

Agenda

Council

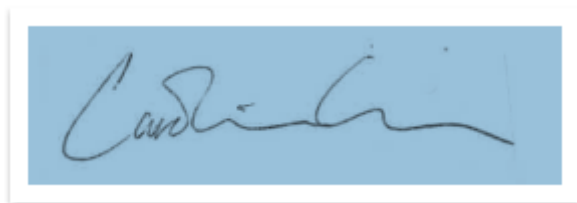
Summons

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

Date: **Monday 24 November 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

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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	
<p>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.</p> <p>List the names, posts and dates of death</p>	
PART 1 - PUBLIC BUSINESS	
1 Apologies for absence	
2 Declarations of interest	
3 Minutes	21 - 32
<p>Minutes of the ordinary meeting of Council held on 6 October 2025.</p> <p>Council is asked to approve the minutes as a correct record.</p>	
4 Appointment to Committees	
<p>Any proposed changes will be circulated with the briefing note.</p>	
5 Announcements	
<p>Announcements by:</p> <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 18 November 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.

7 Urgent Business

The Council may deal with business even though it is not on the Agenda so long as:

- (a) the business is raised by a Motion on Notice under Rule 14 (Motions on Notice);
- (b) the Motion on Notice is delivered to the Director of Law, Governance and Strategy not later than 4 hours before the start of the Meeting;
- (c) the Lord Mayor, or Council, if put to a vote, decide that the business is urgent (see Rule a); and
- (d) the agenda relating to the Meeting states that the Council may deal with urgent business at that Meeting.

Should the Lord Mayor determine that a matter is not urgent on the advice of the Monitoring Officer then the decision shall be final, subject to such reasons being explained to the meeting. Where there is no definitive view from the Monitoring Officer any member may, supported by [10] or more member by a show of hands, may request that the matter be put to a vote to determine if it should be heard.

Should the majority determine in any vote that the matter is urgent (whether put to the meeting by the Lord Mayor or by a member supported by ten others) then Council will debate it under Rule 11.20 Rules of Debate. Where it is determined that the matter is not urgent, the matter shall be deferred to the next Ordinary

Council Meeting (i.e. not to an Extraordinary Council Meeting).

CABINET RECOMMENDATIONS

8 HRA Policies

33 - 110

The Director of Housing has submitted a report to approve the HRA Policies, following the recommendation from Cabinet on 22 October 2025.

Council is recommended to:

1. **Approve** the Damp and Mould Policy
2. **Approve** the Fire Safety Policy
3. **Approve** the Asbestos Policy
4. **Approve** the Disrepair Policy

OFFICER REPORTS

9 Local Government Reorganisation

111 -
124

The Chief Executive has submitted a report to note the decision of Cabinet with regards to Oxford City Council's Local Government Reorganisation preferred option submission.

Council is recommended to:

1. **Note** the decision taken by Cabinet on the 10 November to submit as its preferred option on Local Government Reorganisation, a three unitary council model across Oxfordshire, incorporating West Berkshire, as set out in the Cabinet Report

10 Devolution

The Chief Executive has submitted a report to note that Cabinet will take a decision on whether to endorse the submission by Oxfordshire County Council on behalf of all Oxfordshire councils of an Expression of Interest to Government for the inclusion of the Thames Valley area in the next wave of its Devolution Programme.

Council is recommended to:

1. **Note** that a Special Cabinet on 4 December will be asked to:
 - a) Endorse the benefits from the proposed devolution of powers and functions to a future Thames Valley Mayoral Strategic Authority, and agrees to continue building on the collaborative approach across the region to date;
 - b) Endorse the Expression of Interest (EOI) to be submitted by Oxfordshire County Council as the upper-tier authority to

Government, noting that the EOI is designed to proactively position our region for early consideration in the next wave of the Devolution Programme;

- c) Acknowledge the EOI as an initial invitation to Government, opening further dialogue and engagement, and not a decision to establish a Strategic Authority;
- d) Agree that a further report will be brought to Cabinet prior to any final decision by Oxfordshire County Council as upper-tier authority on the creation of a Strategic Authority; and
- e) Note an informal Devolution Programme Board will oversee discussions with Government, ensuring robust governance and stakeholder engagement by elected members throughout this process.

The report will be published as part of a supplement on Monday, 17 November 2025

11 Updates to Constitution

125 -
150

The Director of Law, Governance and Strategy has submitted a report to seek approval for amendments to the Constitution, including updated Committee procedures and confirmation that Council will be responsible for approving Taxi Licensing policy.

Council is recommended to:

1. **Approve** the reservation to full Council of the decision making and approval of Taxi Licensing Policy as set out in Part 5.4 of the Constitution.
2. **Approve** the updates to the Constitution, as listed in Appendix 1;
3. **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.

12 Recommendation from the Standards Committee to censure Councillor Malik

151 -
152

The Monitoring Officer has submitted a report regarding the outcome of the Local Hearing Panel of the Standards Committee that found that Councillor Malik had breached the Council's Code of Member Conduct and that the sanction imposed should be the formal censure of the full Council.

Council is recommended to:

1. **Censure** Councillor Malik in respect of the finding that he breached the Members' Code of Conduct.

13 Recommendation from the Standards Committee to censure Councillor Latif

153 -
154

The Monitoring Officer has submitted a report regarding the Local Hearing Panel of the Standards Committee that found that Councillor Latif had breached the Council's Code of Member Conduct and that the sanction imposed should be the formal censure of the full Council.

Council is recommended to:

1. **Censure** Councillor Latif in respect of the finding that he breached the Members' Code of Conduct.

QUESTIONS

14 Questions on Cabinet minutes

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.

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

15 Questions on Notice from Members of Council

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

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 12 November 2025.

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

PART 2 - PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT AND SCRUTINY

16 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 18 November 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.
Responses*

17 Scrutiny Committee update report

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.

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

PART 3 - MOTIONS REPRESENTING THE CITY

18 Motions on notice November 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 12 November 2025 are listed below.

Cross party motions are taken first. Motions will then be taken in turn from the Independent Oxford Alliance Group, Oxford Community Independents Group, Oxford Independent Group, Real Independent Group, Labour Group, Liberal Democrat Group, Green 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 21 November 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) Oppose a Work Place Parking Levy and planned Bus Gates in Oxford (proposed by Cllr Henwood, seconded Cllr Yeatman)
- b) Bring Thames Water into public ownership (Proposed by Cllr Mundy, Seconded by Cllr Djafari-Marbini)
- c) Democracy and Freedom (proposed by Cllr Rehman, seconded by Cllr Latif)
- d) Better use of Oxpens Bridge Funding (proposed by Cllr Jupp, seconded by Cllr Miles)
- e) A World-Class Multi-Modal Transport Hub for Oxford Station (Proposed by Cllr. Lois Muddiman, Seconded by Cllr. Emily Kerr)

18a Oppose a Work Place Parking Levy and planned Bus Gates in Oxford (proposed by Cllr Henwood, seconded Cllr Yeatman)

Independent Oxford Alliance Group Motion

Oxford City Council notes that Oxfordshire County Council has approved and expressed support for:

- 1. The proposed **Bus gate (filter) scheme**;
- 2. The proposed **Workplace Parking Levy (WPL)**;

Oxford City Council further notes significant public concern regarding the potential economic, social, and accessibility impacts of these measures on residents, businesses, and visitors.

Council therefore resolves to:

- 1. **Oppose** for the proposed Bus Gate (filter) Scheme, and the proposed Workplace Parking Levy.
- 2. Request the Leader of the Council to write to the Leader of Oxfordshire County Council and other relevant authorities as the local highways authority to communicate this resolution.
- 3. Continue to support sustainable, balanced approaches to improving air quality, public transport, and cycling/walking infrastructure that do not unduly penalise residents, workers, or businesses.

18b Bring Thames Water into public ownership (Proposed by Cllr Mundy, Seconded by Cllr Djafari-Marbini)

Oxford Community Independents Group Motion

Thames Water has become known for poor performance for managing their vital infrastructure. Having managed to discharge raw sewage into the region's waterways for almost 300,000 hours in

2024¹, 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.² 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.³ A natural monopoly like water should be publicly owned. According to The People's Commission on the Water Sector, the environment secretary's claims that taking water back into public ownership is unaffordable, was backed by misleading figures with no basis in law.⁴

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 streets⁵, and dismayed at the daft plans for an enormous reservoir which tears up local landscape and is costly and un-necessary.⁶

Yes, we have been here before, our Council passed a motion pushing for the nationalisation of Thames Water back in January 2023. But the Labour 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 push for a rethink, to urge the government to renationalise Thames Water.

This Council resolves to:

- Request that the 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

¹ <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

² <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

³ <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

⁴ <https://www.theguardian.com/business/2025/aug/03/a-fair-price-to-the-public-for-water-nationalisation> A fair price to the public for water nationalisation

⁵ <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/articles/c79qr333jv4o> and <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/articles/cwyj7ldw14eo> 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

⁶ <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

water supplier needs to be brought in to public hands.

- Ask the Planning cabinet member to write to Thames Water CEO seeking:

1. 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.

2. 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.

3. An urgent timetable of when sewage works in The Leys and Littlemore will be modernised and brought up to capacity to prevent the annual stench across these areas in the summer months.

- For Oxford City Council to engage with local groups such as Windrush Against Sewage Pollution and Boycott Thames Water, to push for better standards from our water supplier.

18c Democracy and Freedom (proposed by Cllr Rehman, seconded by Cllr Latif)

Oxford Community Independents Group Motion

As we prepare today to restructure our local government organisation to improve residents lives, for a better more inclusive and fair society.

To enable people and communities to have greater say in what matters to them most.

The government states it wants communities to decide their own futures in short to create a fairer more democratic inclusive society.

Unfortunately, across the world today we see countries being governed by people who have either taken power by force or rigged elections, denying civilians their mandate to the freedom to choose their leaders, in short their right to freedom.

This has led to mass migration, people not fleeing danger from natural disasters or persecution, but seeking freedom and hope to live freely.

This new wave of migration has placed a huge strain on countries giving sanctuary, such as ours.

The economic impact has been immense and the feeling of Britain being a soft touch and/or being taken for a ride has led to rise of division and animosity within communities.

The biggest tragedy of all has been the rise in anger against genuine refugees facing persecution. They are now feeling scared made feeling unwelcome at a time they desperately need sanctuary.

Our government has a responsibility to the British people both financially and as defenders of democracy to cut ties with such oppressive regimes. It cannot be simply brushed away or ignored any longer, when it is directly impacting lives of residents in our communities.

Our government should immediately halt aid and grants to such governments.

A government which has stolen mandate, cannot be trusted to distribute such monies, especially at a time when people in Britain are facing huge hardship.

I know such funds would make a huge difference to my ward and our city.

It is time our government stood up for the rule of law and democracy wherever it has been denied.

The government has a moral obligation to put the British people first and can do so by internationally taking a moral stance to protect Democracy and Rule of Law

Council calls upon the leader to write to our prime minister to:

- Ask him to confirm Britain's commitment to support the rule of law and democracy across the world, by reaffirming the overriding principal of democracy which is not to hold political prisoners.
- That regime stakeholders to be censored and banned from purchasing and investing in Britain.
- The Government introduce a more stringent vetting procedure which would stop the situation as we witness with the Russian oligarchs at the onset of the Ukraine invasion.
- Outlining that to make a reaffirmation to the country's commitment would send a clear message that Oxford and Britain welcome genuine refugees and upholds the principles of Law and democracy.

18d Better use of Oxpens Bridge Funding (proposed by Cllr Jupp, seconded by Cllr Miles)

Liberal Democrat Group Motion

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 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.

**18e A World-Class Multi-Modal Transport Hub for Oxford Station
(Proposed by Cllr Lois Muddiman, Seconded by Cllr Emily**

Kerr)

Green Group Motion

Council notes:

1. The redevelopment of **Oxford Railway Station**⁷ offers a once-in-a-generation opportunity to create a **world-class gateway** to Oxford that reflects the city's status as a global centre for learning, innovation, and tourism.
2. The **Oxon4Buses**⁸ campaign and petition calls for the new station to be developed as a **multi-modal transport hub**—integrating local and regional buses, coaches, trains, cycling, walking, taxis, and shared mobility.
3. The Movement Strategy in OCC's adopted **Oxford West End and Osney Mead Supplementary Planning Document 2022**⁹ states that vehicular dominance, particularly in the West End is to be reduced with car-free developments & reductions in car parking.
4. **Gloucester Green Bus Station** occupies a valuable central site that could potentially be better used for alternative city-centre purposes if coach and bus services are relocated to a fully integrated station hub.

Council believes:

1. Oxford should aspire to a **transport interchange of international quality**, providing seamless connections between rail, coach, bus, taxis, cycling and walking, and setting a new standard for sustainable urban mobility.
2. Expanding or maintaining the current car parking provision at the station would run counter to the objectives of OCCs **Zero Carbon Oxford's**¹⁰, **Air Quality Action Plan**¹¹, and the **Oxford 2050 Transport and Connectivity Vision**¹² adding congestion and undermining the city's shift towards sustainable modes.
3. A new multi-modal transport hub at Oxford Train Station will support the development of the West End in the same way that the new **Cowley Branch Line**¹³, will support inclusive

⁷ <https://www.oxford.gov.uk/building-projects/oxford-station-masterplan>

⁸ <https://lcon.org.uk/current-activities/oxfordshire-for-buses/>

⁹ <https://www.oxford.gov.uk/downloads/file/1596/adopted-oxford-west-end-and-osney-mead-sp>

¹⁰ <https://www.oxford.gov.uk/climate-emergency/zero-carbon-oxford>

¹¹ <https://www.oxford.gov.uk/air-quality-management/air-quality-action-plan>

¹² <https://www.oxford.gov.uk/oxfords-future/oxford2050/5>

¹³ <https://www.oxford.gov.uk/news/article/1754/cowley-branch-line-to-be-reopened-with-two-new-train-stations-for-oxford>

economic growth, reduce congestion, and improve access to jobs, education, and opportunity.

4. The **West End regeneration area**¹⁴, including Oxford Station, Oxpens¹⁵, and Osney Mead, must be planned and delivered as a **coherent, sustainable district**, where high-quality transport infrastructure underpins inclusive economic and social growth.
5. The new **Cowley Branch Line** was recently described by the City Council as key to “supporting inclusive growth, connecting communities, and enabling a greener future.” The same logic applies to the new Oxford Station development.
6. All options should be considered, including **the feasibility of relocating bus and coach services to the new station interchange** – thereby freeing up the Gloucester Green site for alternative civic uses.

Council therefore resolves to:

1. Request the Cabinet Member for a Zero Carbon Oxford to publicly support the Oxon4Buses campaign in its call for a multi-modal transport hub at Oxford Station, with minimal car parking and no multi-storey car park.
2. Request the Cabinet Member for a Zero Carbon Oxford to work with partners—including Oxfordshire County Council, Network Rail, Great Western Railway, and the Department for Transport—to ensure the final design of the train station places bus, coach, cycling, and walking facilities at its heart.
3. Request that officers produce a paper for cabinet to explore and bring forward proposals for alternative uses of the Gloucester Green site in the context of wider city-centre and West End regeneration priorities.

Matters exempt from publication and exclusion of the public

¹⁴ <https://oxfordwestend.co.uk/>

¹⁵ <https://www.oxpensoxford.uk/>

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.

Minutes of a meeting of Council on Monday 6 October 2025

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Council members present:

Councillor Altaf-Khan
Councillor Azad
Councillor Chapman
Councillor Corais
Councillor Djafari-Marbini
Councillor Fry
Councillor Goddard
Councillor Henwood
Councillor Hunt
Councillor Kerr
Councillor Lygo
Councillor Miles
Councillor Mundy
Councillor Ottino
Councillor Pressel
Councillor Railton
Councillor Regisford
Councillor Robinson
Councillor Sandelson
Councillor Linda Smith
Councillor Smowton
Councillor Turner
Councillor Waite

Councillor Arshad
Councillor Brown
Councillor Clarkson
Councillor Diggins
Councillor Fouweather
Councillor Gant (Sheriff)
Councillor Harley
Councillor Hollingsworth
Councillor Jarvis
Councillor Latif
Councillor Malik
Councillor Muddiman
Councillor Munkonge
Councillor Powell
Councillor Qayyum
Councillor Rawle
Councillor Rehman
Councillor Rowley (Deputy Lord Mayor)
Councillor Stares
Councillor Roz Smith
Councillor Taylor
Councillor Upton (Lord Mayor)
Councillor Yeatman

Also present for all or part of the meeting:

None

Apologies:

Councillor(s) Jupp and Max Morris sent apologies.

The minutes show when Councillors who were absent for part of the meeting arrived and left.

25. Apologies for absence

Councillors Jupp and Morris sent their apologies.

Councillors Latif, Corais, Roz Smith, and Yeatman sent their apologies for a late arrival to the meeting.

26. Declarations of interest

Councillor Malik declared an interest in item 10 on the agenda.

Councillor Upton noted the interest.

27. Minutes

Council agreed to approve the minutes of the ordinary meeting held on **14 July 2025** as a true and correct record.

28. Appointment to Committees

No new appointments were made.

29. Announcements

Announcement from the Lord Mayor

Councillor Upton discussed the change in the constitution relating to the break and said that they may have the public address before the break. The Lord Mayor reflected on her work with friendship groups and different community groups across the city. She noted her meeting with young medical students from Gaza and said that it had made her hopeful for the future. The Lord Mayor spoke about the fun parts of her role, including the opening of St Giles' Fair. She thanked Oxford's healthcare workers, leys development unit and adult volunteers. She noted her upcoming volunteer work to raise funds for and awareness of rough sleeping in Oxford and welcomed sponsorship for this event.

Announcement from the Deputy Lord Mayor

Councillor Rowley said that it was a delight to welcome a new vicar to the parish. He noted that he was happy to attend a demonstration of solidarity with the community that attends the Oxford Central Mosque, particularly in light of recent events.

Announcement from the Leader of the Council

Councillor Brown announced that they had elected a new champion for events and nightlife economy, Councillor Taylor. She noted that Councillor Taylor would be working with Councillor Hollingsworth in this role.

Statement from the Leader of the Council

Councillor Brown made a statement on recent events in the country.

On Thursday last week we saw the horrible attacks on the Jewish community in Manchester on Yom Kippur, the holiest day of the Jewish calendar and yesterday there was an arson attack on a mosque in Peacehaven, which thankfully did not result in any loss of life. Last night I had the privilege of being at Oxford Synagogue where people of all faiths joined the Jewish community as we all mourned the attacks two years ago, but also the terrible destruction and loss of life in Gaza and hoped and prayed for peace. We're fortunate in Oxford to have several decades of different faith communities working together to find the many things that bind us together, but at a time when antisemitism, Islamophobia, and racism are all on the rise we must all double down in our efforts to listen to each other and to encourage our communities to come together.

Announcement from the City Rector

The City Rector said that all of the city's faith communities appreciated the City Council's interest in their work. He reflected on the day's anniversary of martyrdom, as a reminder that atrocities happened historically as they do today. His reflection called for people to stand together in the face of ongoing violence and fear.

30. Public addresses that relate to matters for decision at this meeting

There were no addresses or questions.

31. Appropriation of land at Elsfield Hall from the General Fund to the Housing Revenue Account

The Director of Economy, Regeneration and Sustainability had 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).

Councillor Smith presented the paper. She said that this work should provide one hundred new affordable homes for the city. She said that two of the sites under consideration required Council agree to the appropriation of the sites. This appropriation is represented in agenda items 7 and 8. Councillor Smith said that the Elsfield site, they hoped, would provide over 30 new affordable homes for the city and that the site would be a mix of social rent and shared ownership. She moved the report and Councillor Turner seconded.

Councillor Fouweather encouraged Cabinet to increase the density of homes at this site, if possible, but noted that he was encouraged to see the report and its aspirations come forward.

Councillor Malik welcomed the report but asked what the plan was for the existing structure at the site.

Councillor Linda Smith said that they would take on board the density point and would make that argument to the planning department as they progressed. Regarding the Knights Court, she said that the plan was to convert the building to housing.

Council resolved 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).

Councillor Roz Smith arrived during this item at 17:17.

32. Appropriation of land at Cave Street from the General Fund to the Housing Revenue Account

The Director of Economy, Regeneration and Sustainability had 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.

Councillor Linda Smith presented and proposed the report. She said that they hoped this site would create at least 19 new affordable homes. She said that they hoped to complete the development by the end of 2026.

Councillor Turner seconded the report. He said that the building had been demolished and that the scheme for start up units had not stacked up financially. Due to this, they decided to pursue the affordable housing scheme instead.

Councillor Roz Smith expressed her support for the scheme and for the building of the new homes in this location.

Council resolved 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).

33. Cumulative Impact Assessment and Special Saturation Policy

This report was deferred to a later meeting. The Monitoring Officer clarified that members would not be able to ask questions or discuss the report at this stage, but that the report would return to members for consideration later and that a full briefing would be provided to all members in due course.

