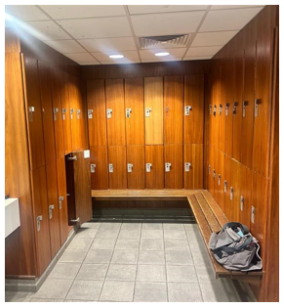






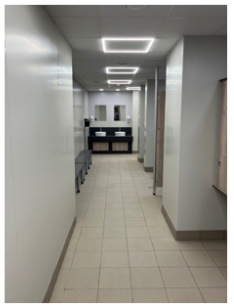
















Leys Pools and Leisure Centre

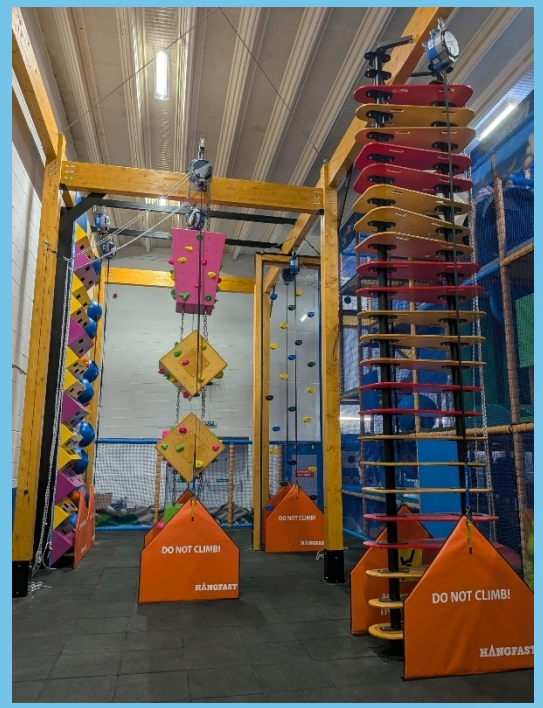
- Active zone (soft play and tag active) including brand new café and toilets/party room
- Sports hall redecoration including fire doors/shutters/complete replacement of lights
- Assisted lifeguard technology implementation
- Leys Youth Hub
- Climbing wall
- Reopening of café including redecoration and furniture

Leys Pools and Leisure Centre











Hinksey Outdoor Pool

- New in-house catering
- New seating
- New tannoy and security systems
- Extensive plant room works continued into new season

Hinksey Outdoor Pool





Oxford Ice Rink

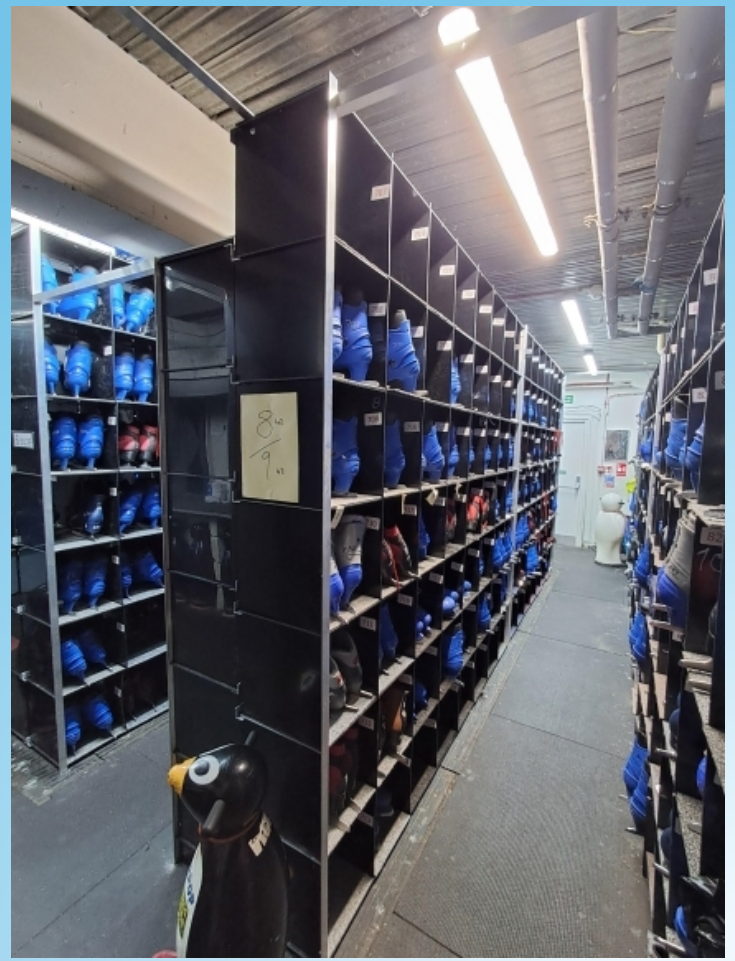
- New in-house catering
- Brand new dehumidification units
- Redecoration of meeting rooms
- New rack system for skates
- New locker system
- Ice pit grit replacement

Oxford Ice Rink









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Risk Register - Leisure Contract ASP Year 3 (Serco / More Leisure) - updated 12 Jan 2026

									Gross			Current			Target							
Ref	Title	Risk Description	Opp / Threat	Cause	Consequence	Risk Treatment	Date Raised	Owner	P	I	Score	P	I	Score	P	I	Score	Comments	Control / Mitigation Description	Date Due	Action Status	% Progress	Action Owner
1	Deterioration of service	Deterioration of the standard delivered (customer service and maintenace) over the lifetime of the contract e.g. cleanliness	Threat	Provider focuses elsewhere. Turbulence in the external environment.	Reduced level of service for local people and reduced participation; reputational damage	Reduce	01/04/24	Hagan Lewisman	1	4	4	1	4	4	1	4	4	-	Ensure that there is a robust contract in place, regular monitoring take places and a strong client team. Quarterly maintenance and monthly client meetings are in place. Programme of regular client audits. Requirement to achieve Quest Excellent by the end of Year 2.	31/03/26	Ongoing	90%	Hagan Lewisman / James Baughan
2	Financial	The external provider is unable to achieve their business forecasts and asks for a change in contractual arrangements	Threat	External factors such as pandemics, utility pricing or a bid that was unrealistic	Financial impact to OCC and/or service reduction to cut costs that impact service quality	Reduce	01/04/24	Hagan Lewisman	3	4	12	3	4	12	2	4	8	Work is being undertaken to understand Serco's reasons behind its lower than expected financial performance, using the client report to challenge and interrogate figures, and mitigations such as increasing fees and charges above inflation have been put forward; ongoing discussions with Serco.	Ensure robust contract in place and strong, well skilled client team. Work with Serco to ensure options are presented to reduce/remove any pressure to the Council. Regular monitoring. Open book accounting. Internal officers meeting.	31/03/26	Ongoing	70%	Emma Burson / Hagan Lewisman / James Baughan
3	Invest to saves	Invest to saves proposals not being accepted, or effectively delivered	Threat	If invest to save proposals are not deliverable either practically or politically; disagreement on terms	Financial impact to assumed management fee	Reduce	01/04/24	Hagan Lewisman	1	4	4	1	3	3	1	3	3	Final investment works to complete by Summer 2026.	Delivery programme in place; regular communications with operator; confirmation of no impact to management fee received.	31/03/26	Ongoing	80%	James Baughan
4	Contract management	Robust contract management not being in place for the contract; misalignment of contractual documents	Threat	Lack of resource and priortisation; old versions of documents in use	Contractor not adhering to contractual obligations; productive relationship not forming with the operator	Reduce	01/04/24	Hagan Lewisman	2	4	8	1	4	4	1	4	4	External audit taking place early 2026.	Ensure that adequate time and focus is given to ensuring contractual obligations are fulfilled. Client monitoring arranagements in place (as item 1 above); internal officers group; final contract docs agreed.	31/03/26	Ongoing	80%	Hagan Lewisman / James Baughan
5	Inclusive access	Pricing and concessions are not effective at increasing usage in target groups	Threat	Operator focusses on full paying customers	Leisure centres not playing their role in tackling inequalities; reputational damage	Reduce	01/04/24	Hagan Lewisman	3	4	12	2	4	8	1	4	4	Bonus concessions maintained in current round of fees/charges discussions; kept low to minimise risk to most vulnerable customers; ASP includes programmes to widen access.	Concessions have been shaped through dialogue. Changes may need to be made to improve the concessionary offer.	31/03/26	Ongoing	90%	Hagan Lewisman / James Baughan
6	Partnership	Effective partnership not formed with the new operator	Threat	Poor contract management; ineffective governance; poor communication	Contract does not deliver its target outcomes	Reduce	01/04/24	Hagan Lewisman	2	3	6	1	3	3	1	3	3	Strategic Partnership Board due to commence from Feb 2026.	Well-designed governance; good communication, regular meetings and establishing good behaviours with Serco management team.	31/03/26	Ongoing	90%	Hagan Lewisman
7	Health and safety, and compliance	Issues on sites around health and safety of customers or staff	Threat	Poor systems of health and safety governance	Injuries or fatalities; reputational damage	Reduce	01/04/24	Hagan Lewisman	2	5	10	1	4	4	1	4	4	External Right Directions H&S audits scheduled each year.	Client meetings and inspections; external inspections including Quest and Right Directions H&S audits.	31/03/26	Ongoing	90%	James Baughan
8	Misalignment of Council priorities	Contractor not understanding and aligning with Council's values, contract and priorities; focusing on commercial over active communities (incl mismatch between net zero council 2030 and net zero Oxford 2040 vs Serco's 2050 target)	Threat	Poor working relationship and communications; lack of clear energy / carbon reduction strategy across sites	Contract not delivering active communities outcomes; reputational damage	Reduce	01/04/24	Hagan Lewisman	4	4	16	2	4	8	2	3	6	Energy management plan received and to be discussed with Serco.	Client meetings and partnership working.	31/03/26	Ongoing	90%	James Baughan
9	Accessibility	Failure to meet accessibility requirements	Threat	Equipment not being replaced or well maintained; customer information in inadequate format	Reduced participation of customers with accessibility needs; reputational damage	Reduce	12/02/25	Hagan Lewisman	3	5	15	3	4	12	3	4	12	Barton lift replacement completed Oct 2025; Ferry couches replaced end of 2025.	Client and maintenance meetings; stronger emphasis on some R&M items.	31/03/26	Ongoing	90%	Jonathan Wright / Hagan Lewisman / James Baughan
10	Local government reorganisation and devolution	Risk to contract as local government is reorganised	Threat	Government policy	Uncertainty on client arrangements or alignment of contract	Accept	02/01/25	Hagan Lewisman	5	3	15	4	3	12	3	3	9	LGR bid submitted Nov 2025, including a contribution from the leisure team	Keep updated with local gov reorganisation plans; contract likely to be transferred to new authority	31/03/27	Ongoing	90%	Justin Zizys / Hagan Lewisman
11	Unknown external factors	Unknown risks such as future pandemics	Threat	Unidentified risks	Unknown	Accept	01/04/24	Hagan Lewisman	3	3	9	3	3	9	3	3	9	-	Business Continuity Plan in place (Serco)	31/03/26	Ongoing	90%	Hagan Lewisman

Risk Identification

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

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

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

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

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

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



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

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

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


Finance

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

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

Risk Evaluation and Prioritisation

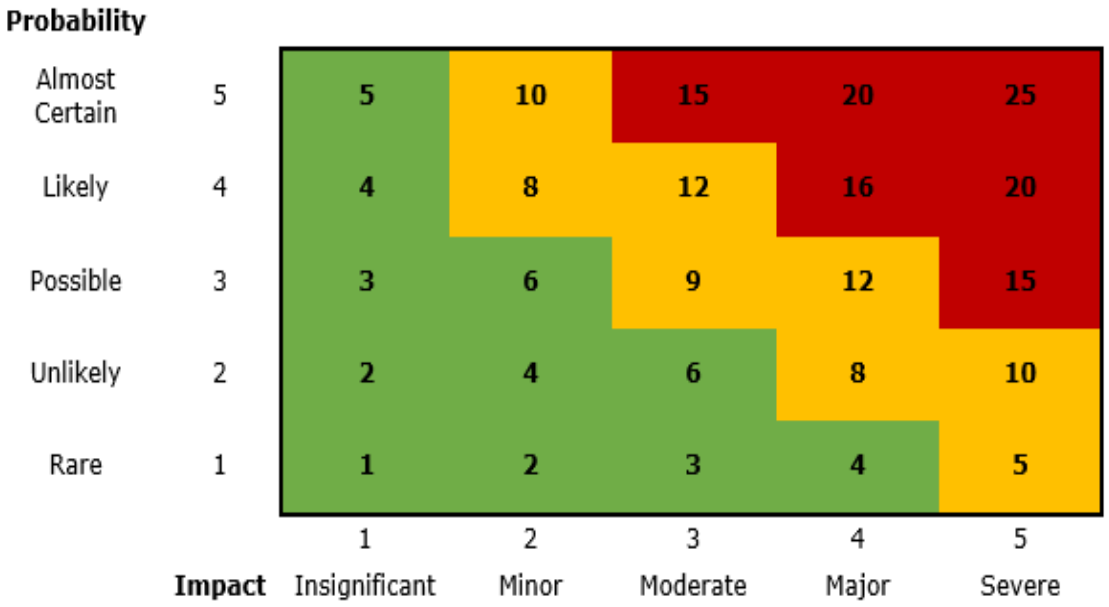
Once risks have been identified the risk matrix is the main tool for prioritising risks so we can establish which risks are most significant and therefore are in need of greater attention and resources. It also allows us to compare different types of risk with each other across the council.

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

Assessing the gross risk allows consideration of the dependency the organisation has upon the existing key controls and informs decisions around risk treatment, and selection of an appropriate target risk level, considered in the next section of this toolkit. It is often helpful to consider the Current Risk first, and then ask yourself what the impact and likelihood of the risk might be if the key controls

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

Each identified risk should then be plotted onto the risk matrix.



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

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

Risk Probability Assessment Criteria

Scale	Description	Likelihood of Occurrence	Probability of Occurrence
1	Rare	1 in 10 years	The event may occur in certain circumstances

2	Unlikely	1 in 3 years	The event could occur
3	Possible	1 in 2 years	The event should occur
4	Likely	Annually	The event will probably occur
5	Almost certain	Monthly	The event is expected to occur or occurs regularly

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

Risk Impact Assessment Criteria

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

Risk Treatment

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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.** **For example:** -New policy, -Review of existing policy, -Changes in service(s), -New project(s), etc.	Leisure Annual Service Plan 2026-27	**2.**	**The implementation date of the activity under consideration:**	April 2026 to March 2027
3.	**Directorate/Department(s):**	Communities and Citizen Services	**4.**	**Service Area(s):**	Active Communities
5.	**Who is (are) the assessment lead(s):** **Please provide:** -Name -Email address	Hagan Lewisman hlewisman@oxford.gov.uk	**6.**	**Contact details, in case there are queries:** **Please provide:** -Name -Email address	James Baughan jbaughan@oxford.gov.uk
7.	**Is this a new or ongoing EqIA?**	New ☐ Extension to existing EqIA ☒	**8.**	If this is an extension of a previous EqIA, please indicate where the previous EqIA is located and share the link to the said EqIA.	June 2018 Cabinet report appendix item
9.	**Date this EqIA started:**	12/01/2026 (date of update)			
10.	**Will this EqIA be attached to** Corporate Management Team (CMT) **reports/updates, which will be published online?**	This will be an appendix of the Cabinet report on the subject	**11.**	**Give a date (tentative or otherwise) when this assessment will be taken to the** CMT.	March 2026 as part of the Cabinet report process

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

12.	**Type of activity being considered:** Check the most appropriate.	☐ Budget	☐ Decommissioning	☒ Commissioning	☐ Change to an existing activity.
		☐ New Activity	☐ Others. Please specify:		
13.	**Which priority area(s) within Oxford City Council's Corporate strategy (2024-2028) does this activity fulfil?** Please check as needed.	☐ Good, affordable homes	☒ Strong, fair economy	☒ Thriving Communities	☒ Zero Carbon Oxford	☒ Well run council
14.	**Which priority area(s) within Oxford City Council's Equality, Diversity & Inclusion Strategy (2022) does this activity fulfil?** Please check as needed.	☐ Responsive services and customer care.	☐ Diverse and engaged workforce.	☐ Leadership & organisational commitment.	☒ Understanding and working with our communities.
15.	**Outline the aims, objectives, & priorities of the activity being considered.**	Aims: improve the leisure offer and address health inequalities, getting more people active, more often Objectives: various including increasing the number of children leaving primary school able to swim a length; linking with the Thriving Communities Strategy outcomes and creating more inclusive/accessible facilities Priorities: delivering the best and most inclusive leisure offer for our citizens			

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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.	Participation levels will fall; inactivity may increase; health inequalities may worsen. The City Council will not be able to fulfil its key corporate priorities.

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

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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.	Customer feedback surveys, Net Promoter Score (NPS) measurement, informal feedback from users, community groups and other partners.
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,	Data used to inform our work includes: • Census • Oxfordshire Joint Strategic Needs Assessment (JSNA) • District Councils' Network Fit for the Future report • Community Health Insight Profiles • Usage data from leisure facilities • English Indices of Deprivation (IoD, 2025)

	-legislation, -articles, -reports, -briefs.	
19.	**If you have not done any consultations or collected data & information, are you planning to do so in the future?** **Please list the details –** -when, -with whom, and -how long will you collect the relevant data.	N/A

Section 4: Impact analysis.

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20.	**Who does the activity impact?** **Check as needed.** The impact may be positive, negative or unknown.	**Service Users**	Yes ☒	No ☐	Don't Know ☐
		Members of staff	Yes ☒	No ☐	Don't Know ☐
		General public	Yes ☒	No ☐	Don't Know ☐
		Partner / Community Organisation	Yes ☒	No ☐	Don't Know ☐
		City Councillors	Yes ☒	No ☐	Don't Know ☐
			Yes ☒	No ☐	Don't Know ☐

		Council suppliers and contractors			

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 supporting your assessment	Analysis, insight & mitigations
Age	☒	☐	☐	☐	25k under 15s (16% of population) 19k over 65s (18% of population) Source: Census 2021	**Impact(s) identified:** An improved, more accessible, and inclusive leisure offer will be attractive to people in this group; some targeted programmes will aim to welcome those who are not using these spaces. **Mitigations and considerations:** Some age groups will benefit from a considered approach to using simple standardised relatable language and signage.
Disability **(Visible and invisible)**	☒	☐	☐	☐	15% living with disabilities Source: Census 2021	**Impact(s) identified:** An improved, more accessible, and inclusive leisure offer will be attractive to people in this group; some targeted programmes will aim to welcome those who are not using these spaces.

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						Mitigations and considerations: Individuals with visual impairment and who are neurodiverse will benefit from a considered approach to using simple standardised relatable language in literature, signage, and other forms of communication.
Gender re-assignment	☒	☐	☐	☐	Insufficient data	**Impact(s) identified:** An improved, more accessible, and inclusive leisure offer will be attractive to people in this group; some targeted programmes will aim to welcome those who are not using these spaces. **Mitigations and considerations:** Individuals in this group will benefit form a considered approach to using gender inclusive language that is standardised in literature, signage, and other forms of communication.
Marriage & Civil Partnership	☐	☐	☒	☐	28% married or in civil partnership. Source: Census 2021	**Impact(s) identified:** People (new and ongoing users of the leisure centres) who identify with this protected characteristic will not be disproportionately impacted negatively or positively. **Mitigations and considerations:** Individuals in this group will benefit from a considered approach to using inclusive language which is

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						standardised in literature, signage, and other forms of communication.
Race, Ethnicity and/or Citizenship	☒	☐	☐	☐	54% White British 17% White-non-British 15% Asian 6% Mixed 5% Black 4% Other ethnic group NB: figures total 101% due to rounding Source: Census 2021	**Impact(s) identified:** An improved, more accessible, and inclusive leisure offer will be attractive to people in this group; some targeted programmes will aim to welcome those who are not using these spaces. **Mitigations and considerations:** Individuals in this group will benefit from a considered approach to using inclusive language which is standardised in literature, signage, and other forms of communication. These actions include not using the BAME acronym in literature. Using more diverse and relatable images and colours in spaces and communications.
Pregnancy & Maternity	☒	☐	☐	☐	1,374 live births in Oxford in 2021 Source: Oxfordshire JSNA 2023	**Impact(s) identified:** An improved, more accessible, and inclusive leisure offer will be attractive to people in this group; some targeted programmes will aim to welcome those who are not using these spaces. **Mitigations and considerations:** Individuals in this group will benefit from a considered approach to using inclusive language which is standardised in literature, signage, and other forms of communication.

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Religion or Belief	☒	☐	☐	☐	39% no religion 38% Christian 9% Muslim 2% Hindu 1% Buddhist 1% Jewish 0.5% Sikh 1% other NB: figures do not add up to 100% because they do not include those who did not reply to the religion question in the census Source: Census 2021	**Impact(s) identified:** An improved, more accessible, and inclusive leisure offer will be attractive to people from all faiths/beliefs and none. **Mitigations and considerations:** Individuals in this group will benefit from a considered approach to using inclusive language which is standardised in literature, signage, and other forms of communication.
Sex	☒	☐	☐	☐	49.1% male 50.9% female Source: Census 2021	**Impact(s) identified:** An improved, more accessible, and inclusive leisure offer will be attractive to people in this group; some targeted programmes will aim to welcome those who are not using these spaces. **Mitigations and considerations:** Individuals in this group will benefit form a considered approach to using inclusive language which is standardised in literature, signage, and other forms of communication.
Sexual Orientation	☒	☐	☐	☐	80% straight/heterosexual 7% not straight/heterosexual	**Impact(s) identified:** An improved, more accessible, and inclusive leisure offer will be attractive to people in this

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					NB: figures do not add up to 100% because they do not include those who did not reply to this question in the census Source: Census 2021	group; some targeted programs will aim to welcome those who are not using these spaces. **Mitigations and considerations:** Individuals in this group will benefit from a considered approach to using inclusive language which is standardised in literature, signage, and other forms of communication.
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.	☒	☐	☐	☐	Four of Oxford's neighbourhood areas are among the 20% most deprived areas in England. These areas, which are in the Leys, Rose Hill and Littlemore, experience multiple levels of deprivation – low skills, low incomes and relatively high levels of crime. Source: English Indices of Deprivation (IoD, 2025)	**Impact(s) identified:** An improved, more accessible, and inclusive leisure offer will be attractive to people in this group, especially with the strong concessionary scheme in place ('Bonus'); some targeted programmes will aim to welcome those who are not using these spaces. **Mitigations and considerations:** Individuals in this group will benefit form a considered approach to using inclusive language which is standardised in literature, signage, and other forms of communication.
Other (voluntary consideration) **For example:** Migrant, refugee, or asylum seekers.	☒	☐	☐	☐	35% of Oxford's population was born outside the UK Source: Census 2021	**Impact(s) identified:** An improved, more accessible, and inclusive leisure offer will be attractive to people in this group; some targeted programmes will aim to welcome those who are not using these spaces.

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						Mitigations and considerations: Individuals in this group will benefit form a considered approach to using inclusive language which is standardised in literature, signage, and other forms of communication.
Other **For example:** - Unpaid carers - Prison population - Homeless population -Council suppliers & contractors -Cabinet Members	☒	☐	☐	☐	Oxford's high cost of living and other factors result in homelessness. Source: Census 2021	**Impact(s) identified:** An improved, more accessible, and inclusive leisure offer will be attractive to people in this group; some targeted programmes will aim to welcome those who are not using these spaces. **Mitigations and considerations:** Individuals in this group will benefit form a considered approach to using inclusive language which is standardised in literature, signage, and other forms of communication.

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

22.		**Conclusions.** Check as needed.					
	☐	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.	☐	No major change(s) or adjustments and continue with the activity. No need to monitor in the future.

23.	**Please explain how you have reached your conclusions above.**	The leisure operator will continue to transform the City's leisure offer and create better, more welcoming facilities that attract people from all backgrounds. As programmes are developed and changed, and as the staffing establishment expands, it is recommended to review this EqIA as required, to ensure people are not negatively impacted.

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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**? **For example-** - team, -directorate, -service area, -Equalities Steering Group,etc.	James Baughan			
25.	**Who (individual, team, or service area) will be responsible for carrying out the EqIA review?**	James Baughan			
26.	**How often will the equality impact be reviewed for this activity?** **For example-** -quarterly, -yearly, etc.	Yearly	**27.**	**Date when the EqIA will be reviewed again.**	January 2027

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Section 7: Sign-off

Name: Hagan Lewisman

Job Title: Active Communities Manager

Signature:

Name: Full Name

Job Title: Type here

Signature:

Name: Full Name

Job Title: Type here

Signature:

Name: Full Name

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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:	18th March 2026
Report of:	Director of Property and Assets
Title of Report:	Disposal of City Centre property

Summary and recommendations	
Decision being taken:	Brief: to approve the disposal of the freehold titles of Floyds Row and Old Mortuary in Oxford.
Key decision:	Yes – Issue details - Disposal of City Centre Property | Oxford City Council
Cabinet Member:	Councillor Ed Turner, Deputy Leader (Statutory) – Finance and Asset Management
Corporate Priority:	Strong, fair economy
Policy Framework:	Asset Management Strategy

Recommendation(s): That Cabinet resolves to:

1. **Delegate authority** to the Directory of Property and Assets, in consultation with the Director of Law, Governance and Strategy and the Group Finance Director and Lead Member for Finance and Asset Management to agree the final sale terms and enter into the final agreement and any other documents necessary to effect the transfer of the freehold titles of Floyds Row and Old Mortuary. The delegation will be on the basis that the sale will meet the requirements of s123 of the Local Government Act 1972 (which states that a council shall not dispose of land otherwise than by way of a short tenancy, for a consideration less than the best that can reasonable be obtained).

Appendix No.	Appendix Title	Exempt from Publication
Appendix 1	Exempt Appendix 1 – Sale terms and financial implications	Yes This information is exempted from publication under Schedule 12A to the Local Government Act 1972 on the following basis: • Information about individuals

		• Information about someone's finances or business
Appendix 2	Exempt Appendix 2 – Risk Register	Yes This information is exempted from publication under Schedule 12A to the Local Government Act 1972 on the following basis: • Information about individuals Information about someone's finances or business

Introduction and background

1. Oxford City Council owns the freehold of 1 Floyds Row and Old Mortuary adjacent ("the Properties"). 1 Floyds Row is currently being used for file storage to support the Archive Scanning Project until Spring 2027. The Old Mortuary is leased to Oxfordshire Council for Voluntary Action on a 25 year lease expiring in January 2027. The Properties are held for investment purposes.
2. 1 Floyds Row was previously used to provide short term emergency shelter – Somewhere Safe to Stay - for people sleeping rough or at risk of rough sleeping, from winter 2020 to spring 2024. The development of the Somewhere Safe to Stay service at Floyds Row was backed by government funding (Rough Sleeping Initiative). Following the covid-19 pandemic, the government is no longer supportive of provisions of bed/sleeping arrangements in communal spaces for persons experiencing homelessness and rough sleeping. Therefore, the City Council worked with Oxfordshire Homeless Alliance (Alliance) partners to develop a new model, that was welcomed and approved by government, and the service was relocated in April 2024. The new service model costs less to deliver than the service delivered from Floyds Row. Since relocation in April 2024, the Somewhere Safe to Stay Service has been delivered effectively through the Alliance from other locations in the city.
3. In anticipation of the Archive Scanning Project ending in Spring 2027 and 1 Floyds Row becoming vacant, options have been considered against the objective of maximising the return to the City Council as soon as possible. Details are in attached confidential Appendix 1. After an off market approach some market testing was done to understand the likely market interest. A number of parties showed interest and a best bids process was run in January 2026 in order to capitalise on strong initial interest.
4. An attractive offer has been received and details are in the attached Exempt Appendix 1. It is recommended that the City Council accepts the offer and proceeds with the sale of the Properties.

Alternative Options Considered

5. Please see Exempt Appendix 1 – Not for Publication.

Financial implications

6. The disposal of the Properties will generate a capital receipt that can be used towards funding the City Council's capital programme. Subsequently, the City Council will save an amount equivalent to the cost of interest and Minimum Revenue Provision (MRP) on the reduction in borrowing requirement. Please see Exempt Appendix 1 – (Not for Publication) for more details.

Legal issues

7. The documents necessary for the disposal will be completed subject to Cabinet approval of the disposal. The sale would meet the requirements of s123 of the Local Government Act 1972 (which states that a council shall not dispose of land under this section, otherwise than by way of a short tenancy, for a consideration less than the best that can reasonable be obtained).

Level of risk

8. See Exempt Appendix 2 – Risk Register.

Equalities impact

9. The financial benefits to the City Council will help provide services, notably those in line with the council's ambition to create a strong, fair economy and well-run council.

   The disposal of the freehold does not give rise to any direct equalities issues. Therefore, an equalities impact assessment is not necessary.

Carbon and Environmental Considerations

10. This report does not give rise to any direct carbon or environmental considerations, but a sale of the Properties will ensure that the City Council will not be paying the utilities bills for the Properties and will therefore not need to invest in zero carbon technology by 2030.

Conclusion

11. It is recommended that approval is granted to allow the City Council to dispose of the freehold titles of the Properties. Not only will this provide a capital receipt to the City Council but will also provide landscaping and external realm improvements to the area, contributing positively to the surrounding townscape.

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Background Papers: None.

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

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OXFORD CITY COUNCIL

To:	**Cabinet**
Date:	18 March 2026
Report of:	Emma-Louise Jackman, Director of Law Governance and Strategy and Mish Tullar, Transition Director
Title of Report:	Oxford City Council Annual Business Plan 2026 to 2027

	Summary and recommendations
Decision being taken:	A report to seek approval for the Council's annual Business Plan priorities 2026 to 2027; and to provide an update on delivery of the 2025 to 2026 Business Plan.
Key decision:	Yes - notice of proposed decision first published, 1 February 2026
Cabinet Member:	Councillor Susan Brown - Council Leader, and Cabinet Member for Partnership Working and Inclusive Economic Growth
Corporate Priority:	Good, affordable housing; Strong, fair economy; Thriving communities; Zero Carbon Oxford; Well-run Council
Policy Framework:	The Council Strategy 2024 to 2028

Recommendation(s): That Cabinet resolves to:

1. **Agree** the draft Oxford City Council annual Business Plan priorities 2026 to 2027, which set out the Council's priority work for the next financial year beginning 1 April 2026;
2. **Delegate** authority to the Director of Law, Governance and Strategy and Transition Director in consultation with the Council Leader to make any further minor amendments to the Business Plan priorities before implementation, provided that such amendments do not materially affect the substance of the Business Plan;
3. **Note** the progress made delivery against the actions set out in the Business Plan 2025 to 2026.

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 appendix as you describe It here	• None

Appendix No.	Appendix Title	Exempt from Publication
Appendix 1	Oxford City Council Business Plan priorities 2026 to 2027	No
Appendix 2	Oxford City Council Business Plan 2025 to 2026 performance update	No
Appendix 3	Risk Register	No
Appendix 4	Equality Impact Assessment	No

Introduction and background

1. The Council Strategy 2024 to 2028 (Council Strategy) details the Council's objectives to achieve sustainable priorities for people, communities and stakeholder groups in Oxford that create a welcoming, safe, and supportive place for people from all backgrounds to work, live and visit.
2. The Council's Business Plan 2026 to 2027 (Business Plan) sets out publicly the Council's priority work programme activities for the coming municipal year to contribute towards achieving the outcomes set out in the Council Strategy.
3. The Business Plan:
   a) was developed in conjunction with, and is supported by, the annual budget and medium-term financial plan (MTFP) that will allocate resources against the agreed priorities
   b) takes into account the changes required as part of Local Government Reorganisation. This means the Business Plan supports a smooth transition to new unitary local government, protects essential services, and helps prepare the organisation for future ways of working
   c) will inform the actions laid out in each department Service Plan.
4. Progress in delivery of the actions set out within the Business Plan will be tracked through the year 2026 to 2027, alongside adopted corporate key performance indicators.

Development of the Business Plan

5. The process for development of the Business Plan has tracked alongside the Council Budget.
6. Officers provided input to an extensive list of proposed activities for the Business Plan. A Corporate Leadership Team and Business Lead's workshop was completed in December 2025, which collectively and collaboratively filtered priorities down to activities.
7. An additional Corporate Leadership prioritisation step was introduced to further refine the Business Plan and ensure organisational capacity and resources are focused on the most critical priorities. This step:
    - strengthened alignment between strategic objectives and delivery plans, enabling the Council to respond effectively to emerging Local Government Reorganisation requirements
    - added a layer of prioritisation, freeing some resources, supporting more agile decision making and helping to safeguard continuity of essential services ahead of the Governments decision for Local Government Reorganisation in Oxfordshire.
8. The Business Plan sets out key actions that typically take the form of projects or new initiatives rather than 'business as usual.' It is not an exhaustive list of such actions.
9. It should be noted therefore that there are many important areas of activity that are not captured within the Business Plan but will nonetheless be identified within individual departmental Service Plans.

Document structure

10. The Business Plan activities sit against the Council's five Council Strategy objectives:
    a) Good, affordable homes
    b) Strong, fair economy
    c) Thriving communities
    d) Zero carbon Oxford
    e) Well-run council.
11. Many activities within the Business Plan are crosscutting in their nature, however each activity has been allocated against one of the five strategic priorities to avoid repetition (Appendix 1).

Business Plan 2025 to 2026 update

12. Significant progress has been made in delivery of the 2025 to 2026 year's Business Plan (Appendix 2).

13. Highlight achievements include:

Good, affordable homes

- There are 1,571 completions forecast from April 2025 to March 2029, against a target of 1,600 over these four years. Including over 1,000 expected to be delivered at the most affordable rent tenure (in excess of the 850 programme target), and significant direct delivery through the Council and OX Place.
- Strong partnership work with Housing Associations continues, with over 600 affordable homes in their pipeline and 186 households rehoused through cross-boundary agreements supporting unmet need.
- Homelessness prevention remains effective, with nearly 200 households prevented from becoming homeless this reporting year and major expansion of temporary accommodation to reduce hotel use.
- Transformation of services for single homeless residents continues, including specialist accommodation and rapid rehousing models, and work has begun on a new countywide homelessness strategy for 2026 to 2028.
- The Council is improving services for tenants and leaseholders, with a new improvement plan, stronger oversight, and a refreshed area-based tenancy management model.
- Resident involvement is being strengthened through a new Tenant and Leaseholder Board, updated engagement strategy, and tenant led policy reviews shaping future service priorities.

Strong, fair economy

- Major regeneration projects are progressing well. Ongoing construction of housing at Knights Road and Blackbird Leys (first handovers expected by March 2026), and completion of the East Oxford Community Centre refurbishment.
- New Community Employment and Procurement Plans' (CEPP) service are active, with eight live plans, exceeding the target and supporting local jobs, apprenticeships, local spend and social value commitments.
- Following extensive work led by Oxford City Council, the Government has confirmed £120m investment to reopen the Cowley Branch Line, with work underway to secure the remaining £35m local funding and to plan local infrastructure links to the new stations.
- The Council is leading work with national partners on short- and long-term solutions for sewage treatment capacity and working with the Oxford Growth Commission to bring together parties to address wider infrastructure challenges such as energy supply.
- Strong progress has been made with the tourism accommodation task groups, developing actions to manage impacts of tourism and explore options such as an Accommodation Business Improvement District.
- The place-based Business Support Programme is providing tailored assistance to local businesses, beginning with a pilot in East Oxford. Building on this, the programme will adopt a phased approach from Spring 2026, extending delivery to Templar Square and Blackbird Leys. In parallel, work is

underway to develop the emerging East Oxford Business Association into a sustainable cooperative model.

Thriving communities

- Local action plans have been refreshed and shared with Ward Members, with funding directed to health activities, food system projects and wayfinding improvements, alongside strong participation in programmes such as Move Together, You Move and leisure initiatives.
- Community centres continue to strengthen their offer, with a new rents policy, updated business plans, and active partnership working including NHS colocation opportunities, Youth Hub delivery and plans for a new integrated face-to-face customer service offer by March 2026
- The Council's 2026 to 2029 Antisocial Behaviour Policy was approved following development with tenants.
- Significant investment in community and leisure facilities is progressing, with improvements at Leys Pools and Leisure Centre, Ferry Leisure Centre, and new or upgraded community hubs including Leys Youth Hub and East Oxford Community Centre.
- Partnership work with national and local bodies continues to strengthen physical activity, wellbeing and culture, including collaboration with Active Oxfordshire, Sport England, Serco Leisure, and Arts Council England on future regional cultural planning.
- A programme is underway to attract larger scale events at South Park and Cutteslowe, focusing on streamlined consultation, improved promotion, updated agreements and better use of digital tools.

Zero carbon Oxford

- The Council has completed the Social Housing Decarbonisation Fund 2.1 council house retrofit programme and is updating its understanding of housing energy performance through new stock surveys.
- Support for households in fuel poverty continues, including promotion of Warm Homes grants, outreach at community events, training for NHS social prescribers, and direct guidance for landlords and tenants on improving energy efficiency.
- Partnership work with Oxfordshire County Council remains strong, including input to the Oxfordshire Retrofit Strategy, joint funding of Better Housing Better Health, and rollout of the Homewise Tool to provide tailored retrofit advice from early 2026.
- Baseline work for the Local Area Energy Plan has been completed, with district-level plans and community engagement to follow ahead of final completion in Autumn 2026
- Development of Heat Network options is progressing, with specialist consultants appointed and partners agreeing success factors; current work focuses on the City Centre and Headington.
- The Zero Carbon Oxford Partnership has expanded to a countywide programme, with a two-year action plan in development, while the Council advances its own 2030 Net Zero work through new groups focused on fleet and assets.

Well-run council

- A proposal for the creation of three new unitary councils across Oxfordshire and West Berkshire was developed by the Council following extensive engagement with residents, businesses and stakeholders and submitted to Government – alongside competing LGR proposals - for its decision by July 2026.
- Safeguarding practice is firmly embedded across the organisation, supported by 19 Safeguarding Champions, compulsory staff training, and active membership of countywide safeguarding partnerships.
- Workforce development continues to strengthen through updated recruitment and positive action policies, new management and career development programmes, expanded data and AI apprenticeships, and improved workforce diversity.
- A new governance structure for the Council and ODS partnership is in place, with quarterly performance meetings, nearly finalised KPIs, and a jointly planned review to shape the 2026 to 2027 partnership action plan.
- Significant investment in ICT and digital capability has improved equipment, connectivity, and service reliability, including 600 laptop replacements, community centre connectivity upgrades, new telephony, and rollout of 100 Microsoft Copilot licences to support innovation.
- Citizen experience continues to improve, with a 10.9% increase in online service usage, new digital portals, implementation of the Channel Management Plan, and retention of external Customer Service Accreditation.

Implications of Local Government Reorganisation

14. The development of the Business Plan has taken account of the Government's planned Local Government Reorganisation and the Government's guidance on Financial decisions before local government reorganisation – GOV.UK.

15. In line with this guidance, the Business Plan focuses on essential activity that supports the Council's existing statutory responsibilities, maintains service continuity, and protects value for money for Oxford citizens and communities.

16. No proposals rely on long term financial commitments that would unreasonably restrict the flexibility of any successor authority.

17. Where actions extend beyond the current Council's lifetime, they relate either to ongoing programmes already agreed through the Council's budget and Medium Term Financial Plan or to transition work required to support the creation of new unitary structures. These activities are necessary to ensure orderly preparation for successor arrangements and to minimise risk to services, staff and communities.

18. On balance, the approach taken is considered proportionate, supports stable financial stewardship during the transition period, and ensures Oxford's interests are appropriately represented as Local Government Reorganisation progresses.

Financial implications

19. The Business Plan sets out the high-level activities and milestones for the Council's priorities for 2026 to 2027, the financial implications of which are contained within the Council's Budget and Medium-Term Financial Plan agreed at Council in February 2026.

Legal issues

20. There are no legal issues arising directly from this report.

EJ/81313/13002026

Level of risk

21. Delivery of the Business Plan is linked with the Budget 2026 to 2027 and the financial and operational health of the Council.
22. This is a high-level strategic document that does not include risks associated with each of the measures it sets out, however failure to deliver the Business Plan carries a reputational risk to the Council.
23. If the Business Plan priorities are not delivered there may be an adverse impact on some of the most vulnerable citizens in the city.
24. The alternative would be to not produce a Business Plan however it is crucial to underpinning the delivery of the Council Strategy.
25. A risk register is provided in Appendix 3.

Equalities impact

26. The Business Plan is concerned with high level activities and milestones. It contains specific actions that will support the delivery of the Councils strategic objectives.
27. Equality, diversity, and inclusion are together a key focus for all the Council's work. They form a core part of all the Council's policies and partnerships, for its citizens, staff, and elected members.
28. An Equality Impact Assessment is provided in Appendix 4.

Carbon and Environmental Considerations

29. The Business Plan sets out the third year plans for delivery of the Council Strategy, 2024 to 2028 corporate priority: Zero carbon Oxford.
30. The aim relating to Zero Carbon Oxford is to ensure that climate change goals prioritise cutting carbon emissions from the Council's buildings and that traffic pollution is reduced by providing more electric vehicle infrastructure and greater opportunities for active travel.
31. Continuing to prioritise Zero carbon Oxford significantly contributes to helping the Council to achieve its goals of being net zero carbon by 2030 and net zero citywide by 2040.

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Background Papers:	
1	Oxford City Council Strategy, 2024 to 2028

Business Plan 2026-27

Local Government Reorganisation

Since the 2025-26 Business Plan was agreed, Government has published The English Devolution and Community Empowerment Bill, which outlines a process for Local Government Reorganisation. All councils in two-tier areas, including all those in Oxfordshire, will be replaced by new unitary local authorities. This will see a merging of those functions currently delivered by Oxford City Council (eg. housing, planning and bin collections) – with those delivered by Oxfordshire County Council (eg. social care, transport and libraries) into a single council. Work is underway to design these new unitary authorities, and Government's decision on the boundaries for new council(s) in Oxfordshire is expected in summer 2026, with the new authorities taking over in April 2028. Merging services, systems and workforces will take a considerable amount of time and resource from our workforce. The business plan reflects the need to balance delivering essential services, programmes and projects for residents with the need to work with other councils and service providers across Oxfordshire to ensure transition to the new authorities is effectively planned and resourced.

Priority 1: Good, affordable homes

We will improve existing housing and increase the number of new homes of all tenure types, especially affordable housing with priority given to homes for social rent, and work to prevent homelessness and reduce rough sleeping in the city.

a) Delivering more affordable homes
b) Preventing and tackling homelessness
c) Good quality homes for all

2026/2027		
P1	Deliver our pipeline of new affordable homes and acquisitions, to be owned and managed by the Council.	Regeneration, Economy & Sustainability (Affordable Supply)
P2	Ensure that the Council meets the Regulator of Social Housing's Consumer Standards: Safety and Quality; Transparency, Influence and Accountability; Neighbourhood and Community; Tenancy and Rent: ensuring the safety and sustainability of our homes, improving services to our tenants as well as resident engagement and transparency, and ensuring well run estates.	Housing Services
P3	Undertake work and consultation on the new Local Plan 2045 to help ensure the delivery of the additional homes Oxford needs. Once adopted, the Local Plan will remain in force for the area of the city of Oxford until the successor unitary authority has a new Local Plan for its geography approved.	Planning & Regulatory
P4	Work more closely with providers of social housing in Oxford, seeking to maximize the delivery of affordable homes, collaborating on estates, and influencing the services provided to their tenants.	Regeneration, Economy & Sustainability (Affordable Supply) Housing Services
P5	Continue to meet the challenges of increasing homelessness and temporary accommodation use through the delivery of a wide range of mitigations focussed on homelessness prevention, investment in new temporary accommodation stock and move-on options.	Housing Services
P6	Bring down rough sleeping numbers, by renewing the Countywide Rough Sleeping and Single Homelessness Strategy with partners, progressing the transformation of the Homelessness Alliance, and investing in Housing First and Housing-Led provision.	Housing Services
P7	Improve the quality of accommodation in the private rented sector and enforce the new Renters Rights Act to protect tenants.	Planning & Regulatory Housing Services

Priority 2: Strong, fair economy

We will support economic growth, including significant new business and housing developments that provide good quality jobs for people in Oxford.

a) Secure, fairly paid, local jobs for Oxford's residents and access to skills and reskilling training
b) Using Oxford's unique strengths in a global economy to attract high quality investment
c) Supporting development to boost economic activity and deliver benefits for all
d) Work to ensure the economic and housing needs of the city are embedded into any future unitary council design

	2026/2027	Lead directorate/s
P1	Support inclusive growth of Oxford's strategically important economy, creating the evidence base and strengthening the partnerships needed to realise to the city's full potential in the context of a new unitary council and devolved strategic authority across the Thames Valley region.	Regeneration, Economy & Sustainability
P2	Continue to tackle city inequality and promote economic inclusion through delivery of: • an Affordable Workspace policy for the Local Plan 2045; increasing contract spend with city based VCSEs and SME businesses; and a strengthened package of skills and employment support for council tenants	Regeneration, Economy & Sustainability
P3	Support strategic infrastructure investments in the city: • Promote Oxford West End and Station development utilising funding from landowners, including exploring feasibility for funding through implementation of Tax Increment Financing (TIF) • Support the cross-service delivery of the Cowley Branch Line, its two stations and associated infrastructure • Deliver the Oxpens River Bridge	Regeneration, Economy & Sustainability
P4	Continue to deliver a place-based approach to city regeneration: • Agree key priorities with Oxfordshire County Council for the Central Oxfordshire Movement and Place Framework, including review of bus movements, modal shifts, reduced congestion and a better visitor experience • Improve the usage, look and feel of the city centre by helping to reduce the number of empty units, changing public realm uses, and increasing cleanliness	Regeneration, Economy & Sustainability

Priority 3: Thriving Communities

We will work to improve health, wellbeing, skills and employment opportunities and reduce inequality in our city.

a) Working in partnership with communities, organisations, and agencies to reduce inequalities and create thriving communities
b) Championing diversity and inclusion in our own work and community partnerships
c) Helping people live healthily by providing services, support, and facilities to prevent and manage physical and mental health conditions

	2026/2027	Lead directorate/s
P1	Improve the safety and environment in the city by: • tackling anti-social behaviour, domestic abuse and hate crime and environmental crime such as fly-tipping and littering; delivering against the RSH's Neighbourhood Standard. • Improving our response and management of high-risk individuals that we house, ensuring staff welfare, risk management and trauma-informed approaches are embedded in our working practices • Developing a CCTV Hub arrangement with the police to extend hours of coverage and enhance technology.	Community Safety Service
P2	Develop proposals for an integrated neighbourhood offer, aligning localities, landlord services, place-based working and community assets with future LGR configurations, the Government's emerging neighbourhood framework and parallel changes in Neighbourhood Health services.	Communities and Citizen Services
P3	Improve health and wellbeing outcomes through working with Sport England and health partners to re-position our leisure facilities as active wellbeing centres that include co-location opportunities linked to the NHS 10-year plan; delivering the Oxford Playing Pitch Strategy; and delivering the City Food Action Plan.	Communities and Citizen Services
P4	Continue to develop strong, cohesive and independent communities through supporting delivery of the Pride in Place Programme; delivery of the Low Income Family Tracker (LIFT) campaigns; and delivery of a new booking and payment system for our community facilities.	Communities and Citizen Services

Priority 4: Zero Carbon Oxford

We will prioritise climate change goals to cut carbon emissions from buildings, and develop low carbon infrastructure and support households, businesses and institutions to save energy and cut emissions

a) Decarbonising homes and other buildings and securing the additional funding required to meet the 2030 and 2040 targets
b) Maintain and improve parks, green spaces, biodiversity and access to nature
c) Develop low carbon infrastructure and support households, businesses and institutions to save energy and cut emissions.

	2026/2027	Lead directorate/s
P1	Continue to make progress towards achieving the Council's energy efficiency target for its housing stock of 95% EPC C by 2030; and secure high energy performance standards for all new builds.	Housing Services
P 2	Support the deployment of critical low carbon infrastructure: • Lead a citywide collaboration to further develop options and opportunities for a heat network for key areas of Oxford, to reduce building emissions of carbon and airborne pollutants to support resident well-being. • Build detailed Local Area Energy Plans for the city, feeding into the Oxfordshire-wide plan.	Environmental Services
P3	• Help communities in fuel poverty: support residents' access to Warm Homes and other available grants • Work with private rented sector landlords and other landlords to increase energy efficiency in existing buildings. .	Environmental Services
P4	Explore areas of innovation that accelerate the City's Net Zero ambitions: • Develop a mechanism and fund to support carbon reduction for institutions that would not otherwise be able to achieve this • Maximise sustainability ask within tender documents to support off-setting fund development	Environmental Services
P5	Deliver Waste & Environmental Services improvements: • Develop the Waste and Environmental Services Transformation Programme (WESP) with partner councils to create collaboration and efficiency opportunities that are aligned with the LGR timeline, and informed by the new unitary council geographies • Focus on improvements to existing waste and recycling services for residents, particularly improving household recycling.	Environmental Services
P6	Continue to work with colleagues to build on the programme of prioritised Council decarbonisation projects including for buildings and property services	Environmental Services

Priority 5: Well-run council

We will be more efficient with our resources by offering better digital services, prioritising our activities and balancing spending with income growth.

a) Be easy, engaging and efficient to deal with
b) Support citizens through value of money services
c) Maintain good, accountable governance
d) Recruit and retain a motivated and diverse workforce that reflects the city it serves.

	2026/2027	Lead directorate/s
P1	Develop and deliver a full transition programme for Oxford City Council as part of Local Government Reorganisation to prepare for a move to new unitary structures in 2028, that provide the best possible outcome for Oxford's residents, businesses and communities. Pre-Government decision, workstreams include: • Response to Government consultation and ongoing stakeholder engagement • Joint council governance and PMO across 7 councils to gather data needed for design of new councils Post Government decision, workstreams include: • Initial design of new unitary council(s); preparation for shadow elections to new unitary council(s) in May 2027	Chief Executive All
P2	Develop and implement an LGR People Strategy and Plan to support recruitment, retention and succession planning and prepare people for change. There will be support for managers and employees through the change process and transition to the new unitary arrangements through change readiness programmes, development opportunities and career planning.	People Services
P3	Work with the Oxfordshire and other Thames Valley councils to develop detailed proposals for the creation of a Strategic Authority, with powers devolved from Government; and support the creation of a Spatial Development Strategy for the Thames Valley geography.	Chief Executive Planning & Regulatory
P4	Strengthen cyber security posture and resilience: Complete cyber security upgrades; ensure and test robustness of Cyber Incident Response Plan (CIRP); and ensure staff training.	ICT
P5	Improve timeliness and ease-of-access to services for our residents through application of Robotic Process Automation and AI to streamline transactional processing and simplify digital self-service.	ICT Financial Services
P6	Strengthen protection of residents' data and ensure compliance with forthcoming legislative updates.	Information Governance

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Priority 1: Good, affordable homes

We will improve existing housing and increase the number of new homes of all tenure types, especially affordable housing with priority given to homes for social rent, and work to prevent homelessness and reduce rough sleeping in the city.

a) Delivering more affordable homes
b) Preventing and tackling homelessness
c) Good quality homes for all

	Year 2 actions – 2025/2026	Lead directorates	Performance update (November 2025)
1	Deliver a pipeline of new affordable homes and acquisitions over the next five years, to be owned and managed by the Council. (*Linked with Priority 2 Action 4*)	Regeneration, Economy & Sustainability (Affordable Supply)	A total of 1,571 affordable homes are forecast for completion between 2025–2029, close to the 1,600 home target. Additional sites and major schemes are being developed for the longer term pipeline over the next seven years. Over 1,000 homes are expected to be delivered at Social Rent tenure, exceeding the target of 850. More than half will be directly delivered by the Council and OX Place, increasing the Council's rented stock from 8,000 to around 9,000 homes by 2032.
2	Work with Housing Associations to increase the number of new affordable homes in Oxford and work with neighbouring Districts to ensure Oxford residents access new housing developments across Oxfordshire. (*Linked with Priority 2 Action 4*)	Regeneration, Economy & Sustainability (Affordable Supply)	There are currently six schemes in the overall affordable housing delivery programme with housing associations – expected to deliver over 600 affordable homes. The Council has agreements with each of the four neighbouring district councils for them to help address unmet need by giving access to specific (rented) schemes for over 5,000 applicants with a Local Connection to Oxford. To January 2026, 186 households have been successfully housed using this approach through lettings via Vale of White Horse District Council.
3	Continue to meet the challenges of increasing homelessness and temporary accommodation use through: a. Working upstream to prevent homelessness whenever possible, including using the new opportunity of the Renter Rights Bill due to be enacted in 2025. b. Bringing forward more temporary accommodation and move-on accommodation, including delivering new	Housing	Nearly 200 households have been prevented from becoming homeless in 2025/26, with support ongoing for 185 at-risk residents. Work continues to expand temporary and move-on accommodation, increasing provision from 100 to over 200 units, with 300 units forecast by December 2026, reducing reliance on hotels and out of area placements. A full review of the Allocations Scheme has been completed, and a new draft policy -reflecting resident and partner feedback -has been prepared for approval. The Renters Rights Act is expected to further strengthen homelessness prevention efforts.

	units owned by the Council and with our Housing Association partners. c. Reviewing our approach to housing allocations, consulting on a new Allocations Policy.		
4	Bring down rough sleeping numbers, by progressing the Countywide Rough Sleeping and Single Homelessness Strategy with partners, including the transformation of the Homelessness Alliance, through decommissioning supported accommodation units that do not fit into our new model, while increasing the accommodation available for Housing First and Housing-Led provision.	Housing	Work continues with partners to transform services for single homeless people in Oxfordshire. Ongoing investment is supporting the expansion of Housing First and Housing-Led accommodation and improving move-on pathways from supported housing into settled homes. The Oxfordshire Homelessness Alliance remains central to delivering this provision, and partners are embedding key elements of the new service model, including more specialised accommodation and faster routes for people to move from the street into a home. The current Countywide Rough Sleeping and Single Homelessness Strategy runs until 2026. Partners have agreed to continue joint working up to at least local government reorganisation, so development of a renewed two-year strategy is underway, with a public consultation planned in the coming months.
5	Deliver our improvement plans to ensure compliance with the Social Housing Act and Consumer Standards to improve services for council tenants and leaseholders including the delivery of the Asset Management Strategy and 5-year capital investment programme in our housing stock.	Housing	The Council is continuing to seek to improve services for tenants and leaseholders. Following a recent self-assessment, a refreshed and prioritised improvement action plan is in place overseen by a new corporate task group, along with resident and Member oversight to ensure progress is made across all four areas of the Consumer Standards. A transformation of the Landlord Services team has been completed to deliver better services to tenants/leaseholders – including a new area based working model for tenancy management launching in January 2026.
6	Launch and deliver the reset of tenant engagement work, to include the development of formal governance structure and a new Tenant Engagement strategy.	Housing	Tenant and leaseholder engagement has increased during 2025/26. The new Resident Involvement and Engagement Strategy and Action Plan (2025–2028), codesigned with residents, was approved by Cabinet in December 2025. A new cross-tenure Tenant and Leaseholder Board will launch in mid-February 2026. The Tenant Satisfaction Survey is underway and will inform service improvement priorities for 2026/27. A dedicated policy review group has also produced

			tenant-led recommendations that are shaping revised housing policies and strategies.
7	Undertake work and consultation on the new Local Plan 2042 to help ensure the delivery of the additional homes Oxford needs.	Planning & Regulatory	Local Plan 2045 was refreshed and final public consultation commenced in February 2026.
8	Ensure the continued improvement of the private rented stock in the city by delivering the renewal of the Additional Licensing Scheme in 2025/26 and Selective Licensing scheme in 2026/27, including public consultation for both schemes in 2025/2026	Regulatory Services	Additional Licensing public consultation has taken place in advance of Council decision to submit for renewal of scheme in summer of 2026. Public consultation for the Selective Licensing scheme will take place in autumn/winter of 2026.

Priority 2: Strong, fair economy

We will support economic growth, including significant new business and housing developments that provide good quality jobs for people in Oxford.

a) Secure, fairly paid, local jobs for Oxford's residents and access to skills and reskilling training
b) Using Oxford's unique strengths in a global economy to attract high quality investment
c) Supporting development to boost economic activity and deliver benefits for all

	Year 2 actions – 2025/2026	Lead directorates	Performance update (November 2025)
1	Continue to progress regeneration schemes in key areas of the city to support local economic development: Blackbird Leys, 38-40 George Street, Templar Square and East Oxford Community Centre.	Economy, Regeneration & Sustainability	Housebuilding at Knights Road, Blackbird Leys is underway, with first handovers expected this financial year. Work continues on the central Blackbird Leys redevelopment, with Block D nearing completion and construction of the Community Hall and Block A now underway. At 38 - 40 George Street, planning permission is in place and the developer is procuring a contractor. The East Oxford Community Centre refurbishment and extension are complete, and the centre has been brought back into use.
2	Work with developers of large-scale regeneration projects, key employers and education stakeholders to develop an employment and skills framework, which aims to coordinate promotion of opportunities and delivery of skills across the city. Ensure the benefits of the growth are accessible to local people, through Community Employment and Procurement Plans, more apprenticeships and local job opportunities.	Economy, Regeneration & Sustainability	The Economic Development Team launched the Community Employment and Procurement Plan (CEPP) service in January 2025 and is monitoring eight CEPPs, exceeding the target of five. These include major developments at ARC Campus, Oxford Science Park and Oxford North. CEPPs secure key commitments from developers: 20% local employment (including 5% apprenticeships), 20% local spend, and the provision of learning, employment and social value opportunities. -application support to move the service towards cost neutrality.
3	Progress work to secure Cowley Branch Line delivery stage funding, using the completed business case, local match funding.	Economy, Regeneration & Sustainability	Following submission of the Full Business Case to the Department of Transport in the summer of 2025, government announced a £120million investment to reopen the Cowley Branch Line with new stations at Oxford Littlemore and Oxford Cowley and direct services to London Marylebone. The announcement included a requirement to raise £35m of local funding towards the scheme to secure final investment and work to achieve that is ongoing. The Council is also working with County colleagues to identify and deliver local infrastructure and connections into the new stations to maximise the benefits for local people.

