

Agenda

Council

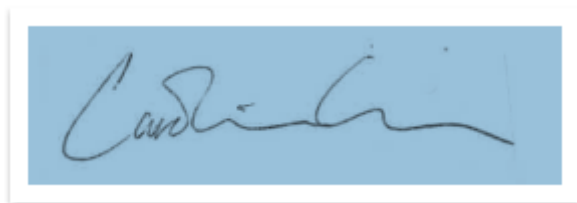
Summons

A meeting of the City Council will be held to transact the business set out below on

Date: **Monday 6 October 2025**

Time: **5.00 pm**

Place: **Council Chamber - Oxford Town Hall**



Proper Officer

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

- may register in advance to speak to the meeting in accordance with the [public speaking rules](#)
- may record all or part of the meeting in accordance with the Council's [protocol](#)

Information about speaking and recording is set out in the agenda and on the [website](#)

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

This meeting can be viewed live or afterwards on the council's [YouTube channel](#).

For further information please contact:

Jonathan Malton, Committee and Member Services Manager,

☎ 01865 602767

✉ democraticservices@oxford.gov.uk

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mycouncil.oxford.gov.uk.*

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

Membership of Council

Councillors: Membership 48: Quorum 12.

Lord Mayor Councillor Louise Upton

Deputy Lord Mayor Councillor Mike Rowley

Sheriff Councillor Andrew Gant

Members	Councillor Mohammed Altaf-Khan	Councillor Dr Max Morris
	Councillor Lubna Arshad	Councillor Lois Muddiman
	Councillor Mohammed Azad	Councillor Edward Mundy
	Councillor Susan Brown	Councillor Chewe Munkonge
	Councillor Nigel Chapman	Councillor Simon Ottino
	Councillor Mary Clarkson	Councillor Alex Powell
	Councillor Tiago Corais	Councillor Susanna Pressel
	Councillor Lizzy Diggins	Councillor Asima Qayyum
	Councillor Dr Hosnieh Djafari-Marbini	Councillor Anna Railton
	Councillor Laurence Fouweather	Councillor Rosie Rawle
	Councillor James Fry	Councillor Dianne Regisford
	Councillor Stephen Goddard	Councillor Ajaz Rehman
	Councillor Judith Harley	Councillor Kate Robinson
	Councillor David Henwood	Councillor Jo Sandelson
	Councillor Alex Hollingsworth	Councillor Anne Stares
	Councillor Jemima Hunt	Councillor Linda Smith
	Councillor Chris Jarvis	Councillor Roz Smith
	Councillor Theodore Jupp	Councillor Dr Christopher Smowton
	Councillor Emily Kerr	Councillor James Taylor
	Councillor Dr Amar Latif	Councillor Ed Turner
	Councillor Mark Lygo	Councillor Naomi Waite
	Councillor Sajjad Malik	Councillor Ian Yeatman
	Councillor Katherine Miles	

Apologies will be reported at the meeting.

Agenda

The business to be transacted is set out below

	Pages
Minute's silence and tributes	
To hear tributes and observe a minute's silence in memory of former Lord Mayors or serving councillors or serving senior officers who have died.	
PART 1 - PUBLIC BUSINESS	
1 Apologies for absence	
2 Declarations of interest	
3 Minutes	19 - 30
Minutes of the ordinary meeting of Council held on 14 July 2025. Council is asked to approve the minutes as a correct record.	
4 Appointment to Committees	
Any proposed changes will be circulated with the briefing note.	
5 Announcements	
Announcements by: <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. The Lord Mayor2. The Sheriff3. The Leader of the Council (who may with the permission of the Lord Mayor invite other councillors to make announcements)4. The Chief Executive, Chief Finance Officer, Monitoring Officer	
6 Public addresses that relate to matters for decision at this meeting	
Public addresses and questions to the Leader or other Cabinet member	

received in accordance with Council Procedure Rules in the Constitution relating to matters for decision in Part 1 of 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 Tuesday, 30 September 2025.

The briefing note will contain the text of addresses submitted by the deadline, and written responses where available.

A total of 45 minutes is available for both public speaking items. Responses are included in this time.

CABINET RECOMMENDATIONS

7 **Appropriation of land at Elsfield Hall from the General Fund to the Housing Revenue Account**

31 - 40

Appendices 1 and 2 contains exempt information pursuant to Paragraph 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972. To discuss this item, it will be necessary for the Council to pass a resolution to exclude the press and public from the meeting.

The Director of Economy, Regeneration and Sustainability has submitted a report to seek Council approval for appropriation of land from the General Fund to the Housing Revenue Account (changing the statutory basis on which it is held by the Council).

Council is recommended to:

1. **Approve** the appropriation of the land owned by Oxford City Council (OCC) at Elsfield Hall from the General Fund (GF) into the Housing Revenue Account (HRA).

8 **Appropriation of land at Cave Street from the General Fund to the Housing Revenue Account**

41 - 50

The Director of Economy, Regeneration and Sustainability has submitted a report to seek Council appropriation of the land at Cave Street from the General Fund (GF) into the Housing Revenue Account (HRA) to facilitate affordable housing development.

Council is recommended to:

1. **Approve** the appropriation of the land owned by Oxford City Council (OCC) at Cave Street from the General Fund (GF) into the Housing Revenue Account (HRA).

COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATIONS

9 Cumulative Impact Assessment and Special Saturation Policy

At the Licensing and Gambling Acts Committee on Monday, 22 September 2025, the Committee agreed to not adopt the proposed Special Saturation Policy 2025-2028 as, based on the cumulative impact assessment before them, the Committee were not of the opinion that the number of licensed premises within the City Centre and East Oxford areas is such that it is likely that granting further licences (or variation to licences) would be inconsistent with the licencing authorities duty to promote the licencing objectives.

Council is recommended to:

1. **Agree** to not adopt the Cumulative Impact Assessment for 2025-2028 and the continued Special Saturation Policy covering City Centre and East Oxford areas

The report will be published within a supplement ahead of the meeting.

10 Hackney Carriage Vehicle Emission Standards Amendment

At the General Purposes Licensing Committee on Monday, 22 September 2025, the Committee agreed to align with Local Government Reorganisation to postpone the final phase that all Hackney Carriage vehicles must meet the ultra-low emission vehicle standard until the establishment of the new unitary council, aligning the policy with wider structural changes and enabling consistent standards across the new licensing authority.

Council is recommended to:

1. **Agree** that the adoption of the Hackney Carriage Vehicle Emission Standards aligns with Local Government Reorganisation.

The report will be published within a supplement ahead of the meeting.

OFFICER REPORTS

11 Working Overseas Policy and Procedure

The Head of People has submitted a report to Council to approve the Working Overseas Policy and Procedure.

Council is recommended to:

51 - 86

1. **Approve** the implementation of the Working Overseas Policy and Procedure.

QUESTIONS

12 Questions on Cabinet minutes

87 - 112

This item has a time limit of 15 minutes.

Councillors may ask the Cabinet Members questions about matters in these minutes since the previous meeting of full Council.

13 Questions on Notice from Members of Council

Questions on notice from councillors received in accordance with Council Procedure Rule 11.11(c).

Questions on notice may be asked of the Lord Mayor, a Member of the Cabinet or a Chair of a Committee. One supplementary question may be asked at the meeting.

The full text of questions must have been received by the Director of Law, Governance and Strategy by no later than 1.00pm on Wednesday, 24 September 2025.

These, and written responses where available, will be published in the briefing note.

PART 2 - PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT AND SCRUTINY

14 Public addresses that do not relate to matters for decision at this Council meeting

Public addresses to the Leader or other Cabinet member received in accordance with Council Procedure Rules in the Constitution and not relating to matters for decision in Part 1 of 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 Tuesday, 30 September 2025.

The briefing note will contain the text of addresses and questions submitted by the deadline, and written responses where available.

A total of 45 minutes is available for both public speaking items.

15 Outside Organisation Report: Oxford Safer Communities Partnership (OSCP) Annual Update 2025-26

113 -
116

The Community Safety Service Manager has submitted a report for the annual update for 2025-2026 for the Oxford Safer Communities Partnership.

Recommendation: That Council resolves to:

1. **Note** the annual update report of Oxford Safer Communities Partnership.

16 Scrutiny Committee update report

117 -
130

The Chair of the Scrutiny Committee has submitted a report which updates Council on the activities of scrutiny and the implementation of recommendations since the last meeting of Council.

Council is invited to comment on and note the report.

PART 3 - MOTIONS REPRESENTING THE CITY

17 Motions on Notice October 2025

This item has a time limit of 60 minutes.

Motions received by the Director of Law, Governance and Strategy in accordance with the rules in Section 11 of the Constitution by the deadline of 1.00pm on Wednesday, 24 September 2025 are listed below.

Cross party motions are taken first. Motions will then be taken in turn from the *Liberal Democrat Group, Green Group, Independent Oxford Alliance Group, Oxford Community Independents Group, Oxford Independent Group, Real Independent Group, Labour Group* in that order.

Substantive amendments to these motions must be sent by councillors to the Director of Law, Governance and Strategy by no later than 10.00am on Friday, 3 October 2025 so that they may be circulated with the briefing note.

Minor technical or limited wording amendments may be submitted during the meeting but must be written down and circulated.

Council is asked to consider the following motions:

- a) Planning and Infrastructure Bill (Proposed by Councillor Smowton, Seconded by Councillor Fouweather)
- b) Oxford stands for diversity, for fairer migration policy and against the far right (Proposed by Councillor Powell, Seconded by Councillor Jarvis)
- c) Bring Thames Water into public ownership (Proposed by Councillor Mundy, Seconded by Councillor Djafari-Marbini)
- d) Keep Oxford Open (Proposed by Councillor Goddard, Seconded by Councillor Smowton)
- e) Better use of Oxpens Bridge Funding (Proposed by Councillor Jupp, Seconded by Councillor Miles)

17a Planning and Infrastructure Bill (Proposed by Councillor Smowton, Seconded by Councillor Fouweather)

Council notes that the Planning and Infrastructure Bill¹ will, if passed, significantly change the way this council makes planning decisions. Council believes these changes will curtail local democratic oversight and reduce environmental protections.

Clause 51 gives the Secretary of State powers to decide which applications are heard at committee, and to dictate the size and composition of planning committees. This would remove opportunities for councillors to judge whether the harm and benefits of applications are appropriately balanced.

Part 3 would permit environmental obligations in relation to development to be discharged, disapplied or otherwise modified if a developer pays the nature restoration levy (called “cash to trash”² by the RSPB). This fund would be used according to a plan prepared by Natural England, not the local authority.

This council believes these measures go entirely against the spirit of effective local decision-making and evidence-based environmental protection.

Council agrees with the Office for Environmental Protection:

In our considered view, the bill would have the effect of reducing the level of environmental protection provided for by existing environmental law. As drafted, the provisions are a regression.³

¹ <https://bills.parliament.uk/publications/61396/documents/6667>

² As quoted by Carla Denyer MP, HoC, 9 June 2025, see HC Hansard, col 689: <https://hansard.parliament.uk/Commons/2025-06-09/debates/3B8E0A89-3756-49FB-8C07-CECF3B58A26A/PlanningandInfrastructureBill>

³ 1 May 2025: <https://www.theoep.org.uk/report/oep-gives-advice-government-planning-and-infrastructure-bill>

Council also agrees with the 32 environmental organisations⁴ and 81 environmentalists and academics who publicly criticised the bill, calling for a “Pause to bad law”.⁵

Council also agrees with Labour MP Chris Hinchcliff, who pointed out that “profit maximisation” is the biggest barrier to development, not “clear processes that uphold democracy and nature”.⁶

Council calls for the preservation of planning committees’ current powers, and for a strong presumption towards environmental mitigation on-site or close by in preference to levy payment.

Council asks the Leader to write to Oxford’s MPs communicating these concerns with the bill.

17b Oxford stands for diversity, for fairer migration policy and against the far right (Proposed by Councillor Powell, Seconded by Councillor Jarvis)

Council notes:

1. Throughout the summer and into September, protests have taken place outside hotels housing asylum seekers across the UK, many directly organised by far-right groups.⁷
2. Over 100,000 people marched in London at a demonstration addressed by a number of far right figures.⁸
3. These demonstrations have also taken place on numerous occasions in Oxford outside the Kassam Stadium Holiday Inn.⁹
4. Alongside this, this summer also saw a racist attack on Central Oxford Mosque.¹⁰
5. Oxford City Council has consistently made clear that it wants to see a fairer migration system, that refugees are welcome in our city, and that policies like immigration detention and

⁴ Wildlife and Countryside Link, ‘Letter to Steve Reed MP, secretary of state for environment, food and rural affairs, ref Planning and Infrastructure Bill’, 8 April 2025:

<https://www.wcl.org.uk/docs/2025/20250408WCLJointPlanningLetter.pdf>

⁵ Justin Adams et al, ‘Joint statement: Pause to bad law- a call for meaningful consultation on the Planning and Infrastructure Bill’, 22 May 2025: see House of Lords briefing, 19 June 2025, page 53:

<https://researchbriefings.files.parliament.uk/documents/LLN-2025-0025/LLN-2025-0025.pdf>

⁶ Report stage, 10-11 June 2025, backbench amendment no. 69, see HC Hansard, 9 June 2025, col 678 and 729:

[https://hansard.parliament.uk/Commons/2025-06-09/debates/3B8E0A89-3756-49FB-8C07-](https://hansard.parliament.uk/Commons/2025-06-09/debates/3B8E0A89-3756-49FB-8C07-CECF3B58A26A/PlanningandInfrastructureBill)

[CECF3B58A26A/PlanningandInfrastructureBill](https://hansard.parliament.uk/Commons/2025-06-09/debates/3B8E0A89-3756-49FB-8C07-CECF3B58A26A/PlanningandInfrastructureBill)

⁷ [https://www.theguardian.com/uk-news/2025/aug/23/members-of-far-right-party-](https://www.theguardian.com/uk-news/2025/aug/23/members-of-far-right-party-organising-asylum-hotel-protests-across-uk-facebook-posts-show)

[organising-asylum-hotel-protests-across-uk-facebook-posts-show](https://www.theguardian.com/uk-news/2025/aug/23/members-of-far-right-party-organising-asylum-hotel-protests-across-uk-facebook-posts-show)

⁸ <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/articles/cwydezxl0xlo>

⁹ <https://www.oxfordmail.co.uk/news/25482399.oxford-asylum-protest-man-taken-away-police/>

¹⁰ <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/articles/c70xnzp0ej4o>

removal are harmful.¹¹ This was most recently and clearly illustrated through our obtaining of City of Sanctuary status.¹²

6. The government has recently announced new policies designed to create a more restrictive migration and asylum system, most notably through the suspension of family reunion.¹³

Council believes:

1. Oxford is a city proud of its diversity and its history of solidarity with people from all across the world.
2. The protests and attacks seen this summer are deeply worrying, and are designed to intimidate and divide our communities.
3. Attempts by politicians, media outlets and commentators to whip up hate and to blame migrants and refugees for the problems in our society should be condemned.
4. Hostile attitudes towards migrants are in part driven by central government policies which seek to create a more hostile environment for migrants and refugees.
5. Neither hotel accommodation, nor detention centres are fair, humane or suitable accommodation for people seeking asylum, and a drawn-out, lengthy process for reviewing asylum applications is harmful for those enduring it.
6. People seeking asylum should not be prevented from working while their claims are being processed.
7. Enabling family reunion is a basic cornerstone of a humane and fair asylum system and suspending it risks putting people who would otherwise be allowed to enter the UK in significant danger.
8. Hostile rhetoric and policies directed at migrants and people seeking asylum make many Oxford residents less safe by fueling xenophobia and racism.

Council resolves:

1. To request the Leader of the Council and the Cabinet Member for Safer Oxford:
 1. Reiterate the council's commitment to stand with and

¹¹ <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/articles/c5yj5j072ero>

¹² <https://www.oxford.gov.uk/news/article/1612/oxford-city-council-awarded-local-authority-of-sanctuary-accreditation>

¹³ <https://www.bbc.com/news/articles/c626p66d6jxo>

support all of Oxford's diverse communities and to oppose attempts to divide and intimidate.

2. Write to the Home Secretary reiterating this council's opposition to the re-opening of Campsfield Immigration Removal Centre and to the decision to suspend family reunion applications.
3. To publicly support and campaign for people seeking asylum to be permitted to work and accommodated within communities.

17c Bring Thames Water into public ownership (Proposed by Councillor Mundy, Seconded by Councillor Djafari-Marbini)

Thames Water has become a by-word for incompetence in utilities management. Having managed to discharge raw sewage into the region's waterways for almost 300,000 hours in 2024¹⁴, the company faced record breaking fines from Ofwat this year. In an ironic twist, Thames Water pleaded poverty when negotiating the fine downwards- committing to paying less than 20% of the £122.7 million fine within the next four and a half years. A fine made larger and of course less affordable by the £170 million in dividends paid out over the last two years.¹⁵ The failure of water companies across the country is being rewarded with huge executive salaries: The average pay for water company CEOs in 2022 was £1.7 million.¹⁶

People of Oxford are fed up of polluted waterways that used to be fit for leisure activities, fed up of aging burst water pipes flooding our streets¹⁷, and dismayed at the daft plans for an enormous reservoir which tears up local landscape and is costly and un-necessary.¹⁸

Yes, we have been here before, our Council passed a motion pushing for the nationalisation of Thames Water back in January 2023. But the government still chooses not to take bold action to take back control of our water supply, deciding instead that a new regulator will solve the problems. Our Council has the opportunity to

¹⁴ <https://www.theguardian.com/business/2025/mar/18/thames-water-data-reveals-raw-sewage-discharges-rivers-2024> Thames Water data reveals raw sewage discharges in rivers rose 50% in 2024. The Guardian 18/03/2025

¹⁵ <https://www.itv.com/news/meridian/2025-08-27/thames-water-negotiates-payment-plan-following-record-fine> Thames Water negotiates payment plan following record £122.7 million fine. ITV Meridian 27/08/2025

¹⁶ <https://www.mirror.co.uk/money/fat-cat-water-firm-bosses-26229950> EXCLUSIVE: 'Fat cat' water firm bosses earn £15m as amount of raw sewage dumped in rivers rockets. Daily Mirror 15/02/2022

¹⁷ <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/articles/c79qr333jv4o> and <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/articles/cwvj7ldw14eo> and <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/articles/cr5v223epnlo> and <https://www.dailymail.co.uk/video/news/video-2750371/Video-Oxford-City-Centre-suffers-water-pipe-burst-UK-hosepipe-ban.html> BBC and Daily Mail Summer 2025

¹⁸ <https://theconversation.com/the-uk-is-surprisingly-short-of-water-but-more-reservoirs-arent-the-answer-243440> The UK is surprisingly short of water – but more reservoirs aren't the answer. The Conversation 01/13/2025

push for a rethink, to urge the government to renationalise Thames Water.

This Council resolves to:

- Request that the Leader or Deputy Leader of the Council writes to Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs Emma Reynolds, with Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Water and Flooding Emma Hardy, stating that water privatisation has failed the people of Oxford and that our water supplier needs to be brought in to public hands.
- Request that the Leader or Deputy Leader of the Council writes to Thames Water CEO Chris Weston, seeking an explanation for the deplorable state of our water infrastructure. Asking, why our city suffered so much disruption from burst water mains this summer, and what is being done to ensure that the same won't be repeated again.
- Request that the Leader or Deputy Leader of the Council writes to Chris Weston seeking a resolution of when we will see an end to routine (outside of recognised extreme wet weather conditions) dumping of raw sewerage overflow in to Oxford's local waterways.
- Request that the Leader or Deputy Leader of the Council engages with local groups such as Windrush Against Sewage Pollution and Boycott Thames Water, to establish what more the Council can do to support their campaigns and to push for better standards from our water supplier.

17d Keep Oxford Open (Proposed by Councillor Goddard, Seconded by Councillor Smowton)

This Council—

- Reaffirms that asylum seekers, refugees and migrants more generally remain welcome in Oxford, and that the City stands by its Local Authority of Sanctuary status.
- Believes that demonstrations outside asylum seeker accommodation are likely to convey the opposite impression.
- Calls for the asylum backlog to be addressed through increased resources and processing efficiency, not through relocation that would cause needless disruption to individuals' living circumstances.
- Believes that negative assumptions concerning an individual, and particularly regarding risk of crime, must never be based on their asylum seeker or refugee status, national origin, religion, cultural background, age, gender or any other protected characteristic, but rather must always be based on hard evidence relating to specific individuals.