34. Hackney Carriage Vehicle Emission Standards Amendment

This report was deferred to a later meeting. The Monitoring Officer clarified that members would not be able to ask questions or discuss the report at this stage, but that the report would return to members for consideration later and that a full briefing would be provided to all members in due course.

35. Working Overseas Policy and Procedure

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

Councillor Chapman presented the report. He said that this policy was the first of its kind for the Council and that data protection issues were at the centre of the policy. He noted the specific steps the policy proscribed for members and officers to work abroad and the countries which had been noted as dangerous to work in. Councillor Chapman proposed the report, and it was seconded by Councillor Munkonge.

Councillor Smowton questioned how the policy would benefit the cyber security of the Council. In response, the Deputy Chief Executive – Citizen and City Services said that they were happy to review the policy as they go and integrate learnings. He noted that the policy was also one measure, amongst several others being implemented for their cyber security.

Councillor Turner asked about the scale of liabilities which members could have to pay. The Deputy Chief Executive – Citizen and City Services responded that in terms of ICO, he could not provide an answer regarding the scale of liabilities.

Councillor Djafari-Marbini asked about the delays that the policy could cause in members' ability to respond to members of the public.

Council discussed the challenges that could be caused by the policy and how this could impact their work.

Council resolved not to:

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

Following debate of the policy, Councillor Chapman said that they would bring a revised policy back to the Council in November and proposed this to Council. This was seconded by Councillor Munkonge.

Council resolved to:

1. **Agreed** to review the policy and to bring a revised Working Overseas Policy and Procedure back to Council in November.

Councillor Corais arrived at the meeting during this item at 17:31.

Councillor Yeatman arrived during this item at 17:44.

36. Questions on Cabinet minutes

Cabinet Minutes – 13 August 2025

No questions were raised.

Cabinet Minutes – 17 September 2025

Councillor Snowton asked about the engagement with temporary accommodation and what was being done to make sure that this would not impact people who need to access this support.

Councillor Linda Smith said that she would bring a further update to Council in due course regarding their plans to expand access to temporary accommodation.

Councillor Fouweather asked about the Council's purchase of four food waste vehicles for ODS and why ODS did not lease the vehicles from a private contractor.

Councillor Chapman explained that this was the structure outlined for ODS's acquisition of vehicles and other expensive pieces of kit.

Councillor Turner said that ODS could choose other procurement routes, but that it was more cost effective for ODS to work with the Council than with a private vendor.

37. Questions on Notice from Members of Council

46 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 22 supplementary questions and responses asked and given at the meeting are set out in the minutes pack.

Councillor Taylor arrived during this item at 18:08.

Councillor Gant left during this item, at 18:23.

The Lord Mayor moved to items 15 and 16 ahead of the break.

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

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

Councillor Arshad presented the report. She highlighted the priorities of the partnership, including tackling serious violence and violence against women and girls. She said that the report details work seeking to make Oxford a safer city. She moved the report, and it was seconded by Councillor Hollingsworth.

Council discussed the need to ensure a balance between a strong protection for vulnerable individuals and protecting the night-time economy in the city. Council also discussed actions being taken to address identified hotspots of disorder in particular areas of the city at night.

Councillor Arshad noted the community partnerships that they work in collaboration with to address these issues. She noted the particular work that had been done by Night Safe Oxford and the Oxford City Angels. She also discussed her work with the police to address hot spot areas of the city.

Council resolved to:

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

39. Scrutiny Committee update report

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

Councillor Powell presented the report. He presented the Committee's meetings and the recommendations that they had considered in their meetings over the course of the year. He thanked officers and Cabinet for their discussions and support. Councillor Powell moved the report.

Council noted the report.

Council took a break following this item from 18:45 – 19:15.

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

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

Council heard 1 address and Cabinet Members read or summarised their written responses.

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

1. Address by **Dan Glazebrook, a representative from Friends of Grandpont Nature Park.**

Councillor Latif joined the meeting during this item at 19:23.

41. Motions on Notice October 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:

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

Motions lost as set out below:

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

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

- 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)

42. Planning and Infrastructure Bill (Proposed by Councillor Smowton, Seconded by Councillor Fouweather)

Councillor Smowton, Seconded by Councillor Fouweather, proposed the motion as set out in the briefing note.

Following the debate and on being put to a vote, the following motion **was lost**.

Council resolved to:

Reject the following motion:

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

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 the then Labour MP Chris Hinchcliff, who pointed out in June this year 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.

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>

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-CECF3B58A26A/PlanningandInfrastructureBill>

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

Councillor Powell, Seconded by Councillor Jarvis, proposed the motion as set out in the briefing note.

Council agreed to suspend standing orders to extend the meeting by 30 minutes to continue the debate on this motion.

Following the debate and on being put to a vote, the motion **was agreed**.

Council noted:

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 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 resolved that it believes:

⁷ <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>

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>

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 resolved:

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 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.

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

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

45. Keep Oxford Open (Proposed by Councillor Goddard, Seconded by Councillor Smowton)

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

46. Better use of Oxpens Bridge Funding (Proposed by Councillor Jupp, Seconded by Councillor Miles)

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

The meeting started at 17:00 and ended at 21:00.

Lord Mayor

Date: Monday 24 November 2025

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: 24 November 2025
Report of: Director of Housing
Title of Report: HRA Property Services Policies

Summary and recommendations	
Decision being taken:	To approve the following policies: fire safety, damp and mould, asbestos and disrepair to ensure the maintenance of the housing stock.
Key decision:	No
Cabinet Member:	Councillor Linda Smith – Housing and Communities
Corporate Priority:	Good, affordable homes
Policy Framework:	HRA Asset Management Strategy

Recommendation(s): That Council resolves to:	
1	Approve the Damp and Mould Policy
2	Approve the Fire Safety Policy
3	Approve the Asbestos Policy
4	Approve the Disrepair Policy

Information Exempt From Publication
N/A

Appendix No.	Appendix Title	Exempt from Publication
Appendix 1	Damp and Mould Policy	No
Appendix 2	Fire Safety Policy	No
Appendix 3	Asbestos Policy	No
Appendix 4	Disrepair Policy	No

Introduction and background

1. Further to the decision of the Cabinet on 22 October 2025 to approve the Housing Revenue Account (HRA) policies in respect of asbestos, damp and mould, disrepair and fire safety, the full Council is asked to approve this suite of policies.
2. Making sure residents have a safe, affordable and decent place to call home is the core purpose of this work. Following the tragic fire at Grenfell Tower in 2017 and the death of Awaab Ishak from damp and mould in 2020, successive Governments has been working to strengthen the voice of residents and introduce legislation to ensure the good quality of all homes.
3. In 2018, the then Government published the Social Housing White Paper to ensure residents of social housing are safe, listened to, live in good quality homes and have access to help when things go wrong. Consequently, the Social Housing Regulation Act (“the Act”) received Royal Assent in July 2023. The Act forms a new regulatory framework for the social housing sector, aiming to give residents greater powers and improve access to quick and fair solutions to problems.
4. The Act aims to ensure Registered Social Landlords (RSLs) are compliant with the consumer standards by giving the Regulator of Social Housing new powers to address RSLs who are not meeting their commitments to residents.
5. The Social Housing Charter detailed what social housing residents should expect from their landlords, including feeling safe in their homes, knowing how their landlords are performing and having their complaints solved quickly.
6. The Act sets out to deliver against each of these commitments:
 - Residents to be safe in their home.
 - Residents to know how their landlord is performing.
 - Residents to have their complaints dealt with promptly.
 - Residents to be treated with respect.
 - Residents to have their voice heard by their landlord.
 - Residents to have a good quality home and neighbourhood to live in.
7. Technical policies are therefore required to adhere to this regulatory regime. They are also key to ensure the effective operation of the Housing Revenue Account (HRA) property service as it ensures that asset management services and the development of the social housing programme are set within a sound operating framework such as meeting key performance criteria, as well as ensuring sustainability objectives are met and monitored.
8. The ability to refresh policies ensures key KPIs can be refined to meet the contemporary needs of tenants and of the wider city in respect of the role of housing in attaining economic growth.

9. At the same time, the need to ensure high standards are maintained, such as guaranteeing that fire safety standards are met and damp and mould is eradicated from the housing stock, can be attained by clear technical policies which ensures consistent follow through with operational work in addressing health and safety objectives.
10. The Council recognises its compliance responsibilities as well as the critical need to listen and act on the lived in experiences of our residents. There has been a series of meetings with the Residents Policy Review Group which has amended and approved the policies. The Cabinet subsequently approved the policies which are being presented to full Council for approval with this report.
11. There is a need for a suite of other policies to be considered and approved by full Council to meet these regulatory standards. It is envisaged that further policies, once they are considered by residents, will be presented to the Cabinet and full Council for approval.

Damp and Mould

12. As part of this compliance structure, there are new requirements for the Council to address damp and mould in properties following the tragic death of two-year-old Awaab Ishak in a Rochdale social housing property in 2020. The coroner concluded that Awaab had died due to exposure to damp and mould.
13. Awaab's Law was introduced in July 2023 as part of the Social Housing (Regulation) Act. This legislation effectively inserts into social housing tenancy agreements the need for landlords, including Oxford City Council, to comply with new standards.
14. Landlords must act quickly on damp and mould, inspecting urgent cases within 24 hours and fixing problems within set legal deadlines, so no one is left living in unsafe conditions. This means all registered providers of social housing will have to meet these requirements and if they fail to do so, tenants will be able to hold their landlords to account by taking legal action through the courts for breach of contract.
15. The requirements for landlords, which came into force on 27 October 2025, are as follows:

Emergency Hazards

- 24 hours to investigate emergencies
- Property must be made safe within 5 working days of the investigation (by carrying out emergency works or by providing suitable alternative accommodation)

Significant Hazards (serious but not immediate risk)

- 10 working days to investigate significant cases of damp and mould
- 3 working days to give tenants written summary of the investigation findings
- 5 working days to start safety work if hazards are found
- 12 weeks maximum to begin longer works

- Alternative accommodation if deadlines cannot be met
16. Landlords must keep clear records of attempts to comply with these requirements, including records of all correspondence with the resident(s) and any contractors. If the landlord is unable to meet these requirements for reasons beyond their control, they will be expected to provide a record of the reasons that prevented them from doing so.
 17. In 2026, requirements will expand to a wider range of hazards beyond damp and mould. This will include excess cold and excess heat, falls, structural collapse and explosions, fire and electrical hazards, and domestic and personal hygiene and food safety.
 18. Then in 2027, the requirements of Awaab's Law will expand to apply to the remaining hazards as defined by the Housing Health and Safety Rating System (HHSRS), where they present a significant risk of harm, but excluding overcrowding.
 19. The policy outlines the key responses of the Council towards incidences of damp and mould as well as the responsibility of tenants to prevent damp and mould.
 20. Further details as to the Council's response times to low and medium incidents of damp and mould and how this is defined is detailed in the attached policy.
 21. The Residents Policy Review Group have amended this policy in order for the policy to reflect the lived experiences and perspectives of our residents. The changes which have been incorporated within the policy are:
 22. Amending the tone of the wording of the policy which was perceived as a negative attitude towards residents. The wording has been amended to neutrally state the responsibility of residents and the Council to address damp and mould;
 23. To make it clearer in the policy how residents can report damp and mould and how the Council will share information with residents on damp and mould.
 24. The full Council is asked to consider and approve the HRA Damp and Mould policy.

Fire Safety

25. The need for the Council to have a Fire Safety Policy was given greater significance following the tragedy of the Grenfell Tower fire in Kensington, London in 2017. A public inquiry was held which led to a series of recommendations, many of which have been implemented in law.
26. The Grenfell Inquiry recommendations were given effect on 23 January 2023, when the Fire Safety (England) Regulations 2022 came into force. The Regulations apply to all buildings in England that comprise two or more domestic premises. The Regulations also cover buildings that have mixed use, but contain more than two residential properties, and they also cover student accommodation. The Regulations do not, however, cover maisonettes, where flats exist within a converted house and there are no common parts.

27. The Regulations are in relation to the buildings themselves, not individual flats within those buildings.
28. The Regulations place a requirement on the responsible person(s) for that building to provide certain information to Fire and Rescue Services and to residents of the building in relation to fire safety and procedures for that building.
29. The 'responsible person' for buildings is the person who is responsible for the safety of themselves and others who use the premises. Therefore, the Council has a Fire Safety Manager who is designated as the responsible person.
30. The responsible person will keep up to date with any further changes to these Regulations, or any new Regulations that come into force.
31. The Fire Safety policy forms part of our wider organisational commitment to driving a health and safety culture amongst staff and contractors.
32. Oxford City Council is committed to reducing, so far as is reasonably practicable, the foreseeable risks of fire, and the risk to the safety of residents and other building users through a series of measures which include:
- Ensuring compliance with legal and statutory requirements, including carrying out, updating, and regularly reviewing fire risk assessments of all relevant accommodations in line with the level of risk.
 - Ensuring that all new build accommodation and refurbishment work meets the requirements of the Building Safety Regulations and other statutory requirements.
 - Ensuring as far as is reasonably possible that the risk of fires igniting and spreading in properties is minimised.
 - Working in partnership with the Oxfordshire Fire and Rescue Service to ensure that residents and staff know what to do when a fire does occur.
 - Ensuring that an investigation is undertaken in the event of any fire or fire safety incident to review the causes and explore opportunities to implement improved control measures, to minimise any potential re-occurrence.
 - Ensuring that all fire safety, electrical, and mechanical equipment on the council's estate is regularly maintained, and kept in a good state of repair, and that records are kept in line with legal and best practice requirements. This includes cyclical servicing and inspections of gas and electrical installations.
 - Defining key fire safety roles and responsibilities within the Oxford City Council.
 - Working collaboratively with Oxfordshire Fire and Rescue Service.
 - Maintaining accurate record keeping and sharing with Oxfordshire Fire and Rescue Service, as appropriate.
33. The policy goes beyond the minimum legal requirements so that, for instance, there are clear guidance to residents beyond the minimum stipulations as stated in legislation.
34. The Residents Policy Review Group amended this policy as follows:
- The policy now includes text that on communal notice boards, residents are advised who to contact if they are concerned flammable materials are being stored in neighbouring properties;

- The list of vulnerable residents has been extended to include residents being supported by the Community Safety team.

35. The full Council is asked to consider and approve the HRA Fire Safety policy.

Asbestos

36. The Council has a legal duty, under the [Control of Asbestos Regulations 2012](#), to manage asbestos in the common areas of residential buildings like halls, stairs, and lifts. This duty involves identifying asbestos, assessing risks, and creating and implementing a [management plan](#). The Council must also provide tenants with information about asbestos in their building. Failure to comply can result in legal penalties, including fines and imprisonment.

37. It has been assessed that the majority of the housing stock, due to its age, has asbestos. This asbestos has been assessed as safe due to the procedures of the Council's Property Services division. The policy which has been presented for approval details these processes and the steps that are followed regularly to maintain the safety of our residents.

38. The policy goes beyond the legal minimum standards and ensures all properties are inspected over time for asbestos. The policy stipulates that:

- The Council would undertake on site post inspections of asbestos work for 5% of completed works.
- Clear advice as to how residents can report asbestos concerns
- Amending the text to read that staff must know the asbestos policy rather than "should" know the policy.

39. Further details as to the Council's response to asbestos incidents and how this is defined is detailed in the attached policy.

40. The Residents Policy Review Group successfully amended this policy with the following changes:

- The Council would undertake on site post inspections of asbestos work for 5% of completed works.
- Clearer text as to how residents can report asbestos concerns
- Amending the text to read that staff must know the asbestos policy rather than "should" know the policy.

41. The full Council is asked to consider and approve the HRA Asbestos policy.

Disrepair

42. The Council needs a disrepair policy to ensure it fulfils the [statutory obligations](#) to maintain safe and suitable housing for tenants under legislation such as

the [Landlord and Tenant Act 1985](#) and the [Homes \(Fitness for Human Habitation\) Act 2018](#).

43. The policy provides a clear framework for managing claims, protecting tenants from health risks associated with disrepair, and ensuring appropriate repairs are carried out promptly and efficiently.
44. The specific aims of the policy are to:
- work to get things right at the earliest point to prevent residents feeling the need to make disrepair claims against the Council
 - ensure disrepair claims are managed appropriately and on time
 - ensure the Council can successfully contest disrepair claims
45. As a landlord, the Council is legally obliged to repair and maintain its property portfolio in line with the requirements of the repairs policy.
46. When a landlord fails to keep the structure, exterior and installations for water, gas, electricity, heating, and sanitation of a property to the requisite standard; and has failed upon receipt of repairs requests to adequately address the issues in the home, and the property is deemed to be uninhabitable, this is referred to as a disrepair.
47. The Council will instruct a dedicated disrepair surveyor, or where required, an external expert/single joint expert in conjunction with the customer or their third-party legal advisor to inspect the property for evidence of disrepair.
48. The policy sets out how disrepair claims are processed. In such circumstances the policy sets out how the Council will undertake an agreed schedule of works to remedy disrepair within a reasonable period of time.
49. This policy applies to all residential properties owned and managed by the Council. However, it should be read in conjunction with individual occupancy agreements as the Council's repair obligations can vary – for example, between tenanted and leased properties.
50. The Residents Policy Review Group did not offer any recommendations to amend this policy.
51. The full Council is asked to consider and approve the HRA Disrepair Policy.

Financial implications

52. There are no financial implications for these policies which adheres to best practice and regulatory requirements with property requirements.

Legal issues

53. The policies being presented for approval are required under the Consumer Standard as set by legislation and the Regulator for Social Housing.

Level of risk

54. The failure of the Council to have these asset management policies would go against the Corporate Plan to keep residents safe and could lead to regulatory infringements further to the requirements of the Regulator for Social Housing, the Health and Safety Executive and the Building Services Regulator.

Equalities impact

55. Equality Impact Assessments (EqIA) has been carried out to determine whether the policies being presented to the Cabinet for approval would have an impact on any member of staff, tenants, or contractor workforce, which unfairly discriminates or disadvantages them in the context of the Equality Act 2010.

56. Whilst the EqIA has identified that there are no particular groups who will be unlawfully disadvantaged by these policies, it is identified that there are certain groups at increased risk from safety infringements. These groups are:

- children
- adults with learning difficulties
- oxygen users
- people taking certain medication
- those suffering the effects of drugs and alcohol
- adults aged 65 and older
- people with disabilities who may not be able to quickly escape in the event of an emergency due to reduced mobility
- Individuals being supported by the Community Safety team and related support services

57. These policies aim to reduce the risks to these groups of people through proactively identifying these risk factors, raising awareness and education.

Carbon and Environmental Considerations

58. Adoption of these policies will contribute towards the good maintenance of properties and would contribute towards reducing carbon emissions, in particular with the damp and mould policy where the procedures, if approved by the Cabinet, will also contribute towards the insulation of properties.

Conclusion

59. By approving the asbestos, disrepair, damp and mould and fire safety policies, this will help establish the framework to maintain the housing stock and further ensure the safety of our residents. This approval would also help meet the expectations of the Regulator of Social Housing that the Council is meeting its regulatory obligations. Further HRA policies will be presented to the Cabinet and Council for consideration after residents have been able to assess and, if necessary, amend draft proposals.

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Background Papers:

List the background documents and, if possible, link to them.

All background papers must be listed in accordance with the Local Government (Access to Information) Act and The Local Authorities (Executive Arrangements) (Meetings and Access to Information) (England) Regulations 2012. This includes, any material which discloses facts or matters on which the report or an important part of it is based and which have been relied on in the preparation of the report. Each document must be listed and a copy of each document made available to members and the public on request, (or they should be directed where to find it if it is already published on the Council's website). All confidential, exempt, copyrighted and published works are EXCLUDED from this requirement.