4	Work with Government and key stakeholders as part of the new Oxford Growth Commission to unlock issues fettering growth and investment in Oxford, including the need to address sewage treatment and energy infrastructure issues. *(Linked with Priority 1 Actions 1 & 2)*	Economy, Regeneration & Sustainability	The Council led the process of engaging with government, Thames Water and the Environment Agency to ensure an immediate solution was realised to increase capacity of Oxford's Sewage Treatment Works and prevent investment being stymied in the short term. The Council is working with the Oxford Growth Commission to ensure that all parties continue to: • prioritise a long-term solution to the Sewage Treatment Works • bring together energy stakeholders to address the potential lack of energy supply.
5	Explore the creation of an Accommodation Business Improvement District (ABID), facilitating conversations with key stakeholders as part of focused task groups. The establishment of the ABID is contingent on the decision of the levy payers, and not the Council.	Economy, Regeneration & Sustainability	Significant progress has been made with two accommodation task groups (one made up of hoteliers and the other made up of Oxford University colleges), to consider the range of actions needed to mitigate any negative impact of tourism in the city and to improve the visitor offer. It is expected that this will progress into an action plan with funding options, including the possibility of an Accommodation Business Improvement District, to deliver on priorities.
6	Develop and roll out a programme of locality-based support to businesses in Oxford outside of the city centre.	Economy, Regeneration & Sustainability	The place-based Business Support Programme, launched in June 2025, is providing tailored assistance to local businesses, beginning with a pilot in East Oxford. Building on this, the programme will adopt a phased approach from Spring 2026, extending delivery to Templar Square and Blackbird Leys. In parallel, work is underway to develop the emerging East Oxford Business Association into a sustainable cooperative model.

Priority 3: Thriving Communities

We will work to improve health, wellbeing, skills and employment opportunities and reduce inequality in our city.

a) Working in partnership with communities, organisations, and agencies to reduce inequalities and create thriving communities
b) Championing diversity and inclusion in our own work and community partnerships
c) Helping people live healthily by providing services, support, and facilities to prevent and manage physical and mental health conditions

	Year 2 actions – 2025/2026	Lead directorates	Performance update
1	Create local action plans targeting areas of deprivation and strengthen partnerships to address inequalities. Help to design development projects to promote healthy lifestyles and provide access to arts and culture, enhancing community wellbeing.	Communities & Citizens	Local action plans were refreshed using latest insights and shared with ward members. A wide range of health-focused projects were delivered, including promotion events, community roadshows and activities with leisure centres. Over £119k was invested in health initiatives in priority areas and £60k in strengthening the local food system, with an additional £30k secured for wayfinding at Shotover Country Park. The Move Together and You Move programmes achieved 400 referrals, a 43% reduction in fewer GP appointments, and 800 new participants, including 500 early years children. Council-led events reached 600+ residents and 70 partners, while the tennis programme in partnership with Courtside engaged 7,000+ unique users.
2	Review our approach to Oxford's Community Centres and other community shared spaces: a) To understand their wide-ranging benefits and help decide their overall value to the community b) Work with partners to maximise the advantages of co-locating services, ensuring better resource utilisation and easier access for the community.	Communities & Citizens Property & Assets	A new Community Centre Rents Policy was approved, and revised business plans for Council-run centres were agreed. Further review work is paused pending the Government's Local Government Reorganisation decision. The Council is working with NHS partners on colocation opportunities and with the County Council and others at the new Youth Hub, which has supported 184 young people with over 1,000 attendances. Customer Service Officers regularly attend food larders to improve access to support.
3	Develop and implement a new Anti-Social Behaviour policy to help maintain a safe and respectful environment for citizens and tenants, in line with the Council's responsibilities under the Social Housing Act 2023.	Community Safety	The Council's Anti-Social Behaviour Policy 2026/2029 was approved by the Cabinet in October 2025. The policy development process was undertaken with Council tenant representatives and regular input from the Council's Scrutiny Committee.
4	Continue to invest in the Council's leisure and community assets to meet community needs:	Communities & Citizens	The Leisure Investment Programme remains on track for completion by May 2026, with new soft play and Tag Active

	a) Deliver the Leisure Investment Programme in partnership with More Leisure b) Deliver the Youth Hub at Leys Pool & Leisure Centre c) Complete and open the refurbished East Oxford Community Centre d) Deliver the new Blackbird Leys Community Centre e) Review the operating model for the Museum of Oxford.	Property & Assets	facilities at Leys Pools and upgraded changing areas at Ferry Leisure Centre delivered this year. The Leys Youth Hub is complete and operational. The refurbished East Oxford Community Centre opened in November 2025. Work on the Blackbird Leys Community Centre is progressing, with construction scheduled to start in February 2026. The Museum of Oxford operating model has been reviewed and is scheduled to change by the end of January 2026.
5	Continue to work in partnership to maximise wider resources to increase wellbeing, boost involvement and increase the independence of community groups: a) Support programmes to tackle health inequalities b) Review how the Council awards grants including assessment process and criteria allocation policy c) Assess the feasibility of setting up a cross-sector Cultural Compact for Oxfordshire to share costs and lever in more private sector funding.	Communities & Citizens	The Council worked with partners including Active Oxfordshire, Public Health, the Integrated Care Board and Sport England to deliver wellbeing programmes, develop an Active Wellbeing approach and attract external funding. Collaboration with Serco leisure created an in-kind funding pot supporting community groups in areas of inequality. The grants assessment process and criteria were reviewed and implemented. Meetings and workshops with cultural organisations have taken place, and the Council is working with Arts Council England to convene a regional meeting in Spring 2026 to explore a cross sector Cultural Compact.
6	Create a new more commercial Events Strategy, and work with partners to develop, support and manage more and larger events. Review and improve the Council's event processes and promote event spaces.	Communities & Citizens	A programme of work is in place to focus on getting new big events in either South Park/ Cutteslowe. The programme has the following workstreams: • Revise consultation list and process • Proactively advertise opportunities for event organisers to run larger scale events in Oxford • Review memorandum of understanding for South Park • Staffing review • Better use of digital.

Priority 4: Zero Carbon Oxford

We will prioritise climate change goals to cut carbon emissions from buildings, and develop low carbon infrastructure and support households, businesses and institutions to save energy and cut emissions

a) Decarbonising homes and other buildings and securing the additional funding required to meet the 2030 and 2040 targets
b) Maintain and improve parks, green spaces, biodiversity and access to nature
c) Develop low carbon infrastructure and support households, businesses and institutions to save energy and cut emissions.

	Year 2 actions – 2025/2026	Lead directorates	Performance update (November 2025)
1	Continue to build learning to successfully bid for and deliver funding to achieve the Council's energy efficiency target for its housing stock of 95% EPC C by 2030, and EPC B across the Council's non-housing assets.	Property & Assets & Housing Services	Following the completion of the Social Housing Decarbonisation Fund 2.1 retrofit programme, lessons learnt are being collated to ensure these can be applied to future funded schemes. Surveys are taking place to confirm the current position of housing and non-housing stock against both Energy Performance Certificate targets to ensure this is up to date and reflects present assessment methodologies and improvements made to homes since last being assessed.
2	Continue to provide targeted support for communities in fuel poverty and deprivation. a) Support residents via retrofit campaigns with access to Warm Home and other available grants. b) Work with County and neighbouring Districts on a joined-up approach to deliver joint retrofit work streams. c) Prepare for the Government new Community Energy Funding programme to maximise benefits to deprived communities.	Economy, Regeneration & Sustainability	The Council continues to support households in fuel poverty by promoting retrofit grants and delivering targeted outreach and training. Work with Oxfordshire County Council includes shaping the Oxfordshire Retrofit Strategy, joint funding bids, and co-funding Better Housing Better Health, which has delivered assessments, referrals and home visits across the city. Support for landlords and estate agents helps improve energy efficiency in the private rented sector. The County Council – in response to our recommendations - has procured the Homewise Tool to provide tailored retrofit advice; and the City Council continues engagement to ensure fair community benefit from emerging energy projects.
3	Work with consultants to deliver a Local Area Energy plan for Oxfordshire and start to shape more detailed plans for the city. Continue to use the Council's convening role to speed up the delivery of extra grid capacity for Oxford.	Economy, Regeneration & Sustainability	The baseline has been delivered for the Local Area Energy Plan for Oxfordshire. The next step now under way is the development of Local Area Energy Plans in each district which will be nested into the countywide plan. These detailed plans set out current energy demands for domestic and commercial activities in Oxford and what future energy demands will look like and how these could be met. Community, business and

			residential engagement will take place to highlight the outcomes of this process. The project is due to complete Autumn 2026.
4	Lead a citywide collaboration to further develop options and opportunities for a heat network for key areas of Oxford.	Economy, Regeneration & Sustainability	The Council has procured consultants to provide project and technical consultancy support for project partners (which includes both Universities, County, NHS, 20 Colleges and City Council). Specialist legal advisors have also been appointed. The Partnership has agreed Critical Success Factors for Heat Networks in Oxford and is considering the best procurement route for a Heat Network to meet these. Current focus is on the City Centre and Headington area.
5	Deliver expansion of Zero Carbon Oxfordshire (ZCOP) to form a successful countywide climate action partnership to help achieve a net zero Oxfordshire by 2050. Commission an updated 2040 Net Zero Road map and Action Plan for the city of Oxford.	Economy, Regeneration & Sustainability	ZCOP has successfully expanded to a countywide remit, with more than 10 new members. A report has been commissioned to provide a new 2-year action plan. This report is currently going through final revisions before being signed off by the Steering Group in Spring 2026.
6	Use findings from the review of 2030 Council-wide Net Zero targets to determine ongoing prioritisation of decarbonisation workstreams, including fleet.	Economy, Regeneration & Sustainability	Following a 2030 Net Zero review, further work has been commissioned to allow the Council to better understand the resources and funds required to achieve net zero targets. Two working groups have been established, one to focus on fleet and one to focus on assets and work has commenced.

Priority 5: Well run council

We will be more efficient with our resources by offering better digital services, prioritising our activities and balancing spending with income growth.

a) Be easy, engaging and efficient to deal with
b) Support citizens through value of money services
c) Maintain good, accountable governance
d) Recruit and retain a motivated and diverse workforce that reflects the city it serves.

	Year 2 actions – 2025/2026	Lead directorates	
1	Enhance our compliance culture by focusing on improving practices such as Health & Safety, Safeguarding, and Risk Management to ensure a safer and more secure environment for everyone involved.	Community Safety and Property & Assets	The Council has embedded safeguarding policy and practice across all services, supported by 19 internal Safeguarding Champions and a dedicated Safeguarding Coordinator, with all staff completing mandatory training. The Council remains an active member of the Oxfordshire Safeguarding Children Partnership and the Oxfordshire Safeguarding Adults Board and their subgroups. Health and Safety compliance boards continue to monitor performance, identify priority areas, and oversee delivery of improvement plans to strengthen overall compliance and ensure a safer environment.
2	Prioritise our activities and balance spending with income growth to continue to build financial resilience. Identify additional efficiencies and income streams, including financial returns generated from our two wholly owned companies Oxford Direct Services and OX Place, and other local limited partnerships.	Financial Services	The City Council continues to set a balanced four-year medium term financial plan using a mixture of efficiencies, increases of fees and charges and financial returns from our wholly owned companies.
3	Deliver the Council's People Programme to ensure diverse and accessible recruitment, developing internal skills, supporting career progression, strengthening succession planning and ensuring our workforce represents our communities.	People Team	The Council delivered key elements of the People Programme, updating recruitment and positive action policies, improving systems, and strengthening staff network influence. New development offers were launched, including the third Aspiring Manager cohort, a career series, AI training, and front-line worker support. A second cohort of Data and AI apprenticeships also began. Workforce diversity has improved, supported by an Equality, Diversity and Inclusion survey, and a new pay policy and structure were successfully implemented.
4	Review how Oxford Direct Services is being commissioned and managed and develop a clear	Financial Services	A new governance structure was established including a strategic partnership and area-based subgroups with senior

	plan to improve these processes. This will help ensure that services are delivered more effectively and better meet the needs of the community.		Council and ODS involvement. Quarterly performance meetings were introduced, and service specifications and KPIs are close to finalisation. Delivery against the annual action plan has been closely monitored. A joint review and planning workshop in early 2026 will assess progress from 2025/26 and collaboratively shape improved commissioning and management processes, including a new partnership action plan for 2026/27.
5	Continue to invest in ICT equipment, AI, connectivity and staff training to boost productivity, improve services, cut costs, and engage with our citizens more. This will help foster innovation and adaptability, making services more efficient, transparent, and responsive.	ICT Services	The Council continued to invest in modern ICT, digital capability, and staff skills to improve productivity and service quality. Over 600 laptops were replaced, enhancing reliability and security. Investment in emerging technology included issuing 100 Microsoft Copilot licences through the Multiverse AI development programme. Connectivity has been strengthened with improved Wi-Fi in community centres and planned expansion in the Town Hall. The contact centre telephony system is also being upgraded to improve resilience and service reliability.
6	Work with our communities to provide early prevention support: a) Improve how we use our main contact channels with our citizens to manage demand better, b) Offer more self-service options c) Ensure a consistent and inclusive experience for everyone.	Communities & Citizens	Online form usage has increased by 10.9% across eight key services, driven by the launch of new digital options including the tenant repairs portal, revenues and benefits portal, online housing application, and the new bulky waste form. A Channel Management Plan was implemented to streamline the Council's contact channels. All actions are now complete, in progress, or scheduled, and the plan has been integrated into the ongoing Citizen Experience programme. The Council successfully retained its external Customer Service Accreditation, achieving 13 compliances and identifying further improvement areas.
7	Work with ODS, neighbouring Districts and County to develop potential business case options for joint waste operations to deliver significant operational efficiencies.	Corporate Strategy	The Waste & Environmental Services Transformation Programme Board, comprising Oxford City Council, West Oxfordshire District Council, Cherwell District Council and Oxfordshire County Council has approved a business case to deliver improvements in operational performance, environmental sustainability and substantial savings through greater collaborative working and integration across the Oxfordshire waste system operations.
8	Work with Oxfordshire and other Thames Valley councils to develop and implement proposals for	Corporate Strategy	A proposal for the creation of three new unitary councils across Oxfordshire and West Berkshire was developed by

	devolution and local government reorganisation (LGR) that provide the best possible outcome for Oxford's residents, businesses and communities.		Oxford City Council following extensive engagement with residents, businesses and stakeholders and submitted to Government – alongside competing LGR proposals - for its decision by July 2026. An Expression of Interest for devolution in the Thames Valley was submitted to Government that could enable the creation of a Mayoral Strategic Authority for our region.

Appendix Three: Risk Register - The Council's Business Plan 2026 to 2027

Ref	Risk Description	Consequence	Owner	Gross		Current			Target		Control Description	Progress	Date Due	Action Owner
				P	I	P	I	Score	P	I				
1	**Political and Partnership Landscape:** The Government's devolution agenda, the universal requirement to create Mayoral Strategic Authorities and the introduction of unitary councils may lead to increased uncertainty, significant additional work to shape new governance, a challenge to partnership and relationship management, dilution of budgetary control, and the assumption of significant new service responsibilities.	The potential loss on city-level growth and community identity, distraction from business as usual work, increased budgetary risk, and negative impact on partnership working.	Chief Executive	5	4	4	3	12	3	3	Prioritisation and policy development linked to new Government agenda & engagement with Oxfordshire partners. Use partnerships to support community cohesion - including the Oxford Strategic Partnership, the Oxfordshire Inclusive Economy Partnership and the Anchor institutions networks. Use cross party working groups for major decisions.	80%	Open	Transition Director
2	**Financial Stability:** Pressure on income and increased demand for services means that the Council will not be able to deliver its plans and corporate priorities. Lack of knowledge on the implications fairer funding in respect of business rates and revenue support grant. Fluctuations in the Council's income and expenditure. Increased costs due to inflation impacting the capital programmes. Increase demand, including for temporary accommodation. Pressures on the Oxford Model caused by more challenging client and inflationary increases incurred by ODS, and a need for Ox Place to refresh the business plan for developments once the current plan expires in 2033. A poor performing wider economy results in a reduction in income including commercial rents and business rates.	Reduction in services, including too vulnerable people with complex needs. Difficult decisions must be taken by Members and senior officers about resource allocation. Fees and Charges have to increase. The Council is exposed to a higher risk exposure outside of its risk appetite. Staff morale and the reputation of the Council is reduced. Unresolvable pressures ultimately lead to government intervention.	Group Finance Director	4	4	3	3	9	2	2	The Business Plan is intrinsically linked with the Council's MTFP and Budget 2026-27 and the financial and operational health of the Council. The Business Plan development process has been comprehensive and carefully designed alongside the development of the Council Strategy 2024 to 2028. All strands within the Business Plan align with the Council Strategy and will need to align with the Council's Medium Term Financial Plan utilising existing resources and capacity. Robust management and monitoring of the Business Plan delivery.	80%	Open	Group Finance Director
3	**Cyber security and IT infrastructure:** A failure to respond to a cyber attack and ensure IT infrastructure resilience. This might be caused by human error or deliberate targeting, as the Council is a high-profile organisation with financial information. Exposure through third-party partners. Inability to invest in security improvements. Lack of skilled staff and recruitment challenges. Inadequate funding and prioritisation of IT infrastructure. Complexity of infrastructure and connectivity issues. Readiness and capacity for change and LGR transition.	Inability to provide key public services. Financial losses, fines and reputational damage. Staff wellbeing and morale impacted. Reduced productivity and operations. Increased IT inequality, limited service accessibility. Failure to deliver savings, modernisation and Local Government transition priorities.	Deputy Chief Executive City and Citizens' Services	3	4	3	3	9	3	2	Prioritisation of ICT projects to be delivered over next 18 months to 2 years. Improve digital skills of staff.	90%	Open	Deputy Chief Executive City and Citizens' Services
4	**Increased demand for services:** There is increased demand for services provided by the Council, particularly Customer Services, Council Tax, and Benefits, whilst at the same time there is a significant increase in work to support the Government's decision to reorganise Local Authority arrangements in Oxfordshire. Demand is increasing because of the cost of living and accommodation which reduces disposable income and drives up debt. Other causes are increased deprivation; not maximising technology; cutting services (discretionary services are often preventative); resources; Oxford less attractive, failure of partners, increased complexity of support needed, i.e. homelessness. The population of Oxford is growing, and this therefore means that demand will also grow; rising health inequalities, an ageing population, significant deprivation in certain areas of the city; Failure to fully leverage technology, when residents are unable to access digital services due to critical poverty, and when partner organisations reduce or eliminate preventative services.	The increasing pressure on services and staff, can lead to lower staff morale and a failure to meet statutory obligations. As a result, the Council's reputation may suffer as customer expectations go unmet, and relationships with delivery partners may become strained. Delivering services within budgets and achieveing savings targets will become more challenging.	Chief Executive	5	4	3	3	9	3	3	Maximise availability of technology. Work with partners and agencies to deploy collaborative solutions. Priroritise and depriotties actions, projects and delivery.	80%	Open	Deputy Chief Executive City and Citizens' Services
5	**Legislation:** Unanticipated changes in legislation caused by uncontrollable Political, Economic, Social, Technological, Legal, Environmental factors.	Adverse impact on some of the most vulnerable citizens in the city.	Director of Law, Governance and Strategy	3	3	3	2	6	3	2	The Council and Business Plan development process has been comprehensive and carefully designed. Robust management and monitoring of the Business Plan delivery.	80%	Open	Director of Law, Governance and Strategy

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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. 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.**	Oxford City Council annual Business Plan 2026 to 2027	**2.**	**The implementation date of the activity under consideration:**	01 April 2026
3.	**Directorate/Department(s):**	Law, Governance and Strategy	**4.**	**Service Area(s):**	Policy and Partnerships
5.	**Who is (are) the assessment lead(s):**	Lucy Cherry lcherry@oxford.gov.uk	**6.**	**Contact details, in case there are queries:**	Lucy Cherry Policy and Partnerships lcherry@oxford.gov.uk
7.	**Is this a new or ongoing EqIA?**	New ☐ Extension to existing EqIA ☒	**8.**	If this is an extension of a previous EqIA, please indicate where the previous EqIA is located and share the link to the said EqIA.	2025 to 2026 Business Plan EqIA
9.	**Date this EqIA started:**	06/02/2026			
10.	**Will this EqIA be attached to Corporate Management Team (CMT) reports/updates, which will be published online?**	No	**11.**	**Give a date (tentative or otherwise) when this assessment will be taken to the** CMT.	Unsure

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

12.	**Type of activity being considered:**	☐ Budget	☐ Decommissioning	☐ Commissioning	☒ **Change to an existing activity.**	
		☒ **New Activity**	☐ Others.			
13.	**Which priority area(s) within Oxford City Council's Corporate strategy (2024-2028) does this activity fulfil?**	☒ **Good, affordable homes.**	☒ **Strong, fair economy.**	☒ **Thriving communities.**	☒ **Zero carbon Oxford.**	☒ **Well-run council.**
14.	**Which priority area(s) within Oxford City Council's Equality, Diversity & Inclusion Strategy (2022) does this activity fulfil?**	☒ **Responsive services and customer care.**	☒ **Diverse and engaged workforce.**	☒ **Leadership & organisational commitment.**	☒ **Understanding and working with our communities.**	
15.	**Outline the aims, objectives, & priorities of the activity being considered.**	Aims: Oxford City Council's Business Plan 2026 to 2027 (Plan) is an annual document that sets out publically the Council's priority work programme activities for the year. The draft Business Plan 2026 to 2027 sets out the second year of activity toward achieving the outcomes set out in the Council Strategy 2024 to 2028.	Objectives: The Plan will inform the actions laid out in each department service plan. Progress in delivery of the actions set out within the Business Plan will be tracked through the year, alongside the 2024 to 2028 corporate key performance indicators.	Priorities: The Plan activities sit against the Council's four Council Strategy 2024 to 2028 priorities: Good, affordable homes; Strong, fair economy; Thriving Communities; Zero Carbon Oxford; With a fifth underpinning Priority 5, Well-run council. There are some issues that cut across more than one area of work and require joined up thinking by different teams and partnerships to achieve overarching goals.	

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16.	**Please outline the consequences of not implementing this activity.**	The Plan underpins the delivery of the Council Strategy and sets the specific priorities for the year ahead and report on progress against adopted key performance indicators. In turn, the Business Plan will be complemented by the Council's annual Budget and Medium Term Financial Plan (MTFP) that will allocate resources against the priorities set. The priorties are intrinsically linked with supporting residents / citizens who experience systemic inequalities and will benefit the most from the delivery of these priorities. If the Plan priorities are not delivered there may be an adverse impact on some of the most vulnerable residents/ citizens in the city.

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?**	None required
18.	**List information and data used to understand who your residents or staff are and how they will be impacted.**	Existing annual service area plans where data and insight work has been considered and already built in Census data 2021
19.	**If you have not done any consultations or collected data & information, are you planning to do so in the future?**	Not applicable

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Section 4: Impact analysis.

20.	**Who does the activity impact?**	**Service Users**	Yes ☒	No ☐	Don't Know ☐
		Members of staff	Yes ☒	No ☐	Don't Know ☐
		General public	Yes ☒	No ☐	Don't Know ☐
		Partner / Community Organisation	Yes ☒	No ☐	Don't Know ☐
		City Councillors	Yes ☒	No ☐	Don't Know ☐
		Council suppliers and contractors	Yes ☒	No ☐	Don't Know ☐

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

Protected Characteristic	Positive	Negative	Neutral	Don't know	Data/information/evidence supporting your assessment	Analysis & insight Mitigations
Age	☐	☐	☒	☐	-15.5% are aged 0-15; (Oxfordshire 18.0%, Southeast 18.5%, England Average 18.4%)	Key groups: Children:

336					Lower than county, regional and national average. -72.4% are aged 16-64, (Oxfordshire 63.6%, Southeast 61.7%, England average of 62.9%). Higher than the county, regional and national average. Residents in this age group make up 72% of the population of Oxford. -12.1% aged 65+, (Oxfordshire 18.3%, Southeast 19.8% and England average 18.7%). Lower than the county, regional and national average. Source: ONS mid-year estimates 2024	- After accounting for housing cost, 21% of children in Oxfordshire live in poverty (Good Food Oxford Report -2021). Adults: -15.3% of all adults in Oxfordshire struggle to meet monthly bills/commitments. - Oxford has an expanding working age population, the scope to deliver positive impact through the 'Inclusive Economy' strand is promising. However, close monitoring of impact on the following groups are needed- 1. Disability, 2. Sex, 3. Race and Ethnicity. The ongoing work will have a positive impact on this group if the actions take on a targeted, strategic, informed and joined-up approach. - Council Strategy 2024 to 2028 - Equality, Diversity & Inclusion Strategy - Thriving Communities Strategy Close monitoring of impact and gaps will enable the Plan to deliver inclusive and equitable results.
Disability **(Visible and invisible)**	☐	☐	☒	☐	-Households with 1 person living with disability = 23.1% in Oxford. Higher than Oxfordshire average, slightly lower than the average for England (Oxfordshire - 22.5%; England - 25.4%)	In terms of number of disabled people in household, the proportion of 1 person disabled under the Equality Act in household in Oxford (23.1%) is above Oxfordshire (22.5%), but below the national average (25.4%). 5.9% of households (3,281 households) in Oxford

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337					-2 or more people disabled in a household = 5.9% Higher than Oxfordshire average, lower than the average for England. (Oxfordshire- 5.3% and England= 6.6%) Source: Census 2021	have 2 or more people disabled under the Equality Act, this is above Oxfordshire and below England averages at 5.3% and 6.6% respectively. The ongoing work will have a positive impact on this group if the actions take on a targeted, strategic, informed and joined-up approach. - Council Strategy 2024 to 2028 - Equality, Diveristy & Inclusion Strategy - Thriving Communities Strategy Close monitoring of impact and gaps will enable the Plan to deliver inclusive and equitable results, especially for more vulnerable groups such as people who are homeless, young residents, and people in the workforce.
Gender re-assignment	☐	☐	☒	☐	Data for 16 and over: -Gender identity the same as sex registered at birth - 88.8%. Lower than Oxfordshire 93.3% and England 93.5%. -Gender identity different from sex registered at birth but no specific identity given - 0.6%, compared to 0.2% in Oxfordshire and 0.2% in England. -Transwoman or transman identity Source: Census 2021.	Please note that the ONS acknowledges that there are potentially issues with the reliability of data on gender identity, and we understand that these questions are currently under review as a result. The ONS is learning from the limitations of the 2021 questions and are now engaged in ongoing research to understand how questions on this topic should best be designed to ensure they are valid and understood properly, if they are to be included in the Census 2031. In terms of gender identity, the majority of respondents (usual residents aged 16 years and over) selected Gender identity

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338						the same as sex registered at birth (88.8%), this is lower than both county (93.3%) and national (93.5%) averages. Of those who selected a gender identity different from sex registered at birth, the largest group was Gender identity different from sex registered at birth, but no specific identity given (0.6%). Trans women and Trans men make up 0.4%, and all other gender identities (0.1%). The proportion of Trans gender, and other gender identity classifications in Oxford are higher than both Oxfordshire and England averages. The proportion of those who did not answer this question is higher in Oxford (9.9%) than Oxfordshire and England averages at 6.1% and 6.0% respectively. The ongoing work will have a positive impact on this group if the actions take on a targeted, strategic, informed and joined-up approach. - Council Strategy 2024 to 2028 - Equality, Diversity & Inclusion Strategy - Thriving Communities Strategy Close monitoring of impact and gaps will enable the Plan to deliver inclusive and equitable results.

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Marriage & Civil Partnership 339	☐	☐	☒	☐	Data for 16 and over: Of those residents aged 16 and over: -55.5% in Oxford are not married or in a civil partnership. This is higher than Oxfordshire and England (37.7% and 37.9% respectively). -32.9% in Oxford are married. This compares to 46.6% in Oxfordshire and 44.5% in England. 0.3% of residents in Oxford are in a same sex marriage and 0.1% are in a same sex civil partnership. This is in line with the county and country averages for same sex marriages and civil partnerships. -0.3% in Oxford are in a civil partnership compared to 0.2% in Oxfordshire and 0.2% in England. -6.2% are divorced in Oxford compared to 8.3% in Oxfordshire and 9.1% in England. -3.7% in Oxford are widowed or surviving partner from a civil partnership, compared to 5.4% in Oxfordshire and 6.1% in England. Source: Census 2021	Census figures on legal partnership show that the proportion of single residents has increased by 1% since last Census up from 54% to 55% of residents aged 16 and over. Across other partnership types there has been little or no change, with the same proportion of residents married (33%), in a registered same-sex civil partnership (0.3%) or divorced (6%) as there were in 2011. There is a very slight decrease in the percentage of residents who are separated (down from 2% to 1%) and those who are widowed (down from 5% to 4% of the 16 plus population). Out of those residents who are married, just under 1% are married to the same sex (414 residents in total) and 99% are married to the opposite sex. This is about in line with the national average. The ongoing work will have a positive impact on this group if the actions take on a targeted, strategic, informed and joined-up approach. - Council Strategy 2024 to 2028 - Equality, Diversity & Inclusion Strategy - Thriving Communities Strategy Close monitoring of impact and gaps will enable the Plan to deliver inclusive and equitable results.

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Race, Ethnicity and/or Citizenship	☐	☐	☒	☐	-White British: 53.5% of residents in Oxford, (76.8% in Oxfordshire and England- 73.5%) -Non-White: 29.3% (England-19.0%) Higher than national average -White non-British: 17.2% (England: 7.5%) - Higher than national average -Mixed: 5.6%, (England: 3.0%) Higher than national average -Asian: 15.4%, (England: 9.6%) Higher than national average -Black: 4.7%, (England: 4.2%) -Other ethnic Group: 3.7%, (England: 2.2%) Higher than national average - Households with multiple ethnicities: 23.6%, (England: 10.4%) Higher than national average. Source: Census 2021 -Born in England: 62.3%, (England Av. 80.3%) -Born outside the UK: 35.0%, (England Av: 17.4%) Higher than national average. Source: Census 2021	White group remains the largest ethnic group in Oxford making up 70.7% of the total population in the city. However the proportion of white residents has decreased by 7.0% points compared to the previous census (77.7%). The biggest increase has been recorded in the Asian/ Asian British group. This group has experienced a 3.0% increase in the proportion of the total resident population from 12.4% in 2011 to 15.4% in 2021. This is also the case for number increase with +6,164 more Asian/Asian British residents compared to the last Census. Within the Asian group, the largest ethnicity increase was the Pakistani population, from 3.2% in 2011 to 4.1% in 2021, an increase of 0.9%. The second largest increase in was registered in the Indian population (+0.8%), followed by Chinese (+0.5%). The 'Other Asian' group saw an increase of 0.8% since 2011. Mixed/Multiple ethnic groups now make up 5.6% of total residents. This represents a 1.6% increase compared to the previous census.

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341						Black/African/Caribbean/Black British groups have remained largely unchanged at 4.7% (+0.1%) with a slight increase in the African subgroup (+0.2%) and a slight decrease in Caribbean (-0.2%). 'Other ethnic groups' experienced a percentage increase of 2.3% with respect to the previous census. 'Any other ethnic group' subgroup saw the largest increase (+2.1%) from 0.7% in 2011 to 2.8% in 2021. In terms of multiple ethnic group households, the largest proportion of households are still those where all household members have the same ethnic group – 47.3% (26,105 residents). Compared to 2011, the biggest increase was experienced in households where Ethnic groups differ within partnerships (+2.7%). The largest decrease from the previous census was recorded in One person households (-4.0%). The ongoing work will have a positive impact on this group if the actions take on a targeted, strategic, informed and joined-up approach. The importance of informed and strategic approach is key, as many in this group face intersecting and multiple levels of disadvantage. It is highly recommended that due diligence is given to how data is being collected and impact is being reported in these

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						groups as there has been a sizable shift in population. - Council Strategy 2024 to 2028 - Equality, Diversity & Inclusion Strategy - Thriving Communities Strategy Close monitoring of impact and gaps will enable the Plan to deliver inclusive and equitable results.
Pregnancy & Maternity	☐	☐	☒	☐	There were 7,406 live births in Oxford for the period 2018 - 22. This is a general fertility rate of 34.4. This compares to a general fertility rate of 54.6 in England as whole for the same period, meaning Oxford's fertility rate is below the country average.	The ongoing work will have a positive impact on this group if the actions take on a targeted, strategic, informed and joined-up approach. - Council Strategy 2024 to 2028 - Equality, Diversity & Inclusion Strategy - Thriving Communities Strategy Close monitoring of impact and gaps will enable the Plan to deliver inclusive and equitable results.
Religion or Belief	☐	☐	☒	☐	-Christian- 38.1%, (England 46.3%) Lower than national average -Muslim- 8.7%, (England 6.7%) Higher than national average	Of those who have a religion in Oxford, the largest proportion is still Christian with 38.1% of the total usual resident population. However, this group has experienced the largest percentage decrease since 2011 (-9.9%).

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343					-Hindu - 1.6% (England 1.8%) Higher than national average -Jewish - 0.7% (England 0.5%) Higher than national average -Sikh- 0.4%, (England 0.9%) Lower than national average -Other- 0.9%, (England 0.6%) Higher than national average - No religion- 39.0% (England average 36.7%) Higher than national average Source: Census 2021	The largest increase between 2011 and 2021 was recorded in the Muslim group which now makes up 8.7% of the resident population, an increase of 1.9% in relation to the previous census. The Hindu population has also seen a slight increase (+0.3%), from 1.3% in 2011 to 1.6% in 2021. Other religious groups have remained relatively similar to 2011 census figures with very minor changes. Residents with no religious beliefs make up 39.0% of the city's total population. This is an increase of 5.9% compared to 2011. The ongoing work will have a positive impact on this group if the actions take on a targeted, strategic, informed and joined-up approach. - Council Strategy 2024 to 2028 - Equality, Diveristy & Inclusion Strategy - Thriving Communities Strategy Close monitoring of impact and gaps will enable the Plan to deliver inclusive and equitable results.
Sex	☐	☐	☒	☐	-Female: 50.9% (51% England av) -Male: 49.1% (49.0% England av)	The ongoing work will have a positive impact on this group if the actions take on a targeted, strategic, informed and joined-up approach.

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					Source: Census 2021	- Council Strategy 2024 to 2028 - Equality, Diversity & Inclusion Strategy - Thriving Communities Strategy Close monitoring of impact and gaps will enable the Plan to deliver inclusive and equitable results.
Sexual Orientation	☐	☐	☒	☐	Identify as straight or heterosexual- 80.4% (Oxfordshire = 88.4%, England = 89.4%) Identify as gay or lesbian -2.4% (compared to 1.5% in both Oxfordshire and England) Identify as bisexual= 3.6% (higher than Oxfordshire and England which are 1.7% and 1.3% respectively) Source: Census 2021	For the sexual orientation indicator, the majority of usual residents aged 16 years and over selected straight or heterosexual (80.4%), this was lower than both Oxfordshire and England averages at 88.4% and 89.4% respectively. Of those who selected an option other than straight, the largest group was Bisexual with 3.6%, this is higher than both Oxfordshire and England at 1.7% and 1.3% respectively. Other groups include Gay or lesbian (2.4%), Pansexual (0.5%), Asexual (0.2%), and Queer (0.1%). The proportion of those who did not answer this question is higher in Oxford (12.7%) than Oxfordshire and England averages at 7.9% and 7.5% respectively. The ongoing work will have a positive impact on this group if the actions take

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						on a targeted, strategic, informed and joined-up approach. In the realm of procurement and partnership working it is necessary for our partner to have some form on gender pay gap reporting to align with Equalities Statutory duty for Oxford City Council and the partners that we work with. UK national recommednation- - Council Strategy 2024/28 - Equality, Diversity & Inclusion Strategy - Thriving Communities Strategy Close monitoring of impact and gaps will enable the Plan to deliver inclusive and equitable results.
Other (voluntary consideration) **For example:** Migrant, refugee, or asylum seekers	☐	☐	☒	☐		The ongoing work will have a positive impact on this group if the actions take on a targeted, strategic, informed and joined-up approach. - Council Strategy 2024 to 2028 - Equality, Diversity & Inclusion Strategy - Thriving Communities Strategy Close monitoring of impact and gaps will enable the Plan to deliver inclusive and equitable results.
Other (voluntary consideration) **For example:**	☐	☐	☒	☐		In terms of household deprivation, over half of the households in Oxford (28,832) do not experience any dimension of deprivation, this is 4% higher (better) than in 2011.

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Socio-economic status (income, wealth, etc.)						Just under a third of the households in Oxford experience at least 1 dimension of deprivation (1,767 residents), this has remained the same since 2011. Approximately 0.3% of households in Oxford experienced all 4 dimensions of deprivation. This is lower (better) than Census 2011 figures. There are 21,222 residents in communal establishments in 2021, 2,557 more than in 2011 (18,665) The proportion of residents aged 16+ years without qualifications is 12.6% and shows a decrease of 1.0% from the previous Census. The ongoing work will have a positive impact on this group if the actions take on a targeted, strategic, informed and joined-up approach. - Council Strategy 2024 to 2028 - Equality, Diversity & Inclusion Strategy - Thriving Communities Strategy - Economic Strategy - Housing, Homeless & Rough Sleeping Strategy. Close monitoring of impact and gaps will enable the Plan to deliver inclusive and equitable results.

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Other 347	☐	☐	☒	☐	Key groups to consider: 1. Lone Parents: Lone parent families with dependent children: 6.1%, (England average of 6.9%) - Below national average. Source: Census 2021 2. In terms of household composition, the largest group of households in Oxford City is 'Single family households' with 55.2% of households this type. This compares to 63.0% in England and 65.4% in the county as a whole. Source: Census 2021 3. Of Oxford's age 5+ population, 3.7% provide 19 hours or less unpaid care a week. 1.3% provide 20-49 hours unpaid care a week and 1.6% provide 50 or more hours of unpaid care a week. Overall this is 6.6% and represents 10,290 residents who are providing some form of unpaid care. This is lower than the county at 7.6%. Source: Census 2021 4. In 2021, national data showed that 2,440 people were rough sleeping on a single night in England, a rate of 1.03 per	In terms of the provision of unpaid care in Oxford, there was a decrease in the number of residents aged 5+ who provide unpaid care (-1,435) from 11,727 in 2011 to 10,290 in 2021. Of those providing unpaid care, age-standardised figures show that the largest group was made up of those who provide 19 hours or less of unpaid care a week (4.3%), this is similar to England's average at 4.4%. Compared to Census 2011, the biggest change was recorded in the group Provides 19 hours or less of unpaid care a week (- 2.9pp) followed by Does not provide weekly unpaid care (+2.4pp). Oxford's two universities: For the academic year 2024/25 Oxford University had 26,225 students enrolled (20,765 full time and 5,460 part time) and Oxford Brookes had 26,095 (22,620 full time and 3,470 part time). Between 2014/15 and 2024/25 the undergraduate population has increased at both Oxford University (up from 26,005 to 26,225) and Oxford Brookes (up from 17,460 to 26,095). The majority of University of Oxford students live within Oxford City although some part time students might not be Oxford residents. Oxford Brookes has a

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					10,000 households. This was a decrease from 2,688 in 2020. In Oxford, 24 people were recorded as rough sleeping on a single night in 2021, giving a rate of 4.52 per 10,000 households. This was an increase from 19 people in 2020. Source: Rough Sleeping snapshot in England as published by DLUHC	campus in Headington, two campuses close to Oxford (in Wheatley and Harcourt Hill, Botley) and a campus in Swindon. The ongoing work will have a positive impact on this group if the actions take on a targeted, strategic, informed and joined-up approach. - Council Strategy 2024 to 2028 - Equality, Diversity & Inclusion Strategy - Thriving Communities Strategy - Economic Strategy - Housing, Homeless & Rough Sleeping Strategy. Close monitoring of impact and gaps will enable the Plan to deliver inclusive and equitable results.

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

22.		**Conclusions.** Check as needed.					
	☐	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.	☒	No major change(s) or adjustments and continue with the activity. No need to monitor in the future.
		Key findings:					

23.	**Please explain how you have reached your conclusions above.**	- Census 2021 figures also show that, there are 55,200 households in Oxford. - According to the Census 2021 figures, the city of Oxford has now a population of approximately 162,100 residents of which 79,700 are men and 82,400 women. - Between 2011 and 2021, the population in Oxford has grown by 6.7%. This change over a 10-year period represents an increase of 10,200 residents in the city. - The proportion of those aged 0-14 years in Oxford is 14%. This is lower than county (17%), regional (17%), and national (17%) averages. In terms of household deprivation, over half of the households in Oxford (28,832) do not experience any dimension of deprivation, this is 4% higher (better) than in 2011. Just under a third of the households in Oxford experience 1 dimension of deprivation (1,767 residents), this has remained the same since 2011. Approximately 0.3% of households in Oxford experienced all 4 dimensions of deprivation. This is lower (better) than Census 2011 figures. There are 21,222 residents in communal establishments in 2021, 2,557 more than in 2011 (18,665).

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**	- Law Governance and Strategy - Policy and Partnerships - Corporate Leadership Team

	responsible for monitoring equalities impact?	- Local Government Reorganisation - Transition Board - Business Intelligence Unit - Project Management Officer			
25.	**Who (individual, team, or service area) will be responsible for carrying out the EqIA review?**	- Law, Governance and Strategy - Policy and Partnerships - Equalities Steering Group - Business Intelligence Unit - Project Management Office PLUS: - Progress updates feature in annual Cabinet reports - Scrutiny work plan - Corporate dashboard updates			
26.	**How often will the equality impact be reviewed for this activity?**	Annually	**27.**	**Date when the EqIA will be reviewed again.**	31/03/2027

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Section 7: Sign-off

Name: Lucy Cherry

Job Title: Policy & Partnerships Officer

Signature: Lucy Cherry

Date: 13/02/26

Name: Sally Hicks

Job Title: Business Intelligence Lead

Signature: Sally Hicks

Date: 11/02/26

Name: Mish Tullar

Job Title: Transition Director

Signature:

Name: Emma-Louise Jackman

Job Title: Director of Law, Governance and Strategy

Signature:

Name: Sobia Afridi

Job Title:

Signature: Sobia Afridi

Date: 13/02/26

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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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To: **Cabinet**

Date: **18 March 2026**

Report of: **Group Finance Director (Section 151 Officer)**

Title of Report: **Integrated Performance Report for Quarter 3 2025/26**

Summary and recommendations	
Decision being taken:	To note the update to the Cabinet on Finance, Risk and Corporate Performance matters at 31st December 2025
Key decision:	No
Cabinet Member:	Cabinet Member for Finance and Assets
Corporate Priority:	All areas
Policy Framework:	Corporate Plan

Recommendation(s): That the Cabinet resolves to:
1. Note the financial position for quarter 3 (Q3) 2025/26 including forecast outturn, as well as the current position on risk and performance at 31st December 2025.

Appendix No.	Appendix Title	Exempt from Publication
Appendix A	General Fund – December 2025 Forecast Outturn	No
Appendix B	Housing Revenue Account – December 2025 Forecast Outturn	No
Appendix C	Capital Programme – December 2025	No

Introduction and background

1. This report updates the Cabinet on the financial, corporate performance and corporate risk positions of the Council at 31st December 2025.

Financial Position Overview

2. **General Fund (GF)** – The General Fund is reporting a projected 2025/26 adverse outturn variance of £1.205m compared to the 2025/26 latest budget. This is almost double the forecast adverse outturn variance reported at September 2025 due mainly to increases in projected overspends for Housing Services, Information & Technology and local cost of benefits offset by a more favourable projected position for the companies' client services of ODS and OX Place.

   Further detail about the Q3 2025/26 actual position and the 2025/26 projected outturn is provided in paragraphs 6 to 8 of this report and in Appendix A.

3. **Housing Revenue Account (HRA)** – At Q3 2025/26 the HRA year to date position is a favourable variance of £0.403m arising from a net shortall of income of £0.155m and a favourable variance of £0.558m for net expenditure related to a lower bad debt provision than budgeted to date by £0.238m and a underspend of £0.368m on responsive and cyclical repairs.

   The 3Q position changes by year end with the HRA projected outturn for 2025/26 expected to be an adverse variance of £0.958m. This is mainly due to a projected net shortfall of income of £0.376m and a net expenditure pressure of £0.582m, which arises from an adverse variance on responsive and cyclical repairs of £0.650m most of which is expected to relate to necessary damp and mould works.

   More information is provided in paragraphs 9 to 11 of this report and Appendix B.

4. **Capital Programme** – The 2025/26 budget, as approved at the Council meeting in February 2025, was set at £179.014m. The carry forward of unspent balances in 2024/25, additional budget changes including new allocations, further revisions to the council's loans to its housing company and the HRA property purchases programme since the setting of the budget in February, leads to the latest budget for 2025/26 being revised downwards to £151.503m.

   The 2025/26 forecast outturn at Q3 is lowered to £140.133m as a result of slippage of £11.369m (7.5%) compared to the revised latest budget. Spend in the three quarters to date is £69.353m, which is 46% of the latest budget.

   Further detail and analysis are provided in paragraphs 12 to 17 of this report and in Appendix C.

5. **Corporate Risk Management** – At the end of Q3 2025/26 in the latest update to the current Corporate Risk Register (CRR) there are 14 risks registered, of which six are red risks and eight are amber risks. There are no new risks and no closed risks.

   More details on the Council's corporate and service risks can be found in paragraphs 18 to 23 of this report.

Financial Position Detailed Analysis

General Fund Revenue

6. The overall Net Budget Requirement for 2025/26 agreed by the Council in February 2025 was £30.25m after a £2.079m transfer to general reserves.

7. Following budget virements and the release of the central pay contingency between directorate budgets and earmarked reserves in 1Q, the 2025/26 latest budget remains in balance.

8. At Q3 there is an adverse projected 2025/26 outturn variance of £1.205m compared to the 2025/26 latest budget.

   The most significant variances, by service area, are attributed to:

   Communities & Citizens Services – The favourable variance of £0.675m at Q3 year to date relates mainly to Leisure and Sport from grants received and savings in the Youth Ambition programme. Anticipated pressures from supplies and services, Community grants and shortfall of income including Events reduce this favourable variance to £0.211m at year end, a result mainly of projected savings in the Leisure Management area, from salaries and utilities.

   Housing – The adverse projected outturn variance of £0.7m is driven by increased demand for Temporary Accommodation (TA). The outturn forecast for 2025/26 includes a provision for bad debts of £0.4m for associated TA rents & charges not paid.

   The number of households approaching OCC as homeless and requiring TA remains high. The number of placements rose from 281 households as at 1 April 2025 to 325 at the end of December 2025. Prevention work continues to focus on earlier interventions to avoid homelessness/placements into TA where possible. The team are continuing to prioritise minimising the number of families in hotels, particularly any families nearing or over the 6-week statutory limit and move them on as quickly as possible, helping people transition to longer-term accommodation, which could either be private sector or social housing sector, in support of independent living.

   The projected outturn overspend for 2025/26 has been taken into account in the setting of the 2026/27 Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) through a plan to bring online additional TA units from a combination of HRA transfers and new acquisitions together with targeted budgetary increases of £0.642m in areas of anticipated cost pressure.

   Information & Technology – Based on the 3Q year to date overspend of £1.279m compared to the profiled budget, the adverse projected outturn variance for 2025/26 is £1.309m which includes estimated unbudgeted spend on:

   - cyber incident response of £0.616m
   - applications fees and migration to Azure cloud solution of £0.389m after recharges to capital year to date at Q3 of £0.80m, which were unbudgeted. This projected cost pressure may be further reduced by year end if additional recharges to capital are identified in Q4.
   - dual running telephony services contracts of £0.304m

The 2026/27 proposed budgetary increases recognise £1.048m of ongoing ICT costs pressures for future years necessary to fund applications' price inflation, data storage requirements, additional user licenses.

ODS and OX Place Client – The Q3 favourable variance of £1.718m mainly relates to increased car parking income compared to budgeted levels.

A favourable outturn to budget of £1.5m is projected for 2025/26. This assumes maintenance of existing April to December 2025 income patterns across the city centre, suburban and Park & Ride car parks collectively throughout the remaining quarter of 2025/26, with car parking management costs similarly rising. However, there is a sense that the full impact of the congestion charge introduced by Oxfordshire County Council is not fully understood as we come out of the Christmas period.

The budgeted dividend return from ODS is £2.0m and from OX Place £4.889m. The ODS dividend declared in January 2026 is higher than budgeted at £2.4m although the Ox Place dividend is lower by a similar amount.

Financial Services – The adverse variance of £0.948m at Q3 primarily arises from the unbudgeted £0.199m requirement for temporary agency staff covering long-term staff sickness; adverse bank charges of £0.093m from increased debit and credit card payment processing charges; adverse contract printing costs of £0.220m; adverse Business Rates RV assessment costs of £0.089m; adverse costs of £0.217m relating to unrecovered Covid grants (a liability currently expected to be passed back to central government); and a £0.067m overspend on temporary staffing in revenue and benefits to deal with backlog correspondence.

There is a projected outturn variance of £0.782m for 2025/26 arising from expected pressures in:

- Revenues and Benefits £0.315m – adverse outturn variances on printing, postage and carriage of £0.248m related to council tax and business rates billing and £0.067m overspend on temporary staffing

  Decentralisation of the printing and postage budget from corporate print room has been found to hold insufficient budget to cover printing and postage costs for the Revenues Service. Reductions in printing costs associated with the annual billing of business rates and council tax are planned although these savings will materialise from 2026-27 onwards.

- Salaries cost pressures of £0.255m across the service area from the requirement for unbudgeted agency staffing for coverage of staff absence including additional short-term support to assist with 2024/25 financial year-end closedown tasks.

- £0.212m cost pressure from a combination of adverse expenditure on subscriptions, fees for tax returns, and bank charges.

Law, Governance & Strategy – there is a projected adverse outturn variance of £0.231m across the service area for 2025/26. This is due to:

- a projected adverse outturn variance of £0.408m across Legal Services, Committee and Members Services. This outturn variance can be mainly attributed to Legal Services staffing costs due to the payment of market allowances and other remuneration increments, difficulty in recruiting

lawyers and increasing dependency on locums to provide resource capacity to meet service demands. The total cost of locums for 2025/26 is forecast to be £0.834m.

- a combined projected favourable outturn variance of £0.177m across Election Services, Information Governance, Corporate Strategy, Policy and Partnerships, Executive Assistants. This outturn variance is mainly due to projected underspends on establishment, such as unpaid leave and reduction in hours, supplies and/or services costs.

People Team – a favourable variance of £0.1m is forecast for 2025/26 arising principally from lower than budgeted expenditure on staff training, Apprenticeship Levy contributions, staff advertising, staff travel discount and consultants' fees offset by expenditure exceeding budget on software purchases.

Corporate Accounts – this includes the net cost of housing benefits, interest receivable from investments and payable on loan finance. At this stage the 2025/26 projected outturn for Corporate Accounts is marginally favourable by £0.01m compared to the net budgeted cost of £2.131m, the majority of which, £1.5m, relates to the net cost of housing benefits.

Whilst a favourable outturn for 2025/26 is expected on net interest to the tune of £2.03m, since borrowing to finance the capital programme is significantly less than budgeted due to programme slippages and higher than budgeted interest receivable is anticipated, current estimates indicate that this will be offset by an almost equal £2.02m increase in the net cost of housing benefits payments as supported housing benefit expenditure and the number of supported housing accommodation cases continue to rise. The council continues to actively work on mitigations to try and contain overspends largely arising from the inability to claim subsidy on supported housing accommodation benefit expenditure and the situation is being monitored.

Housing Revenue Account ("HRA")

9. The HRA budgeted deficit agreed by the council in February 2025 for 2025/26 was £2.603m and the latest 2025/26 budget remains the same. The current forecast outturn for 2025/26 is a deficit of £3.561m, which gives an adverse forecast outturn variance of £0.958m at 31 December 2025.

10. At Q3 2025/26, the HRA has a favourable variance year-to-date to budget of £0.403m mainly due to an underspend of £0.368m on responsive and cyclical repairs. However, these repairs are forecast to generate a year end pressure of £0.650m due to overspend on damp and mould and coupled with a shortfall in dwelling rent income due to delays in the acquisitions of new homes, the **year-end forecast variance becomes an adverse £0.958m.**

Reasons for the current year to date favourable variance of £0.403m include:

Income – 3Q 2025/26 year to date actual income of £45.399m is lower than the corresponding budget of £45.554m by £0.155m due to:

- Dwelling rent underachieving by £0.641m as a result of delayed timings of the acquisition of new homes which generate rental income, which is included in the base budget and is offset by :
    - An increase to service charges and garages income. The service charges budget has an additional income of £0.316m from actuals compared to estimates.
    - An increase to miscellaneous income from: leased properties rental £0.092m, lease assignments £0.047m, court fees £0.015m less £0.042m pressure on the furnished tenancies budget.

Expenditure - 3Q 2025/26 year to date actual expenditure of £23.062m is lower than the corresponding budget of £23.620m creating a favourable variance of £0.558m. This is attributed to:

- **Management and services (stock related)** is currently overspent by £0.115m, due to:
    - Salaries pressure of £0.342m; there are several vacant posts across the service including savings from the Landlord Services Team restructure £0.50m, various recharged posts that are currently vacant £0.121m, savings in the Rent Team £0.094m. This is offset by pressures of £1.057m for staff recharges from General Fund Property Services for the provision of repairs and maintenance support.
    - Overspends on supplies and services £0.398m which includes on consultants £0.198m; council tax payments on void properties, some of which will be refunded as the properties are relet, £0.148m; service charges on leasehold properties £0.168m
    - Savings of £0.626m on utilities
- **Other revenue spend (stock related)** is currently underspent by £0.072m arising from an underspend on advertising of new developments £0.065m; saving from the rent arrears software contract, Rent Sense, of £0.048m following QL exploitation work; consultants underspend of £0.023m and Electric Vehicles charges underspend of £0.015m less overspends on compensation payments to tenants £0.059m and purchase card spend relating to decants £0.019m.
- **Bad debt** - a favourable variance at Q3 of £0.238m against the bad debt provision budgeted following the reassessment of bad debts.
- **Responsive and cyclical repairs** – there is currently a favourable variance to date of £0.368m, which is analysed in the table in figure 1 below.

  The budget for 2025/26 was increased from the last financial year and together with robust HRA clienting and commissioning there is a current saving at December 2025 against the profiled budget. However, due to the extent of necessary damp and mould works which are expected to generate a year end pressure of £0.7m, responsive and cyclical repairs will become a pressure at year end by almost 4% more than the approved budget for 2025/26.

Workstream	Budget	Budget YTD	Actual	Variance	Projected Outturn 2025/26
	£	£	£	£	£
Adverse Variances					
Damp & Mould Works	800,000	798,750	1,261,183	462,433	1,500,000
Asbestos	350,000	262,500	539,347	276,847	350,000
General Minor Works / D2D	6,000,000	4,500,000	4,587,317	87,317	6,000,000
Gas Maintenance	1,635,000	1,226,250	1,294,096	67,846	1,635,000
NTCO	400,000	300,000	347,740	47,740	400,000
Pest Control	180,000	135,000	144,844	9,844	180,000
				952,026	
Favourable Variances					
Fire safety	1,290,000	967,500	651,382	-316,118	1,290,000
Electrical Upgrade/inspections	1,500,000	1,125,000	906,990	-218,010	1,500,000
Voids	2,030,000	1,522,500	1,353,487	-169,013	2,030,000
Highways & Engineering	508,406	381,304	251,525	-129,779	508,406
R&M	1,324,967	989,975	893,902	-96,073	1,324,967
Energy Improvements / Repairs	126,300	94,725	5,615	-89,111	126,300
Env Improvements	224,203	168,152	88,353	-79,799	194,203
Disrepairs	850,000	637,500	568,443	-69,057	850,000
Trees	300,000	225,000	175,075	-49,925	300,000
Disabled Adaptations	280,000	210,000	164,632	-45,368	280,000
Insurance	150,000	112,500	92,099	-20,401	150,000
Water System Testing	165,000	123,750	104,377	-19,373	165,000
Other	97,266	70,450	52,408	-18,041	77,266
				-1,320,069	
Total Responsive & Cyclical Repairs	**18,211,142**	**13,850,856**	**13,482,814**	**-368,042**	**18,861,142**

Fig. 1 Analysis of variations to Q3 2025/26 year to date budget for HRA Responsive and Cyclical Repairs

11. The overall year-end forecast adverse variance of £0.958m is due to:

Income – an adverse forecast outturn variance of £0.376m is forecast from: additional miscellaneous income of £0.124m from leased rental and assignments, additional leaseholders service charges income of £0.30m less a £0.80m shortfall in dwelling rent income arising from delayed acquisitions of new homes.

Expenditure – an adverse forecast outturn variance of £0.582m for:

- **Management and services (stock related)** – the forecast outturn is a pressure of £0.157m arising from underspends on utilities £0.388m, furnished tenancy furniture purchases £0.080m, court fees £0.060m, under occupation scheme £0.040m, new bin purchases £0.040m, less pressures in housing consultants £0.190m, council tax spend £0.180m, contaminated waste £0.070m and service charges £0.030m.
- **Other revenue spend (stock related)** – there is a forecast outturn saving of £0.084m for Rent Sense £0.064m, advertising £0.060m less compensation payments of £0.040m

- **Bad debt** – a forecast saving at year end of £0.20m
- **Responsive and cyclical repairs** – a year-end forecast pressure of £0.650m. Damp and mould works are expected to be £0.7m (4.0%) more than the approved budget. This is offset by a £0.050m saving from the Environment Improvements budget managed by the Landlord Services Team.

Capital

12. The overall budget for 2025/26, as approved by the Council at its meeting in February 2025, was set at £179.014m. Adjusting for required carry forwards of underspends from 2024/25 and additional budget changes, including new allocations in-year and budget slippages with the budgets reprofiled accordingly, this gives a revised latest budget for 2025/26 at 31 December 2025 of £151.503m as shown in Fig.2 and in Appendix C.

13. Spend against the total budget in the period April to December (Q1 to Q3) is £69.353m in total, which represents 46% of the latest budget 2025/26, 49% being GF and 44% HRA. The forecast outturn for 2025/26 at Q3 is £140.133m due to forecast slippage of £11.369m.

    In February 2025 we assumed an optimism bias of 45% for the 2025/26 budget and the current forecast outturn for 2025/26 of £140.133m for the capital programme is in line with that optimism biased budget of £139.680m.

	Original Budget 2025/26	Original Budget 2025/26 assuming 45% optimism bias	Latest Budget 25/26	Spend to 31/12/2025	% Spend to date v Latest Budget	25/26 Forecast Outturn at Q3	25/26 Forecast Outturn Variance at Q3
General Fund Total	£37,687,856	£38,053,321	£47,310,357	£23,204,814	49%	£41,983,441	-£5,326,916
HRA Total	£141,326,133	£101,626,873	£104,192,653	£46,148,613	44%	£98,150,070	-£6,042,583
Total Capital Programme	£179,013,989	£139,680,194	£151,503,010	£69,353,427	46%	£140,133,511	-£11,369,499

Fig.2 Summary of Capital Programme financial position at 31 December 2025

General Fund (GF) Capital

14. A summary of the GF schemes by project classification is shown in Fig.3. Overall, £23.191m (49%) of the latest capital budget has been spent by 31 December 2025 and the outturn forecast of £41.983m is a result of £5.327m of slippage.