- Believes that tightening eligibility for refugee status would inevitably harm people who are fleeing war and conflict, as well as triggering a race to the bottom with other countries receiving refugees, and therefore this course should not be pursued.
- Backs granting a temporary work permit to asylum seekers who face a long wait outside their control, thereby enabling them to support themselves through earnings rather than requiring public support throughout their wait.
- Believes that Brexit has substantially harmed this country's ability to handle asylum cases by weakening cooperation between different European countries' immigration services.
- Calls on the Government to recommit to the United Kingdom as an open, diverse and welcoming place, and desist from hostile rhetoric such as suggesting housing asylum applicants in unsuitable accommodation such as warehouses¹⁹, or overzealously pursuing hotel closures and backlog reduction in a manner that tonally matches those overtly hostile to asylum seekers and refugees, thereby legitimising such views.

17e Better use of Oxpens Bridge Funding (Proposed by Councillor Jupp, Seconded by Councillor Miles)

Council notes:

- The cost of the Oxpens bridge has substantially increased since its original approval, and is running considerably behind other Growth Deal projects.
- That government has the option to repurpose the money for use in other active travel schemes and entrust the County Council to manage this.
- Government can and does vary the rules of the Deal from time to time. Thus far, government has rightly prioritised the spirit and objectives of the Deal above the letter of the agreement.
- Doubt remains that the Oxpens bridge will be able to provide a dry route to Osney Island and thereby unlock housing, due to the low-lying railway underpass in-between.
- The Growth Board (now Future Oxfordshire Partnership) was strongly urged against pursuing the Oxpens bridge project to begin with.

Council therefore believes it would be sensible to examine

¹⁹ <https://www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/home-news/migrant-hotels-asylum-yvette-cooper-warehouses-b2818433.html>

alternatives, and open a conversation with the County and/or the Ministry on options that deliver greater benefits for the residents of Oxford.

Council therefore resolves to ask the Leader to write to the relevant Minister, in full consultation with the accountable body for the Growth Deal funds, requesting that in the event of the bridge not going ahead:

- That the Growth Deal be varied as necessary to permit the funds to be used for other specified purposes in Oxford;
- That other options be explored to better employ the funds, including but not limited to:
 - Resurrecting the substantive scheme for Woodstock Road improvements to mitigate the effect of housing development to the north;
 - Revisiting the pedestrian bridge across the A40 at Barton Park which was dropped at planning stage, resulting in very real and significant safety concerns for residents;
 - Resurrecting the long-discussed plan for a foot/cycle bridge across the Thames at Jackdaw Lane, providing a safe and convenient alternative to the challenging Plain roundabout for residents of south and east Oxford.

Council notes that each of these schemes has been worked up in detail, and are thus available to re-visit, making any one of them attractive to a government which has the best interests of Oxford's residents at heart.

Matters exempt from publication and exclusion of the public

If Council wishes to exclude the press and the public from the meeting during consideration of any aspects of the preceding agenda items it will be necessary for Council to pass a resolution in accordance with the provisions of Section 100A(4) of the Local Government Act 1972 specifying the grounds on which their presence could involve the likely disclosure of exempt information as described in specific paragraphs of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Act 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 Access to Information Procedure Rules – Section 15 of the Council's Constitution – sets out the conditions under which the public can be excluded from meetings of the Council)

Updates and additional information to supplement this agenda are published in the Council Briefing Note.

Additional information, councillors' questions, public addresses and amendments to motions are published in a supplementary briefing note. The agenda and briefing note should be read together.

The Briefing Note is published as a supplement to the agenda. It is available on the Friday before the meeting and can be accessed along with the agenda on the council's website.

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 and Member 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 Councillors and members of the press and public 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 recordings may take place and that you may be inadvertently included in these.

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

Councillors declaring interests

General duty

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

What is a disclosable pecuniary interest?

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

Declaring an interest

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

Members' Code of Conduct and public perception

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

Members Code – Other Registrable Interests

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

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

Members Code – Non Registrable Interests

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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Minutes of a meeting of Council on Monday 14 July 2025

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Council members present:

Councillor Altaf-Khan	Councillor Arshad
Councillor Azad	Councillor Brown
Councillor Chapman	Councillor Clarkson
Councillor Corais	Councillor Diggins
Councillor Djafari-Marbini	Councillor Fouweather
Councillor Fry	Councillor Gant (Sheriff)
Councillor Harley	Councillor Henwood
Councillor Hollingsworth	Councillor Jarvis
Councillor Kerr	Councillor Miles
Councillor Max Morris	Councillor Muddiman
Councillor Munkonge	Councillor Ottino
Councillor Powell	Councillor Pressel
Councillor Railton	Councillor Qayyum
Councillor Rawle	Councillor Robinson
Councillor Rowley (Deputy Lord Mayor)	Councillor Sandelson
Councillor Linda Smith	Councillor Roz Smith
Councillor Smowton	Councillor Stares
Councillor Taylor	Councillor Turner
Councillor Upton (Lord Mayor)	Councillor Yeatman
Councillor Waite	

Also present for all or part of the meeting:

Caroline Green, Chief Executive
Tom Hook, Deputy Chief Executive - Citizen and City Services
Nigel Kennedy, Group Director Finance
Jonathan Malton, Committee and Member Services Manager
Hannah Carmody-Brown, Committee and Member Services Officer
Amber Khaloon, Trainee Solicitor
Emma Griffiths, Legal Services Manager (Deputy Monitoring Officer)

8. Apologies for absence

Councillors Goddard, Lygo, Jupp, Rehman, Regisford, Malik, Hunt, Mundy and Latif sent apologies.

It was noted that Councillor Yeatman, Councillor Corais and Councillor Roz Smith would be late.

9. Declarations of interest

Councillor Gant noted his Cabinet role at Oxfordshire County Council in relation to items 17a and 17d. Council were informed that he would leave the meeting during discussion of those items.

10. Minutes

Council resolved to **approve** the minutes of the meetings held on 24 March 2025 and the annual meeting of Council on 15 May 2025.

11. Appointment to Committees

There were no new appointments to committees.

12. Announcements

The Lord Mayor informed Council of events she had recently attended and noted her enjoyment of her new role. Council heard that she had recently attended a performance of the East Oxford Community Choir, met Mo Farah, accompanied the Silver Joggers, and attended a dinner at Queens College. The Lord Mayor had also met over 100 students from China at Oxford Town Hall and attended a networking event for refugees and migrants at Oxford Brooks University. Council also heard further examples.

The Sheriff also noted his enjoyment of his responsibilities and Council heard that the annual inspection of Port Meadow had been completed successfully.

The City Rector reflected on the power that speeches hold for changing history. Council heard that in Oxford in 1833, poet John Keble delivered a sermon which called on the nation to learn from the past and look to the future. The City Rector reflected on how this positively impacted communities and recommended that Council consider the value of his words.

13. Public addresses and questions that relate to matters for decision at this meeting

There were no addresses or questions.

14. Positive Action Policy

The Head of People had submitted a report regarding the Positive Action Policy. Cabinet had considered the report and recommended it to Council on 18 June 2025.

Councillor Chapman presented the report, noting that the policy is a critical tool for ensuring that under-representation across varying levels of the council is addressed. Council heard that the trade unions support this policy, and it has been integrated within current training, recruitment, and retention efforts.

Councillor Smowton queried what the Council will do to encourage representation of trans persons given the recent Equality Act ruling. Councillor Chapman emphasised that Council would continue reach out and encourage applications from persons within the trans community and will treat all applications properly and fairly. Where already employed, members of the community will be positively encouraged to take up greater responsibility.

Councillor Djafari-Marbini welcomed the addition of recommendations from the child poverty review group relating to social economic duties and the inclusion of KPIs within the policy to support target setting.

Councillor Chapman moved the report to a vote. Upon being seconded by Councillor Brown, the recommendation was put to a vote and agreed.

Council resolved to:

1. **Approve** the Positive Action Policy for publication and use.

15. Adopt the Revised Community Infrastructure Levy

The Director of Planning and Regulation had submitted a report regarding the changes to the Community Infrastructure Levy, and for Council to approve the amended Charging Schedule. Cabinet had considered the report and recommended it to Council on 18 June 2025.

Councillor Henwood left the meeting.

Councillor Hollingsworth presented the report and recommended it for approval.

Councillor Smowton requested that the rationale behind keeping use class C1 hotels on lower CIL rates, as set out in the report, be explained. Councillor Chapman explained that classifications within the report were based on what was deemed likely to be viable and successful through public inquiry processes.

Councillor Roz Smith joined the meeting.

Councillor Turner welcomed the report, emphasising that it is backed up by evidence and reflects the buoyancy of the market in Oxford.

Councillor Henwood rejoined the meeting.

Upon being seconded by Councillor Arshad, the recommendations were put to a vote and agreed.

Council resolved to:

1. **Adopt** the CIL Charging Schedule in line with the recommendation of the independent examiner as set out in Appendix 1.
2. **Approve** the date on which the amended tariffs will come into effect.
3. **Delegate authority** to the Director of Planning and Regulatory to make any necessary further minor changes to the documents or any minor change to the implementation date for the new CIL rates.

16. Appointment of Independent Persons

The Director of Law, Governance and Strategy had submitted a report recommending Council appoint six Independent Persons to assist with supporting the Monitoring Officer with the Standards Process. The Standards Committee had considered the report and recommended it to Council on 3 July 2025.

Councillor Pressel presented the report and moved for it to be voted upon. Upon being seconded by Councillor Jarvis, the recommendation was put to a vote and agreed.

Council resolved to:

1. **Authorise** the Monitoring Officer to re-appoint Chris Ballinger and Andrew Mills-Hicks and to appoint Eric Feltin, Lois Lezmore, Ala Soualhi and Dr. Bushra Almunir Yousef as the Council's Independent Persons for a five-year term.

17. Urgent Key Decisions Since March 2025

The Director of Law, Governance and Strategy had submitted a report to update Council on key decisions taken in cases of special urgency since March 2025.

Councillor Brown presented the report.

Councillor Gant, in relation to the report on urgent decision brought to Council in January 2025, emphasised that proper scrutiny and oversight must be ensured. It was asked why further urgent decisions had since been taken, and why they could not have been taken within proper timescales to facilitate sufficient overview. Councillor Brown acknowledged the matter and explained that all three examples within this report were subject to the requirement for decisions to be taken with haste, especially that relating to local government reorganisation. In these scenarios, Council heard that it would have been impossible for normal timescales to have been observed. Councillor Turner also commented that in some circumstances, there can be significant advantages to the Council if it is able to act with unusual speed, for example in relation to property transactions.

Council resolved to **note** the urgent key decisions taken in cases of special urgency as set out in the report.

18. Constitution Review 2025

The Director of Law, Governance and Strategy had submitted a report to seek approval to the updated Committee procedures in the relevant sections of the Constitution and further amendments to the Constitution.

Councillor Brown presented the report and commended the work of the Constitution Review Group. Council understood that an amendment had been proposed by the Green Group to clarify some wording on point 11.2.

Councillor Jarvis proposed a minor amendment in line with the spirit of the document's intentions. It was proposed that section 11.2 be altered from 'Nominated Councillors must have served at least **one full 4-year term** as a Councillor' to 'Nominated Councillors must have served at least **four full years** as a Councillor'.

Councillor Jarvis explained that the amendment was technical and aimed at ensuring that civic officer holders have a full and proper understanding of the council. Council heard the possible consequences of not agreeing this amendment. Councillor Powell, noting that he had been a member of the Constitution Review Group, seconded the amendment.

Councillor Hollingsworth questioned from what point four years from nomination date would be measured. Councillor Brown clarified that it would be from the date of taking office and Councillor Rowley explained that it would be from the date of the annual council at which persons are appointed to office.

Councillor Henwood noted his support for the amendment but raised concern that Councillor Malik has served the Council for 21 years but not been offered the position of Lord Mayor.

Council **agreed** the amendment.

Councillor Brown moved the report. Upon being seconded by Councillor Smowton, the recommendation was put to a vote and agreed.

Council resolved to:

1. **Approve** the updates to the Constitution, as listed in Appendix 1.
2. **Delegate** authority to the Monitoring Officer to make any other consequential amendments to the Constitution to reflect the changes in appendix 1 to the extent that they have not been identified in the above, provided such changes are purely required as a direct consequence.

19. Pay Policy Statement

The Head of People has submitted a report which asked Council to approve the pay policy.

Councillor Chapman presented the report and moved for it to be voted upon, noting that it sets out the technicalities of how staff are attracted and retained. Council heard that it was supported and agreed by the trade unions. Upon being seconded by Councillor Brown, the recommendation was put to a vote and agreed.

Council resolved to:

1. **Agree** the pay policy.

20. Questions on Cabinet minutes

a) Minutes of the Cabinet meeting held on 9 April 2025

No questions were raised.

b) Minutes of the Cabinet Meeting held on 18 June 2025

Councillor Smowton asked, in relation to the leisure review, whether more data is available to explain the year-on-year fall in visits to leisure centres. Following a discussion of the absence of this data within the minutes, Councillor Munkonge suggested that he discuss the matter with Councillor Smowton outside of the meeting.

Councillor Powell noted that the same statistics were discussed at a meeting of the Scrutiny Committee. Councillor Munkonge explained that the first year of data is considered a baseline and next year more data would be available to provide information on performance.

c) Draft Minutes of the Cabinet Meeting held on 9 July 2025

Councillor Morris, in relation to item 27, noted his disappointment for the reasons provided for the Council's choice not to produce a map in support of Oxford as a walkable city. It was asked whether Cabinet would reconsider the reallocation of funding for this purpose in the next budget. Councillor Railton emphasised that this would be a decision for the next budget, and not a matter to be considered within a motion.

Councillor Smowton, in relation to the Community Lettings Policy, asked the cabinet member whether current tenants are supportive of the policy, and secondly, in relation to the Homelessness Prevention Grant, whether there has been any progress made by the Council in urging central government to avoid a reduction in this. Councillor Turner explained that the Community Lettings Policy is necessary and treats all organisations in the round. Councillor Linda Smith explained that the policy only applies to new leases and does not affect existing tenants. In relation to the Homelessness Prevention Grant, Council heard that some progress has been made, and it has been learned that changes will be phased in and some mitigations will be added in response to representations made by the Council about the proposed formula.

21. Questions on Notice from Members of Council

26 written questions were asked of the Cabinet Members and the Leader, and these and written responses were published before the meeting.

These along with summaries of the 11 supplementary questions and responses asked and given at the meeting are set out in the minutes pack.

Councillor Jarvis left and rejoined the meeting during this item.

Councillor Corais left and rejoined the meeting during this item.

The Lord Mayor moved to items 16a, 16b and 16c ahead of the break.

22. Outside organisation/Committee Chair reports and questions

a) Oxfordshire Health and Wellbeing Board/ Health Improvement Board Partnership Report

The Director of Law, Governance and Strategy had submitted a report to provide the annual report on the work of the Oxfordshire Health and Wellbeing/Health Improvement Board.

Councillor Munkonge presented the report which outlined the actions Oxford City Council is taking to tackle health inequalities and support residents. Council heard that the matter is complex, but that Councillor Munkonge is proud of the ongoing partnership work with Oxfordshire County Council.

Councillor Djafari-Marbini asked how local government work on health and wellbeing will be scrutinised given a recent report from national government that notes relevant organisations disappearing. It was also asked whether representations will be made to central government on this issue. Councillor Munkonge recognised the importance of the question and committed to raising it at the next board meeting.

Councillor Robinson asked whether gardening and community allotments had been considered as gentle means of activity to improve health and wellbeing. Council also heard of the connection of this with food and nutrition understanding. Councillor Munkonge appreciated the recommendation and committed to adding it to the report.

Council resolved to **note** the annual report of the work the City Council does to support the Oxfordshire Health & Wellbeing Board and the Health Improvement Board.

b) Annual Scrutiny Report 2024-2025

The Chair of the Scrutiny Committee had submitted a report to Council to provide a summary of the Scrutiny function during the 2024/2025 municipal year.

Councillor Miles, Chair of the Scrutiny Committee 2024-2025, presented the report, noting that the Committee's discussions took place across a challenging landscape in the last year which further emphasised the importance of the scrutiny function and its delicate balance. Council heard that across the year the Committee made 96 recommendations to Cabinet; 59 of which were accepted in full. Councillor Miles noted that members of the Committee were encouraged that its views were embraced, and its role valued, and she noted her happiness that, despite political differences, members united and worked towards shared goals and values. Councillor Miles thanked officers and members and handed over to Councillor Powell as the new chair of the Scrutiny Committee.

Council resolved to **note** the update report.

c) Scrutiny Committee update report

The Chair of the Scrutiny Committee had submitted a report to update Council on the activities of scrutiny and the implementation of recommendations since March 2025.

Councillor Powell presented the report, noting that it applies to activities dated between 13 March 2025 and 11 July 2025. Council heard that the Scrutiny Committee met for the first time in the new Council year on 10 June and agreed the Committee's operating principles, established 3 working groups, and reconstituted the Budget Review Group. Council also heard that the Committee's operating principles were recommended to Council for formal amalgamation into the Constitution. Councillor Powell also noted that the Committee has made 19 recommendations across its meetings so far relating to topics such as leisure, the Oxford local Plan 2042, and homelessness. Further examples of matters discussed were also detailed.

Council resolved to **note** the update report.

The meeting broke for 45 minutes at the conclusion of this item.

23. Public addresses and questions that do not relate to matters for decision at this Council meeting

Councillor Yeatman joined the meeting during the break.

Councillor Gant, in line with his earlier declared interest, left the meeting and did not return.

The Deputy Chief Executive for City and Citizen's Services, the Group Finance Director, and the Trainee Solicitor left the meeting and did not return following the break.

Lord Mayor noted that member of the public who raised a question was not in attendance but that the response would be published in the minutes.

Council heard 3 addresses and Cabinet members responded.

All addresses and responses are set out in full in the minutes pack.

24. Motions on notice July 2025

Council had before it 5 motions on notice submitted in accordance with Council procedure rules and reached decisions as set out below.

Motions agreed as set out below:

- a) Oppose the County Council Congestion Charge Scheme (Proposed by Councillor James Taylor, Seconded by Councillor Asima Qayyum)

Motions not taken as the time allocated for debate had finished:

- b) Ban Smartphones in Oxford Schools (Proposed by Councillor Katherine Miles, Seconded by Councillor Andrew Gant)
- c) Protecting trans peoples' access to services (Proposed by Councillor Alex Powell, Seconded by Councillor Chris Jarvis)
- d) Keep Oxfordshire's street lights on (Proposed by Councillor Susan Brown, Seconded by Councillor Lubna Arshad)
- e) Environmental Protections in the Planning and Infrastructure Bill (Proposed by Councillor Andrew Gant, Seconded by Councillor Chris Smowton)

a) Oppose the County Council Congestion Charge Scheme (Proposed by Councillor James Taylor, Seconded by Councillor Asima Qayyum)

Councillor Taylor, seconded by Councillor Qayyum, proposed the motion as set out in the briefing note.

Councillor Henwood proposed an amendment to the motion, as set out in the briefing note and was seconded by Councillor Stares.

Following the debate and on being put to the vote, the amendment **fell**.

Following the debate and on being put to a vote, the unamended motion **carried**.

Council resolved to:

- **Express** its' opposition to the congestion charge scheme proposed by the county council

b) Ban Smartphones in Oxford Schools (Proposed by Councillor Katherine Miles, Seconded by Councillor Andrew Gant)

This motion was not taken as the time allocated for debate had finished.

c) Protecting trans peoples' access to services (Proposed by Councillor Alex Powell, Seconded by Councillor Chris Jarvis)

This motion was not taken as the time allocated for debate had finished.

d) Keep Oxfordshire's street lights on (Proposed by Councillor Susan Brown, Seconded by Councillor Lubna Arshad)

This motion was not taken as the time allocated for debate had finished.

e) Environmental Protections in the Planning and Infrastructure Bill (Proposed by Councillor Andrew Gant, Seconded by Councillor Chris Smowton)

This motion was not taken as the time allocated for debate had finished.

The meeting started at 5.00 pm and ended at 8.20 pm

**Lord Mayor
2025**

Date: Monday 6 October

*Decisions on items of business take effect immediately:
Motions may be implemented immediately or may require further budget provision
and/or reports to Cabinet before implementation.
Details are in the Council's Constitution.*

To: Council

Date: 17 September 2025 6 October 2025

Report of: Clive Tritton, Director of Economy, Regeneration and Sustainability

Title of Report: Appropriation of the land at Elsfield Hall from the General Fund ("GF") into the Housing Revenue Account ("HRA") to facilitate affordable housing development

Summary and recommendations	
Decision being taken:	This report seeks Council approval for appropriation of land from the General Fund to the Housing Revenue Account (changing the statutory basis on which it is held by the Council).
Key decision:	No
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 Council resolves to:

1. **Approve** the appropriation of the land owned by Oxford City Council (OCC) at Elsfield Hall from the General Fund (GF) into the Housing Revenue Account (HRA).