- 1 Consumer Standard – Regulator of Social Housing - [Regulatory standards for landlords - GOV.UK](#)
- 2 Social Housing (Regulation) Act 2023 - [Landmark Social Housing Act receives Royal Assent to become law - GOV.UK](#)
- 3 Awaab's Law - [Awaab's Law: Draft guidance for social landlords - GOV.UK](#)
- 4 Fire Safety (England) Regulations 2022 - [Fact sheet: Overview - GOV.UK](#)
Control of Asbestos Regulations 2012 - [Managing and working with asbestos - HSE](#)

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Damp and Mould Policy



BACKGROUND & COVERAGE

Introduction

- 1.1 Studies show that between 10% and 50% of all homes in the UK are affected by damp and mould (The Burden of Respiratory Disease from Formaldehyde, Damp and Mould in English Housing - UK Health Security Agency)
- 1.2 People living in social housing and low-income communities often experience a higher proportion of dampness and mould than the national average. High energy costs and relatively low incomes can prevent the adequate heating of many homes during winter (fuel poverty), leading to increased condensation and mould. In addition, there is a lack of knowledge of how damp and mould is created in a home, and how to reduce the likelihood of it occurring. This can be related to the building type, structure and age.
- 1.3 Damp and Mould can cause the following issues:
 - Exposure to indoor mould has been linked with increased upper respiratory tract symptoms, including coughing and wheezing in otherwise healthy people (Understanding and addressing the health risks of damp and mould in the home - GOV.UK)
 - Underlining the profound health implications of damp and mould.
 - Damp indoor environments elevate dust mites; dust mites affect allergies and asthma.
 - Studies have shown that dampness and mould are associated with approximately 30-50% increases in respiratory and asthma-related health outcomes (Health effects associated with dampness and mould - WHO Guidelines for Indoor Air Quality - NCBI Bookshelf)
 - People living in homes with dampness and mould may also experience depression and anxiety due to the conditions.
- 1.4 Damp and mould-related health outcomes affect people regardless of age or current health, but the elderly and children are most at risk and with people with pre-existing respiratory conditions.
- 1.5 Poor housing conditions result in children frequently being absent from school due to ill health, underachievement, and lower earning power (Press release: Poor housing is a major barrier to school attendance for young people in England)

Key Principles of the Damp and Mould Policy

- 2.1 The key principles of the Damp and Mould policy are:
 - To ensure we provide and maintain dry, warm, healthy homes for our residents in compliance with the Decent Homes Standard
 - To ensure that the fabric of our properties is protected from deterioration and damage resulting from dampness and mould.
- 2.2 The Council will achieve these aims by:
 - Addressing damp issues within residents' homes quickly and professionally by identifying and acting to eliminate the root cause
 - Publicising the damp remediation work that we can do.
 - Inform residents about the changes they can make to reduce condensation and provide advice and guidance in reducing condensation build up in the home such as opening windows when cooking or showering, using extractor fans, and not drying clothes indoors.
 - Informing residents and staff about the health risks of living in damp and/or mouldy homes to be supplied in different languages and in braille.

2.3 Training staff and our contracting partners to:

- Our training will focus on spotting signs of condensation, dampness, and mould, understanding the causes and remedies, and carrying out maintenance to reduce the occurrence of dampness and mould. This will include ongoing support and guidance.
- Carry out maintenance to reduce the occurrence of dampness and mould and to identify and eliminate the root cause
- Knowing our stock and the archetypes of properties likely to suffer from wetness and mould. Understanding the components in our properties that may cause dampness is essential.
- Investing in both preventative and reactive measures.
- Planning resources, i.e., to respond to higher demand in winter
- Ensure appropriate budget levels are assigned to reduce the cause of dampness and moulding.
- We will provide our officers with the correct equipment to assess damp in properties and find a resolution to the problem.
- Complying with all statutory and regulatory requirements and with best practices relating to the provision of this service
- Treating residents non-discriminatively under the Equality Act 2010.

2.4 We actively engage with other Social Housing Landlords, Environmental Health, and energy Advice agencies to ensure we learn from good practice and contribute to the collective effort against damp and mould.

2.5 We will regularly seek best practices from organisations that deliver damp and mould services. For example, we may learn about innovative ventilation systems, insulation methods, or successful community engagement strategies, and adopt any that will help us tackle the issue.

Damp and Mould Trends and Locations

3.1 Damp and mould can have severe impacts on residents' health, particularly children, the elderly, the infirm and those with respiratory conditions like asthma, COPD, lung disease or pulmonary hypertension.

3.2 Damp is the build-up of moisture in a property which affects building structure such as walls, floors and ceilings and can lead to the growth of mould and other microorganisms. Mould spores are released into the air in an effort to continue to spread and grow as with all living things. It is the spores that create respiratory issues.

3.3 Mould is a type of



Causes of Damp and Mould

3.4 Penetrating damp: Caused by water coming through the external structure of the building due to damage, age, or defects in design. Examples may include:

- Broken pointing to external walls
- Old or damaged roof coverings
- Broken or blocked gutters, downpipes, or external wastewater systems.

fungus which grows in moist environments and can cause adverse health effects as well as damage to buildings.

Figure 1. Mould

Figure 2 *a: Leaking Gutter*



b: Damaged Roof



c: Damaged



pointing

- 3.5 Rising damp: Ground moisture or underground leaks rising through floors and walls into the property's structure.

Figure 3: Rising Damp

- 3.6 Leaks: From internal pipes in the kitchen, bathroom, heating drainage.



and

- 3.7 Condensation: Water vapour in the air meeting a colder surface and turning into water droplets. Most common in homes where heating is only occasionally used, or the home is not ventilated enough.

Figure 4: Condensation



3.8 The risk of condensation can be increased by:

- Insufficient ventilation from not opening windows, doors or trickle vents or not operating mechanical extraction in bathrooms and kitchens
- The most common cause is humidity caused by showering, cooking and drying clothes in areas where the moisture cannot escape.
- Inadequate heating or draught proofing, undersized boilers or radiators
- Inadequate insulation such as missing or defective wall and loft insulation
- High humidity due to the presence of rising and penetrating damp
- Poor building design and construction in older buildings that predate building regulations and cold bridging
- Overcrowding - too many occupants in a property designed for fewer people

3.9 Conditions which can lead to condensation are:

- Poor ventilation such as a lack of vents installed, not opening windows or doors regularly or when needed, blocking vents, not turning on extractor fans when washing or cooking or extractors fans being absent from a property or not working, not enough space for air to circulate around furniture
- Insufficient heating which could be the result of fuel poverty
- Defective insulation such as dislodged insulation in lofts or incorrectly installed insulation. The Council has ensured that such problems have, to date, not occurred within its housing stock
- High humidity caused by penetrating damp or lack of ventilation which can become worse when steam is being created such as, for example, during washing or cooking

3.10 The most common causes of damp and mould in properties are: -

Cold Bridging

- 3.11 This can occur in many areas, including difficult to insulate loft areas, raking eaves, concrete mullions and lintels, cavity wall insulation failing over time, and many others.

Blocked vents

- 3.12 On many occasions, ventilation is provided, either mechanical or background ventilation, which is blocked off, broken, or covered.

Type and location of radiators

- 3.13 Heating systems are not always up to the performance standard to prevent condensation. Far too often, radiators are located on the internal walls, creating colder external walls, and may be undersized for the room volume.
- 3.14 No extractor fans in kitchens, bathrooms, and utility rooms. Unvented and condensing tumble dryers.
- 3.15 These produce a significant amount of water vapour in the space, encouraging condensation.

Bridging Damp

- 3.16 There are many cases of bridging dampness from render systems going below the damp proof course to ground level, concrete paving and ground levels being increased, and entrance canopy roofs and wall tie snots not cleared.

Leaking/insufficient guttering

- 3.17 There are many cases of guttering overflowing, leaking joints, a lack of maintenance for clearing gutters, and, in some cases, particularly outbuildings without guttering.

Lack of pointing on brickwork

- 3.18 For various reasons, parts of brick walls have poor or broken-away points, which may have created cold spots for condensation and opportunities for penetrating dampness.

Penetrating Damp from render systems

- 3.19 This could be because they have exceeded their lifespan, and the mix is too dense.

Tenant and residents

- 3.20 Lack of adequate ventilation is the primary cause, but drying clothes on radiators, cooking with lids off pans, and even tropical fish tanks all add to the moisture levels within a property.

Fuel Poverty

- 3.21 It is recognised that fuel poverty is becoming a significant factor in the increase in damp and mould problems.
- 3.22 Residents who cannot afford to heat their homes effectively or evenly, which creates conditions for mould to thrive. This should be referred to the tenant management officers for financial advice and signposting to relevant sources of help for residents.

AREAS OF RESPONSIBILITY

Tenants' responsibilities

- 4.1 Condensation can cause mould, which can adversely affect health and property. Tenants are to work with the Council for any inspection or remedial works within a reasonable time frame when combatting issues with damp and mould.
- 4.2 Condensation is caused by:
- 1 Humidity of indoor air unable to escape
 - 2 Low temperature
 - 3 No air flow
 - 4 Cold surface meets warm surface creating water droplets (condensation)

Poor ventilation

- 4.3 Mould caused by condensation is usually black and typically grows in bathrooms, kitchens, and bedrooms. This is because steam is created in bathrooms and kitchens and we exhale warm humid air when we sleep, none of which is able to escape.

Support available to help residents: -

- 5.1 Advice about how to prevent or reduce condensation is available in our document "Preventing damp in your home," which is available via the website ([How to get help dealing with damp and mould | Oxford City Council](#) and [Preventing damp and mould – Oxford City Council](#)) Residents can contact the Council's call centre for assistance. The Council's surveyors will also provide first hand help and advice with the occupants, on inspecting the property. Residents can contact the Council's call centre for assistance. Telephone **01865 249811** Tenants can also use the on-line service [Report a housing repair | Oxford City Council](#)
- 5.2 As of 1 September 2025 when reporting damp and mould, tenants will be invited to send images to the Council. This will form part of the triage process at the point of reporting. The images would be used to assess prior to visiting the property and also to identify if the severity is higher than described. The Council will investigate whether images could be uploaded via the tenants' portal.

Oxford City Council Housing responsibilities

- 6.1 The Council is responsible for insulating homes according to the Decent Homes Standard as applied in England to help reduce the likelihood of condensation occurring.
- 6.2 We are responsible for maintaining homes to avoid penetrating and rising dampness or for carrying out remedial action if these do occur.
- 6.3 The Council's Damp and Mould team will communicate with the tenant on three occasions. If no contact is made then it will be referred to the Tenant Management Officers to support the Damp and Mould team with access arrangements.
- 6.4 Penetrating and rising damp is typically misdiagnosed, but can sometimes be caused by:
- Lateral Rain Penetration.
 - Condensation or entrapped moisture.
 - High Ground levels.
 - Bridging of the damp proof course.
 - Defective rainwater goods.
 - Salt contamination (Hygroscopic salts can absorb moisture from the air and cause staining).
 - Water leaks from windows, roof, overflow pipes, gutters or drainpipes, and internal plumbing.
 - Defective or non-existent damp proof course.
 - Inadequate cleaning and drying after major leaks, bursts, or floods.
- 6.5 Penetrating or rising damp usually leaves a tide mark.

Training

- 7.1 The Council will ensure that all staff and contractors have the training to raise awareness and create a good understanding of this policy.
- 7.2 The Council will ensure that all our staff and other relevant Oxford City Council Housing staff have the training to raise awareness of and create a good understanding of damp and mould issues, related issues (i.e., health), causes and measures to combat these.

Preventative Work

- 8.1 To reduce the occurrence of condensation, dampness, and Mould in our homes, we will:
- Promote information about how to reduce condensation. We will supply each household visited for reported issues of damp and mould with an information leaflet on dealing and reducing damp and mould. We comply with the Equality Act 2010 and make reasonable adjustments for residents with disabilities or communication needs – including providing information in large print, braille, or alternative languages (offering home visits or extended appointment times as required). This information will be provided in a number of languages and braille.
 - Identify a list of components most likely to cause damp
 - The Council will commission contractors to monitor these items. When officers conduct repair visits, the Council will arrange to replace any components whose condition has deteriorated and may result in dampness.
 - Highlight any areas of concern during each stock condition survey.
 - Carry out work to fix any problems that are found and introducing newer methods of improving air flow and reducing cold areas by fitting better extractor fans, PIV units and improving thermal quality where required
 - Tackle fuel poverty through advice services that are signposted by the Council. It includes replacing inefficient heating with traditional or renewable heating, insulation programmes, and whole property 'retrofit works', which address all areas that affect a property's warmth.
 - Investigate the possibility of providing secure drying areas in communal flat blocks to reduce the need to dry washing on radiators or inside flats. Tenant Management Officers can be contacted by residents if humidifiers are required.
- 8.2 We aim to conduct a stock condition survey for each property at least every 5 years.
- 8.3 We will ensure our planned maintenance work addresses fuel poverty issues by increasing properties' energy efficiency after 6 weeks as mould will grow back in 4 weeks if it reoccurs.
- 8.4 All maintenance teams are to follow the damp and mould policy to prevent wetness and mould by tackling issues when involved with work on the property.

Reactive Work

- 9.1 When residents contact the Council if there is Damp and Mould the Council will:
- Investigate any potential emergency hazards and, if the investigation confirms emergency hazards, undertake relevant safety work as soon as reasonably practicable, both within 24 hours of becoming aware of them
 - Investigate any potential significant hazards within 10 working days of becoming aware of them

- Produce a written summary of investigation findings and provide this to the named tenant within 3 working days of the conclusion of the investigation
- Undertake relevant safety work within 5 working days of the investigation concluding, if the investigation identifies a significant hazard
- Begin, or take steps to begin, any further required works within working 5 days of the investigation concluding, if the investigation identifies a significant or emergency hazard. If steps cannot be taken to begin work in working 5 days this must be done as soon as possible, and work must be physically started within 12 weeks
- When mould is reported we will send a technician to perform a mould wash down will be undertaken 5 working days of the report being made to the Council
-
- When you report a problem, please complete a property and diagnostics questionnaire by telephone to ensure we have enough information and can keep records.
- If the outcome shows that condensation is likely to be causing the problem, we will discuss how residents can make changes to improve the situation.
- If the outcome shows that dampness is likely to be present in the home, we will fix the problem and advise residents on resolving it if it is not a problem with the building.
- Carry out a damp and mould survey, which reviews things like heating, pipes, rainwater goods, damp proof course and loft insulation where the problem is not easy to identify.
- Conduct a damp and mould survey, inspecting cavity wall insulation and thermal imaging. Take damp and humidity measurements. Conduct an underground survey via CCTV on any potential cracked drainage areas if appropriate. We initially do a visual check which is normally adequate, and then instruct the contractor to do more intrusive investigation if the cause is less easy to spot.
- We will evaluate the survey results within 48 hours to establish the cause of the problem and advise residents of the remedial action we will take, steps they should take, and any further work required in the future, together with a timeframe for this.
- Secure the provision of suitable alternative accommodation for the household, at the Council's expense, if relevant safety work cannot be completed within 24 hours and the damp and mould is an emergency hazard
- Provide a damp and Mould leaflet during each visit arranged in connection with these issues.

9.2 All cases of damp and mould will be assessed using the Housing Health and Safety Rating System (HHSRS). Any hazard determined to be Category 1 or a significant/emergency hazard requiring urgent action, will be addressed in line with Awaab's Law timeframes. We will triage cases of damp and mould based on the following priorities:

High: Traumatic water leakage likely to pose an Immediate and significant risk to the building structure or harm to the occupants, extensive mould growth in multiple commonly used rooms (bedroom/living room). The presence of vulnerable residents living in the affected property and mould could cause a potential significant health risk. The response of remedial action in these instances is within 24 hours of the report of the damp and mould having been made. The initial visit would be to remove any potential health risks immediately and make safe and consider the need for the occupants to be decanted whilst further works are addressed, if the mould cannot be removed instantly and the home made safe.

- Medium: Multiple areas of extensive condensation and mould growth in rooms. This would represent a moderate and significant health risk to the occupants. Response of inspection investigation will be 10 days and remedial work and commence within 5

working days of the investigation report of damp and mould having been made. Remedial work should commence withing 5 days of inspection and should be completed within 12 weeks.

- Low: Areas of mould growth limited in coverage and location such as in cupboards, corners of rooms and around windows. This would not be deemed as holding a significant risk to the occupants but as a rule we would try to respond as follows;. Response of inspection within 14 working days and remedial work within 14 working days or reasonable timeframe of inspection the report of damp and mould having been made. Remedial work should be completed within 12 weeks or within a reasonable timeframe

9.3 The triage process will ensure residents with vulnerabilities receive urgent attention whatever the state of damp and mould in the property which can be defined as:

- People with pre-exisitng health conditions such as allergies, asthma, COPD, cystic fibrosis, other lung and cardiovascular diseases;
- People with weakened immune systems, people who have had a transplant or residents taking medication which suppress the immune system
- People with end-of-life conditions
- Residents living with a mental health condition
- Children and young people
- Older people
- Residents who are bedbound, housebound or have mobility problems

9.4 There will be four types of investigations for this triage process to take place:

- Standard investigations
- Renewed investigations
- Further investigations
- Emergency investigations

i) Standard investigations

The Council will conduct a standard investigation within 10 working days of becoming aware of a potential hazard. This must confirm whether or not there is a significant or emergency hazard and must also, if possible, identify the required work to make a property safe and prevent the hazard from recurring. Day one of the 10 working days timeline is the day after the landlord becomes aware of the potential hazard.

Standard investigations can be conducted remotely unless the named tenant specifically requests an in-person investigation. If a tenant later reports a material change relating to the hazard, or the Council becomes aware of a material change through other routes it must investigate again to the same timeframes. A material change could include a change to the severity of the hazard or a change to the effect it is having on the tenant's health. For example, if a tenant reports new symptoms or worsening symptoms that may be associated with the hazard, or if they report that the hazard has worsened since the time of investigating.

If during a standard investigation the Council has reasonable grounds to believe there is an emergency hazard, then the Council will complete the investigation as an emergency

investigation. Emergency timeframes will start from the point at which the potential for an emergency hazard is uncovered

ii) Renewed investigations

If a tenant specifically requests an in-person inspection after an investigation has been done remotely, a 'renewed' in-person investigation must be carried out. For potential significant hazards, the Council will complete the renewed investigation within 10 working days of the request.

For potential emergency hazards, the tenant may request an in-person investigation within 10 working days if an initial remote investigation concludes there is not an emergency hazard or if the initial investigation finds an emergency hazard but does not identify any relevant safety work to address the emergency hazard.

iii) Emergency investigations

Emergency investigations are required if the Council has reasonable grounds to believe that there is an emergency hazard affecting the home. The investigation must confirm whether or not there is a significant or emergency hazard and must also, if possible, identify the required work to make a property safe and prevent the hazard from recurring. In these circumstances the Council will investigate within 24 hours of the Council forming that belief.

If, during a standard or renewed investigation, the Council believes that there may be an emergency hazard, the emergency action requirements begin to apply, and the investigation must be completed as an emergency investigation within 24 hours of the completion of the investigation that identified the emergency hazard.

iv) Further investigations

There may be circumstances where the standard, emergency or renewed investigation is unable to determine the extent of, or underlying cause of, a significant or emergency hazard. In this circumstance a further investigation must be completed as soon as reasonably practicable to determine what work is required to make the property safe and prevent the hazard from reoccurring.

For example, if a property is affected by a damp and mould hazard, the standard investigation may conclude that a structural survey is needed to diagnose the underlying cause of damp. The Council will undertake relevant safety work while further investigations are underway, such as providing a dehumidifier and specialist mould wash.

The further investigation must include an in-person inspection if the tenant so requests it (and an in-person inspection has not already been carried out).

If an investigation has identified relevant safety work, the Council will undertake the relevant safety work within 5 working days of the investigation that concludes there is a significant hazard or 24 hours of an investigation that concludes there is an emergency hazard, even if a further investigation is pending.

- 9.5 Affected residents are to be kept up to date with the progress of damp and mould works and the outcome of inspections. A written report on what was found, what the risks are to the occupants, what needs to be done and when it will be done will be sent to the residents within 3 working days of the inspection. Following the inspection,

the Council or the contractor will contact the affected residents to convey the action which needs to be taken and how long the work will take.

- 9.6 Data loggers are to be installed in properties where surveyors deem it necessary where there is evidence of surface condensation and mould not caused by a building related effect
- 9.7 The Council will supply AICO homelink systems where surveyors deem necessary for monitoring levels of humidity heat and cold in properties that have persistent mould growth. This will also provide residents of the information to help keep the property mould free.
- 9.8 In addition to providing advice and support to eradicate damp and mould where residents are experiencing difficulties paying energy bills then, with the residents' permission, the residents will be passed to appropriate debt advice support services.
- 9.9 The Council will adopt a lessons learned exercise from each damp and mould case which will be considered at the regular meetings between the Council and the contractor when we will also involve tenant representatives in reviewing this policy and monitoring performance, This will include an annual summary of damp and mould reports, response times, and outcomes be shared via consultation groups which will be published on our website to ensure transparency and accountability
- 9.10 In carrying out investigations and remedial actions, we comply with the Equality Act 2010 and make reasonable adjustments as set out in 8.1 above)

VALUE FOR MONEY

- 10.1.1 Fixing damp and Mould once they have taken hold of a property can be extremely costly. By enhancing stock condition surveys to include a complete property surveys and monitoring any potential causes of dampness and mould during day-to-day visits, the cost to Property Services and Oxford City Council Housing should be reduced:
 - Complete property surveys may also reduce reactive repairs unrelated to damp and mould issues.
 - Oxford City Council Housing could have a financial implication because the Council may accrue more repair items that residents may not be aware of.
 - The cost of other public services, such as health services, will be reduced by improving living conditions



Appendix 1

Legislation & Regulations

- Housing Act 2004 (Part 1 - HHSRS)
- Landlord and Tenant Act 1985
- The Homes (Fitness for Human Habitation) Act 2018
- Environmental Protection Act 1990
- Decent Homes Standard
- The Equality Act 2010
- The Care Act 2014
- Social Housing and Regulation Act 2023 (Awaab's Law)
- Defective Premises Act 1972
- Health and Safety at Work Act 1974
- Secure Tenants of Local Housing Authorities (Right to Repair) (Amendment) Regulations 1994
- Housing Act 2004
- The Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005

- [Decent Homes Standard 2006](#)
- [Building Regulations 2010](#)
- [The Control of Asbestos Regulations 2012](#)
- The Construction (Design and Management) Regulations 2015
- [Homes \(Fitness for Human Habitation\) Act 2018](#)
- The Building Safety Act 2022
- The Building (Higher-Risk Buildings Procedures) (England) Regulations 2023
- [Regulator of Social Housing – Safety and Quality Standard 2024](#)

Appendix 2

Oxford City Council Guidance, Procedures and Policies

- [Oxford City Council Safeguarding Policy](#)
- [Oxford City Council Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Strategy](#)

This Policy supports objectives detailed in the [OCC Strategy 2024-2028](#):

Appendix 3

Oxford City Council Objectives

This Policy supports objectives detailed in the [OCC Strategy 2024-2028](#):

- Housing, Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy 2023 to 2028
- Meet the Housing Needs of Vulnerable Groups
- Support Sustainable Communities
- Good Quality Homes For All
- Thriving Communities

Appendix 2



Fire Safety Policy



Oxford City Council Property Services

- **Definition of Fire Safety**, Fire safety is a *group of equipment and/or behaviours designed to reduce the risk of a fire starting and reduce the risk of injury in the event of a fire.*

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1. Purpose of the policy

1.1 The health and safety of tenants, leaseholders, residents, visitors, staff, and contractors is of paramount importance to Oxford City Council. The risk of fire presents a significant hazard to the safety of HRA buildings and their occupants, and statistics show that this risk increases considerably in social housing. It is imperative therefore, that there are robust management systems in place to reduce these risks.