Project Classification	Latest Budget 2025/26	Spend to Date 31/12/2025	% Spend to date v Latest Budget	25/26 Forecast Outturn at Q3	25/26 Forecast Outturn Variance at Q3
Compliance (H&S)	£319,469	£287	0%	£319,469	£0
Development - Project	£5,294,356	£2,916,908	55%	£5,011,835	-£282,520
Feasibility	£1,235,604	£265,493	21%	£939,632	-£295,972
Housing - Homelessness	£813,709	£53,872	7%	£813,709	-£0
Housing Supply	£297,693	£110,528	37%	£297,693	£0
ICT Rolling Programme	£744,747	£466,494	63%	£570,000	-£174,747
ICT Systems	£3,295,737	£2,269,740	69%	£3,355,948	£60,211
Infrastructure	£4,493,252	£1,050,094	23%	£3,991,540	-£501,712
Investments - Improvements	£11,639,526	£4,164,780	36%	£7,699,551	-£3,939,975
Loans	£10,725,000	£9,700,000	90%	£10,725,000	£0
Project	£0	£13,504	0%	£0	£0
Rolling Programme	£7,584,315	£2,051,430	27%	£7,614,315	£30,000
Other Capital Spend	£866,948	£141,685	16%	£644,747	-£222,201
General Fund Total	£47,310,357	£23,204,814	49%	£41,983,441	-£5,326,916

Fig.3 Summary of the General Fund capital schemes by project classification at 31 December 2025

Project classification key budgets:

- **Compliance (H&S)** - Gloucester Green Car Park (H&S)
- **Development-Project** – Blackbird Leys Regeneration; East Oxford Community Centre; Floyds Row Refurbishment; Covered Market; Odeon, 1-3 George Street; Oxford Ice Rink Development; New Burial Space
- **Feasibility** – development feasibility studies for various projects
- **Housing–Homelessness** - National Homelessness Property Fund; Roken House; Growth Deal Registered Provider Payments
- **Housing Supply** – affordable housing supply
- **ICT Rolling Programme** – desktop/laptop computers, telephony device refresh
- **ICT Systems** – MS365 and Cloud Migration; system upgrades
- **Infrastructure** – investment in the wider economy, roads, rail, cycling, bridges including Cowley Branch Line; Oxford Flood Alleviation Scheme; HIF and Growth Deal Osney Bridge works and path; Controlled Parking Zones; Go Ultra Low Oxford projects; St Michael's Street Levelling Works
- **Investments-Improvement** – corporate property investments including car parks resurfacing, Decarbonisation Fund; Leisure Invest to Save and dilapidations works; Leys Youth Hub; waterways investment; Broad Street roofing and façade project; Town Hall works; stock condition surveys; planned building maintenance
- **Loans** – OxWED Loans; loans to OxPlace, the council's housing company
- **Rolling Programme** – ODS Fleet Replacement Programme; Disabled Facilities Grants; Capitalised salaries budget.
- **Project/Other Capital Spend -** UK Shared Prosperity Fund Investment Plan; archive scanning project

The Investment-Improvements classification has the largest 2025/26 budget at £11.64m and the greatest slippage at £3.94m, which relates mainly to planned building improvements and the capital works at the Covered Market amongst other corporate property projects.

Approximately 22% of the GF capital programme budget relates to loans, to the council's housing company, of which 90% is spent at Q3.

15. Key Budget re-profile changes and forecast slippages to individual schemes at Q3 include:

- **Covered Market capital works** – a slippage of £1.037m is forecast for 2025/26 due to the project being on hold and awaiting masterplan details in relation to the roof
- **Reserve (SCS works & Energy)** – a slippage of £0.70m is forecast for 2025/26 works relating to asset repairs and maintenance pressures. The slippage will be mostly used to fund the Ice Rink chillers works
- **Town Hall Relocation** project – a slippage of £0.492m is forecast for 2025/26.There is an outstanding review of the status of the historic building control applications in order to assess project status, target completion date and budget re-profiling for completion of the project. There are delays of the PABX room relating to building regulations and wi-fi delays with works due to complete in May 2026.

HRA Capital

16. A summary of the HRA schemes by project type is shown in Fig.4 below. 44% of the latest HRA capital budget for 2025/26 has been spent by 31 December 2025.

Project Classification	Latest Budget 2025/26	Spend to Date 31/12/2025	% Spend to date v Latest Budget	25/26 Forecast Outturn at Q3	25/26 Forecast Outturn Variance at Q3
Development - Project	£3,659,074	£3,414,845	93%	£3,659,074	£0
Housing Supply	£61,737,958	£28,527,140	46%	£56,838,376	-£4,899,582
Investments - Improvements	£23,322,202	£9,514,228	41%	£23,322,202	£0
Rolling Programme	£13,973,419	£4,674,896	33%	£12,795,419	-£1,178,000
Other Capital Spend	£1,500,000	£17,505	1%	£1,535,000	£35,000
HRA Total	£104,192,653	£46,148,613	44%	£98,150,070	-£6,042,583

Fig.4 **Summary of the HRA capital schemes by project classification at 31 December 2025**

Fig.4 shows that the significant element (59%) of the HRA capital programme is classified as Housing Supply, i.e. housing acquisitions and developments.

The Investment Improvements classification relates to internal, external and communal works required, which have been included in the new programme model and include items such as Fire Safety, Structural works and decency (damp and mould, etc.).

Approximately 14% of the capital programme is a rolling programme, for example kitchen and bathroom replacements, heating, and electrics etc.

Development Projects include Masons Road Refurbishment; the East Oxford Development and Blackbird Leys Regeneration (HRA).

Other Capital Spend classification relates mainly to Southfield Park lease extension which is being pursued with a view to extending the lease for up to 999 years and should be completed by year end.

17. The 2025/26 outturn forecast is £98.027m, which is a result of £6.042m of slippages at Q3 relating mainly to the following schemes:

- **HRA Barton Acquisitions** – a slippage of £4.416m is forecast due to a revised handover schedule received from the developer. Handovers forecast for 2025/26 for 19 houses and 10 flats (block B). Other flat blocks have slipped into 2026/27.
- **Controlled Entry** - a slippage of £0.726m is forecast for 2025/26. The procurement is out to tender.
- **Oxford North Development** – a slippage of £0.715m is forecast due to site delays and this is under review at present.

Corporate Risk

18. The Council employs a 'five-by-five' risk scoring matrix, assessing risks based on probability and impact. Corporate risks are reviewed by the Corporate Leadership Team quarterly, most recently on 18 December 2025. Service level risks are reviewed periodically by Directors and Service Managers and the Risk Management Group maintains oversight of all service risks and, during its meetings, assesses whether any risks should be escalated for inclusion in the Corporate Risk Register (CRR). The Group reviewed the Information and Technology and the Financial Services risk registers on 9 December 2025.

19. The table below shows the number of corporate risks on 31 December 2025, categorised by level Red, Amber and Green, and the comparative number for the previous reported quarters in 2025/26.

Current Risk	Q1	Q2	Q3
	2025/26	2025/26	2025/26
Red	6	6	6
Amber	8	8	8
Green	0	0	0
Total risks	**14**	**14**	**14**
New risks in half year	10	0	0
Closed	8	0	0

At Q3 2025/26, in the latest update to the current CRR, there are no changes to the fourteen named risks, no new risks and no closed risks.

The current six red risks are as follows:

- **Financial stability** – this risk concerns the Council's ability to implement its strategic plans and corporate priorities amid increasing financial pressure. Key contributing factors include:

    - A lack of knowledge on the implications of fairer funding
    - Fluctuations in income and expenditure
    - Inflation-driven cost escalation affecting materials for capital projects
    - Rising service demands, such as temporary accommodation
    - Broader economic weaknesses, which may depress income streams such as commercial rents and business rates
- **A utilities infrastructure that does not meet the needs of the city** – this risk identifies that without further investment and partnership working, the city's utility infrastructure will come under increasing strain, adversely impacting citizens' well-being and the city's prosperity.
- **Cybersecurity and IT infrastructure resilience** - this risk addresses the failure to prevent and respond to cyber-attacks and ensure that the Council's IT infrastructure is fit for purpose and adaptable to future needs.
- **Addressing the causes and impacts of climate change** – this risk identifies the factors that could prevent the Council from prioritising efforts to tackle the causes of climate change and mitigate its effects. Failure to do so would harm both residents and the environment.
- **A failure to deliver Temporary Accommodation strategies to meet demand and increases in homelessness** - this risk assesses the potential consequences if the Council fails to implement effective mitigation measures to control temporary accommodation costs or develop contingency plans to meet the increasing demand for homelessness prevention. It also considers the challenges of securing an adequate housing supply through the private rented sector and the Council's development programme.
- **A failure to meet Social Housing (Regulation) Act 2023 customer/consumer standards** - this risk evaluates the potential impact if the Council, in its capacity as a landlord, fails to fully comply with the Social Housing (Regulation) Act 2023 customer standards, particularly the Safety and Quality Consumer Standard. Such a failure could result in a major incident that compromises tenant safety, leading to sanctions, regulatory intervention, and severe reputational damage.

20. The current corporate amber risks are:

- Workforce stability
- Failure to comply with governance requirements
- Political and partnership landscape – Local and National
- Increased demand for services
- Flood
- Adverse weather, terrorism, and utility outage
- The workforce and public are healthy and safe
- A failure to deliver housing priorities and business plans

21. There are no corporate green risks in the CRR at Q3.

22. As part of the service planning process, all service risks are reviewed. Those no longer relevant are deleted, and any new ones are added. The table below shows the number of service risks at 31 December 2025 compared with the previous reported quarters.

Current Risk	Q4 2024/25	Q1 2025/26	Q2 2025/26	Q3 2025/26
Red	11	10	12	10
Amber	42	52	56	61
Green	26	32	24	25
Total Risks	**79**	**94**	**92**	**96**
New Risks	0	25	0	4
Closed	2	10	2	0

23. The number of red service area risks at 31 December 2025 has decreased from 12 to 10 since 30 September 2025. Details of the current red service risks are as follows:

- **Planning** - if Government legislation requiring substantial changes in the planning system results in a need for redesigned processes, then there will be a lack of capacity to meet the changes, and the delivery of local policy objectives will be undermined.
- **Property and Assets - Quality of data and property knowledge** – failure to implement an asset management system capable of storing and analysing data may hinder the Council's ability to effectively plan and schedule work. This could result in delays to property lettings, difficulties in providing timely insurance information, and increased risk of non-compliance.
- **Law, Governance and Strategy – Resilience of service** - an inability to effectively deliver services required by the Council and to deliver critical projects and support statutory and non-statutory functions will have a direct impact on risk, compliance, expenditure, and income to the Council. Furthermore, inadequate staffing and the requirement for expertise in response to major incidents may necessitate increased reliance on external support or lead to operational delays.
- **Law, Governance and Strategy – Income target not achieved** - if the income target is not achieved, additional pressure will be placed on the overall legal services budget, leading to an overspend.
- **Law, Governance and Strategy** - if the Council's departments and suppliers do not safeguard data there is a risk of a data protection breach and non-compliance
- **Property Assets** - if there is a lack of legal support, the Council will be unable to meet income, capital receipt, and project targets. Alternatively, external legal spend will be more costly and will result in an increase in financial pressure.

- **Failure to Meet Homeless Temporary Accommodation Demand** – if, because of changes in government policy, the Council's homeless prevention activities are unable to meet a sustained increase in homelessness, there will be a failure in service delivery and an increase in temporary accommodation costs.
- **Housing** – a failure in resident involvement activities and compliance with the Social Housing consumer standards might result in an increase in complaints, inefficient service delivery and regulator intervention.
- **Housing** - a failure to evidence the implementation of and adherence to the Social Housing Regulator's consumer standards may result in a loss of reputation to the Council and increased financial pressures as issues are dealt with reactively
- **Communities and Citizen Services** - a contract management and partnership approach to the external leisure provision contract will help ensure the stability of financial performance and quality of service.

Financial implications

24. All financial implications are covered in the body of this report and the Appendices.

Legal issues

25. There are no legal implications arising directly from this report. (EG/81267/4/2/2026)

Level of risk

26. All risk implications are covered in the body of this report and the Appendices.

Equalities impact

27. There are no equalities impacts arising directly from this report.

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Background Papers: 'Risk Management Reporting at 31st December 2025' report to the Audit and Governance Committee dated 28th January 2026

Appendix A: General Fund – December 2025 Forecast Outturn

General Fund Outturn Report 25/26 @ 31 Dec 2025	Approved Budget (per Budget book) 2025/26	Latest Budget 2025/26	Latest Budget YTD P9 Dec-25	Actual YTD P9 Dec-25	Actual variance YTD P9 Dec-25	% latest 2025/26 budget used YTD P9 Dec-25	Projected Outturn against Latest Budget 2025/26	Projected Outturn Variance 2025/26
	£000's	£000's	£000's	£000's	£000's	%	£000's	£000's
S03 - Communities & Citizen Services	7,219	7,777	5,766	5,091	-675	65.5%	7,566	-211
S13 - Housing Services	6,757	6,757	4,795	5,238	443	77.5%	7,457	700
S15 - Community Safety	987	1,011	780	475	-305	47.0%	1,011	0
S06 - Information & Technology	5,031	5,031	3,773	5,052	1,279	100.4%	6,340	1,309
City & Citizens' Services	**19,995**	**20,576**	**15,114**	**15,856**	**741**	**77.1%**	22,374	1,798
S09 - Corporate Property	-8,445	-8,461	-6,376	-6,380	-4	75.4%	-8,443	18
S10 - Economy, Regeneration & Sustainability	2,127	2,486	2,038	1,883	-154	75.8%	2,486	0
S16 - Planning & Regulatory Services	966	832	445	410	-35	49.3%	898	67
Place	**-5,353**	**-5,143**	**-3,893**	**-4,087**	**-194**	**79.5%**	-5,058	85
S26 - Companies Client	**7,712**	**9,512**	**11,996**	**10,278**	**-1,718**	**108.1%**	8,012	-1,500
S01 - Corporate Communications	605	596	447	406	-41	68.1%	574	-22
S32 - Financial Services	4,811	4,811	4,013	4,961	948	103.1%	5,593	782
S33 - Chief Executive	918	918	687	846	158	92.1%	868	-50
S34 - Law, Governance & Strategy	3,860	3,690	2,888	3,262	374	88.4%	3,921	231
S35 - People	1,882	1,882	1,410	1,321	-89	70.2%	1,773	-109
Corporate Services	**12,076**	**11,897**	**9,445**	**10,796**	**1,351**	**90.7%**	12,729	832
Directorate Total Excl SLA's & Capital Charges	**34,431**	**36,843**	**32,662**	**32,843**	**181**	**89.1%**	**38,058**	**1,215**
SLA's & Capital Charges	**-9,612**	**-9,612**	**-2,362**	**-1,574**	**787**	**16.4%**	**-9,612**	**0**
Corporate Accounts	**2,131**	**2,131**	**-42,711**	**-41,745**	**965**	**-1959.3%**	**2,121**	**-10**
Contingencies	**-82**	**-81**	**-187**	**0**	**187**	**0.0%**	**-81**	**0**
Total Corporate Accounts & Contingencies	**2,049**	**2,050**	**-42,898**	**-41,745**	**1,152**	**-2036.6%**	**2,040**	**-10**
Net Expenditure Budget	**26,869**	**29,281**	**-12,598**	**-10,477**	**2,120**	**-35.8%**	**30,486**	**1,205**
Transfers To/From Earmarked Reserves	3,379	967	-609	-536	74	-55.4%	**967**	**0**
Net Budget Required	**30,248**	**30,248**	**-13,207**	**-11,013**	**2,194**	**-36.4%**	**31,453**	**1,205**
Funding								
S47A - External Funding	-739	-739	-554	-23	531	3.1%	-739	0
S47B - Council Tax Funding	-16,783	-16,783	-12,745	-12,745	0	75.9%	-16,783	0
S47C - Parish Precept	264	264	0	283	283	107.2%	264	0
S47D - NDR Funding	-12,989	-12,989	-9,742	-9,742	0	75.0%	-12,989	0
Total Funding Available	**-30,248**	**-30,248**	**-23,041**	**-22,227**	**815**	**73.5%**	**-30,248**	**0**
(Surplus) / Deficit for the year	**0**	**-0**	**-36,248**	**-33,239**	**3,009**		**1,205**	**1,205**

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Appendix B: Housing Revenue Account (HRA) – December 2025 Forecast Outturn

HRA Report 25/26 @ Dec 2025	Approved Budget (per Budget book)	Revised Approved Budget @ 31st Dec 2025	Actual YTD	Budget YTD	Variance YTD	% Budget Spent to 31st Dec 2025	Projected Outturn against Latest Budget @ 31st Dec 2025	Projected Outturn Variance
	£000's	£'000's	£000's	£000's	£'000's	%	£'000's	£000's
Dwelling Rent	(56,887)	(56,887)	(41,624)	(42,265)	641	73%	(56,087)	800
Service Charges	(3,066)	(3,066)	(2,616)	(2,299)	(316)	85%	(3,366)	(300)
Garage Income	(288)	(288)	(226)	(216)	(10)	79%	(288)	
Miscellaneous Income	(1,006)	(1,006)	(885)	(773)	(112)	88%	(1,130)	(124)
Net Income	**(61,247)**	**(61,247)**	**(45,399)**	**(45,554)**	**155**	**74%**	**(60,871)**	**376**
Management & Services (Stock Related)	15,524	15,524	8,500	8,385	115	55%	15,740	216
Other Revenue Spend (Stock Related)	990	990	392	464	(72)	40%	906	(84)
Misc Expenditure (Not Stock Related)	834	834	180	174	6	22%	834	
Bad Debt Provision	994	994	507	746	(238)	51%	794	(200)
Responsive & Cyclical Repairs	18,211	18,211	13,483	13,851	(368)	74%	18,861	650
Interest Paid	15,290	15,290	0	0	0	0%	15,290	
Depreciation	12,040	12,040	0	0	0	0%	12,040	
Total Expenditure	**63,884**	**63,884**	**23,062**	**23,620**	**(558)**	**36%**	**64,466**	**582**
Net Operating Expenditure/(Income)	**2,637**	**2,637**	**(22,337)**	**(21,934)**	**(403)**	**()**	**3,595**	**958**
Investment Income	(34)	(34)	0	0	0	0%	(34)	
Total Appropriations	**(34)**	**(34)**	**0**	**0**	**0**	**0%**	**(34)**	
Total HRA (Surplus)/Deficit	**2,603**	**2,603**	**(22,337)**	**(21,934)**	**(403)**	**(858%)**	**3,561**	**958**

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Appendix C: Capital Programme – December 2025 (Q3)

Capital Scheme	2025/26 Original Budget	Latest 2025/26 Budget	Profiled Budget 31/12/2025	Spend to 31/12/2025	2025/26 Budget Remaining	2025/26 Forecast Variance			
						Forecast Variance	Variance due to Slippage	Over / Under Spend	2025/26 Outturn Forecast
	£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£
General Fund Capital Programme									
Community & Citizen Services Directorate									
Community & Citizen Services Projects									
Upgrade Existing Tennis Courts	-	20,431	15,323	(20,833)	41,265	-	-	-	20,431
Rose Hill Community Centre - Parking Management	-	10,000	7,500	-	10,000	-	-	-	10,000
Leys Youth Hub	-	727,780	554,703	609,962	117,818	(26,604)	(26,604)	-	701,176
Leisure Invest to Save - Leisure Contract	-	1,013,437	779,501	348,488	664,949	(100,000)	(100,000)	-	913,437
Solar PV & LEDS – Barton LC (Sport England funded)	-	4,627	3,559	3,971	656	-	-	-	4,627
Rose Hill CC Gym Equipment	-	80,000	60,000	-	80,000	-	-	-	80,000
Cutteslowe Café – Feasibility	-	10,000	7,500	-	10,000	-	-	-	10,000
Community Centres Review – Feasibility	-	25,000	18,750	558	24,442	-	-	-	25,000
East Oxford Community Centre	2,124,657	2,550,000	1,909,242	2,312,894	237,106	-	-	-	2,550,000
Street Sports Lighting Upgrade	-	0	19	-	0	-	-	-	0
Community & Citizen Services Projects Total	**2,124,657**	**4,441,275**	**3,356,098**	**3,255,039**	**1,186,236**	**(126,604)**	**(126,604)**	**-**	**4,314,671**
Community Safety Projects						-			
CCTV Camera & Infrastructure upgrade	-	80,000	60,000	11,015	68,985	-	-	-	80,000
Community Safety Projects Total	**-**	**80,000**	**60,000**	**11,015**	**68,985**	**-**	**-**	**-**	**80,000**
Housing Services Projects						-			
Replace or refurbish Lifts	-	140,000	105,452	60,210	79,790	30,000	30,000	-	170,000
Floyds Row Refurbishment	-	36,044	27,961	-	36,044	-	-	-	36,044
National Homelessness Property Fund	-	476,298	366,383	-	476,298	(0)	(0)	-	476,298
Roken House	-	65,411	49,059	53,872	11,539	-	-	-	65,411
Housing Services Projects Total	**-**	**717,753**	**548,854**	**114,083**	**603,670**	**30,000**	**30,000**	**-**	**747,753**
Information & Technology Projects									
ICT Software and Licences	245,000	245,000	183,750	420,833	(175,833)	175,833	-	175,833	420,833
CRM Lagan Replacement	-	29,659	22,244	107,312	(77,653)	39,582	39,582	-	69,241
End-Point Devices (Desktops/Laptops)	500,000	612,457	459,343	426,963	185,494	(82,457)	(82,457)	-	530,000
Telephony Device Refresh	210,000	132,290	99,218	39,531	92,759	(92,290)	(92,290)	-	40,000
Capitalised ICT Projects	163,200	85,247	63,935	522,513	(437,266)	-	-	-	85,247
ICT - QL Exploitation Programme	78,000	105,183	79,897	68,401	36,782	580	580	-	105,763
ICT - Replacement of IKEN - L&G case management syst	-	19,290	14,467	-	19,290	-	-	-	19,290
ICT - Refresh of content and taxonomy of the Council W	-	23,386	17,539	-	23,386	-	-	-	23,386
Third-party consultancy for Azure Active Directory and	-	709,334	532,001	420,519	288,815	(0)	(0)	-	709,334
I@W renewal or replacement	-	75,000	56,250	10,800	64,200	-	-	-	75,000
Cyber security monitoring and response service	-	93,326	69,995	29,515	63,812	-	-	-	93,326
Upgrade/replace Kirona DRS (this is an ODS system)	-	-	-	3,742	(3,742)	3,745	-	3,745	3,745
Windows security server upgrades	-	53,449	40,087	81,000	(27,551)	39	39	-	53,488
Migration of Mod.gov	25,000	25,000	18,750	-	25,000	-	-	-	25,000
Migration of SCC to cloud hosted alternatives	500,000	-	-	9,913	(9,913)	0	0	-	0
Replacement of Uniform IDOX (additional funding)	-	-	-	13,393	(13,393)	-	-	-	0
Online forms development (2x resources to accelerate)	160,000	160,920	120,690	-	160,920	(160,920)	(160,920)	-	0
Civica Midcall Telephone Payment System	30,000	30,000	22,500	-	30,000	-	-	-	30,000
02 Mobile Telephony Services	30,000	30,000	22,500	530	29,470	-	-	-	30,000
Jadu CMS	60,000	60,000	45,000	-	60,000	-	-	-	60,000
ArcGIS	150,000	150,000	112,500	15,327	134,673	-	-	-	150,000
Class Affinity	75,000	75,000	56,250	73,251	1,749	(2,000)	(2,000)	-	73,000
Gov Delivery	50,000	50,000	37,500	22,375	27,625	-	-	-	50,000
Ricoh	50,000	50,000	37,500	38,750	11,250	-	-	-	50,000
Academy	10,000	10,000	7,500	-	10,000	-	-	-	10,000
Analyse Pro	10,000	10,000	7,500	-	10,000	-	-	-	10,000
Codeman Energy Module	10,000	10,000	7,500	-	10,000	-	-	-	10,000
Codeman Recycling	10,000	10,000	7,500	-	10,000	-	-	-	10,000
QL/Versaa	350,000	350,000	262,500	212,374	137,626	5,741	-	5,741	355,741
Manage Engine	10,000	10,000	7,500	-	10,000	-	-	-	10,000
Civica Pay	100,000	100,000	75,000	-	100,000	-	-	-	100,000
UIPath (RPA)	75,000	75,000	56,250	36,330	38,671	-	-	-	75,000
Metric Car Parks	25,000	25,000	18,750	33,763	(8,763)	8,762	8,762	-	33,762
Northgate Housing	10,000	10,000	7,500	14,000	(4,000)	-	-	-	10,000
Penalty Notice System	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	0
Information & Technology Projects Total	**2,936,200**	**3,424,542**	**2,569,417**	**2,601,132**	**823,410**	**(103,386)**	**(288,705)**	**185,319**	**3,321,156**
City & Citizens Services Directorate Total	**5,060,857**	**8,663,570**	**6,534,369**	**5,981,269**	**2,682,301**	**(199,990)**	**(385,309)**	**185,319**	**8,463,580**

Capital Scheme	2025/26 Original Budget	Latest 2025/26 Budget	Profiled Budget 31/12/2025	Spend to 31/12/2025	2025/26 Budget Remaining	2025/26 Forecast Variance: Forecast Variance	2025/26 Forecast Variance: Variance due to Slippage	2025/26 Forecast Variance: Over / Under Spend	2025/26 Outturn Forecast
	£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£
General Fund Capital Programme									
PLACE Directorate									
Corporate Property Projects									
Blackbird Leys LC improvements	-	-	-	8,715	(8,715)	-	-	-	0
Conversion of stored water system to mains at	-	130,000	100,000	34,780	95,220	-	-	-	130,000
Leisure infrastructure life cycle investment (dilaps)	560,000	1,167,834	887,414	1,318,697	(150,863)	(329,607)	(329,607)	-	838,227
Leisure Centre Capital Works & Replacements	200,000	193,278	145,516	3,296	189,982	(173,278)	(173,278)	-	20,000
Community Centres Capital Works & Replacements	-	71,116	53,337	106,715	(35,599)	20,947	-	20,947	92,063
Hinksey Splash	200,000	32,163	20,698	234,431	(202,268)	-	-	-	32,163
Planned Building Improvements	750,000	1,621,865	1,216,398	235,036	1,386,829	-	-	-	1,621,865
Community Centres	-	-	-	4,789	(4,789)	-	-	-	0
Jericho Community Centre	200,000	200,000	150,000	2,424	197,576	-	-	-	200,000
Cave Street Development (Standingford House)	-	42,520	31,890	(76,989)	119,510	(42,520)	(42,520)	-	0
Gloucester Green Car Park (H&S)	-	319,469	239,602	287	319,183	-	-	-	319,469
Capital Works at Covered Market	888,453	1,037,672	794,851	130	1,037,542	(1,037,542)	(1,037,542)	-	130
Old Gas Works Bridges	-	391,825	295,374	44,582	347,244	-	-	-	391,825
Regeneration Property	-	3,402	2,552	-	3,402	-	-	-	3,402
Port Meadow Moorings	-	22,990	18,339	5,885	17,105	(6,115)	(6,115)	-	16,875
Asset Surveys	250,000	274,526	206,852	4,408	270,119	(267,026)	(267,026)	-	7,500
Town Hall Options	-	280,363	210,658	12,584	267,779	(260,000)	(260,000)	-	20,363
New Burial Space	1,323,000	347,636	263,708	100,016	247,620	-	-	-	347,636
Enabling works - Decarbonisation Project	638,576	638,576	478,932	-	638,576	-	-	-	638,576
Stock condition surveys (including bridge works)	300,000	129,009	102,422	-	129,009	103,160	103,160	-	232,169
Town Hall Relocation	-	560,220	428,319	33,982	526,238	(492,220)	(492,220)	-	68,000
Repairs to 2-4 Gloucester Street and 24-26 George St	-	103,160	77,370	100,251	2,909	-	-	-	103,160
Tumbling Bay Embankment Works	250,000	331,014	248,476	323,400	7,614	-	-	-	331,014
Hinksey Pool Liner Replacement	-	18,385	14,142	-	18,385	-	-	-	18,385
Bus Shelters	-	-	(5)	43	(43)	43	-	43	43
HSBC Options	-	-	827	135	(135)	-	-	-	0
Covered Market masterplan and enabling works	589,820	495,756	374,952	326,449	169,307	-	-	-	495,756
Waterways - Condition Survey / Long Bridges	-	9,239	6,929	25,878	(16,639)	-	-	-	9,239
Works Town Hall	1,000,000	1,231,452	923,789	568,374	663,078	(341,202)	(341,202)	-	890,250
Redbridge Masterplan	-	114,001	87,153	102,307	11,694	-	-	-	114,001
Floyds Row (Feasibility2024)	-	24,252	18,631	8,195	16,057	-	-	-	24,252
TH Archive Scanning Project	-	335,183	263,589	141,685	193,498	(100,000)	(100,000)	-	235,183
Network infrastructure installations (utilities, Comms	40,000	54,749	41,831	11,701	43,049	-	-	-	54,749
Waterways investment	500,000	377,326	282,994	6,045	371,281	(282,326)	(282,326)	-	95,000
Stone walls & Railing programme	-	21,870	17,556	52,014	(30,145)	24,880	-	24,880	46,749
Broad street roofing & Façade project	500,000	355,640	270,384	6,355	349,285	(325,640)	(325,640)	-	30,000
Fire Risk Assessment programme works	-	-	-	78,515	(78,515)	-	-	-	0
Bridge investment work	300,000	45,000	41,076	5,803	39,197	(7,400)	(7,400)	-	37,600
M&E Capital budget to fund capital replacement of	-	72,315	52,410	16,000	56,315	-	-	-	72,315
42&46a George St – Feasibility	-	22,424	16,818	277	22,147	(10,424)	(10,424)	-	12,000
Regeneration Property Purchase/Odeon	9,880,657	31,500	27,702	25,831	5,669	-	-	-	31,500
Redbridge Paddock Moorings - Feasibility	-	75,000	56,250	-	75,000	-	-	-	75,000
City Centre Income Strip - Feasibility	-	20,000	15,000	-	20,000	-	-	-	20,000
Covered Market Units Split – Feasibility	-	16,000	12,000	-	16,000	-	-	-	16,000
ICT - Asset Management System	300,000	175,000	133,776	550	174,450	-	-	-	175,000
General Fund Capital Reserve (SCS works & Energy)	500,000	900,000	683,654	-	900,000	(700,000)	(700,000)	-	200,000
Corporate Property Projects Total	**19,170,506**	**12,293,732**	**9,314,169**	**3,873,574**	**8,420,158**	**(4,226,272)**	**(4,272,141)**	**45,869**	**8,067,459**
Economy, Regeneration & Sustainability									
City Wide Cycling Infrastructure Contribution	173,681	40,000	30,625	23,957	16,043	-	-	-	40,000
R & D Feasibility Fund	500,000	122,095	91,571	-	122,095	-	-	-	122,095
Seacourt Park & Ride Extension	-	10,000	7,500	5,222	4,778	-	-	-	10,000
1-3 George Street	700,000	710,404	535,433	(33,798)	744,203	-	-	-	710,404
Future Options for City Centre Land (Odeon)	-	-	836	531	(531)	-	-	-	0
Diamond Place Redevelopment	74,770	15,000	11,370	12,233	2,767	-	-	-	15,000
Osney Mead Path Works (HIF)	-	423,746	317,810	2,398	421,348	-	-	-	423,746
Oxford Ice Rink Development	-	153,804	115,353	85,616	68,188	-	-	-	153,804
Oxford Station Feasibility	-	17,357	13,467	19,021	(1,664)	1,452	-	1,452	18,809
Osney Bridge (Growth Deal)	-	1,832,622	1,498,937	537,555	1,295,067	-	-	-	1,832,622
City Cycle Schemes (Growth Deal)	-	34,959	33,898	18,020	16,939	-	-	-	34,959
City Centre Restart (CIL Funded)	-	39,076	29,307	-	39,076	-	-	-	39,076
Greenways Cycling Project	-	15,514	11,636	16,252	(738)	-	-	-	15,514
CIL Feasibility	-	43,350	32,513	-	43,350	-	-	-	43,350
Meanwhile In Oxfordshire	-	79,948	61,544	-	79,948	-	-	-	79,948
Coach Parking Feasibility	-	19,848	14,886	-	19,848	-	-	-	19,848
City Centre Public Realm (Kiosks Project)	-	(6,711)	(4,264)	(6,064)	(647)	-	-	-	(6,711)
St Michael's Street Levelling Works	-	253,729	193,293	322,886	(69,156)	122,201	122,201	-	375,930
Ice Rink Car Parking	130,000	2,000	1,500	132	1,868	(1,500)	(1,500)	-	500
Oxford Flood Alleviation HIF Contribution	-	(0)	83,654	-	(0)	0	0	-	0
Cowley Branch Line Full Business Case	653,350	110,074	72,069	49,659	60,415	-	-	-	110,074
Templars Square (GF Element)	100,000	96,366	72,275	1,976	94,390	-	-	-	96,366
Bury Knowle House	-	41,000	30,750	-	41,000	-	-	-	41,000
Union Street Car Park	-	86,337	65,801	88,541	(2,204)	10,000	10,000	-	96,337
Magdalen Woods Pathway	-	58,200	43,650	112,683	(54,483)	-	-	-	58,200
Council Chamber upgrade – Feasibility	-	30,500	22,875	8,574	21,927	-	-	-	30,500
Southern Quarter – Feasibility	-	110,000	82,500	-	110,000	-	-	-	110,000
Oxford and Abingdon Flood Alleviation Scheme	250,000	249,038	186,778	4,947	244,091	(235,053)	(235,053)	-	13,984
Go Ultra Low Oxford - On Street	-	494,706	371,030	478	494,228	-	-	-	494,706
Go Ultra Low Oxford - Taxis	-	20,213	15,160	1,380	18,833	(902)	(902)	-	19,311
Decarbonisation Fund - OCC element	-	105,142	78,857	1,125	104,017	-	-	-	105,142
Biodiversity Net Gain (Feasibility)	-	48,000	37,058	10,429	37,571	(35,500)	(35,500)	-	12,500
Blackbird Leys Regeneration (GF Element)	4,866,000	930,000	676,615	182,953	747,047	(240,000)	(240,000)	-	690,000
UK Shared Prosperity Fund Investment Plan	-	371,817	278,863	-	371,817	(122,201)	(122,201)	-	249,616
Brownfield Land Release Fund (BLRF)	-	169,693	127,269	109,781	59,912	-	-	-	169,693
Depot Rationalisation	-	16,711	12,533	-	16,711	-	-	-	16,711
Economy, Regeneration & Sustainability Total	**7,447,801**	**6,744,538**	**5,254,949**	**1,576,487**	**5,168,051**	**(501,503)**	**(502,956)**	**1,452**	**6,243,035**

Capital Scheme	2025/26 Original Budget	Latest 2025/26 Budget	Profiled Budget 31/12/2025	Spend to 31/12/2025	2025/26 Budget Remaining	2025/26 Forecast Variance: Forecast Variance	2025/26 Forecast Variance: Variance due to Slippage	2025/26 Forecast Variance: Over / Under Spend	2025/26 Outturn Forecast
	£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£
Housing Supply (Delivery) Projects									
Housing Company Loans (excl Barton Park)	-	9,700,000	7,706,077	9,700,000	-	-	-	-	9,700,000
Affordable Housing Supply	-	128,000	133,654	747	127,253	-	-	-	128,000
Growth Deal Registered Provider Payments	272,000	272,000	204,000	-	272,000	-	-	-	272,000
Housing Supply Projects Total	**272,000**	**10,100,000**	**8,043,731**	**9,700,747**	**399,253**	**-**	**-**	**-**	**10,100,000**
Planning & Regulatory Projects									
ICT - replacing Uniform (building control and	-	83,931	62,948	-	83,931	-	-	-	83,931
Essential Repairs Grant	15,000	25,000	19,271	2,030	22,970	-	-	-	25,000
Disabled Facilities Grants	1,200,000	1,763,767	1,318,090	1,258,041	505,726	0	0	-	1,763,767
Controlled Parking Zones	-	443,000	339,423	-	443,000	(388,000)	(388,000)	-	55,000
Planning & Regulatory Projects Total	**1,215,000**	**2,315,697**	**1,739,732**	**1,260,071**	**1,055,626**	**(388,000)**	**(388,000)**	**-**	**1,927,698**
PLACE Directorate Total	**28,105,307**	**31,453,967**	**24,352,581**	**16,410,879**	**15,043,088**	**(5,115,775)**	**(5,163,097)**	**47,321**	**26,338,192**
General Fund Capital Programme									
Corporate Services Directorate									
Financial Services Projects									
ICT - Open Revenue Cloud Migration	100,000	170,000	128,462	120,000	50,000	-	-	-	170,000
Salary Costs across the Council to be capitalised	663,000	1,815,548	1,361,661	-	1,815,548	-	-	-	1,815,548
ICT - Agresso upgrade and migration to Cloud	-	46,534	39,097	-	46,534	-	-	-	46,534
OxWED Loans	-	1,025,000	788,462	-	1,025,000	-	-	-	1,025,000
Financial Services Projects Total	**763,000**	**3,057,083**	**2,317,682**	**120,000**	**2,937,083**	**-**	**-**	**-**	**3,057,083**
Law & Governance									
IDOX Eros	50,000	50,000	37,500	-	50,000	-	-	-	50,000
Audio & Visual Equipment	-	-	246	-	-	-	-	-	0
Law & Governance Projects Total	**50,000**	**50,000**	**37,746**	**-**	**50,000**	**-**	**-**	**-**	**50,000**
People									
ICT - I-trent replacement	20,000	20,000	15,000	-	20,000	-	-	-	20,000
Itrent system improvement	-	30,000	22,500	-	30,000	-	-	-	30,000
People Projects Total	**20,000**	**50,000**	**37,500**	**-**	**50,000**	**-**	**-**	**-**	**50,000**
Corporate Services Directorate Total	**833,000**	**3,157,083**	**2,392,928**	**120,000**	**3,037,083**	**-**	**-**	**-**	**3,157,083**
ODS Client Projects						-			
DRS	50,000	40,478	30,359	14,551	25,927	(11,151)	(11,151)	-	29,327
MT Vehicles/Plant Replacement Programme.	3,500,000	3,840,000	2,880,000	652,633	3,187,367	-	-	-	3,840,000
Car Parks Resurfacing	138,692	121,000	90,750	25,381	95,619	-	-	-	121,000
Cowley Marsh Extension	-	34,259	25,694	100	34,159	-	-	-	34,259
ODS Client Projects Total	**3,688,692**	**4,035,737**	**3,026,803**	**692,666**	**3,343,071**	**(11,151)**	**(11,151)**	**-**	**4,024,586**
General Fund Total	**37,687,856**	**47,310,357**	**36,306,680**	**23,204,814**	**24,105,543**	**(5,326,916)**	**(5,559,557)**	**232,640**	**41,983,441**
Housing Revenue Account (HRA) Capital Programme									
Tower Blocks	-	-	-	629	(629)	629	629	-	629
Structural	300,000	450,000	337,500	379,372	70,628	-	-	-	450,000
Controlled Entry	660,000	752,640	564,480	27,064	725,576	(726,640)	(726,640)	-	26,000
Major Voids	1,000,000	1,000,000	750,000	1,394,790	(394,790)	-	-	-	1,000,000
Electrics	1,696,744	1,696,744	1,272,558	476,190	1,220,554	-	-	-	1,696,744
Extensions & Major Adaptions	1,370,000	1,400,000	1,050,000	1,272,575	127,425	-	-	-	1,400,000
Energy Efficiency Initiatives	6,145,000	1,389,038	1,041,779	936,579	452,459	(94,488)	(94,488)	-	1,294,550
Lift Replacement Programme	190,000	116,000	87,000	76,411	39,589	-	-	-	116,000
Fire doors	968,500	796,615	597,461	548,278	248,337	-	-	-	796,615
Renewal Of Fire Alarm Panels	90,000	297,021	222,766	783	296,238	-	-	-	297,021
HRA Stock Condition Survey	120,000	607,501	455,626	23,235	584,267	(357,501)	(357,501)	-	250,000
Major Refurbishment Masons Road	-	589,615	442,211	3,600	586,015	-	-	-	589,615
Southfield Park Leases	-	1,500,000	1,125,000	-	1,500,000	-	-	-	1,500,000
Oxford North Development	13,922,141	6,812,382	5,109,286	1,754,810	5,057,572	(714,631)	(714,631)	-	6,097,751
LAHF Acquisitions	-	-	-	17	(17)	-	-	-	0
LAHF 2 Acquisitions	-	179,643	134,732	383	179,261	-	-	-	179,643
Retained Right to Buy Receipts (Acquisitions)	3,000,000	3,439,660	2,579,745	2,502,849	936,810	-	-	-	3,439,660
Retained Right to Buy Receipts (Additional)	-	-	-	39,071	(39,071)	-	-	-	0
Digital Noticeboards for tower blocks	-	-	-	17,505	(17,505)	35,000	35,000	-	35,000
Communal Capital investment works to Council	3,335,015	3,335,015	2,501,261	631,511	2,703,504	-	-	-	3,335,015
ExternalCapital investment works to Council Homes	10,389,637	10,389,637	7,792,228	2,899,477	7,490,160	-	-	-	10,389,637
Internal Capital investment works to Council Homes	8,503,914	8,503,914	6,377,936	5,434,179	3,069,735	-	-	-	8,503,914
Tower Blocks - Fire Alarm System Replacement	6,300,000	6,561,496	4,921,122	88,050	6,473,446	-	-	-	6,561,496
Windale & Northbrook Decant Costc	481,000	481,000	360,750	313,525	167,475	-	-	-	481,000
Blackbird Leys Regeneration (HRA)	1,142,000	680,000	510,000	674,761	5,239	-	-	-	680,000
East Oxford development	1,910,128	2,389,459	1,792,094	2,736,483	(347,024)	-	-	-	2,389,459
Properties Purchased From OCHL	49,176,171	28,200,000	21,150,000	19,812,778	8,387,222	(388,945)	(388,945)	-	27,811,055
Northfield Development Phase 1	15,581,280	7,296,270	5,472,203	3,519,058	3,777,212	(299,461)	(299,461)	-	6,996,809
Lanham Way	191,248	510,275	382,707	30,035	480,240	(0)	(0)	-	510,275
SHAP Acquisitions	-	-	-	1,121	(1,121)	-	-	-	0
Underhill Development	-	-	-	41	(41)	-	-	-	0
Leiden Road (c. 12 affordable homes)	324,213	36,903	27,677	6,529	30,374	-	-	-	36,903
Underhill Circus (c. 11 affordable homes)	264,538	76,433	57,325	7,090	69,343	-	-	-	76,433
Maltfield House	-	-	-	132,303	(132,303)	-	-	-	0
LAHF 3 Acquisitions	261,625	998,234	748,675	284,134	714,100	919,841	919,841	-	1,918,075
HRA Barton Acquisitions	14,002,979	9,564,658	7,173,494	104,411	9,460,247	(4,416,386)	(4,416,386)	-	5,148,272
Northfield Development Phase 2	-	122,500	91,875	1,137	121,363	-	-	-	122,500
Elsfield Hall	-	20,000	15,000	-	20,000	-	-	-	20,000
Cave Street	-	1,000,000	750,000	-	1,000,000	-	-	-	1,000,000
21 Between Towns Road (Knights Court)	-	3,000,000	2,250,000	15,000	2,985,000	-	-	-	3,000,000
Westlands Drive / Halliday Hill	-	-	-	2,849	(2,849)	-	-	-	0
Housing Revenue Account Total	**141,326,133**	**104,192,653**	**78,144,489**	**46,148,613**	**58,044,039**	**(6,042,583)**	**(6,042,583)**	**-**	**98,150,070**
Grand Total	**179,013,989**	**151,503,010**	**114,451,169**	**69,353,427**	**82,149,582**	**(11,369,499)**	**(11,602,139)**	**232,640**	**140,133,511**

	% Latest Budget	% Original Budget
GF Spend v Budget	49%	62%
HRA Spend v Budget	44%	33%
Total Spend v Budget	**46%**	**39%**

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OXFORD CITY COUNCIL

To:	**Cabinet**
Date:	18 March 2026
Report of:	David Butler, Director of Planning and Regulation
Title of Report:	Additional HMO Licensing Scheme Renewal

	Summary and recommendations
Decision being taken:	To approve the designation of the whole of the City of Oxford as subject to Additional HMO Licensing under section 56(1)(a) of the Housing Act 2004 for a further five years commencing from June 2026 and following expiry of the 3 month statutory notice period.
Key decision:	Yes
Cabinet Member:	Councillor Linda Smith, Cabinet Member for Housing and Communities
Corporate Priority:	Good, Affordable Homes
Policy Framework:	Housing and Homeless Strategy 2023-28

Recommendation(s): That Cabinet resolves to:

1. Having considered the outcome of the statutory consultation and the evidence previously considered by Cabinet in October 2025, confirm that the statutory tests set out in sections 56 and 57 of the Housing Act 2004 are met and that a renewed Additional HMO Licensing Scheme is required.
2. Designate the whole of the City of Oxford as subject to Additional HMO Licensing under section 56(1)(a) of the Housing Act 2004 for a period of five years commencing from June 2026 and following expiry of the 3 month statutory notice period.
3. Delegate authority to the Director of Planning and Regulation to finalise and sign, publish and implement the designation and take all necessary steps to give effect to the renewed scheme.
4. Approve the Additional HMO Licensing Scheme as set out in Appendix 2 including the simplified licence condition relating to waste management.

5. Note that the Additional HMO Licensing Scheme will continue to operate on a full cost-recovery basis, with licence fees set through the Council's annual budget and fees and charges approval process.

Appendix No.	Appendix Title	Exempt from Publication
Appendix 1	Consultation findings	No
Appendix 2	Additional HMO Licensing Scheme and Conditions	No
Appendix 3	Finance	No
Appendix 4	Risk Register	No
Appendix 5	Equity Impact Statement	No

Introduction and background

1. The Housing Act 2004 gives local authorities the power to introduce additional licensing schemes for Houses in Multiple Occupation (HMOs) where evidence shows that a significant proportion are being poorly managed, resulting in problems for occupiers or the wider community.
2. Mandatory HMO licensing, set out in the Housing Act 2004, applies to every local authority and regulates larger HMOs occupied by five or more unrelated people. Councils also have the discretionary power to introduce additional licensing which extends the licensing requirement to smaller HMOs not covered by the mandatory scheme. Oxford City Council has operated a citywide Additional HMO Licensing Scheme since 2011, renewed in 2016 and again in 2021. The current scheme is due to expire in June 2026.
3. In October 2025, Cabinet considered a review of the operation of the current scheme and resolved that a statutory consultation should be undertaken on a proposal to renew the scheme in its entirety for a further five years. That report concluded that the statutory tests for renewal were met and that continued licensing remained necessary and proportionate.
4. This report follows completion of that statutory consultation. It reports on the consultation outcome and seeks Cabinet approval to formally designate a renewed Additional HMO Licensing Scheme under section 56 of the Housing Act 2004.

Consultation overview

5. In accordance with section 56(3) of the Housing Act 2004, the Council undertook a statutory consultation for a period of not less than ten weeks on the proposed renewal of the Additional HMO Licensing Scheme. The consultation ran from 10 November 2025 to 1 February 2026. It sought views from landlords, letting and managing agents, tenants, residents, community groups and other stakeholders.

6. The consultation was promoted through the Council's website, targeted communications to known stakeholders, and direct engagement with landlords and agents. In addition to the online consultation, two in person engagement sessions were held as part of the Landlord Forum and Agent Forum, attended by approximately 100 landlords and 40 agents respectively.

7. Responses were invited through an online survey and written submissions. A total of 80 responses were received. A summary of the consultation responses and a more detailed analysis are provided in Appendix 1.

Key consultation themes

8. Responses to the consultation identified a number of recurring themes across stakeholder groups. Tenants, residents and representative organisations expressed broad support for the continuation of additional HMO licensing, particularly in relation to improving property standards and protecting tenant safety. Landlords and agents expressed more mixed views, with some raising concerns about regulatory burden while others acknowledged the role of licensing in maintaining standards and supporting a level playing field within the sector.

9. Across all respondent groups, fire safety, overcrowding and effective management practices were consistently highlighted as priority issues within the HMO sector. Respondents also emphasised the importance of consistency, transparency and proportionality in the operation of the scheme.

10. While views differed between stakeholder groups, the consultation demonstrated that the issues identified in the October 2025 Cabinet report remain live and that renewal of the scheme continues to attract support as a mechanism for addressing those issues.

Officer response and proposed scheme

11. Officers have carefully considered all responses received during the statutory consultation, in accordance with section 56(3) of the Housing Act 2004.

12. Having regard to the consultation responses, the evidence previously considered by Cabinet in October 2025, and the ongoing operation of the current scheme, officers remain satisfied that a significant proportion of HMOs in the city continue to be managed ineffectively so as to give rise to problems for occupiers and the wider community. Officers also consider that renewal of Additional HMO Licensing will

significantly assist the Council in addressing those problems and that continued designation remains consistent with the Council's Housing and Homelessness Strategy and wider regulatory approach.

13. It is therefore proposed that the Additional HMO Licensing Scheme be renewed broadly on the same basis as the current scheme, with no material changes to scope or operation. The only proposed change relates to a simplification of the licence condition relating to waste management, reflecting operational experience under the current scheme.

14. It is therefore proposed that Cabinet approve the designation of the whole of the City of Oxford under section 56(1)(a) of the Housing Act 2004 for a period of five years commencing in June 2026. The renewed scheme would continue to operate on the same basis as the current designation, including the scope of licensable properties, licence conditions and operational approach, with the existing fee structure retained on a full cost-recovery basis.

Alternative options considered

15. As set out in the October 2025 Cabinet report, alternative options to renewal were considered, including allowing the scheme to lapse or limiting the designation to specific areas. These options were not supported due to the ongoing evidence of poor conditions and ineffective management across the city and the risk of undermining progress made since 2011.

16. The consultation did not raise any new alternatives that would provide an effective or proportionate substitute for additional licensing. Officers therefore remain of the view that renewal of a citywide scheme is the most appropriate course of action.

Implications of Local Government Reorganisation

17. In preparing this report, regard has been given to Government guidance on financial decision-making in advance of Local Government Reorganisation.

18. Additional HMO Licensing is a discretionary power available to local housing authorities under Part 2 of the Housing Act 2004. The proposed renewal of the scheme does not involve long-term financial commitments, borrowing or capital expenditure, and is intended to operate on a full cost-recovery basis through licence fees approved as part of the Council's annual budget process. It therefore does not give rise to financial liabilities that would transfer to any successor authority.

19. Renewal of the scheme is intended to maintain continuity of housing regulation and tenant protection during any transition period associated with Local Government Reorganisation. Allowing the current scheme to lapse would risk creating a gap in regulatory oversight and undermining progress made in improving housing standards.

20. Any successor authority arising from Local Government Reorganisation would retain the ability to review, amend or discontinue the scheme in accordance with the Housing Act 2004.

Financial implications

21. The Additional HMO Licensing Scheme is intended to operate on a full cost recovery basis, funded through licence fees. Any costs associated with the statutory consultation have been met from existing service budgets, and the scheme does not require subsidy from the Council's General Fund.
22. Since 2016, the Council has operated a charging structure designed to reflect levels of compliance and ensure that compliant landlords are not subsidising noncompliant ones. Following relevant case law, a two-part fee structure was introduced in 2019, with the first part charged on application to cover processing and inspection costs and the second part charged when the Council is in a position to grant a licence to cover ongoing operational and enforcement costs. This approach supports transparency, proportionality and cost recovery.
23. The renewal of the Additional HMO Licensing Scheme does not involve changes to the structure of licence fees. Any adjustments to fee levels for future financial years will be considered and approved through the Council's annual budget and fees and charges approval process, in line with statutory guidance and case law. The proposed 26/27 fees and a forecast of the renewed scheme's costs and income is provided in Appendix 3.

Legal issues

24. The legal framework for Additional HMO Licensing is established under Part 2 of the Housing Act 2004, which grants Local Authorities discretionary powers to designate areas for additional licensing where they consider that a significant proportion of HMOs are being managed sufficiently ineffectively as to give rise to problems for occupants or members of the public.
25. Section 56 of the Act sets out the conditions that must be satisfied before a designation can be made, requiring the authority to consider the extent of ineffective management and take reasonable steps to consult with affected persons.
26. Section 57 further requires the authority to ensure that any designation is consistent with their overall housing strategy, adopts a coordinated approach with other housing enforcement activities, considers alternative courses of action, and will significantly assist in dealing with identified problems.
27. A statutory consultation has now been undertaken in accordance with section 56(3), and all representations received have been conscientiously considered. Officers are satisfied that the statutory conditions in sections 56 and 57 continue to be met and that the proposed designation is lawful, proportionate and justified.
28. Following any decision to renew the scheme, Section 59 requires a minimum of 3 months' notice before the designation comes into force, during which time the Council must publish the designation and notify affected persons. The proposed fees must be set in accordance with the statutory guidance and recent case law, ensuring they reflect the costs incurred in operating the scheme and do not exceed the reasonable costs of the licensing function.

Level of risk

29. The updated risk register is attached at Appendix 4. There are no abnormal risks identified.

Equalities impact

30. An updated Equality Impact Assessment is attached at Appendix 5. The assessment recognises that HMOs provide housing for a wide range of residents, including students, young professionals, low-income households and families with children, as well as people from minority ethnic backgrounds and other groups who may be more reliant on the private rented sector. Poorly managed HMOs can have a disproportionate impact on these groups, particularly in relation to health, safety and financial vulnerability. Renewing the licensing scheme has the potential to deliver positive equalities outcomes by improving standards and protecting tenants in a part of the housing market where disadvantage is more prevalent.

Carbon and Environmental Considerations

31. While there are no direct carbon implications arising from the decision to renew the scheme, effective management of HMOs can support wider environmental objective. Properties with low energy efficiency standards contribute to higher carbon emissions. Poorly managed HMOs also generate waste management challenges where household systems are inadequate or not properly used. The licensing scheme provides opportunities to improve environmental performance through licence conditions requiring appropriate facilities for waste storage and collection. Licence conditions can also be used to encourage energy efficiency improvements, though these must be proportionate to the scheme's core objectives around safety and management standards.

Conclusion

32. The statutory consultation has confirmed that the issues which led to the introduction and continuation of Additional HMO Licensing in Oxford remain relevant. Renewal of the scheme will enable the Council to maintain a proactive, proportionate and consistent approach to regulating HMOs and protecting tenants and communities. Cabinet is therefore recommended to approve the designation of a renewed citywide Additional HMO Licensing Scheme for a further five year period from June 2026.and following expiry of the 3 month statutory notice period.

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Appendix 1: Consultation on the Renewal of the Additional HMO Licensing Scheme

1. Purpose of the consultation

The purpose of the consultation was to seek views on the Council's proposal to renew the Additional HMO Licensing Scheme across Oxford. The consultation invited feedback on the effectiveness of the current scheme, the potential impact of discontinuing it, the proposal to renew the scheme, and specific elements including licence lengths, criteria, fees, and administrative arrangements.
The consultation formed part of the Council's decision-making process and was undertaken to inform Cabinet's consideration of whether to designate a renewed scheme.

2. Consultation methodology

The consultation was carried out through a combination of:

- an online public consultation hosted on the Council's consultation platform
- two in person engagement sessions, which included facilitated discussion and a SWOT style exercise

The online consultation ran from 11 November 2025 to 1 February 2026 and was promoted via the Council's website and established stakeholder channels.

3. Consultation responses

A total of 80 consultation responses were received. Respondents included private landlords, letting and managing agents, residents, and organisations with an interest in the private rented sector. In addition to the online responses, written representations were received during the consultation period, and qualitative feedback was gathered at the in-person engagement sessions.

4. Profile of respondents

Of those responding to the online consultation:

- approximately 63% identified as private landlords operating in Oxford
- around 9% identified as letting or managing agents
- approximately 20% identified as residents living in Oxford
- a small number identified as representing organisations or other interests

Where respondents provided information about property portfolios, the majority indicated ownership or management of between one and five properties, with a similar proportion reporting between one and five HMOs.

Demographic questions were optional and had a lower response rate. The information provided is therefore indicative and not representative of the wider population.

5. Summary of consultation themes

5.1 Effectiveness of the current Additional Licensing Scheme

Views on the effectiveness of the current scheme were mixed. Approximately 46% of respondents agreed or strongly agreed that the scheme has been effective in improving the quality and management of HMOs in Oxford, while around 23% disagreed or strongly disagreed. A proportion of respondents indicated uncertainty or selected “don’t know”.

Supportive comments referred to improved standards, greater accountability, and clearer expectations for landlords. Critical comments focused on perceived duplication with existing enforcement powers and the view that compliant landlords are disproportionately affected.

5.2 Impact of discontinuing the scheme

When asked about the likely impact if the scheme were to end and not be continued, a greater proportion of respondents anticipated a negative or very negative impact than a positive one. Around 54% anticipated a negative or very negative impact, compared with approximately 21% who anticipated a positive or very positive impact.

Comments highlighted concerns that discontinuation could lead to a reduction in oversight of property standards and management practices. Others considered that existing enforcement powers would be sufficient without the need for licensing.

5.3 Views on renewal of the scheme

Overall views on the proposal to renew the Additional HMO Licensing Scheme were divided. Approximately 52% of respondents agreed or strongly agreed with renewal, while around 34% disagreed or strongly disagreed. A smaller proportion neither agreed nor disagreed or were unsure.

Those supporting renewal generally cited improved housing standards, tenant protection, and consistency across the city. Those opposing renewal raised concerns about cost, administrative burden, and the effectiveness of licensing as a regulatory tool.

5.4 Licence lengths and criteria

Respondents expressed a range of views on the proposed licence lengths and criteria. Around 56% agreed or strongly agreed with the proposals, while approximately 32% disagreed or strongly disagreed.

Supportive responses welcomed longer licence periods for accredited landlords as an incentive for good practice. Concerns raised included:

- fairness if accreditation is not maintained for the full licence term
- whether licence length could be reduced in such circumstances
- whether any refund would apply if a licence were varied

The Council notes these views. Licence lengths are awarded based on the criteria met at the point of grant, and licences may be varied where those criteria are no longer satisfied. Licence fees are charged on a cost recovery basis and are not refundable where a licence is lawfully granted and subsequently varied.

5.5 Licence fees

Views on licence fees were mixed. Approximately 47% of respondents considered the proposed fees to be too high, while around 37% considered them to be about right. A smaller proportion considered fees to be too low or were unsure.

Comments focused on affordability for smaller landlords, cumulative regulatory costs, and the perceived relationship between fees and enforcement activity. The Council notes these views and confirms that fees are set in accordance with cost recovery principles.

5.6 Administration, flexibility, and fairness

A number of respondents raised practical issues relating to scheme administration, including:

- common representation arrangements on licences
- refunds where licences are revoked or varied part way through their term

These matters relate to operational delivery rather than the principle of scheme renewal. Existing policies and guidance will continue to apply, and opportunities to clarify guidance and communications will be considered as part of implementation. Similar concerns about fairness and proportionality were also raised during the in person engagement sessions, particularly where issues were perceived to be outside a landlord's direct control.