Appendix No.	Appendix Title	Exempt from Publication
Appendix 1	Financial Information Elsfield Hall	This information is exempted from publication under Schedule 12A to the Local Government Act 1972 on the following basis:

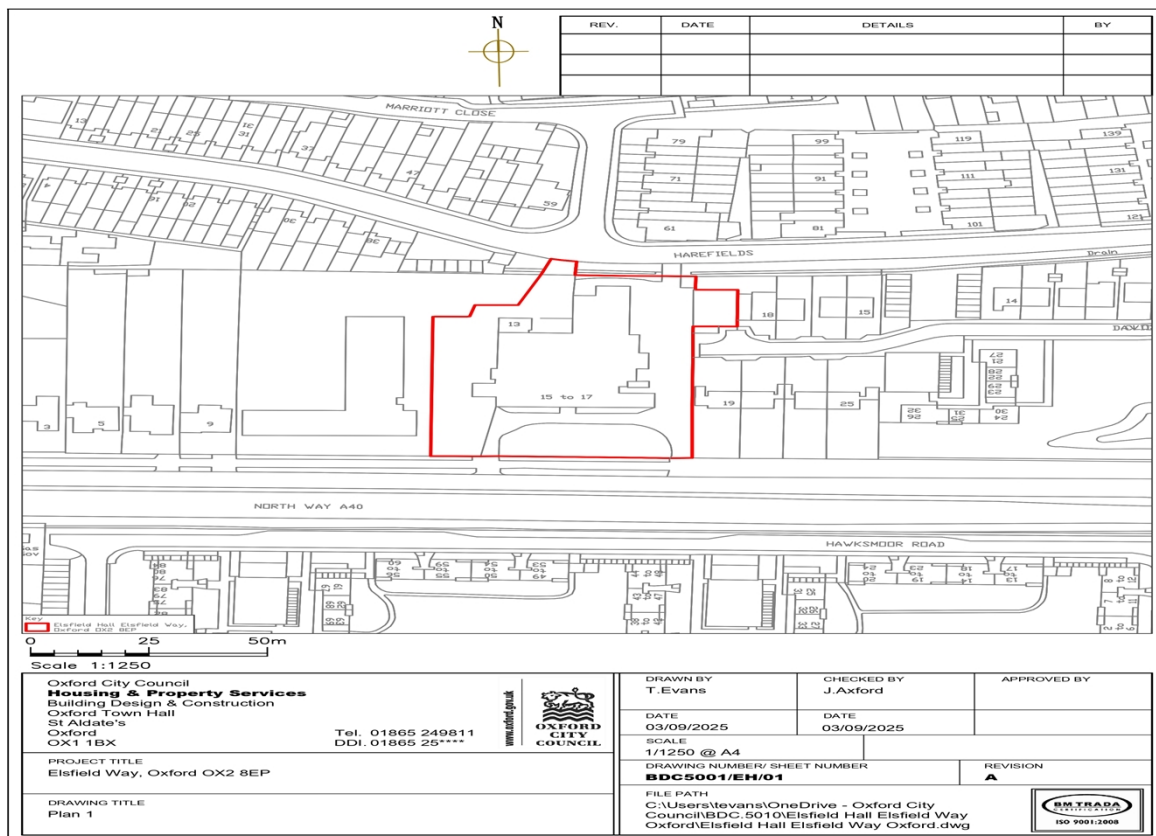
		Commercial Sensitivity
Appendix 2	Planning considerations & risk	<p>This information is exempted from publication under Schedule 12A to the Local Government Act 1972 on the following basis:</p> <p>Commercial Sensitivity</p>

Introduction and background

1. The Council continues to develop a supply programme to deliver more affordable housing through multiple work streams, including the delivery of homes through the Council's housing company – OCHL (Oxford City Housing Limited); direct delivery by the Council; joint ventures; regeneration schemes; acquisitions; and enabling activity with Registered Providers, community-led housing groups, and other partners.
2. The Council seeks to deliver over 1,600 affordable tenure homes across the next four years (to March 2029), with at least 850 of those at the most affordable Social Rent level. Projections at the time of writing will deliver 1,500 homes across this period and additional sites and developments are required to meet these targets and address housing need within the city.
3. Officers continue to review opportunities to bring forward the development of further affordable homes to increase the supply available to help meet Oxford's housing needs. This might take the form of developing more new homes; acquiring property to use as affordable housing; or switching tenures to improve affordability and access to these homes.
4. On 17 September 2025, Cabinet agreed project approvals and approved delegations and budget for the delivery of more affordable homes at Elsfield Hall.
5. These three new opportunity sites are being brought forward to collectively deliver 83 or more new units in the affordable housing programme. They have been appraised jointly and on an individual basis and meet HRA financial parameters (see 'Financial Implications' section). They also present an opportunity to deliver affordable housing to help meet the 1,600 homes target across the 4-year MTFP, rather than at the back end of the development pipeline programme in 2031/32.

Scheme information

6. This report concerns Elsfield Hall – a currently vacant office building in the Cutteslowe area, facing onto the Northern ring-road, located in the Wolvercote ward. It has vehicular access from Harefields (to the north) and additional pedestrian access from Elsfield Way. The site is adjacent to the Cannon Court (developed by OX Place) which completed in 2022/23 comprising of 26 affordable flatted homes.
7. The site is owned by OCC in the General Fund commercial portfolio.
8. The existing buildings are considered to require demolition, although this will require testing as part of the next stage of feasibility work.



Image

Red line drawing of site (including already developed Cannon Court – image left)

9. The current proposal is for a 100% affordable housing development, and the site is considered to have capacity for at least 30 homes. The project brief will seek to maximise the site density and building heights which may deliver greater than 30 homes. A final decision on site numbers will need to be balanced against any potential planning risks.
10. The tenure mix has yet to be finalised, though initial testing includes fifteen units for Social Rent and fifteen units for Shared Ownership. Again, the final tenure strategy will be subject to design development and viability considerations. The table below sets out an early indication of the likely mix (of property sizes and tenures) that the site is considered capable of taking in physical design terms, and in terms of ensuring the financial viability of the scheme.

Size	Social Rent	Shared ownership	Total	%
1 bed	6	6	12	40%
2 bed	6	6	12	40%
3 bed	3	3	6	20%
4 bed	0	0	0	0%
Total	15	15	30	
Percentage	50%	50%		

11. The sizes of the individual homes have also yet to be confirmed, but the Council will endeavour to achieve suitably sized homes. These will always meet 'Nationally Described Space Standards', but in addition, the Council would seek to ensure that one bed flats are for two people; two bed homes are for four people; three bed homes are for five people (i.e., two double bedrooms and a single); and so forth.
12. To ensure that 5% of the affordable homes meet the M4 (3) "Wheelchair Standard" (to be adapted/ adaptable for households with mobility needs), it is expected that three homes will meet this requirement. The design and allocation of this property have yet to be completed but will be part of the planning submission.
13. The proposed delivery model is for the HRA direct delivery, under which the Council retains full ownership of the land and delivers the scheme through its Housing Revenue Account. OCHL will be appointed as the Council's development agent via a Development Services Agreement (DSA). There will be no disposal of the land; instead, the Council will grant a licence to the building contractor to carry out the development works on the Council-owned land. The DSA will require OCHL to procure the grant of this licence as part of its role in managing the delivery of the scheme on the Council's behalf along with procuring and appointing a contractor.

Alternative Options Considered

14. The option of not proceeding with Elsfield Hall as a development opportunity would mean that the site does not realise its full potential to deliver affordable housing to help meet the 1,600 homes target across the 4-year MTFP. The current programme for Elsfield Hall targets a project completion of end of 2027 – providing an opportunity to deliver homes relatively quickly, compared with other larger pipeline sites.
15. Disposal to a private developer is also a consideration. While this could potentially generate a capital receipt, it would limit the Council's ability to ensure delivery of genuinely affordable housing and control over design quality and sustainability standards and will not necessarily contribute to the delivery of more affordable housing.
16. Re-letting the property as a commercial premises is not considered a viable option. OCC has attempted to market the property for a new letting with limited success, as the office market is not strong, particularly outside the city centre.
17. Only 'core' affordable tenures have been modelled – Social Rent (as the OCC priority) and Shared Ownership (as cross-subsidy).

Financial implications

18. Introduction of this site into the development pipeline is contingent on re-shaping of the existing OCHL development programme to release necessary funding for the developments. This will require a virement to be approved within the HRA capital programme from the current "Properties purchased from OCHL" to the new schemes as discussed in this paper.
19. The current OCHL programme review is necessary to address an existing budget pressure (attributed to delays and build cost inflation), and an adjustment is proposed to introduce additional market sale units to cover-off the budget pressure and allow for a programme contingency to be introduced. The re-shaping will then also release

funding for these three new pipeline schemes. As such, the budget required for the new opportunity sites will be contained within the existing development budget envelope and will not require an increase to the existing budget.

20. A separate paper will be presented to Council to detail the proposed reshaping of the existing programme, as part of the initial budget reports for 2026/27 & the MTFP.
21. The financial appraisal for Elsfield Hall has established a proposed HRA capital budget for scheme costs of £11.7 million which includes the appropriation value of the land to the HRA. A budget virement from the "Properties purchased from OCHL" purchase line into a new scheme line has been approved by Cabinet to match the build programme across the four years from 2025/26 to 2028/29. Further financial details are provided in confidential Appendix 1.

Legal issues

22. On 17 September 2025 Cabinet resolved to:

23. **Grant project approval** to finalise the scheme design, to the proposals to enter into build contracts and any other necessary agreements or contracts and incur associated development cost spends, as set out in this report, and within the allocated HRA capital budgets and business plan, for the purpose of delivering more affordable housing in Oxford;
24. **Delegate authority to the Director of Housing**, in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Affordable Housing; the Head of Financial Services/Section 151 Officer; and the Council's Monitoring Officer, to enter into build contracts and any other necessary agreements or contracts to facilitate the development within the identified budget, for the provision of additional affordable housing;
25. **Grant approval** for a virement within the HRA capital budget for scheme costs of £11.7 million. The virement will be from the "Properties purchased from OCHL" (Oxford City Housing Limited) purchase line into a new scheme line to be profiled to match the build programme across the four years from 2025/26 to 2028/29;
26. **Recommend to Council** the appropriation of the land owned by Oxford City Council (OCC) at Elsfield Hall from the General Fund (GF) into the Housing Revenue Account (HRA).
27. Section 122 of the Local Government Act 1972 provides a general power to the Council to appropriate land from one statutory purpose to another where the land in question is no longer required for its current purpose. In terms of process, case law has established that appropriation must involve more than a mere decision to hold for the particular land for another purpose. The Council must consider whether the land is no longer needed in the public interest of the locality for the purpose for which it is held.
28. This report proposes bringing a vacant commercial site which is no longer required for its original purpose into use as affordable housing.
29. To facilitate the proposed housing development, the land must be transferred from the General Fund ("GF") to the Housing Revenue Account ("HRA"). This report seeks Council's approval for the appropriation of the land at Elsfield Hall from the GF to the HRA.

Level of risk

30.No planning permission is currently granted on the site, and further design development work is required to establish the proposed scale, massing and quantum of proposed units. Considerable due diligence has been carried out however to identify and mitigate delivery risks associated with a new development. The existing planning consent of Cannon Court – which includes Elsfield Hall within its red line boundary - establish an in-depth understanding of the site and its opportunities and risks. Whilst the Cannon Court consent provides useful background information of the site, it is noted that any future application will need to assess the proposed site on its own merits to establish its suitability for residential development, and in line with current regulatory standards.

31.Further detail on the Principle of Development has been included in Appendix 2.

Equalities impact

32. 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

33.All development schemes delivered by OCC/OCHL are subject to high sustainability standards with the expectation that they exceed statutory (building) standards.

Report author	Dave Scholes
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Service area or department	Economy, Regeneration and Sustainability
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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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By virtue of paragraph(s) 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A
of the Local Government Act 1972.

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To: Council

Date: 6th October 2025

Report of: Clive Tritton, Director of Economy, Regeneration and Sustainability

Title of Report: Appropriation of the land at Cave Street from the General Fund (GF) into the Housing Revenue Account (HRA) to facilitate affordable housing development.

Summary and recommendations	
Decision being taken:	This report seeks Council appropriation of the land at Cave Street from the General Fund (GF) into the Housing Revenue Account (HRA) to facilitate affordable housing development.
Key decision:	No
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 Council resolves to:

1. **Approve** the appropriation of the land owned by Oxford City Council (OCC) at Cave Street from the General Fund (GF) into the Housing Revenue Account (HRA).

Appendix No.	Appendix Title	Exempt from Publication
Appendix 1	Financial Information Cave Street	This information is exempted from publication under Schedule 12A to the Local Government Act 1972 on the following basis:

		Commercial Sensitivity
Appendix 2	Planning considerations & risk	This information is exempted from publication under Schedule 12A to the Local Government Act 1972 on the following basis: Commercial Sensitivity

Introduction and background

1. The Council continues to develop a supply programme to deliver more affordable housing through multiple work streams, including the delivery of homes through the Council's housing company – OCHL (Oxford City Housing Limited); direct delivery by the Council; joint ventures; regeneration schemes; acquisitions; and enabling activity with Registered Providers, community-led housing groups, and other partners.
2. The Council seeks to deliver over 1,600 affordable tenure homes across the next four years (to March 2029), with at least 850 of those at the most affordable Social Rent level. Projections at the time of writing will deliver 1,500 homes across this period, and additional sites and developments are required to meet these targets and address housing need within the city.
3. Officers continue to review opportunities to bring forward the development of further affordable homes to increase the supply available to help meet Oxford's housing needs. This might take the form of developing more new homes; acquiring property to use as affordable housing; or switching tenures to improve affordability and access to these homes.
4. On the 17th September 2025, Cabinet agreed project approval and approved delegations and budget for the delivery of more affordable homes at Cave Street. It sits alongside two other Cabinet approvals (acquisition of Elsfield Hall and Knights Court into the HRA).
5. These three new opportunity sites are being brought forward to collectively deliver 83 or more new units in the affordable housing programme. They have been appraised jointly and on an individual basis and meet HRA financial parameters (see 'Financial Implications' section). They also present an opportunity to deliver affordable housing to help meet the 1,600 homes target across the 4-year MTFP, rather than at the back end of the development pipeline programme in 2031/32.

Scheme information

6. This report concerns Cave Street – a vacant site in the St Clements area, the site was an employment/ new business starter premise (Standingford House) - now demolished (as end of life). Access is onto Cave Street, a small residential street.
7. In December 2022, planning consent was granted for the erection of a new 2-3 storey office building. This was to be funded via the LEP, but the funding opportunity ended in 2023, and replacement funding to deliver an employment site is not expected.
8. The site is owned by OCC in the General Fund commercial portfolio.



Image 1: Red line drawing of site (Standingford House now demolished)

9. The proposal is for a 100% affordable housing development, and the site is considered to have capacity for 19 homes, though this needs to be agreed through the planning process and will be subject to design development and viability considerations. The intention is to match the massing height and footprint to the existing planning approval for commercial use.
10. The tenure mix has yet to be finalised, though initial testing includes ten units for Social Rent and nine units for Affordable Rent (to support the delivery of one bed units to meet needs) but capped at LHA rates in line with the Council's Tenancy Strategy. Again, the final tenure strategy will be subject to design development and viability considerations. The table below sets out an early indication of the likely mix (of property sizes and tenures) that the site is considered capable of taking in physical design terms, and in terms of ensuring the financial viability of the scheme.

Size	Social Rent	Affordable rent	Total	%
1 bed	10	9	19	100%
2 bed	0	0	0	0%
3 bed	0	0	0	0%
4 bed	0	0	0	0%
Total	10	9	19	
Percentage	53%	47%		

11. The sizes of the individual homes have also yet to be confirmed, but the Council's ambition is to prioritise 1-bed homes to directly respond to the housing need and the

Council would be seeking a deviation from the usual planning mix to support this objective. These will always meet 'Nationally Described Space Standards', but in addition, the Council would seek to ensure that one bed flats are for two people. Any two bed homes should accommodate for four people; three bed homes are for five people (i.e., two double bedrooms and a single); and so forth.

12. To ensure that 5% of the affordable homes meet the M4 (3) "Wheelchair Standard" (to be adapted/ adaptable for households with mobility needs), it is expected that two homes will meet this requirement. The design and allocation of this property has yet to be completed but will be part of the planning submission.
13. The proposed delivery model is for the HRA direct delivery, under which the Council retains full ownership of the land and delivers the scheme through its Housing Revenue Account. OCHL will be appointed as the Council's development agent via a Development Services Agreement (DSA). There will be no disposal of the land; instead, the Council will grant a licence to the building contractor to carry out the development works on the Council-owned land. The DSA will require OCHL to procure the grant of this licence as part of its role in managing the delivery of the scheme on the Council's behalf along with procuring and appointing a contractor.

Alternative Options Considered

14. The option of not proceeding with Cave Street as a development opportunity would mean that the site does not realise its full potential to deliver affordable housing to help meet the 1,600 homes target across the 4-year MTFP. The current programme for Cave Street targets a project completion at the end of 2027 – providing an opportunity to deliver homes relatively quickly, compared with other larger pipeline sites.
15. Disposal to a private developer is also a consideration. While this could potentially generate a capital receipt, it would limit the Council's ability to ensure delivery of genuinely affordable housing and control over design quality and sustainability standards and will not necessarily contribute to the delivery of more affordable housing.
16. Whilst Planning permission for a commercial development has been granted, due to build-cost increases and uncertainty of the office-letting market, the delivery of the scheme is unviable for the Council.
17. Only 'core' affordable tenures have been modelled – Social Rent (as the OCC priority) and Affordable Rent (as cross-subsidy). Initial feasibility studies show that a small scheme of at least 13 x 2-bed flats (part-two, part-three storeys) would be possible using the existing footprint and mass of the current office planning consent, although this places additional pressure on the project viability.

Financial implications

18. Introduction of this site into the development pipeline (alongside the two other opportunity sites at Elsfield Hall and Knights Court) is contingent on re-shaping of the existing OCHL development programme to release necessary funding for the developments. This will require a virement to be approved within the HRA capital programme from the current "Properties purchased from OCHL" to the new schemes as discussed in this paper.

19. The current OCHL programme review is necessary to address an existing budget pressure (attributed to delays and build cost inflation), and an adjustment is proposed to introduce additional market sale units to cover-off the budget pressure and allow for a programme contingency to be introduced. The re-shaping will then also release funding for these three new pipeline schemes. As such, the budget required for the new opportunity sites will be contained within the existing development budget envelope and will not require an increase to the existing budget.
20. A separate paper will be presented to Council to detail the proposed reshaping of the existing programme, as part of the initial budget reports for 2026/27 & the MTFP.
21. The financial appraisal for Cave Street has established a proposed HRA capital budget for scheme costs of £5.9 million which includes the appropriation value of the land to the HRA. A budget virement from the “Properties purchased from OCHL” purchase line into a new scheme line has been approved by Cabinet to match the build programme across the four years from 2025/26 to 2028/29. Further financial details are provided in confidential Appendix 1.

Legal issues

22. On 17 September 2025 Cabinet resolved to:

23. **Grant project approval** to finalise the scheme design, to the proposals to enter into build contracts and any other necessary agreements or contracts and incur associated development cost spends, as set out in this report, and within the allocated HRA capital budgets and business plan, for the purpose of delivering more affordable housing in Oxford;
24. **Delegate authority to the Director of Housing**, in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Affordable Housing; the Head of Financial Services/Section 151 Officer; and the Council’s Monitoring Officer, to enter into build contracts and any other necessary agreements or contracts to facilitate the development within the identified budget, for the provision of additional affordable housing;
25. **Grant approval** for a virement within the HRA capital budget for scheme costs of £5.9 million. The virement will be from the “Properties purchased from OCHL” (Oxford City Housing Limited) purchase line into a new scheme line to be profiled to match the build programme across the four years from 2025/26 to 2028/29;
26. **Recommend to Council** the appropriation of the land owned by Oxford City Council (OCC) at Cave Street from the General Fund (GF) into the Housing Revenue Account (HRA).
27. Section 122 of the Local Government Act 1972 provides a general power to the Council to appropriate land from one statutory purpose to another where the land in question is no longer required for its current purpose. In terms of process, case law has established that appropriation must involve more than a mere decision to hold for the particular land for another purpose. The Council must consider whether the land is no longer needed in the public interest of the locality for the purpose for which it is held.
28. This report proposes bringing a vacant commercial site which is no longer required for its original purpose into use as affordable housing.
29. To facilitate the proposed housing development, the land must be transferred from the General Fund (“GF”) to the Housing Revenue Account (“HRA”). This report seeks

Council's approval for the appropriation of the land at Cave Street from the GF to the HRA.