1.2 This policy outlines the approach to identifying, managing, and mitigating the risks associated with fire in Oxford City Council housing properties, also known as HRA stock.

1.3 This policy aims to demonstrate that the Council has appropriate measures in place to comply with relevant legislation, regulation, and other relevant codes of practice, and good practice guidance.

1.4 There is an agreement between the council and Oxfordshire Fire and Rescue Service (OFRS) which is intended to provide a framework to ensure that the roles and responsibilities of the two organisations are effectively translated into practical working arrangements. The agreement lays out the partnership approach to making Oxford a safer place, in which to live, work, and visit. This policy underpins the agreement and aligns with the actions agreed within.

2. Scope of the policy

2.1 The policy covers housing assets. The policy does not apply to the management of fire risks within non-council-owned dwellings or other non-council housing assets such as schools, care homes, offices, or many commercial properties.

2.2 This policy does not apply directly to buildings and homes under private management. However, in these service areas, Oxford City Council Housing has a responsibility to ensure that the minimum standards set out in this policy are in place and are sufficiently robust across all council-managed homes.

2.3 All employees of the council, who are involved with the management and maintenance, including contractors or all persons visiting the buildings for the purpose of carrying out their work duties on behalf of the council, are required to adhere to the standards set out within this policy.

3. Relevant legislation, regulation, and guidance

3.1 The legislation, regulation, and guidance listed below will be taken into consideration when implementing this policy:

- Housing Act 2004

- Gas Safety (Installation and Use) Regulations 1998
- The Building Regulations 2024 Approved Document B (Fire Safety)
- Housing Act 2004: Part 1
- Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005
- Equalities Act 2010
- General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR)
- Fire Safety (England) Regulations 2024
- Smoke and Carbon Monoxide Alarm (Amendment) Regulations 2022
- Fire Safety Act 2024
- Building Safety Act 2024
- Social Housing Regulation Act 2024 (Consumer Standards)
- RSH Tenant Satisfaction Measures
- Social Housing Regulation Consumer Standards:
 - The Safety and Quality Homes Consumer Standard
 - The Transparency, Influence, and Accountability of Consumer Standard
 - The Neighbourhood and Community Consumer Standard
 - The Tenancy Consumer Standard
- The Decent Homes Standard
- Health and Safety at Work Act 1974
- The Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999
- The Construction (Design and Management) Regulations 2015

4. Sanctions

4.1 Oxford City Council accepts its responsibilities in accordance with the regulatory standards and legislation relating to fire safety.

4.2 Failure to comply with these statutory obligations may result in:

- Enforcement by the Building Safety Regulator
- Receipt of statutory Enforcement Notice from Oxfordshire Fire and Rescue Service (OFRS)
- Receipt of statutory Prohibition notice by OFRS
- Prosecution by OFRS
- Prosecution by the Health and Safety Executive under Health and Safety at Work Act 1974
- Prosecution under Corporate Manslaughter and Corporate Homicide Act 2007
- Receipt of regulatory notice from the Regulator of Social Housing
- Loss of confidence by stakeholders in the organisation

5. Strategic context

5.1 This policy supports the Oxford City Council's Corporate Strategy by providing good affordable homes, thriving communities as well as a strong and inclusive economy.

5.2 This policy also contributes to the key themes of the Asset Management Strategy and in particular:

- Improving housing quality
- Child and age-friendly housing
- Safe and strong communities
- Health and housing

5.3 This policy should be read in conjunction with the Oxford City Council's [Tenancy Agreement](#) - [Your tenancy agreement | Oxford City Council](#)

6. Objectives

6.1 As a landlord, we must meet the legal obligations that require us to deal with the risks associated with fire safety within the properties we own or manage.

6.2 This policy forms part of our wider organisational commitment to driving a health and safety culture amongst staff and contractors.

6.3 Oxford City Council is committed to reducing, so far as is reasonably practicable, the foreseeable risks of fire, and the risk to the safety of residents and other building users through a series of measures which include:

- Ensuring compliance with legal and statutory requirements, including carrying out, updating, and regularly reviewing fire risk assessments of all relevant accommodations in line with the level of risk.
- Ensuring that all new build accommodation and refurbishment work meets the requirements of the Building Safety Regulations and other statutory requirements.
- Ensuring as far as is reasonably possible that the risk of fires igniting and spreading in properties is minimised.
- Working in partnership with the Oxfordshire Fire and Rescue Service to ensure that residents and staff know what to do when a fire does occur.
- Ensuring that an investigation is undertaken in the event of any fire or fire safety incident to review the causes and explore opportunities to implement improved control measures, to minimise any potential re-occurrence.
- Ensuring that all fire safety, electrical, and mechanical equipment on the council's estate is regularly maintained, and kept in a good state of repair, and that records are kept in line with legal and best practice requirements. This includes cyclical servicing and inspections of gas and electrical installations.
- Defining key fire safety roles and responsibilities within the Oxford City Council.
- Working collaboratively with Oxfordshire Fire and Rescue Service.
- Maintaining accurate record keeping and sharing with Oxfordshire Fire and Rescue Service, as appropriate.

All staff receive training appropriate to their duties under the Fire Safety Order, and all those with delegated responsibility for fire safety complete specific training to assure and demonstrate competency to undertake their required duties.

7. Key roles and responsibilities

7.1 Corporate Fire Safety Manager is responsible for:

- Providing monthly Fire Risk Assessment (FRA) and FRA Action statistics for the compliance report that is scrutinized by Property Service Manager, Director of Housing, followed by Corporate Leadership Team (CLT).
- Ensuring the effective planning and management of fire safety across the council-owned portfolio which includes:
- Supporting the Property Services Manager, Director of Housing in setting the strategic direction and effective planning and management of fire safety activity within the council-owned portfolio.
- Ensuring that adequate resources are in place across the service to enable the effective delivery of these policy requirements.
- Ensuring that a culture of strong governance arrangements is in place concerning fire safety management, including reporting progress against key compliance activity and the escalation of significant risks to the directorate risk register.
- Encouraging a strong fire safety culture across Oxford City Council housing service, which includes good communication and engagement with residents, staff, and Trade Unions.
- Ensuring a strong and effective partnership is in place with Oxfordshire Fire and Rescue Service.
- Developing and keeping this policy under review.
- Providing expert specialist fire safety support and advice regarding fire risk assessment, fire prevention and general fire safety management across the Housing Service.
- Ensuring that the service remains up to date with developments to fire safety legislation and that the Oxford City Council Corporate Leadership Team is appraised of change requirements.
- Ensuring sufficient information to ensure fire safety performance is shared with staff, contractors, and residents through an effective communications strategy.
- Ensuring that a program of training for staff with designated fire safety duties is adequate and kept up to date.
- Ensuring an effective resident engagement and communication strategy linked to fire safety, jointly with communication and housing managers.
- Ensuring up-to-date fire risk assessments are in place for all relevant assets and maintaining an up-to-date register of fire risk assessments and the remedial actions.

7.2 Senior Fire Risk Assessor is responsible for:

- Leading fire safety activity within the Oxford City Council housing portfolio, taking a lead role in delivering fire-related compliance activity which includes:
- Managing a team of Fire Risk Assessors to deliver the following:
- Ensuring the planning, and delivery of fire risk assessments for all relevant assets and monitoring the completion of significant findings and remediation works.
- Conducting audits to ensure that the provisions within the fire safety policy are being enforced to the standard required.
- Ensuring sufficient information, instruction, and training is carried out to demonstrate knowledgeable and competent teams.
- Ensuring that fire precautions are maintained effectively.
- Organising the investigation of fires and introducing controls to reduce the risk of such incidents recurring.
- Undertaking quality assurance checks of works to ensure standards are being achieved.
- Producing bespoke Fire Safety Management Strategies for all relevant buildings and blocks with clear evacuation plans and improvement plans.
- Developing and maintaining a fire risk register on all HRA buildings and blocks requiring fire risk assessments, recording, and reporting findings following fire safety legislation.
- Undertaking desktop reviews of fire risk assessments at planned intervals as per policy requirements.

7.3 Director of Housing have responsibility for:

- Appointing a designated Corporate Fire Safety Manager and Fire Safety Team to lead Fire Safety activity and day-to-day delivery across the Oxford City Council portfolio.
- Assuring effective governance and risk management, that the controls in this policy are working and that the approach complies with legislation.
- Ensuring an effective programme of activity is in place to meet the compliance requirements of the Regulatory Reform Order 2005, Fire Safety Act 2024, and Building Safety Act 2024.
- Working collaboratively with other Directors and Service Managers to ensure that adequate operational processes and procedures are in place to manage fire risk pertinent to their areas of service.
- Ensuring that an adequate capital improvement programme is in place to deliver fire safety improvements to the council's housing stock.
- Ensuring that works being undertaken are designed and constructed competently and safely.
- Ensuring that cyclical maintenance and servicing arrangements are in place, as well as an effective repairs service for responding to repair reports.
- Ensuring that fire safety is appropriately considered as part of all procurement and commissioning activity.

- Ensuring that emergency procedures are in place to respond to damage caused by fire to the council housing stock.

7.4 Service Managers are responsible for:

- Ensuring that actions from fire risk assessments for their service areas are completed within the timescale, and completions recorded in a timely manner.
- Ensuring the effective delivery and monitoring of fire safety-related activity within the service area, including the effective contract management of service providers.
- Ensuring the appointment of competent persons and organisations to complete design and construction works (inclusive of repairs, maintenance, service, and inspection).
- Ensuring that all staff complete fire safety training appropriate to their roles.
- Ensuring that risks relating to fire safety are appropriately recorded, managed, and escalated where appropriate.
- Ensuring that all activity within the service area is given due consideration to fire safety and contributes to a strong fire safety culture.
- Appraising the impact of changes to fire safety legislation on the service and developing business cases for change.
- Ensuring the effective contract management of service providers in relation to fire safety requirements.

7.5 Managers within the Housing Service are responsible for:

- Ensuring the effective delivery of the detailed arrangements necessary to manage fire risk within their areas of control.
- Ensuring that staff under their control have adequate training and are kept aware of their responsibilities under the fire safety policy.
- Ensuring an effective resident engagement and communication strategy linked to fire safety.

7.6 All staff. All employees have a responsibility to:

- Take reasonable care for their own health and Safety and that of others.
- Report immediately any concerns they may have relating to Fire Safety or other safety hazards.
- Complete fire safety training.
- Co-operate with managers to enable compliance with this policy and the legal duties to Oxford City Council.

7.7 Contractors and Oxford Direct Services (ODS)

Work to fire safety performance standards as set out in their respective agreements with the council.

- Ensuring that their staff and sub-contractors have received appropriate information, induction, and training.
- Employ competent, suitably qualified staff and sub-contractors, ensuring they are able to demonstrate their ability to meet all statutory requirements.
- Ensure that all works relating to fire safety are adequately monitored, controlled, and quality checked.
- Complete works in a timely manner in line with the urgency timescales agreed with the council.
- Maintain and make available records with the details of all completed fire safety works.
- Work collaboratively with Oxford City Council to identify fire safety risks and jointly agree solutions.

7.8. Tenants, leaseholders, residents, and visitors.

All residents must take responsibility for their own household's safety and ensure that they do not do anything that might cause a fire within their home, or shared areas, or impede or endanger the emergency services when tackling fires or carrying out rescues.

This responsibility extends to other householders and visitors of tenants and leaseholders. The Tenancy Agreement sets out specific terms and conditions which are in place to prevent potential fire risks and ensure that fire evacuation routes are not obstructed. Non-conformance with these conditions amounts to a breach of the tenancy agreement which will be dealt with through appropriate tenancy action:

- Bonfires. You can have a bonfire or barbecue at a reasonable time as long as you do not cause a nuisance with the smoke or the smell of the smoke and the frequency, only dry and suitable waste is burnt, and it does not cause any risk to the property, people or other buildings. Barbecues are not permitted on balconies. Any fireworks must be used safely and in line with manufacturer's instructions. Fire pits, barbecues, chimineas and braziers must be used in accordance with manufacturer's instructions.
- Flammable material. You or any member of your household or visitors are only permitted to keep bottled gas, paraffin, petrol, LPG, acid, or any other hazardous material in a contained, safe, and secure storage area that is dry, ventilated, away from direct sunlight and heat sources. You can only keep a limited amount of such material which is reasonable for domestic use. You must not keep such materials in any common areas.
- Gas and electricity safety. You or any member of your household or visitors must not tamper with gas or electricity supplies or with utility meters.
- You or any member of your household must allow access to your home for annual gas safety checks, fire door inspections and periodic electrical safety checks.
- Smoke and carbon monoxide detectors. You are responsible for testing any battery-operated smoke detector and ensuring it is always in good working order. You must not tamper with or damage any detectors in your home.
- Emergency services access. You or any member of your household or visitors must not obstruct access to emergency service vehicles in any way in your property,

common areas or the locality of your property. You must not park your car in any way that obstructs access for the emergency services, your vehicle may be removed if it is blocking such access.

- Fire safety in communal properties. You or any member of your household or visitors must cooperate with the council and your neighbours to keep any common areas clear, and the council may remove and dispose of any objects found in common areas. You may be required to pay for the cost of the removal and disposal of such items. You must not keep any lithium battery motor bikes/mobility scooters in the communal areas or fire exit routes. You must not charge any lithium batteries overnight or without supervision, as these could cause a catastrophic fire whilst being charged. Please do not obstruct any fire exit route with any lithium batteries due to their explosive nature.
- Due to the increased risk of fires starting caused by the charging of lithium-ion batteries, the council will not support residents to charge or store e-bikes or scooters in council blocks or within individual homes.

In addition, residents and their visitors must:

- Not keep or charge mobility aids such as mobility scooters or motorised wheelchairs, electric scooters, or electric bikes in any common area.
- Not interfere with security or safety equipment in any council property or communal area.
- Dispose of rubbish responsibly and not leave any rubbish in communal areas.
- Report repairs straight away and allow access for their completion.
- Not smoke or use e-cigarettes in the common areas of the building.

Leaseholders are also required to comply with the terms and conditions set by the council as stated in their Lease Agreement.

8. Approach to managing fire safety

8.1 A range of measures are in place to prevent the risk of fire and to ensure that any potential fire hazards are dealt with in a timely manner.

8.2 Fire Risk Assessments (FRAs)

8.2.1 Fire Risk Assessments are regularly undertaken within buildings with communal areas to identify potential risks and implement measures to mitigate/remove them. However, Fire Risk Assessments are not undertaken within domestic homes, including flats with their own separate entrance, maisonettes, houses, or bungalows.

8.2.2 The fire risk assessments take into consideration the effect a fire may have on anyone in or around the premises, plus neighbouring property and are kept under regular review. The building fire risk assessment concentrates on the following areas:

- Elimination or reduction of risks (ignition sources).
- Suitable means of detecting and raising the alarm in the event of a fire.
- Adequate emergency escape routes and exits.
- Adequate fire compartmentation (fire and smoke spread and the protection of escape routes).
- The appropriate type, and sufficient number, of fire extinguishers.
- Correct type, and sufficient number, of fire signs and notices. A standard specification has been developed for safe condition signage which meets legislative requirements.
- Provisions for the correct maintenance of installed fire equipment.
- Suitable provisions for the protection of fire service personnel.
- Ensuring that occupants receive the appropriate instructions.

8.2.3 The fire risk assessments will assess for fire hazards, evaluate the risk of the hazards, and advise on action that should be taken to remove, reduce, or manage the risk. Each hazard identified will be categorised as follows:

- Low - work or action to be carried out within a reasonable time frame as soon as resources allow.
- Medium - maintenance action or new works required to be initiated as soon as reasonably practicable, depending upon budget and staff resources, within 3-6 months.
- High - items that should be resolved immediately, or work initiated within 7-14 days.

8.2.4 The assessor will task actions to relevant officers, and track and monitor progress to ensure completion within the required timescale.

8.2.5 The frequency and type of inspection depends upon the level of risk. Smaller blocks under 11 metres are considered as lower risk and will have an annual desktop review and a fire risk assessment in person in the block at least once every four years. Higher-risk blocks which are above 11 metres or have higher occupancy levels will have a fire risk assessment in person, in the block at least once every twelve months.

8.2.6 In addition, a physical inspection fire risk assessment will be undertaken no matter what the risk category is:

- Following a fire, near miss, or threat of arson.
- Whenever there has been any structural or material change to the building or its use.

8.2.7 Employees undertaking fire risk assessments will be confirmed by the Corporate Fire Safety Manager as being "competent" to do so and will be able to evidence they have the appropriate skills, knowledge, and experience as required for 3rd party accredited membership of the Institute of Fire Safety Managers.

9. New build and developments

9.1 Where a new asset is being developed by or on behalf of Oxford City Council, the responsible Service Manager or Business Lead will ensure that the requirements of the Fire Safety Order and Building Safety Act 2022 have been addressed within the design and that the building maintenance, health and safety file, and Regulation 38 (the Building Regulations) information is provided at handover of the building. This is achieved by commissioning approved, and suitably qualified consultants.

10. Empty properties and changes of occupancy

10.1 Gas and electricity services to empty homes will be isolated, and the premise will be made secure following an assessment made to determine the need to provide any additional security measures to the property whilst empty to prevent unlawful entry and occupation.

10.2 Prior to re-occupancy of empty homes, checks will be undertaken to ensure that homes meet minimum fire safety standards.

10.3 Where change of occupancy occurs, a check will be made before exchange to identify any fire safety defects. Conditional Approvals may be applied where defects and unauthorised alterations have been carried out which compromise fire safety.

10.4 Gas and Electric inspections or installations will be carried out before change of occupancy.

11. Fire evacuation (communal buildings)

11.1 Each residential building with a communal area has a defined evacuation procedure which has been determined by a fire risk assessment. If a fire occurs in a property, residents will follow the instructions as stated within the fire action notice as displayed in the communal areas of blocks. Residents should immediately evacuate the building and once safely outside, raise the alarm by contacting 999.

11.2 All tenants will be notified on commencement of occupancy, and thereafter on a regular basis, of the fire safety guidance for their block, how to report a fire, a reminder of what the evacuation strategy is for that building. As well as any other instructions which are required to inform residents what they must do if a fire has occurred, based on the building's evacuation strategy.

11.3 We will regularly remind residents of the fire evacuation procedure for their block through letters to residents, newsletters, resident emails, and through our dedicated [Fire safety web page for council tenants](#) - [Fire safety for council housing tenants | Oxford City Council](#)

11.4 In our blocks of flats a fire action notice will also be displayed in communal areas (such as the building's lobby or any visible part of the building). These are already in place for the majority of blocks with the exception of our smallest low-rise blocks. We are currently working towards installing fire action notices in all our blocks of flats with communal areas. Additional information, such as contact details, for residents to raise concerns will be displayed on community notice boards.

11.5 Fire prevention measures are in place to prevent the spread of fire in-line with the fire risk assessment.

11.6 Regular checks are undertaken to maintain equipment that has been provided for the purpose of firefighting, and to ensure that the equipment is functioning correctly. The checks undertaken and frequency are as follows:

Fire prevention measure	Checks undertaken and frequency
	<p>If the top storey of the building is above 11 metres in height (typically, a building of more than four storeys) or has high occupancy levels, we will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> inspect all flat entrance fire doors at least once every 12 months*; and inspect fire doors in communal areas at least once every 3 months.
Fire doors (in all council and leaseholder flats with a communal area)	<p>For blocks under 11 metres high we will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> inspect all flat entrance fire doors externally and a minimum of 10% of flats to the internal face at least once every 24 months. inspect fire doors in communal areas at least once every 24 months. <p>*We will inspect the external face of every flat entrance door, and we will make "Best Endeavours" to gain access to inspect the internal face of these doors.</p>

Gas boilers, Carbon Monoxide alarms, and flues are inspected through the Landlord Gas Safety Register (LGSR) certification

Serviced and maintained annually.