5.7 Data protection and transparency

Some respondents expressed concerns about the publication of landlord details on the public licence register, particularly in relation to names and addresses.

The Council notes these concerns and confirms that the public register operates in accordance with statutory requirements. Only information required by law is made publicly available, and data protection obligations have been considered and complied with.

5.8 In person engagement sessions

Two in person engagement sessions were held during the consultation period, involving landlords, managing agents, and other stakeholders. Participants took part in facilitated discussion and a SWOT style exercise to explore views on the current scheme and the proposal for renewal.

Strengths
Participants identified a number of strengths associated with the current Additional Licensing Scheme, including:

- improved quality of accommodation and management standards for tenants
- clearer expectations placed on landlords and agents
- support from the Council in driving compliance
- a more level playing field for compliant landlords
- reduced overcrowding and better control of tenant numbers

Some participants noted that licensing helps agents encourage landlords to address issues that might otherwise be delayed or avoided.

Weaknesses

Weaknesses raised focused primarily on cost and administration, including:

- licence fees and the cumulative cost of regulation
- the administrative burden associated with applications and renewals
- perceptions that compliant landlords bear a disproportionate burden
- concerns about fairness where enforcement action relates to issues outside a landlord's direct control

There were also comments about inconsistency in how requirements are understood or applied.

Opportunities

Participants identified opportunities to improve the operation of the scheme, including:

- clearer guidance and communication from the Council
- more practical advice and support for landlords and agents
- improved alignment with other regulatory requirements
- greater use of data to target non compliant or higher risk properties

Some participants suggested that improved communication could help increase understanding of the scheme's purpose.

Threats

Threats identified included:

- the risk of landlords disengaging from the sector
- potential reduction in the supply of privately rented accommodation
- landlords choosing to operate outside regulatory frameworks
- wider pressures on the private rented sector impacting compliance

Participants also noted that removal of the scheme could reduce oversight of property standards and management practices.

Overall, the themes raised during the in person sessions broadly aligned with those received through the online consultation.

6. Use of consultation responses

All consultation responses have been considered in the development of the final proposals set out in the main report. The consultation has informed refinements to guidance and implementation considerations but has not altered the Council's assessment that renewal of the Additional HMO Licensing Scheme is justified.

Appendix 2 – Additional HMO Licensing Scheme and Licence Conditions (June 2026)

Introduction

This appendix sets out the Additional HMO Licensing Scheme approved by Cabinet in March 2026 for implementation from June 2026. The scheme applies across the whole of the City of Oxford and will operate for a period of five years.

The scheme is made pursuant to the Council's discretionary powers under Part 2 of the Housing Act 2004 and is intended to support the effective regulation of Houses in Multiple Occupation, improve housing standards, and protect the health, safety and welfare of occupants and the wider community.

The renewed scheme is broadly consistent with the current Additional HMO Licensing Scheme approved in 2021. All licence conditions are unchanged from the current scheme, except for a simplification of the licence condition relating to waste management, which reflects operational experience gained during the current scheme period.

Scope of the scheme

The Additional HMO Licensing Scheme applies to all Houses in Multiple Occupation within the City of Oxford that fall within the scope of the designation approved by Cabinet under section 56(1)(a) of the Housing Act 2004. This includes HMOs occupied by three or more persons forming two or more households, and relevant section 257 HMOs, as defined by the Act.

Mandatory HMO licensing under Part 2 of the Housing Act 2004 continues to apply separately and is not affected by this designation.

Licence conditions

Properties licensed under the Additional HMO Licensing Scheme will be subject to the licence conditions approved by Cabinet and set out in this appendix. The conditions are intended to secure appropriate standards of safety, management and amenity within HMOs and to support effective regulation and enforcement.

The full set of licence conditions applicable to the renewed scheme is attached to this appendix. All conditions remain unchanged from the current scheme, except for the amendment to the licence condition relating to waste management, which has been simplified to improve clarity and enforceability.

Licence duration and variation

Licences granted under the Additional HMO Licensing Scheme may be issued for varying durations, including one-year, two-year and up to five-year licences, depending on compliance with licence conditions and relevant statutory requirements. The approach to licence duration under the renewed scheme is unchanged from the current scheme.

The Council retains the power to vary, suspend or revoke licences in accordance with the Housing Act 2004 where appropriate.

Additional HMO Licensing Scheme – Licence Conditions (June 2026)

LICENCE CONDITIONS

1 NUMBER OF OCCUPANTS

The house may be occupied by no more than the number of persons specified on the licence

2 ROOM SIZES AND OCCUPANCY*

The following minimum floor area requirements apply to rooms being used as sleeping accommodation:

- In HMOs with sufficient communal living space provided in accordance with Oxford City Council's Amenities and Facilities Guide:
    - 4.64 square metres for one (1) person aged under ten (10) years;
    - 6.51 square metres for one (1) person aged over ten (10) years;
    - 10.22 square metres for two (2) persons aged over ten (10) years.
- In HMOs without sufficient communal living space provided in accordance with Oxford City Council's Amenities and Facilities Guide:
    - 8.5 square metres for one (1) person regardless of age;
    - 14 square metres for two (2) persons regardless of age.
- Where the room contains kitchen facilities for the exclusive use of the occupant(s):
    - 14 square metres for one (1) persons regardless of age;
    - 18 square metres for two (2) persons regardless of age.

Rooms must not be occupied by a greater number of persons than what is prescribed in this condition. The Licence Holder must notify the local housing authority in writing of any room in the HMO with a floor area of less than 4.64 square metres.

Any part of the floor area of a room in relation to which the height of the ceiling is less than 1.5 metres is not to be taken into account in determining the floor area of that room for the purposes of this condition.

3 NUMBER OF HOUSEHOLDS

The house may be occupied by no more than the number of households specified on the licence. A household is either a single person or members of the same family who live together. A family includes people who are:

- married or living together - including people in same-sex relationships
- relatives or half-relatives, e.g. grandparents, aunts, uncles, siblings
- step-parents and step-children

Gas Safety and Carbon Monoxide

4. LANDLORD'S GAS SAFETY CERTIFICATE

If gas is supplied to the house, each year obtain and submit to the Council a new landlord's gas safety certificate issued by a recognised engineer approved under Regulation 3 of the Gas Safety (Installation and Use) Regulations 1998*.

A copy of the certificate must be displayed in the common parts of the property.

Ensure that a valid gas safety certificate is in place for the property for the duration of the licence (there should be no gaps in between certificate dates) and copies of all gas safety certificates obtained whilst the licence is in force must be kept by the Licence Holder for the duration of the licence and, on demand, supplied to the Council.

5. CARBON MONOXIDE ALARMS*

Ensure that a carbon monoxide alarm is installed in any room in the house which is used wholly or partly as living accommodation and contains a solid fuel combustion appliance. A 'room' includes a hall or landing and 'living accommodation' includes a bathroom or toilet.

The Licence Holder must keep all alarms in proper working order and supply the Council, on demand, with a declaration by him as to the condition and positioning of any such alarm. Electrical Safety

6. ELECTRICAL SAFETY CERTIFICATE

The Licence Holder must ensure that every electrical installation in the house is in proper working order and safe for continued use and supply, on demand, with a declaration as to the safety of such installations*.

Ensure that an electrical condition report dated within the last five (5) years is submitted to the Council. If the current report expires during this licence, ensure the new report is submitted. A valid electrical condition report must be in place for the property for the duration of the licence (there should be no gaps in between certificate dates).

The report must detail the condition of the fixed electrical installation of the property, Carry out any remedial works identified on the report and submit evidence to the Council upon completion. The report must be issued in accordance with the latest edition of the BS7671 Regulations for Electrical Installations, as issued by the Institute of Electrical Engineers. The inspection, report and all electrical work must be undertaken by qualified electricians registered and assessed by a UKAS LICENCE REFERENCE NUMBER accredited Certification Body to A1.2 of the IET Electrotechnical Assessment Scheme. The register of competent persons is available from: www.competentperson.co.uk

7. ELECTRICAL APPLIANCE SAFETY*

Keep all electrical appliances made available to the occupants in a safe condition. On demand, the Licence Holder must submit to the Council a declaration by him as to the safety of such appliances.

Fire Safety

8. SMOKE ALARMS*

Ensure that a smoke alarm is installed on each storey of the house on which there is a room used wholly or partly as living accommodation. The Licence Holder must keep all alarms in proper working order and supply the Council, on demand, with a declaration by him as to the condition and positioning of any such alarm.

9. TEST CERTIFICATE/DECLARATION FOR SMOKE / HEAT DETECTORS & FIRE ALARMS

Please note, a system of smoke and heat detectors (alarms) is classed as a “fire alarm” system under the British Standards.

Ensure the fire alarm system (i.e. the smoke / heat detectors (alarms)) is tested at least annually and submit to the Council a certificate / declaration to confirm the fire alarm system in the property has been tested and maintained in accordance with the provisions of British Standard BS5839-6:2019. The certificate / declaration must be not more than one year old.

If the property has a 'Grade A' fire alarm system (typically larger alarm systems with a control panel) the Licence Holder must ensure that the system is:

a. tested weekly; and
b. inspected and serviced at periods not exceeding six months by a suitably qualified and competent person.
   An inspection and servicing certificate issued in accordance with BS 5839-1:2019 must be provided biannually to the Council.

If the property has a 'Grade D1/D2' fire alarm system (i.e. mains-powered and interlinked detectors / alarms typically located in halls, landings and kitchens of low risk two or three storey HMOs), the Licence Holder must ensure that all alarms are:

a. tested monthly; and
b. maintained in accordance with the manufacturer's instructions.
   A self-declaration or an inspection / servicing certificate is acceptable for Grade D systems.

10. EMERGENCY LIGTHING

If emergency lighting is installed then ensure the system is tested at least annually and submit to the Council a certificate / declaration to confirm the emergency lighting system in the property has been tested and maintained in accordance with the provisions of British Standard BS 5266. The certificate must be not more than one year old. Carry out any remedial works identified on the report and submit evidence to the Council upon completion.

The person issuing the certificate must be a competent person qualified to undertake such inspection and testing. The register of competent persons is available from: www.competentperson.co.uk

11. FURNITURE SAFETY*

All furniture made available to the occupants of the house must be kept in a safe condition and must comply with the Furniture and Furnishings (Fire) (Safety) Regulations 1988. On demand, the Licence Holder must submit a declaration concerning the safety of the furniture to the Council.

12. FIRE NOTICES

Provide a notice informing occupants about what to do in the event of a fire. The notice shall be prominently displayed and located adjacent to the Notice containing the name, address and telephone contact number of the person who manages the house.

13 KEEP FIRE ESCAPE ROUTE CLEAR

Ensure that all fire escape routes are maintained clear of obstructions, storage and potential sources of ignition.

14 FIRE RISK ASSESSMENT

The Licence Holder must ensure a suitable and sufficient fire risk assessment which meets all requirements of the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005 has been undertaken before the property is let. This must be reviewed regularly. A copy of the fire risk assessment must be provided to the Council on demand.

Tenancy Management

15 WRITTEN TERMS OF OCCUPANCY

Supply the occupiers of the house / rooms, on commencement of their occupancy, with a written statement of the terms in which they occupy the house (i.e. a tenancy agreement).

The Licence Holder must, on demand, provide the Council with a copy of the written statement*. The Licence Holder must make a copy of the tenancy agreement available before the house is let so that tenants can read it before being asked to sign. It also gives the tenants the opportunity to get independent advice before signing.

16 REFERENCES

The Licence Holder must ensure that references are requested from persons who wish to occupy the house and wherever possible, are obtained. When referencing consideration must be given to the tenant's history, credit and right to rent checks. The Licence Holder must, on demand, ensure that the Council is provided with a copy of any such references and records.

17 RENT RECEIPTS

The Licence Holder must ensure there is a record of all rent payments received in respect of the property. The record must cover the duration of the licence. Where rent is paid in cash or cheque, the occupant(s) must be given a written receipt for the rental payment stating the date of payment, amount paid and the name of the person who collected the payment. Where rent is paid via bacs, this will count as the record of rental payment. The Licence Holder must, on demand, ensure that the Council is provided with a copy of rent payment records.

18 INVENTORY

The Licence Holder must ensure that an inventory is provided to the occupants. For separate tenancies or lodgers, this is limited to the occupant(s) exclusive room(s). For joint tenancies, an inventory for the whole house to be provided. The Licence Holder must, on demand, ensure that the Authority is provided with a copy of the inventory/ies.

19 UTILITIES AND APPLIANCES

The Licence Holder must ensure that, where tenants are to pay the bills, they are provided with details of the utility provider and billing information within 14 days of occupation of the house. The Licence Holder must ensure that the tenants are provided with a user manual or written instructions for the correct operation and setting of the fixed form of heating system in the property.

Waste disposal and refuse

20 WASTE DISPOSAL AND RECYCLING REQUIREMENTS*

Oxford City Council's policy relating to the collection of domestic household waste and recycling is outlined on the Council's website at www.oxford.gov.uk/recycling. This policy applies to all households entitled to the statutory waste and recycling collection service.

Oxford City Council will not collect recycling or general waste unless it is correctly presented in receptacles that meet the Council's specification.

Properties with sack collections or communal collections (including blocks of flats):
Where a property is subject to sack-based waste collection because it is not

possible to store or present bins, or where the property forms part of a block of flats with communal waste arrangements, the Licence Holder must comply with the guidance published on the Council's website at www.oxford.gov.uk/recycling.

All properties:
The Licence Holder must provide new tenants with written information on managing and disposing of household waste and recycling, including:

- the days on which waste and recycling should be presented for collection
- details of what can and cannot be recycled, including use of the blue bin or clear sack where applicable
- information on how bulky waste can be disposed of and the penalties associated with fly tipping

The Licence Holder must ensure that suitable and adequate provision is made available at the start of a tenancy for the storage of household waste and recycling generated at the property. Where necessary, the Licence Holder must make supplementary arrangements for the disposal of additional waste.

The Licence Holder must ensure that, at the end of each tenancy, any rubbish or unwanted household goods left behind are removed and disposed of appropriately before the start of the next tenancy. In particular, any waste or goods left in the front or rear garden, or on the pavement in front of the property, must be removed.

Where the tenancy agreement places responsibility on tenants for garden maintenance, the Licence Holder must ensure that appropriate arrangements are in place for garden waste disposal, including the purchase of a garden waste collection subscription where required.

21 PROVISION OF CONTACT DETAILS TO TENANTS

The Licence Holder must display, in a prominent position within the house, a notice containing the name, address and telephone contact number of the person who manages the house.

The Licence Holder must provide to the tenants, in writing within 7 days of their occupation, details of who to contact to report repairs, including out of hours emergency contact details.

22 DIS-REPAIR / PESTS

The Licence Holder must ensure that, if they are informed, in writing, by email or other form of communication, about a complaint of disrepair or pest infestation in the property from the occupiers, the Council or a third party, they take action to investigate and if necessary remedy the disrepair and/or infestation within a reasonable period of time. The Licence Holder shall respond, preferably in writing to any such complaint, within 14 days of receipt of the complaint, stating what action they have or intend to take.

Where an emergency issue is reported (e.g. loss of heating, hot water, issues relating to security), it should be responded to within 24 hours. This includes undertaking a temporary measure before the full repair can be undertaken.

Where a pest problem is identified following a complaint, the Licence Holder must employ a suitably qualified pest control company to investigate the problem and undertake all action needed to remove pests (this includes baiting and any structural repairs to prevent pest access).

23 PROPERTY INSPECTION

The Licence Holder must ensure that inspections of the house are carried out at least every six months to identify any problems relating to the condition and management of the house. The records of such inspections must be kept for the last year. As a minimum requirement the records must contain a log of who carried out the inspection, date and time of inspection any issues found and actions(s) to be taken. Copies of these must be provided to the council within 28 days of demand. In the event that an inspection is not possible (e.g. pandemic situation) then it is acceptable for the Licence Holder to fulfil this in alternative ways (e.g. zoom call with tenants who show the house and landlord takes notes or written confirmation from tenants there are no problems).

24 EMERGENCY ARRANGEMENTS

Where the Licence Holder is out of the country for more than two weeks and for less than four weeks, there must be emergency arrangements in place for the tenants to be able to arrange emergency repairs. These arrangements must be provided to the tenant.

Where the Licence Holder is out of the country for more than four weeks at a time, there must be a named managing agent or alternative person who can arrange repairs. This person must be named on the application form and must be a “fit and proper” person. These arrangements must be provided to the tenant.

Energy Performance Certificate

25 ENERGY PERFORMANCE CERTIFICATE (EPC)

Where an EPC is required for the HMO, on demand submit to the Council an energy performance certificate stating the property has a minimum energy efficiency standard of an E-rating. The person issuing the certificate must be an Approved Energy Assessor qualified to undertake such inspection and testing.

If the property is exempt from the Minimum Energy Efficiency Standard, on demand provide details of the registered exemption. Notification of changes

26 CHANGES TO CONTACT DETAILS

The Licence Holder must advise the HMO Customer Services Applications Team in writing of any permanent change to the address or contact details of each

person (except any mortgage provider) named on the licence application form as soon as reasonably practicable.

27 CHANGES WITHIN THE HOUSE

The Licence Holder must advise the HMO Customer Services Applications Team in writing of any change in the house (apart from the change of occupants) that is likely to affect the operation or management of the HMO as soon as reasonably practicable.

28 CHANGES TO FIT AND PROPER PERSON STATUS LICENCE REFERENCE NUMBER

The Licence Holder must advise the HMO Customer Services Applications Team in writing of any changes to the Licence Holder, the Manager's or any associate's circumstances which could affect their fit and proper person status, i.e. any cautions or convictions for any offence involving fraud, dishonesty, violence, drugs, sexual offences (under Sexual Offences Act, schedule 3) discrimination or breach of housing or landlord / tenant law or convicted of a banning order offence or issued with a banning order. The Licence Holder to inform the Council within 14 days of becoming aware of the change to fit and proper person status.

29 SALE OF PROPERTY

Where the property is sold and the owner is the Licence Holder, the Licence Holder must request that the HMO licence is revoked. Licences cannot be transferred.

Where the property is sold and the Licence Holder remains the same (for example, the agent is the Licence Holder), then the Licence Holder must inform the HMO Customer Services Applications Team in writing with the new ownership details.

Property Specific Conditions – work required to the property to ensure it is suitable for the number of occupants or improve the condition and content

Any conditions relating to work required will be listed here. If this section is left blank, then at the time the licence was granted there were no known issues. Work can be added at any time via a notice to vary the licence. This may be due to a complaint made or a routine inspection.

END OF LICENCE CONDITIONS

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Appendix 3 – Finance

26/27 Budget Proposed Fees

License Type	Description	Stage 1	Stage 2	Total Fee
A: Higher Rate New Application	New application - HMO operating unlicensed for 12+ weeks	£407	£2,783	**£3,190**
B: Standard New Application	New application - Recently acquired HMO, renewal within 12 weeks of expiry, or change of licence holder	£407	£451	**£858**
C: Standard Renewal	Annual renewal - No management concerns, not an Accredited Landlord	£130	£262	**£392**
D: Higher Rate Renewal	Annual renewal - Management concerns or re-inspection required	£130	£614	**£744**
E: Two-Year Renewal	Two-year renewal - All criteria met	£130	£302	**£432**
F: Five-Year Licence	Five-year licence - Accredited Landlord, all criteria met	£130	£480	**£610**

Scheme Cost/Income Forecast

Year	26/27	27/28	28/29	29/30	30/31	Total
Staffing	£ 984,877	£ 755,404	£ 792,862	£ 832,181	£ 873,452	£ 4,238,777
Training	£ 12,000	£ 12,600	£ 13,230	£ 13,892	£ 14,586	£ 66,308
Technology	£ 20,000	£ 21,000	£ 22,050	£ 23,153	£ 24,310	£ 110,513
Travel	£ 2,000	£ 2,100	£ 2,205	£ 2,315	£ 2,431	£ 11,051
Equipment & misc supplies & services	£ 12,471	£ 13,095	£ 13,750	£ 14,437	£ 15,159	£ 68,911
Landlord liaison / promotion	£ 10,000	£ 10,500	£ 11,025	£ 11,576	£ 12,155	£ 55,256
Subscriptions inc ATLAS LL Accreditation Scheme	£ 3,892	£ 4,087	£ 4,291	£ 4,506	£ 4,731	£ 21,508
Total Cost	**£ 1,045,241**	**£ 818,786**	**£ 859,413**	**£ 902,059**	**£ 946,825**	**£ 4,572,324**
Income	**£ 1,171,648**	**£ 761,688**	**£ 900,520**	**£ 804,771**	**£ 981,279**	**£ 4,619,906**

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Risk Register

Additional HMO Licensing Renwal

As at:26 January, 2026

									Gross		Current			Target						
Ref	Title	Risk Description	Opp / Threat	Cause	Consequence	Risk Treatment	Date Raised	Owner	P	I	P	I	Score	P	I	Comments	Control / Mitigation Description	Date Due	Action Status	% Progress	Action Owner
1	Income generation not as predicted	Applications reduced or increased and not as predicted	O/T	due to market changes / longer licences issued / changes in legislation/ increase in accredited licence holders	resources not being matched to demand	Reduce	01/09/25	Courtney Bennet	3	3	2	3	6	2	2	Build in flexibility in staffing to increase/decrease if scheme income and costs are out of balance	Provide Net zero budget. Budget based on predicted workload on annual basis and ensure resources aligned				
2	legal challenge / judicial review	The decision to renew the additional HMO licensing scheme could be subject to a legal challenge via a Judicial Review	T	Statutory requirements not met. Insufficient resources provided to fulfil requirements. Insufficient evidence base. Lack of wider consultation	The time table for introducing the scheme would be altered and extra unbudgeted spending would be required to defend the legal challenge.	Reduce	01/09/25	Courtney Bennet	3	3	2	2	4	2	2	A number of challenges have been brought against councils introducing or renewing property licensing schemes - for various reasons with varying success	External experts have been employed to ensure that consultation exercise has been undertaken widely - all statutory requirements have been met and robust evidence for proving need for scheme provided				
3	Report recommendations not approved	Cabinet do not approve the recommendations in the report	T	Insufficient support from members to proceed with the renewal of the scheme	Approximately 45% of the HMO stock in the city will not be regulated by HMO licensing which inevitably will lead to more poor conditions in the sector.The council would still be legally obliged to investigate these complaints. Regulatory services officers needed would remain the same at a reduced budget and so cost may need be covered from council bduget. Customer services applications officers may have possible reduncies.		01/09/25	Courtney Bennet	3	2	3	2	6	2	2	The review of the current scheme shows there is still a large proportion of HMOs not meeting requirements of the licencing scheme	Robust evidence provided that scheme is needed to regulate this sector				

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

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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.**	Renewal of Additional HMO licensing Scheme	**2.**	**The implementation date of the activity under consideration:**	June 2026
3.	**Directorate/Department(s):**	Planning and Regulation	**4.**	**Service Area(s):**	Regulatory Services
5.	**Who is (are) the assessment lead(s):** **Please provide:** -Name -Email address	Courtney Bennett cbennett@oxford.gov.uk	**6.**	**Contact details, in case there are queries:** **Please provide:** -Name -Email address	Courtney Bennett cbennett@oxford.gov.uk **Error! Bookmark not defined.**
7.	**Is this a new or ongoing EqIA?**	New ☐ ☐	**8.**	If this is an extension of a previous EqIA, please indicate where the previous EqIA is located and share the link to the said EqIA.	
9.	**Date this EqIA started:**	01/09/2025			
10.	**Will this EqIA be attached to** Corporate Management Team (CMT) **reports/updates, which will be published online?**	No	**11.**	**Give a date (tentative or otherwise) when this assessment will be taken to the** CMT.	

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

12.	**Type of activity being considered:** Check the most appropriate.	☐	☐ Decommissioning	☐ Commissioning	☐
		X ☐	☐ x Others. Please specify: Renewal of an enforcement scheme		
13.	**Which priority area(s) within Oxford City Council's Corporate strategy (2024-2028) does this activity fulfil?** Please check as needed.	X Good, affordable homes	☐ Strong, fair economy	☐ Thriving Communities	☐ Zero Carbon Oxford	☐ Well run council
14.	**Which priority area(s) within Oxford City Council's Equality, Diversity & Inclusion Strategy (2022) does this activity fulfil?** Please check as needed.	X Responsive services and customer care.	☐ Diverse and engaged workforce.	☐ Leadership & organisational commitment.	X Understanding and working with our communities.
15.	**Outline the aims, objectives, & priorities of the activity being considered.**	The licensing of all HMOs in Oxford has been in operation since 2011. The aim of the activity is to renew and designate a citywide Additional HMO Licensing Scheme for a further five years. The scheme seeks to ensure minimum standards of safety and management in HMOs, protect tenants who may be more vulnerable in the private rented sector, and promote responsible landlord practices.			

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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.	The current designation expires in June 2026. Failure to renew would result in only a portion of the sector being regulated, leaving some tenants without the protection of licensing. This would increase risks to health and safety, reduce housing standards, and undermine the Council's strategic objectives on housing, community wellbeing, and equity.

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.	A statutory consultation was undertaken between November 2025 and January 2026, including an online survey and in-person engagement through landlord and agent forums.
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, -articles, -reports, -briefs.	Licensed HMOs record information Census and ONS housing tenure data Local affordability data showing reliance on HMOs as a housing option Reports on housing and community resilience in Oxford

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19.	**If you have not done any consultations or collected data & information, are you planning to do so in the future?** **Please list the details –** -when, -with whom, and -how long will you collect the relevant data.	No – consultation has been completed and informed the decision to renew the scheme.

Section 4: Impact analysis.

20.	**Who does the activity impact?** **Check as needed.** The impact may be positive, negative or unknown.	**Service Users**	Yes	X	**No**	Don't Know ☐
		Members of staff	**Yes**	X	No ☐	Don't Know ☐
		General public	**Yes**	X	No ☐	Don't Know ☐
		Partner / Community Organisation	Yes	X	**No** ☐	Don't Know ☐
		City Councillors	Yes	X	**No** ☐	Don't Know ☐
		Council suppliers and contractors	Yes	X	No	Don't Know ☐

21.	Does the activity impact positively or negatively on any protected characteristics as stated within Equality (Act 2010)?					
Protected Characteristic	**Positive**	**Negative**	**Neutral**	**Don't know**	**Data/information/evidence supporting your assessment**	**Analysis & insight** **Mitigations**
Age	X	☐		☐	High proportion of young adults & students rely on HMOs	Positive impact: licensing protects younger tenants' housing conditions.
Disability **(Visible and invisible)**	X	☐	☐	☐	Residents with disabilities may live in HMOs	Licensing can ensure safe, suitable housing. Ensure accessibility requirements considered in enforcement.
Gender re-assignment		☐	X	☐	No direct evidence	Neutral
Marriage & Civil Partnership	☐	☐	X	☐	No direct evidence	Neutral

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Race, Ethnicity and/or Citizenship	X	☐	☐	☐	HMO	Licensing may affect BME landlords disproportionately, tenants from migrant backgrounds often in HMOs. Inclusive consultation, multi-language materials, monitoring landlord impacts
Pregnancy & Maternity	X**Error! Bookmark not defined.**	☐		☐	Families with young children may reside inHMOs	Licensing can protect family health & safety Consultation with family support services
Religion or Belief	OBJ	☐	X	☐	No direct evidence	Neutral
Sex	Yes			☐		Licensing improves standards. Target

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						information via women's community networks
Sexual Orientation	☐	☐	Yes	☐	No direct evidence	Neutral
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.	Yes	☐		☐	HMOs are often the only viable option due to Oxford housing affordability	Licensing addresses inequality by ensuring affordable housing is safe Fees structured to be proportionate and cost-neutral

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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.	**X**	No major change(s) or adjustments and continue with activity but continue to monitor.	☐	No major change(s) or adjustments and continue with the activity. No need to monitor in the future.
23.	**Please explain how you have reached your conclusions above.**		**Benefits of Implementation**: The EqIA concludes that renewal of the Additional HMO Licensing Scheme is likely to have a positive impact on equality groups who are more reliant on HMOs, including younger people, low-income households and people from migrant backgrounds. No new negative impacts have been identified as a result of renewal. The scheme will continue to be monitored to ensure it operates proportionately and fairly. **Promotes Equity**: Ensures everyone has equal opportunities. **Enhances Diversity**: **Improves Representation**:					

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**? **For example-** - team, -directorate, -service area, -Equalities Steering Group,etc.		Residential Regulation Team, Regulatory Services		
25.	**Who (individual, team, or service area) will be responsible for carrying out the EqIA review?**		Regulatory Services Management team		
26.	**How often will the equality impact be reviewed for this activity?** **For example-** -quarterly, -yearly, etc.		Annually	**27.** **Date when the EqIA will be reviewed again.**	February 2027

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Section 7: Sign-off

Name: Courtney Bennett

Job Title: Regulatory Services Manager

Signature:
Cbennett

Name:

Job Title:

Signature:

Name: Full Name

Job Title: Type here

Signature:

Name: Gail Malkin

Job Title: Head of People

Signature:
G Malkin

Name: Full Name

Job Title: Type here

Signature:

Name: Full Name

Job Title: Type here

Signature:

Name: Full Name

Job Title: Type here

Signature:

Name: Full Name

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Job Title: Type here

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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.**

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To:	**Cabinet**
Date:	**18 March 2026**
Report of:	**Jane Winfield – Director of Property and Assets**
Title of Report:	**Grant of Easement at Blackberry Lane**

Summary and recommendations	
Decision being taken:	Request approval to enter into an Option Agreement in relation to granting an Easement in relation to land at Blackberry Lane.
Key decision:	Yes
Cabinet Member:	Cllr Ed Turner – Deputy Leader (Statutory) – Finance and Asset.
Corporate Priority:	Supports a strong local economy by securing a capital receipt for the Council higher than the current use value.
Policy Framework:	Oxford Local Plan 2016–2036 (no specific allocation for the site).

Recommendation(s): That Cabinet resolves to:

1. **Delegate** authority to the Director of Property and Assets in consultation with the Director of Law, Governance and Strategy, the Group Finance Director, and the Lead Cabinet Member for Finance and Assets to agree the final commercial terms for the Option Agreement as set out in Exempt Appendix 1.
2. **Delegate** authority to the Director of Property and Assets in consultation with the Director of Law, Governance and Strategy, Group Finance Director, and Lead Member for Finance and Assets, to approve the final form of the Option Agreement and enter into it on behalf of the Council.
3. **Delegate** authority to the Director of Property and Assets in consultation with the Director of Law, Governance and Strategy and the Group Finance Director and Lead Member for Finance and Assets t to agree the final disposal price for the easement and to ensure that the disposal is compliant with the Council's statutory duty to obtain Best Consideration reasonably obtainable pursuant to Section 123 of the Local Government Act 1972.

Information Exempt from Publication	
	The Exempt Appendix and Risk Register contain commercially sensitive information relating to the financial or business affairs of the Council and BW ESS. This information is exempt under Schedule 12A to the Local Government Act 1972, on the following basis: Information about someone's finances or business.

Appendix No.	Appendix Title	Exempt from Publication
Appendix 1	Exempt Appendix	Yes – Exempt under Schedule 12A (financial/business affairs).
Appendix 2	Easement Plan	No – Not exempt under Schedule 12A (financial/business affairs).
Appendix 3	Risk Register	Yes – Exempt under Schedule 12A (financial/business affairs).

Introduction and background

1. BW ESS (formerly Penso Power) obtained planning consent in July 2025 for a Battery Energy Storage System (BESS) adjacent to Cowley Substation, off Blackberry Lane, Oxford.
2. To enable the development, BW ESS requires an easement over Council-owned land as set out in paragraph 5 below.
3. The location of the proposed easement is approximately 4.1 miles directly southeast of Oxford city centre on the southern edge of the Oxford City Council boundary adjoining South Oxfordshire District Council. Figure 1 shows the approximate location in relation to the City.



Figure 1: Location of Proposed Easement

4. The land forms part of the Council's agricultural estate at Blackbird Leys Farm and is currently let under a 60-year Agricultural Holdings Act tenancy to Thames Water Utilities Limited (TWUL), expiring in 2037; TWUL has underlet to a farm tenant via a Farm Business Tenancy currently being renewed for two years from December 2025 until December 2027.



Figure 2: Aerial Image of Indicative Area of Easement Location

5. The easement will cover two defined areas: a cable easement of 3,986 m² and an access road easement of 805 m², covering a total area of approximately 4,791 m² (1.18 acres) of arable land, as shown in Figure 2. The agreed commercial terms are set out in the Exempt Appendix (Appendix 1), and the easement areas are shown on the Easement Plan (Appendix 2).

Project rationale and strategic fit

6. The primary rationale for agreeing the easement is to avoid a compulsory acquisition route that BW ESS could pursue, thereby reducing delay and cost risk and securing a certain, negotiated capital receipt for the Council.

Details of the proposed option agreement and easement

7. The Option Agreement will allow BW ESS to call on the easement if it meets a number of objectives.
8. The easement will grant BW ESS rights for:
   - Access to/from Blackberry Lane to the BESS site.
   - Installation of underground cabling to connect the site to the NGET Cowley substation.

- Temporary laydown areas for cabling works.

9. Due to the land currently being let to TWUL under an Agricultural Holdings Act tenancy, TWUL is entitled to a share of the easement fee.

Financial issues

10. The proposed easement will generate a one-off capital receipt.
11. The easement will also result in the loss of agricultural income currently charged under the headlease. This is considered negligible in the context of the one-off capital receipt.

Legal issues

12. The Council has the legal power to grant an option to grant an easement, and to grant an easement under its general disposal powers in Section 123 of the Local Government Act 1972. The easement will be documented by a formal Deed of Easement, following completion of an Option Agreement, if the option is exercised.
13. In order to grant the easement, the Council will need to vary a lease of land granted to Thames Water Authority (now Thames Water Utilities Limited) dated 23rd May 1978, which will be affected by the Deed of Easement. TWUL has agreed to this and will be a party to the Option Agreement and the Deed of Easement.
14. BW ESS is a statutory undertaker under the Electricity Act 1989 and has obtained a generation licence. This gives BW ESS compulsory purchase powers, meaning it could acquire the rights through a statutory process if agreement is not reached. Accepting the negotiated terms avoids the risk of compulsory acquisition and associated costs.

Level of risk

15. A risk register has been prepared and will be attached as Appendix 3 to the report. Overall, the risks are considered manageable and outweighed by the benefits of securing a guaranteed capital receipt and supporting strategic sustainability objectives.

Equalities Impact

16. An Equalities Impact Assessment has been considered for this decision. The grant of an easement for cable installation and access does not affect service delivery or public access and is therefore assessed as having no adverse impact on any protected groups under the Equality Act 2010.

Carbon and Environmental Considerations

17. The easement will indirectly support the Council's zero-carbon objectives by enabling delivery of a Battery Energy Storage System (BESS). While the easement itself does not generate carbon benefits, the resulting BESS will help integrate renewable energy into the grid and reduce reliance on fossil-fuel generation during peak periods

18. The environmental impacts of the BESS site have been addressed through the site's planning conditions, which secure:
    - Noise mitigation measures (low-noise equipment, acoustic enclosures).
    - Visual screening (landscaping and boundary treatments).
19. These measures are outside the scope of the easement but ensure the development operates within acceptable environmental standards.

Report author	Douglas Harvey
Job title	Senior Estates Surveyor
Service area or department	Corporate Property
Telephone	07483011364
e-mail	Dharvey@oxford.gov.uk

Background Papers:

None.

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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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Revisions:

Revision	Date	Revision Notes	Drawn	Inspected
01	26.08.25	First Issue	EM	HSJ

LEGEND:

- LANDLORD'S PROPERTY
- AREA AVAILABLE FOR NEW ACCESS ROAD (6544m²)
- EXISTING ACCESS
- INDICATIVE NEW ACCESS ROAD (805m²)
- CABLE EASEMENT (3986m²)
- TEMPORARY LAYDOWN AREA (6000m²)

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1 COWLEY EASEMENT PLAN

Scale: 1:2500@A1

0 50 100 150 200 250m

SCALE 1:2500

N

Status:

LEGAL

Project:

Cowley Battery Storage

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Drawing Title:

Cowley Easement Plan

Drawn:	Checked:	First Issued:
EM	HSJ	26.08.2025

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Sheet Size: **A1**	Scale: **1:2500**	Revision: **01**

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

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To:	**Cabinet**
Date:	18 March 2026
Report of:	Director of Housing
Title of Report:	HRA Property Services Policies

Summary and recommendations	
Decision being taken:	To approve the following policies: compliance, decant, gas safety, health and safety, permit to work and radon to ensure the maintenance and good management of the housing stock.
Key decision:	Yes
Cabinet Member:	Councillor Linda Smith – Housing and Communities
Corporate Priority:	Good, affordable homes
Policy Framework:	HRA Asset Management Strategy

Recommendation(s): That Cabinet resolves to recommend the following policies for Council approval:

1. The draft Compliance Policy
2. The draft Decant Policy
3. The draft Gas Safety Policy
4. The draft Health and Safety Policy
5. The draft Permit to Work Policy
6. The draft Radon Policy

Appendix No.	Appendix Title	Exempt from Publication
Appendix 1	Compliance Policy	No
Appendix 2	Decant Policy	No
Appendix 3	Gas Safety Policy	No

Appendix 4	Health and Safety Policy	No
Appendix 5	Permit to Work Policy	No
Appendix 6	Radon Policy	No

Introduction and background:

1. Further to the Cabinet and Council approving the damp and mould, fire safety, asbestos, disrepair, electrical safety and legionella policies, further policies are being presented to the Cabinet to ensure the safety of residents and ensure the good management of the housing stock.

2. The policies being presented to the Council fall into two broad categories – ensuring the safety of all residents and secondly, ensuring the good management of the housing stock and the need to treat residents with dignity and respect when, in extreme circumstances, tenants have to leave homes temporarily for urgent maintenance work to be undertaken.

3. Making sure residents have a safe, affordable and decent place to call home is the core purpose of this work. Successive Governments has been working to strengthen the voice of residents and introduce legislation to ensure the quality of homes.

4. In 2018, the then Government published the Social Housing White Paper to ensure residents of social housing are safe, listened to, live in good quality homes and have access to help when things go wrong. Consequently, the Social Housing Regulation Act ("the Act") received Royal Assent in July 2023. The Act forms a new regulatory framework for the social housing sector, aiming to give residents greater powers and improve access to quick and fair solutions to problems.

5. The Act aims to ensure Registered Social Landlords (RSLs) are compliant with the consumer standards by giving the Regulator of Social Housing new powers to address RSLs who are not meeting their commitments to residents.

6. The Social Housing Charter detailed what social housing residents should expect from their landlords, including feeling safe in their homes, knowing how their landlords are performing and having their complaints solved quickly.

7. The Act sets out to deliver against each of these commitments:

- Residents to be safe in their home.
- Residents to know how their landlord is performing.
- Residents to have their complaints dealt with promptly.
- Residents to be treated with respect.
- Residents to have their voice heard by their landlord.
- Residents to have a good quality home and neighbourhood to live in.

8. Technical policies are therefore required to adhere to this regulatory regime. They are also key to ensure the effective operation of the Housing Revenue Account (HRA) property service as it ensures that asset management services and the development of the social housing programme are set within a sound operating framework such as meeting key performance criteria, as well as achieving sustainability objectives are met and monitored.

9. The ability to refresh policies ensures key KPIs can be refined to meet the contemporary needs of tenants and of the wider city in respect of the role of housing in attaining economic growth.

10. At the same time, the need to ensure high standards are maintained, such as guaranteeing gas safety standards are met and there is constant action to monitor and act on radon levels, can be attained by clear technical policies which ensures consistent follow through with operational work in addressing health and safety objectives.

11. The Council recognises its compliance responsibilities as well as the critical need to listen and act on the lived in experiences of our residents. There has been a series of meetings with the Residents Policy Review Group and survey work with residents which has amended and approved the policies which are being presented to Cabinet for approval with this report.

12. There is a need for a suite of other policies to be considered and approved by the Cabinet to meet these regulatory standards. It is envisaged that further policies, once they are considered by residents, will be presented to the Cabinet for approval.

Compliance Policy

13. The Compliance Policy details how the Council will meet the legal obligations it has as a landlord and as an employer in relation to HRA properties. This is critical in enabling the Council to deliver on its strategic goals and to provide quality and safe homes for residents. The specific compliance themes and the requirements associated with them range from ‘threat to life’ responsibilities, such as gas safety and fire safety, through to administrative technicalities set out in various regulations.

14. As a registered social landlord, freeholder and employer, the Councils operate in a defined regulatory environment whereby the effect of any non-conformance with regulatory requirements can be amplified through the impact on our relationship with the Regulator for Social Housing (RSH), and notably their assessment the Council’s governance arrangements and performance in meeting the Decent Homes Standard.

15. The Council also has important working relationships with Oxfordshire Fire & Rescue Service as well as national regulators such as the Health & Safety Executive, the Building Safety Regulator, and the Environment Agency.

16. Therefore, the policy provides an overarching framework for core compliance requirements to be met:

No	Title	Obligation
1	**Gas** The Gas Safety (Installation and Use) Regulations 98 (as amended 2018) and ACOPs and any subsequent amendments.	To adhere to the landlord's main duties as listed in "A guide to landlords' duties: Gas Safety (Installation and Use) Regulations 1998 As amended". • Ensure gas Appliances, fittings, and flues are maintained in a safe condition. Ensure that an annual safety check is carried out on Gas Appliances and Flues and that ongoing maintenance is carried out. Gas appliances should be serviced in accordance with the manufacturer's instructions and annually by a Gas Safe registered engineer. • Ensure an annual safety check is carried out on each gas appliance/flue and pipework Before any new lease starts, you must make sure that these checks have been carried out within one year before the start of the lease date, unless the appliances in the property have been installed for less than 12 months, in which case they should be checked within 12 months of their installation date. • Keep the record of the gas safety check until two further checks have been carried out (this may be longer than two years). • Issue a copy of the latest safety check record to existing tenants within 28 days of the check being completed, or to any new tenant before they move in (in certain cases, there is an option to display the record electronically). This is further to the Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974, s.3 (duty to non-employees including tenants) 2. The Housing Act 2004, s.11 (Category 1 hazards under HHSRS). •
2	**Fire and Building Safety** The Fire Safety Order 2005, as amended by the Fire Safety Act 21, The Fire Safety England Regulations 22, Building Safety Act 2022 (BSA) &	Oxford City Council (OCC) is committed to full compliance with the **Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005 (FSO),** including all landlord duties outlined in Articles 8–24. Particular attention is given to: • **Article 8 – Duty to take general fire precautions:** Ensuring that appropriate fire safety measures are in place to protect occupants and property. • **Article 9 – Risk assessment:** Conducting and maintaining up-to-date fire risk assessments,

	subsequent secondary legislation.	identifying hazards, and implementing necessary controls. **Update – Fire Safety Act 2021:** Following the Fire Safety Act 2021, fire risk assessments (FRAs) now explicitly include the **external walls, cladding, balconies, and attachments** of buildings. OCC ensures that all FRAs reflect this expanded scope, mitigating potential risks and maintaining regulatory compliance. **The Fire Safety England Regs 22** - These regulations made it a requirement in law for responsible persons of high-rise blocks of flats to provide information to Fire and Rescue Services to assist them to plan and, if needed, provide an effective operational response. Also, the regulations require responsible persons in multi-occupied residential buildings, which are high-rise buildings, as well as those above 11 metres in height, to provide additional safety measures. In all multi-occupied residential buildings, the regulations require responsible persons to provide residents with fire safety instructions and information on the importance of fire doors. The regulations apply to existing buildings, and requirements for new buildings may be different. **The Building Safety Act 22** – This Act makes ground-breaking reforms to give residents and homeowners more rights, powers, and protections – so homes across the country are safer. It delivers far-reaching protections for qualifying leaseholders from the costs associated with remediating historical building safety defects, and an ambitious toolkit of measures that will allow those responsible for building safety defects to be held to account. It overhauls existing regulations, creating lasting change and making clear how residential buildings should be constructed, maintained, and made safe. The Act creates three new bodies to provide effective oversight of the new regime: the Building Safety

		Regulator (BSR), the National Regulator of Construction Products, and the New Homes Ombudsman. Together, these changes mean owners will manage their buildings better, and the home-building industry has the clear, proportionate framework it needs to deliver more and better, high-quality homes. With buildings at 18 metres or above or 7 storeys or above, the Council must, under s.62 Building Safety Act 2022 register as the Principal Accountable Person (PAP) under s.72. 3. These duties under ss.77-91 addresses safety case reports, resident engagement, mandatory occurrence reporting Cognisance of the requirements of the the Building Safety (Leaseholder Protections) (Information etc.) (England) Regulations 2022 (SI 2022/859) and the Fire Safety (Approval of Persons) Regulations 2024 is also required.
3	**Electricity** The Health and Safety at Work Act 1974, (HASAW), Electricity at Work Regs 1989, The Management of Health and safety at work regs 1999, Provision and use of work Equipment Regs 1998 (PUWER) Landlord and Tenant Act 1985 The Housing Act 2004	**HASAW –** Applies to everyone (employers and employees) in general terms, concerned with work activities and provisions to protect members of the public. **Electricity at Work Regs 89** – ensures that precautions are taken against the risk of death or personal injury from electrical work activities. Aimed at those involved in the design, construction, operation, or maintenance of electrical systems and equipment. **The Management of Health and Safety at Work Regs 99** – Aimed at Employers, managers, and other duty holders for H&S, requires them to assess the risks posed to workers and any others who may be affected by their work or business. **PUWER** – Requirements for equipment provided for work use: • Suitable for the intended use. • Safe for use, maintained, and inspected to ensure it is correctly installed and does not deteriorate.

		• Used only by people who have had adequate information, instruction, and training. • Accommodated by suitable H&S measures. • Used in accordance with specific requirements for mobile work equipment. **Landlord and Tenant Act 85 –** Section 11 sets out who is responsible for repairing a property whilst it is being rented. **The Housing Act 04 –** Main provisions: • The housing, health, and safety system (HHSRS). • Enforcement of housing standards. • Licensing of HMO's. • Empty homes. • Home information packs. **Plus, many others:** Homes (Fitness for Habitation) Act 2018, The Consumer Protection Act 87, FSO 05, Defective Premises Act 72, The Electrical Equipment (safety) Regs 16, Building Regs and the Approved Docs A-R, noting ADP – Electrical safety in Dwellings, IET wiring Regs 18th edition. In addition, there is the Electrical Safety Standards in the Private Rented Sector (England) Regulations 2020 (SI 2020/312). These regulations establish industry standards for 5-yearly electrical installation inspections that are considered good practice for social landlords and may be required under the Home Standard. These requirements also relate to the Electrical Safety Standards in the Private Rented Sector (England) Regulations 2020 with 5-yearly EICR inspection requirement and the need for competent persons to undertake such work.
4	**Asbestos** Control of Asbestos Regulations (CAR) 2012	**CAR 2012 –** Sets minimum standards for the protection of employees from the risks of exposure to Asbestos Containing Materials, ACMs. Applies to work that disturbs or is likely to disturb ACM, ACM sampling, and laboratory analysis.

	Reporting of Injuries, Diseases, and Dangerous Occurrences, RIDDOR. HSG 227: A comprehensive guide to managing asbestos in premises. Approved Code of Practice (ACOP) HSG 210 – Asbestos Essentials, ACOP Other ACOPS: HSG247 – Licensed Contractors HSG 248 – The Analyst's Guide HSG 264 – The survey guide L143 & L127 – The management of and work with ACM in non-domestic premises.	Noting key Regulations below: Reg 3 – Application. Reg 4 – Duty to manage in non-domestic premises (including the duty to manage asbestos in common parts) Reg 5 – Identification of the presence of ACM. Reg 8 – Licensing of work with ACM. Reg 9 – Notification of work with ACM. Reg 10 – Information, instruction, and training. Reg 11 – Prevention or reduction of exposure. Reg 16 – Duty to prevent or reduce the spread of ACMs. There is the due to asses and manage risk in domestic properties under health and safety law. **RIDDOR** – Places duties on employers and other duty holders to report certain serious workplace accidents, occupational diseases, and specified dangerous occurrences. Exposure to ACMs is a dangerous occurrence. **HSG 227** – Extensive guidance for those with a duty to manage the risks from asbestos-containing materials (ACMs) in premises, e.g., building owners, tenants, and anyone with legal responsibilities for workplaces. **HSG 210 -** A task manual for building, maintenance, and allied trades of non-licensed asbestos work.
5	**Water** The Health and Safety at Work Act 74 (HaSAW), Control of Substances Harmful to Health (CoSHH) 2002,	**HaSAW –** Applies to everyone (employers and employees) in general terms, concerned with work activities and provisions to protect members of the public. Further to the Housing Act 2004, legionella is a Category 1 hazard under HHSRS. The Council has duty under s.9A Housing Act 2004 to take enforcement action against Category 1 hazards.

	ACOPs - L8, HSG 274 PARTS 1-3, plus many others.	**CoSHH –** Risk assessments must be carried out to assess any risks and to minimise harm. If employers fail to control hazardous substances, this can lead to staff becoming ill from mild eye irritation to chronic lung disease, and could lead to civil prosecution, loss of productivity, enforcement action, and reputational damage. Legionella is a biological agent and is a hazardous substance under CoSHH. **L8 - ACOP –** the control of legionella bacteria in water systems, applies where HaSAW Act applies. To comply, employers must: Risk assesses, provide a written scheme as required, monitor systems, and appoint a responsible person as well as: 1. Frequency of risk assessments (review every 2 years or when significant changes per L8) 2. Temperature monitoring regimes (hot water ≥50°C at outlets, cold ≤20°C per L8 para 170) 3. Monitoring and inspection frequencies for different risk systems 4. Competency requirements for "responsible person" (reference to CIEH/LCA training) **HSG 274 – Part 1-3** – details requirements for risks from cooling towers, cold water systems, and all other risk systems.
6	**Lifts** The Health and Safety at Work Act 74 (HaSAW) Lifts Regulations 2016 (SI 2016/1093) - implements EU Lifts Directive. 2. Supply of Machinery (Safety) Regulations 2008 (for new installations).	**HaSAW –** Applies to everyone (employers and employees) in general terms, concerned with work activities and provisions to protect members of the public. Section 3 applies to the use and maintenance of passenger lifts by the public. **LOLER –** Places duties upon persons and organisations who own, operate, provide, or have control over lifting equipment. To ensure it is fit for purpose, appropriate for the task, suitably marked, and in many cases, subject to statutory periodic thorough examination. LOLER Reg 9(2) requires examinations by "competent person" which specifies the competency criteria.

	Lifting Operations & Lifting Equipment Regulations (LOLER) Provision and use of Work Equipment Regulations 1998 (PUWER)	**PUWER** – Requirements for equipment provided for work use: Suitable for the intended use. Safe for use, maintained, and inspected to ensure it is correctly installed and does not deteriorate. Used only by people who have had adequate information, instruction, and training. Accommodated by suitable H&S measures. Used in accordance with specific requirements for mobile work equipment.
7	**Radon** • Housing Act 2004 • Ionising Radiation Regulations 2017 • Housing Health and Safety Rating system • Health & Safety at Work Act 1974 • Management of Health & Safety at Work Regulations 1999 • The Building Regulations (Approved Document C) 2010 • Construction (Design and Management) Regulations 2015 • Control of Substances Hazardous to Heath Regulations 2002.	Under the Housing Act's Health and Safety Rating System (HHSRS) the Council has a legal obligation to: • assess risks associated with radon gas in our properties • where the elevated levels of radon gas are identified, take appropriate action to mitigate the reduce this to a safe level. The Building Regulations (Approved Document C) 2010 also require that where significant alterations are made to buildings or new buildings are constructed in high radon areas, protective measures are taken to eliminate the build-up of radon gas, though the presence of radon in east Oxford does not meet this threshold. To ensure the Council is able to fulfil its responsibilities in relation to the management of radon the Council will: • provide sufficient resource to manage radon gas effectively • implement suitable and sufficient governance arrangements to manage the risks associated with radon gas • allocate responsibilities and duties in relation to radon • employee competent persons to manage radon programmes • conduct radon testing, where required, within suitable timeframes • install suitable mitigation to reduce radon levels where testing shows that they exceed the action threshold

		• implement effective radon management record keeping • operate effective contract management arrangements with the contractors responsible for delivering the service, including ensuring contracts are in place, conducting client-led performance meetings and ensuring the contractors employee and public liability insurances are up to date on an annual basis • engage with customers to inform and promote radon awareness • use the legal remedies available within the terms of the tenancy or lease agreement should any tenant, leaseholder or shared owner refuse access to conduct essential radon related inspection and remediation works. conduct and maintain a risk and control self-assessment for radon management and operations setting out our key risks from radon and appropriate mitigations.

17. The Cabinet is asked to approve the draft Compliance Policy and commend the policy for approval to Full Council.

Decant

18. This policy concerns the appropriate way to support tenants to move out of properties where emergency repairs are being undertaken. The Council aims to maintain and improve its homes to a high standard and to develop high quality housing.

19. As a result, the Council sometimes need to move tenants out of their principal homes so that major repairs or improvements can take place. We refer to this as a ‘decant’.

20. A decant is where a resident moves from their current home to another one, either temporarily or permanently. There is a need to consider suitable alternative accommodation further to Schedule 2, Part IV, Housing Act 1985 and s.20 and s.149 of the Equality Act 2010. In addition, this policy is in accordance with the Ombudsman Order relating to decants.

21. Improvement works and major repairs will normally be carried out whilst the tenant remains in their home. However, there will be certain situations, such as those when the health and safety of the tenant would be at risk or the works are extensive, when works cannot be carried out with the tenant in the property.

22. Where this is the case, the Council will arrange to move the tenant and their household. This will either be done on a temporary or permanent basis, depending on the nature of the works and the tenant will be given this opti

23. The Cabinet is asked to approve the draft Decant Policy and recommend the policy for approval to Full Council.

Gas Safety Policy

24. This policy aims to ensure the safety of our tenants and leaseholders and that gas appliances, fittings, and flues provided for tenants are safe. Gas servicing and Safety covers the provision of cyclical servicing, safety checks and related responsive maintenance to all HRA properties owned or managed by Oxford City Council where gas installation is present.

25. The Council recognises that, as a landlord, it has legal responsibilities to ensure the safety of gas pipework, appliances, fittings, and flues installed for residents' use. The Council would be at risk of potential criminal liability for the organisation and individual officers if systems fail. Recent prosecutions of social landlords demonstrate the Health and Safety Executive's willingness to prosecute for gas safety failures.

26. It is also a key component of Oxford City Council's overall Asset Management Strategy, ensuring that the useful life of individual heating system components is maximised and hence value for money is optimised

27. Amongst the technical requirements to ensure gas safety in all homes, the policy stipulates a quality assurance process in order to assess gas safety standards in real time by ensuring there is a:

- Minimum risk based justification for 5% of onsite quality assurance audits on servicing, using Gas Safe registered consultants
- Minimum risk based justification for 5% of onsite quality assurance audits on new boiler installations, using Gas Safe registered consultants.

28. The Cabinet is asked to approve the Gas Safety Policy.

Health and Safety Policy

29. The Council recognises and accepts its responsibility to provide and maintain the safest and healthiest work conditions which meet best practice and achieve legal compliance so far as is reasonably practicable.

30. The Council also recognises that every accident/dangerous occurrence, however slight, is a matter for concern and that the need for constant alertness by all Directors, managers and employees is equally important in identifying potential hazards and removing or minimising their effect.

31. To this end the Health and Safety Policy would:

- To institute and maintain safe working systems throughout the housing service
- To take all reasonable measures to establish the causes of accidents and impairments to health occurring throughout the Council and to institute all reasonably practicable remedial measures to prevent recurrence.
- To provide all reasonable facilities to mitigate the effects of accidents and impairments to health and safety when they do occur.
- To ensure that no process, plant, or machinery, is introduced in the Council unless it has conformed with any relevant statutory testing or examination requirement and it has been established that, so far as is reasonably practicable, the safety or health of employees will not be impaired.
- To disseminate information on safe working relating to specific areas of work and on general safety and health matters relating to all employees.

- To provide proper and adequate training facilities in order to ensure that all employees are fully instructed in the safe working methods applicable to their jobs.
- To encourage and demonstrate the closest possible liaison between management and employees in all matters affecting safety and health
- To ensure that all requirements of legislation relating to Council activities are fully complied with in regard to safety and health, it being recognised that these in the main constitute only a minimum standard of achievement.
- To aim for continual improvement of health and safety performance through employee involvement and by the adoption of safety and health measures

32. This comprehensive policy addresses health and safety policy from a strategic perspective and also include the following key areas:

- Construction, Design, Maintenance (further to the Construction (Design and Management) Regulations 2015
- Contractor Management
- First Aid
- Mandatory Occurrence Reporting
- Lone Working
- Slips, Trips, Falls
- Working at Height
- Flammable Liquids
- Pesticides
- Biological Hazards
- Major Incidents

33. The Cabinet is asked to approve the Health and Safety Policy.

Permit to Work Policy

34. A permit to work is a formal documented procedure that authorises designated individuals, such as contractors, to carry out specific activities that pose a significant risk within a specified time frame. It is a key part of the procedures required to ensure safety compliance standards are met at all times.

35. The permit to work requires declarations from the people authorising the work and carrying out the work. Where necessary it also requires a declaration from those involved in shift / team handover procedures or extensions to the work.

36. Typical areas / work activities that should be covered by a permit include:

- Works affecting, requires access through or in close proximity to a buildings compartmentation fire break
- Hot works (use of naked flames, abrasive cutting, electric arc welding, hot soldering)
- Confined spaces
- High Voltage electrical work
- Excavation works

- Demolition works
- Work on scaffold towers, mobile elevated working platforms (MEWPs)
- Work in isolated locations, or areas with difficult access or those at high levels.
- Work in the proximity of, or involving, explosives or highly flammable substances.

37. These requirements are further to the Confined Spaces Regulations 1997 and the Work at Height Regulations 2005.

38. A permit to work should ensure that:

- Everyone involved is fully aware of the hazards involved with the work activity. It is essential that the Permit Authoriser has sufficient technical knowledge of all the processes to be used, and is competent to make judgements about the safety of proceeding with the work
- The location and boundaries of work are identified, where necessary, services are isolated or made physically safe and any other specific hazards are identified and made safe where possible or suitable controls put in place
- The person(s) in charge both of the area and the operation are identified, and that all the necessary signage is displayed in and around the area
- Any monitoring or sampling required before, during and after the operation is identified.

39. The policy details the technical steps that must be followed for the permit to work system to be operational.

40. The Cabinet is asked to approve the draft Permit to Work Policy and recommend the approval of the policy to Full Council.

Radon Policy

41. Radon is a natural, colourless and odourless gas. It is formed by the radioactive decay of small amounts of uranium that naturally occur in all rocks and soils. If left unmanaged this radioactive gas can build-up inside properties causing a potential risk to health by damaging lung tissue, and over a long period may cause lung cancer.