Level of risk

30. No planning permission is currently granted on the site, and further design development work is required to establish the proposed scale, massing and quantum of proposed units. Due diligence has been carried out however to identify and mitigate delivery risks associated with a new development. The existing planning consent establishes the principle of development on the site and the planning documentation provides a great level of detail about the site's opportunities and risks. Whilst the existing consent provides details of what may be acceptable to the LPA, it is noted that any future application will need to assess the site to review its suitability for residential development, and in line with current regulatory standards.
31. Further detail on the Principle of Development has been included in Appendix 2.

Equalities impact

32. 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

33. All development schemes delivered by OCC/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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To: Council
Date: 6th October 2025
Report of: Head of People
Title of Report: Working Overseas Policy and Procedure

Summary and recommendations	
Decision being taken:	Seeking agreement to implement a new policy and procedure relating to working outside of the United Kingdom.
Key decision:	No
Cabinet Member:	Councillor Nigel Chapman, Cabinet Member for Citizen Focused Services and Council Companies
Corporate Priority:	None.
Policy Framework:	None.

Recommendation(s): That Council resolves to:
1. Approve the implementation of the Working Overseas Policy and Procedure

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	N/A

Appendix No.	Appendix Title	Exempt from Publication
--------------	----------------	-------------------------

Appendix 1	Draft Working Overseas Policy and Procedure	No
Appendix 2	Risk Register	No
Appendix 3	Equality Impact Assessment	No

Introduction and background

1. The process of requesting to work overseas is not currently documented.
2. In recent months the organisation identified a number of employees, workers and members working overseas without having notified ICT or obtaining permission.
3. This poses a high risk to the council in terms of:
 - Data security
 - Tax implications
 - Right to work
 - Employment protections
 - Health and safety
 - Contractual agreements
4. Following the recent cyber incident, all access to council systems outside the UK has been stopped.
5. Access can be granted by ICT, but to mitigate the significant risks this carries, the policy provides a process that should be followed to enable working overseas in a safe and responsible way.

Proposed parameters to working overseas

6. Please note there are no alternatives to the proposed criteria to work overseas given the data security and legal risks.

Who the policy applies to:

7. This policy covers all Oxford City Council employees, workers, members and volunteers. There is a simpler process for members.

What the policy covers:

8. This policy includes any work-related activity conducted on any device whilst overseas (outside of the United Kingdom). It includes but is not limited to the checking and composition of emails, attending meetings, speaking to colleagues or completion of written work.

Parameters to working overseas for employees / contractors

9. Requests to work will be considered on a case-by-case basis and if the following apply:
 - The employee's role can be effectively performed remotely and carried out lawfully from the country in question.

- The employee is not in probation, notice period, performance improvement or disciplinary proceedings.
- The period spent working overseas will not be more than 90 days in a rolling 180-day period.
- A risk assessment (see appendix 1 of the policy document) is completed that sets out the specific risks and mitigations that will be put in place
- The employee has obtained and proven their right to work in the overseas country
- The employee will accept liability for any costs incurred as a result of working overseas including travel, accommodation, insurance and legal compliance
- The employee will accept liability for any costs incurred to the Information Commissioner as stated in Data Protection Law should a data breach occur due to the employee's failure to comply with this policy
- Work related activity will be carried out using only council equipment (no personal devices) with the strict use of a council approved VPN when accessing the council network and any work-relation information, including Microsoft 365.
- The employee will not use council devices for personal use whilst abroad
- Access to the council network will be via a private connection. Connection to public Wi-Fi is not permitted under any circumstances.
- All work will be password protected all work in case equipment is lost or stolen
- The employee will use a strong unique password and two factor authentication.
- Written approval is obtained by the Head of People, Deputy Chief Executive of City and Citizens' Services and Director of Law, Governance and Strategy.
- The council reserves the right to withdraw the agreement at any time, with reasonable notice
- If, for any reason access to work systems, facilities or permissions is revoked or restricted, the employee will need to return to the UK in order to resume duties.

Parameters to working overseas for members

10. Requests to have access to council-related data will be accommodated on the following basis:
 - A risk assessment (see appendix 2 of the policy document) is completed that sets out the specific risks and mitigations that will be put in place.
 - The member will accept liability for any costs incurred to the Information Commissioner as stated in Data Protection Law should a data breach occur due to the member's failure to comply with this policy.
 - Council related activity will be carried out using only council equipment (no personal devices) with the strict use of a council approved VPN when

accessing the council network and any work-relation information, including Microsoft 365.

- The member will not use council devices for personal use whilst abroad.
- Access to the council network will be via a private connection. Connection to public Wi-Fi is not permitted under any circumstances.
- Written agreement is obtained by the DPO (Director of Law, Governance and Strategy) and SIRO (Deputy Chief Executive City and Citizens' Services).

Red flag countries

11. Under no circumstances will any individuals be given access to council systems from any of the listed countries:

- Afghanistan
- Belarus
- China
- Haiti
- Iran
- Lebanon
- Libya
- North Korea
- Russia
- South Korea
- South Sudan
- Syria
- United States of America
- Yemen

12. These are countries considered to have 'high-risk conditions' based on information from the UK Foreign Office and the European Commission adequacy decision as to whether a country offers an adequate level of data protection.

Other implications

Consultation and communications

13. This policy has been reviewed and agreed by the Unions and the Council Leadership Team.

14. Upon its agreement we will share employee and member communications to clarify the position on working overseas and set out the procedure that must be followed for any future requests.

Financial implications

15. There are no financial implications. The policy is clear that any costs associated with working outside of the UK will sit with the individual, not the council.

Legal issues

16. Failure to put mitigations in place before individuals carry out council-related work overseas carry significant legal risk, which are set out in the Policy and Risk Register. This includes legal implications on both the individual if:

- Personal or sensitive data is breached.
- The individual does not have the legal right to work in that country.
- The individual becomes subject to the legal jurisdiction of the overseas country.

Level of risk

17. The risk without a robust policy and procedure in place is significant. As indicated by the Risk Register, putting in place a procedure involving a risk assessment and specific criteria the risks can be sufficiently avoided or reduced.

Equalities impact

18. A copy of the Equalities Impact Assessment is attached in Appendix 3.

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Working Overseas

Policy and Procedure

1 Introduction

- 1.1 Working overseas is generally not supported at Oxford City Council. However this policy sets out the process that allows individuals to work overseas in a safe and responsible way.
- 1.2 This policy is not intended to facilitate employees being permanently based in another country or to take/extend a 'normal' holiday.
- 1.3 Any exceptional agreement to overseas working will be considered on a case by case and short-term basis and must have prior approval of the Head of People, the Director of Law, Governance and Strategy, and the Deputy Chief Executive City and Citizens' Services.

2 Who this policy covers

- 2.1 This policy covers all Oxford City Council employees, workers, members and volunteers.
- 2.2 It applies to contractors, consultants, agency workers, self-employed individuals directly accessing council data to complete work for the organisation.

3 What this policy covers

- 3.1 This policy includes any work-related activity conducted on any device whilst overseas (outside of the United Kingdom).
- 3.2 It includes but is not limited to the checking and composition of emails, attending meetings, speaking to colleagues or completion of written work.
- 3.3 Equipment used overseas includes laptops, tablets, smartphones, and any other devices that can store or access council data. Council applications and data include emails, documents, databases, and any other information that belongs to the council or is processed by the council.

4 Working overseas

- 4.1 Employees should not access any work systems or emails whilst overseas without permission, and to do so could raise security risks and have serious legal implications.
- 4.2 Employees should not take any council devices outside of the UK unless they have raised a request to work overseas, and it has been approved.

- 4.3 In line with the ICT Remote Access to Networks and Equipment Policy employees should not install or use any unapproved software or private VPNs to council equipment.
- 4.4 Employees should not use personal devices to access the council network, including Microsoft 365, whilst working overseas.
- 4.5 Failure to obtain approval to carry out any work-related activity when abroad could result in disciplinary action.

5 What are the risks?

- 5.1 Working overseas carries a number of risks to individuals and the organisation.

Data Security

- 5.2 Where a role involves the use or processing of personal data, this could give rise to data protection issues, including a potential breach of data protection laws and a higher risk of a cyber-attack.
- 5.3 The level of risk is dependent on the following factors:
- The sensitivity of the data and nature of the work
 - The systems accessible by the user
 - The data protection law in the destination country
 - Any political and or security concerns regarding the destination country.
 - The duration of the requested stay
- 5.4 Employees who have access to DWP data will not be permitted to work abroad unless their access to all DWP data is removed prior to leaving the UK.
- 5.5 Employees who process data on behalf of a third-party organisation may need to seek that organisation's approval prior to processing any such data abroad.

Tax

- 5.6 If duties are carried out in a different country, subject to protection under a taxation agreement, the other country may seek to tax the income individuals receive for those duties.
- 5.7 Even with short-term work overseas, there may be additional reporting obligations in the overseas country.

Right to Work

- 5.8 There may be immigration restrictions on working in another country, even for a limited period. Permission may be required in advance of travel unless the individual is a national of that country.
- 5.9 There could also be an impact for any non-British/ Irish nationals, as any absence may impact their settled status, visa, or their eligibility to apply for other types of status in the future.

Employment protections

- 5.10 If employees live and work abroad, even for short periods, they can become subject to the jurisdiction of that country. This could include minimum rates of pay, paid annual holidays and rights on termination.

Health and Safety

- 5.11 In the UK employers have a duty to protect the health, safety and welfare of their employees. Different countries have different rules, so any work must meet these varying obligations.
- 5.12 Consideration must also be given to additional threats at the time of any request such as crime, extreme climate, infectious diseases, political unrest, natural disasters and terrorism.

Contractual agreements

- 5.13 Employees may not be able to carry out work overseas where their role involves contractual agreements. Current legislation does not allow for employees to enter into or negotiate contracts overseas as this may be viewed as forming a “permanent establishment” in another country.

6 When will a request to work overseas be accepted?

- 6.1 Requests to work will be considered on a case-by-case basis and accepted only in exceptional circumstances.
- 6.2 Requests to work will be accepted strictly on the following basis:
- The employee’s role can be effectively performed remotely and carried out lawfully from the country in question.
 - The employee is not in probation, notice period, performance improvement or disciplinary proceedings.
 - The period spent working overseas will not be more than 90 days in a rolling 180-day period.
 - A risk assessment is completed that sets out the specific risks and mitigations that will be put in place (see appendix 1).
 - The employee has obtained and proven their right to work in the overseas country.
 - The employee will accept liability for any costs incurred as a result of working overseas including travel, accommodation, insurance and legal compliance.
 - The employee will accept liability for any costs incurred to the Information Commissioner as stated in Data Protection Law should a data breach occur due to the employee’s failure to comply with this policy.
 - Work related activity will be carried out using only council equipment (no personal devices) with the strict use of a council approved VPN when accessing the council network and any work-relation information, including Microsoft 365.
 - The employee will not use council devices for personal use whilst abroad
 - Access to the council network will be via a private connection. Connection to public Wi-Fi is not permitted under any circumstances.

- All work will be password protected in case equipment is lost or stolen.
- The employee will use a strong unique password and two factor authentication.
- Written approval is obtained by the Director of Law, Governance and Strategy, Head of People and Deputy Chief Executive City and Citizens' Services.
- The council reserves the right to withdraw the agreement at any time, with reasonable notice.
- If, for any reason access to work systems, facilities or permissions is revoked or restricted, the employee will need to return to the UK in order to resume duties.

6.4 Under no circumstances will individuals be permitted to work from any of the listed countries, where there are data ed:

- Afghanistan
- Belarus
- China
- Haiti
- Iran
- Lebanon
- Libya
- North Korea
- Russia
- South Korea
- South Sudan
- Syria
- United States of America
- Yemen

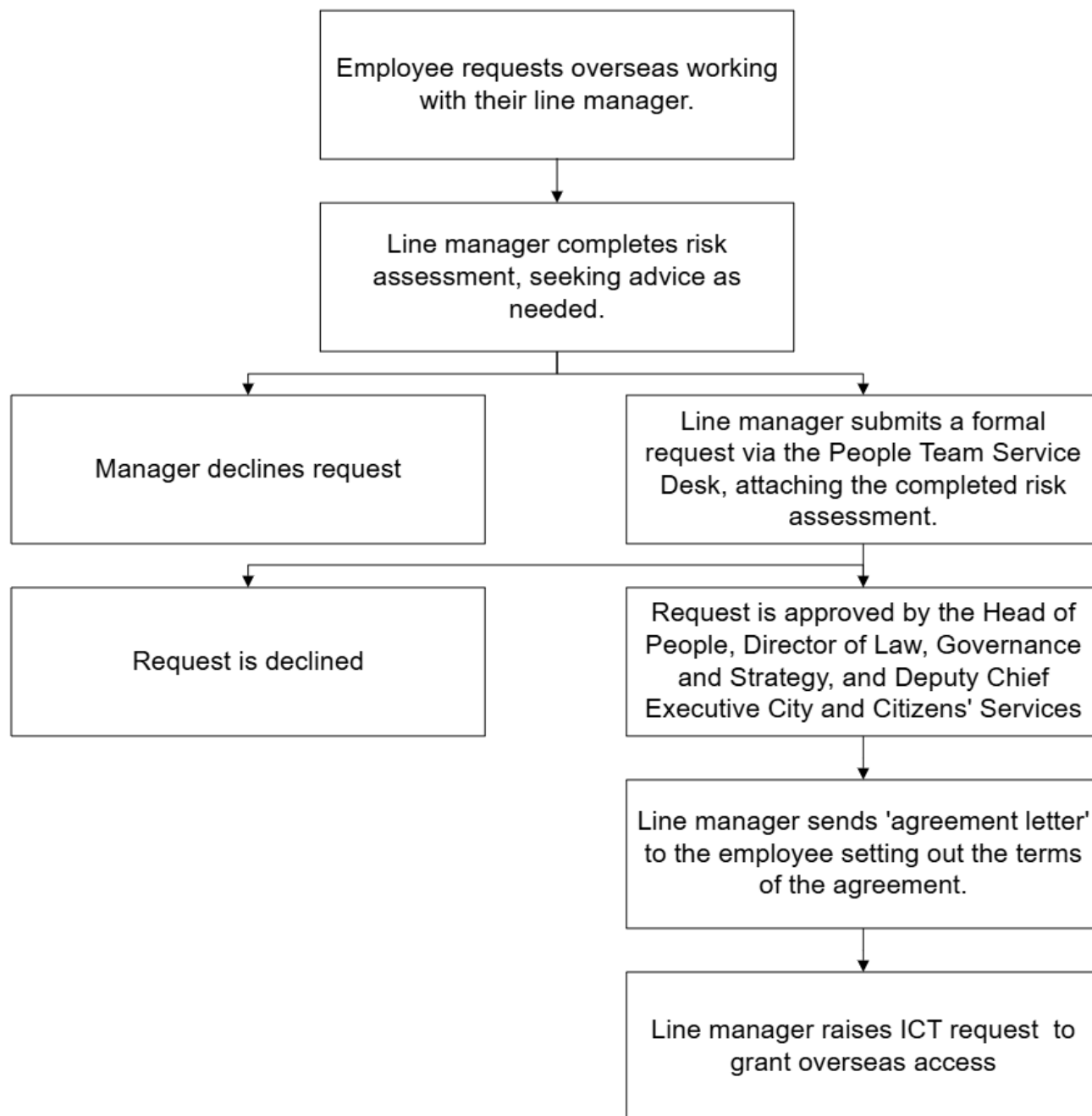
These are countries considered to have 'high-risk conditions' based on information from the UK Foreign Office and the European Commission adequacy decision as to whether a country offers an adequate level of data protection.

6.5 Permission to work abroad cannot be assumed because it was approved in the past. Each request should be treated as a separate application.

6.6 Failure to meet any of these requirements could result in disciplinary action being taken.

7 Procedure

7.1 This flowchart sets out the procedure that must be followed:



Risk Assessment

- 7.2 The risk assessment should be completed by the line manager, seeking advice as needed from the People, ICT, and Data Protection teams.
- 7.3 The employee raising the request is responsible for obtaining and paying for any additional specialist advice required e.g. tax, contractual or employment obligations.

Agreement letter

- 7.4 If a request is approved by the Head of People, Director of Law, Governance and Strategy and Deputy Chief Executive City and Citizens' Services, a notification will be sent to the ICT team to ensure data security provisions can be put in place.
- 7.5 Upon approval, written agreement must be sent to the employee by the line manager, setting out the terms of the arrangement. A member of the People Consultancy Team must review the Agreement Letter before it is sent.
- 7.6 While the detail of the Agreement Letter will depend on the circumstances typical provisions include:
- The agreed dates of working overseas.
 - The agreed working hours and exact location.
 - Expectations around meeting performance standards and responsibilities of the role.
 - Confirmation that the employee will be liable for any additional income taxes or employee social security which may be charged because of their decision to work for a period in an overseas location (with the employer being authorised to make additional deductions or seek reimbursements, if necessary, for this purpose).
 - Confirmation that the employee will be responsible for any personal tax declarations or social security contributions that need to be made.
 - Confirmation that the employee will be responsible for any Council equipment they use overseas and must have sufficient insurance to cover the replacement of any equipment if it is lost, damaged or rendered unusable.
 - Requirement for the employee to provide proof of the legal right to work in the destination country for the agreed period.
 - Confirmation that the employee will bear the full cost of flights, accommodation, medical insurance, and any other costs related to working abroad.
 - Requirement for any phishing attempts, lost devices or suspected problems to be reported immediately.
 - Confirmation that if the employee becomes ill while being abroad, they must follow the Attendance Management Policy, and any sick notes obtained must be officially translated into English.
 - Confirmation that if they are unable to work whilst overseas for any reason, the remaining time overseas can be taken annual leave or special unpaid leave.
 - Statement that confirms the council reserves the right to withdraw, suspend or amend the agreement at any time.

8 Procedure for Members

- 8.1 Whilst members are not subject to the same request procedure when planning to work overseas, they must still meet the following criteria:
- A risk assessment is completed that sets out the specific risks and mitigations that will be put in place (see appendix 2).
 - The member will accept liability for any costs incurred to the Information Commissioner as stated in Data Protection Law should a data breach occur due to the member's failure to comply with this policy.

- Work related activity will be carried out using only council equipment (no personal devices) with the strict use of a council approved VPN when accessing the council network and any work-relation information, including Microsoft 365.
- The member will not use council devices for personal use whilst abroad
- Access to the council network will be via a private connection. Connection to public Wi-Fi is not permitted under any circumstances.
- The employee will use a strong unique password and two factor authentication.
- Approval is obtained by the Director of Law, Governance and Strategy and Deputy Chief Executive City and Citizens' Services.

- 8.2 A risk assessment must be completed and reviewed by the DPO (Director of Law, Governance and Strategy) and SIRO (Deputy Chief Executive City and Citizens' Services) in advance so that any risks can be identified and mitigations put in place. Completed risk assessments should be sent to Committee and Member Services for processing.
- 8.3 Upon agreement, ICT must be notified and an Agreement Letter sent to set out the terms of the arrangement.
- 8.4 Failure to do this may result in access to all OCC systems being withdrawn immediately until the member's return to the UK.

9 Monitoring and review

- 9.1 This policy will be regularly reviewed in consultation with trade unions.

10 Appendix 1 – Working Overseas Risk Assessment Form for Employees/ Workers

Section 1: Employee/ member details			
Name		Service Area	
Job Title		Employment Type	
Country they wish to work from		Requested dates (from – to)	
Address when working abroad			
Section 2: Detail of the request			
<p><i>What is the reason for the request?</i></p> <p><i>If the request is not accepted – what is the impact on the organisation?</i></p> <p><i>How will it impact the person's ability to do their job? Consider working hours, collaboration, in person meetings. Would any adjustments need to be made?</i></p> <p><i>What is the current Foreign Office travel guidance to this country? Consider crime, climate, public health information, political unrest, natural disasters and terrorism.</i></p> <p><i>What is the work environment like? Consider privacy, connectivity, equipment.</i></p> <p><i>Does the employee have proof of the right to work in the requested location?</i></p> <p><i>What are the GDPR rules in the requested location? For information on a Countries adequacy status please check this site: Data protection adequacy for non-EU countries.</i></p> <p><i>What data will the employee access whilst working overseas? Is any of it personal or sensitive data? What systems does the employee have access to?</i></p>			

As part of their working environment, how will they keep data secure and protect the confidentiality of any data or work conversations they may have?

As part of the employee's role are they involved in contract negotiation or agreement at all?