Sprinkler systems and smoke detection systems.

Serviced and maintained annually.

Emergency escape lighting

Serviced and maintained monthly operational checks and annual 3 hour drain down.

Fire alarm systems - BS5839 Pt1

Serviced and maintained quarterly.

Firefighting equipment (Fire extinguishers, fire blankets, etc in the community centres) in communal areas.

Serviced and maintained annually.

Lifts (in high rise blocks and complexes only)

Serviced and maintained monthly with 6 monthly LOLER inspections.

Dry and wet risers

Serviced and maintained every six months and after operational use.

12. Managed use of communal areas

12.1 To minimise the potential fire safety risk, a 'managed use' approach is operated where residents are not permitted to personalise communal areas that may present a fire risk or cause an obstruction to the means of escape in the event of a fire or emergency.

12.2 Residents are informed regularly through posters and leaflets of the restrictions on storage within communal areas.

12.5 The following items are not permitted and where identified, residents will be provided with appropriate advice and the reasons for refusal, or requests to remove items:

- Rugs, door mats, carpets (potential tripping hazard and non-fire-retardant materials).
- Christmas decorations (potential fire risk).
- Bicycles, prams, and scooters in communal hallways (obstruction).
- Storing flammable items including gas, petrol, barbeques, and any electrical items (fire risk and obstruction).
- Disposing or storing refuse (fire risk, health risk, and obstruction).
- Charging electrical items from the landlord electric supply (Lithium Battery explosion, fire risk, and abuse of 'landlord only' facilities/installations).
- Leaving footwear outside the door (potential tripping hazard and obstruction).

13. Identifying and removing potential hazards

13.1 Proactive measures are in place to identify and remove any potential hazards which create a risk of starting a fire and impeding escape routes to communal areas. This approach includes carrying out:

- Stage 1 - Fire and Safety Checks undertaken by cleaning teams, such as ODS – carried out daily in High Rise blocks, twice weekly in Low Rise blocks, five times a week in Housing for older people complexes, and three times a week in Community Centres.
- Stage 2 - Fire and Safety Checks undertaken by Housing Officers/Area Improvement Officers – on a scheduled basis, the frequency which is determined by the housing manager's assessment of risk based on several risk factors, as stipulated within this policy.
- Stage 3 – High Rise Block Fire and Safety Checks in high-rise residential buildings with communal areas which are 18 metres tall or higher, or at least seven storeys, with two or more residential units. These are carried out quarterly during the fire risk assessment by the Fire Safety Team and the Building Safety Team.
- Annual Tenancy Check In (ATCI) visits allow hazards inside the home to be identified, as well as checks carried out that smoke detection is in place, and that any vulnerability factors that may increase the risk of fire starting, or impede an evacuation from the home, are identified and recorded, (PCFRA)
- 13.2 Housing Officers, Area Improvement Officers work with the estate officers, caretaking teams and cleaners, on an 'eyes and ears' basis, to identify and arrange immediate removal of any fire hazards identified within communal areas and around the general estate environment.

13.3 If a non-permitted item is left in a communal area, officers will attempt to identify the owner to notify them to remove it promptly. Dependent upon the level of risk, officers will arrange removal or disposal if the owner cannot be located or is not able to remove the item within an acceptable timescale, depending on the level of risk that it poses.

13.4 Permission will not be given for the installation of security gates/grilles to the entrance doors of flats in blocks that have shared communal areas as these may prevent persons from evacuating, and/or impede the emergency services, in the event of a fire. Where other high-

risk factors are present, then a suitable risk assessment must be undertaken to determine the highest risk.

13.5 Charging of mobility scooters and e-bikes/scooters within communal areas is not allowed. This practice is not in line with our policy to maintain clear communal areas as it increases the risk of an emergency evacuation route becoming blocked, can result in trailing wires causing trip hazards, and increases the risk of fire starting because of charging batteries. Where other safe alternatives exist, and this can be achieved, then we will work with residents to try and find safer alternatives for the storage and charging of mobility scooters.

14. Communal lounges

14.1 The majority of furniture and furnishings within communal lounges that are provided by the council will meet appropriate fire safety standards.

14.2 Residents may place items within the communal lounge, subject to them meeting the following requirements:

- All furnishing in communal areas and rooms should satisfy the flammability requirements for classification as Type B or C when tested in accordance with BS 5867: Part 2.
- All furniture should comply with the medium hazard resistance to ignition classification of BS 7176: 1995.
- Any soft furnishing such as carpets, mats, curtains, chairs, etc. will be manufactured to the above standard and have fire labels indicating as such.

15. Smoking

- 15.1 Smoking is not permitted in any communal areas, entrances, and refuse areas of HRA buildings. Signage is displayed informing residents and other building users.

16. Smoke, Heat and Carbon Monoxide detection

16.1 Smoke detection is provided to individual homes to provide a means of alerting residents to the presence of fire and facilitating safe escape.

16.2 Interlinked smoke, heat, and carbon monoxide detectors are installed in accordance with British Standard 5389 part 6 as part of electrical rewires and refurbishment work.

16.3 Where it is identified that there is no detection, temporary battery detection will be installed as a matter of urgency until mains detectors can be installed through upgrade.

16.4 The minimum standard for temporary smoke detection is one detector per storey level.

16.5 Residents are regularly reminded to test detection weekly and report any defects immediately.

16.6 As a landlord, we will test smoke detection before re-occupation of homes and also during annual gas safety checks and periodic electrical inspections. In high-rise properties, the Fire Safety team will test domestic smoke alarms whilst carrying out annual front door inspections inside the home.

17. Equality, diversity, inclusion, and vulnerability (including most at risk groups)

17.1 An Equality Impact Assessment (EqIA) has been carried out to determine whether the policy would have an impact on any member of staff, tenants, or contractor workforce, which unfairly discriminates or disadvantages them in the context of the Equality Act 2010.

17.2 Whilst the EqIA has identified that there are no particular groups who will be unlawfully disadvantaged by this policy, it is identified that there are certain groups at increased risk from fire. These groups are:

- children
- adults with learning difficulties
- oxygen users
- people taking certain medication
- those suffering the effects of drugs and alcohol
- adults aged 65 and older
- people with disabilities who may not be able to quickly escape in the event of an emergency due to reduced mobility
- Individuals being supported by the Community Safety team and related support services

17.2 This policy aims to reduce the risks to these groups of people through proactively identifying these risk factors, raising awareness and education, agreeing evacuation plans, and making Safe and Well referrals to Oxfordshire Fire and Rescue Service where appropriate. [Keep safe and well | Oxfordshire County Council](#)

17.3 Fire safety advice will be made available in braille, large print, audio, or alternative languages upon request to Oxford City Council.

17.4 We will assess the needs of residents who inform us they have a disability such as a hearing impairment, visual impairment, and mobility issue, and will provide appropriate equipment or support to ensure that they are alerted in the event of a fire.

17.5 Where an individual is identified with a vulnerability issue that may put them at a higher risk of causing a fire within their home, a referral will be made to the Oxfordshire Fire and Rescue Service for an assessment for fire enhanced protection items such as fire- retardant

night wear, blankets, and personal misting units. [Keep safe and well | Oxfordshire County Council](#)

17.6 We recognise that residents with some protected characteristics are over-represented in certain blocks that are higher risk in terms of fire safety, for example older people or those with disability or long-term health conditions in retirement schemes. In these blocks we will ensure that the communal areas are appropriately equipped with fire protection equipment such as emergency lighting, fire doors, and safety signs, as advised by a fire risk assessment.

17.7 The Housing Officers will carry out A Person-Centred Fire Risk Assessment (PCFRA) with the support of the Fire Safety Team for any resident within the High-Rise blocks, older people housing, and who has been identified as having issues with fire risks within their homes (hoarding), or with self-evacuation. For instance, for a person with impaired mobility, to evacuate a building or reach a place of safety in the event of an emergency. Persons requiring PCFRA's will be updated and recorded on the QL following identification through tenancy contact.

17.8 Fire Risk Assessors will check the PCFRA before assessments of the building so that they may adjust the significant findings to take into consideration any issues identified within these PCFRA reports.

17.9 Information relating to residents who have a PCFRA is kept on a secured website so that this information can be shared with Oxfordshire Fire and Rescue Service in the event of an incident.

17.10 For older people housing, information regarding any person who has been identified as having issues with self-evacuation, a personal emergency evacuation plan (PEEP) is kept within a secure on-site fire information box accessible by Oxfordshire Fire and Rescue Service, and the Fire Safety Team.

17.11 Where staff and contractors identify fire safety concerns within residents' accommodation, they can, with the resident's permission, refer to Oxfordshire Fire and Rescue Service for a safe and well visit to be arranged by a fire brigade person where safety advice will be provided if any hazards are identified. [Keep safe and well | Oxfordshire County Council](#).

18. Communication of the policy

18.1 This policy will be communicated internally to Oxford City Council staff and key stakeholders.

19. Resident communication

19.1 We regularly share information with customers so that they understand their responsibilities in relation to fire safety, know what they can do to minimise fire risks, and know how to raise any fire safety concerns with us. This is done through our resident community strategy which includes sharing regular fire safety messages through resident emails, letters, leaflets, and social media.

19.2 Our dedicated [Fire safety for council housing tenants | Oxford City Council](#) contains important fire safety information.

19.3 Key content from this policy will be included in the [Oxford City Council Welcome Pack](#) and [Oxford City Council webpage](#).

19.4 A full copy of this policy will be made available upon request via the Oxford City Council [Fire Safety Team: firesafetyteam@oxford.gov.uk](mailto:firesafetyteam@oxford.gov.uk)

20. Resident engagement

20.1 Oxford City Council is committed to providing a high level of customer care and positive communication which is vital to effective fire safety. This will support residents in their understanding of fire safety and fire safety risks, advise them of how they can manage the risks within their properties, and encourage them to report any concerns about fire safety.

20.2 Further monitoring of feedback will take place through resident surveys and this intelligence will be used to inform future reviews of this policy.

20.3 Periodic engagement with residents will take place to ensure that this policy, along with other policies, remain customer facing.

20.4 Residents who are wanting to report a non-urgent safety concern can do so by using the link below: [Report a Building Safety Concern with council housing | Instructions – Oxford City Council](#)

20.5 All emergency and urgent fire safety reports should be made to 01865 249811.

21. Policy review

21.1 A full policy review will take place in response to any changes in legislation, significant events that may impact on the policy, or at periods not exceeding 2 years.

Fire Safety Policy

Appendix 1



Further related Legislation, Policies and Guidance



Oxford City Council Property Services

Appx 1.1 Legislation & Regulations

- Housing Act 2004 (Part 1 - HHSRS)
- Landlord and Tenant Act 1985
- The Homes (Fitness for Human Habitation) Act 2018
- Environmental Protection Act 1990
- Decent Homes Standard
- Awaab's Law - Social Housing (Regulation) Act 2023.
- The Equality Act 2010
- The Care Act 2014
- Social Housing Regulation Act 2023

The Legislation above can be found on the [.Gov website](#)

Appx 1.2 OCC Guidance, Procedures and Policies

- **Oxford City Council Safeguarding Policy**
- **Oxford City Council Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Strategy**

This Policy supports objectives detailed in the [OCC Strategy 2024-2028](#):

Appx 1.3. OCC Objectives

This Policy supports objectives detailed in the [OCC Corporate Strategy 2024-2028](#):

- Housing, Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy 2023 to 2028
- Meet the Housing Needs of Vulnerable Groups
- Support Sustainable Communities
- Good Quality Homes For All
- Thriving Communities Strategy



Appendix 3

Oxford City Council

Asbestos Policy

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1. Purpose of the Policy

- 1.1 The purpose of this policy is to ensure the Council discharges its duty to manage asbestos in all HRA properties, where there is responsibility for the management of asbestos and that this is done in accordance with The Control of Asbestos Regulations (CAR) 2012.
- 1.2 Breathing in air containing asbestos fibres can lead to asbestos-related diseases, mainly cancer of the lungs and chest lining. Asbestos is only a risk to health if asbestos fibres are released into the air and breathed in.
- 1.3 There is usually a long delay between first exposure to asbestos and the onset of the disease (15-60 years). Only by preventing or minimising these exposures now can asbestos-related disease eventually be reduced.
- 1.4 Any building built before the year 2000 may contain asbestos. As long as the asbestos-containing material (ACM) is in good condition and is not going to be disturbed or damaged, there is negligible risk. However, if it is disturbed or damaged it can become a danger to health.
- 1.5 People who occupy or visit premises could be at risk should the asbestos not be managed properly or if it is in poor condition or has the potential to be disturbed. The Council is responsible for managing asbestos in all of its properties and buildings.

2. Policy Objectives and Scope

- 2.1 The Council must have a policy which meets the requirements of The Control of Asbestos Regulations (CAR) 2012. The policy must provide assurance to the Council that measures are in place to identify, manage and/or mitigate risks associated with asbestos.
- 2.2 The Council must establish an Asbestos Management Plan (AMP), which outlines key information on roles and responsibilities, and the management of information and works.
- 2.3 The Council must also ensure that it remains compliant and that the Council Executive appoints appropriate responsible and competent persons to undertake the management of asbestos along with appropriate reporting and monitoring processes.
- 2.4 The policy is relevant to all Council employees, residents, contractors and other persons or other stakeholders who may work on, occupy, visit, or use its HRA properties, or who may be affected by its activities or services.
- 2.5 It should be used to ensure that all persons effected understand and are aware of the duty placed on them and the Council to maintain a safe environment for HRA buildings.

3. Legal/Regulatory Framework

3.1 The principal legislation applicable to this policy is the Control of Asbestos Regulations (CAR) 2012. The Council has a legal obligation to manage asbestos appropriately and is the Duty Holder for this purpose.

3.2 This policy also ensures compliance with the regulatory framework and consumer standards (Home Standard) for social housing in England, which was introduced by the Regulator of Social Housing (RSH).

3.3 The principal approved codes of practice and guidance (as updated) applicable to this policy are:

- ACoP L143 - 'Managing and working with Asbestos' (Second edition December 2013)
 - HSG264 - 'Asbestos: The survey guide' (Second edition 2012, this holds ACoP status)
 - HSG248 - 'Asbestos: The analysts guide for sampling, analysis and clearance procedures'
 - HSG247 - 'Asbestos: The licensed contractors' guide'
 - HSG227 - 'A comprehensive guide to managing asbestos in premises'
 - HSG210 - 'Asbestos Essentials – A task manual for building, maintenance and allied trades and non-licensed asbestos work'
- 3.5 The Council acknowledges and accepts its responsibilities in accordance with the regulatory standards, legislation, and approved codes of practice, and that failure to discharge these responsibilities properly could lead to a range of sanctions including prosecution by the Health and Safety Executive under the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974, and/or prosecution under the Corporate Manslaughter and Corporate Homicide Act 2007.
- 3.6 In addition, the Regulator of Social Housing has powers to proactively intervene where landlords are performing badly on consumer issues (including non-compliance with building safety measures) and may conduct routine inspections to investigate systematic issues in regard to its Social Housing properties
- 3.7 This asbestos policy also operates in the context of the following additional legislation:
- Health and Safety at Work etc Act 1974
 - The Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999
 - The Workplace (Health Safety and Welfare) Regulations 1992
 - Personal Protective Equipment at Work Regulations 1992
 - Hazardous Waste (England and Wales) Regulations 2005 (Amendment 2009)
 - Control of Substances Hazardous to Health (COSHH) Regulations (as amended) 2002
 - Construction (Design and Management) Regulations 2015
 - Defective Premises Act 1972

- Landlord and Tenant Act 1985
- Data Protection Act 2018
- Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations (RIDDOR) 2013
- Homes (Fitness for Human Habitation) Act 2018
- The Asbestos (Licensing) (Amendment) Regulations 1998

3.8 The Council will use the legal remedies available to it to enforce its management of asbestos.

4. Responsibilities

4.1 The Council's Cabinet will formally approve this policy and review it every three years (or sooner if there is a change in regulation, legislation or codes of practice).

4.2 The Council's Corporate Leadership Team has responsibility for ensuring the asbestos policy is implemented and that the asbestos policy is adhered to in full

4.3 The Council's Director of Housing has strategic responsibility for the management of asbestos and ensuring compliance is achieved and maintained within the Council's Housing stock and The Director of Corporate Property & Assets the same responsibility for all Corporate property

4.4 The Council's Asbestos Manager (Appointed Person) will be responsible for ensuring the policy is reviewed every three years, and will notify the Council's Corporate Leadership Team of the upcoming review.

4.5 Competent Persons

4.5.1 The Council will ensure that the Appointed Person is competent and suitably qualified, holding one of the following as a minimum:

- BOHS (Management of Asbestos in Buildings including removal) P405 qualification
- Level 6 NEBOSH National Diploma in health and safety

4.5.2 The Council will ensure that competent contractors are procured and appointed to deliver asbestos management surveys. The Council will ensure that competent licensed asbestos removal contractors are appointed for all notifiable non-licensed work or licensed works.

4.5.3 The operational team with responsibility for the delivery of any works will only instruct a suitably qualified and competent contractor approved by the Property Services appointed person. The Appointed person will check the relevant qualifications of employees working for these contractors on an annual basis and evidence this appropriately.

5. Obligations

5.1 The Council must identify the location of any asbestos-containing material (ACM) and identify what condition it is in. If the building was built prior to the year 2000 the Council will assume asbestos is present. If the building was built after the year 2000 asbestos is unlikely to be present and an initial inspection of the building to confirm the absence of asbestos is required.

5.2 The Council must establish and keep an up-to-date record (referred to as the 'asbestos register') of the location and condition of the asbestos-containing materials (ACMs) or presumed asbestos-containing materials in the homes and buildings it owns and manages, in order to:

- Assess the risk from the asbestos-containing materials found;
- Prepare an Asbestos Management Plan that sets out in detail how the Council is going to manage the risk from the asbestos-containing materials and taking steps to put the asbestos management plan into action.

5.3 Anyone who has information on the whereabouts of asbestos in buildings is required to make this available to the Council as the 'duty holder', and the Council then has to assess its reliability.

5.4 The Council must have a suitable asbestos management plan for each building where asbestos is identified. The Management plan should be available upon request and should be reviewed at relevant intervals as outlined within the plan.

5.5 The Building operator must set up a system for providing information on the location and condition of the asbestos-containing materials to anyone who is liable to work on or disturb these materials.

6. Statement of Intent

6.1 The Council recognises that the main hazard in relation to asbestos is the nonidentification of ACMs, and as such will protect those persons potentially exposed to asbestos as far as is reasonably practical by minimising the exposure through the use of appropriate control measures and working methods.

6.2 The Council accepts that asbestos is likely to be present in the majority of its properties built prior to the year 2000 and will therefore manage these properties accordingly.

6.3 The Council will employ suitably competent persons to undertake asbestos reinspections and the removal of non-licensed asbestos.

6.4 The Council will also employ suitably competent persons to undertake an intrusive refurbishment and demolition (R&D) survey to domestic and non-domestic properties if required.

6.5 The Council will ensure there are effective arrangements in place for managing Asbestos contractors, in the form of client-led meetings taking place regularly, with

standard agendas and minutes produced, key performance indicators analysed and programmes and performance scrutinised.

6.6 The Council will provide leaseholders and tenants with an asbestos survey report and register where available, on request.

6.7 The Council will not use asbestos in any form when undertaking works or refurbishments.

6.8 The Council will implement a robust process to deal with all changes to stock, including new property acquisitions to ensure that the Asbestos register remains up to date at all times.

6.9 The Council will ensure that there is a robust process in place for the management of immediately dangerous situations identified from any asbestos related works undertaken on the Council's properties.

6.10 Within Communal Areas or Corporate Buildings – The Council will refer any contractor to the Asbestos Register as required and prior to, carrying out any repairs or planned maintenance works which may involve working on, or adjacent to, any asbestos-containing materials.

7. Asbestos Risk Assessment/Inspection Programmes

7.1 The Council will ensure that all HRA properties will have an appropriate asbestos management survey carried out.

7.2 The Councils Asbestos register will be updated following the completion of a survey and the subsequent inspection or survey date identified.

7.3 The Council will not need to re-inspect any built after the year 2000 where the initial asbestos management survey confirms that there are no asbestos-containing materials present.

7.4 All contractors undertaking intrusive works shall carry out a relevant survey or risk assessment to confirm the presence or absence of asbestos prior to undertaking any works

7.5 Contractors will review existing asbestos register information prior to carrying out any void or vacant unit repairs, day to day repairs, or planned maintenance works which may involve working on or adjacent to any asbestos-containing materials .

8. Compliance and Asbestos Surveys

8.1 The Council will establish and maintain a programme of surveys and re-inspections of all asbestos assets, and maintain an Asbestos Register of all the asbestos-containing materials by type, address, location and condition.