42. Radon levels vary due to an area's geology and day to day building use. The aim of this policy is to provide a radon testing and mitigation programme to identify and reduce the risk in line with prescribed target levels.

43. The Government's UK Radon Map (UKradon - UK maps of radon) shows that the risk of radon is very limited with low levels of radon having been recorded in east Oxford.

44. As a precautionary policy and to abide by regulatory requirements, this policy will institute the following steps to monitor radon levels:

- Review radon maps and housing stock data to identify properties requiring testing based on location, age, construction type and footprint.

- Develop a dynamic multi-year testing plan informed by property risk profiling and previous screening results.

- Deploy passive radon detectors in designated homes according to best practice for optimal placement and duration.

45. Where a result of less than 200Bq/m3[1] is confirmed, no further action will be taken, however if the result is more than 200Bq/m3 the following mitigation measures will be installed:

- Result (in Bq/m3) 200-299 - Passive ventilation system
- 300-800 - Active ventilation system
- Above 800 - Active ventilation system (high rated pump)

46. Following the installation of mitigation measures the property will be retested to confirm that the radon level has been sufficiently reduced.

47. The Cabinet is asked to approve the draft Radon Policy and recommend the approval of this policy to Full Council.

Financial implications

48. There are no financial implications for these policies, any work required under these policies will be funded from existing budgets.

Legal issues

49. The policies being presented for approval are required under the Consumer Standard as set by legislation and the Regulator for Social Housing.

Level of risk

50. The failure of the Council to have these asset management policies would go against the Corporate Plan to keep residents safe and could lead to regulatory infringements further to the requirements of the Regulator for Social Housing, the Health and Safety Executive and the Building Services Regulator.

Equalities impact

51. Equality Impact Assessments (EqIA) has been carried out to determine whether the policies being presented to the Cabinet for approval would have an impact on any member of staff, tenants, or contractor workforce, which unfairly discriminates or disadvantages them in the context of the Equality Act 2010.

52. Whilst the EqIA has identified that there are no particular groups who will be unlawfully disadvantaged by these policies, it is identified that there are certain groups at increased risk from safety infringements. These groups are:

- children
- adults with learning difficulties
- oxygen users

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[1] $Bq/m3$ - (Becquerels per cubic metre) is the SI unit used to measure the concentration of radioactive materials, specifically radon gas, in the air. It represents one radioactive disintegration per second in a cubic metre of air.

- people taking certain medication
- those suffering the effects of drugs and alcohol
- adults aged 65 and older
- people with disabilities
- Individuals being supported by the Community Safety team and related support services

53. These policies aim to reduce the risks to these groups of people through proactively identifying these risk factors, raising awareness and education further to the Public Sector Equality Duty (s.149).

Carbon and Environmental Considerations

54. Adoption of these policies will contribute towards the good maintenance of properties further to the Climate Change Act 2008 and the Smoke Free Oxford strategy.

Conclusion

55. By approving these policies, this will help establish the framework to maintain the housing stock and further ensure the safety of our residents. This approval would also help meet the expectations of the Regulator of Social Housing that the Council is meeting its regulatory obligations. Further HRA policies will be presented to the Cabinet for its consideration after residents have been able to assess and, if necessary, amend draft proposals.

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Background Papers:

List the background documents and, if possible, link to them.

All background papers must be listed in accordance with the Local Government (Access to Information) Act and The Local Authorities (Executive Arrangements) (Meetings and Access to Information) (England) Regulations 2012. This includes, any material which discloses facts or matters on which the report or an important part of it is based and which have been relied on in the preparation of the report Each document must be listed and a copy of each document made available to members and the public on request, (or they should be directed where to find it if it is already published on the Council's website). All confidential, exempt, copyrighted and published works are EXCLUDED from this requirement.

1	Consumer Standard – Regulator of Social Housing - Regulatory standards for landlords - GOV.UK

2	Social Housing (Regulation) Act 2023 - Landmark Social Housing Act receives Royal Assent to become law - GOV.UK
3	
4	

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Housing & Asset Management
Property Compliance Policy

Oxford City Council
Building a world-class city for everyone

DRAFT

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DRAFT

1. Purpose

1.1 The Property Compliance Policy details how we meet the legal obligations we have as a landlord and as an employer. This is critical in enabling us to deliver our strategic goals and to provide quality and safe homes for our residents and leaseholders. The specific compliance themes and the requirements associated with them range from 'threat to life' responsibilities, such as gas safety and fire safety, through to administrative technicalities set out in various regulations. This policy document confirms our objectives and intent. It also goes on to describe.

- How we organise ourselves to meet this objective,
- Our headline commitments, and
- How we report performance.

1.2 As a registered social landlord, freeholder and employer, we operate in a unique regulatory environment whereby the effect of any non-conformance with regulatory requirements can be amplified through the impact on our relationship with the Regulator for Social Housing (RSH), and notably their assessment of our governance arrangements and our performance in meeting the Decent Homes Standard. We operate in the spirit of co-regulation with the RSH. We also have important working relationships with some of our local regulators, such as Oxfordshire Fire & Rescue and other local fire services, as well as national regulators such as the Health & Safety Executive, the Building Safety Regulator, and the Environment Agency.

1.3 We manage this and other risks through our risk management framework and our three lines of defence. These include:

- effective operational management,
- risk and compliance management and
- our internal audit and governance functions, providing independent and objective assurance.

2. Scope

The primary focus of this policy is the residential portfolio, managed by the Housing function of the Directorate, while remaining aligned with the overarching Corporate Health & Safety policies.

3. Related Documents

3.1 The Following Documents must be read in conjunction with this policy.

- Strategic Compliance Plan
- H&S Strategy
- All Property Compliance Procedures and Briefing Notes
  - Fire Safety
  - Building Safety
  - Gas
  - Radon

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- Lifts
- Asbestos
- Water
- Electrical

4. Legal Framework

Oxford City Council (OCC) will adhere to all relevant legislation under The Health and Safety at Work Act and related legislation, such as the Housing Act 2004, the Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999, Building Regulations, and the approved documents, etc. The table below lists those specific to each of the Big 6 as targeted in this Compliance Policy and OCC obligations.

No	Title	Obligation
1	**Gas** The Gas Safety (Installation and Use) Regulations 1998 (as amended) and ACOPs and any subsequent amendments.	To adhere to the landlord's main duties as listed in "A guide to landlords' duties: Gas Safety (Installation and Use) Regulations 1998 as amended". • Ensure gas Appliances, fittings, and flues are maintained in a safe condition. Ensure that an annual safety check is carried out on Gas Appliances and Flues and that ongoing maintenance is carried out. Gas appliances should be serviced in accordance with the manufacturer's instructions and annually by a Gas Safe registered engineer. • Ensure an annual safety check is carried out on each gas appliance/flue and pipework Before any new lease starts, you must make sure that these checks have been carried out within one year before the start of the lease date, unless the appliances in the property have been installed for less than 12 months, in which case they should be checked within 12 months of their installation date. • Keep the record of the gas safety check until two further checks have been carried out (this may be longer than two years). • Issue a copy of the latest safety check record to existing tenants within 28 days of the check being completed, or to any new tenant before they move in (in certain cases, there is an option to display the record electronically).
2	**Fire and Building Safety** The Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005, as	Oxford City Council (OCC) is committed to full compliance with the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005 (FSO), including all landlord duties outlined in Articles 8–24. Particular attention is given to:

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	amended by the Fire Safety Act 2021, The Fire Safety (England) Regulations 2022, Building Safety Act 2022 (BSA) & subsequent secondary legislation.	• **Article 8 – Duty to take general fire precautions:** Ensuring that appropriate fire safety measures are in place to protect occupants and property. • **Article 9 – Risk assessment:** Conducting and maintaining up-to-date fire risk assessments, identifying hazards, and implementing necessary controls. **Update – Fire Safety Act 2021:** Following the Fire Safety Act 2021, fire risk assessments (FRAs) now explicitly include the **external walls, cladding, balconies, and attachments** of buildings. OCC ensures that all FRAs reflect this expanded scope, mitigating potential risks and maintaining regulatory compliance. **The Fire Safety (England) Regs 2022** - These regulations made it a requirement in law for responsible persons of high-rise blocks of flats to provide information to Fire and Rescue Services to assist them to plan and, if needed, provide an effective operational response. Also, the regulations require responsible persons in multi-occupied residential buildings, which are high-rise buildings, as well as those above 11 metres in height, to provide additional safety measures. In all multi-occupied residential buildings, the regulations require responsible persons to provide residents with fire safety instructions and information on the importance of fire doors. The regulations apply to existing buildings, and requirements for new buildings may be different. **The Building Safety Act 2022** – This Act makes ground-breaking reforms to give residents and homeowners more rights, powers, and protections – so homes across the country are safer. It delivers far-reaching protections for qualifying leaseholders from the costs associated with remediating historical building safety defects, and an ambitious toolkit of measures that will allow those responsible for building safety defects to be held to account.

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		It overhauls existing regulations, creating lasting change and making clear how residential buildings should be constructed, maintained, and made safe. The Act creates three new bodies to provide effective oversight of the new regime: the Building Safety Regulator (BSR), the National Regulator of Construction Products, and the New Homes Ombudsman. Together, these changes mean owners will manage their buildings better, and the home-building industry has the clear, proportionate framework it needs to deliver more and better, high-quality homes.
3	**Electricity** The Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974, (HSWA), Electricity at Work Regulations 1989, The Management of Health and safety at Work Regulations 1999, Provision and Use of Work Equipment Regulationss 1998 (PUWER) Landlord and Tenant Act 1985 The Housing Act 2004	**HSWA –** Applies to everyone (employers and employees) in general terms, concerned with work activities and provisions to protect members of the public. **Electricity at Work Regulations 1989** – ensures that precautions are taken against the risk of death or personal injury from electrical work activities. Aimed at those involved in the design, construction, operation, or maintenance of electrical systems and equipment. **The Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999** – Aimed at Employers, managers, and other duty holders for H&S, requires them to assess the risks posed to workers and any others who may be affected by their work or business. **PUWER** – Requirements for equipment provided for work use: • Suitable for the intended use. • Safe for use, maintained, and inspected to ensure it is correctly installed and does not deteriorate. • Used only by people who have had adequate information, instruction, and training. • Accommodated by suitable H&S measures. • Used in accordance with specific requirements for mobile work equipment. **Landlord and Tenant Act 1985 –** Section 11 sets out who is responsible for repairing a property whilst it is being rented. **The Housing Act 2004 –** Main provisions:

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		• The housing, health, and safety system (HHSRS). • Enforcement of housing standards. • Licensing of HMO's. • Empty homes. • Home information packs. **Plus, many others:** Homes (Fitness for Habitation) Act 2018, The Consumer Protection Act 1987, Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005, Defective Premises Act 1972, The Electrical Equipment (Safety) Regulations 1989, Building Regs and the Approved Docs A-R, noting ADP – Electrical safety in Dwellings, IET wiring Regs 18th edition.
4	**Asbestos** Control of Asbestos Regulations (CAR) 2012 Reporting of Injuries, Diseases, and Dangerous Occurrences, RIDDOR. HSG 227: A comprehensive guide to managing asbestos in premises. Approved Code of Practice (ACOP) HSG 210 – Asbestos Essentials, ACOP Other ACOPS: HSG247 – Licensed Contractors HSG 248 – The Analyst's Guide HSG 264 – The survey guide L143 & L127 – The management of and work with ACM in	**CAR 2012 –** Sets minimum standards for the protection of employees from the risks of exposure to Asbestos Containing Materials, ACMs. Applies to work that disturbs or is likely to disturb ACM, ACM sampling, and laboratory analysis. Noting key Regulations below: Reg 3 – Application. Reg 4 – Duty to manage in non-domestic premises. Reg 5 – Identification of the presence of ACM. Reg 8 – Licensing of work with ACM. Reg 9 – Notification of work with ACM. Reg 10 – Information, instruction, and training. Reg 11 – Prevention or reduction of exposure. Reg 16 – Duty to prevent or reduce the spread of ACMs. **RIDDOR** – Places duties on employers and other duty holders to report certain serious workplace accidents, occupational diseases, and specified dangerous occurrences. Exposure to ACMs is a dangerous occurrence. **HSG 227** – Extensive guidance for those with a duty to manage the risks from asbestos-containing materials (ACMs) in premises, e.g., building owners, tenants, and anyone with legal responsibilities for workplaces. **HSG 210 -** A task manual for building, maintenance, and allied trades of non-licensed asbestos work.

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	non-domestic premises.	
5	**Water** The Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974 (HSWA), Control of Substances Hazardous to Health Regulations 2002 (COSHH) ACOPs - L8, HSG 274 PARTS 1-3, plus many others.	**HSWA –** Applies to everyone (employers and employees) in general terms, concerned with work activities and provisions to protect members of the public. **COSHH –** Risk assessments must be carried out to assess any risks and to minimise harm. If employers fail to control hazardous substances, this can lead to staff becoming ill from mild eye irritation to chronic lung disease, and could lead to civil prosecution, loss of productivity, enforcement action, and reputational damage. Legionella is a biological agent and is a hazardous substance under COSHH. **L8 - ACOP –** the control of legionella bacteria in water systems, applies where HSWA Act applies. To comply, employers must: Risk assesses, provide a written scheme as required, monitor systems, and appoint a responsible person. **HSG 274 – Part 1-3** – details requirements for risks from cooling towers, cold water systems, and all other risk systems.
6	**Lifts** The Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974 (HSWA), Lifting Operations & Lifting Equipment Regulations 1998 (LOLER) Provision and Use of Work Equipment Regulations 1998 (PUWER)	**HSWA –** Applies to everyone (employers and employees) in general terms, concerned with work activities and provisions to protect members of the public. Section 3 applies to the use and maintenance of passenger lifts by the public. **LOLER –** Places duties upon persons and organisations who own, operate, provide, or have control over lifting equipment. To ensure it is fit for purpose, appropriate for the task, suitably marked, and in many cases, subject to statutory periodic thorough examination. **PUWER** – Requirements for equipment provided for work use: Suitable for the intended use. Safe for use, maintained, and inspected to ensure it is correctly installed and does not deteriorate. Used only by people who have had adequate information, instruction, and training. Accommodated by suitable H&S measures. Used in accordance with specific requirements for mobile work equipment.

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7	**Radon** • Housing Act 2004 • Ionising Radiation Regulations 2017 • Housing Health and Safety Rating system • Health & Safety at Work etc. Act 1974 • Management of Health & Safety at Work Regulations 1999 • The Building Regulations 2010 Approved Document C (2013 edition) • Construction (Design and Management) Regulations 2015 • Control of Substances Hazardous to Heath Regulations 2002.	Under the Housing Act 2004's Health and Safety Rating System (HHSRS) the Council has a legal obligation to: • assess risks associated with radon gas in our properties • where the elevated levels of radon gas are identified, take appropriate action to mitigate the reduce this to a safe level. The Building Regulations 2010 Approved Document C (2013 edition) also require that where significant alterations are made to buildings or new buildings are constructed in high radon areas, protective measures are taken to eliminate the build-up of radon gas, though the presence of radon in east Oxford does not meet this threshold. To ensure the Council is able to fulfil its responsibilities in relation to the management of radon the Council will: • provide sufficient resource to manage radon gas effectively • implement suitable and sufficient governance arrangements to manage the risks associated with radon gas • allocate responsibilities and duties in relation to radon • employee competent persons to manage radon programmes • conduct radon testing, where required, within suitable timeframes • install suitable mitigation to reduce radon levels where testing shows that they exceed the action threshold • implement effective radon management record keeping • operate effective contract management arrangements with the contractors responsible for delivering the service, including ensuring contracts are in place, conducting client-led performance meetings and ensuring the contractors employee and public liability insurances are up to date on an annual basis • engage with customers to inform and promote radon awareness • use the legal remedies available within the terms of the tenancy or lease agreement should

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		any tenant, leaseholder or shared owner refuse access to conduct essential radon related inspection and remediation works. conduct and maintain a risk and control self-assessment for radon management and operations setting out our key risks from radon and appropriate mitigations.

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5. Glossary

Term	Means
BSC	*Building Safety Case*
BSC R	*Building Safety Case Report*
BSA	*Building Safety Act*
RP	*Responsible Person*
PAP/AP	*Principle Accountable Person / Accountable Person*
FRA	*Fire Risk Assessment*
WRA	*Water Risk Assessment*
LGSR	*Landlord's Gas Safety Record*
EICR	*Electrical Installation Condition Report*
LOLER	*Lifting Operations & Lifting Equipment Regulations (LOLER)*
PUWER	*Provision and Use of Work Equipment Regs 1998 (PUWER)*
HSWA	*The Health and Safety at Work Act*
FSO	*Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005*

6. Equality and Diversity

6.1 OCC is committed to ensuring that no person or group of persons will be treated less favourably than another person or group of persons and will carry out our duty with positive regard for the following core strands of the protected characteristics as defined under the Equality Act 2010 being - Age, Disability, Gender, Race, Gender Identity / Gender Expression, Sexual Orientation, Pregnancy and Maternity, Marriage and Civil Partnership, Religion and/or Belief.

6.2 OCC also recognises that some people experience disadvantage due to their socio-economic circumstances, employment status, class, appearance, responsibility for dependants, unrelated criminal activities, being HIV positive or with AIDS, or any other matter which causes a person to be treated with injustice.

6.3 OCC will also ensure that all services and actions are delivered within the context of current Human Rights legislation. Staff and others with whom we work will adhere to the central principles of the Human Rights Act (1998).

7. Policy Statement

Statement of Intent

OCC is committed to ensuring that HRA properties and HRA property-focused operations are fully compliant with all applicable laws and regulations. This supports us in providing a safe home for our residents, to protect our assets, and to reinforce our reputation as a responsible landlord.

We do this by:

- understanding the legal requirements.
- knowing our properties and our activities.

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- maintaining an operational risk management approach.
- maintaining externally certified management systems.
- having competent, well-trained staff.
- maintaining records and data.
- communicating key compliance messages.
- engaging openly and proactively with our regulators and other stakeholders.
- clearly reporting compliance performance.
- undertaking internal checks and audits, and
- seeking external challenge and review.

Health & Safety is covered by the OCC's Health & Safety Policy and operates in parallel to this policy. As such, the focus of property compliance is across the six main themes of:

- Gas safety
- Fire & Building safety
- Electrical safety
- Asbestos management
- Legionella management
- Lift management
- Radon management

Whilst these are our focus, we also recognise and commit to comply with the full range of legal requirements as they apply to us, including, but not limited to, the requirements of the Housing Act, the Government's Regulatory Framework & the relevant Standards, environmental legislation, energy efficiency legislation, planning legislation, and transport/vehicle legislation.

8. Key Roles and Responsibilities

Many of the regulatory requirements apply to us as a corporate body. To support compliance across the main themes, we have highlighted several key roles.

The employer or, where applicable, the owner/occupier of the building will ensure relevant guidance, information, training, and equipment are in place for anyone with specific responsibilities and all other staff.

The Employer (OCC) for the purposes of this policy is the Responsible Person, Accountable person, and Employer as the Duty Holders (for other relevant legislation). Although this is designated/delegated through to operational leads, ultimately the Chief Executive is "responsible" as the lead for OCC for ensuring compliance.

Meaning of "responsible person"

> *3. In this Order, "responsible person" means—*
>
> *(a) in relation to a workplace, the employer, if the workplace is to any extent under their control.*
>
> *(b) in relation to any premises not falling within paragraph (a) —*

(i) the person who has control of the premises (as occupier or otherwise) in connection with the carrying on by him of a trade, business, or other undertaking (for profit or not); or

(ii) the owner, where the person in control of the premises does not have control in connection with the carrying on by that person of a trade, business, or other undertaking.

Meaning of "accountable person"

(1) In this Part, an "accountable person" for a higher-risk building is—

(a) a person who holds a legal estate in possession in any part of the common parts (subject to subsection (2)), or

(b) a person who does not hold a legal estate in any part of the building but who is under a relevant repairing obligation in relation to any part of the common parts.

The employer will appoint the:

Chief Executive as the lead to act as the Responsible Person/Accountable Person, Duty Holder, etc, to ensure the Council's compliance with all relevant legislation; and will be responsible for ensuring an agreed programme of investment is properly accounted for in the Council's annual financial planning; and will appoint the following as 'relevant persons' to assist with property compliance.

The Deputy Chief Executives to act as Designated leads and act for the employer in fulfilling its legal duties.

The HRA Assets Lead is responsible for the development of policies and strategies in relation to property compliance and providing leadership to the Operational leads. Ensuring systems are implemented, maintained, and regularly monitored.

The Directors, Asset Management & Improvement.

Ensures that they:

Appoint the Heads of Services as required to be the operational leads and ensure they are competent to do so.

Ensures all managers and staff have access to and carry out a relevant level of safety training as provided by the Learning and Development, Health, Safety, and Wellbeing Teams, or other competent persons.

Consults with Employees & Unions about nominating people/contractors to carry out roles (e.g., fire marshals/wardens, re-inspection of ACM, etc.) and about proposals for improving safety precautions.

The Head of Building Safety and Compliance is the operational lead for the Employer in its role as RP and PAP/AP, supporting policy development, appointing compliance strategic leads, and leading on procedure, standards, and guidance in relation to property compliance that is in place and monitored. It is also responsible

for Audit and Reporting on agreed performance measures on property compliance, ensuring timely intervention as any emerging risks are identified.

The HRS Assets Lead are the operational leads for staff and works contractors, and ensure the required works are completed using competent resources to the relevant quality/requirements as defined in legislation and in a timely response to all relevant due dates as defined in Legislation, Policy, Procedure, and any contracts awarded.

Provide Employees with clear and relevant information on the risks to them identified by the various assessments and certifications, about the measures taken to prevent safety risks and any safety breaches.

9. Resident Engagement

How OCC communicates with and educates residents and keeps them informed - Key Documents, Reporting & Assurance through the Compliance Resident Group.

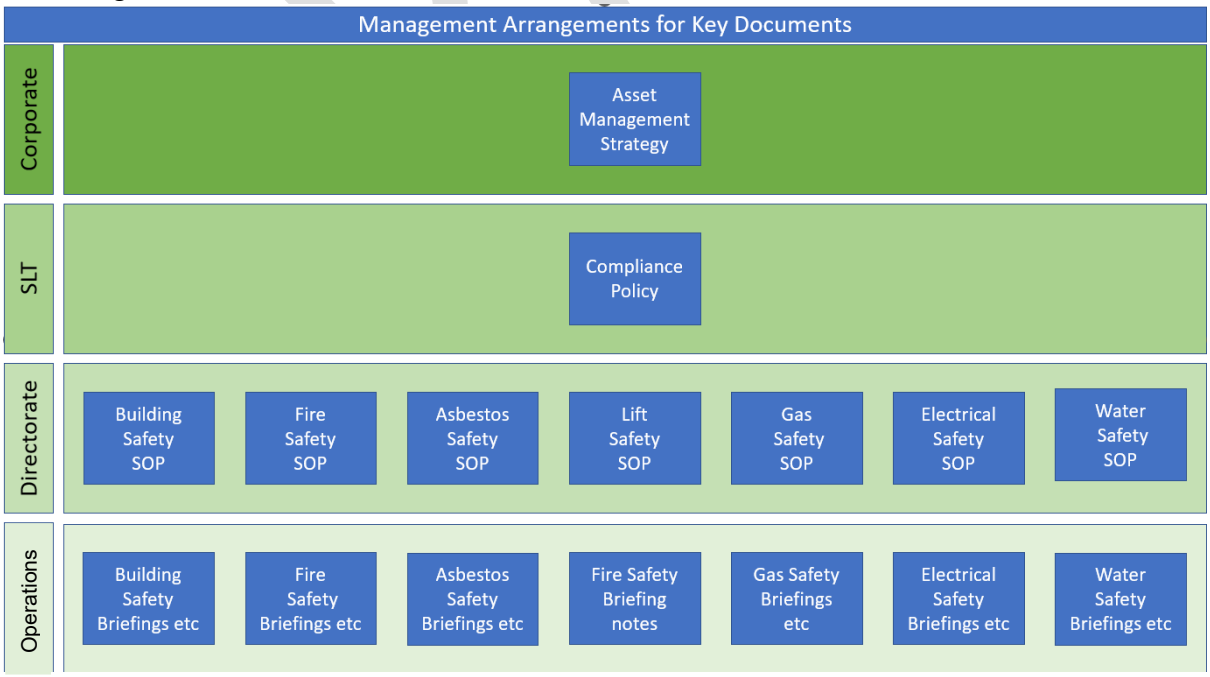
An OCC Resident Engagement strategy has been produced and is regularly reviewed. All Policies will be posted on the website and available to all to read.

OCC has created and delivered to all residents a block-specific Resident Engagement Strategy as part of the requirements of the Building Safety Act 2022. These will be reviewed annually in line with the legislation.

10. Management Arrangements, Reporting, Competency, and Assurance

The Management arrangements for all 6 Major Compliance areas will be structured as shown.

See diagram:



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Delivery Procedures

The Asset Management Service will maintain the quality of management systems to support internal delivery and document control. External delivery providers will be expected to maintain similar standards.

Competency

We will ensure that our teams have the appropriate levels of experience and competency, combining both technical specialisation and management capability. We invest in training our teams and augment capability through external technical advisors where required. Specific competencies will be defined in the Local Directorate/Service Area Procedure Documents. OCC Agreed Review of key Compliance Certification and Assessments.

As described in the various pieces of legislation listed above, certain checks require regular review, some are set in the legislation, others are a policy decision, and others are based on previous assessments. The table below describes OCC's responsibilities.

Area	Details	Frequency
FRA's	High Risk (includes HRBs, Sheltered, etc, and other considered High risk due to issues of a nature considered high)	1 Year
FRA's	Medium Risk (Includes 5/6 storey blocks, others considered medium risk)	2 Years
FRA's	Low Risk (Includes all low-rise blocks 4 storey and below, and everything else not deemed High or Medium)	3 Years
FRA's	Renewed when any significant changes or incidents are recorded	As required
WRA's	It is a live document in a live system, deemed to be reviewed frequently; however, it should be reviewed regularly as per L8 (*The control of legionella bacteria in water systems. Approved Code of Practice and guidance on regulations (L8)"* – published by the UK Health and Safety Executive (HSE).	1 years
WRA's	Low/Medium risk	3 years
WRA's	Renewed when any significant changes or incidents are recorded	As required
LGSR's	Legal requirement to annually complete a Gas Safety Check and Service using the MOT employed by OCC. Relevant to domestic and commercial Appliances.	1 year

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EICR's	5 Years (Best Practice for now for social housing providers), or sooner if the renewal date is sooner. Relevant for domestic and communal areas of blocks. *(In November 2025 for new tenancies and May 2026 for existing tenancies).*	5 years
Asbestos	**The Management Survey** is carried out and renewed sooner if significant changes are noted	10 years
Asbestos	**Re-inspection** is carried out every year, where ACMs are identified in the Management survey	1 year
Asbestos	**Refurbishment & Demolition** – carried out as required before any planned works	As required
Lifts - LOLER	**Passenger Lifts –** legal requirement in common areas. Keeping in *good order (maintenance)* is covered under the Housing Act and HASAW, so good practice in residential properties (although stair lifts in residential premises do not require a LOLER certificate).	6 months
Building Safety	Building Safety Case – legal requirement to submit to the BSR within 28 days once requested – once approved, a Building Assessment Certificate BAC is issued and must be displayed in each block	5 years
Radon	Under the Housing Act's Health and Safety Rating System (HHSRS) the Council has a legal obligation to: • assess risks associated with radon gas in our properties • where the elevated levels of radon gas are identified, take appropriate action to mitigate the reduce this to a safe level.	12 months

Access Policy

OCC will follow a planned access procedure to ensure it meets its legal responsibilities as required with all tenures as per the legal section above.

There are avenues for planned access, including:

- Access for periodic inspections/checks, such as gas and electric.
- Access to remove or inspect for the presence of known hazards, e.g., asbestos, through survey or removal.
- Access to post-inspection works.
- Health and safety breaches.

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- Fire & Building Safety requirements, such as Flat entrance and other Fire door Inspections.

Reporting on agreed performance measures

Regular reporting of performance will be communicated to key strategic stakeholders to enable performance monitoring and to support effective governance. Reporting will be completed by the Asset Management Compliance Team.

Compliance Area	Secondary Area	Calculation HSLT/PLM Monthly - level 1	HSLT & PLM Target	example % Level 1	Example RG Level 1
BS01 Gas Safety Checks	Communal Blocks	**Two measures - 1 Domestic and 2 Communal systems:** A. 1 Number of dwelling units and 2 dwelling units in communal blocks served by gas boilers owned for which all required gas safety checks (LGSR's)were carried out and recorded as at current period end. Divided by: B. Number of 1 dwelling units and 2 dwelling units in communal block owned for which gas safety checks (LGSRs) were required to have been carried out as at current period end. Multiplied by 100	100%	100.00%	
	Domestic dwellings			100.00%	
BS02 Fire Safety Checks	Communal Blocks	**One measure:** A. Number of "dwelling units in blocks" owned that required an FRA for which all required FRAs were carried out and recorded as at current period end. Divided by B. Number of "dwelling units in owned blocks" owned for which an FRA was required to have been carried out as at current period end. Multiplied by 100	100%	100.00%	

Assurance and Governance

Assurance of performance is provided through various mechanisms. Specific assurance activities are described in the relevant "Big 6 Procedure". Assurance is co-ordinated by the Asset Management's Building Safety & Compliance Team along with technical and engineering support and oversight.

Certification to accredited standards requires 3rd party external verification, which provides us with additional assurance.

11. Escalation

The process for escalation of incidents, risks, and any issues found that cannot be dealt with as per this Policy, other OCC relevant polices, such as H&S, RIDDOR, etc, and the relevant compliance procedures will be via the responsibility chain as listed in section 4.

Whistle blowing

You can raise a concern at any time about an incident that happened in the past, is happening now, or you believe will happen soon.

12. Monitoring and Review

12.1 This Policy will be reviewed every year or sooner if there are significant changes in legislation, management, a major incident, or if it is no longer suitable.

13. Record Keeping

13.1 The Council will ensure that records relating to Property Compliance activity are accurate, accessible, and updated regularly. This includes, but is not limited to works involving servicing, risk assessments and remedial repairs and maintenance works.

13.2 Certification and any other relevant documentation must be completed in accordance with the associated statutory regulations and available for inspection where required.

13.3 Internal audits on the Property Compliance services will be undertaken annually, which will include sample checking of certificates. We will also commit to external auditing periodically to ensure quality.

14. Record Keeping

14.1 The Council will either employ directly or procure the services of appropriately trained and qualified personnel in carrying out its statutory responsibilities.

14.2 Where statutory Responsible Persons are required, these are specified in the relevant property compliance policies.

14.3 The Council will always insist that any third-party contractor used to deliver Property Compliance works will be accredited with a relevant governing body for compliance purposes in specialist areas.

15. Resident Involvement

15.1 Oxford City Council is committed to providing a high level of customer care and positive communication which is vital to effective fire safety. This will support residents in their understanding of electrical safety and advise them of how they can manage the risks within their properties and encourage them to report any concerns about fire safety.

15.2 Further monitoring of feedback will take place through resident surveys and this intelligence will be used to inform future reviews of this policy.

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15.3 Periodic engagement with residents will take place to ensure that this policy, along with other policies, remain customer facing.

15.4 Advice will be provided on the use of equipment in the welcome pack given to new tenants and information that would be sent from Landlord Services to existing tenants.

15.5 Residents who are wanting to report a non-urgent safety concern can do so by using the link below: Report a Building Safety Concern with council housing | Instructions – Oxford City Council

15.6 All emergency and urgent safety reports should be made to 01865 249811.

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Decant Policy

Introduction

1.1 The Council aims to maintain and improve its homes to a high standard and to develop high quality housing.

1.2 As a result, the Council sometimes need to move tenants out of their principal homes so that major repairs or improvements can take place. The Council refer to this as a ‘decant’.

1.3 A decant is where a resident moves from their current home to another one, either temporarily or permanently.

1.4 Improvement works and major repairs will normally be carried out whilst the tenant remains in their home. However, there will be certain situations, such as those when the health and safety of the tenant would be at risk or the works are extensive, when works cannot be carried out with the tenant in the property.

1.5 Residents are advised to take out their own home contents insurance. Residents will be advised of insurance options in case a decant situation emerges.

1.6 Where this is the case, the Council will arrange to move the tenant and their household. This will either be done on a temporary or permanent basis, depending on the nature of the works and the tenant will normally be given this option.

Roles, responsibilities, and authority

2.1 The Director of Housing and the Landlord Services Lead are responsible for the implementation of this policy. Various housing staff are responsible for activities relating to decants. Specific roles are set out in the procedures that support this policy.

Aims of policy

3.1 The aims of this policy are:

- To ensure decants operate in a fair, equitable and reasonable manner.
- To provide ongoing and proactive communication to tenants who need to be decanted ensuring simple but effective consultation and feedback at the earliest opportunity and throughout the process.
- To enable decants to be carried out with the minimal disturbance to tenants.
- To outline the support, both financial and practical, provided to tenants who are required to decant.
- To minimise rent loss to the Council and to ensure that the best use is made of the Council’s resources.

- Offering tenants a clean and safe environment

Scope

4.1 In line with the legislation and existing best practice, the following people will be eligible for assistance and possible rehousing

- Tenants
- their family members
- partners, and spouses
- Children

4.2 The Council will not rehouse unauthorised occupants, sub-tenants, lodgers, licensees, and other non-secure occupants.

4.3 Owner-occupiers and leaseholders may be given assistance to find alternative accommodation in exceptional circumstances and the options available to them will depend on their individual circumstances. and the equity available to them.

4.4 The Council may not be able to guarantee large households the option of being rehoused together in one temporary decant property but this will remain our principal aim in such circumstances.

4.5 If a tenant refuses to be temporarily decanted, the Council may take legal proceedings including an injunction to exclude the tenant and their household from living at the property until any essential work has been carried out or commencing possession proceedings in appropriate circumstances.

4.6 The Council is not legally responsible for finding alternative accommodation for household pets in the case of a decant but will always make sure that assistance to animals for which the tenant has obtained permission are accommodated.

4.7 The Council will ensure that residents who require guide dogs and assistant animals will be accommodated in properties where the guide dogs and assisted animals can reside with the resident

4.8 The Council will provide specific and tailor-made assistance to vulnerable residents who need to be decanted including helping with packing and unpacking belongings. The Council will be sensitive and empathetic to all residents who are being decanted in such circumstances.

Legal context

5.1 The key legislation that relates to decants is as follows:

<u>Housing Act 1985:</u>

5.2 The Council has a legal obligation under Section 105 of the Housing Act 1985 (Housing Act 1985) to consult with tenants when they are substantially affected, such as maintenance, improvement, or demolition of dwellings or changes to management arrangements. If a decant is likely to be necessary, the consultation will take place when proposals are still at an early stage and the Council will consult with all affected persons.

Housing Act 1985:

5.3 Part IV of Schedule 2 of the Housing Act 1985 (Housing Act 1985) provides the criteria for when accommodation will be suitable alternative accommodation. This should provide the tenant with equivalent security of tenure and be similar in regard to rent, size, and needs and means of the tenant. .

5.4 Ground 8 of Schedule 2 of the Housing Act 1985 provides the ground for seeking possession of the decant property once works have been completed on the tenant's principal home and is again available for occupation by the tenant.

Land Compensation Act 1973:

5.5 Section 30 of the Land Compensation Act 1973 (Land Compensation Act 1973) sets out the provisions for the statutory Home Loss Payments to be made to compensate tenants for having to permanently move out of their home, subject to certain eligibility criteria. This mandatory lump sum payment is reviewed periodically and confirmed in the Home Loss Payments (Prescribed Amounts) England Regulations.

5.6 The Land Compensation Act 1973 Act also sets out guidance relating to the payment of Disturbance Allowances aimed at compensating tenants for the actual cost of moving from their home.

Major Works

6.1 Where the Council needs to undertake major works, it will always aim to carry out necessary works without having to decant residents and will determine when relocation is required by carrying out a full assessment of the tenant's household and its needs.

6.2 In circumstances described in 6.1, the Council will consult with those affected as soon as it is apparent that a decant may be necessary and aim to make sure that any disruption to their lives is kept to a minimum. If it is decided that a decant is required, we firstly identify the needs of the tenant and their household in order to determine the most suitable available accommodation.

6.3 In many cases where a decant is required the Council will provide disturbance allowances to cover residents' out of pocket expenses.

6.4 In the case of redevelopment or demolition of properties, the Council will develop a decanting plan, which will include consultation with the affected residents so that their needs and wishes are considered and acted on.

6.5 The Council will endeavour to help tenants to return to their principal home and/or neighbourhood wherever possible. This may not always be possible and so where this cannot be achieved the Council will work with, and support the tenant(s), to provide options for alternative suitable accommodation. Tenants who must move due to major works will have a legal right to return to their home.

6.6 For every decant case, the Council will hold weekly decant management meetings. These meetings review key factors such as temporary moves, outstanding complaints, complex repairs, and the needs of vulnerable households. The purpose is to identify suitable alternative properties that meet the household's requirements and to ensure risks are managed effectively.

Emergency Decants

7.1 An emergency decant is usually required when an unexpected event such as a fire or flood has caused a tenant's home to be uninhabitable and the household needs to stay elsewhere. In these situations, we will give support to find alternative accommodation.

This may include but is not limited to:

- Staying with friends or family
- Hotel accommodation
- Private accommodation
- Other Council accommodation.

7.2 In any emergency, the priority will be the immediate safe relocation of the affected household. A full assessment will then be carried out to establish both the likely timescales for the property remaining uninhabitable and the housing need of the tenant and their permanent household members.

7.3 Each case will be considered individually to ensure appropriate steps are taken to address the tenant's needs and that suitable alternative accommodation has been found. Whilst we consider factors such as schools, place of employment etc, we cannot guarantee that the emergency accommodation provided will meet every request.

7.4 The tenant must continue to pay rent. We expect the tenant will pay the lower of the rent charge between the principal home and the alternative accommodation.

7.5 If the family or friends are not in Oxfordshire, we will also consider paying reasonable travel costs for the tenant to stay with them. The sum is payable per night and is intended to cover both food, drink, and the accommodation, whilst alternative accommodation is secured.

7.6 If the emergency occurs out of office hours, and the tenant cannot go to family or friends, we will arrange emergency temporary accommodation until a full assessment can be made on the next working day. Temporary accommodation will normally be arranged

through the Council's Housing Needs team. Whilst the Council will seek to provide temporary accommodation as near as possible to a tenant's home, this may not always be feasible and sometimes accommodation may be located outside Oxfordshire.

7.7 All Council tenants are advised to take out their own home contents insurance. In the event that there is a fire, flood or storm damage, the tenant would be expected to check their own insurance policy to see if this would support a temporary move to alternative accommodation, if required.

7.8 If the tenant does not have their own insurance, they will be rehoused in temporary accommodation by the Council. The extent of the damage will be assessed by the Council as quickly as possible to ascertain the timescale for repairs to be undertaken and the return of tenants to the property.

7.9 Where it is identified that the damage has been caused by the actions or inactions of the tenant and these result in the need for a decant, the tenant(s) may be recharged for any costs associated with the refurbishment.

Permanent Decants

8.1 A permanent decant may be required where the damage is so extensive that permanent rehousing is necessary such as, for example, after a major fire.

8.2 A permanent decant will also be considered where the work is expected to take a long time such as for more than 6 months and the tenant would prefer to move permanently.

8.3 The type of accommodation provided will depend on the anticipated duration of the repair works.

Suitable Alternative Accommodation:

9.1 When offering alternative accommodation, we will try to find a property which suits the needs of the residents at that time. A permanent transfer should not provide tenants with a different size property to that of their principal home, except in cases where the tenant was statutorily overcrowded. If the tenant had been under occupying their home, we would offer a downsizing incentive payment in addition to the decant assistance payment.

9.2 Downsizing incentive payments also include the ability to claim for moving expenses.

Compensation and Costs

10.1 The Council has discretion to provide financial assistance towards tenants' removal expenses under the Housing Act 1985 when tenants are temporarily decanted to other Council property.

10.2 There are three types of payments that tenants will be entitled to under this policy:

- Disturbance Payments
- Home loss Payments

- Downsizing incentive Payments

Disturbance Payments

11.1 The purpose of disturbance payments is to ensure that the tenant(s) are not financially disadvantaged due to a decant. The Council, in consultation with the tenant, will cover reasonable expenses.

11.2 The Council will accept disturbance allowance costs based on invoices and receipts supplied by the tenant or contractor, or by approved estimates from the contractor.

Home Loss Payments for Council Tenants

12.1 A Home Loss Payment is a statutory payment made to compensate tenants for having to permanently move out of their home and will be paid in addition to the statutory disturbance payment referred to earlier in this policy.

12.2 It is not payable for tenants who temporarily move out of their home and are able to return to their original property once the work is completed. However, if their area is being demolished and rebuilt and they return, they would be entitled to Home Loss as they would be returning to a totally new home.

12.3 Tenants have the option of transferring prior to this based on their rehousing needs. However, if they do so, they would not be entitled to any form of compensation (Home Loss or Disturbance). The Council in recognition of the limited supply of available Council homes will make Home Loss payments to tenants who are already on the transfer list.

12.4 The Home Loss payment is for an eligible tenant/joint tenant who has lived in their property as their principal home for at least 12 months prior to the date of agreement for the scheme and is required to move out of their home permanently because of the property being demolished, sold or the scheme remodelled to remove their property.

12.5 In all circumstances the home loss payment is limited to one per household, not per tenant – joint tenants will therefore receive one payment between them.

12.6 In circumstances where there is suspected coercive behaviour including financial control from one of the joint tenants, the Council will fully investigate through a safeguarding process to ensure this is properly considered before any payments are made.

12.7 If a decision in principle has been agreed to refurbish, remodel, redevelop or dispose of a property, full support will be given to the tenant(s) in locating another council home.

12.8 If a tenant or tenants has rent arrears, home loss payments will not be used to clear the account unless the tenant requests this.

The Tenant's Role

13.1 Where a tenant is being decanted, they will be expected to pack up their own belongings unless they are vulnerable or have special needs in which case, a packing service will be arranged.

13.2 Tenants must ensure that they have taken steps to ensure that their fridges and freezers are cleaned, having been emptied and defrosted, if necessary, before the removal company is due to arrive.

13.3 If the tenant is being transferred to alternative accommodation, they will be responsible for clearing their belongings from the property and for giving vacant possession of that property. Any items left behind will be cleared and there will not be any opportunity to reclaim them, or to claim compensation to the value of them. The cost of clearance and disposal of any such items will be recharged.

13.4 The tenant is required to provide access to contractors, as necessary. They must also take responsibility for their own fixtures and fittings or DIY improvements, unless the property is to be demolished, in which case they could sign a disclaimer stating that they do not require any compensation for the loss of these items. There will be a pre- void visit where such items will be identified, and the tenant informed about the work that is required before they move out. Failure to undertake such work could result in the tenant being recharged.

13.5 The tenant is expected to make other members of their household aware of the decant arrangements and to move on the agreed date. In addition, they must make appropriate arrangements for any pets and ensure that they are not abandoned in the property after they have moved out.

13.6 If the household has home contents or other insurance, the tenant is advised to notify their insurance company about the change of address.

13.7 Tenants are expected to take appropriate steps to clear any areas where work is to be undertaken. If there are issues caused by disability or other factors these will be discussed with the Housing Officer to seek an appropriate supported outcome

Data

14.1 Data on all decants will be recorded on the Council's database and designated officers within the Council's Landlord Services will monitor the progress of decants on a weekly basis.

14.2 Data on decant must record:

a) Date of decant
b) Reason for the decanting of tenant(s)
c) Where the tenant has moved to
d) Vulnerabilities of household members
e) Whether pets are affected by the move in respect of animal welfare

14. 3 All data held will be in accordance with GDPR regulations pursuant to the Data Protection Act.

Equality and Diversity

15.1 The Council is committed to promoting equality, diversity, and inclusion in all housing services. We will ensure compliance with the Equality Act 2010 by treating all applicants and tenants fairly, with dignity and respect, and without unlawful discrimination. We will make reasonable adjustments for tenants with protected characteristics ensuring services are accessible to all.

Consultation, communication, and training

16.1 This policy will be made available to the Council's tenants and shared owners.

Monitoring and Performance Management

17.1 The Council or any successor local authority will review this policy in two years, when legislation changes or when a new local authority is established, whichever occurs the soonest, to ensure it reflects current legislation and the latest examples of best practices.

Procedure for managing complaints

18.1 A person who is dissatisfied with the application of this policy can ultimately raise the issue under the Council's complaints procedure.

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Gas Safety Policy

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1. Policy statement

1.1 This policy aims to ensure the safety of our tenants and leaseholders and that gas appliances, fittings, and flues provided for tenants are safe.

1.2 Gas Servicing and Safety covers the provision of cyclical servicing, safety checks and related responsive maintenance to all properties owned or managed by Oxford City Council where gas installation is present.

1.3 Oxford City Council recognises that, as a landlord, it has legal responsibilities to ensure the safety of gas pipework, appliances, fittings, and flues installed for our Contract Holders' use.

1.4 It is also a key component of Oxford City Council's overall Asset Management Strategy, ensuring that the useful life of individual heating system components is maximised and hence value for money is optimised

2. Purpose

2.1 Oxford City Council's aims and objectives in respect to our Gas Servicing and Safety Policy are:

2.1.1 To meet our legal and regulatory obligations to undertake annual gas safety inspections, as required under the provisions of the Gas Safety (Installation and Use) Regulations 1998.

2.1.2 To maintain all gas appliances that are Oxford City Council's responsibility in safe working order and to manufacturers' instructions.

2.1.3 To engage with our customers in a participative and empowering manner so that they can contribute and influence the service standards and future direction of the Gas Servicing and Repairs Service.

2.1.4 To fulfil our commitment to equality and diversity while delivering the Gas Servicing and Repairs Service to our residents.

2.1.5 To maintain the Company's housing stock and preserve its asset value.

3. Scope

3.1 This policy applies to all properties owned or managed by Oxford City Council.

4. Responsibilities

4.1 It is the HRA Asset Lead's responsibility to ensure that this policy's implementation is monitored.

4.2 The Chief Executive is responsible for appointing people to deliver the policy and ensure adequate resources are in place.

4.3 The Operations Manager ensures compliance with this policy and is responsible for managing gas safety. The Operations Manager is responsible for ensuring: (a) compliance with regulation 36 of the Gas Safety (Installation and Use) Regulations 1998; (b) maintaining the gas safety records and certificate database; (c) oversight of contractor performance; and (d) reporting gas safety compliance to senior management and Members.

4.4 Every Housing Service colleague is responsible for reading, understanding and implementing this policy.

4.5 All contractors, consultants and partner organisations are responsible for operating under this policy when delivering services on behalf of Oxford City Council.

4.6 Oxford City Council will take breaches of this policy very seriously. Any instances of such behaviour will be thoroughly investigated and may be subject to disciplinary procedures. Breaches by Council staff may be subject to disciplinary procedures, and breaches by contractors may result in contractual action including contract termination. Breaches of gas safety legislation are criminal offences under regulation 36(7) of the 1998 Regulations (punishable by fine and/or imprisonment up to 6 months on summary conviction or 2 years on indictment).

5. Implementation

5.1 To meet the aims that this policy sets, Oxford City Council will:

5.1.1 Under the current gas safety regulations and legislation, maintain all gas appliances, flues, and associated pipework in a safe condition and carry out annual gas safety checks on all appliances and flues in Oxford City Council's housing stock. This is further to regulation 36(2) (annual safety checks), regulation 36(3) (maintenance in safe condition), regulation 36(6) (record keeping for 2 years), and regulation 36(5) (provision of certificates to tenants within 28 days).

5.1.2 Install carbon monoxide detectors to properties, where applicable, with open flue gas fuel heating appliances, on a risk-assessed basis. This is to give added protection against the dangers of carbon monoxide. Carbon monoxide alarms are mandatory under the

Smoke and Carbon Monoxide Alarm (England) Regulations 2015 (as amended by the Smoke and Carbon Monoxide Alarm (Amendment) Regulations 2022), which came into force for social housing landlords on 1 October 2022. Regulation 4 requires a carbon monoxide alarm in any room used as living accommodation which contains a fixed combustion appliance (excluding gas cookers).

5.2 The Council will make an informed decision and choose the best alarms for their properties and tenants, with due regard for their residents' circumstances. For example, specialist smoke alarms and carbon monoxide alarms that alert by vibration or flashing lights (as opposed to by sound alerts) may be required for residents who are deaf or hard of hearing. This is in addition to the mandatory alarm requirement under the 2015 Regulations as amended

5.3 The Council will consider its duties under the Equality Act 2010.Carbon monoxide alarms are mandatory in rooms with any fixed-combustion appliance (excluding gas cookers) in privately rented homes and social housing.

5.4 Engage competent Gas Safe Registered contractors to meet Gas Safety Legislative Compliance requirements. In their post-installation and inspection certification, this contractor will ensure that their improvements meet current legal standards. Gas Safe registered contractors must:

(a) hold valid Gas Safe registration for the specific types of work undertaken;
(b) provide evidence of public liability insurance (minimum £10 million) and employers' liability insurance;
(c) demonstrate compliance with relevant standards including Gas Safety (Installation and Use) Regulations 1998 and Building Regulations 2010 (Part J – Combustion appliances and fuel storage systems):

5.5 The Council will maintain a register of approved Gas Safe contractors, including copies of their Gas Safe registration certificates, insurance documentation, and competence evidence. This register will be reviewed annually to ensure contractors remain registered and insured"

5.6 The Council will annually test all hard-wired smoke detectors installed within our properties. Where properties contain gas appliances, the fixed smoke detectors will be tested simultaneously with the gas annual service. The testing of hard-wired smoke detectors is in addition to the landlord's duty under the Smoke and Carbon Monoxide Alarm (England) Regulations 2015 to ensure alarms are in proper working order at the start of each tenancy and to repair/replace alarms within a reasonable time after being notified of a fault

5.7 During void refurbishment work, Oxford City Council will cap off the gas supply at the meter and uncap the gas supply when void work is completed, with a Gas Safe Certificate issued

5.8 For mutual exchanges, Oxford City Council will cap off the gas supply to the meter before the outgoing tenant moves out of the property, and recap and service all gas appliances re-established with a Gas Safe Certificate issued, when the new tenant moves into their new home. Capping off gas supply during mutual exchanges must be undertaken by a Gas Safe registered engineer and that all work must be recorded in accordance with regulation 36 of the 1998 Regulations.

5.9 Operate clear, concise, convenient and well-published arrangements to complete the annual gas safety check service.

5.10 Set the target time for completion of repairs to maintain heating and hot water or complete immediately if urgent.

5.11 Identify and respond appropriately to the specific needs of residents and ensure that every resident is aware of the importance of the annual gas safety check and service.

5.12 Maintain a property database that details the property's gas servicing history and date next due, gas appliances installed, gas access procedure records and timescales. The property database must include all information required under regulation 36(6) of the 1998 Regulations, including: appliance details and locations, dates of installation and inspection, engineer details, defects identified, and remedial action taken.

5.13 The Council will positively promote the importance of gas safety to residents and ensure that relevant information is made available upon request in alternative languages and versions.

5.14 In consultation with residents, the Council will implement clear procedures to gain access to undertake the gas safety check within 12 months.

5.15 In 'no access' to occupied properties, to ensure that Oxford City Council meets its legal obligations to complete the gas servicing. Oxford City Council will use various methods to gain access, apply to the Court for a Court order, and recharge the associated costs for the resident. The Council may:

(a) apply for an injunction under s.222 Local Government Act 1972; or
(b) in extreme cases, seek possession under Ground 12, Schedule 2, Housing Act 1985 (breach of tenancy obligation).

5.16 Legal costs incurred in obtaining access may be rechargeable to the tenant under the tenancy agreement, subject to reasonableness and proportionality.

5.17 Ensure that all work on gas appliances and fittings is carried out by a competent and suitably qualified engineer who is Gas Safe registered.

5.18 Ensure that all gas appliance installations are fitted and conform to current legislation, codes of practice, and manufacturer's instructions by our Gas Installation and Service Contractors at the time of Installation or repair.

5.19 On completion of the gas safety check, service or new installation, issue to the resident a copy of the Landlord's Gas Safety Regulations certificate (LGSR) and maintain a copy of the LGSR on file for at least two years. The two-year record retention period is the minimum required by regulation 36(6) of the 1998 Regulations. Recommend extending retention to at least 6 years (in line with the Limitation Act 1980, s.5 – time limit for contract claims) or longer for evidential purposes. Records should include all matters specified in regulation 36(7) such as date of check, address, landlord details, appliance descriptions and locations, defects identified, remedial action, confirmation of compliance, and engineer name, signature, and Gas Safe registration number.

5.20 Ensure that the qualified engineer who installs a gas appliance or heating system, on behalf of Oxford City Council, issues the manufacturer's operating instructions to the resident and explains how to use the appliance controls.

5.21 Carry out quality assurance checks on new installations (10% of all installations), gas servicing, repairs and landlords' LGSRs to ensure that the works and certificates are completed under current legislation and codes of practice.

5.22 Adopt a systematic approach to performance management in monitoring the gas servicing and repairs service, reporting the key performance results to the Corporate Leadership Team and to the Council's Audit Committee or equivalent governance body.

5.23 Employ sufficient and suitably qualified colleagues, consultants and contractors to enable us to meet our gas servicing and repairs responsibilities.

5.24 Publicise to leaseholders and shared owners the importance of checking the gas appliances installed in their homes regularly by a qualified professional. This is the residents' responsibility and is distinctly different from Oxford City Council's landlord's duty to check the gas supply, i.e., inspect the gas supply under gas safety regulations and issue a Gas Safe Certificate.

5.25 The Council may have duties to inspect gas supply pipework and meters in leasehold properties even where appliances are the leaseholder's responsibility. Ensure this is clearly stated and that the Council's duties are distinguished from leaseholders' responsibilities

5.26 The Council will highlight to residents the location of gas isolation valves. A gas isolation valve is a crucial safety device used to completely shut off the gas supply to a property in an emergency. The isolation valve location will be documented in the property file and communicated to new tenants in the welcome pack.

5.27 Provide a free gas cooker connection service for tenants being decanted from one property to another.

5.28 Ensure that all colleagues, contractors and consultants employed to deliver Oxford City Council's gas servicing, repairs, and maintenance service adhere to the Council's compliance requirements.

5.29 Annually review the effectiveness of our arrangements for servicing and the legal action the Council can take to gain access against residents who do not allow access to their homes to complete the annual gas safety check. The annual review will include:

(a) analysis of "no access" cases and reasons for refusal;
(b) effectiveness of access procedures and timescales;
(c) legal action taken and costs incurred;
(d) lessons learned and improvements implemented;
(e) reporting to senior management and Members on persistent "no access" case

6. Monitoring and quality control

6.1 Oxford City Council will monitor implementation of this Policy using the following quality assurance measures:

- Minimum 5% onsite quality assurance audits on servicing, using Gas Safe registered consultants

- Minimum 5% onsite quality assurance audits on new boiler installations, using Gas Safe registered consultants.

6.2 The above will ensure the work carried out by contractors who meet regulations and the right safety checks have been properly completed and documented.

6.3 The Council will operate a suitable and sufficient audit and assurance programme. This will help to provide reassurance on the quality of work and data linked to maintaining gas safety. The audit and assurance programme must include:

(a) verification that engineers hold valid Gas Safe registration;
(b) checks on certificate accuracy and completeness;
(c) physical inspection of work quality;
(d) review of contractor compliance with regulations and policy;
(e) escalation procedures for non-compliance

Resident Engagement

7.1 Oxford City Council is committed to providing a high level of customer care and positive communication which is vital to effective safety. This will support residents in their understanding of gas safety and advise them of how they can manage the risks within their properties and encourage them to report any concerns about fire safety. This is also further to the Regulator of Social Housing's Tenant Involvement and Empowerment Standard under the Social Housing (Regulation) Act 2023

7.2 Further monitoring of feedback will take place through resident surveys and this intelligence will be used to inform future reviews of this policy.

7.3 Periodic engagement with residents will take place to ensure that this policy, along with other policies, remain customer facing.

7.4 Advice will be provided on the use of gas related equipment in the welcome pack given to new tenants and information that would be sent from Landlord Services to existing tenants.

7.5 Residents who are wanting to report a non-urgent safety concern can do so by using the link below: Report a Building Safety Concern with council housing | Instructions – Oxford City Council

7.6 All emergency and urgent safety reports should be made to 01865 249811.

Equality, diversity, inclusion, and vulnerability (including most at risk groups)

8.1 An Equality Impact Assessment (EqIA) has been carried out to determine whether the policy would have an impact on any member of staff, tenants, or contractor workforce, which unfairly discriminates or disadvantages them in the context of the Equality Act 2010.

8.2 Whilst the EqIA has identified that there are no particular groups who will be unlawfully disadvantaged by this policy, it is identified that there are certain groups at increased risk. These groups are:

- children
- adults with learning difficulties
- oxygen users
- people taking certain medication
- those suffering the effects of drugs and alcohol
- adults aged 65 and older
- people with disabilities

- Individuals being supported by the Community Safety team and related support services

8.3 This policy aims to reduce the risks to these groups of people through proactively identifying these risk factors and raising awareness Risk reduction will be achieved by:

(a) maintaining a vulnerable persons register;
(b) prioritising access and response times for vulnerable residents;
(c) enhanced communication methods (e.g., large print, easy read, interpreters);
(d) coordination with adult social care and safeguarding teams;
(e) referrals to relevant support services where gas safety concerns are linked to hoarding, self-neglect, or other safeguarding issues

8.4 We will assess the needs of residents who inform us they have a disability such as a hearing impairment, visual impairment, and mobility issue, and will provide appropriate equipment or support. This assessment will mean that reasonable adjustments for disabled persons can be provided. For disabled persons, carbon monoxide detectors should include specialist alarms that use visual alerts (flashing lights) and vibration pads to supplement or replace standard audible alarms, ensuring all individuals are effectively alerted. Assessments will be carried out promptly upon notification of disability and reasonable adjustments will be made at no additional cost to the disabled tenant when appropriate. The Council will consult with the tenant on their specific needs and preferred adjustments and adjustments will be recorded in the property database and communicated to contractors. These provisions are in accordance with s.20 of the Equality Act 2010.

8.5 The Equality Impact Assessment will be kept under review and updated if there are significant changes to the policy or evidence of differential impact on protected groups, in accordance with the Public Sector Equality Duty under s.149 Equality Act 2010

7. References

Related External Documents	
Reference	
Gas Safety (Installation and Use) Regulation 1998	http://www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/1998/2451/contents/made
Health & Safety at Work Act 1974	https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1974/37
Landlord and Tenant Act 1988	https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1988/26/contents
Related Internal Documents	
Health and Safety Servicing (ACCESS) Procedures	

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Health and Safety Policy

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Purpose and Scope of the Policy

1.1 The Council recognises and accepts its responsibility to provide and maintain the safest and healthiest work conditions which meet best practice and achieve legal compliance further to the Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974, s.2 (general duty of employers to employees), s.3 (general duty to non-employees), and the Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999, reg. 3 (risk assessment duty).