Section 3: Consideration of risks and mitigations

Risk	Likelihood	Impact	Mitigating Action	Owner
<i>What is the risk?</i>	<i>How likely is it to happen? (Unlikely – likely)</i>	<i>Consider the impact on the person, team, organisation and customers</i>	<i>What actions can be taken to reduce the likelihood of this risk occurring?</i>	<i>Who is responsible for completing the mitigating action?</i>
Inability to carry out the tasks required of the role	[Unlikely / likely]	[Low / medium / high]		Line Manager
Additional health and safety obligations in the overseas country	[Unlikely / likely]	[Low / medium / high]		Health and Safety Team
Additional tax obligations to the overseas country	[Unlikely / likely]	[Low / medium / high]		Line Manager
No right to work in the overseas country	[Unlikely / likely]	[Low / medium / high]		People Team
Additional employment rights in the overseas country	[Unlikely / likely]	[Low / medium / high]		People Team
Additional GDPR obligations in the overseas country	[Unlikely / likely]	[Low / medium / high]		Data Protection Team
Sensitivity of data accessible	[Unlikely / likely]	[Low / medium / high]		Data Protection Team

Restrictions on ability to make contractual agreements on behalf of the Council	[Unlikely / likely]	[Low / medium / high]		Legal Services
Loss or damage of Council equipment	[Unlikely / likely]	[Low / medium / high]		ICT
Breach of OCC systems	[Unlikely / likely]	[Low / medium / high]		ICT
Breach of DWP data sharing regulations	[Unlikely / likely]	[Low / medium / high]		ICT
<i>Add any other risks specific to this post.</i>				

11 Appendix 2 - Working Overseas Risk Assessment Form for Members

Section 1: Employee/ member details			
Name		Requested dates (from – to)	
Country they wish to work from		Address when working abroad	
Section 2: Detail of the request			
<p><i>What is the current Foreign Office travel guidance to this country? Consider crime, climate, public health information, political unrest, natural disasters and terrorism.</i></p> <p><i>What are the GDPR rules in the requested location? For information on a Countries adequacy status please check this site: Data protection adequacy for non-EU countries.</i></p> <p><i>What data will the member access whilst working overseas? Is any of it personal or sensitive data? What systems does the employee have access to?</i></p> <p><i>As part of their working environment, how will they keep data secure and protect the confidentiality of any data or work conversations they may have?</i></p>			
Section 3: Consideration of risks and mitigations			
Risk	Likelihood	Impact	Mitigating Action
<i>What is the risk?</i>	<i>How likely is it to happen? (Unlikely – likely)</i>	<i>Consider the impact on the person, team, organisation and customers</i>	<i>What actions can be taken to reduce the likelihood of this risk occurring?</i>
Additional health and safety obligations in the overseas country	[Unlikely / likely]	[Low / medium / high]	
Additional GDPR obligations in the overseas country	[Unlikely / likely]	[Low / medium / high]	

Sensitivity of data accessible	[Unlikely / likely]	[Low / medium / high]	
Breach of OCC systems	[Unlikely / likely]	[Low / medium / high]	
<i>Add any other risks specific to this post.</i>			

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 below:

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

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

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



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

The description of the risk should include the following elements:

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

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 those impacts.

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	Unforeseen 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 unwarranted 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/decommissioning 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.

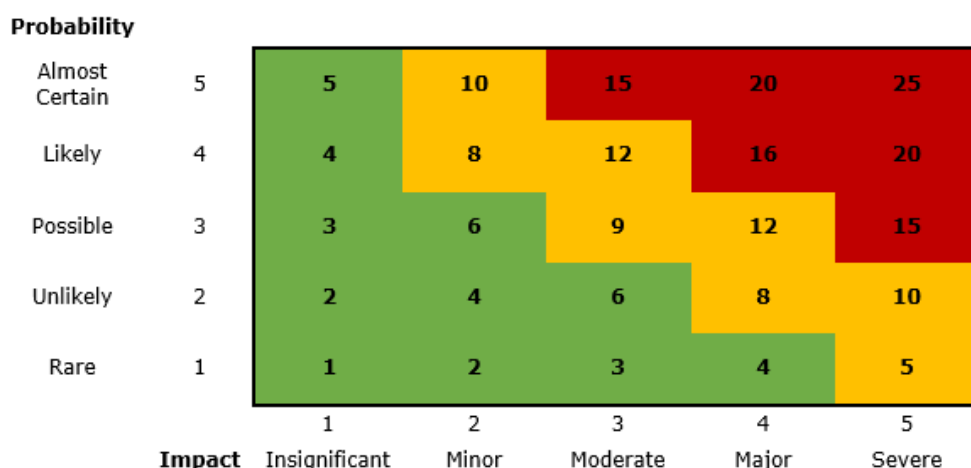
Each risk should be analysed using a five by five matrix for (1) the likelihood it will happen and (2) the impact if it did occur. This assessment should be made on three different basis:

- 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 risk.

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



When considering the likelihood of a risk happening you should select the number from 1 to 5 from the risk matrix that you think it will be over the next 12 months (it can be longer or shorter; some risks in the Strategic Risk Register are better considered over 3 to 5 years, some operational risks will be considered over 3 to 6 months). This score will require an element of judgement when considering how likely an event is to occur and you should consider the following:

- Has this event happened before in the Council? (How frequently?) Has this event happened elsewhere? (How frequently?)
- 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 impact. Once again, this score will have an element of judgement.

Risk Impact Assessment Criteria

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

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: Treat, Tolerate, Terminate or Transfer:

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

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

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

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

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

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

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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.	Introduction of a Working Overseas Policy and Procedure	2.	The implementation date of the activity under consideration:	22/10/2025 – subject to Council approval
3.	Directorate/Department(s):	Corporate Services – People Team	4.	Service Area(s):	People Services
5.	Who is (are) the assessment lead(s): Please provide: -Name -Email address	Victoria Taylor vtaylor@oxford.gov.uk	6.	Contact details, in case there are queries: Please provide: -Name -Email address	Victoria Taylor vtaylor@oxford.gov.uk
7.	Is this a new or ongoing EqlA?	Ongoing	8.	If this is an extension of a previous EqlA, please indicate where the previous EqlA is located and share the link to the said EqlA.	N/A
9.	Date this EqlA started:	15/09/2025			
10.	Will this EqlA be attached to Corporate Management Team (CMT) reports/updates, which will be published online?	Yes	11.	Give a date (tentative or otherwise) when this assessment will be taken to the CLT.	22/09/2025

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

12.	Type of activity being considered: Check the most appropriate.	<input type="checkbox"/> Decommissioning		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Commissioning		
13.	Which priority area(s) <u>within Oxford City Council's Corporate strategy (2024-2028)</u> does this activity fulfil? Please check as needed.	<input type="checkbox"/> Good, affordable homes	<input type="checkbox"/> Strong, fair economy	<input type="checkbox"/> Thriving Communities	<input type="checkbox"/> Zero Carbon Oxford	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Well run council
14.	Which priority area(s) within <u>Oxford City Council's Equality, Diversity & Inclusion Strategy (2022)</u> does this activity fulfil? Please check as needed.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Responsive services and customer care.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Diverse and engaged workforce.	<input type="checkbox"/> Leadership & organisational commitment.	<input type="checkbox"/> Understanding and working with our communities.	
15.	Outline the aims, objectives, & priorities of the activity being considered.	The process of requesting to work overseas is not currently documented. This poses a high risk to the Council in terms of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tax implications • Right to work • Employment protections • Data security • Health and safety • Contractual agreements 				

		This policy aims to highlight the risks and set out a formal process that must be followed in any request to work overseas.
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.	Individuals may try to work outside of the United Kingdom without mitigations being put in place, exposing individuals and the council to additional risk.

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.	Consulted with employees, data protection and system experts. We have sought external legal advice on the risk and proposed procedure. We have also consulted with CLT and Trade Unions.
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,	Applies to anyone who may wish to log on to council systems and carry out work whilst outside the United Kingdom.

	-reports, -briefs.	
19.	<p>If you have not done any consultations or collected data & information, are you planning to do so in the future?</p> <p>Please list the details – -when, -with whom, and -how long will you collect the relevant data.</p>	N/A

Section 4: Impact analysis.

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

21.	Does the activity impact positively or negatively on any protected characteristics as stated within Equality (Act 2010)?					
Protected Characteristic	Positive	Negative	Neutral	Don't know	Data/information/evidence supporting your assessment	Analysis & insight Mitigations
Age	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Policy applies to all individuals regardless of age.	
Disability (Visible and invisible)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Policy applies to all individuals regardless of disability	
Gender re-assignment	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Policy applies to all individuals	
Marriage & Civil Partnership	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Policy applies to all individuals	
Race, Ethnicity and/or Citizenship	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Employees with a dual citizenship may be able to demonstrate their legal right to work in an alternative country.	
Pregnancy & Maternity	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		

Religion or Belief	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Policy applies to all individuals	
Sex	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Policy applies to all individuals	
Sexual Orientation	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Policy applies to all individuals	
Socio-economic inequalities such as: - income and factors that impact income. - access to jobs	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Individuals wanting to work overseas would be liable for any costs incurred and required to obtain sufficient travel insurance for the duration of the period.	Requests would be raised by the individuals themselves. Any requirement to work overseas by OCC would have all costs covered.
Council of Sanctuary For example: Migrant, refugee, or asylum seekers.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	May provide individuals the opportunity to travel to see and support family whilst working – depending on the country and any risks identified.	


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

22.	Conclusions.					
	<input type="checkbox"/> Stop and reconsider the activity.	<input type="checkbox"/>	Adjust activity before beginning the activity and continue to monitor.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> No major change(s) or adjustments and continue with activity but continue to monitor.	<input type="checkbox"/> 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.		<p>Benefits of Implementation: Implements a consistent approach to agreeing any requests to working overseas and allows mitigations to be put in place that protect individuals and the council.</p> <p>Promotes Equity: Ensures everyone has equal opportunities.</p> <p>Enhances Diversity: Supports the notion of hybrid working – allowing individuals to work around personal circumstances.</p>			

Section 6: Monitoring and review plan.

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

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

24.	<p>Who or which team or service area will be responsible for monitoring equalities impact?</p> <p>For example-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - team, -directorate, -service area, -Equalities Steering Group,etc. 	<p>People Team Data Protection Team ICT Team Legal Services</p>			
25.	<p>Who (individual, team, or service area) will be responsible for carrying out the EqlA review?</p>	<p>People Team</p>			
26.	<p>How often will the equality impact be reviewed for this activity?</p> <p>For example-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -quarterly, -yearly, etc. 	<p>Bi-annually</p>	27.	<p>Date when the EqlA will be reviewed again.</p>	<p>October 2027</p>

Section 7: Sign-off

Name: Victoria Taylor

Job Title: People Consultancy
Manager

Signature:



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You have now reached the end of the assessment.

 Please append this to any reports and project files for reference.

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To: Council

Date: 6 October 2025

Report of: Director of Law, Governance and Strategy

Title of Report: Questions on Cabinet Minutes

Introduction

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

Appendix 1 – Minutes from the meeting of Cabinet held on 13 August 2025

Appendix 2 – Draft Minutes from the meeting of Cabinet held on 17 September 2025

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Minutes of a meeting of the Cabinet on Wednesday 13 August 2025

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Committee members present:

Councillor Brown

Councillor Arshad

Councillor Hollingsworth

Councillor Munkonge

Councillor Railton

Officers present for all or part of the meeting:

Caroline Green, Chief Executive

Tom Bridgman, Deputy Chief Executive – Place

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

Nigel Kennedy, Group Finance Director

Jenny Barker, the Regeneration and Development Lead

Dr Brenda McCollum, Committee and Member Services Officer

Also present:

Councillor Alex Powell, Chair of Scrutiny

Apologies:

Councillor(s) Turner, Chapman and Linda Smith sent apologies.

32. Declarations of Interest

None.

33. Minutes of the previous meeting

Cabinet resolved to approve the minutes of the meeting held on **09 July 2025** as a true and accurate record.

34. Addresses by members of the public

An address to Cabinet was given by Dan Glazebrook, a representative of the Friends of Grandpont Nature Park group:

Almost 2000 people, the vast majority of them local residents, have now signed the petition against Oxpens River Bridge and its connecting paths. There are many reasons people are up in arms - the ecological destruction involved, the lack of democratic consultation, the fact that there are already two excellent pedestrian and cycle bridges within quarter of a mile of the site, the misuse of £10million of public money intended to facilitate affordable housing - but what I want to focus on today is how the bridge singularly fails to meet its own intended purpose - to provide a floodproof connection from Osney Mead to Oxpens.

So the local plan specifies the need for both a new bridge linking Osney Mead to the other side of the river, and a floodproof route out of Osney Mead. These two things have subsequently been combined into plans for a single floodproof connection reaching all the way from Osney Mead across the river, as is made clear in several official documents.

The problem is, to reach the bridge from Osney Mead, users would have to go across a stream and under a railway bridge along a section of the towpath that frequently floods.

To solve this problem, the City Council commissioned Stantec to develop a project called Osney Pathworks, to create a new floodproof path linking Osney Mead to the planned new bridge. The preferred plan was to erect floodwalls under the railway bridge. But the Environment Agency vetoed this proposal in 2021, as it would cause further flooding elsewhere. Stantec's report admitted there is no solution currently available which adequately addresses the flooding issue whilst also meeting current safety standards for cycling and walking. This remains the case today.

This makes the bridge completely redundant, as it utterly fails to provide the new floodproof connection from Osney Mead across the river without which housing cannot be built on the site and which was the whole point of the project in the first place.

The City Council is now right on the verge of committing up to £14million of public money, and causing irrevocable damage to a cherished piece of countryside on our doorstep, for a bridge that singularly fails to meet its basic purpose. We urge you - please do not be a party to this shocking waste of money and biodiversity. Surely no further funds should be committed so long as there remains no viable plan to floodproof the connection between Osney Mead and the new bridge.

I would also like to address the issue of the University's funding commitments to the scheme. A spokesman for the University told the Oxford Mail back in January that, the University, quote, "last year agreed to make a contribution of around 10 per cent of the cost of the new bridge after learning that cost increases had put its viability at risk."

10% at that time equated to more than £1 million of the project's projected costs. If the University had already committed more than a million pounds last year, why is this financial commitment not appearing in the figures before us today? Why is the public purse being asked to guarantee the full £3.7million in increased costs, and not, say, £2.7 million, given that a million from the University is already in the bag? Have the University now reneged on this commitment? And if the Council is willing to commit the entirety of the increased costs from the public purse, what incentive is there for the University to contribute any money at all?

Finally, I would also like to address the issue of Balfour Beatty's monopoly position in the delivery of the scheme. Balfour Beatty are set to be awarded the construction

contract without any competitive tendering process at all. Balfour Beatty are a notorious company. They are involved in the imposition of near-slavery conditions on their migrant workforce in Qatar; just four years ago they were fined £49 million for massive fraud against the US government after it was revealed they had been systematically falsifying data in order to get bonus payments - and in this country their failure to comply with statutory safety requirements led in 2020 to the death of one construction worker and serious injuries to another, according to a [ruling](#) by the Health and Safety Executive last year.

But as well as being criminally unethical, they are also just not very good builders. On trustpilot, they are rated 'bad' with just 1.7 stars out of 5 and student residents have had to be moved out of their accommodation in Bethnal Green recently due to significant defects which have been blamed on the contractor, and which have cost its owner over £34million to address.

Why is the Council so keen to work with these incompetent criminals that it is prepared to set aside its usual tendering process and guarantee the contract to Balfour Beatty without any tendering at all? And is it's willingness to do so the reason why the company feels confident enough to hike its bill by over 35%, from £10 to £14 million in just a few months?

After all, the company do have form here - in 2016, one of their employees [revealed](#) how they had been extorting the taxpayer by systematically inflating their costs. The company responded by sacking the whistleblower, for which they were later forced to pay £137,000.

I will end there but if you would like to be in touch about this, or to see any of the documentation I have referred to today, please do not hesitate to be in touch with Friends of Grandpont Nature Park at gnptrees@gmail.com

More information is also available at our website - savegnp.org

An address to Cabinet was submitted by Andrew Smith, resident of Grandpont:

We are longstanding residents of Grandpont and we have lived in the area for the past 50 years. We are therefore asking the Cabinet to critically review the necessity of continuing with the plan to instal the proposed Oxpens Bridge. The Council appears determined to press ahead with the project despite there being strong grounds to consider cheaper and more environmentally friendly alternatives, and in the face of well informed and consistent opposition. Local residents exercised their democratic right to raise objections and galvanise support to oppose the bridge. An appeal is pending the recent Judicial review.

The cost of the proposed River Bridge has now spiralled to some £14+million. Local democratic objection has been blamed for this rise from the £10m. In fact, the original deadline for project completion was March 2023, when the price was £6million. The delays were due to the Council's mismanagement of the project (eg not having applied for planning permission and a licence to fell trees) - costs had spiralled long before the Judicial Review October 2024 initiated by the SaveGNP group.

The area of Grandpont Nature park (GNP) that will be unnecessarily destroyed, is a unique area of land that was regenerated from the "poisoned" land that blighted this part of Oxford for many years. The GNP is therefore a success story, that highlights the important partnership between the then environmentally aware council (some 35 years ago) that supported the regeneration, the local community and the capacity of nature to

grow and diversify, and turn this once abandoned and toxic part of Oxford into a thriving biodiverse area for the people of Oxford.

The Council must continue to take responsibility for the natural environment in Oxford. These principles seem to have sadly been abandoned and to have become a willing participant in the destruction of this unique area. It is a legacy that should be respected and protected for future generations.

The Council appears to simply brush aside this argument, seeing the bridge as being essential for connectivity and as part of the yet to be authorised Osney Mead science park development. but perhaps will do so in a manner that seriously limits a open minded and informed approach to the There are much cheaper and better alternatives:

The Gas Works Bridge, built in 1927, was recently publicised by Cllr Railton and Liz Wooley (local historian) as an important part of Oxford's industrial heritage (but in need of maintenance). As you are aware it is a 2 minute walk from the proposed site of the new bridge. It offers not only a historical connection to the regenerated nature reserve, but offers an ongoing route for local people into Oxford. A Council feasibility study (cost updated 2024: £679.344) highlighted the Gas work Bridge as offering good much cheaper connectivity to the city and proposed a redevelopment scheme that would create a flood proof oute across the Oxpens Meadow. This was roundly rejected by the Council as not a viable option, but is something that the council as guardians of tax payers' money should revisit and perhaps, put into practice the commitment to sustainability that the Council projects as a guiding principle. The Council's focus on the proposed bridge has become rigid and unimaginative.

It has been pointed out repeatedly, that the position of the River Bridge, does not take into account the serious limitations of the route under the railway bridge on the pathway towards Osney/Botley. It has a limited height and often floods. You then have to cross a small wooden bridge in poor condition, where 2 cyclists can't pass each other. The proposed 4 metre wide bridge would exit into an area that is not suitable: a motorway grade construction and roadway would lead into an ancient cycle and pedestrian path, which would be hazardous for all users. There are no plans about connectivity towards Osney and how to safely negotiate the rail bridge limitations. When we asked Council officials about these obvious problems, during a "walk about" in March 2024, officer Jenny said: "it is not in our remit - up to the University to sort out ". Thus confirming a planning infrastructure "black hole" that does little justice to the planned bridge and the safety and needs of local people. We see ever more electric bikes/delivery vans going at breakneck speeds along existing paths. We dread to think of the ever higher speeds across the new "motorway", then screeching down a path under the low, often flooded railway bridge/tiny wooden bridge! This is a shared space : pedestrians (often elderly) love to walk through the woods.

It is time for a rethink! Is this really the time for such a poorly conceived and unpopular project to be advanced with our public money, intended for much needed housing for local people? We are regularly in the glade where the proposed bridge will be situated. We have had many conversations with members of the local public who use the cycle track or walk through the area. The most common response is WHY?- we already have 2 good bridges" Then followed by shock about the scale and purpose of the proposed bridge.

After considering all the local objections, it would be seen as reasonable and admirable for the Council to cancel the River Bridge, not a weakness or loss of face. This which would greatly improve the public perception that the Council are working in the best interest of us, your tax payers.

We thank you for considering our views and hope you will reconsider the River Bridge.

Councillor Alex Hollingsworth provided Cabinet's response to the two addresses from members of the public. He noted that the second member of the public who had submitted an address had not been able to attend in person and that the response below was being given to respond to both addresses from members of the public.

"The Cabinet report is seeking agreement to delegate the signing of agreements and entering of contracts to deliver the bridge. This is necessary to be able to meet the programme to deliver the bridge in 2026.

The Bridge has long been part of the policy and placemaking proposals for the West End. Councillor Hollingsworth noted that all of the previous policies and proposals had been subject to public consultation and democratic approval by the Council.