8.2 The Council will ensure there is a robust process in place for the management of any follow-up works required following the completion of an asbestos management survey.

8.3 Where asbestos is positively identified and, as a result of a risk assessment (conducted in accordance with published guidance), removal, sealing or encapsulation is recommended, this will be carried out as follows:

- Non-licensed works – as defined in regulation 2 of CAR 2012 – by specifically trained contractors with appropriate equipment and working procedures in place which are sufficient to comply with the CAR 2012;
- Notifiable non-licensed works – as defined in regulation 2 of the CAR 2012 – by a licensed asbestos removal contractor (LARC) licensed by the Health and Safety Executive in compliance with the CAR 2012; or
- Licensed works - as defined in regulation 2 of the CAR 2012 – by a LARC, licensed by the Health and Safety Executive in compliance with the CAR 2012. Key controls and reporting

8.4 A cloud based web system will be used to record the details of all asbestos surveys undertaken on HRA properties. This will include the date and type of the most recent survey and/or re-inspection where applicable.

8.5 The findings from the asbestos survey, including any ACMs and remediation works identified and subsequently completed (including evidence of removal and encapsulation) should also be recorded on the system

9. Training

9.1 The Council will ensure that all employees working in our properties have appropriate training relevant to their function/duty. As a minimum, everyone should have basic asbestos awareness training.

9.2 Contractor staff working for, or on behalf of, the organisation must have the relevant training required for their role. This will be managed via periodic review of accreditations.

10. Performance Reporting

10.1 Robust performance indicator measures will be maintained to ensure the Council is able to report on performance in relation to asbestos.

10.2 Performance measures will be produced and provided at Corporate Leadership Team (CLT) and Cabinet as part of the reporting cycle, as required. As a minimum these measures will include reporting on:

Relevant properties with a valid asbestos management survey where required. This is the level of compliance expressed as a number and/or as a percentage;

11. Quality Assurance

11.1 The Council will require external contractors to provide the results of their own assurance audit checks of management survey programmes, on a minimum of 5% of inspections (or a percentage determined through agreed contractual arrangements). The Council will undertake on site post inspections of asbestos work for 5% of completed works.

11.2 The Council will commission an independent audit of asbestos at least once every 5 years. This audit will specifically test for compliance with the regulation, legislation and codes of practice and identify any non-compliance issues for correction.

12. Non-Compliance/Escalation Process

12.1 The definition of non-compliance in relation to this policy refers to any incident which results in a breach of legislation.

12.2 Any non-compliance issue identified at an operational level will be formally reported to the Council's Director of Corporate Property and Assets, and/or, Director of Housing.

12.3 Where necessary, the relevant Director will agree an appropriate course of corrective action with the relevant operational teams in order to address any non-compliance issue.

12.4 The relevant Director will ensure the appropriate Cabinet Member(s) is/are made aware of any non-compliance issue.

13 Resident Engagement

13.1 Residents who are concerned about asbestos in their property can contact the Council's call centre for assistance. The Council's surveyors will also provide first hand help and advice with the occupants, on inspecting the property. Residents can contact the Council's call centre for assistance. Telephone **01865 249811** Tenants can also use the on-line service [Report a housing repair | Oxford City Council](#)

13.2 There will be communications with residents on the detail of this policy with residents using a range of communication mechanisms.

14 Equality and Diversity

14.1 An Equality Impact Assessment has been carried out to determine whether the policy would have an impact on any member of staff, tenants or contractor workforce, which unfairly discriminates or disadvantages them in the context of the Equality Act 2010. Adherence to the policy provides the same level of protection for all building users and no impacts have been identified that would adversely affect one group more than any other.

14.2 In relation to social housing properties, provision has been made to record any tenant vulnerability issues that are known or identified, and therefore taken account of, when gaining access to properties to undertake necessary safety checks. However, ensuring we can gain timely access to any property in order to be compliant with this policy and safeguard the wellbeing of the tenant and/or other building occupants, is the Council's primary concern

Appendix A

Contingency Policy for Absent Responsible Persons (Asbestos)

1. Purpose and Scope

The purpose of this policy is to ensure that the responsibilities for managing asbestos remain effective during the absence of the designated Appointed Person (AP). This policy applies to all City Council owned or occupied properties where OCC have responsibility for asbestos management.

2. Appointed Person (AP)

The AP is responsible for ensuring that the asbestos management plan (AMP) is implemented, monitored, and updated as required. The AP's duties include conducting risk assessments, liaising with contractors, ensuring compliance with regulations, and maintaining asbestos records.

3. Contingency Arrangements for Absence

In the event that the AP is absent for any reason (e.g., holiday, sickness, personal leave), the following contingency measures will be activated to ensure that compliance management continues without disruption.

4. Designated Alternate Responsible Person

A **Designated Alternate responsible Person (DARP)** will be nominated and trained to take over the AP's duties during their absence. The DARP should be familiar with the asbestos management plan, the latest asbestos survey, and the procedures to follow in case of asbestos-related incidents.

Key individuals are designated to take over the AP's duties in their absence.

All designated persons must be familiar with the asbestos management plan, the asbestos policy, the latest asbestos survey, and procedures to follow in case of asbestos-related incidents.

5. Delegated Responsibilities

The following key responsibilities will be delegated to the DAAP or other designated individuals during the absence of the AP:

- **Monitor and Review Asbestos Management Plan (AMP):** Ensure that the AMP remains up to date and that regular inspections are carried out.
- **Ensure continuation of the Asbestos re-inspection programme**

- **Incident Response:** In case of accidental disturbance or damage to asbestos-containing materials (ACMs), the DAAP will act as the point of contact for emergency procedures, including:
 - Stopping any activities that may disturb ACMs.
 - Contacting licensed asbestos contractors for urgent remediation if required.
 - Notifying relevant authorities, such as the Health and Safety Executive (HSE).
- **Liaison with Contractors:** Ensure that any contractors working on the premises are made aware of the asbestos survey and are provided with the necessary information regarding the location of ACMs.
- **Training and Awareness:** Ensure that any personnel (e.g., volunteers, maintenance staff) are reminded of their asbestos awareness responsibilities and have the appropriate resources and training to deal with potential asbestos risks.

6. Emergency Contact Details

The following details must be available to all relevant parties during the absence of the RP:

- **List of accredited asbestos removal contractors**

DCUK Ltd:0330124 5671
- **HSE emergency contact details** in case of a major asbestos incident.

0345 300 9923

7. Communication Protocol

- **Notification of Absence:** The AP must inform the relevant stakeholders (e.g., management, volunteers, contractors) of their planned absence in advance, ensuring that a handover to the DAAP is done seamlessly.
- **Regular Updates:** During the absence, the DAAP must provide regular updates to the AP (or management if the absence is extended) regarding the status of asbestos management, including inspections, maintenance, or incident reports.

8. Documentation and Record-Keeping

All actions taken by the DARP in relation to asbestos management during the absence of the AP must be properly documented. This includes:

- **Inspection reports, contractor communication, and training records.**
- **Any asbestos incidents and the response taken.**
- **Any updates or changes made to the asbestos management plan.**

9. Return of the Responsible Person

Upon the return of the AP, a debriefing should take place to update the AP on any changes, incidents, or important activities that took place during their absence. The AP should review all records and ensure that the management of asbestos has been carried out in line with regulatory requirements.

10. Review of Contingency Plan

The contingency plan should be reviewed annually or following any significant changes, such as a new AP or DAAP, changes in property management, or changes in the regulations governing asbestos.

Appendix B

Emergency Procedure for the Disturbance of Asbestos-Containing Materials (ACMs)

1. Immediate Action

- **Stop Work Immediately:** Any activity that disturbs asbestos-containing materials (ACMs) must be halted at once.
- **Evacuate the Area:** Clear all personnel from the affected area. Only trained asbestos personnel should remain.
- **Prevent Further Exposure:** Secure the area to prevent further disturbance of the ACMs. This may involve cordoning off the area, closing doors, and putting up warning signs (such as 'Asbestos Hazard').

2. Assess the Situation

- **Visual Inspection:** The appointed asbestos person should carry out a visual assessment of the situation to determine the extent of the disturbance.
- **Identify the Type of Material:** If possible, identify whether the material is ACM (e.g., insulation, tiles, sprayed coatings). Do not attempt to handle the material without proper protective equipment and procedures in place.
- **Check Airborne Fibre Levels:** In the event of a suspected disturbance, the air quality may need to be monitored for asbestos fibres, with the appropriate testing equipment or by calling in an external asbestos surveyor for immediate testing.

3. Notify Authorities and Relevant Parties

- **Contact the HSE:** In the event of significant disturbance or potential exposure to asbestos, contact the **Health and Safety Executive (HSE)** immediately. A notifiable incident, such as the uncontrolled release of asbestos fibres, must be reported under the **Reporting of Injuries, Diseases, and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations (RIDDOR)**.
- **Inform the Council Asbestos Team:** Notify the council's safety team and management to ensure that a coordinated response can be made, including organising the necessary resources for decontamination and investigation.
- **Notify Contractors or Work Teams:** If the disturbance was caused by contractors or external workers, they must be informed immediately, and the nature of the disturbance should be reported.

4. Implement Control Measures

- **Seal the Area:** Use plastic sheeting, barriers, and tape to prevent the spread of asbestos fibres beyond the immediate vicinity of the disturbance.

- **Use PPE (Personal Protective Equipment):** Ensure that all personnel entering the area wear the appropriate PPE, such as **disposable coveralls, P3 respirators, protective gloves, and footwear**.
- **Decontamination Procedures:** If personal contamination is suspected, ensure all personnel follow appropriate decontamination procedures, including using a **boot wash, decontamination units**, and ensuring any contaminated clothing is disposed of safely.

5. Establish Air Monitoring

- **Air Sampling:** If not already done, arrange for immediate air sampling to determine the level of airborne asbestos fibres.
- **Stop Work Until Safe:** Work should not resume until air monitoring has been conducted, and the results indicate that the air is safe (fibre levels must be below the exposure limits).

6. Arrange for Asbestos Removal or Repair

- **Licensed Asbestos Removal:** If the disturbance involves significant damage to ACMs or if removal is necessary, ensure that licensed asbestos removal contractors are contacted and instructed to deal with the situation as per **CAR 2012** regulations.
- **Emergency Repair:** If the disturbance is minimal and repair is appropriate (e.g., sealing a crack in asbestos insulation), ensure that work is conducted by a competent person, following approved emergency procedures and the correct methodology.

7. Post-Incident Investigation and Reporting

- **Incident Investigation:** Conduct a thorough investigation of the cause of the disturbance. Review the risk assessments and safe systems of work that were in place before the disturbance occurred to identify gaps or failings.
- **Review Control Measures:** Review and update the emergency procedures, training, and monitoring systems to prevent similar incidents in the future.
- **Documentation:** Ensure that all steps taken during the emergency procedure are documented, including the initial assessment, actions taken, air quality monitoring results, and any investigations conducted.

8. Reopening the Area

- **Air Clearance Certificate:** Once air monitoring confirms that fibre levels are below the action limit, an independent asbestos air clearance certificate should be obtained before the area is reopened for work.
- **Restore the Work Area:** Once clearance is granted, the area may be re-entered by workers. Ensure that the area remains secure and that safe working practices are followed going forward.

Key Considerations:

- **Emergency Planning:** It's essential that emergency procedures for asbestos disturbance are included in the **site-specific asbestos management plan** and that staff are trained to follow them.
- **Record Keeping:** All incidents of asbestos disturbance must be documented and the relevant regulatory authorities (including the HSE) notified within required timeframes.
- **Compliance:** This procedure must be aligned with **Control of Asbestos Regulations 2012** and the advice provided by the **Health and Safety Executive (HSE)**, ensuring that both local authority responsibilities and the safety of employees are met.

Emergency Equipment Required:

- Personal Protective Equipment (PPE): Disposable coveralls, P3 respirators, gloves, footwear, etc.
- Air monitoring and sampling equipment.
- Warning signs and barriers for site containment.
- Asbestos waste bags and containers for disposal.

Disrepair Policy



Introduction

- 1.1 The Council has statutory and contractual obligations regarding the repair and maintenance of its properties to ensure they meet the required standards. Disrepair refers to instances where the Council has breached its repair obligations.
- 1.2 This policy outlines the Council's approach to meeting those obligations, highlights the preventative measures it takes to mitigate against disrepair and the measures it takes to manage disrepair cases, where they do arise.

Purpose

- 2.1 The aim of this policy is to provide a clear framework for staff, tenants, our residents and wider stakeholders dealing with housing disrepair and injury claims arising from allegations of disrepair and defective premises claims (working in partnership with the Council's insurers).
- 2.2 The policy is based on complying with the Housing Disrepair Protocol (see Appendix A).
- 2.3 The specific aims of the policy are to:
 - work to get things right at the earliest point to prevent residents feeling the need to make disrepair claims against the Council
 - ensure disrepair claims are managed appropriately and on time
 - ensure the Council can successfully contest disrepair claims

Scope

- 3.1 As a landlord, the Council is legally obliged to repair and maintain its property portfolio in line with the requirements of the repairs policy.
- 3.2 When a landlord fails to keep the structure, exterior and installations for water, gas, electricity, heating, and sanitation of a property to the requisite standard; and has failed upon receipt of repairs requests to adequately address the issues in the home, and the property is deemed to be uninhabitable, this is referred to as a disrepair.
- 3.3 The implications of serious housing disrepair include respiratory illnesses, fatal accidents from structural failures, fire-related deaths, cardiovascular problems, and psychological harm, all stemming from issues such as damp and mould, faulty heating and electrics, structural damage and fire hazards. Serious disrepair issues can lead to health conditions such as asthma, heart attacks, strokes and, in severe cases, they can be life-threatening.
- 3.4 This policy applies to all residential properties owned and managed by the Council, however it should be read in conjunction with individual occupancy

agreements as the Council's repair obligations can vary – for example, between tenanted and leased properties.

- 3.5 While a housing condition claim is broader than the defined definition of a disrepair claim, this policy had been designed to address both housing condition claims and disrepair claims.

Definitions

- 4.1 The Council has maintenance duties under Section 11 of the Landlord and Tenant Act 1985 and under the Homes (Fitness for Human Habitation) Act 2018. These place the council under a duty to maintain properties to a required standard allowing the tenant to exercise quiet enjoyment of their property.

Council's (landlord's) responsibilities

- 5.1 Under Section 11, the Council is responsible for the exterior, the structure and all major interior repairs in tenanted properties. This is a non-delegable duty, although the carrying out of the duty can be delegated to another body, person or organisation.
- 5.2 Section 11 requires the Council to:
- keep in repair the structure and exterior of the dwelling house (including drains, gutters and external pipes)
 - keep in repair and proper working order the installations in the dwelling house for the supply of water, gas and electricity and for the sanitation (including basins, sinks, baths and sanitary conveniences but not other fixtures and fittings and appliances for making use of the supply of water, gas or electricity)
 - keep in repair and proper working order the installations in the dwelling house for space heating and heating water
- 5.3 Section 9A of the Landlord and Tenant Act 1985, as amended by the Homes (Fitness for Human Habitation) Act 2018, imposes a legal obligation on landlords in England to ensure that their properties are fit for human habitation at the start of the tenancy and throughout its duration. This means the property must be safe, healthy, and free from hazards that could affect the wellbeing of the tenant. If the Council fails to maintain this standard, a tenant can pursue a claim for breach of contract.
- 5.4 Under section 4 of the Defective Premises Act 1972, the Council has a duty to take such care as is reasonable in all the circumstances to see that persons owed a duty (i.e. tenants, members of their household, and or their visitors) are reasonably safe from personal injury or property damage caused by a defect that the Council is bound to repair or maintain.

- 5.5 The Homes (Fitness for Human Habitation) Act 2018 further clarifies the Council's repairs responsibilities by noting that a property will be unfit for habitation if there are serious defects in any of the following:
- Repair
 - Stability
 - Freedom from damp
 - Internal arrangement
 - Natural lighting
 - Ventilation
 - Water supply
 - Drainage and sanitary conveniences; and
 - Facilities for preparation and cooking of food and for the disposal of waste water
- 5.6 Decent Homes Standard - A Government programme aimed at improving social housing homes to bring them all up to a minimum standard.
- 5.7 Housing Health and Safety Rating System (HHSRS) - Places a legal duty on landlords to assess and regularly review the condition of their homes to ensure that they are safe and free from hazards.
- 5.8 Housing Disrepair Claim - A civil claim arising from the condition of residential homes and may include a related personal injury claim.
- 5.9 Pre-action Protocol - Procedural framework to be used by parties in the pre-action stages of a disrepair / poor housing conditions claim, intended to assist parties in a housing condition claim to resolve the issues early and appropriately.
- 5.10 Expert / Single Joint Expert - A suitably qualified expert who acts as an independent witness for the benefit of court, and who prepares a report addressing the allegations of disrepair and/or poor housing conditions. Survey - An inspection or assessment of the structure, exterior, or related installations of a home.

Tenants' Responsibilities

- 6.1 Tenants are responsible for minor interior repairs including, but not limited to:
- tightening of screws in door handles on a cupboard door or similar
 - re-hanging a shower curtain
 - replacing a light bulb in a pendant light fitting
 - bleeding a radiator
 - replacing bath and sink plugs and chains
 - changing the time on boiler controls/timer controls
 - replacing batteries in door bells
 - replacing door numbers (except fire doors)
 - painting and decoration of walls, ceilings and woodwork
 - clearing gardens of rubbish, weeding, cutting grass and hedges

- maintaining own personal belongings, furniture, fixtures and fittings

6.2 Furthermore, tenants must:

- report any repairs needed to the landlord as soon as possible
- properly ventilate their homes
- dispose of rubbish properly
- maintain internal decorations, furniture and equipment. Damage to these may need to be paid for by the tenant

6.3 Tenants are also responsible for any damage arising because they or someone living with or visiting them, have not taken adequate care of the property.

Investigating a repair

7.1 When investigating the validity of a disrepair claim the below points will be considered:

- whether the defect falls within the statutory and express provisions of the repairing obligations, and that the landlord has failed to remedy the defect within a 'reasonable period' (the length of time depends upon the nature of the problem)
- that the landlord is aware of the problem (i.e., on notice from the tenant that a defect has arisen) and the resident has exhausted the landlord's internal complaints procedure

Risks to health

8.1 The Council is bound by the Environmental Protection Act 1990. Section 82 of this legislation enables a tenant aggrieved by a Statutory Nuisance pursuant to Section 79(1) EPA 1990 if the disrepair is injurious to health and/or a nuisance, to bring proceedings in a Magistrates' Court against the responsible landlord.

8.2 This standard means that the disrepair has to be likely to cause injury; no injury has to have occurred for a successful claim to be brought against the Council. The risk to health does not only apply to the tenant - injury to anyone that might reasonably be on the property can give rise to a disrepair claim.

Notice and time frames for repair

9.1 Repairs can be identified, and notice given, by numerous stakeholders including tenants, staff, contractors, a surveyor, local authority health and safety professional or other third parties.

9.2 Full repairs in a property defined as being in disrepair must be remedied within 56 days following receipt of notice of the defect from the tenant.

- 9.3 Repair of or within the common parts of the buildings, for example, lifts, stairwells and entrance halls to blocks of flats remain the landlord's responsibility.

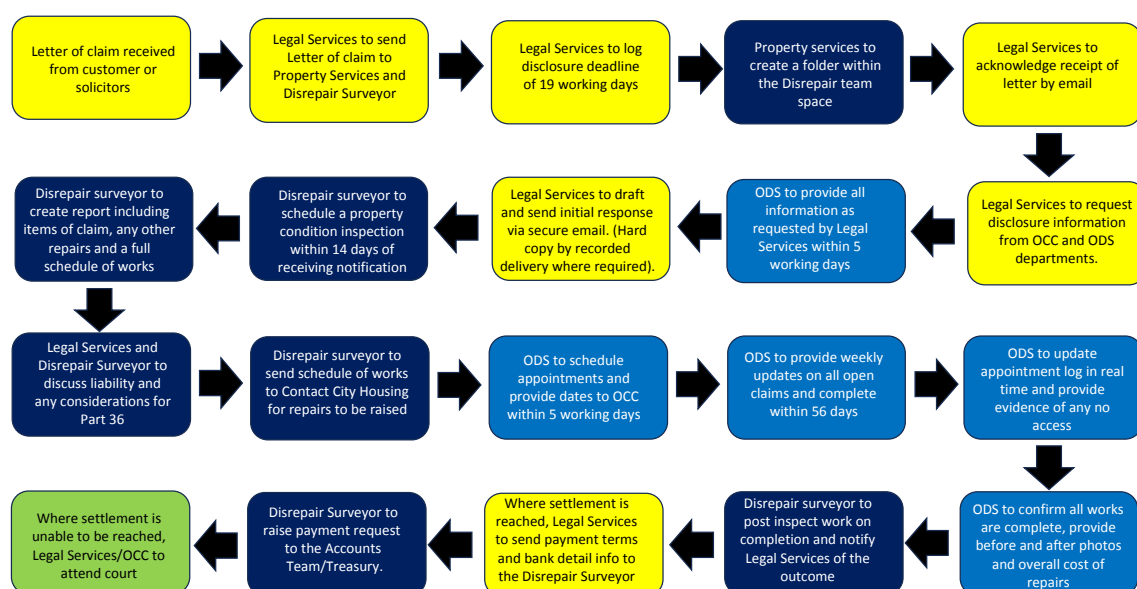
Preventing disrepair claims

- 10.1 The Council invests in, and manages, its properties in line with its Asset Management Strategy and 5-Year Investment Programme to ensure all properties meet regulatory and contractual obligations outlined.
- 10.2 The Council operates a rolling programme of stock and block condition surveys to evaluate the state and condition of its properties. These surveys form the basis of investment in planned maintenance to reduce the likelihood of disrepair.
- 10.3 The Council maintains an asset investment database which contains comprehensive information regarding its stock, enabling it to determine which types of property in which areas require investment to prevent disrepair. This data is supplemented by a referral process which enables properties requiring investment to be prioritised for improvement works.
- 10.4 The Council operates a responsive repairs and maintenance service to mitigate against the potential for disrepair. Tenants need to promptly report any repairs needed that the Council is responsible for. The Council will record all contact with tenants where a repair is requested by the tenants or identified by surveyors.
- 10.5 Details of the maintenance or repair works undertaken to a specific property or scheme should be recorded to help inform the Council of the condition of its properties.
- 10.6 Thorough inspections should be carried out during the voids process to identify potential disrepair issues and deploy resources to remedy any defect before the property is re-let.
- 10.7 Council staff and contractors will report back to the relevant property and maintenance team immediately where they become aware of repair issues while visiting a property or estate.