1.2 The Council also recognises that every accident/dangerous occurrence, however slight, is a matter for concern and that the need for constant alertness by all Directors, managers and employees is equally important in identifying potential hazards and removing or minimising their effect.

1.3 To this end it has been decided that the Health and Safety Policy for the Council shall be:

- To institute and maintain safe working systems throughout the Council, including the introduction of permit to work systems (i.e. for hazardous situations or workplaces) where required.
- To take all reasonable measures to establish the causes of accidents and impairments to health occurring throughout the Council and to institute all reasonably practicable remedial measures to prevent recurrence.
- To provide all reasonable facilities to mitigate the effects of accidents and impairments to health and safety when they do occur.
- To ensure that no process, plant, or machinery, is introduced in the Council unless it has conformed with any relevant statutory testing or examination requirement and it has been established that, so far as is reasonably practicable, the safety or health of employees will not be impaired.
- To disseminate information on safe working relating to specific areas of work and on general safety and health matters relating to all employees.
- To provide proper and adequate training facilities in order to ensure that all employees are fully instructed in the safe working methods applicable to their jobs.
- To encourage and demonstrate the closest possible liaison between management and employees in all matters affecting safety and health, including the formation of Safety Committees and appointment of Safety Representatives as appropriate.
- To ensure that all requirements of legislation relating to Council activities are fully complied with in regard to safety and health, it being recognised that these in the main constitute only a minimum standard of achievement.
- To aim for continual improvement of health and safety performance through employee involvement and by the adoption of safety and health measures

1.4 To advise and keep employees informed of their duties and responsibilities further to s.7 and s.8 of the Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974

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including:

- the requirement to adopt and follow safe working systems and practices
- the requirement to make use of facilities and equipment provided for their protection
- the requirement to abstain from any act which could endanger the safety or health of themselves or any other person
- the requirement to refrain from intentionally or recklessly interfering with or misusing anything provided in the interests of health, safety or welfare
- the requirement to report any known defect which could endanger the safety or health of themselves or other persons
- the requirement to co-operate with the Council or any other person as far as is necessary to ensure that statutory duties or requirements are performed or complied with standards.

1.5 These requirements also apply to the staff of the Local Authority Trading Company. The Council will ensure appropriate health and safety governance arrangements are in place with the Trading Company through service level agreements or management agreements.

1.6 The standard that this policy aims to achieve is to ensure compliance with current health and safety legislation. Through the application of this Policy the Council aims to avoid Improvement Notices and Prohibition Notices issued by the Health and Safety Executive under ss.21-22 of the Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974.

1.7 The Council will ensure that sufficient resources are available to provide any health and safety equipment, personal protective equipment and training where appropriate.

1.8 Information and training for employees will be provided in order (as far as is reasonably practicable) to achieve and maintain a high standard of safety proficiency, in accordance with s.2(2)(c) of the Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974 and reg. 13 of the Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999.

Objectives

2.1 The Council's health and safety objectives within the Housing Service are:

- To secure the health, safety and welfare of all those who may be affected by our undertaking.
- To demonstrate a commitment to health and safety through consultation and involvement.
- To set health and safety performance targets to enable performance to be measured
- To improve awareness of health and safety management amongst Housing Service staff.
- To improve use of the intranet for health and safety related functions.

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- To develop, maintain and implement procedures that are considered to be best practice.
- To consult and involve residents
- To ensure staff are provided with information, instruction and training
- To ensure all staff should have an agreed training programme which is reviewed annually.
- To ensure risk assessments are to be completed by a competent person in accordance with reg. 7 of the Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999 (Health and safety assistance)
- To ensure risk assessments are to be reviewed at least every three years, or prior to any significant change or following an accident.
- The Council will ensure risk assessments are suitable and sufficient in accordance with reg. 3 of the Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999, and are reviewed when there is reason to suspect they are no longer valid or there has been a significant change in the matters to which they relate
- To ensure that lessons learned from accidents, incidents, and near misses are shared across the Housing Service and wider Council to prevent recurrence
- To ensure any uncontrolled risks are mitigated effectively.
- To carryout continual hazard and risk identification to mitigate any potential for harm.
- Accidents/Incidents
- To ensure all accidents and incidents are reported in accordance with statutory requirement and departmental protocols.
- To ensure that accidents, incidents, dangerous occurrences and near misses are kept at the lowest possible level.
- To ensure that all identified risks are appropriately controlled.
- Monitoring and inspection
- To implement a routine procedure auditing programme to measure the effectiveness of management procedures.
- An annual review of the health and safety management system is to be undertaken by a competent person.
- To undertake performance reviews and maintain records of data collected in order to demonstrate continuous improvement in health and safety performance.
- All health and safety documentation is reviewed in line with statutory and department requirements and best practice.
- Maintain as appropriate emergency preparedness procedures.
- These will be subject to periodic review and re-assessment in the light of any internal or external changes in the way the Council operates.

Definitions

- Accident – an unplanned, unexpected event that results in injury or ill health to an employee, resident, contractor or member of the public, or some other form of damage or loss (e.g. to property) in relation to the Council's activities.

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- Incident or Near Miss – an unplanned, unexpected event which did not result in injury, ill health, damage or loss, but had the potential to do so.

- RIDDOR – Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations 2013. These regulations require employers and those in control of premises to report specific workplace incidents to the Health and Safety Executive. Deaths and specified injuries must be reported without delay (within 10 days for full report). Over-seven-day injuries (where an employee is unable to carry out their normal work for more than seven consecutive days, excluding the day of the accident) must be reported within 15 days of the accident. Dangerous occurrences and work-related diseases must be reported without delay

- HSE – the Health and Safety Executive is the body responsible for the encouragement, regulation and enforcement of workplace health, safety and welfare.

Responsibilities

3.1 The health, safety and welfare of all those who may be affected by the Council's activities is its highest priority and therefore, the Council commit to ensuring that appropriate resources are set aside for the delivery of safe systems of work, a safe environment for residents, the prevention of accidents, incidents and ill health, the effective management of our contractors and to meet health and safety targets.

3.2 The Chief Executive is responsible for overall health and safety compliance at the Council ensuring that all legal obligations are met, including ensuring that the Council's health and safety policy is prepared, maintained, and brought to the attention of all employees in accordance with s.2(3) of the Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974

<u>Director of Housing</u>

3.3 Reports to the Chief Executive, recommends policy, takes responsibility for management across the Housing Service.

Responsibilities include:

- Monitoring compliance and escalating where appropriate.
- Ensuring sufficient resources are available
- Provides adequate management systems and support to ensure standards are maintained.
- Communicating standards, requirements and providing updates on performance.
- Setting and monitoring performance standards
- Health and Safety to be an embedded agenda item with relevant Council officers
- Ensuring adequate arrangements are in place to meet all health and safety standards.

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- Taking appropriate action to address health and safety issues which may arise.
- Facilities are in place to provide for staff consultation and communication.
- Housing Service policies are implemented.

HRA Assets Lead

3.4 Responsibilities include:

- Health and Safety Lead, designated under the Social Housing Regulation Act 2023 and the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974
- Monitor the Service's compliance with health and safety requirements
- Assess risks of failure to comply with health and safety requirements
- Notify Cabinet of material failures to comply with health and safety requirements
- Provide advice to Cabinet on how risks and failures notified should be addressed to ensure compliance.
- Ensure compliance with the Building Safety Act 2022 duties where the Council is the Accountable Person or Principal Accountable Person for Higher-Risk Buildings (buildings with at least seven storeys or 18 metres plus height containing at least two residential units);
- Oversee the mandatory occurrence reporting system required under s.62 and s.87 of the Building Safety Act 2022; 3. Maintain and update building safety cases for Higher-Risk Buildings

All Managers

3.5 Responsibilities include:

- Staff are provided with such information, instruction, supervision and training to enable them to safely carry out their duties.
- Risk assessments are carried out on work activities that may present a significant risk to staff, and suitable control measures are devised and implemented.
- Accidents, incidents and ill-health arising out of work are reported, recorded and investigated where necessary.
- Work areas are regularly inspected and monitored for unsafe conditions.
- Where managers have responsibilities for premises, risks relating to both employees and non-employees are adequately controlled. This includes compliance with s.4 of the Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974 (duties of persons in control of premises to persons other than their employees).

Employees

3.6 Responsibilities include

- Employees have a legal duty to take care of our own health and safety and that of others, fellow employees, contractors, tenants and visitors.
- Measures to control risks must be followed at all times.

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3.7 Should staff become aware of any unsafe condition or action this should be reported immediately to the immediate line manager. Where there is serious and imminent danger, employees must take appropriate steps to protect themselves and others and, where necessary, stop work and leave the area of danger, in accordance with reg. 8 of the Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999 (Procedures for serious and imminent danger and for danger areas

Competent Advisor

4.1 Specialist consultants act as “Competent Advisors”, are responsible for:

- Advising the Housing Service on all health and safety matters concerning property management.
- Producing management updates as required.
- Undertaking risk assessments and inspections as directed by the Property Services Manager or Head of Housing.
- Review as directed management compliance against legal, best practice and our requirements and reporting on a timely basis.
- Undertaking accident investigations and emergency planning when required to do so.
- Delivering training when required to do so
- The Council will maintain records of the competence evidence of all specialist consultants (qualifications, professional memberships, insurance, training, CPD) and review their competence annually

4.2 Specialist consultants act as "Competent Advisors" appointed in accordance with reg. 7 of the Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999. A person is competent where they have sufficient training, experience, knowledge and other qualities to enable them properly to assist the Council in undertaking measures needed to comply with health and safety requirements (reg. 7(5) Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999).

Management Reporting

4.3 In line with Regulation 5 of the Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999 (MHSW) there is a general requirement to monitor and review preventive and protective measures with reference to health and safety.

4.4 The Housing Service recognises that its health and safety policy and procedures may need to be updated as legislative requirements are revised. To this end the Housing Service will conduct a regular review of health and safety policies and operational procedures to ensure compliance.

4.4 Policies and procedures must be in place to ensure the effective management of Health and Safety within the common parts of all properties, including compliance with the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005 for fire safety in common parts.

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4.5 The boundaries of control between residents and the Housing Service are defined within leases and the tenancy agreements.

4.6.1 The Housing Service has a responsibility to co-operate and co-ordinate with all residents on issues that affect the safety of the property, in accordance with the Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999, reg. 11 (Co-operation and co-ordination), and the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005, art. 22 (General duties of employees at work)

4.7 Risk assessments should be linked to maintenance cycles and linked to events such major incidents, health changes affecting residents and other relevant issues that leads to a change of circumstances when the risk assessments were first drafted. Special consideration will be made to vulnerable residents in all risk assessments, taking into account the Public Sector Equality Duty under s.149 of the Equality Act 2010, and the duty to make reasonable adjustments for disabled persons under s.20 of the Equality Act 2010.

4.8 Approved contractors are required to implement their own health and safety policies, procedures and control measures. Contractors must hold valid public liability insurance (minimum £10 million) and employers' liability insurance as required by the Employers' Liability (Compulsory Insurance) Act 1969.

4.9 Contractors must adhere to the Council's values and behaviours at all times including when working and engaging with residents. Any breach of these values will lead to the Council to consider disciplinary action against the affected contractors subject to due process.

Accidents, Incidents, Near Misses and Dangerous Occurrences

5.1 It is a requirement of the Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations (RIDDOR) 2013 that employers notify their enforcing authority of accidents at work that result in a fatality, specified injury (e.g. fractures other than to fingers, thumbs or toes, amputations, serious burns, loss of sight) or incapacity for normal work for more than seven consecutive days, excluding the day of the accident but including any days that would not normally be worked. Deaths and specified injuries must be reported without delay and a full report submitted within 10 days. Over-seven-day injuries must be reported within 15 days of the accident. This includes any act of physical violence done to a person at work. Dangerous Occurrences (e.g. collapse of scaffolding, explosion, electrical short circuit causing fire) and work-related diseases (following diagnosis) must also be reported without delay

5.2 The Council will ensure that:

- All accidents and dangerous occurrences (including near misses) that occur within the common areas of the property whether they are notifiable or not under RIDDOR, must be recorded by the contactor or staff as appropriate using the defined procedures.

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- Should an accident, dangerous occurrence or near miss occur within the common parts of a property a thorough investigation must be undertaken in accordance with the documented accident investigation procedures.
- The scope of any investigation will be dependent on the severity of the incident. Where reasonably practicable, measures must be taken to prevent reoccurrence of any accident or dangerous occurrence and where necessary relevant risk assessments should be reviewed.
- The following incidents must be reported in line with the Council's procedures:
- Any specified injury, dangerous occurrence or incidence of disease relating to health and safety matters as defined by RIDDOR.
- Any accident/incident that involves an investigation by the HSE, local authority or the Environment Agency.
- Where the Council receives notification from the HSE of an investigation, inspection, or enforcement action, this must be immediately escalated to the Chief Executive, Director of Housing, HRA Assets Lead, and the Council's legal services team
- Equipment should be isolated in the event of an accident
- Any incident relating to health and safety or environmental matters which may cause specific concern in respect of public perception or where the incident may have direct implications such as legal proceedings.
- Records of all accidents should be held for a period of at least three years", add: "The Council should consider retaining accident records for longer periods where potential civil claims may arise (limitation period is generally three years from date of knowledge under the Limitation Act 1980, s.11, but can be longer for latent injuries). Records relating to exposure to hazardous substances should be retained for at least 40 years in accordance with the Control of Substances Hazardous to Health Regulations 2002, reg. 11
- An incident/accident which causes environmental damage or which poses an imminent threat of environmental damage may require reporting to the Environment Agency under the Environmental Damage (Prevention and Remediation) (England) Regulations 2015. Examples include pollution of water, land contamination, damage to protected species or habitats

Construction

6.1 The CDM Regulations apply to all construction work and covers physical safeguards which need to be provided to prevent danger.

6.2 Duties to achieve these standards are held by contractors who actually carry out the work, irrespective of whether they are employers or are self-employed. Duties are also held by those who do not carry out any construction work but control the way in which the work is done. The extent of the duty is in proportion to the degree of control which the individual or organisation has over the construction work.

6.3 General management duties apply to all construction projects by virtue of the Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974 under s.2 (duty to employees), s.3 (duty to non-employees), and s.4 (duty of persons in control of premises), and the Management of Health & Safety at Work Regulations 1999 (MHSWR)

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which has specific reference to contractors under reg. 3 (risk assessment) and reg. 11 (co-operation and co-ordination

6.4 In addition, the CDM Regulations sets out additional duties which apply to notifiable projects.

6.5 Projects are notifiable if they:

- Last 30 days or more and have more than 20 workers on site working at any one time
- Involve more than 500 person days of construction work.

6.6 The Health and Safety Executive must be notified of any project that reaches the above threshold using Form F10 in writing or online.

6.7 Witten Construction Phase Plan is required for every notifiable project, prepared by the Principal Contractor before the construction phase begins, in accordance with reg. 12 of CDM 2015

6.8 A Principal Designer and a Principal Contractor must be appointed in writing by the client when there is (or is likely to be) more than one contractor working on a project (reg. 5, CDM 2015), and in addition a Health & Safety file must be prepared by the Principal Designer and handed to the client at the end of the project (reg. 12, CDM 2015)

6.9 The Council will ensure that all contractors meet the following standards:

- Reasonable management arrangements in place throughout the project to ensure that the construction work can be carried out, so far as is reasonably practicable, safely and without risk to health.
- All designers, contractors and others involved in the project are competent, adequately resourced and appointed early enough for the work they are required to undertake.
- They allow sufficient time for each stage of the project.
- They co-operate with others involved in the project as is appropriate to allow them to comply with their duties under the Regulations.
- They co-ordinate their own work with others involved in the project in order to ensure the safety of those carrying out the construction work and others who may be affected by it.
- Review contractors welfare arrangements throughout the construction phase of the project.
- Any fixed workplaces that are to be constructed comply with any requirements of the Workplace (Health, Safety and Welfare) Regulations 1992.
- All relevant information is passed to designers and contractors to enable them to carry out their work safely (e.g. asbestos registers).
- The Council will verify contractor competence in accordance with the Council's Contractor Selection and Management procedures (section 7 below), ensuring that competence assessments are proportionate to the risks and complexity of the work.

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6.10 The Council will:

- Identify the Client responsible for CDM where a project is led by a Project Board or Team. The 'client' under CDM 2015 means any person for whom a project is carried out (reg. 2). Where the Council commissions construction work, the Council is the client and must comply with client duties under regs. 4-6 of CDM 2015
- Notify the HSE before construction work begins using the online notification system
- Formally appoint a Principal Designer (PD) prior to the start of the construction phase
- Appoint a Principal Contractor prior to the start of the construction phase
- Ensure that the construction phase does not begin until the Principal Contractor has prepared a suitable construction phase plan and has made adequate welfare facilities available from the start of the construction phase (reg. 13, CDM 2015)
- Ensure adequate time for the construction project
- Provide pre-construction information to the PD including all project-specific health and safety information needed to identify hazards and risks associated with the design and construction work
- Ensure cooperation and coordination between parties
- Ensure management and welfare arrangements are in place
- Ensure workplaces are designed correctly
- Retain and provide access to the Health and Safety file.

6.11 Responsibilities of the Principal Designer

- Advise and assist the client with their duties including providing pre-construction information and ensuring designers comply with their duties (reg. 11, CDM 2015)
- Coordinate health and safety aspects of design and cooperate with others involved in the project
- Facilitate good communication within the project
- Liaise with the principal contractor regarding on –going design
- Identify collect and pass on pre-construction information
- Prepare and maintain health and safety file
- The Principal Designer should allow adequate time for any unseen circumstances that could delay construction

6.12 The Council accepts its responsibility under the above requirements to its employees, contractors and others who may be affected by its activities and in fulfilling the duties may require contractors to provide evidence of their competency and compliance with current statutory rules and regulations before entering into any contract.

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Contractor Selection and Management

7.1 A contractor is anyone retained to carry out work who is not an employee to perform tasks such as maintenance, repairs, installation, construction, demolition and other activities.

7.2 All work activities are covered by health and safety law. Awareness of how the relevant legislation is applied is key to successful selection and management of contractors.

7.3 There are a number of specific regulations such as Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999 (SI 1999/3242); Construction (Design and Management) Regulations 2015 (SI 2015/51); Control of Substances Hazardous to Health Regulations 2002 (SI 2002/2677) which must be adhered to.

7.4 The employment of contractors or consultants will not absolve the Council of responsibility for ensuring that hazards have been identified, risks quantified and control measure meet the standard required. To this end reasonable steps must be taken to ensure the competence of contractors before entering into contracts. Similar steps must be taken to ensure on-going compliance.

7.5 The Council commits to the following actions:

- The Council will ensure that all contractors are thoroughly vetted to ensure they have adequate health and safety policies, procedures and practices in place prior to being used on our properties.
- Competence assessment must be proportionate to the work and the risks involved. For low-risk, routine work, basic checks may be sufficient. For high-risk or complex work (e.g. asbestos removal, work at height, confined spaces, major construction), rigorous competence checks including trade accreditations, specialist certifications, safety records, and past performance are required
- The Council will ensure contractors are provided with the necessary information required to undertake the work safely. Such information may include but is not limited to risk assessments, safe systems of work, statutory inspections, training records and monitoring procedures.
- The Council shall maintain a copy of the contractor’s written health and safety policy statement along with risk assessments, method statements and Public Liability and Employers Liability Insurance This will be subject to a periodic review.
- Employers' Liability Insurance must be for at least £5 million in accordance with the Employers' Liability (Compulsory Insurance) Regulations 1998. Public Liability Insurance should be for at least £10 million for construction and high-risk works. This will be subject to an annual review, or more frequently for high-risk contracts.
- The Council will notify residents affected by any works and ensure they are consulted prior to works being undertaken and kept informed as to the progress of the relevant works.

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Contractor's responsibilities

7.6 All contractors must ensure compliance with the terms and conditions of their contract which makes specific reference to compliance with legislation and Approved Codes of Practice at all times.

7.7 It will be the responsibility of approved contractors to review risk assessments and method statements, comment on their suitability and make adjustments where required to ensure that the health and safety of all parties is protected throughout the period of the work. Details of this review must be provided to the Housing Service. Wherever possible the contractor must ensure that risk is eliminated.

7.8 The Council will ensure that no hazardous works are to be carried out without the completion of a valid permit to work form. The following works are considered to be hazardous:

- Hot works*
- Work within a confined space
- Certain work at height e.g. working on unprotected roof areas.
- High risk electrical works e.g. live working.
- Removal of asbestos, for details please refer to the Council's Asbestos Policy.

7.9 The Council will ensure that all permits to work are supported by a written risk assessment and method statement that must be submitted in advance. Any permit to work must be authorised by an appropriate and competent person. Suitable records must be maintained.

7.10 The Council will ensure that contractors do not start any hazardous work without the authority of the appropriate signed and dated permit to work. All permits to work should be time limited and are valid only for the period stated on the document itself. For high-risk activities including confined space entry, hot works, and work on live electrical systems, permits must be reviewed and renewed daily if work continues beyond one working day.

7.11 It shall be the responsibility of the contractor to ensure that before the contractor's employees leave the site:

- The work area is free from obvious hazards.
- There are no residual fire safety hazards.
- There should be safe storage of equipment and chemicals
- All equipment that has been worked on has been re-commissioned and is operating safely (or is safely decommissioned as is appropriate).
- The contractor will sign in before commencing work and out on the completion of the work each day on site.
- When issued a permit to work must be signed off as completed
- To provide any new documentation when a provided document has passed its agreed anniversary expiry date
- There should be safe routes of travel for customers when contractors on site

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- When issued, a permit to work must be signed off as completed and returned to the authorising officer with confirmation that the site has been left safe and all fire safety measures have been reinstated.

*Hot Works is defined as “operations requiring the use of open flames or the local application of heat or friction”. This includes welding, flame cutting, soldering, brazing, grinding and the use of other equipment incorporating a flame, e.g. tar boilers, etc. The definition of Hot Works applies to all references to hot works in this policy.

Resident Engagement

8.1 Co-operation is needed to effectively carry out the general duties under s.3 and s.4 of the Health and Safety at Work etc Act 1974 (duties to non-employees and persons in control of premises), as well as more specific duties under other Regulations.

8.2 The Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999 and the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005, requires persons who share a workplace to co-operate and co-ordinate and exchange information to ensure that our legal obligations are met. These regulations concern all people who may be at risk, both on and off site. They also include situations where an employer may not be physically present at the workplace.

8.3 The Council commits to the following actions

- The Council shall provide tenants with information packs containing all relevant property management details together with the tenant’s responsibilities including information on fire safety, gas safety, electrical safety, and how to report repairs and hazards
- The Council will ensure that residents will be informed of all changes in policy
- The Council shall maintain an appropriate method whereby residents may report defects in the premises.
- The Council shall develop and maintain relevant emergency procedures for the common parts of the property and make them readily available to all residents
- The Council shall make available to all tenants copies of risk assessments relevant to the common parts of their buildings, in accessible formats. Personal data will be redacted in accordance with UK GDPR and the Data Protection Act 2018 The Council shall establish and maintain effective communication with residents
- The Council shall provide information to tenants through mediums such as the *In-Touch* magazine
- The Council will engage residents in accordance with the Regulator of Social Housing's Tenant Involvement and Empowerment Standard under the Social Housing (Regulation) Act 2023, ensuring residents' voices are heard on health and safety matters that affect them
- For Higher-Risk Buildings (18m+ or 7+ storeys with 2+ residential units), the Council will prepare and maintain a Resident Engagement Strategy in accordance with s.87 of the Building Safety Act 2022, setting out how residents will be involved in decisions affecting building safety

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Staff Engagement

9.1 The Council recognises the right under the Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974, The Safety Representatives and Safety Committees Regulations 1977 (SI 1977/500), and the Health & Safety (Consultation with Employees) Regulations 1996 (SI 1996/1513) for recognised trade unions to appoint Safety Representatives

9.2 The Council commits to the following actions:

- The Council shall encourage the involvement of staff in formulating procedures to effectively manage health and safety in all aspects of the business.
- The Council shall allow reasonable time away from staff's normal tasks in order to perform inspections of the workplace, attend training, and safety committee meetings in accordance with regs. 4 and 4A of the Safety Representatives and Safety Committees Regulations 1977
- The Council will provide worker representatives with access to health and safety information and appropriate facilities appertaining to the work task.
- The Council will instigate, develop and implement measures to ensure the Health Safety and Welfare of employees at work.
- The Council will monitor the progress of initiatives to address specific health and safety matters.
- The Council will review how successfully the health and safety policy has been implemented.

9.3 All new employees, whether they are full-time, part-time, work experience, work placement or volunteers will be provided with sufficient health and safety information, instruction and training to ensure that they are aware of the hazards in the workplace and know what safe working procedures to follow to reduce the risk of injury or work related ill health, to themselves and others.

9.4 Managers will ensure that new employees receive a health and safety induction, which covers emergencies such as fire or injury on the first day of work and other health and safety information and training pertinent to their role within the first week of employment.

9.5 The HRA Assets Lead is responsible for designing the health and safety induction training material and for ensuring it remains up to date and reflects current policies and legislation.

9.6 Health and safety induction training will be recorded using a checklist, which is signed and dated by the new employee and the person undertaking the induction. Training records will be maintained by HR within the employees' file

Training

10.1 It is a requirement under s.2(2)(c) of the Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974 and reg. 13 of the Management of Health and Safety at Work

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Regulations 1999 that adequate information, instruction, training and advice with regard to health and safety matters will be given to all employees

10.2 Information will be communicated through

- Internal and external training courses, team briefings intranet.
- Digital platforms.
- Risk Assessments
- Other means as necessary (for example, Fire Service, Environmental Health Officers, Health and Safety Executive, Environmental Agency, ROSPA, British Safety Council, IOSH and British Standards).

10.3 Records of information, instruction and training received by employees will be maintained on the individual's personnel record and retained for the duration of employment plus six years in accordance with the Limitation Act 1980.

First Aid

11.1 The Health and Safety (First-Aid) Regulations 1981 require organisations to provide adequate and appropriate first-aid equipment, facilities and people so employees and others can be given immediate help if they are injured or taken ill at work.

11.2 The Council commits to the following actions:

- The Council will ensure that suitable first aid materials are provided in community centres and Council offices
- The Council will ensure first aid materials are routinely checked by on site staff and formally inspected monthly and after each use. Out of date dressings must be discarded and materials replenished as required.
- The need for first aid training and equipment provision must be assessed subsequent to the risk assessment taking into account: the nature of the work and workplace hazards; the size of the organisation and distribution of employees; the organisation's accident history; the remoteness of the site from emergency medical services; employees working on shared or multi-occupied sites; shift working and out-of-hours work
- The minimum requirement is to appoint a person to take charge of first-aid arrangements. The roles of this appointed person include looking after the first-aid equipment and facilities and calling the emergency services when required. They can also provide emergency cover, within their role and competence, where a first-aider is absent due to unforeseen circumstances (annual leave does not count).
- The Council will require that any first aid treatment provided must be recorded on an incident report logged with Property Services
- Where employees work alone, in isolated locations, or engage in high-risk activities, additional first aid provision including trained first aiders or emergency first aid training for all staff should be considered

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Mandatory Occurrence Reporting

12.1 This section of the Health and Safety Policy has been developed to outline the process for Mandatory Occurrence Reporting, in line with the Building Safety Act 2022 (BSA).

12.2 The BSA requires the Principle Accountable Person (PAP) to establish a mandatory Occurrence reporting system (MOR) to report building safety risks on higher-risk buildings (HRB), to the Regulator. A 'mandatory occurrence reporting system' is a means of giving information to the Accountable Person and the Building Safety Regulator (BSR).

12.3 The Building Safety Act 2022 Section 62(1) defines a 'building safety risk' as a risk to the safety of people in or about a building arising from any of the following occurring as regards the building:

(a) the spread of fire
(b) structural failure
(c) any other prescribed matter.

12.4 The Higher-Risk Buildings (Management of Safety Risks etc.) (England) Regulations 2023 defines a 'Safety occurrence' as an incident or situation relating to the structural integrity of, or spread of fire in, a higher-risk building that meets the risk condition.

12.5 The 'risk condition' is met if a part of a building in use would be likely to present a risk of a significant number of deaths, or serious injury, to a significant number of people due to an incident or situation not being remedied.

12.6 The safety occurrence must have taken place in the part of the building for which the Accountable Person (AP) is responsible.

12.7 Some examples that could meet the criteria of what to report to BSR when the building is occupied by residents, include:

• the spread of fire or something that could lead to the spread of fire
• total or partial collapse of the building
• defective building work unexpected failure or the degradation of construction materials
• the discovery of structural defects
• failure of a critical fire safety measure, such as an automatic opening vent, smoke extraction or fire doors

12.8 Some examples that could meet the criteria of what to report to BSR during the construction of a new building by the Principal Designer (PD) and Principal Contractor (PC), include:

• defective building work, including defective competent person scheme work which is part of the wider building work

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• fire safety issues likely to result in the spread of fire
• the use of non-compliant products or incompatible compliant products in the construction of the building
• inappropriate or incorrect installation of construction products
• product failure against specification and claimed performance
• faults in the design plans, caused by either design software or human error

12.9 A single reporting system is required for each Higher-Risk Building (HRB) operated by the Principal Accountable Person in accordance with s.90 of the Building Safety Act 2022.

12.10 Failure to report a building safety risk, without a reasonable excuse, is a contravention to subsection (1) of the BSA and deemed an offence which is liable on summary conviction to a fine.

12.11 The notice must be given to the Regulator as soon as is reasonably practicable under s.85(3) of the BSA. A full report must be provided to the Regulator within 10 days of it coming to the Accountable Person's attention, beginning with the day it came to the AP's attention, in accordance with reg. 27 of the Higher-Risk Buildings (Management of Safety Risks etc.) (England) Regulations 2023.

12.12 The Resident Involvement Strategy must be reviewed by the Principal Accountable Person (PAP), within a 30-day period after a MOR in relation to the building is submitted to the Regulator, under Section 87 of the BSA.

12.13 All Safety Occurrences will need to be included in the building safety case.

12.14 The AP will be responsible for ensuring the safety occurrence is recorded.

12.15 The AP will be responsible for reporting safety occurrences to the Regulator as soon as is reasonably practicable.

12.16 The AP must carry out a full report ensuring the report is recorded and issued to the BSR within 10 days of the occurrence coming to the attention of the AP.

12.17 The AP will be responsible for ensuring corrective actions are established, carried out and recorded.

12.18 The AP will be responsible for any further liaison with the Regulator on the MOR matter.

12.19 The HRA Assets Lead should be notified in writing, who will then escalate to the Director of Housing of the building that the Occurrence has been raised.

12.20 The HRA Assets Lead should inform the Director of Housing that the MOR notice has been submitted to the BSR, and should record the Mandatory Occurrence Reference Number provided by the BSR on the Council’s Housing Management Service database.

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12.21 The HRA Assets Lead and the Director of Housing should investigate the MOR notice and ensure the MOR report is submitted within 10 days.

12.22 The investigation should include the production and submission of a detailed report identifying the cause, effect and what has been done to remediate/eliminate any risk including interim measures. This report together with the MOR notice and report is included into the Golden Thread of information for the building. In addition, the Council must take interim measures to ensure the safety of residents and staff while recommendations to address systemic issues are being considered.

12.23 All MOR Reports submitted must be provided to the BSR as part of any Building Assessment Certificate (BAC) application and must include a list of incidents reported to the BSR since the last Building Assessment Certificate assessment. This must include a brief description of the incident/s, the incident date and any reference numbers provided by the BSR for the reports.

12.24 The Council will follow the same process if a resident makes a complaint that meets the criteria of what to report to the BSR

12.25 All outcomes of an MOR will be communicated to the wider Property Services and HRA team and other relevant stakeholders to ensure learning is circulated to the wider organisation.

Lone Working

13.1 The HSE have issued guidance documents which provide standards of workplace safety to be achieved such as the Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations (1999) which requires a suitable and sufficient assessment of risks arising from work activities, including reasonably foreseeable violence, to be undertaken.

13.2 This policy covers risks to staff health resulting from acts of violence or aggression whilst undertaking duties for the Council, or from risks incurred through lone working. It encompasses contractors or agency staff working on behalf of the Council as well as Council members of staff.

13.3 The Health and Safety Executive defines lone workers as “those individuals who work by themselves without close or direct supervision”. This applies to workers in a number of situations including those who work alone at a site, premises or in restricted areas, workers who are mobile and often work away from their usual workplace, home-workers and those working outside normal hours. It can also apply to specific circumstances such as being first in to, or last to leave an office.

13.4 The Council is committed to minimising risks through pro-active risk assessment, the provision of lone working guidelines and codes of safe working practice.

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13.5 The Council will not tolerate any aggressive act, physical contact or verbal abuse at the workplace.

13.6 The Council will ensure that lone workers have effective means of communication (e.g., mobile phones, lone worker alarms, check-in systems) and that procedures are in place to respond if a lone worker fails to check in or raises an alarm.

13.7 Risk assessments for lone working will consider the environment (isolated locations, high-crime areas); the nature of the task (working at height, confined spaces, electrical work); the capability of the individual (experience, training, health conditions); and arrangements for monitoring and emergency response.

Slips, Trips and Falls

14.1 The Health and Safety Executive (HSE) have issued guidance documents which provide standards of workplace safety to be achieved such as the Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999 and the Workplace (Health, Safety and Welfare) Regulations 1992.

14.2 The Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999 requirements include duties on employers to assess risks (including slip and trip risks) and where necessary take action to safeguard health and safety.

14.3 The Council will ensure that appropriate floor finishes are provided and maintained.

14.4 The Council will ensure that an appropriate cleaning regime is maintained, including dealing effectively with spillages.

14.5 The Council will ensure good housekeeping is maintained and the walkways are not obstructed.

Void Properties

15.1 The Occupiers' Liability Acts 1957 and 1984 impose duties on landlords to ensure premises are reasonably safe for lawful visitors (1957 Act) and trespassers (1984 Act). Under the Occupiers' Liability Act 1957, s.2, an occupier owes a common duty of care to all lawful visitors to ensure that they will be reasonably safe in using the premises. Under the Occupiers' Liability Act 1984, s.1, a duty of care is owed to trespassers in respect of injury suffered on the premises if the occupier is aware of the danger or has reasonable grounds to believe it exists, knows or has reasonable grounds to believe that others may come into the vicinity of the danger, and the risk is one against which the occupier may reasonably be expected to offer some protection.

15.2 It is required that where a lease or tenancy agreement has expired or has been revoked the Council have the same legal responsibilities in respect of

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unoccupied areas of any property as for the common parts of occupied premises. Unoccupied properties or units are likely to attract the attention of vandals, intruders, squatters and arsonists. A risk assessment will be undertaken to manage and reduce risks in unoccupied.

15.3 In all cases the asbestos register will be checked and if there is no record of an asbestos survey for the property one will be carried out prior to any refurbishment or re-letting, in accordance with the Control of Asbestos Regulations 2012, reg. 4 (duty to manage asbestos in non-domestic premises)

15.4 The following actions will be considered based on the type of property, its location and whether it is likely to be a short or long term void.

- Gas supply to be turned off at the main.
- Water supply to be turned off at the main and the water installation fully drained down.
- Electricity supply to be turned off at the main. If it is necessary for essential circuits to be left on for intruder/fire alarm systems etc. or lighting for periodic security visits etc., it must be ensured that the wiring to those parts is in a safe and satisfactory condition. Non-essential circuits isolated, either by turning off at the main switch or by removal of fuses, (unless required by contractor to carry out essential works).
- All letterboxes sealed to prevent insertion of flammable material.
- All combustible contents, especially waste, should be removed from inside and adjacent to the premises.
- The premises must be made secure. At the very least we would expect:
- good quality locks and bolts on all doors;
- Where a property is likely to a be long term void or where a risk assessment identified an elevated risk, glazed areas, if accessible, i.e. ground and basement windows and upper floor windows if accessible from flat roofs etc. and glass in doors, should be boarded over using suitable material;
- where intruder alarms exist, these will be used if possible;
- where provided perimeter site security, i.e. fencing and gates, will be maintained in good condition.
- Gardens to be kept well-trimmed/maintained (gives appearance property is occupied).
- The Council will ensure that void premises will be visited as defined by a risk assessment and a thorough inspection carried out internally (although it is appreciated that access to leased premises may not be possible) and externally. The frequency of visits may need to be increased, depending on the nature of the premises, its location and loss history. A log detailing times and dates of visits will be maintained.
- A record of all void property inspections must be maintained, including date, time, inspector name, condition found, and any actions taken. These records form part of the Council's evidence of compliance with its Occupiers' Liability Act duties

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- As part of the termination of contract of letting procedure gather relevant health and safety information from tenants prior to the vacation of any property/part of property.

Work at Height

16.1 The Council must adhere to the Work at Height Regulations 2005.

16.2 A place is 'at height' if a person could be injured falling from it, even if it is at or below ground level.

16.3 The Regulations apply to all work at height where there is a risk of a fall liable to cause personal injury. They place duties on employers, the self-employed, and any person that controls the work of others (for example facilities managers or building owners who may contract others to work at height).

16.4 The Regulations include schedules giving requirements for existing places of work and means of access for work at height, collective fall prevention (platforms), collective fall arrest (mitigation.), personal fall protection and ladders.

16.5 Work at height should be avoided where possible. Where work at height cannot be avoided, the Council must apply the hierarchy of measures in reg. 6 of the Work at Height Regulations 2005: (a) prevent falls through physical precautions (guardrails, working platforms); (b) where prevention is not possible, minimise distance and consequences of falls (fall arrest equipment, nets, airbags); (c) provide instruction and training.

16.6 The Council will ensure:

- That all work at height must be planned and organised, this may involve using a specialist contractor or the issue of a permit to work.
- The Council will require persons involved in work at height are trained and competent to the extent required by the type and complexity of work, in accordance with reg. 5 of the Work at Height Regulations 2005 (competence)
- The Council will require that where work at height is undertaken suitable and sufficient risk assessments have been undertaken and recommended control measures such as fall arrest systems which minimise the distance a person could fall and the consequences of a fall are used, ensuring collective protection measures (guardrails, working platforms) take priority over personal protection measures (harnesses) in accordance with Schedule 3 of the Work at Height Regulations 2005
- The Council will advise the contractor of any site specific risks e.g. where edge protection is not fitted the contractor will be advised and it will be the responsibility of the contractor to ensure that appropriate safe access arrangements are in place and enforced prior to any roof work being undertaken.
- The Council will ensure that all fixed ladders are of sound construction and securely fixed. Where the ladder is higher than two and a half metres must be provided with suitable safety hoops or fixed fall arrest systems as

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recommended by the Workplace (Health, Safety and Welfare) Regulations and in accordance with Schedule 5, para. 7 of the Work at Height Regulations 2005

- The Council will require that all ladders are securely stored in a way that will prevent use by unauthorised persons such as tenants and contractors.
- The Council will ensure that all ladders are inspected prior to every use by the user and must be subject to formal inspection by a competent person on a 6 monthly basis and a ladder log maintained. The ladders must be marked to indicate the date of the last inspection, in accordance with reg. 12 of the Work at Height Regulations 2005 (inspection of work equipment)
- The Council will ensure that all ladders are inspected prior to every use and must be subject to formal inspection on a 6 monthly basis and a ladder log maintained. The ladders marked to indicate the date of the last inspection.
- The Council will maintain all ladders used on site must be kept in good condition. Defective ladders must be immediately and correctly disposed of.
- Roof access doors and hatches must be kept locked with appropriate warning signage applied to discourage unauthorised access and where applicable, physical barriers or edge protection must be installed in accordance with reg. 6 and Schedule 2 of the Work at Height Regulations 2005
- The Council will ensure that the risks from fragile surfaces (e.g., asbestos cement roofs, glass roof lights, liner panels) are properly controlled through platforms, coverings, fall arrest equipment, or other suitable means, and appropriate warning signage applied to fragile roof areas in accordance with reg. 9 and Schedule 4 of the Work at Height Regulations 2005

Flammable Liquids & Explosive Atmospheres

17.1 The Dangerous Substances and Explosive Atmospheres Regulations 2002 (DSEAR) (SI 2002/2776) require employers to assess the risks from dangerous substances and implement control measures. Managers will ensure that:

- Flammable liquids must only be stored in an approved metal or plastic container. This must be kept secure in stores or vehicles when not in use.
- No smoking is permitted within 20m of fuel or flammable liquid.
- The storage of flammable liquids must be secure, adequately ventilated and clearly signed. All storage areas are subject to an annual Risk Assessment review.
- Controls are in place to reduce the effects of any incidents involving dangerous substances in accordance with reg. 6 of DSEAR 2002 (risk assessment) and reg. 7 (elimination or reduction of risks from dangerous substances)
- Plans are prepared and procedures to deal with accidents, incidents and emergencies involving dangerous substances.
- Employees are properly informed about and trained to control or deal with the risks from the dangerous substances.
- Employees wear all necessary Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) as defined in the Risk Assessment before commencing any works.

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Pesticides

18.1 Managers and Supervisors will ensure that

- Any employee supervising, mixing, applying pesticides or disposing of pesticide containers must hold the relevant professional competence certificate recognised under the Plant Protection Products (Sustainable Use) Regulations 2012 (formerly NPTC competence certificate
- The storage of pesticides must be secure, adequately ventilated and clearly signed. All storage areas are subject to an annual Risk Assessment review.
- The storage of pesticides does not exceed the threshold limit of 200kg, after which a Storekeeper's Certificate is a requirement.
- All pesticides must be used by authorised employees as directed by the manufacturer, supplier and container label
- Employees to wear all necessary Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) as defined in the Risk Assessment before commencing any works.

Biological Hazards

19.1 Biological Hazards, also known as biohazards, refer to biological substances that pose a threat to the health of living organisms, primarily that of humans. This can include human and medical waste or samples of a microorganism, virus or toxin that can affect human health.

19.2 There are a number of naturally occurring biohazards, which can cause serious problems to health should they be inhaled, ingested or inhaled. Examples include: plant saps (hogweed, staghorn Sumac), fungal spores, blue green algae, animal faeces, leptospirosis (weils disease), legionella.

19.3 There are a number of other biohazards, which can cause serious problems to health should they be, ingested or enter the body directly via an skin abrasion, cut or hypodermic needle. Examples include: HIV, hepatitis B, hepatitis C.

19.4 Managers and Supervisors will ensure that:

- Biohazards are considered whilst undertaking Risk Assessments (including void cleaning and fly tipped waste) and suitable precautions including specialist personal protective equipment (PPE) is used as a control measure to protect employees against all the biohazards identified in accordance with the Control of Substances Hazardous to Health Regulations 2002 (COSHH), which applies to biological agents including bacteria, viruses, fungi, and parasites
- Employees are aware that they are not to move or handle hypodermic syringes / sharps, condoms, disposable nappies or other potentially contaminated biohazards. These must be treated as clinical waste and specialist contractors engaged for safe removal.
- The area where the biohazards have been found is quarantined and reported to line management.

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• Line Management can only authorise clean-up work where biohazards are present if the employees are suitably equipped and trained to do so.
• Attention must be paid by employees to prevent biohazards being transferred via clothing or tools to employee's homes, vehicles or other premises.
• Waters systems are assessed, maintained and monitored to reduce the risks from legionella bacteria in accordance with the Health and Safety Executive's Approved Code of Practice L8 'Legionella bacteria: The control of legionella bacteria in water systems' and the Council's Legionella Risk Management Policy

Major Incidents

20.1 In response to a major incident a Major Incident Management Plan is required to ensure the Council has an agreed framework in place to respond to circumstances.

20.2 Without an agreed framework, the response to any major incident could be disjointed, unfocused, slow or less effective than needed. The plan is to be used in a range of different situations. It is not intended to replace emergency plans for protecting the health and safety of people, for example a fire evacuation plan.

20.3 The plan is designed to complement the other emergency procedures the organisation has by ensuring there is an agreed framework to respond to incidents once any immediate danger to health and safety has passed.

20.4 It is the role of the Chief Executive, or their deputy, to ensure that the organisation responds appropriately to any major incident.

20.5 Any member of staff who becomes aware of a major incident, or a situation which has the potential to be a major incident should inform a member of the Corporate Leadership Team immediately.

20.6 Although the plan is designed to be applied in all situations it is not possible to anticipate all the potential crises or disruptions. Therefore, the plan will never cover every action needed for a response to be effective but gives an indication of potential responses.

20.7 It is not always necessary to call on the whole Incident Management Team to respond. The Incident Management Team is made up of core members of staff who are expected to be involved in most instances.

20.8 Other Directors or members of staff may be called on – for particular expertise, knowledge or for guidance – depending on the nature of the incident.

20.9 Representatives of third parties may also join the team, for example from our insurers if appropriate. It is important that the Team is confident it has the necessary skills and expertise to allow them to make effective decisions in responding to a major incident. At least one deputy should be agreed for each Team Member.

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20.10 This is to:

• Provide cover if the Principal Team Member is unavailable (i.e. on holiday, sick leave etc.).
• Allow tasks to be delegated to an appropriate person if it is not necessary to have all senior managers involved.

20.11 Administrative support should be available and will be responsible for logging actions agreed by the team and recording key information as it is received. This helps ensure there is one record of what has happened, what has been agreed, any actions taken or outstanding.

20.12 Regardless of the makeup of the team established to respond to any incident, it will be responsible for the following:

• Gathering information relating to the incident and assessing the potential impact on the organisation
• Assessing the options available to respond to the incident
• Deciding on the most appropriate course of action
• Turning these decisions into a clear action plan and overseeing its implementation
• Reviewing options, decisions, and actions in light of new information as it emerges

20.13 The aim is to gather facts about what has happened:

• Are the emergency services (or any other third party) involved?
• If a third party is managing the incident who is in charge and when can you get a briefing from them?
• Are there any known injuries or fatalities?
• Has the site been evacuated, or is it being evacuated?
• Has there been damage to property or the environment as a result of the incident?
• How long is the incident likely to last?
• What critical functions and activities are likely to be affected?
• Are there any upcoming events or special circumstances that need to be factored into the decision-making process?

20.14 As the incident continues other actions should be considered:

• Decide if any specialist or operational knowledge should be brought in at this stage, for example specialist health and safety advisors, or external legal specialists
• Gather information from as many sources as necessary about what has happened,

20.15 Key areas to consider include:

20.16 The impact and potential impact on Team members and residents who may be involved in the incident

20.17 A Communications strategy for key stakeholders and statutory agencies such as the Health & Safety Executive and other interested parties such as ward councillors and MPs

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20.18 The Council will review and test the Major Incident Management Plan annually through desktop exercises or simulations, and update the plan following any major incident or significant changes to the organisation's structure or operations.

20.19 The Major Incident Management Plan will be formally reviewed and approved by the Corporate Leadership Team and reported to Cabinet to ensure member-level awareness and governance oversight

Major Incident: Major community or residents health & safety incident This event response plan is to be used for an incident that has or could put at risk the health & safety of tenants or communities. For example, a gas explosion in a block of flats, or severe weather that impacts a community.
Event Response Actions to Consider: • Contact Emergency Services incident commander or co-coordinator to be briefed on what has happened, and what others (emergency services and local authorities) are doing to respond • If necessary, consider asking the Emergency Services if we should contribute to their incident response team • Advise insurers and ask for formal advice on how to manage the response to the incident to reduce potential liabilities • Consider requesting legal advice through insurer to advise on response to incident • Co-operate with Health & Safety Executive and other agencies as required • Assess likely impact of incident on tenants, staff team and ability to deliver critical activities • If residents are made homeless by the incident liaise with the homelessness/housing needs team • Inform CLT and the Cabinet of actions agreed • Inform team members of actions agreed • Consider arranging home visits to affected residents to assess needs and communicate the proposed next steps • Consider needs of team involved in response. They may need counselling now or at some point in the future • Assess workloads and priorities for team who are involved in the response and investigation

Relevant legislation

• Health and Safety at Work Act 1974
• Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999
• Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations (RIDDOR)

Equality, diversity, inclusion, and vulnerability (including most at risk groups)

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21.1 An Equality Impact Assessment (EqIA) has been carried out to determine whether the policy would have an impact on any member of staff, tenants, or contractor workforce, which unfairly discriminates or disadvantages them in the context of the Equality Act 2010. The EqIA will be kept under review and updated if there are significant changes to the policy or evidence of differential impact on protected groups, in accordance with the Public Sector Equality Duty under s.149 of the Equality Act 2010.

21.2 Whilst the EqIA has identified that there are no particular groups who will be unlawfully disadvantaged by this policy, it is identified that there are certain groups at increased risk from health and safety incidents.

21.3 These groups are:

- children
- adults with learning difficulties
- oxygen users
- people taking certain medication
- those suffering the effects of drugs and alcohol
- adults aged 65 and older
- people with disabilities
- Individuals being supported by the Community Safety team and related support from other agencies

20.4 The Council will make reasonable adjustments to health and safety arrangements on request to accommodate employees, residents, or contractors with disabilities, in accordance with the Equality Act 2010, s.20. This may include: adapted PPE; alternative communication methods; additional training or supervision; modified work methods; accessible emergency procedures.

20.5 The Council will consult with residents, particularly vulnerable residents, where works or changes to health and safety arrangements may significantly affect their occupation or welfare, in accordance with the Regulator of Social Housing's Tenant Involvement and Empowerment Standard

20.6 This policy will be reviewed annually, or sooner if there are changes in legislation, HSE guidance, Regulator of Social Housing standards, or following a serious health and safety incident.

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Permit to Work Policy

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Purpose

1.1 The aim of this policy is to describe the procedures to be implemented to ensure that all tasks that are required to be undertaken which are controlled by the use of a permit to work are managed effectively and appropriately to ensure the issue of the permit is completed in a formalised and standardised manner. This policy is also further to the Council's statutory duties under Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974, s.2 (duty to employees) and s.3 (duty to non-employees including contractors and residents), and Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999 as the legal basis for the permit-to-work system.

1.2 The permit to work documents are easily accessible for all contractors/stakeholders and are used and completed correctly and in line with this policy.

1.3 To ensure the safety elements of a building are left in good order and to maintain the safety of the building is in place. For example fire breaks in loft spaces are not damaged or compromised and any fire doors in loft spaces are left closed and secure. Fire safety examples (fire breaks, fire doors) are managed in accordance with the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005 and, for multi-occupied residential buildings, the Fire Safety (England) Regulations 2022 (SI 2022/547)

1.4 This policy sets out the responsibilities and duty placed upon the contractor/stakeholder and the Council and any others utilising the permit to work policy.

1.5 The Council acknowledges that the effective issue and monitoring process for permits to work is key to ensure that the Council maintain and control, safe working functions for all staff, contractors and stakeholders so we can effectively manage and maintain our Housing assets. This is in accordance to the Council's duties as a landlord and housing provider, including compliance with the Fire Safety Act 2021 (which amended the Fire Safety Order to cover external walls and balconies) and Building Safety Act 2022 where applicable to housing assets

1.6 A permit to work must be obtained from the Council or the Council’s Local Authority Trading Company before any works commence.

1.7 This policy applies to Council staff and contractors who have an interest in any works where a permit to work would be required.

Definition

2.1 A permit to work is a formal documented procedure that authorises certain people to carry out specific activities that pose a significant risk within a specified time frame. It outlines precautions required to complete the work safely, based on a risk assessment. It describes what work will be done and how it will be done; the latter can be detailed in a ‘method statement’. The

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permit to work requires declarations from the people authorising the work and carrying out the work. Where necessary it also requires a declaration from those involved in shift / team handover procedures or extensions to the work. This is further to HSE guidance HSG250 *Guidance on Permit-to-Work Systems.*

2.2 The permit to work document will contain information on work required to be done and the relevant precautions that will need to be adhered to.

2.3 Typical areas / work activities that should be covered by a permit include:

- Works affecting, requires access through or in close proximity to a buildings compartmentation fire break.
- Hot works (use of naked flames, abrasive cutting, electric arc welding, hot soldering)
- Confined spaces
- High Voltage electrical work
- Excavation works
- Demolition works
- Work on scaffold towers, mobile elevated working platforms (MEWPs)
- Work in isolated locations, or areas with difficult access or those at high levels.
- Work in the proximity of, or involving, explosives or highly flammable substances
- The permit-to-work system is designed to ensure compliance with all applicable statutory requirements, including but not limited to the Confined Spaces Regulations 1997, Work at Height Regulations 2005, Electricity at Work Regulations 1989, and Construction (Design and Management) Regulations 2015.

2.4 A permit to work should ensure that:

- Everyone involved is fully aware of the hazards involved with the work activity. It is essential that the Permit Authoriser has sufficient technical knowledge of all the processes to be used, and is competent to make judgements about the safety of proceeding with the work
- Permits must be linked to suitable and sufficient risk assessments under Regulation 3 of the Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999
- The location and boundaries of work are identified, where necessary, services are isolated or made physically safe and any other specific hazards are identified and made safe where possible or suitable controls put in place
- The person(s) in charge both of the area and the operation are identified, and that all the necessary signage is displayed in and around the area
- Any monitoring or sampling required before, during and after the operation is identified

Permit-to-Work Authorising Officers

3.1 The permit issuer is denoted as the authorising officer, this person and/or role has been appointed as they are classed as a competent person and have received or have a reasonable working knowledge of the work processes due to be carried out by the requestor.

3.2 A person defined as competent when that person has sufficient training and experience or knowledge as to enable them to assist in securing compliance, on the part of the employer, with the necessary safety legislation and maintenance procedures. The definition of "competent" aligns with Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999, reg. 7(5): *"A person is competent where they have sufficient training, experience, knowledge and other qualities to enable them to properly assist in undertaking the measures needed to comply with health and safety requirements*".

3.3 The following staff are authorised to issue a relevant 'Permit-to-Work' on behalf of the Council and its local authority trading company:

- HRA Assets Lead
- Surveyors
- Operations Manager
- Director of Property Services at the Local Authority Trading Company

3.4 Authorising officers must receive specific training on the permit-to-work system, relevant health and safety legislation, and the specific hazards associated with activities they are authorised to permit. Maintain records of competence evidence (qualifications, training, CPD).

3.5 The competent person will be provided with clear guidance on how the permit to work process works and will be responsible for the following:

- Validating, Issuing, denying, monitoring and closing permit to work applications Allocating every application with a unique serial number for ease of monitoring Discussing the work to be undertaken with stakeholders/Council officers so that the identification and confirmation of any hazards can be addressed ensuring the relevant control measures can be implemented and adhered to by the requestor
- Explicit responsibility for ensuring permits specify any isolation requirements (electrical, gas, fire alarm systems) and that isolations are verified before work commences, in line with Electricity at Work Regulations 1989
- Processing the application requests, approving or denying issuing relevant documentation to the requestor
- Monitor the completion of the works to ensure compliance to any noted control measures has been adhered to
- Recalling the contractor and/or raising rechargeable repairs in the event the permit to work controls have been breached
- Inspecting the area of work to ensure all areas are still compliant in regard to fire safety elements of the structure.

Permit to work Requestor

3.6 The permit to work requestor must be able to demonstrate to the Council that they are fully competent to undertake the nature of works.

3.7 The requestor must agree, understand and adhere to any conditions imposed on them if their permit to work application is approved.

3.8 The requestor must ensure that a copy of the permit to work is available on site should inspection be requested.

3.9 The permit to work requestor will also be responsible for the following:

- Ensuring that all persons employed, contracted or being supervised by them working on the site have had the full scope of the permit to work scope of work and any conditions imposed fully explained to them as part of the site induction working practices.
- The requestor must comply with all specific regulations applicable to the work (CDM 2015, Confined Spaces Regulations 1997, Work at Height Regulations 2005, Fire Safety Order 2005)
- Ensuring all persons employed or contracted or being supervised by them working on the site hold the appropriate relevant qualifications to undertake the scope of work due to be completed.
- Ensuring that their Risk Assessments are revised to ensure the control measures are considered and implemented
- Ensuring that all persons employed, contracted or being supervised by them working on the site are trained to use any relevant specialist equipment
- Ensuring the site is left clean and tidy at the end of each working day
- Ensuring that any welfare and site compounds are left locked and secure preventing any resident or member of the public to access these areas
- Ensuring that all persons employed, contracted or being supervised by them working on the site are working in accordance with all Health and Safety Legislation, to include Construction (Design and Management) Regulations 2015 (SI 2015/51)

3.10 The Council reserves the right to verify the competence of the permit requestor and all operatives through inspection of qualifications, certifications (e.g., CSCS cards, Gas Safe registration, NICEIC certificates), insurance documentation, and risk assessments prior to approving any permit. The requestor must hold valid public liability insurance of not less than £10 million and employers' liability insurance as required by the Employers' Liability (Compulsory Insurance) Act 1969

Exemptions - Planned Work

4.1 There are no exemptions to planned work for this policy.

4.2 Reactive emergency work or out-of-hours work must be undertaken in accordance with the Council's emergency procedures and, where reasonably

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practicable, a permit to work must be obtained before commencement. Where immediate emergency work is unavoidable and a prior permit cannot be obtained, the work must be subject to a dynamic risk assessment, limited to the minimum necessary to make the situation safe, and comply with all applicable statutory requirements including the Confined Spaces Regulations 1997 and Electricity at Work Regulations 1989. A full permit-to-work retrospective review must be completed within 24 hours (48 hours if the emergency occurs on a weekend or bank holiday) to confirm that all statutory health and safety requirements were met during the emergency work

Planned Maintenance Works

5.1 If the maintenance inspections require construction and alteration works then a permit-to-work will be issued further to the to the CDM 2015, reg. 2 definition of construction work.

5.2 The Council's Operations Manager will carry out site audits annually with the contractors to ensure they meet working practises expected. Site audits should include checks on compliance with permit conditions and relevant statutory requirements (fire stopping reinstatement, working at height controls, confined spaces controls).

5.3 Each contractor will supply the following documentation, this is to be reviewed and updated annually:

- Specification, detail and certification of any proposed fire stopping to cable or pipe penetrations
- Process and method of working within loft spaces to ensure area is left compliant
- Fire stopping specifications and certification comply with Building Regulations 2010, Approved Document B (Fire Safety) and any applicable third-party certification schemes (e.g., FIRAS-accredited installer

5.4 Documentation of sites worked will be retained for a minimum of six years (or longer where Building Safety Act 2022 applies) and will be available on request, to include: date and time on site; operative carrying out the work; areas worked in; work carried out; photographic evidence of before and after.

5.5 Contractors are contractually liable for defects in their work in accordance with their appointment terms, and must report any defective areas in regard to loft spaces and fire breaks to the Council immediately.