The West End AAP, adopted June 2008, sought

A new pedestrian and cycle bridge across the Thames to join Oxpens Field to the Thames towpath is proposed. This would link the West End to Osney Mead and the West Oxford Cycle Route. Improvements will also be made to the route running east from the pedestrian bridge

The Oxford Core Strategy adopted March 2011 sought; A new Thames cycle and pedestrian bridge

The Oxpens SPD, adopted Nov 2013 sought (5.30)

A new footbridge crossing the Thames (Isis) should be provided to enhance opportunities to move between Oxpens and the wider area, notably the Grandpont Nature Reserve, the residential areas up/down stream on the opposite side of the river. Indicative locations for the proposed bridge crossing are illustrated on the Development Framework Plan and Illustrative Masterplan. The exact location of the bridge is to be determined, and the Environment Agency must be consulted on the design.

The Oxford LP policy SP2 June 20

The masterplan should consider in greater detail how and when a new pedestrian and cycle bridge will be delivered linking this site with the other side of the river.

West End and Osney Mead SPD Nov 22

Key Infrastructure priorities in relation to movement are:

....Oxpens River Bridge

- The proposed bridge now has planning permission and technical approval for the structure and a route has been identified to deliver the bridge. Further work has been done to refine the proposals to reduce the impact on trees at Grandpont through reuse of the existing path as far as possible and these are*

set out in a Non-Material Amendment currently with the planning team. Grandpont Nature Park will remain for recreational use. The proposals include replacement planting and deliver a Net Biodiversity Gain.

- The path through Grandpont is already well used and with further development in the West End the level of use is forecast to increase. Optioneering was done to look at the options to floodproof the tow path under the rail bridge but they were not taken forward as there was not funding available for them. That does not mean the route will not continue to be used the rest of the time, and the pathworks and the proposed bridge will provide an attractive and legible route across the river to the city centre.*
- The other Gasworks bridges will remain. The potential to improve the Gasworks Rail bridge was considered by the County Council in 2016/17 and discounted. Further review has highlighted considerable challenges particularly with the footpath alongside Castle Mill Stream which is too narrow to accommodate cycling and the alternative route over the Castle Mill Stream bridge which would require alterations to create a hardened path and altered levels across the Meadow.*
- The proposed bridge provides the opportunity for a new and convenient active travel route across the river, designed specifically for the location and to support the placemaking that will support the development of the West End as a vibrant quarter of the City.”*

Councillor Brown thanked the members of the public for their submissions.

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

None.

36. Councillor addresses on Neighbourhood Issues

None received.

37. Items raised by Cabinet Members

None.

38. Reports from the Scrutiny Committee

The Scrutiny Committee met on 5 August 2025 and reviewed the Oxpens River Bridge Update. The Climate and Environment Working Group met on 22 July 2025 to consider the Net Zero Tracker, the Local Plan 2042 Climate Change and Resilience, and the Annual Air Quality Status Report. Councillor Alex Powell noted that there were not recommendations arising from the Working Group regarding the Net Zero Tracker.

Councillor Alex Powell presented the Scrutiny Committee's discussions and recommendations regarding the Oxpens River Bridge Update. He noted that the Committee discussed possible impacts, risks, and the likelihood of further delays.

- **Recommendation:** That Cabinet undertake high-level remodelling and assess potential impact of the judicial review appeal progressing to a hearing,

particularly around timescales and future costings, to ensure the Council is better prepared and has a more informed basis for decision.

Councillor Hollingsworth responded to the recommendations from Scrutiny and said that Cabinet had agreed the recommendation from Scrutiny.

Councillor Alex Powell presented the Climate and Environment Working Group's discussions and recommendations relating to the Local Plan 2042 Climate Change and Resilience. He noted that the Working Group emphasised the need to integrate building cooling systems into building plans moving forward.

- **Recommendation 1:** That the Local Plan 2042 include clearer support for renewable energy schemes, particularly the potential for solar panel installations on terraced houses through community-led energy schemes.
- **Recommendation 2:** That there is greater robustness demonstrated in the Local Plan 2042 supporting text acknowledging the urgency of climate action when balancing the need to address climate emergency through retrofitting heritage buildings to support decarbonisation against the need to minimise harm to heritage assets.
- **Recommendation 3:** That the Plan explicitly references the potential use of energy offsetting funds from developers for retrofit improvements to schools and community buildings, recognising the wider public benefit of public buildings rather than individual residential buildings, and criteria applied to the allocation of these funds prioritises maximum community impact.
- **Recommendation 4:** That there is specific language acknowledging the potential for loss and damage associated with new and existing properties in areas of high flood risk, and that local plan policies ensure applicants take account of these potential impacts in future planning and climate resilience design features to minimise possible damage (e.g. positioning of plugs, use of specific materials on the ground floor that can cope with flood damage).

Councillor Alex Powell presented the Climate and Environment Working Group's discussions and recommendations relating to the Annual Air Quality Status Report.

- **Recommendation:** That the Air Quality Action Plan incorporates specific measures addressing the use of diesel generators associated with street trading, construction and similar activities, reflecting the Council's regulatory responsibilities in relation to street trading and seek to reduce air quality impacts.

Councillor Hollingsworth provided the Cabinet responses to the recommendations from the Climate and Environment Working Group regarding the Local Plan 2042. Generally, he said that they would agree with most of the recommendations regarding the Local Plan 2042. He noted that there were limitations from government guidance and legislation which meant that they could only agree in part to recommendations two and three from the Working Group. Regarding loss and damage policies, he said that those would be set out in greater detail later on in the Local Plan delivery process. He said that recommendations one and four had been agreed by Cabinet.

Councillor Railton provided the Cabinet response to the recommendation from the Climate and Environment Working Group relating to the Annual Air Quality Status Report. She said that they had agreed the recommendation in part.

Councillor Brown thanked the Scrutiny Committee and the Chair of Scrutiny for their work and discussions on these items.

39. Oxpens River Bridge Update on Delivery and Funding

The Deputy Chief Executive – Place had submitted a report to Cabinet to request that Cabinet agree to the virement of underspend in the current capital programme to increase the project budget in the capital programme for the Oxpens bridge; to accept additional funding for the construction of the bridge from external bodies, and to agree to amending and entering legal agreements as necessary for the funding, construction and transfer of the bridge.

Councillor Hollingsworth presented the report. He highlighted key elements of the report, including the fact that the bridge had been in many different policy plans, adopted through public consultation, for about twenty years. He emphasised that the first recommendation requests delegated authority to seek external funds to support this project. Clarifying the original funding for the bridge, he said it had come from central government, the County Council was accountable for the funds, and that the City Council had taken responsibility for the delivery. He noted that if the Council decided not to proceed with this, they would have to return residual money not spent on the program to central government and could not spend the money on a different program.

Jenny Barker, the Regeneration and Development Lead, highlighted the work which had been done in the planning and approvals process for this project. She said that their timing was key and that to deliver the bridge, construction needed to take place when land is at its driest. She noted that they had agreed with the EA to do the construction in September. Responding to Scrutiny, regarding the impacts of further delays, she said that their team had concluded that further delay would move construction back to 2027. With inflationary rises in costs, this would cause an increase in the total cost of the project, between 600k and 1 million.

Councillor Munkonge thanked the team for their work on this report and said that he supported this project. He thanked Councillor Hollingsworth for the background he had provided. He emphasised that he supported the report's aim to seek external funds first, as a way of funding the project.

Councillor Railton discussed the difficulties with alternative cycle path options in this area and how these challenges necessitated the purpose-built bridge being proposed in this project. She expressed her support for the report and the project.

Councillor Brown acknowledged the issues that had been raised and highlighted that they were there today to approve the latest round of funding for the bridge. She acknowledged the possibility of legal proceedings delaying the project and increasing costs but noted that they needed to take action accordingly. She said that she supported the report and the project.

Councillor Hollingsworth provided a summary of the report. He emphasised the third recommendation and noted that they did not yet have a contract for construction of the bridge.

Cabinet resolved to:

1. **Delegate** authority to the Deputy Chief Executive - Place, in consultation with the Council's Group Finance Director (Section 151 Officer), the Director of Law Governance and Strategy (Monitoring Officer) and the Cabinet Member for Planning and Culture to enter into legal agreements, or amend legal agreements, to secure the additional external funds required to meet the £3.7 m

needed to deliver the Oxpens River Bridge and to enter an amended agreement with Oxfordshire County Council to enable the Growth Deal funding to be spent in 26/27

2. To **approve** the increase in the budget for the project within in the capital programme for the Oxpens River Bridge project by £3.7 m from £10.3m to £14.00m through the virement of underspend within the capital programme 2025/26.
3. **Delegate** authority to the Deputy Chief Executive - Place, in consultation with the Council's Group Finance Director (Section 151 Officer), the Director of Law Governance and Strategy (Monitoring Officer) and the Cabinet Member for Planning and Culture to enter into a construction contract and any necessary ancillary contracts for the delivery of the bridge, subject to the necessary funds being in place.
4. **Delegate** authority to the Deputy Chief Executive - Place, in consultation with the Council's Group Finance Director (Section 151 Officer), the Director of Law Governance and Strategy (Monitoring Officer) and the Cabinet Member for Planning and Culture, to approve the transfer of the bridge to Oxfordshire County Council on completion.

40. Dates of future meetings

Cabinet noted the dates of future meetings.

Matters Exempt from Publication

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

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

The meeting started at 18:00 and ended at 18:40.

Chair
2025

Date: Wednesday 17 September

When decisions take effect:

Cabinet: after the call-in and review period has expired

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

Minutes of a meeting of the Cabinet on Wednesday 17 September 2025

www.oxford.gov.uk



Committee members present:

Councillor Brown

Councillor Turner

Councillor Arshad

Councillor Chapman

Councillor Hollingsworth

Councillor Railton

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

Celeste Reyeslao, Scrutiny and Governance Advisor

Kate Protheroe, Asset Manager

Jonathan Malton, Committee and Member Services Manager

Alison Daly, Team Leader Lawyer

Clare Paterson, Strategic Finance Manager

Kieran Edmunds, Rapid Rehousing Manager

Emma Gubbins, Corporate Asset Lead

Sally Hicks, Business Intelligence Unit Lead

Nick Kowalski, Affordable Housing Development Manager

Brendan Lewis, Senior Rough Sleeping Officer

Jiajia Miao, Corporate Consultation Officer

Ossi Mosley, Rough Sleeping and Single Homelessness Manager

Dave Scholes, Affordable Housing Supply Corporate Lead

Megan Woodward, Housing Options Team Leader

Stuart Hosieh, Mechanical and Electrical Manager

Esther Knight, Category Manager, Operations (ODS)

Owain Pearce, Transport Manager ODSL (Systems & Specifications)

James Viljoen, Technical Engineering Manager

Clive Tritton, Interim Director, Regeneration, Economy and Sustainability

Also present:

Councillor Alex Powell

Apologies:

Councillor(s) Munkonge sent apologies.

41. Apologies for Absence

Councillor Munkonge sent apologies.

Councillor Arshad arrived late.

42. Declarations of Interest

None

43. Minutes of the previous meeting

Cabinet resolved to **approve** the minutes of the meeting held on Wednesday, 13 August 2025 as a true and accurate record.

44. Addresses by members of the public

None received.

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

None received.

46. Councillor addresses on Neighbourhood Issues

None received.

47. Items raised by Cabinet Members

None.

Councillor Railton joined the meeting.

48. Reports from the Scrutiny Committee

The Scrutiny Committee met on 9 September and reviewed the Citizen and Community Engagement Policy 2025 and the Scrutiny Budget Review Group Scope, there were no recommendations for the Budget Review Group Scope. The Housing and Homelessness Working Group met on 2 September 2025 to consider the Re-procurement of Housing First Support Service, Temporary Accommodation Placement Policy, Housing Service Q1 Performance for 2025/26 and Annual update on Social Housing Allocations and Lettings. Councillor Alex Powell noted there were only recommendations for the Temporary Accommodation Placement Policy. The Climate

and Environment Working Group met on 4 September 2025 to consider the Heat Network Update, Local EV Infrastructure and Local Energy Area Planning. Councillor Powell noted there were no recommendations for the Local Energy Area Planning.

Councillor Powell presented the Scrutiny Committee's recommendations for the Citizen and Community Engagement Policy 2025, reflecting on the Committee's discussions.

- **Recommendation 1:** That the Policy specifically assigns locality managers a role in the dissemination of consultations, making use of their deeper understanding of each local area's needs and dynamics with the intention to tailor engagement efforts more effectively.
- **Recommendation 2:** That the Policy acknowledges and identifies busy time periods to be avoided for consultations, to ensure residents or participants have adequate opportunity to participate, particularly where the consultation topic requires more focused attention.
- **Recommendation 3:** That every consultation document undergoes an inclusivity check by an officer, resident panel, or elected member prior to release for readability and understandability by all audiences.
- **Recommendation 4:** That Cabinet ensures the Policy is applied in a manner that maximises the inclusion of disabled people in the Council's consultation processes.
- **Recommendation 5:** That Cabinet requests officers to undertake exploratory work to incorporate a system for ranking the importance of each consultation, and to investigate whether the use of incentives could effectively increase participation and engagement.

Councillor Chapman observed that scrutiny, on occasion, blur the lines between strategy, policy and the operational delivery. Referring to the recommendation which involved the role of localities manager, he explained this would be better placed in the operational plan rather than set out as a general provision in the policy. In relation not the fifth recommendation, Councillor Chapman expressed appreciation for the Committee's intent but highlighted the difficulties in ranking consultations, stating that it was not always possible to do as each varies in scope and impact. He also cautioned that use of incentives may produce perverse outcome in that participants could be motivated by incentives rather than the substance of the consultation, in addition to creating financial implications. Overall, he valued the constructive discussions at Scrutiny, confirming his support for three and indicating partial agreement with two of the above listed recommendations.

Councillor Powell also reported the Housing and Homelessness Working Group's recommendation to the Temporary Accommodation Placement Policy. In presenting this, he conveyed concerns regarding the statutory six week limitation on placements in temporary accommodation and whether this period could be reduced. It was however understood that the six week limit is prescribed in legislation.

- **Recommendation:** That Cabinet ensures the Temporary Accommodation Placement Policy incorporates a degree of flexibility to take account of extraordinary employment circumstances including those who work irregular hours or on variable contracts, in order to support fairness and further clarity.

He proceeded to draw attention to the key points discussed during the Working Group's consideration of the Social Housing Allocations and Lettings report. These included the

significant demand for one-bed homes and their underrepresentation within the current stock; issues of unseen overcrowding in council properties; the need for greater transparency around eligibility of applicants placed in Band 5 where likelihood of being housed is very low; and the potential benefits of downsizing incentive schemes. He confirmed that no formal recommendations were made in respect of this item.

Councillor Powell then presented the Climate and Environment Working Group's discussions and recommendations on the Heat Network Update. He pointed out that this topic had also attracted considerable interest amongst members of Scrutiny upon endorsing the recommendations, noting that it was positively received by both the Committee and the Working Group.

- **Recommendation 1:** That social value creation is explored and embedded in the delivery of the heat network, with particular focus on mitigating the negative impacts of construction, including compensation for any disruptions to local businesses, safety concerns, damage to properties, and other community impacts, and that income generated through the network is directed toward addressing fuel poverty through measures such as insulation and energy efficiency upgrades.
- **Recommendation 2:** That Council ensures there is further scrutiny specifically around the ownership models of the infrastructure under consideration for the heat network.
- **Recommendation 3:** That concerns around potential monopoly are duly noted, and that commercial arrangements include mechanisms that will ensure long-term public benefit and enable public oversight; that any profits or financial turnover generated through the network are shared with the City Council and used to directly benefit residents; and that where possible, infrastructure is retained in public ownership or alternative safeguards are implemented to ensure dependency on a single private provider is prevented.

Lastly, Councillor Powell presented the Climate and Environment Working Group's recommendation on the Local EV Infrastructure.

- **Recommendation:** That OX Place, as a council-owned company, ensure that EV charge points in new developments are accessible to the wider community; and that further work is undertaken to explore the use of workplace EV charging points by local residents during evenings and weekends, potentially through planning conditions.

In response to Councillor Powell, Councillor Smith expressed agreement with the recommendation seeking flexibility within the Placement Policy particularly to allow employment to be considered on a case-by-case basis. Councillor Railton confirmed her acceptance of all three recommendations relating to Heat Network noting the discussions had been constructive. In respect to the final recommendation concerning EV charge points, Councillor Chapman acknowledged the positive intent but advised that, in practice, such condition would be unworkable. He explained that the Council would be unable to enforce this requirement unless private owners voluntarily agreed to make their charge points publicly accessible at designated times, which could itself give rise to complex practical issues. Differentiating this from communal EV charge points, he highlighted further issues around sharing access with the wider community, laudable though the aim might be.

Councillor Brown thanked Councillor Powell for his contributions, and Scrutiny's work on various reports presented to Cabinet in this meeting.

49. Quarterly Integrated Performance Report - Q4 2024/25

The Group Finance Director had submitted a report to Cabinet to note the update to the Cabinet on the financial outturn for the year ending 31 March 2025.

Councillor Turner introduced the report, commenting on its usefulness in reviewing both successes and challenges, as well as lessons learned for setting the budget for the coming year. He acknowledged the need to transfer some amount from the reserves particularly in light of the significant pressures arising from temporary accommodations in the past year. He noted that the budget for this had now been increased, recognising that the homelessness crisis remains a pressing issue in the city. Councillor Turner also drew attention to issues surrounding housing benefit and supported accommodation, describing these as an unwelcome policy quirk which would benefit from review. With respect to the HRA account, he highlighted a one-off income from disposal while also noting the ongoing challenge of repair costs, which he advised would need to be closely monitored and addressed. Turning to the Capital Programme, the councillor acknowledged inevitable slippage but expressed confidence that the Council's monitoring and planning processes in this area had improved. Lastly, he provided assurance that the Finance Team was carefully estimating likely capital expenditure, at levels lower than the total capital programme, to ensure the Council did not unnecessarily held funds in reserve and thereby incur avoidable interest costs.

Cabinet resolved to:

1. **Note** the financial outturn and performance of the Council for the year 2024/25 and the recommended transfer of £1.549 million from the risk reserve; and
2. **Agree** the carry forward requests in respect of the General Fund of £0.083 million in accordance with paragraph 6.

50. Quarterly Integrated Performance Report - Q1 2025/26

The Group Finance Director had submitted a report to Cabinet to note the update to the Cabinet on Finance, Risk and Corporate Performance matters at 30th June 2025.

Councillor Turner introduced the report. He explained that Q1 reporting is useful for identifying trends and addressing emerging issues before they escalate, rather than focusing on the bottom line given the early stage. He reported that the General Fund is currently forecasting an overspend of £600k but emphasised that there remains scope to mitigate this. He also highlighted pressures relating to temporary accommodation, as referenced in the previous report, noting significant costs and year-on-year movements, though with an expected HRA recharge. On the matter of the HRA, Councillor Turner was keen to point out that the Council is not currently experiencing the same level of repair issues as the previous year. He welcomed this as a positive development, given earlier concerns about the difficulty of achieving a turnaround, and expressed hope that this improvement would be sustained.

Nigel Kennedy, Group Finance Director, confirmed that budgets had been topped up this financial year to address pressures on the HRA, following the overspend in the previous year. Whilst noting that it is still early in the financial cycle, the Q1 position suggests these measures have brought the situation under control. However, the

Group Finance Director did emphasise, in line with Councillor Turner's comments, that this position may change over the course of the year.

Caroline Green, Chief Executive, added that in response to last year's challenges, officers have identified a series of actions which alongside reducing budget pressures, are enabling the council to shift from 'more' to a planned approach. She noted that a significant programme of work was underway, and highlighted that improved monitoring through out the year remains a key priority. She also concluded that whilst the Q1 position is looking positive, continued focus will be required as the year progresses.

Cabinet resolved to:

1. **Note** the financial position for quarter 1 (Q1) 2025/26 including forecast outturn, as well as the current position on risk and performance at 30th June 2025.

51. Citizen and Community Engagement Policy 2025 - Adoption of Plan

The Director of Communities and Citizen Services had submitted a report to Cabinet to request the approval to adopt the Citizen and Community Engagement Policy 2025.

Councillor Chapman introduced the report, thanking Jiajia Miao, Corporate Consultation Officer, for authoring it. He emphasised the importance of meaningful citizen engagement, noting that the Council must understand residents' needs, views and priorities in order to make sound decisions about the allocation of limited resources. Beyond this, he stressed that proper engagement lies at the heart of accountability, enabling residents to contribute at the appropriate stage in the development of strategies, policies and proposal. Councillor Chapman highlighted that the Policy sets out a comprehensive range of tools for engaging with communities across the city, including hard-to-reach groups, but underlined that its effectiveness ultimately depends on how skilfully the Council uses the information gathered. The Policy also acknowledges the varied and distinct needs of different communities, incorporating factors that shape how citizens and groups engage, and incorporates elements of tenant engagement. Whilst there is no single national blueprint for this work, he noted that existing guidance including from the Local Government Association, had informed its development.