Managing Disrepair Claims

- 11.1 The Council adheres to the Pre-Action Protocol when responding to all reports of disrepair. Where a customer issues a disrepair claim, the Council may instruct a solicitor to act on its behalf.
- 11.2 Where appropriate, the Council will consider using alternative dispute resolution methods to resolve the matter with the resident at the earliest opportunity and avoid legal action. Such methods include financial settlements.

- 11.3 The Council will instruct a dedicated disrepair surveyor, or where required, an external expert/single joint expert in conjunction with the customer or their third-party legal advisor to inspect the property for evidence of disrepair.
- 11.4 The Council will undertake an agreed schedule of works to remedy disrepair within a reasonable period of time. This may sometimes mean that parts of the property will be inaccessible for a period whilst works are undertaken. Where the property is uninhabitable as a result of the works (for example if the kitchen or bathroom is inaccessible), the Council will provide temporary alternative accommodation. The property will be inspected upon completion of the remedial works.
- 11.5 To progress disrepair claims, the Council exchanges information with its Legal Services or other agencies requests in line with the Pre-Action Protocol and its Data Protection policy:



Appendix A

Pre Action Protocol

This Protocol was previously the Pre-Action Protocol for Housing Disrepair Cases. It has been revised to embrace claims based on the new section 9A in Landlord and Tenant Act 1985 (implied term as to fitness for human habitation) which applies only in England. Accordingly, the Protocol itself now applies only to claims made in England.

1 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 This Protocol applies to residential property. It relates to claims by tenants and others in respect of poor housing conditions. Before using the Protocol, tenants should ensure that their landlord is aware of those conditions. The Protocol is intended for those cases where, despite the landlord's knowledge of the poor conditions, matters remain unresolved.
- 1.2 This Protocol describes the conduct that the court will normally expect prospective parties in a housing conditions claim to engage in, prior to the start of proceedings. It is intended to encourage the exchange of information between parties at an early stage and to provide a clear framework within which parties in a housing conditions claim can attempt to achieve an early and appropriate resolution of the issues.
- 1.3 If a claim proceeds to litigation, the court will expect all parties to have complied with the Protocol as far as possible. The court has power to order parties who have unreasonably failed to comply with the Protocol to pay costs or to be subject to other sanctions.

2 AIMS

2.1 The aims of this Protocol are to—

- (a) avoid unnecessary litigation;
- (b) promote the speedy and appropriate carrying out of any remedial works which are the landlord's responsibility;
- (c) ensure that tenants receive any compensation to which they are entitled as speedily as possible;
- (d) promote good pre-litigation practice, including the early exchange of information;
- (e) give guidance about the instruction of experts; and
- (f) keep the costs of resolving disputes down.

3 THE SCOPE OF THE PROTOCOL

- 3.1 A housing conditions claim is a civil claim arising from the condition of residential premises and may include a related personal injury claim (see 3.5 below). Although most claims are brought by a tenant against their landlord, this Protocol is not limited to such claims. It covers claims by any person with a housing conditions claim including tenants, lessees and members of the tenant's family. The use of the word "tenant" in this Protocol is intended to cover all such people.
- 3.2 The types of claim which this Protocol is intended to cover include those brought under sections 9A and/or 11 of the Landlord and Tenant Act 1985, section 4 of the Defective Premises Act 1972, common law nuisance and negligence, and those brought under the express or implied terms of a tenancy agreement or lease. It does not cover claims brought under section 82 of the Environmental Protection Act 1990 (which are heard in the Magistrates' Court).
- 3.3 This Protocol does not cover housing conditions claims which originate as counterclaims or set-offs in other proceedings i.e. where the tenant is seeking to have the compensation due for adverse housing conditions set against money claimed by the landlord (typically in a possession claim for rent arrears). In such cases, the landlord and tenant will still be expected to act reasonably in exchanging information and trying to settle the case at an early stage.
- 3.4 The Protocol should be followed in all cases, whatever the value of the damages claim.
- 3.5 Housing conditions claims may contain a personal injury element. If the personal injury claim requires expert evidence other than a General Practitioner's letter, the Personal Injury Pre-Action Protocol should be followed for that element of the housing conditions claim. If the personal injury claim is of a minor nature, and will only be evidenced by a General Practitioner's letter, it is not necessary to follow the Personal Injury Pre-Action Protocol. If the situation is urgent, it would be reasonable to pursue separate housing conditions and personal injury claims, which could then be case managed together or consolidated at a later date.

THE PROTOCOL

4 Alternative dispute resolution

- 4.1 The parties should consider whether some form of alternative dispute resolution (ADR) procedure would be more suitable than litigation and if so, try to agree which form of ADR to use. Both the landlord and the tenant may be required by the court to provide evidence that alternative means of resolving their dispute were considered. The courts take the view that litigation should be a last resort, and that claims should not be issued while a settlement is still actively being explored. Parties should be aware that the court will take into account the extent of the parties' compliance with this Protocol when making orders about who should pay costs.
- 4.2 Options for resolving a dispute include the following—
(a) mediation: information about mediation can be found at <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/a-guide-to-civil-mediation>

(b) for council tenants—

*The council's own complaints and/or arbitration procedures.

*The Right to Repair Scheme. The scheme is only suitable for small, urgent repairs of less than £250 in value. Information about the scheme in England can be obtained from the Ministry for Housing, Communities and Local Government <https://www.gov.uk/repair-council-property>

*The Housing Ombudsman Service deals with complaints from council tenants in England about housing conditions <http://www.housing-ombudsman.org.uk/>

5 Tenant's Letter of Claim

5.1 It is recognised that cases about housing conditions can range from straightforward to highly complex, and that it is not always possible to obtain detailed information at an early stage. In order to avoid unnecessary delay and to ensure that notice of the claim is given to the landlord at the earliest possible opportunity, particularly where the situation is urgent, it may be appropriate for the tenant to send a letter notifying the landlord of the claim before a detailed Letter of Claim is sent.

5.2 The tenant should send to the landlord a Letter of Claim at the earliest reasonable opportunity. A specimen Letter of Claim is at Annex A. The letter may be suitably adapted as appropriate. The Letter of Claim should contain the following details:

- (a) the tenant's name, the address of the property, the tenant's address if different, the tenant's telephone number and when access is available;
- (b) details of the defects, including any defects outstanding, in the form of a schedule, if appropriate (See Annex C for a specimen schedule of conditions which can be used to inform the landlord of the defects);
- (c) history of the defects, including any attempts to rectify them;
- (d) details of any notification previously given to the landlord of the poor housing conditions or information as to why the tenant believes that the landlord has knowledge of those conditions;
- (e) the effect of the defects on the tenant (including any personal injury claim by the tenant);
- (f) the identities of all other persons who plan to make a personal injury claim and brief details of their personal injury claims;
- (g) the details of any special damages;
- (h) the proposed expert (see paragraph 7);
- (i) the proposed letter of instruction to the expert; and
- (j) relevant documents disclosed by the tenant.

5.3 The Letter of Claim should also request disclosure from the landlord of all documents relevant to the poor housing conditions including:

- (a) a copy of the tenancy agreement including the tenancy conditions;
- (b) the tenancy file;
- (c) any documents relating to notice of poor housing conditions given, including copies of any notes of meetings and oral discussions;

- (d) any inspection reports or documents relating to works required to the property;
and
- (e) any computerised records.

5.4 Documents relating to rent arrears or other tenancy issues will not normally be relevant. Nothing in the Protocol restricts the right of the tenant to look personally at their file or to request a copy of the whole file. Neither is the landlord prevented from sending to the tenant a copy of the whole file.

5.5 A copy of the Protocol should be sent to the landlord if the tenant has reason to believe that the landlord will not have access to the Protocol. If in doubt, a copy should be sent.

6 Landlord's Response

6.1 A person should be designated to act as a point of contact for the tenant (and their solicitor, if one is involved). The designated person's name and contact details should be sent to the tenant and their solicitor as soon as possible after the landlord receives the Letter of Claim from the tenant.

6.2 The landlord should normally reply to the Letter of Claim within 20 working days of receipt. Receipt is deemed to have taken place two days after the date of the letter. The landlord's response should include at least the following:

- (a) copies of all relevant records or documents requested by the tenant; and
- (b) a response to the tenant's proposals for instructing an expert including—
 - i. whether or not the proposed single joint expert is agreed;
 - ii. whether the letter of instruction is agreed;
 - iii. if the single joint expert is agreed but with separate instructions, a copy of the letter of instruction; and
 - iv. if the appointment of a single joint expert is not agreed, whether the landlord agrees to a joint inspection.

6.3 The landlord must also provide a response dealing with the issues set out below, as appropriate. This can be provided either within the response to the Letter of Claim or within 20 working days of receipt of the report of the single joint expert or receipt of the experts' agreed schedule following a joint inspection:

- (a) whether liability is admitted and, if so, in respect of which defects;
- (b) if liability is disputed in respect of some or all of the defects, the reasons for this;
- (c) any point which the landlord wishes to make regarding lack of notice of the defects or any difficulty in gaining access;
- (d) a full schedule of intended works, including anticipated start and completion dates and a timetable for the works;
- (e) any offer of compensation; and
- (f) any offer in respect of costs.

6.4 Failure to respond within 20 working days of receipt of the Letter of Claim or at all, is a breach of the Protocol (see paragraph 1.3) and the tenant is then free to issue proceedings.

6.5 The Letter of Claim and the landlord's response are not intended to have the same status as a statement of case in court proceedings. Matters may come to light subsequently which mean that the case of one or both parties may be presented differently in court proceedings. Parties should not seek to take advantage of such discrepancies, provided that there was no intention to mislead.

7 Experts

7.1 (a) Parties are reminded that the Civil Procedure Rules provide that expert evidence should be restricted to that which is necessary and that the court's permission is required to use an expert's report. The court may limit the amount of experts' fees and expenses recoverable from another party.

(b) When instructing an expert, the parties must have regard to CPR 35, CPR Practice Direction 35 and the Guidance for the Instruction of Experts in Civil Claims (2014) <https://www.judiciary.uk/wp-content/uploads/2014/08/experts-guidance-cjc-aug-2014-amended-dec-8.pdf>

(c) In some cases, it might not be necessary to instruct an expert to provide evidence of the housing conditions, for example, if the only issue relates to the level of any damages claimed. It may be advisable for tenants to take photographs or video footage of any defects before and after works.

(d) The expert should be instructed to report on all adverse housing conditions which the landlord ought reasonably to know about, or which the expert ought reasonably to report on. The expert should be asked to provide a schedule of works, an estimate of the costs of those works, and to list any urgent works.

Single Joint Expert

7.2 (a) If the landlord does not raise an objection to the proposed expert or letter of instruction within 20 working days of receipt of the Letter of Claim, the expert should be instructed as a single joint expert, using the tenant's proposed letter of instruction.

(b) Alternatively, if the parties cannot agree joint instructions, the landlord and tenant should send their own separate instructions to the single joint expert. If sending separate instructions, the landlord should send the tenant a copy of the landlord's letter of instruction with their response to the Letter of Claim.

Joint Inspection

7.3 (a) If it is not possible to reach agreement to instruct a single joint expert, even with separate instructions, the parties should attempt to arrange a joint inspection, meaning an inspection by different experts instructed by each party to take place at the same time. If the landlord wishes their own expert to attend a joint inspection, they should inform both the tenant's expert and the tenant's solicitor.

(b) Should a case come before the court, it will be for the court to decide whether the parties have acted reasonably in instructing separate experts and whether the costs of more than one expert should be recoverable.

Time Limits

7.4 (a) Whether a single joint expert or a joint inspection is used, the property should be inspected within 20 working days of the date that the landlord responds to the tenant's Letter of Claim.

(b) If a single joint expert is instructed, a copy of the expert's report should be sent to both the landlord and the tenant within 10 working days of the inspection. Either party can ask relevant questions of the expert who should send the answers to both parties.

(c) If there is a joint inspection, the experts should produce an agreed schedule of works detailing–

i. the defects and required works which are agreed and a timetable for the agreed works; and

ii. the areas of disagreement and the reasons for disagreement.

(d) The agreed schedule should be sent to both the landlord and the tenant within 10 working days of the joint inspection.

Urgent Cases

7.5 The Protocol does not prevent a tenant from instructing an expert at an earlier stage if this is considered necessary for reasons of urgency.

Appropriate cases may include–

(a) where the tenant reasonably considers that there is a significant risk to health and safety;

(b) where the tenant is seeking an interim injunction; or

(c) where it is necessary to preserve evidence.

Access

7.6 Tenants must allow the landlord reasonable access for inspection and the carrying out of works in accordance with the tenancy agreement. The landlord should give reasonable notice of the need for access, except in the case of an emergency. The landlord must give access to common parts as appropriate, for example, for the inspection of a shared heating system. If the tenant is no longer in occupation of the premises, the landlord should take all reasonable steps to give access to the tenant for the purpose of an inspection.

Expert's fees

7.7 (a) Experts' terms of appointment should be agreed at the outset, including the basis of charging and time for delivery of the report.

(b) If a single joint expert is instructed, each party will pay one half of the cost of their inspection and report.

(c) If separate experts are instructed, each party will pay the full cost of the inspection and report by their own expert.

- 7.8 Information about independent experts can be obtained from—
- (a) The Chartered Institute of Environmental Health, Consultants Directory <http://www.ehn-online.com/consultantsdirectory/consultants.aspx?cdid=5548>
 - (b) The Royal Institution of Chartered Surveyors' Find a Surveyor <https://www.ricsfirms.com/>
 - (c) The Expert Witness Directory <https://www.sweetandmaxwell.co.uk/our-businesses/directories.aspx>

Taking stock

- 8 Where the procedure set out in this Protocol has not resolved the dispute between the landlord and the tenant, they should undertake a review of their respective positions to see if proceedings can be avoided and, at the least, to narrow the issues between them.

Time limits

- 9 (a) The time scales given in the Protocol are long stops and every attempt should be made to comply with the Protocol as soon as possible. If parties are able to comply earlier than the time scales provided, they should do so.
- (b) Time limits in the Protocol may be changed by agreement. However, it should always be borne in mind that the court will expect an explanation as to why the Protocol has not been followed or has been varied and breaches of the Protocol may lead to costs or other orders being made by the court.

Limitation period

- 10 (a) There are statutory time limits for starting proceedings ('the limitation period'). If a tenant starts a claim after the limitation period applicable to that type of claim has expired, the landlord will be entitled to use that as a defence to the claim. In cases where the limitation period is about to expire, the tenant should ask the landlord to agree not to rely on a limitation defence, so that the parties can comply with the Protocol.
- (b) If proceedings have to be started before the parties have complied with the Protocol, they should apply to the court for an order to stay (i.e. suspend) the proceedings until the steps under the Protocol have been completed.

Costs

- 11 If the tenant's claim is settled without litigation on terms which justify bringing it, the landlord will pay the tenant's reasonable costs. The Statement of Costs Form N260 can be used to inform the landlord of the costs of the claim. <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/form-n260-statement-of-costs-summary-assessment>

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To: Council
Date: 24 November 2025
Report of: Chief Executive
Title of Report: Local Government Reorganisation Submission

Summary and recommendations	
Decision being taken:	To note the decision of Cabinet with regards to Oxford City Council's Local Government Reorganisation preferred option submission
Key decision:	No
Cabinet Member:	Councillor Susan Brown, Leader of the Council
Corporate Priority:	Strong, Fair Economy; Thriving Communities
Policy Framework:	No

Recommendation(s): That Council resolves to:
1. Note the decision taken by Cabinet on the 10 November to submit as its preferred option on Local Government Reorganisation, a three unitary council model across Oxfordshire, incorporating West Berkshire, as set out in the Cabinet Report

Appendix No.	Appendix Title	Exempt from Publication
Appendix 1	Cabinet report of 10 November 2025	No

Introduction and background

1. As Council is aware government has issued an invitation for all 2 tier local authority areas in England to submit proposals for Local Government Reorganisation (LGR).
2. As set out in the Appendix, and as recommended by Scrutiny and approved by Cabinet at its meeting on the 10 November, Oxford City Council will submit a

proposal that three unitary authorities are created across the geography of Oxfordshire and West Berkshire. In coming to its decision, Cabinet was also able to review and consider the alternative proposals for one- and two-unitary proposals that have been developed by other councils in Oxfordshire.

3. Council is asked to note the decision to submit the three unitaries proposal.
4. The decision is a matter for Cabinet however it has been considered appropriate to bring this to full Council for noting.

Alternative Options Considered

5. All options on the proposals for submission are outlined in the report at Appendix 1.

Other implications

5. There are no other implications arising from this report to Council. All implications of the decision of Cabinet are outlined within the Appendix 1.

Financial implications

6. There are no financial implications arising from the recommendations of this report. All implications of the proposals for submission are outlined in Appendix 1.

Legal issues

7. All legal issues are covered within the body of this report and the Appendix 1.

Level of risk

6. There are no risks associated with this recommendation, in relation to the decision of Cabinet they are as outlined in the Cabinet report at Appendix 1.

Equalities impact

8. There are no equalities impact associated with this recommendation, in relation to the decision of Cabinet they are as outlined in the Cabinet report at Appendix 1.

Report author	Emma Jackman
Job title	Director of Law, Governance and Strategy
Service area or department	Corporate Services
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Background Papers:	
1	Agenda for Scrutiny Committee on Wednesday 5 November 2025, 6.00 pm Oxford City Council
2	Agenda for Cabinet on Monday 10 November 2025, 6.00 pm Oxford City Council

To: Cabinet

Date: 10th November 2025

Report of: Caroline Green, Chief Executive

Title of Report: Full response to Government Statutory Invitation to submit proposal for Local Government Reorganisation

Summary and recommendations	
Decision being taken:	To agree a preferred option for the creation of three unitary councils in Oxfordshire and West Berkshire as a proposal to Government for Local Government Reorganisation (LGR); and to submit the proposal to Government by the 28 November 2025.
Key decision:	Yes. FORWARD PLAN ENTRY
Cabinet Member:	Councillor Susan Brown, Council Leader
Corporate Priority:	Good, affordable homes. Strong, fair economy. Thriving communities. Zero Carbon Oxford. Well-run council.
Policy Framework:	The Government's Devolution White Paper published December 2024. The Council Strategy 2024 to 2028.

Recommendation(s): That Cabinet resolves to:
<p>1. Note and consider all three LGR proposals that have been developed by Oxfordshire and West Berkshire councils for the creation of unitary local government across Oxfordshire, which are presented in the appendices:</p> <p>Three unitary authorities (Greater Oxford, Northern Oxfordshire and Ridgeway) developed by Oxford City Council</p> <p>Two unitary authorities (Oxford and Shires, and Ridgeway) developed by West Oxfordshire District Council, Cherwell District Council, South Oxfordshire District Council, Vale of White Horse District Council and West Berkshire Council</p>

One unitary authority (Oxfordshire Council) developed by Oxfordshire County Council.
2. Agree that Oxford City Council's preferred LGR proposal is for the creation of three new unitary councils covering Oxfordshire and West Berkshire, as set out in Appendix One;
3. Delegate authority to the Chief Executive, in consultation with the Council Leader, to make any further minor amendments to the LGR proposal before its submission to Government in accordance with its prescribed process and requirements to ensure a fully compliant proposal, provided that such amendments do not materially affect the substance of the proposal. This may include the addition of explanatory graphics and case studies, and the design layout of the proposal.