Duration of Permits to work

6.1 The duration of the permit to work will be clearly shown on the permit to work notice.

6.2 One permit to work will be accepted for the duration of a project at one site, subject to regular review and revalidation for longer duration works,

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particularly where risk profiles change. Separate permits will be required for each different working site

6.3 Any Permit to work that is for a duration over 24 hours requires authorisation from a senior member of staff, this list includes:

- HRA Assets Lead
- Operations Manager
- Surveyors
- Director of Property Services at the Local Authority Trading Company

6.4 If work is to take longer than the dates advised due to any unforeseen circumstances, additional works, or weather implications, the contractor must apply for a new permit to work. The new permit application must include a fresh risk assessment and confirmation that control measures remain effective

Works in progress

7.1 The Council will designate an officer to act as the Clerk of Works to oversee the scope of works carried out by an external contractor to ensure the works are being completed in accordance with the agreed permit to work and all relevant statutory requirements (including CDM 2015, Work at Height Regulations 2005, Confined Spaces Regulations 1997, and Fire Safety Order 2005).

7.2 Works carried out by the Local Authority Trading Company will be overseen by the Council's Operations Manager who will manage the scope of works carried out to ensure the works are being completed in accordance to the agreed permit to work.

7.3 If the Council identifies any breaches during the scope of works being completed, the site will be shut down immediately and a written stop notice will be issued to the contractor detailing the breach and remedial action required.

Where a site is shut down under paragraph 7.3, the Council shall:

(a) issue a written stop notice to the contractor detailing the breach and remedial action required;
(b) assess whether the breach must be reported to the Health and Safety Executive under the Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations 2013 (RIDDOR);
(c) document the breach with photographic and written evidence; and
(d) not permit recommencement of work until the breach is remedied to the satisfaction of the authorising officer and, where applicable, the HSE. The Council reserves all contractual rights including termination for material breach.

Signing off a permit to work

8.1 When the scope of work is completed then the requestor must inform the Council or the Council's Local Authority Trading Company so that the work can be post inspected and signed off.

8.2 The Council and the requestor must sign off the works and confirmation that any noted conditions have been fully met and works have been completed successfully in accordance to this.

8.3 A Council officer or the Local Authority Trading Company's Director of Property Services must attend site to inspect works and ensure the property is left compliant. A Council officer or the Local Authority Trading Company's Director of Property Services must attend site to inspect works and ensure the property is left compliant. For works affecting fire compartmentation, fire doors, or fire stopping, sign-off must include verification that: (a) all fire stopping is certified in accordance with Building Regulations 2010, Approved Document B; (b) fire doors are closed, self-closers are functioning, and intumescent/smoke seals are intact; (c) any temporary breaches of compartmentation are permanently sealed with certified fire-stopping materials; and (d) a fire risk assessment review is completed if works materially affect fire safety.

8.4 Failure to adhere to conditions set out in the permit to work application will result in the requestor being issued a written notice of non compliance which could result is a termination of contract and re-charges for any repairs. Re-charges for any repairs will be levied in accordance with the contractor's appointment terms and conditions.

8.5 Signed-off permits and associated inspection records, photographs, and certifications shall be retained by the Council in accordance with its records retention policy and, where applicable, the Building Safety Act 2022 'golden thread' requirements, for a minimum period of six years

Monitoring and Closing of Permit-to-Works

9.1 The Council's Operations Manager or the Local Authority Trading Company's Director for Property Services will be responsible for ensuring work is monitored at regular intervals and that the work is signed off with the Permit-to-Work closed. The Council's Operations Manager or the Local Authority Trading Company's Director for Property Services will be responsible for ensuring work is monitored at regular intervals, that periodic audits of the permit-to-work system are conducted (sampling permits, site inspections, documentation), and that the work is signed off with the Permit-to-Work closed.

9.2 Permit requestors must ensure that the work has been undertaken to an acceptable standard and the work area has been left in a suitable condition before notifying the Permit Authoriser to cancel the permit to work. If the work has not been completed (even after an extension of time endorsement), then

the Permit Requestor must suspend the work, and ensure that the workforce are withdrawn from the area prior to contacting the responsible officer from the Council or the Local Authority Trading Company. f the work has not been completed (even after an extension of time endorsement), then the Permit Requestor must suspend the work, ensure that the workforce are withdrawn from the area, ensure the area is left in a safe condition with any temporary safety arrangements (barriers, signage, temporary fire stopping) implemented, prior to contacting the responsible officer from the Council or the Local Authority Trading Company to cancel the permit to work.

9.3 The Council will take immediate action where unauthorised entry without a Permit to Work or an official exemption is discovered. This will include commissioning a survey to assess any damage to fire safety measures or building fabric. The cost of the survey and any necessary remedial works will be recharged to the contractor in accordance with the contractor's appointment terms and conditions. Where unauthorised works result in damage to fire safety measures, the Council will consider reporting the matter to the relevant enforcing authority under the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005.

Change of Permit Requestor

10.1 If the Permit Requestor needs to hand over his/her responsibilities to another person, the work must be suspended immediately. The workforce must be withdrawn and the site left in a safe condition. The Permit Authoriser must be contacted to cancel the permit and decide on further action. If the Permit Requestor needs to hand over responsibilities to another person, the work must be suspended immediately. The workforce must be withdrawn and the site left in a safe condition. The Permit Authoriser must be contacted to cancel the permit, verify the competence of the new requestor, and decide on further action before any new permit is issued.

Emergency Procedures

11.1 Due to the increased risks involved in activities requiring a permit to work, it is essential that site-specific emergency procedures are in place that can adequately deal with the potential consequences if things go wrong. All involved in the activity must fully understand the emergency procedure and their responsibilities for implementing them. For emergency purposes, contact telephone numbers must be listed on the permit to work document.

11.2 For work in confined spaces, emergency rescue arrangements complying with the Confined Spaces Regulations 1997, regulation 5, must be in place before entry, including: identification of rescue equipment (harnesses, tripods, breathing apparatus); trained rescue personnel on standby; means of raising the alarm; and arrangements for summoning emergency services.

11.3 For hot works, emergency procedures must include: availability of suitable fire extinguishing equipment at the work location; a fire watch for at least one hour after work ceases; and evacuation procedures if required.

11.4 First aid provision must comply with the Health and Safety (First-Aid) Regulations 1981. For high-risk activities in isolated locations or confined spaces, a trained first aider must be present on site or immediately available.

11.5 In the event of any accident, injury, dangerous occurrence, or near miss, the incident must be reported to the Council's Health and Safety team immediately. The Council will determine whether notification to the Health and Safety Executive under the Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations 2013 (RIDDOR) is required.

Verification of contractors

12.1 Residents should be assured that contractors working on site have the permit to work by showing the permit when meeting residents to gain access or at the request of residents. Contractors must carry and display identification and evidence of authorisation (permit or reference to it) when meeting residents to gain access or at the request of residents.

12.2 If a resident suspects an individual or individuals or not genuine contractors with a permit to work, they should contact the Council Contact Centre to report any concerns. The Council will then investigate (in compliance with UK GDPR and Data Protection Act 2018 when handling personal data) and will update the resident on the action it is taking.

Complaints

13.1 If a requestor is not satisfied by the way in which their application has been dealt with, or in the way in which their work may be criticised, the requestor can submit a formal complaint which will be considered within 10 working days of receipt of the complaint with a response provided within 20 working days of receipt of the complaint.

13.2 If the requestor remains dissatisfied following the response under paragraph 12.1 they may escalate the matter to the Director of Housing. This procedure does not affect any legal rights or remedies available to the contractor under the contract or at law"

Equality, diversity, inclusion, and vulnerability (including most at risk groups)

14.1 An Equality Impact Assessment (EqIA) has been carried out to determine whether the policy would have an impact on any member of staff, tenants, or contractor workforce, which unfairly discriminates or disadvantages them in the context of the Equality Act 2010. The EqIA will be kept under review and updated if there are significant changes to the policy or evidence of differential impact on protected groups

14.2 The EqIA has identified that there are no particular groups who will be unlawfully disadvantaged by this policy, based on current evidence

Legislation

15.1 The following list is not exhaustive; however, the key legislative requirements relate to:

Health and Safety Legislation:

- Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974
- Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999 (SI 1999/3242)
- Workplace (Health, Safety and Welfare) Regulations 1992 (SI 1992/3004)
- Provision and Use of Work Equipment Regulations 1998 (SI 1998/2306)
- Personal Protective Equipment at Work Regulations 1992 (SI 1992/2966)
- Confined Spaces Regulations 1997 (SI 1997/1713)
- Work at Height Regulations 2005 (SI 2005/735)
- Electricity at Work Regulations 1989 (SI 1989/635)
- Control of Substances Hazardous to Health Regulations 2002 (SI 2002/2677)
- Control of Asbestos Regulations 2012 (SI 2012/632)
- Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occur

Construction and Building Regulations:

- Construction (Design and Management) Regulations 2015 (SI 2015/51)
- Building Regulations 2010 (as amended)
- Building Safety Act 2022

Fire Safety Legislation:

- Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005 (SI 2005/1541)
- Fire Safety Act 2021
- Fire Safety (England) Regulations 2022 (SI 2022/547)

Housing Legislation:

- Housing Act 2004 (Part 1: Housing Health and Safety Rating System)
- Landlord and Tenant Act 1985

Insurance and Employment:

- Employers' Liability (Compulsory Insurance) Act 1969
- Employers' Liability (Compulsory Insurance) Regulations 1998

15.2 This policy must be read in conjunction with the above legislation and any guidance issued by the Health and Safety Executive, Home Office (fire safety), Building Safety Regulator, or other relevant regulators. In the event of any conflict between this policy and statutory requirements, the statutory requirements shall prevail

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Radon Policy

Objectives

1.1 Radon is a natural, colourless and odourless gas. It is formed by the radioactive decay of small amounts of uranium that naturally occur in all rocks and soils. If left unmanaged this radioactive gas can build-up inside properties causing a potential risk to health by damaging lung tissue, and over a long period may cause lung cancer.

1.2 Radon levels vary due to an area's geology and day to day building use. The aim of this policy is to provide a radon testing and mitigation programme to identify and reduce the risk in line with prescribed target levels.

1.3 The Council will ensure that the risk from radon is managed in accordance with current legislations and guidance. This includes but is not limited to:

• Housing Act 2004
• Ionising Radiation Regulations 2017
• Housing Health and Safety Rating system
• Health & Safety at Work Act 1974
• Management of Health & Safety at Work Regulations 1999
• The Building Regulations (Approved Document C) 2010
• Construction (Design and Management) Regulations 2015
• Control of Substances Hazardous to Heath Regulations 2002.

1.4 Under the Housing Act's Health and Safety Rating System (HHSRS) the Council has a legal obligation to:

• assess risks associated with radon gas in our properties
• where the elevated levels of radon gas are identified, take appropriate action to mitigate the reduce this to a safe level.

1.5 The Building Regulations (Approved Document C) 2010 also require that where significant alterations are made to buildings or new buildings are constructed in high radon areas, protective measures are taken to eliminate the build-up of radon gas, though the presence of radon in east Oxford does not meet this threshold.

1.6 To ensure the Council is able to fulfil its responsibilities in relation to the management of radon the Council will:

- provide sufficient staffing resource to manage radon gas effectively
- implement suitable and sufficient governance arrangements to manage the risks associated with radon gas
- allocate responsibilities and duties to key officers in relation to radon monitoring and management
- employ competent persons to manage radon programmes
- conduct radon testing, where required, within suitable timeframes
- install suitable mitigation to reduce radon levels where testing shows that they exceed the action threshold
- implement effective radon management record keeping

- operate effective contract management arrangements with the contractors responsible for delivering the service, including ensuring contracts are in place, conducting client-led performance meetings and ensuring the contractors employee and public liability insurances are up to date on an annual basis
- engage with customers to inform and promote radon awareness
- consider use of the legal remedies available within the terms of the tenancy or lease agreement should any tenant, leaseholder or shared owner refuse access to conduct essential radon related inspection and remediation works.
- conduct and maintain a risk and control self-assessment for radon management and operations setting out our key risks from radon and appropriate mitigations. This living document is the responsibility of Property services.

Roles and responsibilities

2.1 As a landlord the Council has a responsibility under the Housing Act 2004 to provide residents with safe homes that are free from hazards.

2.2 As an employer the Council has a duty to provide a safe working environment to our employees under the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974 and the Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999.

2.3 The Chief Executive will have overall responsibility for this policy, and delegates day-today management of these duties to the Director of Housing and to the Housing Revenue Account (HRA) Assets Lead.

2.4 The Corporate Leadership Team will:

• scrutinise the implementation of the radon policy and its related procedure
• provide sufficient resource for the implementation of a robust and compliant system of radon management, in line with relevant legislation.

2.5 The Compliance Manager and the HRA Assets Lead will:

• promote awareness of this radon policy and its associated procedure, across the Council and oversee the management of the radon, ensuring that the Council remains compliant with relevant legislation and guidance
• develop clear and robust communication with residents about radon
• regularly report radon programme performance on an agreed consistent basis to the Corporate Leadership Team with regular oversight of radon programme performance by the HRA Assets Lead with direct accountabity to the Director of Housing
• develop, maintain, and regularly review the radon procedure on a quarterly basis
• develop and implement a radon testing strategy across the housing estate in east Oxford
• procure and oversee performance management of a competent contractor to undertake radon testing and mitigation work
• arrange for mitigation work to be completed in a timely and efficient manner, when testing shows this is required

• where required, arrange for the cyclical inspection and maintenance of radon mitigation installations (such as fans, pumps)
• liaise with managers and other employees on matters relating to radon control and provide support and ongoing advice across the organisation
• ensure relevant radon data is recorded, updated, monitored, and held in an appropriate location.

2.6 The Council will:

• ensure that staff and contractors working on radon remediation systems are appropriately trained to do so
• provide residents with information on radon, including any costs associated with mitigation measures installed, at the beginning of their tenancy and make them aware of their radon related obligations in their tenancy agreement
• will consider appropriate actions in respect of of no access to properties further to the need for the inspection and remediation requirements as contained within this policy
• ensure all new build developments are compliant with the relevant radon control legislation and guidance
• provide competent health and safety advice as stipulated in regulation 7 of the Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999
• investigate accidents and incidents involving radon with a view to highlighting opportunities for improvement.

2.7 Council staff will

• ensure they are aware of the radon management policy and procedure and their duties within these
• immediately report any radon related issues to Property Services

2.8 Residents will:

• follow the guidance supplied around radon safety in their home
• report any faults/defects in the radon mitigation measures which are installed

Programme and remedial works

3.1 The Council will undertake its radon testing programme using the information provided in the UK Health Security Agency's radon map. This assigns areas of the UK a percentage radon potential score.

3.2 The Council does not currently have any properties recorded which sit in a radon affected area above 10%. Therefore the risk of radon in respect of damaging residents' health is limited. However, regular monitoring is required, as stipulated within this policy, to assess the level of radon on a regular basis.

3.3 The Council will:

- Review radon maps and housing stock data to identify properties requiring testing based on location, age, construction type and footprint.

- Develop a dynamic multi-year testing plan informed by property risk profiling and previous screening results.

- Deploy passive radon detectors in designated homes according to best practice for optimal placement and duration.

- Retrieve detectors at radon levels of Becquerels/m3 and analyse these at accredited laboratories.

- Install appropriate remediation solutions where levels exceed 200 Bq/m3.
- Conduct rigorous post-remediation validation testing over 3 months during winter to confirm radon reduction.

3.4 Where a result of less than 200Bq/m3 is confirmed, no further action will be taken, however o the following mitigation measures will be installed:

- Result (in Bq/m3) 200-299 - Passive ventilation system
- 300-800 - Active ventilation system
- Above 800 - Active ventilation system (high rated pump)

3.5 Following the installation of mitigation measures the property will be retested within a month of this installation to confirm that the radon level has been sufficiently reduced.

3.6 Active ventilation systems will be serviced one year after installation and every two years thereafter by a competent contractor.

3.7 Properties in 3-10% radon potential bands, or those in 1-3% with mitigation measures installed, will be retested after any change of tenancy or significant alteration, such as a large extension.

3.8 Perform further investigative measurements if validation results remain elevated.

3.9 Review test records to identify geographical radon hotspots requiring more frequent screening.

3.10 Maintain a comprehensive register of all properties tested, results, mitigation details and confirmation testing.

3.11 Report any readings above the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) notification levels to Public Health England as required.

3.12 Provide tenants with transparent communication on risks, testing schedules, results and mitigation works on an annual basis.

3.13 Ensure internal teams and external contractors follow proper radon measurement and installation protocols.

3.14 Continually evaluate technological developments in radon prevention and detection solutions.

Data

4.1 The Council will maintain an asset register of all properties. This data will be compared to the information in the UK Radon map to confirm the properties that are potentially affected.

4.2 All radon testing programmes are managed though appropriate software, and paperwork (such as mitigation installation information and lab testing certificates) whichis also transferred to our data records.

Competent persons

5.1 Only competent contractors will be used to complete radon related activities. Contractors undertaking this work will be a member of the UK Radon Association or the European Radon Association. When testing is completed radon detectors will be sent for analysis at a laboratory operating under the UK Health and Security Agency validation scheme. This scheme ensures good laboratory practices giving assurance on the quality of results being received.

Resident engagement

6.1 The Council consider good communication essential in effective radon management. This will support residents in their understanding of radon and advise residents as to how they can keep themselves and others safe and encourage them to report any concerns to the Council.

6.2 The Council will share information clearly and transparently and will ensure that information is available to residents through regular publications and information on our website.

6.3 The Council will:

• implement a suitable radon detection programme across our homes
• install radon mitigation measures where the radon level detected is above the action threshold of more than 200Bq/m3
• maintain any radon mitigation measures to ensure they remain effective
• regularly promote radon awareness with residents
• advise residents of the results of radon testing undertaken within their homes, including providing specific information and assurance if increased radon levels are detected
• keep residents updated on any radon mitigation works taking place
• act upon any radon safety concerns reported by residents
• consider any suggestions made by residents that could improve radon control

• liaise with residents regularly to discuss radon safety precautions and other compliance matters.

6.4 Residents who are wanting to report a non-urgent safety concern can do so by using this link - Report a Building Safety Concern with council housing | Instructions – Oxford City Council

6.5 All emergency and urgent safety reports should be made to 01865 249811.

Performance reporting

7.1 Performance data will be provided to the Corporate Leadership Team.

7.2 The content of these reports will include:

• Number of properties where radon testing has been conducted
• Number of programmed properties where radon testing is outstanding, including where detectors have been placed but are still within their three-month testing period
• Number of mitigation installations completed
• Number of mitigation installations outstanding
• Information on cases of no access .
• Narrative in relation to properties where radon testing is outstanding
• Details of radon levels where mitigation installations are required.

Quality assurance

8.1 The Council will review all radon testing certificates to ensure high standards are met.

8.2 All mitigation installations requiring electrical work are reviewed and signed off by an appropriate professional in Property Services.

Policy review

9.1 The policy will be reviewed annually unless there is:

• a significant radon incident
• an important change in circumstances or legislation, which would warrant a review being carried out at an earlier date
• any significant issues raised regarding the policy, by an independent organisation undertaking audit or review.

9.2 All non-compliance issues will be reported and escalated as soon as possible, and no later than 24 hours after the incident or of a Council officer or contractor becoming aware.

9.3 Any non-compliance issues at an operational level will be formally reported to the Operations Manager within Property Services and, where necessary, the

HRA Assets Lead in the first instance, who will agree an appropriate course of corrective action.

9.4 In cases of serious non-compliance, the Director of Housing will consider whether it is appropriate to disclose the issue to the Regulator for Social Housing as required by the regulatory framework, or any other organisations such as the Health and Safety Executive.

Equality, diversity, inclusion, and vulnerability (including most at risk groups)

10.1 An Equality Impact Assessment (EqIA) has been carried out to determine whether the policy would have an impact on any member of staff, tenants, or contractor workforce, which unfairly discriminates or disadvantages them in the context of the Equality Act 2010.

10.2 Whilst the EqIA has identified that there are no particular groups who will be unlawfully disadvantaged by this policy, it is identified that there are certain groups at increased risk from lack of awareness. These groups are:

- children
- adults with learning difficulties
- oxygen users
- people taking certain medication
- those suffering the effects of drugs and alcohol
- adults aged 65 and older
- people with disabilities
- Individuals being supported by the Community Safety team and related support services

10.3 This policy aims to reduce the risks to these groups of people through proactively identifying these risk factors, raising awareness and education.

To:	**Cabinet**
Date:	18 March 2026
Report of:	Director of Economy, Regeneration and Sustainability
Title of Report:	Project approval and delegations for the Harebell Road affordable housing development

Summary and recommendations	
Decision being taken:	The report seeks project approval and delegations in relation to the affordable housing scheme at the former garage site on Harebell Road. The report seeks approval to commence the appropriation of land from the current purpose of garages to a planning purpose, within the General Fund. The report also notes the future intent to appropriate land from the General Fund ("GF") to the Housing Revenue Account ("HRA") where necessary, prior to completion of the scheme.
Key decision:	Yes Issue details - Project Approval and Delegations for the Harebell Road affordable housing scheme | Oxford City Council
Cabinet Member:	Councillor Linda Smith, Cabinet Member for Housing
Corporate Priority:	More Affordable Housing
Policy Framework:	Housing and Homelessness Strategy 2023 to 2028

Recommendation(s): That Cabinet resolves to:

1. **Grant project approval** noting Full Council allocation of the £863,000 budget for this scheme within the Housing Revenue Account Capital Programme as part of its budget setting in February 2026, to develop this scheme, as set out in this report, within the allocated Housing Revenue Account capital budget and business plan, for the purpose of delivering more affordable housing in Oxford on the Harebell Road former garage site;
2. **Delegate authority** to the Deputy Chief Executive - City and Citizens' Services in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Housing; the Group Finance Director/Section 151 Officer; and the Council's Monitoring Officer, to enter into design and build contracts and any other necessary agreements to facilitate the

delivery of the scheme within the identified budget, except where there is an existing officer delegation within the Council's Constitution;

3. **Agree** to commence the process for the appropriation of this site (as per the red line shown at para 5) to a planning purpose;
4. **Note** the intent to take a report to the Full Council to approve the appropriation of land from the General Fund (GF) to the Housing Revenue Account (HRA) at a later date (prior to scheme completion).

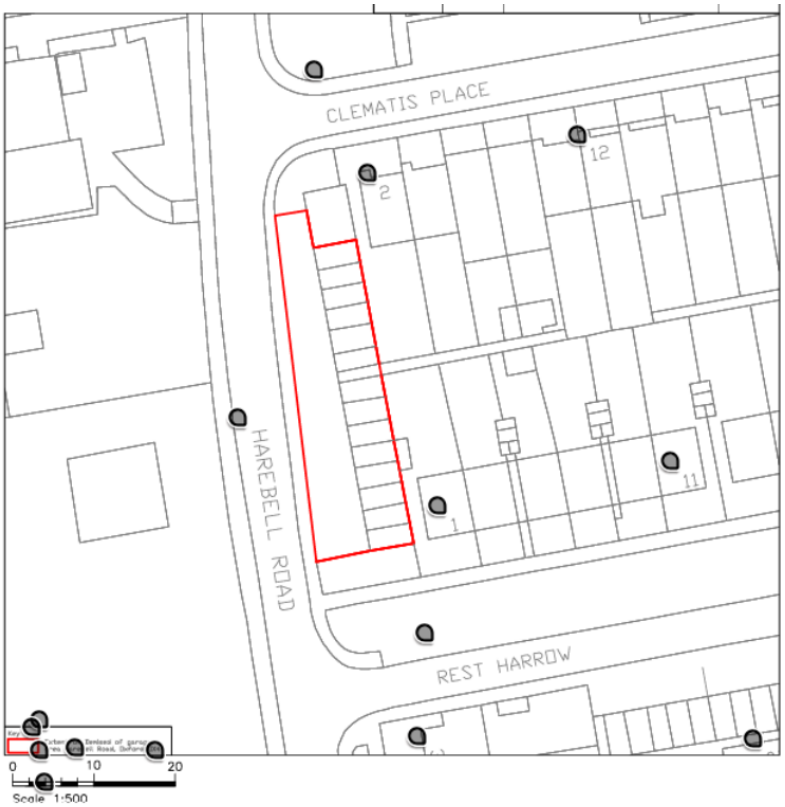
Appendix No.	Appendix Title	Exempt from Publication
Appendix 1	Financial Information for the Harebell Road development	This information is exempted from publication under Schedule 12A to the Local Government Act 1972 on the following basis: **Commercial Sensitivity**
Appendix 2	Risk Register	No

Introduction and background

1. The Council is progressing a comprehensive supply programme to deliver additional affordable housing through multiple workstreams, including development via the Council's housing company, Oxford City Housing (Development) Limited (OCH(D)L), direct Council delivery, joint ventures and regeneration schemes, strategic acquisitions enabling activity with Registered Providers, community-led housing groups and other partners.

2. Across the four-year period from April 2025 to March 2029, the Council's Affordable Housing Supply Programme aims to deliver over 1,600 new affordable tenure homes with at least 850 of these at the most affordable Social Rent level.
3. The garage site at Harebell Road forms part of a portfolio of garage sites in the Blackbird Leys ward, where a significant proportion of garages are vacant due to their inability to accommodate modern vehicles. Most are used solely for storage, representing underutilised brownfield land, often attracting anti-social behaviour, with strong potential to unlock much needed housing in Oxford.
4. The Council owns approximately 1,925 garages across 200 sites citywide, with 39% currently unlet. In Blackbird Leys alone, around 305 garages exist, with occupancy levels substantially lower, most sites have a majority of garages standing empty.
5. The Harebell Road site formerly contained 14 garages and shares its northern boundary with two Oxford City Council properties and a SSEN substation. The garages were constructed directly against the substation, with a party wall forming the shared boundary between the two structures.

Figure 1: Red Line Plan



6. This site benefits from Brownfield Land Release Fund (BLRF) support, which has enabled the demolition of the garages, paving the way for housing development.

Brownfield Land Release Funding for site enabling works

7. The Brownfield Land Release Fund (BLRF) is a cross-government programme led by the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG) and the One Public Estate (OPE) partnership, delivered jointly with the Local Government Association and the Cabinet Office. The scheme provides grant funding to support the release of council-owned brownfield land for housing development.
8. The Council successfully secured funding of £340,221 for five sites in August 2023. £75,260 relates specifically to Harebell Road. The bid was submitted under BLRF Round 2. Funding conditions require the Council to:
9. Complete contract-enabling works by the end of March 2024; and
10. Release the land for housing by the end of March 2027 (defined as signing a Development Agreement, transferring land for enabling works, or achieving Start on Site for direct delivery); and
11. Update non-housing land and property assets on the ePIMS Lite system by the end of the financial year.
12. There is a limited risk of grant repayment if demolition and groundworks are completed but the Council is unable to meet the March 2027 land-release deadline. This risk has been discussed with the Local government Association (LGA) and Cabinet Office and is considered minimal. It is further mitigated through robust due diligence to ensure that viable and deliverable housing proposals are in place prior to full expenditure of BLRF2 funds.

13. The first funding condition has been met, with the Council contracting ODS to undertake enabling works in March 2024. The garages were demolished in August 2025, and the site is hoarded and prepared for development.

Oxfordshire Community Land Trust (OCLT) Partnership

14. Cabinet granted approval in January 2024 for the Council to enter into a lease with the Oxford Community Land Trust (OCLT).

15. This site, together with Balfour Road and Pegasus Road, forms part of a wider group of brownfield garage sites where the Council has been working in partnership with OCLT and Transition by Design (TbD) since 2020. The purpose of this collaboration has been to develop an innovative model for small-scale, community-led housing schemes on underused garage sites, with the intention that the approach could be replicated and scaled across additional sites in the future.

16. A feasibility study covering all three sites was undertaken in 2021, funded through the Local Government Association's Housing Advisors Programme (HAP).

17. The original proposal envisaged the Council granting OCLT a long lease (likely 125 years) to enable redevelopment. OCLT would deliver the affordable homes with nomination rights to the Council (entering into the Oxford Register for Affordable Housing (ORAH) agreement). OCLT commenced early design development with Transition by Design and held a first pre-application meeting with the Local Planning Authority in May 2025.

18. While OCLT will continue to progress Balfour Road and Pegasus Road, feedback from the initial pre-application stage indicated that the Harebell Road site is unlikely to support four units as originally anticipated. With the reduction of one (and potentially two) units, combined with existing financial constraints, OCLT has determined that delivery of homes at Harebell Road is not viable and has withdrawn from involvement in this site. OCLT also has limited pre-development funding, which restricts their ability to progress a third site in parallel with the other two within the BLRF delivery timescales.

Development Programme and Strategy

19. Following the decision that OCLT will no longer deliver homes on this site, and in light of the attached BLRF funding conditions, the Council must commence works and achieve start on site by March 2027 in order to meet funding requirements and avoid risk of grant repayment.

20. It is therefore proposed that the Council takes forward the development of homes on this site. OCLT has agreed that the Council may utilise the design work developed to date with Transition by Design, helping to minimise additional costs and support an accelerated route to planning submission.

21. The recommendation is that the homes are delivered directly by the Council through the Affordable Housing Supply (AHS) team, working with Transition by Design to secure planning consent. Subject to planning approval, the Council would then enter into contract with a suitable contractor to complete construction.

22. The site is currently held within the General Fund and will need to be appropriated to the Housing Revenue Account (HRA) following the grant of planning permission by

Full Council. Prior to submission of the planning application, the site should also be appropriated for planning purposes to manage and suspend any residual rights that could otherwise impede delivery, thereby supporting a smoother and lower-risk development process.

23. Following the initial pre-application advice, the Council is aiming to deliver 3 one bed (two person) affordable homes at Social Rent on this site. This is the preferred delivery option and full financial details are included in Appendix 1. Further appraisals and sensitivity analysis, show if necessary, an alternative option to deliver 2 one bed (two person) homes remains a viable option. However, this would result in the loss of one unit, and the Council's preference is to maximise delivery by providing the additional home. The financial appraisal outputs can also be further improved if the tenure was switched to Affordable Rent (capped at LHA) if required.

Table 1: Indicative programme

Early Feb 2026	Pre-application (Pre-App)
End May 2026	Planning submission
Jul-Sept 2026	Procurement work
Oct 2026	Planning approval (target)
Oct-Dec 2026	Start procurement (post-consent)
Feb - March 2027	Start on Site (with contingency) (Backstop BLRF Mar 27)
February/March 2028	Practical Completion (PC)

Alternative Options Considered

24. Consideration was given to delivering the scheme through OCH(D)L; however, due to the limited scale of the development, this option was assessed as impractical. OCH(D)L's delivery model is geared towards larger schemes where economies of scale can be realised, and the overhead costs associated with mobilising their approach would not represent good value for money on a site of this size. For these reasons, delivery via OCH(D)L was discounted in favour of a more proportionate and cost-effective route.

25. There are no viable alternatives to the proposed approach other than not progressing the scheme. Failure to proceed would prevent the delivery of much-needed affordable homes and would also place the Council at risk of having to repay the Brownfield Land Release Fund (BLRF) that has already been allocated and expended on this site.

Financial implications

26. The total scheme costs are included within the approved HRA capital programme. The proposed scheme satisfies all of the required parameters – Pay Back Years, NPV, and IRR. Full details regarding the financial appraisal is included in Appendix 1.

Legal issues

27. The site is currently held within the Council's General Fund and used as a garage site. It is proposed that the land be appropriated for planning purposes within the General Fund and, following the grant of planning permission, subsequently appropriated from the General Fund to the Housing Revenue Account (HRA). This will enable the delivery of affordable housing and ensure compliance with Section 122 of the Local Government Act 1972 and Section 19 of the Housing Act 1985. Appropriation for planning purposes will also enable the Council, where necessary, to rely on the statutory override of certain third-party rights under section 203 of the Housing and Planning Act 2016, with affected parties entitled to compensation.

28. Procurement of goods, services, and works for the purpose of developing homes must be carried out in accordance with the Council's Constitution, Contract Rules, procurement procedures and in compliance with the Procurement Act 2023 (or any successor legislation), where applicable, including adherence to transparency, fairness and best value principles.

29. The proposals set out in this report fall within the Council's statutory powers including its powers to provide and manage housing through the Housing Revenue Account (HRA). The general power of competence under the Localism Act 2011 and the Local Authorities (Land) Act 1963 enables the Council to develop land it already owns. These powers support the proposed direct delivery of the scheme by the Council.

30. The Council will need to enter into construction and consultancy contracts directly in connection with this development. Such agreements must be carefully structured to comply with procurement law, avoid unlawful subsidy, and protect the Council's financial and delivery interests.

31. The Council's Constitution provides that the project approval for schemes of the value of £750,000 and over falls within the remit of the Cabinet and, therefore, the Cabinet has the power to take decisions in line with the recommendations contained in this report.

Level of risk

32. The overall level of risk for the Harebell Road scheme is assessed as manageable, with several critical programme and planning risks requiring ongoing oversight. The most significant relates to meeting the Brownfield Land Release Fund requirement to achieve Start on Site by March 2027, where delay could expose the Council to grant-repayment risk. This is being mitigated through a tightly managed programme, parallel procurement preparation, regular reporting, and contingency measures such as early contractor engagement. Planning risks remain material due to site constraints.

33. The risk register is included in Appendix 2.

Equalities impact

34. There are no adverse impacts in undertaking this activity, with the potential to improve provision for persons in housing need, through the provision of more affordable and accessible housing to better meet client needs.

Carbon and Environmental Considerations

35. All development schemes delivered by the Council are subject to high sustainability standards with the expectation that they exceed statutory (building) standards.

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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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Delivery of Affordable Housing - Cabinet Report - March 2026

Appendix 2 - High Level Risk Register - Harebell Road

Scoring methodology: Likelihood (L) and Impact (I) are scored **1-5**. **Inherent score = L × I** before controls. **Residual score** reflects the position after mitigations.

RAG thresholds: Green 1–5; Amber 6–10; Red 11–25.

ID	Risk	Cause / Context	Consequence	L	I	Inherent Score / RAG	Key mitigations & controls	Residual L	Residual I	Residual Score / RAG	Target / Trigger
R1	**Failure to meet BLRF "Start on Site" by March 2027**	Challenging programme; planning and procurement must complete to reach BLRF milestone	Grant clawback and reputational impact; delay to affordable homes delivery	3	5	**15 / Red**	Maintain critical path; parallel procurement prep during determination; regular OPE/LGA reporting; contingency float to Feb–Mar 2027; early contractor engagement	2	4	**8 / Amber**	BLRF backstop Mar 2027
R2	**Planning consent risk / reduced capacity**	LPA pre-app feedback limits site to 3 units	Refusal / redesign; programme delay; cost increase	3	4	**12 / Red**	Proceed on 3x1b2p preferred option; submit robust planning pack	2	4	**8 / Amber**	Pre-App 2 and planning submission
R3	**Appropriation delays (GF to planning purpose; later GF to HRA)**	Statutory steps, consultation/objections, scheduling Full Council	Programme impact; legal challenge risk if sequencing is wrong	2	4	**8 / Amber**	Commence appropriation for planning purpose pre-submission; prepare Full Council report for GF to HRA post consent; publish notices; maintain counsel review	2	3	**6 / Amber**	Cabinet/Full Council cycles
R4	**Access / easements - central footpath to rear gardens**	Existing easement for 4, 6, 8 and 10 Clematis Place must be retained	Layout constraints; re-design and cost	2	4	**8 / Amber**	Design to retain path; secure construction phase management plan; consult affected residents; legal confirm easement wording	2	3	**6 / Amber**	RIBA Stages 2–3
R5	**Utilities conflicts (SSEN substation proximity / unknown services)**	Former party wall with SSEN; possible constraints/wayleaves; diversions	Redesign; cost/time overrun; H&S interface risks	3	3	**9 / Amber**	Early utilities mapping, GPR & service clearance; confirm SSEN requirements; protect zones in design; programme any diversions early	2	3	**6 / Amber**	Pre-RIBA 3 design freeze

R6	**Construction market interest / price volatility on a small scheme**	Limited appetite for 3 units; tender risk pricing	Budget pressure; procurement delay	3	4	**12 / Red**	Soft market testing; use appropriate lot/framework; maintain contingency	2	4	**8 / Amber**	Pre-tender
R7	**Budget / HRA affordability risk**	Inflation; design development; sustainability standards	Re-scope; funding gap	3	4	**12 / Red**	Live cost plan; independent benchmarking; value engineering gateways; retain client contingency; confirm funding sources	2	4	**8 / Amber**	Each gateway
R8	**Procurement compliance (Procurement Act 2023) & challenge**	Process/ advertising	Legal challenge; delay; reputational harm	2	4	**8 / Amber**	Route-to-market plan; legal review of documents; transparency and audit trail; conflict-of-interest controls	1	4	**4 / Green**	ITT issue/award points
R9	**Survey gaps / design liability**	Outstanding letters of reliance; evolving topo/ utility info	Liability gaps; redesign; claims risk	3	3	**9 / Amber**	Close out reliance letters; define novation and collateral warranties; document control; change control process	2	3	**6 / Amber**	Prior to contract
R10	**Stakeholder / neighbour objections**	Perceived impacts (trees, amenity, access); high local sensitivity	Objections; extended determinations	2	3	**6 / Amber**	Targeted engagement; clear narrative on social rent need; retain access path; manage construction impacts	2	2	**4 / Green**	Pre-submission
R11	**Health & Safety / site security pre-start**	Vacant, hoarded site; adjacent substation; public realm interface	Incident; enforcement action	2	5	**10 / Amber**	Maintain hoarding & inspections; CDM roles appointed; pre-construction information pack; utilities exclusion zones	1	5	**5 / Green**	Ongoing
R12	**Programme governance and internal approvals**	Cabinet approvals; Legal/Finance sign-offs; report cycles	Slippage into BLRF window	2	4	**8 / Amber**	Forward plan for Cabinet & Full Council; draft reports early; escalation route agreed	2	3	**6 / Amber**	Each decision point

To:	**Cabinet**
Date:	18 March 2026
Report of:	Clive Tritton/ Carolyn Ploszynski, Director of Economy, Regeneration and Sustainability
Title of Report:	Project approvals and delegations for Redbridge Paddock affordable housing development

Summary and recommendations	
Decision being taken:	This report seeks project approval and delegations to enable the continued delivery of more affordable housing at the Redbridge Paddock site
Key decision:	Yes https://mycouncil.oxford.gov.uk/mgIssueHistoryHome.aspx?IId=41810&PlanId=572&RPID=66080022
Cabinet Member:	Councillor Linda Smith, Cabinet Member for Housing Councillor Ed Turner, Cabinet Member for Finance and Asset Management
Corporate Priority:	More Affordable Housing
Policy Framework:	Housing and Homelessness Strategy 2023 to 2028

Recommendation(s): That Cabinet resolves to:

1. **Give project approval** for the development, including the land sale and acquisition of affordable dwellings developed by Oxford City Housing (Development) Ltd (OCH(D)L) for which budgetary provision has been made in the Council's Housing Revenue Account (HRA) in respect of Redbridge Paddock;
2. **Delegate authority** to the Deputy Chief Executive - City and Citizens' Services, in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Housing; the Head of Financial Services/Section 151 Officer; and the Head of Law and Governance/Monitoring Officer, to finalise the scheme design and financial appraisals and enter into any necessary agreements and contracts to facilitate the agreed purchase by the Council of the affordable housing (to be held in the HRA) and any associated land, within the identified budget, for the provision of the affordable homes, as set out in this report, on the Redbridge Paddock development, within the project approval;

3. **Delegate authority** to the Deputy Chief Executive (Place), in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Finance and Asset Management; the Head of Financial Services/Section 151 Officer; and the Head of Law and Governance/Monitoring Officer, to approve the final terms, which will be S123 compliant, and enter into the sale agreement for the Redbridge Paddock site from the General Fund to OCH(D)L;

Appendix No.	Appendix Title	Exempt from Publication
Appendix 1	Financial Information and risk for Redbridge Paddock	Yes This information is exempted from publication under Schedule 12A to the Local Government Act 1972 on the following basis: **Commercial Sensitivity**
Appendix 2	Risk Register	

Introduction and background

1. The Council continues to develop a supply programme to deliver more affordable housing through multiple delivery routes. These include direct delivery schemes; partnerships and joint ventures; regeneration projects; acquisitions and advance purchase agreements; and enabling work with Registered Providers, community-led Housing groups, and other partners. Direct delivery schemes can comprise of developments delivered directly by the Council (in the HRA) and also developments brought forward by Oxford City Housing Limited (OCHL) – trading as OX Place.

2. This report relates specifically to the Redbridge Paddock scheme. It seeks to secure Cabinet approvals to progress this OCH(D)L scheme including the sale of the land to OCH(D)L, who will undertake the development, and then the subsequent purchase of all affordable homes into the HRA (as freehold) on completion.

Development programme

3. As an OCHL delivered scheme, this model of delivery proposed would commit the Council to selling the land for development and then buying back the affordable homes and any associated land. The Council will hold the affordable housing stock, and any directly associated land, within the HRA on completion.

4. The Council has allocated sufficient budget in the Medium-Term Financial Plan (MTFP) and the HRA business plan, for this purpose. The current consultation budget (2026/27 and MTFP) proposes to continue the capital funding provision.

5. The scheme is detailed below, with additional financial appraisal information provided in the (commercially sensitive) appendix to this report.

Redbridge Paddock

6. Redbridge Paddock is an 8.99 acre/ 3.64-hectare site owned by Oxford City Council and situated in Hinksey Park ward. The site sits opposite the Redbridge Park and Ride (across Abingdon Road). To the other side it borders Weirs Mill Stream.

7. It is an allocated housing site in the current Local Plan 2036 (adopted June 2020), and in the emerging Local Plan 2045. The Local Plan 2036 proposed residential development at Redbridge Paddock delivering a minimum of 162. The Regulation 19 consultation for the 2045 Local Plan opened in January 2026, following approval by Council on 26th January 2026, and proposes a minimum of 200 homes.



Red line image depicting extent of the site



Aerial photo of site referencing the red line

8. From the late 1960s almost all of the site was used for landfill. Landfill operations ceased in 1972, after which it was infilled and covered over to create made ground. The land has remained largely unused ever since; however, from 2013 to 2023 a tenant grazed horses on the land. The site will be sold for development on the basis of vacant possession.

9. As a former landfill site it will require extensive remediation and enabling work to make the site safe and suitable for development. Numerous site investigations have been undertaken with a team of specialist consultants developing an appropriate strategy to address the contamination while also limiting local disruption.

10. The site is held for General Municipal Purposes in the General Fund. As such, the Council holds the land under its general powers and there is no single statutory purpose fixing or constraining its use by virtue of how it is held by the Council. It is currently managed by Corporate Assets, and was formerly, leased for horse grazing.

11. The site has a long history, in part due to specific site abnormalities along with the desire for the scheme to be an exemplar development for design and sustainability. Key elements relate to moorings, site density, parking requirements and its status as a former landfill. The scheme is only viable to bring forward with subsidy support to address the costs of remediation and enabling works. A bid is being prepared for Homes England for grant funding to support the remediation and decontamination works. Such subsidy is required to make the scheme viable and is assumed in the financial modelling, with more information shown in Appendix 1.

12. Density expectations have evolved over several years. Previously the site was anticipated to deliver at a higher density of approximately 295 homes. However, the current proposal improves the viability and deliverability of this mixed-tenure scheme, whilst still ensuring the levels of affordable housing delivery across the wider programme, as previously envisaged.

13. The approach to parking has yet to be developed. There is a preference minimise the parking provided within the development, in part due to the proximity of the park and ride scheme. A range of options is being explored in conjunction with the Local Planning Authority which will need to balance the need and impact of resident parking along with visitor parking, blue badge and car club spaces.

Scheme detail

14. This is a 50% affordable housing scheme which will deliver 118 much-needed affordable homes. There is a mix of unit types from 1-bedroom flats to 5-bed houses. 94 homes (80%) are to be let at Social (Council) Rents to households on the housing register, and 25 (20%) homes are to be developed as Shared Ownership tenure.

15. A further 119 properties will be available for outright market sale. The total number of homes on the site is 237. A full breakdown of expected unit types and tenures is detailed below.

Proposed accommodation schedule (subject to planning)

Size	SR	AR	SO	Total Aff	Aff %	OMS	OMS %	Total
1B2PF	39		10	49	80%	12	20%	61
2B4PF	20		5	25	38%	41	62%	66
3B5PH	17		5	22	36%	40	64%	62
4B7PH	16		4	20	46%	24	54%	44
5B6PH	1		1	2	50%	2	50%	4
Total	**93**		**25**	**118**		**119**		**237**
%				**50%**		**50%**		**100%**

16. A minimum of 10% of the site should be for public open space, which should be accessible for existing local residents. In accordance with planning requirements, 5% of the affordable homes (for which the City Council is responsible for allocations or nominations) will be designed to the M4(3) wheelchair accessible standard. Currently this will provide six accessible properties.

17. It is proposed that circa 20 homes from the market sale properties will be sold to Oxfordshire Cohousing (OCH) for the purpose of creating a co-housing scheme. This has been provisionally agreed with OCH and will progress on the basis of an advance purchase deal.

18. The site does not currently have planning consent, which means there is some planning risk. More detail on the planning risks, including reference to moorings and parking, are noted in the risk register (Appendix 2).

19. The submission of an Outline planning application for this scheme is currently targeted for August 2026. The scheme is already in the pre-application process. As such, this Cabinet report is being presented relatively early in the development process. This provides OCHL with improved contractual certainty from the Council with regards to the purchase of the homes and enables contracts with developers to be more quickly progressed.

20. As such, it should be noted that the scheme details (including layouts; unit numbers; size and tenure mixes; etc) are likely to still change. If changes are made, then the development appraisals will require re-assessment. Officers will continue to ensure that all the HRA financial parameters and tests continue to be met, reverting to Cabinet for re-approval if they are not, or if the scheme delivery approach is substantially changing.

21. The scheme has previously had two pre-apps and a public consultation (which took place in September 2024). These have elicited key feedback from planners and the public as the scheme advances.

Development programme

22. The proposed development programme milestones are outlined in the table below:

Table 1: Proposed Development Programme

Project Milestone	Target Date
Outline planning submission	August 2026
Outline Determination	March 2027
Reserved Matters planning submission	June 2027
Reserved Matters determination	Dec 2028
Discharge Conditions & Enabling Works	Up to Feb 2029
Start on Site (Phase 1)	Feb 2029
Final phased PC handovers	2030/31 to 2033

Innovation

23. The scheme is intended as a sustainability exemplar development. It is envisaged as a low- or zero-carbon development. In line with other OCHL developments this will deliver a 40% or more reduction in carbon emissions (on 2022 building regulations). It will take a fabric first approach with high levels of thermal efficiency and focus on renewable energy, including photovoltaic technology. The homes will be all-electric, with air-source heat pumps and PV.

24. It is also intended that the scheme takes an innovative approach to place-shaping and building a community. This includes engagement with Oxfordshire Cohousing to shape a diverse and sustainable community with a key focus on developing facilities for children's play.

25. On completion, OCHL will sell the land and the affordable homes to the Council The land sale will be Section 123 compliant. The affordable housing, and land directly associated with it, will be held in the HRA.

Alternative options considered

26. There are no further alternatives to the proposed options, other than to not progress with the scheme, as outlined, this is considered the approach that best ensures feasibility and a viable scheme that can be delivered.

27. Options relating to the sale of the land for housing by a third party have been considered, but the viability-gap from the cost of remediation is not considered to generate land values beyond current assumptions.

Financial implications

28. This report seeks the required delegations to further develop this scheme within the programme of affordable housing supply. The Council's Medium Term Finance Plan (MTFP), approved at Council on 11 February 2026, supports the 40-year HRA Business Plan, and makes provision for purchases of affordable housing from OCHL's 10-year development programme, alongside direct delivery by the Council, within an overall budget envelope of £385.6m (before grant and shared ownership sales).

29. The decision to proceed with any development or buy-back will be supported by a development scheme appraisal/ financial modelling to ensure that financial parameters and requirements are met for OCHL and the HRA. The HRA parameters are:

    - a payback period of up to 70 years; and
    - a positive Net present value (NPV) over a 70-year life; and
    - an internal rate of return (IRR) of at least 3%.

30. Meeting these parameters ensure that the HRA business plan remains financially robust. Conversely not meeting these parameters will impact this position.

Legal issues

31. The activity, as set out in this report, relates to activity for the purpose of developing homes as affordable housing. This is within the Council's statutory powers. The Council has power to dispose of land by agreement under section 123 of the Local Government Act 1972.The Council has power to acquire land by agreement under section 121 of the Local Government Act 1972.

32. The Council has Homes England Investment Partner status and has Registered Provider status, in order to receive grant on any 'additional' affordable homes beyond the requirement in the planning consent.

33. Procurement of goods and services for the purpose of developing homes must be carried out in accordance with the Council's Constitution, Contract Rules, procurement procedures and in compliance with the Procurement Act 2023 (or any successor legislation), including adherence to transparency, fairness and best value principles.

Level of risk

34. Any risks inherent in this programme are already identified elsewhere, with actions to mitigate these detailed in the OCHL and HRA Business Plans and the Council's Medium Term Financial Plan.

35. The risks include potential cost overruns or visibility, and legal exposure if contracts are not appropriately structured. These risks will be mitigated through detailed financial appraisals, use of established governance delegations, and legal oversight throughout procurement and contracting stages.

Equalities impact

36. There are no adverse impacts in undertaking this activity, with the potential to improve provision for persons in housing need, through the provision of more affordable and accessible housing to better meet client needs.

Carbon and Environmental Considerations

37. All development schemes delivered by the Council / OCHL are subject to high sustainability standards with the expectation that they exceed statutory (building) standards.

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

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Appendix 2: High-Level Risk Register (Summary) – Redbridge Paddock Affordable Housing Scheme

Risk Category	Risk Description	Likelihood	Impact	Overall Rating	Mitigation / Controls
1. Planning	Delays or challenges to the planning process. A key issue relates to the approach to **parking,** which has yet to be agreed. Delays could prevent or slow delivery of the scheme. Site allocation seeks the provision of residential **moorings** and associated facilities on the site.	High	High	High	• Development of a clear Planning Strategy; Delivery approach & communication plan. • Ongoing discussions with planning & ODRP and a pre-app with highways. • Consideration of issues and risks possible from the Environment Agency (as a statutory consultee) • Transparent consultation process.
2. Ground Conditions	There are multiple risks to the viability and deliverability of the project due to the history of the site – including re-routed historic waterways and former use as a landfill site.	Medium-High	Medium-High	Medium-High	• Adequate survey period allowed within current programme. • Hill engaging contractors on decontamination options. • Coordination with Homes England on bid for remediation works. • Careful preparation of drainage strategy
3. Programme Delay	Planning determination (outline and RMA), or procurement delays could push construction commencement beyond planned dates, impacting OHCL and HRA business plans and possibly grant funding opportunities.	Medium	High	High	• Maintain robust programme governance with OCHL. • Secure funding early for remediation and enabling works. • Resolve critical path dependencies (parking – moorings – self-build/ custom housing) at earliest opportunity.

4. Financial Viability	Rising construction costs, abnormal ground conditions, or inflationary pressures could threaten scheme viability against OCHL and HRA parameters	Medium- High	High	High	• Undertake updated cost plan reviews at each gateway. • Conduct value engineering through design phases. • Explore grant funding, market sale and shared ownership revenue optimisation, and phasing.
5. Procurement & Contracting Risk	Risk of non-compliance with the Procurement Act 2023 or issues in structuring the Development Agreement, leading to legal challenge or financial exposure.	Low-Medium	High	Medium-High	• Early legal review of procurement route. • Follow Council Contract Rules and maintain audit trail. • Use standard forms of contract with appropriate risk allocation.
6. Cohousing	Planning requirement to provide 5% of site area developed for residential for self-build/ custom homes. This will require careful coordination.	Medium	Medium	Medium	• Ongoing liaison with Oxfordshire Cohousing. • Site strategy to be developed.
7. Ecology	Ecological significance of site currently unknown. Protection/mitigation measures may be required which could impact on the scheme, programme and viability. Riverbank ecology will be important.	Medium-High	Medium-High	Medium-High	• OXP to update on current BNG position, mitigation options and next steps, including any legal advice on land management.
8. Views	Heights and massing will largely be dictated by the impact to views. Possible viability issues if massing is significantly impacted.	Low-Medium	Medium	Medium	• Design team to continue to engage with officers and demonstrate that proposed heights and massing are appropriate through architectural treatment and design.

9. Legal Challenge	Objection or challenge – including on planning decisions could delay the project.	Low	High	Medium	• Ensure any statutory notices and consultations are properly executed. • Maintain strong evidence base of need for housing
10. Delivery Capacity & Resourcing	Insufficient internal or consultant capacity across project management, planning, legal, assets or design disciplines could delay the scheme.	Medium	Medium	Medium	• Agree clear roles • Retain multidisciplinary design team support. • Maintain programme-based resource planning.
11. Statutory Services infrastructure	Insufficient electrical capacity (from SSEN) to sufficiently serve the site (and all electric spec); lack of sufficient capacity in the water or waste networks to meet programme delivery.	Low-Medium	High	Medium-High	• Planning and strategic electrical advisers engaged to work on these issues early • Constant review of this risk through all project stages

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To:	**Cabinet**
Date:	18 March 2026
Report of:	Director of Economy, Regeneration and Sustainability
Title of Report:	Project approval and delegations for the Sandy Lane Recreation ground affordable housing development

Summary and recommendations	
Decision being taken:	The report seeks project approval and delegations in relation to the affordable housing scheme at the Sandy Lane Recreation Ground, together with the relocation of football pitches and providing changing facilities and storage as set out in the report. The report also seeks approval to commence the process for the appropriation of the land from its current purpose (including recreation ground and open space) to a planning purpose, within the General Fund. The report further notes the future intention, subject to separate decision of Full Council, to appropriate land from the General Fund ("GF") to the Housing Revenue Account ("HRA"), prior to completion of the scheme.
Key decision:	No Issue details - Project Approval and Delegations for Sandy Lane Recreation Ground affordable housing scheme | Oxford City Council
Cabinet Member:	Councillor Linda Smith, Cabinet Member for Housing Councillor Ed Turner, Cabinet Member for Finance and Asset Management
Corporate Priority:	More Affordable Housing
Policy Framework:	Housing and Homelessness Strategy 2023 to 2028

Recommendation(s): That Cabinet resolves to:
1. **Grant project approval** noting Full Council allocation of the £97,551,302 budget for this scheme within the Housing Revenue Account Capital Programme as part of its budget setting in February 2026, to fund the development of this scheme, as a proposed Housing Revenue Account ("HRA") project, as set out in this report, within the allocated HRA capital budget and business plan, for the purpose of delivering more affordable housing in Oxford on the Sandy Lane Recreation Ground site; 2. **Delegate authority** to the Deputy Chief Executive – City and Citizens' Services in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Housing; the Group Finance Director/Section 151 Officer; and the Council's Monitoring Officer, to enter into design and build contracts and any other necessary agreements to facilitate the scheme development within the identified budget, except where there is an existing officer delegation within the Council's Constitution. Facilitating the scheme development includes the relocation of football pitches and providing a pavilion as set out in the report; 3. **Agree** to commence the process for the appropriation of this Site (as per the red line shown at para 12) to a planning purpose, following completion and handover of the replacement playing pitch facilities at Herschel Crescent and **note** the intention to bring forward a further report for Cabinet to consider the appropriation of the Site from recreation/open space purposes to planning purposes and the potential to rely on *section 203 of the Housing and Planning Act 2016* in the event of interference with private rights; 4. **Note** the intent to take a report to the Full Council seeking approval for the subsequent appropriation of the Site from the General Fund (GF) to the HRA (prior to practical completion of the scheme or delivery of the first phase, if delivery of the units is phased).

Appendix No.	Appendix Title	Exempt from Publication
Appendix 1	Financial Information for the Sandy Lane Recreation Ground development	This information is exempted from publication under Schedule 12A to the Local Government Act 1972 on the following basis: **Commercial Sensitivity**
Appendix 2	Risk Register	No
Appendix 3	Equalities Impact Assessment	No

Introduction

1. The Council continues to develop a supply programme to deliver more affordable housing through multiple delivery routes. These include direct delivery schemes; partnerships and joint ventures; regeneration projects; acquisitions and advance purchase agreements; and enabling work with Registered Providers, community-led Housing groups, and other partners. Direct delivery schemes can comprise of development delivered directly by the Council (where the Council procures and directly contracts with a design and construction contractor to develop housing) and also developments brought forward by Oxford City Housing Limited (OCH(D)L (where the Council engages OCH(D)L to act as a developer, to procure and contract with a design and construction contractor to develop housing, usually involving a sale of the Council's land to OCH(D)L and purchase back of completed development).

1. Across the four-year period from April 2025 to March 2029, the Council's Affordable Housing Supply Programme aims to deliver over 1,600 new affordable tenure homes with at least 850 of these at the most affordable Social Rent level.

2. This report concerns the Sandy Lane Recreation Ground scheme. It seeks Cabinet approval to progress the scheme as detailed in this report through direct delivery by the Council, funded via the HRA. The recommended approach is to appoint OCH(D)L - trading as OX Place - as the Council's Development Agent to project manage the scheme and administer a design and construction contract on the Council's behalf, as this represents the most appropriate delivery model for the scheme, as it is delivering 100% affordable housing for the HRA on Council owned land.

3. For the purposes of this report, OCH(D)L will be referred to as OCHL. The arrangement will be formalised through a Development Services Agreement (DSA) between the Council and OCHL.

Background

2. The Sandy Lane scheme is allocated in the current Local Plan 2036 and in the emerging Local Plan 2045 where it proposes residential development at Sandy Lane, delivering a minimum of 300 homes.

3. The proposed scheme will be 100% affordable housing and designed to integrate high-quality public open space, enhanced green infrastructure, and biodiversity improvements in line with policy requirements. Development will respond to the site's gateway role created by the new Cowley Branch Line station, ensuring strong connectivity, active travel routes, and high quality placemaking.

4. This scheme has been part of the Council's development programme for some time, with previous iterations exploring different scales and tenure mixes. It was originally included in the OCHL pipeline as a development site under a model where the Council would sell the land to OCH(D)L and subsequently purchase back the affordable homes. Following review, the scheme is now considered more appropriate for direct delivery by the Council. This change reflects its nature as a 100% affordable housing scheme on Council-owned land, which provides greater value for money for the HRA and ensures that development appraisal financial parameters are met.

5. The approach aligns with the wider strategy for Redbridge and Diamond Place, with these three schemes forming the cornerstone of the future direct delivery programme. Together, they will secure improved outcomes for affordable housing provision.

6. Capital budget provision within the HRA was approved by Council in February.

Site Information

7. **Image 1: Red Line Plan**



8. The Site is a 5.15-hectare site in Blackbird Leys, currently in Council ownership and held within the General Fund for recreation purposes, including football pitches, a pavilion, and an area of hardstanding let to a third party.
9. The Site lies between two major transport corridors: the Eastern Bypass to the north and the Cowley Branch railway line to the south. It is accessed from Blackbird Leys Road to the southwest and sits adjacent to Oxford Retail Park and the ARC Business Park to the northeast.
10. It is well positioned near the proposed Cowley Branch Line station, offering strong connectivity and a future gateway role. It lies within Flood Zone 1 and has some surface water flood risk.
11. To enable delivery of the scheme and following completion and handover of the replacement facilities at Herschel Crescent, subject to the Cabinet approval, the land at the Sandy Lane site will be appropriated to planning purposes within the General Fund. Following the grant of planning permission and prior to the practical completion of any of the residential units, the site will be appropriated from the General Fund to the Housing Revenue Account, subject to approval by Full Council.