Finally, Councillor Chapman noted that the Policy reflects recent discussions on the Citizen Experience Strategy. In particular, points raised by Scrunity on the provision of language interpretation in parts of the city, and the importance of proactive engagement with children under 12 and young people where relevant, have now been embedded in the Policy, which he considered the appropriate place for them.

Cabinet resolved to:

1. **Approve** the Citizen and Community Engagement Policy 2025; and
2. **Delegate authority** to the Director of Communities and Citizen Services to publish the Citizen and Community Engagement Policy and to make any typographical amendments as may be required, before publication.

52. Re-procurement of Housing First support service

The Deputy Chief Executive – City and Citizen Services had submitted a report to Cabinet to request the approval of the commencement of a re-procurement exercise for

a support service to enable the Housing First service in Oxford to continue after 31st March 2026.

Councillor Linda Smith introduced the report, firstly by emphasising Housing First as a vital strategy in reducing homelessness in the city. She noted that the model has been successfully applied internationally, and that in Oxford, more than 50 individuals have already benefited from Housing first tenancies. She explained that unlike traditional approaches where accommodation and support are provided together in shared or supported settings, Housing First offers individuals a permanent home of their own, with personalised support provided separately. This meant that as residents stabilise and move forward with their lives, the level of support is gradually reduced enabling long-term independence.

She stated that the Council currently works with three providers: Beam Up, A2 Dominion, and St Mungo's in order to deliver support. Contracts with two of the providers are approaching renewal and are dependent on future government funding.

Ossi Mosely, Rough Sleeping and Single Homelessness Manager, stressed the importance of Housing first in providing stable homes for some of the city's most vulnerable residents, many of whom have experienced repeated homelessness and rough sleeping. She explained the intention to begin a procurement process in advance so that contracts can be awarded promptly once government funding is secured.

Richard Wood, Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Manager, advised that funding announcement is expected around Christmas time. With only three months remaining on the existing contracts, early reprocurement is intended to ensure continuity of service once confirmation of money is received.

Councillor Turner suggested that, in light of recent reshuffling of responsibilities amongst ministers, it would be beneficial to revisit previous work on wider homelessness funding challenges. He noted that Members of Parliament representing similar areas have observed the effects of certain policy changes, and reviewing this work could provide more preferable outcome. Councillor Brown endorsed the point made by Councillor Turner, emphasising the importance of lobbying the government to secure funding and continue this very important work of supporting people experiencing homelessness. She offered her thanks to the Housing Officers and Councillor Smith for leading on the Housing First programme and stated that she was proud there was such provision in the city

Cabinet resolved to:

1. **Approve** the commencement of a re-procurement exercise for a Housing First support service;
2. **Delegate authority** to the Director of Housing, on completion of the procurement exercise and subject to funding, to award contracts in relation to Housing First support provision.

53. Introduction on the Temporary Accommodation Placement Policy

The Director of Housing had submitted a report to Cabinet to approve the Temporary Accommodation Placement Policy.

Councillor Linda Smith introduced the report, referring to earlier discussions on the pressures of temporary accommodation in Oxford, where demands has doubled over the past year. She explained that the Policy outlines the mitigations the Council has

implemented to manage this demand as well as expand the availability of units. The Policy also included measures aimed at preventing the need for temporary accommodation and reducing homelessness. She said that, despite these efforts, the present reality was that there remains a continued need to place people in temporary accommodation. The Policy sets out how the Council makes its decision regarding allocations to such accommodation. Councillor Smith further noted that the Council does not own sufficient temporary accommodation to meet all demand, and as a result, nightly charge accommodations are utilised. The councillor emphasised therefore, the importance of transparency in the Council's decision-making and the need for allocations to be conducted in a fair and legally compliant manner.

Megan Woodward, Housing Options Team Leader, reiterated the councillor's points, adding that the Policy would ensure the Council's decision-making is consistent and strengthen its ability to meet statutory obligations whilst safeguarding the rights and well-being of its citizens.

Cabinet resolved to:

1. **Approve** the Temporary Accommodation Placement Policy as set out in Appendix 1.
2. **Delegate** authority to the Director of Housing to make minor amendments to the policy in response to operational or legislative changes, in consultation with the Cabinet member for Housing and Communities.

54. Appropriation of land at Underhill Circus

The Director of Economy, Regeneration and Sustainability had submitted a report to Cabinet that requests to appropriate the land (change the statutory basis on which it is held by the Council) within the General Fund ("GF") to the Housing Revenue Account ("HRA") and the appropriation of the land for planning purposes. The land is currently held as garages and for public open space purposes at Underhill Circus (the "Land") for the objective of building affordable housing.

Councillor Linda Smith introduced the report. She noted that the underused garages in Barton had attracted antisocial behaviour and become unsightly, and was pleased to propose the provision of affordable housing as a new use for the site.

Dave Scholes, Affordable Housing Supply Corporate Lead advised that the site formed part of the small sites programme. Cabinet had considered the matter in January 2024 at which time the appropriation process commenced, including the issue of notices of intent and receipt of objections. He explained that following a late review, some ambiguity had been identified in the recommendations as drafted and set out in the agenda. An amendment had therefore been tabled to recommendations 2 and 3, substituting the word 'recommend' with 'approve'. This was intended to clarify that the proposal was to move the purpose from the General Fund to a planning purpose, and subsequently for Cabinet to recommend to Council that, during the construction phase, the units be transferred from the General Fund to the HRA to take affect following planning consent.

Councillor Hollingsworth queried the lease arrangements for the garages and whether any constraints existed on ending such arrangements, specifically in cases where a small number of garages might remain in use and where releasing them could make sites developable. He also sought clarification on whether the proposed wording change had any implications, specifically whether garages within the site were currently

held in the General Fund or already in the HRA. In response, the Affordable Housing Supply Corporate Lead explained that garages were typically let by the Council on short agreements terminable by either party within a week's notice. In this specific case, some garages had remained empty for considerable time and had not been let to private individuals. He further stated that half of the garages were being used by shopkeepers, in some cases forming part of their leasehold demise. These arrangements had since been terminated and the garages separated from the shop leases, allowing the council to progress the site for development. He confirmed that all garages on the site were currently held within the General Fund and that, once developed, the transfer to the HRA would occur as part of the process.

Councillor Brown introduced an amended recommendation, which was agreed by Cabinet.

Cabinet resolved to:

1. **Note** that following the statutory public notification process of the Council's intention to appropriate the Land to planning purposes, no written representations were received in response to the public notice; and
2. **Approve** the appropriation of the land in the Council's ownership at Underhill Circus (see Image 1) ("the Land"), to planning purposes;
3. Subject to obtaining planning consent, **recommend to Council** the appropriation of the land owned by Oxford City Council that forms the development site for housing at Underhill Circus from the General Fund ("GF") into the Housing Revenue Account ("HRA") at the established red book valuation figure.

55. Acquisition of land at Knights Court into the HRA

The Director of Economy, Regeneration and Sustainability had submitted a report to Cabinet that requests project approval and delegations to progress the development of affordable homes at Between Towns Road (Knights Court). This includes delegated authority to enter into the land purchase, build contracts and other necessary agreements and associated development costs, and virement of HRA capital funds.

Councillor Linda Smith introduced the report, noting that the site was a former office block near Cowley Centre. She explained that the proposal was to retain the existing fabric of the building and convert it into residential use, which if achievable, would be an interesting and environmentally sustainable form of housing development. The proposals include the provision of units for temporary accommodation, helping to address the pressures previously discussed.

Councillor Brown commented that for clarity in future discussions, the site should continue to be referred to as "the site on Between Towns Road" as there had been some confusion around its naming.

Cabinet resolved to:

1. **Approve** the freehold acquisition of the Between Towns Road site Knights Court on the terms set out in this report and at Appendix 1 and 2;
2. **Grant project approval** to finalise the scheme design, to the proposals to enter into build contracts and any other necessary agreements or contracts and incur associated development cost spends, as set out in this report, and within the

allocated HRA capital budgets and business plan, for the purpose of delivering more affordable housing in Oxford;

3. **Delegate authority** to the Director of Housing, in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Affordable Housing; the Head of Financial Services/Section 151 Officer; and the Council's Monitoring Officer, to enter into agreements for the purchase of land; build contracts and any other necessary agreements or contracts to facilitate the development within the identified budget, for the provision of additional affordable housing; and
4. **Grant approval** for a virement within the HRA capital budget for scheme costs of £8.9 million. The virement will be from the "Properties purchased from OCHL" (Oxford City Housing Limited) purchase line into a new scheme line to be profiled to match the build programme across the four years from 2025/26 to 2028/29;

56. Acquisition of land at Elsfield Hall into the HRA

The Director of Economy, Regeneration and Sustainability had submitted a report to Cabinet that requests for project approval and delegations to progress the development of affordable homes at Elsfield Hall. This includes delegated authority to enter into build contracts and other necessary agreements and associated development costs, virement of HRA capital funds and the approval to commence the process regarding the appropriation of land from the General Fund ("GF") to the Housing Revenue Account ("HRA") (changing the statutory basis on which it is held by the Council).

Councillor Arshad joined the meeting.

Councillor Linda Smith introduced the report. She noted that this site was an empty office block already owned by the City Council with potential for development. The proposals involved demolishing the existing building to make way for a new structure. It is hoped that at least 30 new homes would be constructed in the site, subject to viability and planning. The councillor expressed delight in being able to bring this to Cabinet as part of the council's commitment to building more affordable homes in Oxford.

Nick Kowalski, Housing Development Manager, noted that the current proposal of 30 homes mirrors the adjacent Cannon Court site, a development built by OCHL for the Council. He stated that the target was to deliver more homes on the site, though this is subject to detailed design work and planning risks as explained by Councillor Smith.

Cabinet resolved to:

1. **Grant project approval** to finalise the scheme design, to the proposals to enter into build contracts and any other necessary agreements or contracts and incur associated development cost spends, as set out in this report, and within the allocated HRA capital budgets and business plan, for the purpose of delivering more affordable housing in Oxford;
2. **Delegate authority** to the Director of Housing, in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Affordable Housing; the Head of Financial Services/Section 151 Officer; and the Council's Monitoring Officer, to enter into build contracts and any other necessary agreements or contracts to facilitate the development within the identified budget, for the provision of additional affordable housing;

3. **Grant approval** for a virement within the HRA capital budget for scheme costs of £11.7 million. The virement will be from the “Properties purchased from OCHL” (Oxford City Housing Limited) purchase line into a new scheme line to be profiled to match the build programme across the four years from 2025/26 to 2028/29;
4. **Recommend to Council** the appropriation of the land owned by Oxford City Council (OCC) at Elsfield Hall from the General Fund (GF) into the Housing Revenue Account (HRA).

57. Acquisition of land at Cave Street into the HRA

The Director of Economy, Regeneration and Sustainability had submitted a report to Cabinet that requests project approval and delegations to progress the development of affordable homes at Cave Street. This includes delegated authority to enter into build contracts and other necessary agreements and associated development costs, virement of HRA capital funds and the approval to commence the process regarding the appropriation of land from the General Fund (“GF”) to the Housing Revenue Account (“HRA”) (changing the statutory basis on which it is held by the Council).

Councillor Linda Smith introduced the report, noting that the site was owned by the City Council with proposals to develop at least 19 homes, more if achievable. She further noted that this development would be 100% affordable housing.

Dave Scholes, Affordable Housing Supply Corporate Lead, added that proposed development for this site focuses heavily on one-bedroom homes. Whilst Elsfield would be more mixed, this as well as the site on Between Town Road would provide a number of one-bedroom units directly feeding into the reports and pressures heard earlier to address the need for single bedroom properties and relieving the pressure of using B&B accommodation for homeless households.

Councillor Chapman offered a general observation, noting that across the four reports considered, the schemes represented a substantial contribution towards meeting the Council’s target of delivering 1600 affordable homes by March 2029, including 850 for social rent. He remarked that few councils nationally appeared on track to meet such ambitious targets and suggested that some recognition should be taken from this progress. He commended officers for their work in identifying potential development sites across the city and surrounding areas, including smaller sites which taken together, contribute significantly to overall target. He emphasised that this effort by the lead member and officers should not go unacknowledged.

Councillor Brown endorsed these comments, highlighting the value of seeing affordable homes for social rent being delivered in the city. She expressed thanks to officers for their work and noted that these achievements reflected positively especially when showcased to visitors.

Cabinet moved to closed session to discuss matters within the exempt portions of the report. This is in accordance with the provisions of Paragraph 4(2)(b) of the Local Authorities (Executive Arrangements) (Access to Information) (England) Regulations 2012 that could involve the likely disclosure of exempt information as described in Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972.

Cabinet moved back to open session to conclude the item.

Cabinet resolved to:

1. **Grant project approval** to finalise the scheme design, to the proposals to enter into build contracts and any other necessary agreements or contracts and incur associated development cost spends, as set out in this report, and within the allocated HRA capital budgets and business plan, for the purpose of delivering more affordable housing in Oxford;
2. **Delegate authority** to the Director of Housing, in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Affordable Housing; the Head of Financial Services/Section 151 Officer; and the Council's Monitoring Officer, to enter into build contracts and any other necessary agreements or contracts to facilitate the development within the identified budget, for the provision of additional affordable housing;
3. **Grant approval** for a virement within the HRA capital budget for scheme costs of £5.9 million. The virement will be from the "Properties purchased from OCHL" (Oxford City Housing Limited) purchase line into a new scheme line to be profiled to match the build programme across the four years from 2025/26 to 2028/29;
4. **Recommend to Council** the appropriation of the land owned by Oxford City Council (OCC) at Cave Street from the General Fund (GF) into the Housing Revenue Account (HRA).

58. 4 x Food Waste 18T Dennis Terberg Topload RCVs

The Group Finance Director had submitted a report to Cabinet to request to award a contract to Dennis Eagle T/a Terberg Matec UK under the Halton Framework for the purchase of four (4) 18T Terberg single compartment toploading food waste refuse vehicles.

Councillor Chapman introduced the report, remarking food waste and the proper collection of it as a very important issue. He noted that a number of the Council's food refuse vehicles are reaching the end of their seven to ten year life cycle, and to avoid operational difficulties arising from an ageing fleet, approval was sought for the procurement of replacement vehicles. The councillor explained that procurement will be through a call-off contract with the only supplier able to meet the city's required specification. He further added that budget provision was in place and that the proposal will ensure Council maintains a modern and reliable fleet.

In endorsing the report, it was remarked that the new top-loaded vehicles "look absolutely smashing" and support was expressed for the swift procurement and delivery into service.

Cabinet resolved to:

1. **Enter into** a contract with Dennis Eagle T/a Terberg Matec UK under the Halton Framework for the purchase of four (4) 18T Terberg single compartment toploading food waste refuse vehicles.

59. Agreement to procure the provision and award including the budget for the Lift Servicing and Maintenance and minor/major works contracts

The Director of Property and Assets had submitted a report to Cabinet to request an agreement to procure and award the Lift Servicing and Maintenance contract from the committed budget for a 5-year term with an optional (+1) (+1) year extension.

Councillor Turner introduced the report explaining that the contract will include social value provisions including Oxford Living Wage requirements and an appropriate balance between price and quality.

In moving the recommendations, it was remarked that this item allowed the meeting to finish on a high.

Cabinet resolved to:

1. **Approve** the procurement of a 5-year contract with two 12-month extensions, for the inspection, servicing, maintenance and repair of lifts with an approximate value of £330,000 per annum.
2. **Delegate authority** to the Director of Property and Assets to award a contract for inspection, servicing, maintenance and repair of lifts following a lawful procurement exercise.

60. Dates of future meetings

Cabinet noted the dates of future meetings.

Councillor Railton left the meeting and did not return.

61. Matters Exempt from Publication

Cabinet agreed to exclude the press and public 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.

62. Disposal of City Centre commercial property

The Director of Property and Assets had submitted a report to Cabinet to request the disposal of a City Centre Commercial Property.

Councillor Turner introduced the report.

Cabinet resolved to:

1. **Delegate authority** to the Director of Property and Assets, in consultation with the Director of Law, Governance and Strategy and the Group Finance Director to consider any comments received through the consultation pursuant to section 123 (2A) of the Local Government Act 1972 following a statutory advertisement for disposal of open space and if considered appropriate following consideration of any comments and or objections agree the final sale terms and dispose of the freehold title.

The meeting started at 6.00 pm and ended at 7.20 pm

Chair
October 2025

Date: Wednesday 22

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.

To: Council
Date: 6 October 2025
Report of: Community Safety Service Manager
Title of Report: Oxford Safer Communities Partnership (OSCP)
 Annual Update 2025-26

Summary and recommendations	
Purpose of report:	Provide a summary of OSCP's achievements in 2024-25
Key decision:	No
Cabinet Member with responsibility:	Cabinet Member for Safer Communities
Corporate Priority:	Strong and Active Communities.
Policy Framework:	
Recommendation(s): Note the report	

Appendices: None

Introduction and background

1. Oxford Safer Communities Partnership (OSCP) is Oxford's statutory partnership to address local community safety priorities in the city. It is responsible for plans to reduce the fear of crime, minimise the likelihood of becoming a victim of crime and address community safety concerns to improve the lives of our residents, businesses and visitors.
2. OSCP has an Executive Group that brings organisations together to work in partnership to prevent and reduce crime and anti-social behaviour. Oxford City Council chair and facilitate the partnership which meets on a quarterly basis to review the priority plans and identify emerging risks within the city.
3. OSCP Partnership Executive Group comprises of responsible authorities, as defined by the Crime and Disorder Act 1998, and other local partners, including Oxford University Hospitals, Oxford Brookes University, the University of Oxford, Turning Point, and the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner.
4. The Police and Crime Commissioner provides some of the funding to address the priorities for the year, including modern slavery, serious violence and domestic abuse. OSCP's priorities compliment the priorities of the PCC's crime plan, as set out in the Police and Crime Plan 2024-29.

5. The annual Joint Strategic Needs Assessment, produced by Safer Oxfordshire Partnership provides the crime data to assist in identifying those priorities.
6. To view the full Joint Strategic Needs Assessment or TVP's Police & Crime Commissioner's Police and Crime Plan, please click on the hyperlinks below.

<https://data.oxfordshire.gov.uk/jsna/>

<https://www.thamesvalley-pcc.gov.uk/police-and-crime-plan/>

OSCP Priorities 2025-26

7. At an OSCP Executive Group meeting, held on 30th June 2025, the following priorities were agreed.

Anti-Social Behaviour and neighbourhood crime

- Develop and implement problem-solving plans for ASB hotspot areas, including undertaking crime prevention surveys with our communities.
- Address environmental crime such as littering, fly-tipping and waste in gardens that can blight our neighbourhoods.
- Continue to improve CCTV across Oxford by working in partnership with other local authorities and TVP.
- Oversee ASB Reviews that enable victims of anti-social behaviour to request a review of how agencies addressed persistent ASB complaints.
- Tackle retail crime by supporting TVP's Operation Purchase, the police-led retail crime reduction initiative.

Reduce Serious Violence

- Work with the Safer Oxfordshire Partnership to deliver the statutory Serious Violence Duty requirements set out in Chapter 1 of Part 2 of the Police, Crime, Sentencing and Courts Act 2022. These are:
 - to work together and plan to prevent and reduce serious violence.
 - identify the kinds of serious violence that occur in the area and the causes of that violence.
 - prepare and implement a strategy for preventing and reducing serious violence in the area.
- To address drug dealing in open spaces through a problem-solving approach.
- Support the work of the multi-agency Serious and Organised Crime group to identify and disrupt organised criminal groups.
- Work with young people who are at risk of offending or socially isolated by providing diversionary activities and becoming more inclusive within our communities.
- Work with partners and housing providers to identify, support and protect vulnerable people whose property has been taken over (cuckooing).

- Continue the successful NightSafe partnership that aims to improve safety in Oxford's nighttime economy areas.

Violence Against Women and Girls (VAWG)

- Commission Domestic Homicide Reviews and implement recommendations.
- Support Oxford City Council to achieve Domestic Abuse Housing Accreditation (DAHA), ensuring the council maintains the accreditation for future years.
- Support the delivery of the Oxfordshire Domestic Abuse Strategy.
- Increase the safety of women and girls in the night-time economy through our NightSafe programme that works with licensees, Higher Education partners, student bodies and our communities.

Modern Slavery and Exploitation

- Develop multi-agency plans to support victims and disrupt perpetrators of modern slavery and exploitation.
- Continue the work of the Thames Valley Anti-Slavery Network to increase awareness and cooperation in prevention, communications and disruption of activities, preventing victims becoming exploited.
- Identify trends in the National Referral Mechanism (NRM) and pathway referrals to identify emerging themes.