Pitches Background and Strategy

12. Sandy Lane Recreation Ground currently accommodates four football pitches. These pitches serve as the home ground for Greater Leys Football Club and form part of the overall playing field hectarage available for local football activity. As such, the reprovision of this sporting function is essential to unlocking the housing development at Sandy Lane.

13. Sport England's Playing Fields Policy requires that any loss of playing field land is mitigated either through a like-for-like quantitative replacement of the land area or, where this is not achievable, through a qualitative improvement that provides equivalent or enhanced sporting value.

14. The emerging Local Plan 2045 states that specific consideration should be made for reprovision of enhanced pitch facilities in order to address the loss of this particular type of open space on the Sandy Lane site.

15. The Sandy Lane site is bigger than the Herschel Crescent site therefore there will be a loss of hectarage. This deficit means that a full quantitative replacement of playing field land is not feasible. Consequently, the scheme must adopt Sport England's qualitative improvement pathway, ensuring that the reprovision delivers enhanced pitch quality, year-round usability, improved facilities, and better overall accessibility for the community.

16. To meet this requirement, the Council is reproviding the pitch capacity currently available to Greater Leys FC through an upgraded offer at Herschel Crescent Recreation Ground. Four pitches will be delivered at Herschel Crescent, supported by new purpose-built changing facilities and secure storage. This improved site reflects community feedback and will provide more coherent and sustainable long-term football playing fields.

17. Alongside the Herschel Crescent reprovision, the Council is exploring the delivery of an additional pitch on an alternative Council-owned site. This additional pitch will help offset the quantitative land deficit and represents a proactive enhancement that further supports compliance with Sport England's Playing Fields Policy.

18. The freehold of Herschel Crescent is owned by the Council. It has been leased to Littlemore Parish Council for community recreation purposes, but the lease has being formally surrendered back to the Council. As part of this arrangement, the site will remain in recreational use, and the Council will assume responsibility for maintaining the improved playing fields, including drainage management, grounds upkeep and the running and lifecycle costs associated with the new changing facilities. Any future enhancements to the site must align with community and Council objectives.

19. Consultants and sports specialists have been commissioned to refine the detailed design of the reprovided pitches at Herschel Crescent and the additional pitch elsewhere. They are developing layouts and associated cost plans to ensure that the preferred solution delivers high-quality infrastructure, operational resilience and long-term value for Greater Leys FC, other local football stakeholders and the wider community.

20. Overall, this strategy complies with planning requirements and Sport England guidance by prioritising the delivery of high-quality, accessible and sustainable pitch infrastructure. In addition to maintaining equivalent access to pitch formats, the reprovision will provide Greater Leys FC with modernised, higher-specification facilities, improved drainage and more reliable year-round pitch availability, as well as enhanced changing rooms, storage and parking. This approach offers qualitative betterment over the current Sandy Lane provision and supports both community use and the release of the Sandy Lane site for urgently needed affordable housing.

21. Consultation with local clubs, Sport England, and ward members has informed the revised proposal, ensuring flexibility, safe access, and adequate storage. Initial Consultation has taken place with Sport England, local football stakeholders, ward

members, and community representatives to inform the proposal. Through these discussions, stakeholders highlighted the need for flexible pitch layouts, appropriate on site facilities and storage, safe access arrangements, sufficient parking capacity, and high quality maintenance. This feedback has directly shaped the preferred approach at Herschel Crescent, ensuring the design responds to operational needs and community priorities. Further consultation will continue throughout the design and planning stages to confirm mitigation requirements, refine the pitch layout, and ensure the proposals remain aligned with community needs and regulatory expectations.

22. The proposals seek to fully ensure the continuous use of current, or enhanced, football provision throughout, with no development on Sandy Lane until the new facilities are operational.

Scheme Details

23. The scheme is detailed below, with additional information relating to the financial appraisal provided in Appendix 1 (commercially sensitive) to this report.

24. This is a 100% affordable housing scheme delivering 331 homes to meet general housing needs. The proposed mix includes flats ranging from 1-bedroom to 3-bedroom and houses of 4 bedrooms. Of these, 261 homes (79%) will be for Social Rent and 70 homes (21%) for Shared Ownership, ensuring full affordability across the development. The unit types include 1-bed, 2-bed, 3-bed, and 4-bed homes, with provision for larger family accommodation such as 4-bedroom (7 person) houses. Accessibility is also addressed, with 5% of homes built to the M4(3) standard (wheelchair accessible). Table 2 provides a detailed breakdown of tenure and unit types.

Table 2: **Tenure and unit types**

Size	SR	AR	SO	Total Aff
1B2PF	97		20	117
2B4PF	78		30	108
3B4PF	19		0	19
3B5PF	44		13	57
4B5PH	13		4	17
4B7PH	10		3	13
Total	**261**	**0**	**70**	**331**
%	**79%**		**21%**	**100%**

25. The mix across tenures and between houses and flats accommodates a balanced approach which seeks to prioritise affordability whilst ensuring the financial viability of the scheme.

26. A full multidisciplinary design team is engaged on the Sandy Lane scheme, ensuring comprehensive expertise across architecture, engineering, landscape, and planning disciplines. The design process has been informed by two pre-application submissions and three reviews by the Oxford Design Review Panel (DRP), which

have shaped the proposals to align with best practice and local policy. The scheme adopts a high-density yet relatively low-rise form, responding to the site's urban context and the emerging Local Plan aspirations. This approach balances the need for significant affordable housing delivery with sensitive integration into the surrounding residential environment. The design also reflects feedback from the DRP, focusing on placemaking, permeability, and sustainability.

27. The planning journey will follow a hybrid approach, with an outline application to establish key parameters and a reserved matters application to secure detailed design. The proposals respond proactively to the future Cowley Branch Line station, creating a gateway development that enhances connectivity and supports sustainable travel. The masterplan incorporates a central boulevard and station square, complemented by a hierarchy of green spaces, including a circular green corridor around the site to maintain biodiversity and provide high-quality amenity.

28. The Council is undertaking a strategic review to ensure that the emerging proposals take appropriate account of the opportunities and considerations associated with the Cowley Branch Line. This will include a broad assessment of how the scheme responds to potential connectivity, accessibility, and long-term sustainability benefits. The work completed to date has been developed in ongoing collaboration with key partners, and further coordination will continue as the proposals evolve to ensure strategic alignment.

29. Site-specific issues have been addressed, including ending the lease arrangement for the motorcycle training area on the hardstanding to the north of the site and the need to relocate existing sports pitches (as discussed in the Pitches Background and Strategy section above). The design proposal also mitigates constraints such as noise from adjacent transport corridors and level changes along Blackbird Leys Road, while safeguarding ecological buffers; delivering biodiversity net gain; and providing open green space surrounding the development suitable for walking and exercising.

30. Sustainability is embedded throughout the proposed scheme, with measures including Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems (SuDS), permeable paving, rain gardens, and a robust biodiversity strategy. The development will achieve policy-compliant energy efficiency standards and incorporate active travel infrastructure, car-free principles as outlined in the emerging local plan, and EV charging provision. The design prioritises pedestrian-friendly streets, shared surfaces, and high-quality materials to create a distinctive and enduring character.

31. The Council will undertake a high-level review to ensure that the emerging design and supporting financial model take appropriate account of the infrastructure considerations associated with a development of this scale. This will include a broad assessment of key service and community needs, alongside an overview of existing local capacity. Where any additional requirements are identified, the proposals will be refined as necessary to incorporate suitable provision.

32. In the proposal the homes will be designed to a high quality, exceeding a 40 per cent reduction in carbon emissions (against 2022 building standards). The scheme will use a fabric-first approach to minimise energy consumption and cost, with a target of zero carbon for regulated energy. An all-electric scheme is expected to achieve this, with air-source heat pumps and PV panels on roofs. An EPC rating of B or above is expected.

33. This is a low car development as it is close to public transport services and located in a Controlled Parking Zone (CPZ)

Development Programme

34. The proposed development programme milestones are outlined in the table below.

Table 1: Proposed Development Programme

Project Milestone	Target Date
Play Pitch Relocation Planning Submission and determination	June 2026 – November 2026
New Playing Pitch facilities operational	August 2027
Appropriation of Sandy Lane to a Planning Purpose	September 2027
Outline Planning Submission for Sandy Lane	January 2027
Outline Determination	June 2027
Reserved Matters for Phase 1 (60 units) Planning Submission	August 2027
Reserved Matters for Phase 1 Determination	November 2027
Procurement for Phase 1	November 2027 - April 2028
Discharge Conditions and Enabling Works	May 2027 - July 2028
Start on Site Phase 1	June 2028
Appropriation from the GF to the HRA	November 2029
Handover Phase 1	December 2029
Completion all phases	Summer 2034

Alternative Options Considered

35. A ‘do nothing’ option was considered but discounted. Retaining the site in its current form would not support the Council’s strategic objective to increase the supply of affordable housing and would fail to maximise the potential of an under-utilised General Fund asset. The site is allocated for residential development in both the current Local Plan 2036 and the emerging Local Plan 2045, and therefore a non-intervention approach would not align with adopted or emerging policy direction. Furthermore, it would not address significant housing demand pressures in the city or contribute to the Council’s Affordable Housing Supply Programme.

36. The Council also considered the sale of the site on the open market. While a disposal could generate a capital receipt, this option was rejected because it would not secure 100% affordable housing, nor guarantee that the scale, tenure mix, or design quality would reflect the Council’s priorities. A sale would also result in the long-term loss of control over development outcomes and reduce opportunities to ensure the best value for the HRA and Oxford residents. For these reasons, outright disposal was deemed inconsistent with strategic corporate priorities.

37. A partnership or joint venture model was reviewed, including potential collaboration with registered providers or private sector partners. Although partnership models can transfer risk or accelerate delivery, they typically involve shared control, mixed-tenure outputs, and less flexibility in aligning delivery with the Council's programme and HRA business planning requirements. Given that the Sandy Lane scheme is intended to deliver 100% affordable housing on Council-owned land, a partnership arrangement was not considered to offer sufficient additional value and would introduce unnecessary complexity at this stage. Ownership of the homes is assumed within the HRA Business Plan.

38. Consideration was also given to progressing the scheme as an OCHL led development, where OCHL would be appointed as a developer and directly procure and contract with a design and construction contractor (usually involving sale of Council land to OCHL and purchase back of completed development). Following review, this approach was not taken forward. As a 100% affordable housing scheme on Council land, direct delivery by the Council (where the Council directly procures and contracts with a design and construction contractor) offers a stronger value-for-money position and aligns more closely with the wider strategic approach taken for other major sites such as Diamond Place and Redbridge. It also ensures full alignment with financial parameters already established for HRA-led schemes.

39. Finally, multiple alternative housing mix options were explored, including varying levels of shared ownership or introducing market housing. These were discounted as they would not meet the ambition for a wholly affordable scheme nor respond appropriately to Oxford's acute housing needs. The selected mix, predominantly Social Rent with a proportion of shared ownership, supports financial viability, meets a range of household needs, and aligns with policy expectations and the HRA business plan. Alternative mixes were modelled but were either financially unviable or delivered fewer homes at Social Rent levels, and therefore not recommended. As a 100% affordable housing scheme, all the homes are eligible for grant, so the net cost to the HRA is significantly improved.

Financial implications

40. This report seeks the required delegations to further develop this scheme within the programme of affordable housing supply. The Council's Medium Term Finance Plan (MTFP), approved at Council on 13 February 2025, supports the 40-year HRA Business Plan, and makes provision for purchases of affordable housing from OCHL's 10-year development programme, alongside direct delivery by the Council, within an overall budget envelope of £385.6m (before grant and shared ownership sales).

41. The decision to proceed with any development will be supported by a development scheme appraisal/ financial modelling to ensure that financial parameters and requirements are met for OCHL and the HRA. These parameters have been previously agreed and for the HRA are as follows for each scheme:

42. a payback period of up to 70 years; and
43. a positive Net Present Value (NPV) over this period; and
44. an Internal Rate of Return (IRR) of at least 3%.

45. Meeting these parameters ensures that the HRA business plan remains financially robust. Conversely, not meeting these parameters will impact this position.

46. The proposed scheme will be eligible for Homes England funding, ideally through the portfolio approach in the Social and Affordable Housing Programme 26-36.

Legal issues

47. The site is presently held in the General Fund for recreation/open space. Following completion and operation of the replacement facilities at Herschel Crescent, and subject to outline consent being in place, it is proposed to appropriate the land to *planning purposes* pursuant to section 122(1) Local Government Act 1972.

48. As site comprises open space, the Council will, where applicable, comply with the section 122(2A) LGA 1972 requirement to advertise the proposed appropriation and consider any objections before making a decision.

49. Appropriation to planning purposes would enable reliance, where necessary, on section 203 Housing and Planning Act 2016 to allow the development of the Scheme to proceed notwithstanding interference with certain third-party rights, with compensation payable in accordance with the legislation.

50. Prior to practical completion of the first units, a further appropriation from the General Fund to the Housing Revenue Account will be sought pursuant to section 19 Housing Act 1985.

51. Procurement of goods, services and works for the purpose of developing the scheme, including for the purpose of enabling the development by relocating the existing football pitches on the Sandy Lane site, must be carried out in accordance with the Council's Contract Rules, procurement procedures and in compliance with the Procurement Act 2023 (or any successor legislation) where applicable, including adherence to best value principles.

52. The proposals set out in this report fall within Council's statutory powers including the power to provide and manage housing through the HRA. The general power of competence under the Localism Act 2011 and the Local Authorities (Land) Act 1963 enables the Council to develop land it already owns. These powers support the proposed direct delivery by the Council of the Sandy Lane site.

53. The Council will need to enter into construction and consultancy contracts directly for this development, as well as agreeing a DSA with OCHL. The appointment of OCHL as development agent via a DSA may rely on the teckal exemption, provided the legal criteria are met. Such agreements must be carefully structured to comply with procurement law, avoid unlawful subsidy, and protect the Council's financial and delivery interests.

54. The Council's Constitution requires that the project approval for schemes of the value of £750,000 and over fall within the remit of the Cabinet and, therefore, the Cabinet has the power to take decisions in line with the recommendations contained in this report.

Level of risk

55. Any risks inherent in this programme are already identified elsewhere, with actions to mitigate these detailed in the OCHL and HRA Business Plans and the Council's Medium Term Financial Plan.

56. A high-level risk register is included in Appendix 2 to support early-stage project approval. The principal risks relate to the reprovision of football pitches, statutory land

appropriation, planning pathway, financial viability within the HRA business plan, and compliance with procurement legislation. Mitigations are in place through established governance, legal oversight, and early engagement with key stakeholders including Sport England, Littlemore Parish Council, OCHL, the local community and Homes England.

Equalities impact

57. There are no adverse impacts in undertaking this activity, with the potential to improve provision for persons in housing need, through the provision of more affordable and accessible housing to better meet client needs.

58. An Equalities Impact Assessment has been undertaken and is included in Appendix 3.

Carbon and Environmental Considerations

59. All development schemes delivered by the Council / OCHL are subject to high sustainability standards with the expectation that they exceed statutory (building) standards.

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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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Appendix 2: High-Level Risk Register (Summary) – Sandy Lane Recreation Ground Affordable Housing Scheme

Risk Category	Risk Description	Likelihood	Impact	Overall Rating	Mitigation / Controls
1. Planning & Appropriation	Delays or challenge to the land appropriation process (GF to planning purpose and then to the HRA) could prevent or slow delivery of the scheme.	Medium	High	High	• Early legal engagement to confirm statutory compliance under LGA 1972 and Housing Act 1985/ HPA 2016 • Transparent consultation process. • Ensure reprovision of pitches is fully aligned with planning requirements prior to appropriation.
2. Pitches Reprovision & Sport England Compliance	Failure to deliver Sports England compliant reprovision of football pitches at Herschel Crescent and additional off-site provision prior to development could lead to objection from Sport England and delay planning approval.	Medium	High	High	• Complete detailed design, costings and delivery programme for Herschel Crescent ahead of outline submission • Maintain active engagement with Sport England, Greater Leys FC, and ward members. • Secure funding and procurement route for pavilion and pitch works
3. Programme Delay	Planning determination (outline and RM), pitch reprovision, or procurement delays could push construction commencement beyond planned dates, impacting HRA business plan and Homes England funding opportunities.	Medium	High	High	• Maintain robust programme governance with OCHL. • Secure Homes England programme alignment early. • Resolve critical path dependencies (pitches-appropriation -outline) at earliest opportunity.
4. Financial Viability	Rising construction costs, abnormal ground conditions, or inflationary pressures could threaten scheme viability against HRA parameters	Medium	High	High	• Undertake updated cost plan reviews at each gateway. • Conduct value engineering through design phases. • Explore grant funding, shared ownership revenue optimisation, and phasing.
5. Procurement & Contracting Risk	Risk of non-compliance with the Procurement Act 2023 or issues in structuring the Development Services Agreement, leading to legal challenge or financial exposure.	Low–Medium	High	Medium–High	• Early legal review of procurement route and DSA. • Follow Council Contract Rules and maintain audit trail. • Use standard forms of contract with appropriate risk allocation.
6. Community Opposition	Concerns regarding loss of open space, relocation of pitches, traffic, or	Medium	Medium	Medium	• Deliver clear and open communications on benefits (100% affordable, new open space, biodiversity gains).

	design intensification could lead to opposition that influences planning outcomes or reputational risk.				• Engage proactively with residents, clubs, parish councils. • Use pre-app and DRP feedback to support planning case.
7. Environmental & Technical Constraints	Surface water flood risk, noise from nearby transport corridors, ecological sensitivities, or ground contamination may require additional mitigation, increasing cost or complexity.	Medium	Medium–High	Medium–High	• Commission detailed surveys (flood modelling, acoustic, ecology, geotechnical). • Integrate SUDs, buffers, biodiversity net gain and acoustic design early. • Engage with the Local Highway Authority and transport consultant to confirm access requirements, assess impacts on nearby transport corridors, and identify any necessary mitigation.
8. Strategic Dependency – Cowley Branch Line Station	Delay or change in the delivery of the new station could undermine assumptions around connectivity and sustainability, affecting planning or design assumptions.	Low–Medium	Medium	Medium	• Scenario-plan design to ensure scheme viability regardless of station delivery. • Maintain liaison with Network Rail and planning policy colleagues.
9. Legal Challenge	Objection or challenge related to open space disposal, appropriation, or planning decisions could delay the project.	Low	High	Medium	• Ensure all statutory notices and consultations are properly executed. • Maintain strong evidence base of need for housing and pitch reprovision.
10. Delivery Capacity & Resourcing	Insufficient internal or consultant capacity across project management, planning, legal, or design disciplines could delay the scheme.	Medium	Medium	Medium	• Agree clear roles in the Development Services Agreement. • Retain multidisciplinary design team support. • Maintain programme-based resource planning.
11. Statutory Services infrastructure	Insufficient electrical capacity (from SSEN) to sufficiently serve the site (and all electric spec); lack of sufficient capacity in the water or waste networks to meet programme delivery.	Low-Medium	High	Medium-High	• Carry out Utilites Mapping and coordination to constantly identify risks through all project stages • Maintain regular engagement with SSEN to confirm capacity, identify constraints early, and manage any upgrade requirements. • Engage early with Thames Water to confirm water supply and drainage capacity and secure timely approvals for connections/diversions.



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Appendix 3 – Sandy Lane Rec Development – Cabinet 18 March 2026 - Equalities Impact Assessment

Service Area: Economy, Regen and Sustainability	**Section:** Affordable Housing Supply	**Date of Initial assessment:** 12/01/2026	**Key Person responsible for assessment:** D. Scholes	**Date assessment commenced:** 12/01/2026
Name of Policy to be assessed:		Sandy Lane Recreation Grounds affordable housing development		
1. In what area are there concerns that the policy could have a differential impact		*Race*	*Disability*	*Age*
		Gender reassignment	*Religion or Belief*	*Sexual Orientation*
		Sex	*Pregnancy and Maternity*	*Marriage & Civil Partnership*
Other strategic/ equalities considerations		*Safeguarding/ Welfare of Children and vulnerable adults*	*Mental Wellbeing/ Community Resilience*	
2. Background: Give the background information to the policy and the perceived problems with the policy which are the reason for the Impact Assessment.		The Sandy Lane Recreation Ground scheme forms part of Oxford City Council's Affordable Housing Supply Programme, which aims to deliver over 1,600 new affordable homes between April 2025 and March 2029, with at least 850 at Social Rent levels. This programme supports the Council's corporate priorities of delivering more affordable housing and supporting thriving communities. The Sandy Lane site is allocated for residential development in the current Local Plan 2036 and the emerging Local Plan 2045, with a minimum of 300 homes proposed. The scheme will deliver 100% affordable housing, comprising 331 homes (79% Social Rent and 21% Shared Ownership), alongside high-quality public open space, biodiversity improvements, and sustainable transport connections. The development responds to the		

	site's strategic location near the future Cowley Branch Line station, creating a gateway role and promoting active travel. The site is currently held within the Council's General Fund for recreation purposes and accommodates three football pitches and a pavilion. To enable housing delivery, these pitches will be relocated to Herschel Crescent Recreation Ground, supported by a new pavilion, ensuring continuity of sports provision and compliance with planning policy and Sport England guidance. This relocation is a key requirement before land appropriation and development can proceed. The need for this Equalities Impact Assessment arises primarily because the scheme involves changing the use of land currently serving as a community recreation facility, which may affect existing users and local residents. The Council is committed to mitigating these impacts through reprovision of sports facilities, community engagement, and design measures that enhance accessibility and inclusivity. The development will also contribute positively by providing high-quality, affordable homes to meet housing need, improving sustainability, and supporting the Council's Climate Emergency objectives.
3. Methodology and Sources of Data: The methods used to collect data and what sources of data	To inform the Sandy Lane Recreation Ground development and its Equalities Impact Assessment, the Council has adopted a multi-faceted approach to data collection and engagement: • Community Engagement: The Council has undertaken extensive consultation with local residents, sports clubs, and stakeholders. This includes discussions with ward members, Sport England, and local football clubs to shape the pitch relocation strategy. Engagement has focused on ensuring continuity of sports provision and addressing community concerns about the loss of recreation space. • Reference Groups and Stakeholder Meetings: Regular meetings have been held with key stakeholders, including community representatives and relevant Council teams. These meetings have provided a forum for feedback on design proposals, site strategy, and mitigation measures. Minutes of these meetings have been recorded and shared. • Needs Analysis and Policy Review: A thorough needs analysis has been conducted to assess housing demand and community facility requirements. This analysis draws on the Council's Housing and Homelessness Strategy (2023–2028), Local Plan allocations, and Sport England guidance.

	• Site Visits and Best Practice Research: Officers have undertaken site visits to Sandy Lane and Herschel Crescent to assess existing conditions and inform design decisions. Comparative research on similar schemes has been used to identify best practice in delivering housing alongside community and sports facilities. • Consultation History: The Sandy Lane site has been subject to significant consultation during the Local Plan process and through pre-application engagement, including two pre-application submissions and three Oxford Design Review Panel sessions. Public consultation has informed the conceptual scheme and design principles. • Technical Data Sources: Data has been gathered from feasibility studies, QS cost advice, valuation reports, and environmental assessments. These sources underpin decisions on land appropriation, financial viability, and sustainability measures.
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.	Consultation was undertaken to ensure that the proposed development at Sandy Lane Recreation Ground reflects community needs, mitigates potential adverse impacts, and complies with planning and equality requirements. The relocation of football pitches and the change of land use from recreation to housing necessitated engagement with affected stakeholders to maintain inclusivity and fairness. • Local Plan Process: The Sandy Lane site has been subject to statutory consultation during the development of the Local Plan 2036 and the emerging Local Plan 2045, which allocates the site for residential development. • Community and Stakeholder Engagement: The Council has consulted with local residents, sports clubs, ward members, and Sport England. Engagement has included: o Meetings with football clubs and community representatives to agree on pitch relocation strategy. o Discussions with Littlemore Parish Council regarding surrender of the Herschel Crescent lease for reprovision. o Pre-application engagement, including two pre-application submissions and three Oxford Design Review Panel (DRP) reviews.

• A statement of what you plan to do next	• Public Consultation: Public consultation has informed the conceptual scheme, design principles, and sustainability measures. Feedback was sought on priorities such as housing mix, green space, and active travel infrastructure. Summary of responses received: • Strong support for affordable housing delivery, particularly social rent homes. • Concerns about loss of recreation space mitigated by commitment to reprovision pitches and changing facilities at Herschel Crescent. • Positive feedback on sustainability measures, biodiversity enhancements, and active travel routes. • Requests for clear communication on timescales and continuity of sports provision. Assessment of proposed policy in light of responses: The scheme has been refined to address concerns by: • Ensuring full reprovision of football pitches before development begins. • Incorporating high-quality public open space and biodiversity net gain. • Designing a low-car development with strong connectivity to the future Cowley Branch Line station. Next steps: • Continue engagement with local clubs and Sport England during detailed design of reprovision facilities. • Maintain dialogue with residents and stakeholders through planning and delivery stages. • Update the Equalities Impact Assessment as the scheme progresses to ensure compliance and inclusivity. The consultation process actively promotes the three aims of the Equality Act 2010: • Eliminating discrimination: By engaging with diverse stakeholders, including sports clubs and community groups, the Council ensures that no group is disproportionately disadvantaged by the change of land use. • Advancing equality of opportunity: The scheme prioritises affordable housing and accessible design, creating opportunities for those in housing need and ensuring inclusive sports provision.

<table>
<tr><td></td><td>

- Fostering good relations: Ongoing dialogue with the community helps build trust, address concerns collaboratively, and maintain positive relationships between the Council and residents.

</td></tr>
<tr><td>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</td><td>

<table>
<tr><td>Race
Neutral</td><td>Disability
Positive Impact</td><td>Age
Positive Impact</td></tr>
<tr><td>Gender reassignment
Neutral</td><td>Religion or Belief
Neutral</td><td>Sexual Orientation
Neutral</td></tr>
<tr><td>Sex
Neutral</td><td>Pregnancy and Maternity
Neutral</td><td>Marriage & Civil Partnership
Neutral</td></tr>
</table>

This is an initial assessment and will evolve as the project progresses. The current view is that the Sandy Lane development will have an overall positive impact, primarily by delivering high-quality, affordable housing and improving access to recreation facilities through the reprovision of football pitches and a new pavilion. Doing nothing would risk deterioration of the existing recreation ground and facilities, which could lead to eventual closure and loss of community benefit.

Rationale for Assessment:

- Disability: The new housing and reprovisioned sports facilities will meet modern building standards, improving accessibility for people with physical impairments. Design will incorporate inclusive features such as step-free access and accessible toilets. Delivering 5% M4(3) units.
- Age: Positive impact through provision of family housing and improved recreational facilities for all age groups, supporting active lifestyles and community cohesion.
- Other Strands: No adverse impacts identified; the scheme is designed to be inclusive and accessible to all.

</td></tr>
</table>

	Safeguarding and Welfare Considerations: The project will consider safeguarding throughout delivery, particularly during the relocation of pitches and construction phases. Measures will include: • Safe access routes for children and vulnerable adults. • Secure design principles for public spaces. • Engagement with local schools and community groups to ensure continuity of sports provision. Community Involvement: The user brief incorporates feedback from consultation and will continue to involve the community and reference groups during design development. This policy supports the aims of the Equality Act 2010 by eliminating discrimination through inclusive design and ensuring equal access to housing and recreation. It advances equality of opportunity by providing affordable homes and accessible sports facilities for diverse groups and fosters good relations by maintaining ongoing dialogue with stakeholders and mitigating the impacts of land-use change through the reprovision of community and recreational facilities
6. Consideration of Measures: This section should explain in detail all the consideration of alternative approaches/mitigation of adverse impact of the policy	The Council has carefully considered alternative approaches and mitigation measures to address potential adverse impacts of the scheme. A range of development options for the Sandy Lane site were explored during feasibility and design stages, including variations in housing numbers, tenure mix, and retention of some recreation space. However, retaining pitches on-site would not meet Sport England requirements and would significantly reduce the affordable housing delivery needed to meet local demand and to meet the emerging Local Plan allocation. To mitigate impacts, the Council has committed to full reprovision of football pitches and associated facilities at Herschel Crescent before development begins. This approach ensures continuity of sports provision and aligns with community feedback. Additional measures include: • Early and ongoing engagement with local clubs, Sport England and residents to shape the reprovision strategy. • Incorporation of high-quality public open space and biodiversity enhancements within the housing scheme to maintain community amenity.

	• Design principles that prioritise accessibility, safety, and inclusivity, ensuring compliance with modern standards. • Relocation of the pitches prior to construction to minimise disruption. • Consideration of an optional fourth pitch to enhance provision and support more intensive use. These measures aim to balance the delivery of much-needed affordable housing with the protection and enhancement of community and recreational facilities, ensuring that equality and safeguarding considerations are fully addressed.
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.	To ensure that the Sandy Lane development does not result in adverse equality impacts, robust monitoring systems will be implemented throughout the project lifecycle. These include: Project Governance: An internal officer project group will oversee delivery and monitor equality considerations at each stage. This group will review progress against the Equalities Impact Assessment and ensure compliance with statutory obligations. Community Reference Group: The established reference group, comprising local stakeholders and community representatives, will continue to meet regularly to provide feedback and raise concerns. Minutes will be recorded and shared to maintain transparency. Formal Reporting: Equality impacts will be reviewed at key milestones, including: • Pre-application stage (design finalisation and pitch relocation strategy) • Planning submission and determination • Post-completion evaluation Assessment and Evidence**:** Monitoring will include tracking complaints, feedback, and engagement outcomes to identify any

	evidence of discrimination or disproportionate impact. If issues arise, mitigation measures will be implemented promptly. Continuous Review: The Equalities Impact Assessment will be updated as the project evolves, ensuring that new risks or opportunities are addressed. Findings will be reported through governance channels and shared with stakeholders. These arrangements aim to safeguard equality, maintain accountability, and ensure that the project delivers positive outcomes for all groups.
7. Date reported and signed off by Cabinet:	18 March 2026 (pending)
8. Conclusions: What are your conclusions drawn from the results in terms of the policy impact	The assessment concludes that the proposed Sandy Lane development represents a positive and inclusive policy intervention. By delivering 100% affordable housing alongside the reprovision of high-quality sports facilities, the scheme will address housing need while safeguarding community recreation. The project will improve accessibility through compliance with modern building standards, create flexible and sustainable spaces, and enhance the overall quality of the environment for current and future generations. The proposed development supports the Council's corporate priorities of delivering more affordable housing and supporting thriving communities, while embedding sustainability and equality considerations throughout. This Equalities Impact Assessment will continue to evolve as the project progresses, with ongoing input from the community and stakeholders to ensure that the scheme remains inclusive, responsive, and aligned with the Equality Act 2010 objectives.

9. Are there implications for the Service Plans?	No	**10. Date the Service Plans will be updated**	N/A	**11. Date copy sent to Equalitie**	26/01/26

				s Lead Officer	

Signed (completing officer) Signed (Lead Officer)

Dave Scholes (initial assessment)

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To:	**Cabinet**
Date:	**Wednesday 18th March 2026**
Report of:	**Director for Property & Assets**
Title of Report:	**Introduction of charging at 1 existing off-street car park and making of a new parking order**

Summary and recommendations	
Purpose of report:	To approve making of a new off-street parking place order as well as implementing charges at one car park
Key decision:	No
Cabinet Member:	Councillor Alex Hollingsworth Cabinet Member for Planning and Culture
Corporate Priority:	Strong, Fair Economy
Policy Framework:	None

Recommendation(s): That Cabinet resolves to:

1. **Approve the making of** new off-street parking places order covering Car Park off Meadow Lane
2. **Approve** the introduction of charges at Meadow Lane Car Park as set out in Appendix 1
3. **Delegate** authority to the Director for Property & Assets in consultation with relevant Cabinet Members to follow due procedure as set out in the Local Authorities' Traffic Order (Procedure)(England and Wales) Regulations 1996 and in the Road Traffic Regulations Act 1984 including required public consultation and consideration of objections and responses to them.

   4. Delegate authority to the Director for Property & Assets in consultation with relevant Cabinet Members to approve Notice of Making and Making of Orders.

Appendices	
Appendix 1	Proposed Tariffs
Appendix 2	Risk Register
Appendix 3	Equalities Impact Assessment

Appendix 4	Procedure for making a new traffic order

Introduction and background

1. The Council's Off-Street Parking Orders allow the implementation of charges across the portfolio, along with the enforcement of payment of these charges.
2. The car park off Meadow Lane is not currently included on the Council's Off-Street Parking Order. The Car Park has historically been an informal parking area but with the grant of planning on 7th October 2025 it is now a formal public car park, serving the local community and facilitating access to sports and leisure facilities along the river.
3. There are a number of conditions to discharge on the planning consent, including some relining to create a one-way system, fencing to prevent parking on the verge and implementation of a tariff.

Proposal

4. It is recommended that consultation commences to create a new Off-Street Parking Order for this car park and the suggested tariff is shown in Appendix 1. The intention to introduce the tariff will be advertised for 21 days and any comments received will be considered prior to the implementation.
5. In line with the planning condition, the tariff has been designed to facilitate access but deter commuter use of the car park.
6. It should be noted, there was a period of closure of the car park prior to the grant of planning in October. Falcon Rowing Club occupy the building adjoining the car park. When the club redeveloped the rowing club the car park was included within their red line. Due to this, the car park was closed to the public while the condition was varied. The Council is in discussions with Falcon to ensure access to the club is maintained and to ensure busy periods are managed.

Financial Implications

7. It is anticipated that Meadow Lane will generate circa £6k pa from parking charges which is broadly aligned to the annual maintenance liability for the site.

Legal Implications

8. Please see appendix 4 setting out the process to implement a new order.

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Background Papers: None
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2
3
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Appendix 1 – Parking Tariffs

New Parking Tariffs to be introduced

Meadow Lane

0-1 Hours	Free
1-3 Hours	£2
3-5 Hours	£4
5-25 Hours	£15

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Risk Register

Appendix 2 - Charging at Meadow Lane

As at: 29.01.26

									Gross		Current			Target							
Ref	Title	Risk Description	Opp / Threat	Cause	Consequence	Risk Treatment	Date Raised	Owner	P	I	P	I	Score	P	I	Comments	Control / Mitigation Description	Date Due	Action Status	% Progress	Action Owner
	Not creating a new traffic order	The Council chooses to further vary the existing order rather than creating a new one.	Threat	Not approving the new order.	This will leave the Council open to challenge when implimenting further variations as the traffic order is already heavily varied. It is more appropriate to create a new one	Avoid	29.01.26	Emma Gubbins	2	4	2	4	8	1	1		Approving the inroduction of a new traffic order to regularise the previous variations	31.03.27	In Progress	20%	Emma Gubbins
	Advertisment of the intention to introduce new charges at site	Comments may be provided by members of the public which are not in support of the introdution of charges at the sites	Threat	Existing users of the car parks may not be supportive of the introduction of charges at the additional sites	The Council may receive negative comments during the consultation period	Accept	29.01.26	Emma Gubbins	3	3	3	3	9	3	3	The process invites comments rather than objections to the proposal. The Council does have to consider any responses (positive or negative)	The Council will consider any comments received and make any appropriate amends to the proposed tariff subject to it not impacting potential income	31.03.27	In Progress	20%	Emma Gubbins
	Breach of planning condition	The Council should reline, fence and introduce the tariff in line with the timeline set out in the planning conditions	Threat	Breach of planning conditions	The Planning Authority may take enforcement actionif the conditions are not met	Accept	29.01.26	Emma Gubbins	3	3	3	3	9	2	2		Works are underway to meet the condition dates	31.03.27	In Progress	50%	Emma Gubbins
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THE RISK REGISTER IS FORMATTED AS A TABLE. PRESS TAB ON THE LAST TABLE CELL TO INSERT A NEW ROW.

Risk Identification

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

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

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

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

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

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





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

The description of the risk should include the following elements:

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

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


ance

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

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

Risk Evaluation and Prioritisation

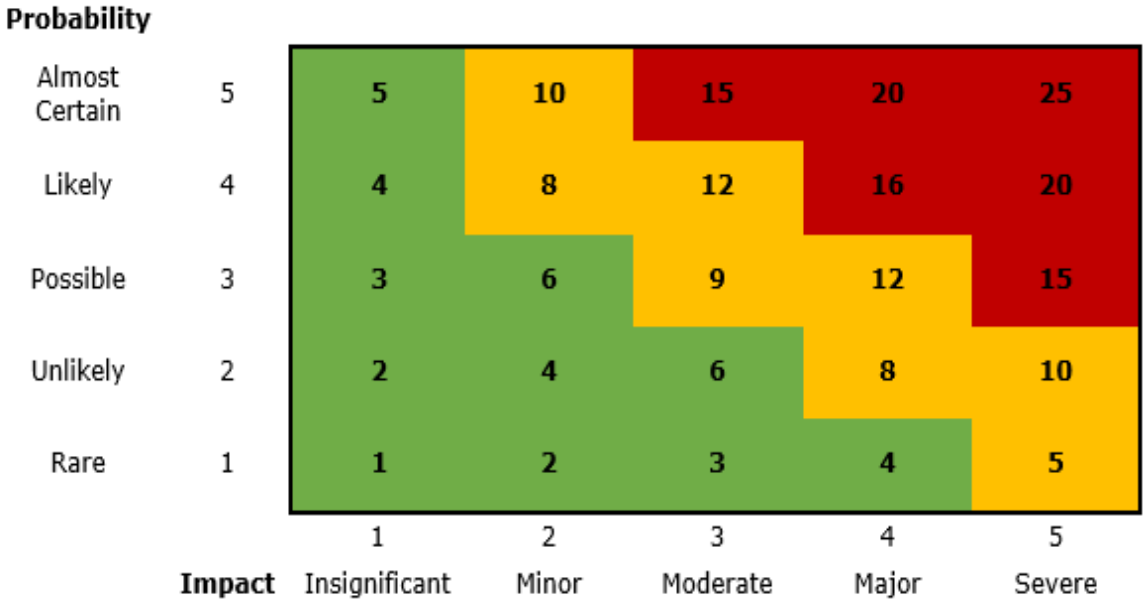
Once risks have been identified the risk matrix is the main tool for prioritising risks so we can establish which risks are most significant and therefore are in need of greater attention and resources. It also allows us to compare different types of risk with each other across the council.

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

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

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

Each identified risk should then be plotted onto the risk matrix.



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

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

Risk Probability Assessment Criteria

Scale	Description	Likelihood of	Probability of Occurrence

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

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

Risk Impact Assessment Criteria

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

Risk Treatment

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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.	Charges within Oxford City Council Car Parks existing and future sites.	**2.**	**The implementation date of the activity under consideration:**	01/02/2024
3.	**Directorate/Department(s):**	Corporate Assets	**4.**	**Service Area(s):**	Car Parks
5.	**Who is (are) the assessment lead(s):** **Please provide:** -Name -Email address	Gary Preston gary.preston@odsgroup.co.uk Emma Gubbins egubbins@oxford.gov.uk	**6.**	**Contact details, in case there are queries:** **Please provide:** -Name -Email address	Gary Preston gary.preston@odsgroup.co.uk
7.	**Is this a new or ongoing EqIA?**	New ☒ Extension to existing EqIA ☐	**8.**	If this is an extension of a previous EqIA, please indicate where the previous EqIA is located and share the link to the said EqIA.	Please type here.
9.	**Date this EqIA started:**	24/01/2024			
10.	**Will this EqIA be attached to** Corporate Management Team (CMT) **reports/updates, which will be published online?**	No	**11.**	**Give a date (tentative or otherwise) when this assessment will be taken to the** CMT.	21/02/2024

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

12.	**Type of activity being considered:** Check the most appropriate.	☒ Budget	☐ Decommissioning	☐ Commissioning	☒ Change to an existing activity.
		☐ New Activity	☐ Others. Please		
13.	**Which priority area(s) within Oxford City Council's Corporate strategy (2020-2024) does this activity fulfil?** Please check as needed.	☒ Enable an inclusive economy.	☐ Deliver more affordable housing.	☐ Support thriving communities.	☒ Pursue a zero carbon Oxford.
14.	**Which priority area(s) within Oxford City Council's Equality, Diversity & Inclusion Strategy (2022) does this activity fulfil?** Please check as needed.	☐ Responsive services and customer care.	☐ Diverse and engaged workforce.	☒ Leadership & organisational commitment.	☐ Understanding and working with our communities.
15.	**Outline the aims, objectives, & priorities of the activity being considered.**	Aims: Review charges within Oxford City Council Car Parks - existing and future sites.	Objectives: Incentivise the displacement of vehicles to the permiter of Oxford City to more appropriate locations such as park and rides. Remove free car parking element within Parks to ensure	Priorities: Review of charges within exisitng car parks. Introduction of parking charges in future sites.	

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			car parks are being utiliised for faciltiies.	
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.	Existing activity does not fulfil corporate objectives e.g. Oxford Transport Strategy (OTS) within the Local Plan 2036 "Over recent years, while Oxford's population has grown (13% increase between 2001 and 2011), traffic flows on key roads across the city have not increased. This has been achieved through a combination of measures including the use of city centre access restrictions, more restrictive car parking policy, expansion of controlled parking zones and bus and cycle improvements. The overarching aim of the OTS is to increase overall transport capacity but with no further growth in traffic". Current issues of free car parks being utilised by commuters and residents using car parks as additional parking spaces for their household prevails. Doesn't meet Council's core policy of tackling climate change (Pursue a zero Carbon Oxford) and contribute to a reduciton in carbon emissions within the city. Doesn't build up on exisitng success of "46,000 people commute into Oxford for work. About a quarter travels into the city by foot, bicycle or public transport. Those commuting within the city are even more likely to use these modes of transport with two thirds doing so. " (enable an inclusive economy)	

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	Parking charges within exisitng car parks are reviewed annually and are subject to scrutiny through the Council's budget setting process. Charges are scrutinised by full council and as part of their statutory requirement, the Council ask residents for feedback on fees and charges. When proposing the introduction of charges in a new car park, parking charges are set within the Council's Traffic Regulation Orders. The order is advertised for 21 days within the car park inviting comments from respondents.		

	-the approach taken.	All members of the public can provide feedback on the proposals, indicating whether they support, partially support of object to them. This includes feedback if a respondent feels there is an equalities issue that has not been identified or considered.The Council is mandated to consider such objections. The consultation is publicised via local press, social media and the Council website where people can view the information and feedback comments via the Car Parks Service email address.
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, -articles, -reports, -briefs.	2021 Oxford City Council Census Data Oxfordshire County Council Feedback from Traffic Order Notice BBC News
19.	**If you have not done any consultations or collected data & information, are you planning to do so in the future?** **Please list the details –** -when, -with whom, and -how long will you collect the relevant data.	See section 17

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Section 4: Impact analysis.

20.	Who does the activity impact? **Check as needed.** The impact may be positive, negative or unknown.				
		Service Users	Yes ☒	No ☐	Don't Know ☐
		Members of staff	Yes ☐	No ☒	Don't Know ☐
		General public	Yes ☒	No ☐	Don't Know ☐
		Partner / Community Organisation	Yes ☒	No ☐	Don't Know ☐
		City Councillors	Yes ☐	No ☒	Don't Know ☐
		Council suppliers and contractors	Yes ☐	No ☒	Don't Know ☐

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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	☐	☐	☒	☐	At the 2021 Census it was estimated that 30% of Oxford's population was aged 18-29 years (compared to 16% for Oxfordshire and 14% for	Only car users will pay parking charges. Since 2020 there has been growing concerns across the UK that the removal of car parking

627					England and Wales), and the city has the second youngest median age – 31 years – of any place in England and Wales. Adults of working age (16-64 years) make up for 73% of the total Oxford population according to the Census 2021. This is higher than county (64%) and national (60%) averages. Those aged 65+ years make up 12% of the population in the city. This is lower than county (18%) and national averages (18%). The number of people aged over 75 years has increased slightly in the last 10 years (+595) – making up 5% of the population of the city. This is lower than the county (9%) and the national averages (8%). https://www.oxford.gov.uk/info/20131/population/460/age_and_gender_statistics	payment machines and the reliance on parking apps on smartphones would alienate over 65s, https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-65765554 Parking payment machines are available at existing sites and will be available in future sites. The machines will be cashless e.g. take card machines only.
Disability **(Visible and invisible)**	☐	☐	☒	☐	The new data found that the number of people impacted by disability in Oxford has increased slightly over the last decade – from 18,851 in 2011 to 23,491 in 2021. In 2021, 4.9% of Oxford residents had “day-to-day activities limited a lot” by disability (7,912 people) and 9.6% had “day-to-day activities limited a little” (15,579). This compares to 5.4% (8,139) and 7.1% (10,712), respectively, in 2011.	Free parking for disabled will be permitted in any bay

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628					When standardised for age, the data shows that Oxford has more residents limited by disability “a little” or “a lot” (16.4%) than Oxfordshire as a whole (14.8%), but less than the average for England (17.7%). The new data also showed that 71.0% of Oxford households include no disabled people (39,213 households), 23.1% included one disabled person (12,746) and 5.9% included two or more disabled people (3,281). Blue badge holders do not need to pay for parking as long as they display a valid blue badge.	
Gender re-assignment	☐	☐	☒	☐	nly car users will pay parking charges. There is a choice of other alternative transport methods are promoted e.g. public transport, walking and cycling. Cyclox website https://www.cyclox.org/index.php/2023/05/28/oxford-online-cycle-map/ higlights cycling routes around Oxford In 2023 a walking map https://www.oxpa.org.uk/map/ for Oxford was created. The map higlights walkling routes around Oxford and facilities such as benches and toilets. e. "Residents, their visitors, and local businesses can park in designated bays when displaying a relevant	No Impact on this group

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629					parking permit for that zone. Some spaces are also available for short-term parkers, and Blue Badge holders can park without restriction." (https://www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/residents/roads-and-transport/parking/parking-permits/controlled-parking-zones#paragraph-7024) . Finally the City Council operates 3 Park and Rides around the city - Redbridge, Peartree & Seacourt. There are 2 other Parks and Ride sites Thornhill and Water Eaton operated by the County Council. At all sites a park and bus ticket is offered. You can pay for parking and a day return bus ticket using the machines onsite. For car parking and one traveller £4.00. For car parking and two adults £5.00. Up to three children (under 16) can also travel using either of the Park + Bus ticket options.	
Marriage & Civil Partnership	☐	☐	☒	☐	Only car users will pay parking charges. There is a choice of other alternative transport methods are promoted e.g. public transport, walking and cycling. Cyclox website https://www.cyclox.org/index.php/2023/05/28/oxford-online-cycle-map/ higlights cycling routes around Oxford	No impact on this group.

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630					In 2023 a walking map https://www.oxpa.org.uk/map/ for Oxford was created. The map higlights walkling routes around Oxford and facilities such as benches and toilets. In terms of public transport the Oxford Bus Company City 46 bus stops outside Florence Park and the ST2 Connector and 6 City stops outside one of many Port Meadow access gates. "Residents, their visitors, and local businesses can park in designated bays when displaying a relevant parking permit for that zone. Some spaces are also available for short-term parkers, and Blue Badge holders can park without restriction." (https://www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/residents/roads-and-transport/parking/parking-permits/controlled-parking-zones#paragraph-7024) . Finally the City Council operates 3 Park and Rides around the city - Redbridge, Peartree & Seacourt. There are 2 other Parks and Ride sites Thornhill and Water Eaton operated by the County Council. At all sites a park and bus ticket is offered. You can pay for parking and a day return bus ticket using the machines onsite. For car parking and one traveller £4.00. For car parking and two adults £5.00. Up to three children (under 16) can also travel using either of the Park + Bus ticket options.	

Race, Ethnicity and/or Citizenship	☐	☐	☒	☐	Only car users will pay parking charges. There is a choice of other alternative transport methods are promoted e.g. public transport, walking and cycling. Cyclox website https://www.cyclox.org/index.php/2023/05/28/oxford-online-cycle-map/ higlights cycling routes around Oxford In 2023 a walking map https://www.oxpa.org.uk/map/ for Oxford was created. The map higlights walkling routes around Oxford and facilities such as benches and toilets. e. "Residents, their visitors, and local businesses can park in designated bays when displaying a relevant parking permit for that zone. Some spaces are also available for short-term parkers, and Blue Badge holders can park without restriction." (https://www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/residents/roads-and-transport/parking/parking-permits/controlled-parking-zones#paragraph-7024) . Finally the City Council operates 3 Park and Rides around the city - Redbridge, Peartree & Seacourt. There are 2 other Parks and Ride sites Thornhill and Water Eaton operated by the County Council. At all sites a park and bus ticket is offered. You can pay for parking and a day return bus ticket using the	No impact on this group.

					machines onsite. For car parking and one traveller £4.00. For car parking and two adults £5.00. Up to three children (under 16) can also travel using either of the Park + Bus ticket options.	
Pregnancy & Maternity	☐	☐	☒	☐	nly car users will pay parking charges. There is a choice of other alternative transport methods are promoted e.g. public transport, walking and cycling. Cyclox website https://www.cyclox.org/index.php/2023/05/28/oxford-online-cycle-map/ higlights cycling routes around Oxford In 2023 a walking map https://www.oxpa.org.uk/map/ for Oxford was created. The map higlights walkling routes around Oxford and facilities such as benches and toilets. e. "Residents, their visitors, and local businesses can park in designated bays when displaying a relevant parking permit for that zone. Some spaces are also available for short-term parkers, and Blue Badge holders can park without restriction." (https://www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/residents/roads-and-	.No impact on this group

633					transport/parking/parking-permits/controlled-parking-zones#paragraph-7024) . Finally the City Council operates 3 Park and Rides around the city - Redbridge, Peartree & Seacourt. There are 2 other Parks and Ride sites Thornhill and Water Eaton operated by the County Council. At all sites a park and bus ticket is offered. You can pay for parking and a day return bus ticket using the machines onsite. For car parking and one traveller £4.00. For car parking and two adults £5.00. Up to three children (under 16) can also travel using either of the Park + Bus ticket options.	
Religion or Belief	☐	☐	☒	☐	Only car users will pay parking charges. There is a choice of other alternative transport methods are promoted e.g. public transport, walking and cycling. Cyclox website https://www.cyclox.org/index.php/2023/05/28/oxford-	No impact on this group

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634					online-cycle-map/ higlights cycling routes around Oxford In 2023 a walking map https://www.oxpa.org.uk/map/ for Oxford was created. The map higlights walkling routes around Oxford and facilities such as benches and toilets. e. "Residents, their visitors, and local businesses can park in designated bays when displaying a relevant parking permit for that zone. Some spaces are also available for short-term parkers, and Blue Badge holders can park without restriction." (https://www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/residents/roads-and-transport/parking/parking-permits/controlled-parking-zones#paragraph-7024) . Finally the City Council operates 3 Park and Rides around the city - Redbridge, Peartree & Seacourt. There are 2 other Parks and Ride sites Thornhill and Water Eaton operated by the County Council. At all sites a park and bus ticket is offered. You can pay for parking and a day return bus ticket using the machines onsite. For car parking and one traveller £4.00. For car parking and two adults £5.00. Up to three children (under 16) can also travel using either of the Park + Bus ticket options.	

Sex	☐	☐	☒	☐	nly car users will pay parking charges. There is a choice of other alternative transport methods are promoted e.g. public transport, walking and cycling. Cyclox website https://www.cyclox.org/index.php/2023/05/28/oxford-online-cycle-map/ higlights cycling routes around Oxford In 2023 a walking map https://www.oxpa.org.uk/map/ for Oxford was created. The map higlights walkling routes around Oxford and facilities such as benches and toilets. e. "Residents, their visitors, and local businesses can park in designated bays when displaying a relevant parking permit for that zone. Some spaces are also available for short-term parkers, and Blue Badge holders can park without restriction." (https://www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/residents/roads-and-transport/parking/parking-permits/controlled-parking-zones#paragraph-7024) . Finally the City Council operates 3 Park and Rides around the city - Redbridge, Peartree & Seacourt. There are 2 other Parks and Ride sites Thornhill and Water Eaton operated by the County Council. At all sites a park and bus ticket is offered. You can pay for parking and a day return bus ticket using the machines onsite. For car parking and one traveller £4.00. For car parking and two adults £5.00. Up to	No impact on this group

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					three children (under 16) can also travel using either of the Park + Bus ticket options.	
Sexual Orientation	☐	☐	☒	☐	nly car users will pay parking charges. There is a choice of other alternative transport methods are promoted e.g. public transport, walking and cycling. Cyclox website https://www.cyclox.org/index.php/2023/05/28/oxford-online-cycle-map/ higlights cycling routes around Oxford In 2023 a walking map https://www.oxpa.org.uk/map/ for Oxford was created. The map higlights walkling routes around Oxford and facilities such as benches and toilets. e. "Residents, their visitors, and local businesses can park in designated bays when displaying a relevant parking permit for that zone. Some spaces are also available for short-term parkers, and Blue Badge holders can park without restriction." (https://www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/residents/roads-and-	No impact on this group

637					transport/parking/parking-permits/controlled-parking-zones#paragraph-7024) . Finally the City Council operates 3 Park and Rides around the city - Redbridge, Peartree & Seacourt. There are 2 other Parks and Ride sites Thornhill and Water Eaton operated by the County Council. At all sites a park and bus ticket is offered. You can pay for parking and a day return bus ticket using the machines onsite. For car parking and one traveller £4.00. For car parking and two adults £5.00. Up to three children (under 16) can also travel using either of the Park + Bus ticket options.	
Other (voluntary consideration) **For example:** Migrant, refugee, or asylum seekers	☐	☐	☒	☐	Tariff applied to all with access to facilities maintained for this group	No impact on this group

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Other (voluntary consideration) **For example:** Socio-economic status (income, wealth, etc.)	☐	☐	☒	☐	Tariff applied to all with access to facilities maintained for this group	No impact on this group
Other **For example:** -Unpaid carers - Prison population - Homeless population -Council suppliers & contractors -Cabinet Members	☐	☐	☒	☐	N/A	

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

22.		**Conclusions.** Check as needed.

	☐	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.	☐	No major change(s) or adjustments and continue with the activity. No need to monitor in the future.

23.	**Please explain how you have reached your conclusions above.**	The information set out above provides evidence of alternative methods of transport around Oxford City. Where the use of a car and therefore parking is required free parking within the vacinity of the sites has been provided. Also the sites will still offer free parking for disbable users. Oxford City Council operates 9 car parks within Parks as pay and display: Alexandra Courts car park Court Place Farm car park Cowley Marsh Park car park Cutteslowe and Sunnymead Park car park (A40) Cutteslowe and Sunnymead Park car park (Harbord Road) Godstow Road car park (Port Meadow North) Hinksey Park car park Oatlands Road Recreation Ground car park Walton Well Road car park (Port Meadow South) The implementation of the parking charges at the suggested car parks are are an addition to the exisitng operation.

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**? **For example-** - team, -directorate, -service area, -Equalities Steering Group,etc.	OCC Corporate Assets and ODS Car Parks Service
25.	**Who (individual, team, or service area) will be responsible for carrying out the EqIA review?**	Gary Preston gary.preston@odsgroup.co.uk Emma Gubbins egubbins@oxford.gov.uk

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26.	**How often will the equality impact be reviewed for this activity?** **For example-** -quarterly, -yearly, etc.	When Parking Charges Are Introduced At New Sites.	**27.**	**Date when the EqIA will be reviewed again.**	05/12/2024

Section 7: Sign-off

Name: Full Name

Job Title: Type here

Signature:

Name: Full Name

Job Title: Type here

Signature:

Name: Full Name

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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.

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Signature:	Signature:	Signature:
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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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PROCEDURE FOR THE MAKING OF
OXFORD CITY COUNCIL (OFF-STREET PARKING PLACES) ORDERS 2024

- Powers to make an order are provided in the Road Traffic Regulations Act 1984.
- Procedures for doing so are specified there and in the Local Authorities' Traffic Orders (Procedure)(England and Wales) Regulations 1996.
- The signs relating to an order must confirm to the Traffic Signs Regulations & General Directions 2002.

NB: Not for general circulation or amendment DRAFT for consideration

	Action	Date	Done
1	Consult Highway Authority, Police and any other body required by regulations		
2	Preliminary consultation with affected organisations, individuals and stakeholders and relevant Members		
3	REPORT TO CABINET by Head of Corporate Property Seek approval of Cabinet for proposal and delegating authority to Head of Corporate Property (subject to consultation with relevant Cabinet members) to publish Notice of Proposal, conduct public consultation, collate and consider all responses, respond to objectors, modify the proposal if necessary and approve the Notice of Making and Making of the Orders.		
4	Apply for Planning Permission where required		
5	Drafting of Notice of Proposal		
6	Advertise Notice of Proposal (need not be the full draft orders) and effects in local newspaper at least once		
7	Display Notice of Proposal on land affected		
8	Send Notice of Proposal to Highways Authority		
9	Send Notice of Proposal to local businesses affected		
10	Make relevant documents available for inspection and on website MUST include full draft orders		
11	**CONSULTATION** **21 CLEAR DAYS MUST BE ALLOWED FOR OBJECTIONS AND REPRESENTATIONS TO BE MADE.** 21 days runs from date of advert or display on land etc whichever is the latest		
12	Objections and representations to be collated, summarised and considered by Head of Corporate Property. Consider modification to proposal depending on objections. If substantial modification proposed then re consult.		
13	Decision by Head of Corporate Property under delegated authority from Cabinet to approve Making of Orders. Decision to include summary of objections, amendments made to proposal and confirmation of consultation with Cabinet members and approval to Making of Orders.		
14	Drafting of Notices of Making.		

15	Send Notices of Making, including commencement date to Highways Authority, Police and interested business, parties and stakeholders		
16	Individual objectors MUST be notified individually. Prepare letters of response to ALL objectors, stating reasons for going ahead with the scheme and/or prepare letters for reasons for not going ahead with elements of scheme. MUST be within 14 days of making of the orders		
17	Notify objectors of reasons for making order in spite of outstanding objections / or reasons for rejecting elements of order. MUST be within 14 days of making of the orders		
18	Make documents available for inspection and on website from day of commencement		
19	Advertise Notice of Making order as per 6-10 above Include operative commencement date of Orders		
20	Sealing of full orders Corp Property to provide all necessary delegated decisions, authorisations, minutes and record of consultation with relevant Cabinet Members and their approval Commencement date inserted		
21	Erect signs and notices and payment machines etc at car parks where necessary due to changes		
22	Commencement date		
23	Legal challenge can be made within 6 months of commencement to the High Court – possible grounds being that the Order is not within the relevant powers or procedural elements have not been complied with.		