Preventing Extremism

- Work with partners to implement the requirements of the Terrorism (Protection of Premises) Act 2025 for publicly accessible locations.
- Support the Oxfordshire Prevent Strategy in its actions to deter people from extremist ideology.

OSCP Achievements 2024-25

8. This section provides a summary of some of the partnership projects undertaken throughout the year.
 - TVP launched Operation Purchase that tackled retail crime. Officers undertook a robust operation to address shoplifting within our neighbourhoods and city centre. Over the 12 months from February 2024 to January 2025, there were 2,534 reported crimes, an increase of 39.9% compared to the same period the previous year. This resulted with an increase in the solved crime rate of 35.6%.
 - In 2024, Oxford City Council's Anti-Social Behaviour Investigation Team successfully rescued fourteen animals found in a flat. The tenant had been using the flat to keep unsupervised animals including twelve dogs, a chameleon and a rabbit. Neighbours raised concerns due to the smell and welfare of the animals. After obtaining a warrant from court, the Council coordinated the rescue of the animals that involved the police, RSPCA, Housing Officers, and the Council's dog warden.

- In 2024, Oxford's Problem-Solving Officer collaborated closely with residents by undertaking environmental visual audits, consulting with residents and implementing projects that improve the community.

Several mobile CCTV cameras were deployed across Oxford to support intelligence gathering for TVP's Stronghold cases that addresses drug dealing, abuse, and anti-social behaviour. Introduced and trained staff from Oxford City Council on the use of Body Worn Cameras to enhance opportunities for evidence capture and assist in the detection and prevention of crime and ASB.

- Oxford's Anti-Slavery Coordinator worked with several agencies including Gangmasters Labour Abuse Authority, HMRC, Adult Social Services, Quality Improvement Team and Home Office were involved with a Care provider that was identified as exploiting their workers. Thirty-two workers, who worked across Oxfordshire were identified as being exploited and were supported by Victims First Specialist Services or Anti-Slavery Initiative Oxford (ASIO) who OSCP commissioned. As a result, twenty-nine people found other employment.
- OSCP organised a summit dedicated to the issue of serious violence and knife crime, with a particular focus on supporting young people. Several partner agencies attended, along with county and city councillors. The Police and Crime Commissioner, TVP, Oxfordshire Youth Justice Service, and Youth Groups funded by the PCC gave presentations on their work to combat serious violence.

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Background Papers: None

To: Council
Date: 6 October 2025
Report of: Scrutiny Committee
Title of Report: Update from the Scrutiny Committee

Summary and recommendations	
Decision being taken:	To update Council on the work of the Scrutiny Committee and Working Groups.
Key decision:	No
Lead Member:	Councillor Alex Powell, Chair of the Scrutiny Committee
Corporate Priority:	A Well-Run Council
Policy Framework:	None

Recommendation(s): That Council resolves to:	
1.	Note the work of the Scrutiny Committee and the recommendations as set out in the report.

Information Exempt From Publication	
N/A	N/A

Appendix No.	Appendix Title	Exempt from Publication
Appendix 1	Scrutiny recommendations and Cabinet responses	No

Introduction

1. This report provides an update on the activities of the Scrutiny Committee and its Working Groups since the last update to Council on 14 July 2025. It covers the period from 12 July 2025 to 30 September 2025.

Update of Activities

2. Since the last full Council meeting, the Committee held two meetings, on 5 August 2025 and 9 September 2025, to consider a range of substantive items:

5 August 2025

- Oxpens Bridge River Update

9 September 2025

- Citizen and Community Engagement Policy 2025
- Budget Review Group Scope 2026/27

3. The Committee also endorsed recommendations from the following Working Group meetings:

Climate and Environment Working Group – 22 July 2025

- Net Zero Masterplan Update
- Local Plan 2042 Climate Change and Resilience
- Annual Air Quality Status Report

Housing and Homelessness Working Group – 2 September 2025

- Re-procurement of Housing First Support Service
- Temporary Accommodation Placement Policy
- Housing Service Q1 Performance for 2025/26
- Social Housing Allocations and Lettings Report

Climate and Environment Working Group – 4 September 2025

- Heat Network Update
- Local EV Infrastructure
- Local Energy Area Planning

4. Cabinet considered 16 Scrutiny recommendations across the various aforementioned items during its meetings on 13 August 2025 and 17 September 2025, providing commentary on each to inform the Committee of the rationale behind its decision. Of the which, 10 were agreed, 5 partially agreed, 0 not agreed. 1 recommendation was neither agreed or disagreed.
5. A table summary of recommendations and responses is included as appendices. No table was produced for items where no recommendations were made.
6. Minutes of relevant meetings are provided below as hyperlinks:
 - [Scrutiny Committee 5 August 2025](#)
 - [Scrutiny Committee 9 September 2025](#)
7. The Scrutiny Committee and its Working Groups wish to put on record:
 - In its review of the Oxpens River Bridge update, the Committee raised a number of critical questions regarding the project's financial and procedural risks, including concerns about the potential impact of expanding the capital envelope on the wider capital programme, risks posed if external funding is

not secured, the possibility of the project succumbing into cost fallacy and whether budget slippages are additional to the optimism bias factored into the programme. The Committee scrutinised the Council's preparedness for the likelihood of further legal proceedings or delays, emphasising that any additional judicial review could significantly affect the project timeline and budget furthermore.

- Acknowledging the limitations in making formal recommendations on this topic, the Committee urged that all key decisions relating to Oxpens River Bridge be made directly by Cabinet, not delegated to officers.
 - The Committee wish to formally thank Mr Glazebrook (Friends of Grandpont Nature Park) and Cllr Lois Muddiman for their contributions on the Oxpens River Bridge item.
 - The Committee formally agreed the scope and Terms of Reference for the Budget Review Group to guide its examination of the Council's 2026-27 annual budget proposals.
8. The Committee extends its thanks to the Cabinet Members for their valuable contributions. They are also grateful to Council Officers for their hard work in preparing and presentation of the reports, as well as for responding to questions.

Financial implications

9. Financial implications for the reports listed above were outlined within the reports presented at Scrutiny Committee or Working Group.
10. Where appropriate, any further financial implications were reviewed when considering the recommendations.

Legal issues

11. Legal implications for the reports listed above were outlined within the reports presented at Scrutiny Committee or Working Group.
12. Where appropriate, any further legal implications were reviewed when considering the recommendations.

Level of risk

13. Risk Registers, where appropriate, were linked to the reports presented at Scrutiny Committee or Working Groups.
14. Where appropriate, the risk register was reviewed when considering the recommendations.

Equalities impact

15. Equalities Impact Assessments, where appropriate, were linked to the reports presented at Scrutiny Committee or Working Groups.
16. Where appropriate, the Equalities Impact Assessments was reviewed when considering the recommendations.

Carbon and Environmental Considerations

17. Consideration for Carbon and Environmental impacts, where appropriate, were linked to the reports presented at Scrutiny Committee or Working Groups.

18. Where appropriate, the Carbon and Environmental impacts were reviewed when considering the recommendations.

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Appendix 1: Scrutiny Recommendations and Cabinet Responses

Table 1 – Cabinet response to the list of Scrutiny recommendations in August 2025

The table below sets out the response of the Cabinet Member to recommendations made or endorsed by the Scrutiny Committee during its meeting on 5 August 2025.

Oxpens River Bridge Update

<i>Recommendation</i>	<i>Agree?</i>	<i>Comment</i>
1) That Cabinet undertake high-level remodelling and assess potential impact of the judicial review appeal progressing to a hearing, particularly around timescales and future costings, to ensure the Council is better prepared and has a more informed basis for decision-making.	Yes	<p>The discussion at the Scrutiny Committee raised this recommendation having heard that it is difficult to fully estimate the costs that would be incurred if there was another delay to the project caused by the Judicial Review process and an appeal against the original rejection of the JR. That is because those costs will be based on the length of the delay, which is outside the control of the City Council.</p> <p>It is likely that a delay due to Judicial Review beyond Autumn 2025 would result in the delivery of the project being pushed from 2026 to 2027, to avoid construction over the period of highest flood risk. The high-level cost of such a delay will be reported verbally at the meeting.</p>

Local Plan 2042 Climate Change and Resilience

<i>Recommendation</i>	<i>Agree?</i>	<i>Comment</i>
1) That the Local Plan 2042 include clearer support for renewable energy schemes, particularly the potential for solar panel installations on terraced houses through community-led energy schemes.	Yes	The new Local Plan will set out clear support for renewable energy generation, as is the case in the first draft plan that is currently subject to consultation, as we agree this is important. However, it is crucial that flexibility is retained in relation to what format this generation takes – i.e. not

		<p>specifying rigidly that generation come from a particular technology. This will allow proposals to respond to particular characteristics of each site, and help future-proof the policies (e.g. should new technologies become suitable in future).</p> <p>We will consider how best to respond to proposals for community-led energy schemes, and whether the currently proposed policies can suitably cover this, or whether additional wording is needed and incorporate if necessary (potentially through supporting text).</p>
2) That there is greater robustness demonstrated in the Local Plan 2042 supporting text acknowledging the urgency of climate action when balancing the need to address climate emergency through retrofitting heritage buildings to support decarbonisation against the need to minimise harm to heritage assets.	In-part	<p>The proposed draft policies in the current Local Plan 2042 Regulation 18 consultation strongly respond to the need for both mitigating impacts on climate change and adapting to it. Whilst the supporting text to the policies is yet to be drafted, we will also ensure that this message comes through strongly here.</p> <p>The new Local Plan 2042 proposes policy on retro-fitting of existing buildings, including historic buildings, in order to support applicants in making the best possible application. This is a new policy compared with the adopted Local Plan as we agree it is a key challenge we need to help applicants respond to. As the plan develops, we will continue to set out that, wherever possible, these applications will be supported, however, it should be noted that we also have a statutory duty towards protecting the historic environment which we must balance in preparing a legally compliant Local Plan.</p> <p>Whilst the vast majority of buildings in Oxford do not have a heritage designation, we are clear that heritage designations do not need to be a barrier to retro-fit but do necessitate additional care and consideration in designing such projects which the policy seeks to address. Having</p>

		<p>previously sought advice on this issue, there are limitations in how much further Local Plan policy can go, however, we will consider how we can further support such projects, whether this is through additional messaging in supporting text, or through other associated guidance (e.g. Technical Advice Notes) as we agree it is an important objective for the city.</p>
<p>3) That the Plan explicitly references the potential use of energy offsetting funds from developers for retrofit improvements to schools and community buildings, recognising the wider public benefit of public buildings rather than individual residential buildings, and criteria applied to the allocation of these funds prioritises maximum community impact.</p>	In-part	<p>Firstly, it should be noted that the proposed policy is clear that use of offsetting should be a last resort and that the preference is for net zero carbon to be achieved onsite first. Where offset funds are collected, it will be important that these funds are spent on projects that are identified through a fair and transparent methodology and that the funding is utilised for delivering true offsetting. We would agree that these would ideally be securing additional benefits for wider communities wherever possible – such as focusing on community buildings and/or social housing – but there may also be other important criteria.</p> <p>The methodology for administering these funds, including identifying suitable projects, is a work in progress that will continue to be developed as the Local Plan progresses, though separately to the Local Plan itself.</p> <p>We will look for ways to reference in the Local Plan examples of how we would wish to utilise funds generated from offsetting going forward, including that they can secure wider benefits for the community wherever possible. We will also factor the recommendation into the considerations of the wider process of creating the fund and its ongoing governance, which will ultimately need to be approved separately at an appropriate time (e.g. once the overarching policy approach has been tested at examination).</p>

<p>4) That there is specific language acknowledging the potential for loss and damage associated with new and existing properties in areas of high flood risk, and that local plan policies ensure applicants take account of these potential impacts in future planning and climate resilience design features to minimise possible damage (e.g. positioning of plugs, use of specific materials on the ground floor that can cope with flood damage).</p>	<p>Yes</p>	<p>The term “loss and damage” is a broad concept typically used internationally to refer to the consequences of climate change that go beyond what people can adapt to.</p> <p>In the Oxford context, the Local Plan 2042 is focused on adaption and mitigation that can be secured through the development process, whilst avoiding/mitigating risks now and in future wherever possible.</p> <p>To that end, the Local Plan includes a specific draft policy (Draft Policy G9) which is proposed to ensure that new development is designed in a way that is resilient to future climate change, including appropriate adaptation measures that can address a range of climate hazards like flooding and overheating where necessary. We agree that the Local Plan also has a role in highlighting the key risks in the city, such as flood risk and risk from overheating, at least at a high level, and will ensure this is a part of the supporting text.</p> <p>Proposed policy G9 also includes language that seeks to ensure applicants take these risks into account in designing their development and this will be expanded on in supporting text as it is drafted. The priority for the policies is to ensure that a strong framework is put in place setting out the key considerations which we want applicants to respond to where it is within their power. This can then provide a hook for additional supporting guidance (e.g. Technical Advice Notes) which can provide further detail and specific examples of resilience measures which might be suitable to meet the policy’s requirements.</p>
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Annual Air Quality Status Report

<i>Recommendation</i>	<i>Agree?</i>	<i>Comment</i>
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<p>1) That the Air Quality Action Plan incorporates specific measures addressing the use of diesel generators associated with street trading, construction and similar activities, reflecting the Council's regulatory responsibilities in relation to street trading and seek to reduce air quality impacts.</p>	<p>In-part</p>	<p>We acknowledge the importance of addressing air quality impacts associated with diesel generator use in street trading, construction, and similar activities. As part of the development of the city's new Air Quality Action Plan (AQAP), we commit to exploring this issue further.</p> <p>However, at this stage, we are unable to commit to specific measures in detail, as the AQAP is still subject to internal review(s) and will also undergo a full public consultation process. This will ensure that any proposed actions in the final document are informed by stakeholder input and reflect a balanced, realistic, and evidence-based approach.</p>
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Table 2 – Cabinet response to the list of Scrutiny recommendations in September 2025

The table below sets out the response of the Cabinet Member to recommendations made or endorsed by the Scrutiny Committee during its meeting on 9 September 2025.

Citizen and Community Engagement Policy 2025

Recommendation	Agree?	Comment
1) That the Policy specifically assigns locality managers a role in the dissemination of consultations, making use of their deeper understanding of each local area’s needs and dynamics with the intention to tailor engagement efforts more effectively.	In part	<p>We agree that locality managers have a valuable role in tailoring engagement to the needs of local areas.</p> <p>Rather than including this level of operational detail in the overarching Policy, their role can be referenced in the project brief template, which includes a dedicated section outlining all support and resources planned for each engagement exercise (e.g. Locality Managers, Communications Team, Project Management). This will ensure their contribution is embedded in practice without overloading the Policy.</p>
2) That the Policy acknowledges and identifies busy time periods to be avoided for consultations, to ensure residents or participants have adequate opportunity to participate, particularly where the consultation topic requires more focused attention.	Yes	<p>Under the <i>Timeliness</i> principle, the Policy already states that <i>“If engagement takes place over holiday periods, the Council will assess and mitigate any negative impact on participation.”</i></p> <p>In practice, there are occasions when consultations must take place during holiday periods — for example, the Annual Residents Survey (normally run July–September, where consistency of timing ensures accurate year-on-year comparisons) and the Budget Consultation (which must align with the statutory budget cycle in late December). For these reasons, we believe the current wording in the</p>

		<p>Policy strikes the right balance.</p> <p>Where consultations do need to run during busier periods, officers will carefully assess the necessity, monitor participation closely, and take additional steps to encourage involvement.</p> <p>To further strengthen this in practice, a checkpoint on timing will be added to the project brief template, ensuring officers actively consider and, where possible, avoid launching consultations during peak holiday periods.</p>
3) That every consultation document undergoes an inclusivity check by an officer, resident panel, or elected member prior to release for readability and understandability by all audiences.	Yes	<p>We agree that accessibility and readability are essential. Officers will continue to carry out inclusivity checks (including plain English review and digital accessibility compliance).</p> <p>In practice, all consultation questionnaires are already reviewed to ensure readability and clarity. This includes checking that questions are written in plain English, that the length of the questionnaire is appropriate, and that the content is easy to follow for a wide audience. We will continue to apply this standard.</p> <p>The readability issue is usually observed more in supporting documents or policy papers that sit alongside the consultation.</p> <p>Looking ahead, we will strengthen the process by embedding it in the project brief template. Requesting officers will be asked to self-check all supporting materials and documents for readability and inclusivity before submission, with a checkpoint added in the template to make this explicit.</p>

		Where needed, we will also ask the Communications Team to provide an additional check to further support clarity and accessibility.
4) That Cabinet ensures the Policy is applied in a manner that maximises the inclusion of disabled people in the Council's consultation processes.	Yes	<p>This will be reinforced through both officer training and practical measures such as offering alternative formats, using accessible venues, and ensuring interpreters/support workers are available where needed.</p> <p>We will also add guidance re engaging with relevant community groups that can support with engagement.</p>
5) That Cabinet requests officers to undertake exploratory work to incorporate a system for ranking the importance of each consultation, and to investigate whether the use of incentives could effectively increase participation and engagement.	In part	<p>Regarding the suggestion to rank the importance of consultations, this would be difficult to implement in practice. Consultation projects vary widely in purpose, scope, and target audience — some focus on local residents on specific local issues, while others target the general public. Each consultation is equally important to its intended audience, making it challenging to compare projects and quantify "importance." Therefore, we propose continuing the current case-by-case review process, ensuring that each consultation is promoted effectively to its relevant audience.</p> <p>Regarding the use of incentives, this can be included as a checkpoint in the project brief template. However, any use of incentives must consider the project budget and potential impacts. While incentives can help boost response rates, they may also introduce bias by attracting participants who are more motivated by the incentive rather than the consultation topic itself. Careful consideration would be required before implementing this approach.</p>

Temporary Accommodation Placement Policy

Recommendation	Agree?	Comment
1) That Cabinet ensures the Temporary Accommodation Placement Policy incorporates a degree of flexibility to take account of extraordinary employment circumstances including those who work irregular hours or on variable contracts, in order to support fairness and further clarity.	Yes	The policy ensures that when placements are being considered that each case will be considered on its merits, having regard to employment, caring responsibilities, medical needs, and education of the household. This includes households which have people working variable hours.

Heat Network Update

Recommendation	Agree?	Comment
1) That social value creation is explored and embedded in the delivery of the heat network, with particular focus on mitigating the negative impacts of construction, including compensation for any disruptions to local businesses, safety concerns, damage to properties, and other community impacts, and that income generated through the network is directed toward addressing fuel poverty through measures such as insulation and energy efficiency upgrades.	Yes	<p>We agree that the Council will explore all opportunities for social value creation and to mitigate any negative impacts of the scheme, noting that a balance will need to be struck between a) partner requirements (including social value delivery), b) the cost of heat and c) commercial viability of any heat network.</p> <p>Social value creation is a core work package of the due diligence work being undertaken by the DHN Partnership, chaired by Oxford City Council. All aspects of social value delivery will be explored, including those mentioned by the panel and employment opportunities etc.</p>
2) That Council ensures there is further scrutiny specifically around the ownership models of the infrastructure under consideration for the heat network.	Yes	Delivery models, including co-investment and golden share, are being reviewed as part of the due diligence work.
3) That concerns around potential monopoly are duly noted, and that commercial arrangements include mechanisms that will ensure long-term public benefit and enable public oversight; that any profits or financial	Yes	We agree that the Council will explore all potential delivery models as part of the due diligence work, noting again that a balance will need to be struck between a) partner requirements b) the cost of heat and c) commercial viability

turnover generated through the network are shared with the City Council and used to directly benefit residents; and that where possible, infrastructure is retained in public ownership or alternative safeguards are implemented to ensure dependency on a single private provider is prevented.		<p>of any heat network</p> <p>The results of the comprehensive due diligence will set out the key requirements for the City from a Heat Network. This will provide the Council and its Partners with the information on whether to proceed with the heat network option offered by 1energy.</p>
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Local EV Infrastructure

<i>Recommendation</i>	<i>Agree?</i>	<i>Comment</i>
1) That OX Place, as a council-owned company, ensure that EV charge points in new developments are accessible to the wider community; and that further work is undertaken to explore the use of workplace EV charging points by local residents during evenings and weekends, potentially through planning conditions.		<p>It would be difficult to impose such a condition (or require it through Section 106 agreement), and the Council would not be in a position to monitor or effectively enforce it. There is currently no relevant policy supporting this, and the provision of EV charging points for general public use is not the responsibility of applicants, unless an applicant was volunteering to do so. This can be included in considerations for the Local Plan, however there are practical challenges with implementing such a requirement.</p>