Appendix No.	Appendix Title	Exempt from Publication
Appendix 1	Three unitary councils: Greater Oxford, Northern Oxfordshire, and Ridgeway	No
Appendix 2	Two unitary councils: Oxford & Shires and Ridgeway	No
Appendix 3	A single unitary council: Oxfordshire Council	No
Appendix 4	Risk Register	No
Appendix 5	Equalities Impact Assessment	No
Appendix 6	Appendix 3UA Oxford City Council LGR Proposal	No
Appendix 7	Appendix C Volterra Oxfordshire LGR Economic Growth Report	No
Appendix 8	Appendix F Oxfordshire Unitary Models – Waste, Recycling and Environmental Services Transformation Programme (WESP)	No
Appendix 9	Unmodified 3 unitaries proposal – not involving boundary changes	No

Background - Local Government Reorganisation

- On 16 December 2024, the Government published the Devolution White Paper. The paper sets out the most significant reforms to local government since the Local Government Act 1972, including the ambition to create unitary – or single tier – councils in all existing two-tier areas of England, including Oxfordshire.

2. Government has been clear that it sees local government reorganisation as an enabler to moving towards devolution of powers and funding to Mayoral Strategic Authorities.
3. On 5 February 2025, the Government issued to all councils in Oxfordshire a statutory invitation to prepare proposals for Local Government Reorganisation (LGR). Government requested that any councils wishing to submit LGR proposals should provide an Interim Plan updating on progress towards developing those proposals by 21 March 2025, followed by Full Proposals by 28 November 2025.
4. Government requested that councils within two-tier areas work together to develop a single Interim Plan for their area which may include more than one proposal in development. Oxford City Council worked with all other councils across Oxfordshire to develop three LGR proposals within a single interim plan.
5. Following submission of the Interim Plan, this report proposes the submission of a Full Proposal for the creation of three unitary councils in Oxfordshire and West Berkshire Council. This would see the existing City Council area form part of a larger Greater Oxford unitary council broadly aligned to the geography of the existing Oxford Green Belt. A second new unitary council with the working title of 'Ridgeway' would cover the rest of the existing areas of South Oxfordshire, Vale of White Horse and West Berkshire; and a third new unitary council with the working title of 'Northern Oxfordshire' would cover the entire existing area of West Oxfordshire and the rest of Cherwell.
6. Final proposals are to be submitted by 28 November 2025. The Government will formally consult on compliant proposals in spring 2026 with the Secretary of State deciding on which proposal is selected before summer parliamentary recess.
7. The Government has confirmed its intention that a new unitary council or councils will go live in May 2028 with shadow elections to the council or councils expected in May 2027.

Introduction

8. The Government wishes to see local government transitioning from the current two-tier system of district and county councils to new unitary councils. It also wishes to see councils working in combination to form Strategic Authorities at the sub-regional level where these don't already exist.
9. While the Government has not prescribed a specific model, local authorities are expected to collaborate on proposals that deliver efficiency, high-quality services, and stronger local engagement.
10. Government guidance sets out six key principles:
 - i) Establishment of single tier local government for the whole area, involving sensible economic areas and geographies that will increase housing supply and help meet local needs;
 - ii) Creation of unitary local government at the right size to achieve efficiencies, improve capacity and withstand financial shocks. New councils should serve a minimum population of 500,000, with exceptions considered where this ensures structures are locally appropriate, including for devolution. Decisions

will be made on a case-by-case basis. The proposed three-unitary model addresses this requirement;

- iii) Unitary structures must prioritise the delivery of high quality and sustainable public services to citizens;
- iv) Proposals should show how councils in the area have sought to work together in coming to a view that meets local needs and is informed by local views;
- v) New structures must support devolution arrangements;
- vi) Unitary structures should enable stronger community engagement and deliver genuine opportunity for neighbourhood empowerment.

11. Councils across Oxfordshire and West Berkshire developed three interim options:

- i) Three unitary councils covering all of Oxfordshire and West Berkshire (Greater Oxford, Northern Oxfordshire, Ridgeway) - developed by Oxford City Council.
- ii) Two unitary councils covering all of Oxfordshire and West Berkshire (Oxford & Shires, Ridgeway) - developed by West Oxfordshire District Council, Cherwell District Council, South Oxfordshire District Council, Vale of White Horse District Council and West Berkshire Council.
- iii) A single unitary council covering Oxfordshire (Oxfordshire Council) - developed by Oxfordshire County Council.

12. Interim proposals for proposals were published in March 2025, outlining the case for creating three, two and one unitary authorities. On 3 June 2025 all Oxfordshire's councils received feedback from the MHCLG on the interim proposals.

13. Since then, detailed work has been taking place to develop Full Proposal for the three options. All six Oxfordshire councils and West Berkshire Council have worked collaboratively to share data sets, provide teach-ins for officers across a range of specialist service areas and, where appropriate, to work together to engage with key stakeholder groups.

14. While officers are recommending the approval of the three unitaries proposal as for submission to Government, all three proposals are included in the Cabinet papers for Members to consider.

Three Unitary Authorities

15. The reorganisation of local government is a once in a generation opportunity. This is a key moment both locally and nationally to restore trust in local government by creating organisations which are fit for the future while reflecting the people and places they represent.

16. Introducing three unitary councils creates a unitary city on expanded boundaries, as well as northern and southern unitaries. This would include West Berkshire, which makes it a 'Type C' proposal under the Government's criteria: a single tier of local authority covering the whole of the county concerned, or one or more districts in the county; and one or more relevant adjoining areas.

17. It would also involve boundary changes, to create Greater Oxford on a footprint broadly aligned with the city's existing Green Belt. While Government has stated that it requires strong justification to depart from using existing district areas as the

building blocks for new unitaries, officers believe the Proposal fully meets this threshold.

18. Following MHCLG guidance, legal advice has been taken on how best to present the three unitaries proposal in a way that is consistent with the Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007. This is because while the Statutory Invitation allows for LGR proposals involving boundary changes, the 2007 Act does not make provision for this and the English Devolution and Community Empowerment Bill 2025, which does include such provision is not yet enacted. The 2007 Act does allow the Secretary of State to make modifications to a submitted proposal.
19. Based on the legal advice received, this proposal is presented as a requested modification to the three unitary authorities proposal, as it better meets the criteria set out in the Government's statutory invitation in terms of financial sustainability, sensible economic areas, increased housing supply to meet local needs, robust public services, neighbourhood empowerment and supporting devolution.
20. It should be noted that MHCLG officials have advised officers that the majority of the 21 areas undergoing LGR include proposals that would involve boundary changes.
21. The proposal for three unitary authorities:
 - i) responds directly to Government's ambition to reshape local government around local priorities and opportunities: to unlock renewal of our public services, economy and society through deep connection to the distinct places and communities within our region. Three unitary councils are the best route to realise this vision and fully unleash the huge economic potential of our county, while retaining its strong character and environment.
 - ii) maintains and builds on the great strengths of Oxfordshire. It focuses growth of housing and employment growth around the city so that the wider area can access these opportunities and benefits whilst protecting and enhancing the character of the rural communities and countryside and delivering appropriate and proportionate levels of growth in those areas.
 - iii) has at its core councils, communities, and partners working together to co-deliver early intervention and preventative outcomes in efficient and inclusive ways. This is a huge opportunity to work with our residents, communities and partners on what matters to them most.
22. The LGR proposal strikes the balance of Oxfordshire's diverse needs in serving three distinct geographies and their communities across the county and into western Berkshire, which shares long historic links with southern Oxfordshire. It enables complementary and connected co-existence into the future across a geography that will be much more closely connected through the expected creation of a Thames Valley Mayoral Strategic Authority.

Case for three Unitaries

23. The proposal for three unitary authorities is fundamentally designed to deliver the best possible outcomes for the people, places, and economy of Oxfordshire. It is a direct response to the clear needs and ambitions of the area, providing a blueprint for a modern, effective, and equitable model of local government.

24. The three unitaries will deliver a future where Oxfordshire achieves its full potential across six critical dimensions:
- where **prosperity** is unlocked and shared through Oxford's economic engine;
 - where good affordable **homes** are available to all, and are delivered in a way that enhances sustainability;
 - where **quality of life** is enhanced through preventative, integrated services;
 - Where local community **identity** is strengthened rather than diluted;
 - where democratic **voice** is empowered at every level; and
 - where our local authorities are financially sustainable and **future-fit** and financially sustainable.
25. The case for three unitaries is built on the conviction that the right geography of governance is the foundation for success. This model uniquely delivers across these six elements by creating authorities of the right scale and character to meet Oxfordshire's diverse needs, while reconnecting the southern areas of the existing county and West Berkshire with which they share a long history.
26. It gives Oxfordshire the powers and space to drive transformational prosperity through new homes, jobs, and infrastructure, while ensuring the distinct identities of Oxford, Northern Oxfordshire and Ridgeway are preserved and strengthened through local decision-making. In doing so, it strengthens prosperity alongside health, wellbeing, and inclusion, restores clear and accountable leadership, and ensures that Oxfordshire's diverse communities are recognised and protected, not diminished by scale.

Engagement

27. Oxford City Council, as a proposer of a three unitary solution for Oxfordshire and West Berkshire, has undertaken a very extensive programme of engagement. This has involved many thousand interactions with residents and a broad range of stakeholders.
28. The engagement involved meetings with more than 75 stakeholder organisations including universities, developers, major businesses, parish councils, Members of Parliament, statutory bodies, and neighbouring local authorities.
29. A public survey of Oxfordshire and West Berkshire residents received 1,580 responses, of which 61% of respondents were from outside of the city. 340 residents were engaged through 11 drop-in events across Oxfordshire and one in West Berkshire. The Council's Residents' Panel was also surveyed, and there was a dedicated survey of businesses.
30. Community engagement and inclusivity were enhanced through targeted digital outreach, achieved more than 2.6million impressions and strong interaction across six platforms, with TikTok boosting youth engagement
31. The proposal was brought to the Group Leaders' meetings 6 times, and 4 all Member workshops were delivered as part of the Council's 3 Unitary Authority Local Government Reorganisation proposal. Each workshop focused on key themes, were led and facilitated by one of the Councils senior officers and were open to all Members.

- i) Housing delivery and economy
 - ii) Transport
 - iii) Social Services, communities and housing integration
 - iv) Governance and local representation
32. The input and contributions from all political groups were valued, ensuring a collaborative approach.
33. This comprehensive engagement programme has been central to the development of the three-unitary proposal. Feedback from this process demonstrates strong support for councils that are smaller, closer to their communities, and more responsive to local needs. Businesses highlighted the importance of proximity to the city and support for going beyond the Government's minimum targets for housing delivery.
34. Responses from residents, businesses, and partners consistently indicate a preference for a locally responsive governance model that:
- i) Delivers tailored services
 - ii) Strengthens local representation
 - iii) Balances economic growth with heritage and environmental priorities
35. This feedback underpins the Council's commitment to enhancing democratic participation through formal engagement structures that reflect both urban and rural perspectives. Each new authority will be rooted in its community, preserving local identity, enabling distinctive service models, and creating councils that residents recognise, trust, and feel part of.
36. The three unitaries proposal reflects these priorities by:
37. Preserving historic and cultural identities while aligning governance with community boundaries.
38. Empowering residents through stronger local voice and participatory governance.
39. Supporting economic growth and delivering affordable housing in sustainable locations.
40. Integrating health, education, and social care services.
41. Embedding principles of transparency, co-design, and tailored strategies for urban and rural needs

Other Options Considered

42. As part of the Council's work to develop a three unitary authority proposal, alternative options for Local Government Reorganisation in Oxfordshire were considered. The three alternative potential options are defined as follows:
- i) **Single Unitary Authority for Oxfordshire:** Amalgamation of all councils into a single unitary authority for the whole of Oxfordshire, where Oxfordshire Council is responsible for all services for Oxfordshire residents.
 - ii) **Two Unitary Authorities:** Replacing the current two-tier, six-council system with two unitary councils. Oxford and Shires Council created from the existing district councils for Cherwell, Oxford City and West Oxfordshire; and Ridgeway

Council, created from the existing district councils of South Oxfordshire, Vale of White Horse and the unitary council of West Berkshire.

- iii) **Three Unitary Authorities:** Introducing three unitary councils that create a unitary city on existing boundaries, as well as northern and southern Unitaries, also including West Berkshire. These would be Oxford, Northern Oxfordshire and Ridgeway. This is presented as a compliant proposal under the Local Government and Involvement in Public Health Act 2007.

- 43. The Cabinet may wish not to submit any LGR proposal to Government. Given Government's stated expectation that areas should submit proposals and that others in Oxfordshire are planning to do so, this option is not recommended.
- 44. Officer's recommendation is that the Cabinet endorse the preferred LGR proposal for the creation of three new unitary councils covering Oxfordshire and West Berkshire, on expanded boundaries, as set out in Appendix One for the reasons set out in this report and the Appendix One.

Corporate Priorities and Policies

- 45. The Council has set five strategic priorities it is working to achieve and will seek to progress further through local government reorganisation:

Good, affordable homes

Strong, fair economy

Thriving communities

Zero Carbon Oxford

Well-run council

- 46. Progression of reorganisation ambitions will provide a successor council or councils in Oxfordshire with broader responsibilities to progress social, economic, environmental and operational objectives on a greater footprint than the existing Oxford City Council.
- 47. Local government reorganisation will require partners to ensure democratic participation and voice is protected and where possible, strengthened as part of this process.

Financial implications

- 48. Financial modelling undertaken as part of the LGR proposal, and reviewed by Pixel Financial, has shown the transitional costs of merging seven existing local authorities into the proposed three new unitary councils will be £36.2million. This is in line with the level of transitional costs experienced in previous local government reorganisations.
- 49. The balance sheets of the current authorities were disaggregated into balance sheets for the 3 unitaries by a Finance Specialist at LGFin. This showed that, from a balance sheet perspective, the new authorities would have a sufficient level of assets and resources to be financially sustainable. Various measures of financial health show that the new authorities will start on a strong financial basis when compared with like authorities.

50. The balance sheets of the current authorities were disaggregated in to balance sheets for the 3 unitaries by a Finance Specialist at LGFin. This showed that, from a balance sheet perspective, the new authorities would have a sufficient level of assets and resources to be financially sustainable. Various measures of financial health show that the new authorities will start on a strong financial basis when compared with like authorities.
51. Government has set a clear expectation that the transition costs of LGR must be met by local authorities themselves through efficiencies achieved.
52. Savings will arise from the move to successor unitary authorities from the removal of duplication and rationalisation across a range of services.
53. Strong balance sheets and significant future growth benefits underline the financial sustainability and resilience of the three unitary councils.
54. A manageable revenue position on formation of the unitaries based on disaggregation of their 2025-26 budgets.
55. Payback of transitional costs of £36.2 million and the transformation of services could be achieved within a 4-year period with- no need for any Government support.
56. By year 5 annual net savings of £48.6 million per annum will be achieved through transitional and transformational efficiencies
57. Oxfordshire County Council has already committed £10m from earmarked reserves for local government reorganisation and devolution, which can be used towards the cost of local government reform and devolution (£1.2m of which will be used for devolution). Oxford City Council's Budget 2026/27 is also expected to allocate a provision towards meeting LGR and devolution transitional costs, and it is expected that this pool of funding will be further supplemented by the District Councils to facilitate LGR and devolution activity.

Legal issues

58. The legal basis for the statutory invitation having been issued is the Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007. This report, and the resulting decisions of Government, would signal the continuation of a significant legal and constitutional process. This is set out in detail within this report, with the Council proposing a Type C proposal.
59. Whilst District areas should be considered the building blocks for the proposals more complex boundary changes can be considered where there is strong justification. The Council has sought advice on the format and structure of its proposals. This has confirmed that:
60. A proposal within the existing boundaries and a request to government to modify/a supplementary proposal with boundary changes can be submitted together on a cross-reference basis.
61. A proposal involving boundary changes should include as much information as possible in order to ensure the "strong justification" is demonstrated in the submission.
62. The Secretary of State can then determine the submissions made in line with the above.

63. The decision regarding the submission of a proposal for a single tier of local government under Part 1 of the Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007 ('the 2007 Act'), is an executive function, in accordance with Part 3: Responsibility for Functions as out in the Council's Constitution. This report and recommendation complies with the provisions of the Local Government Act 2000 and the Local Authorities (Functions and Responsibilities) (England) Regulations ('the Functions Regulations').
64. Upon submission to the Secretary of State, under Part 1 of the 2007 Act (Section 7) they may, by order, implement the proposal, with or without modification or decide to take no action. The Secretary of State may not make an order implementing a proposal unless he has consulted every authority affected by the proposal (except the authority or authorities which made it), and such other persons as he considers appropriate.

Level of risk

65. The Secretary of State can decide to take forward proposals that are submitted by areas with or without modification. Furthermore, the Government has the power to initiate and implement LGR, even if local councils choose not to propose changes.
66. It is, therefore, important to submit a compelling, evidence-based vision for LGR to the Government that fully reflects the needs, opportunities and challenges of Oxfordshire's diverse places and communities. (See Appendix Four)

Equalities impact

67. Equality, Diversity & Inclusion of local government services are key aspects of local government reorganisation and service transformation. LGR provides an opportunity to further enhance Equality, Diversity & Inclusion across public services and features prominently in our proposed service delivery model, particularly in structuring services around the principles of Early Intervention and Prevention. (See Appendix Five)

Carbon and Environmental Considerations

68. New unitary authorities will be responsible for meeting government targets on greenhouse gas emissions and setting and agreeing Net-Zero targets. As such this decision should not impact North Norfolk District Council's immediate Net Zero commitments.
69. However, during the time in which LGR is agreed and implemented, there is the potential for delays in the implementation of Net Zero actions for the improvement of community assets and buildings. Should decisions and investment be delayed due to uncertainty of LGR, progress towards Net Zero could be limited, and this would increase the need for accelerated action in the future to meet government targets.

Conclusion

70. The preferred LGR proposal for the creation of three new unitary councils covering Oxfordshire and West Berkshire, on expanded boundaries (as set out in Appendix One), delivers three local councils that:
- Are of significant size and scale.

- Have economic opportunities which can unlock new homes, new skills and new jobs for local people in the most sustainable way, anchored in the character of Oxfordshire's distinct historical city, towns and villages.
- Have different communities and geographies with distinct needs which are best served by locally tailored and delivered public services which ensure local voices are heard and identity retained; and
- Are financially sustainable, safe and legal, with real opportunities to drive efficiencies, savings and local benefit not only through economies of scale but meaningful reform which reduces demand for services and ensures the most people have access to fulfilling lives.

71. Officers are satisfied that the preferred LGR proposal for the creation of three new unitary councils covering Oxfordshire and West Berkshire, on expanded boundaries (as set out in Appendix One), fully meets the government criteria set out in the Statutory Invitation and includes an options appraisal of the other proposals, which score lower.

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Background Papers:

List the background documents and, if possible, link to them.

All background papers must be listed in accordance with the Local Government (Access to Information) Act and The Local Authorities (Executive Arrangements) (Meetings and Access to Information) (England) Regulations 2012. This includes, any material which discloses facts or matters on which the report or an important part of it is based and which have been relied on in the preparation of the report. Each document must be listed and a copy of each document made available to members and the public on request, (or they should be directed where to find it if it is already published on the Council's website). All confidential, exempt, copyrighted and published works are EXCLUDED from this requirement.

- | | |
|---|---|
| 1 | Interim Plan for Oxfordshire, March 2025 |
| 2 | Interim Oxfordshire and West Berkshire Three Unitary Option |
| 3 | Interim Oxfordshire and West Berkshire Two Unitary Option |
| 4 | Interim Oxfordshire Single Unitary Option |

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To: Council

Date: 24 November 2025

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

Title of Report: Updates to Constitution – November 2025

Summary and recommendations	
Decision being taken:	To seek approval for amendments to the Constitution, including updated Committee procedures and confirmation that Council will be responsible for approving Taxi Licensing policy.
Key decision:	No
Cabinet Member:	Councillor Susan Brown, Leader and Cabinet Member for Partnership Working and Inclusive Economic Growth
Corporate Priority:	A Well Run Council.
Policy Framework:	None.

Recommendation(s): That Council resolves to:
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Approve the reservation to full Council of the decision making and approval of Taxi Licensing Policy as set out in Part 5.4 of the Constitution. 2. Approve the changes to the Constitution, as listed in Appendix 1; 3. 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

Information Exempt From Publication	
N/A	N/A

Appendix No.	Appendix Title	Exempt from Publication
Appendix 1	List of proposed amendments to the Constitution	No

Introduction and background

1. The Constitution forms a key part of the Council's governance framework, setting rules, principles and procedures to enable the Council to take decisions and do its work effectively.
2. The Constitution is reviewed annually to ensure that it continues to properly reflect the law and meet the needs of the Council. This report is in addition to the annual review, being both a tidying up exercise and an opportunity to respond to governance changes and issues that have arisen since the previous review.
3. The list of proposed amendments resulting from the Constitution Review are attached at Appendix 1 and summarised below.

Call-in of Planning Applications

4. Following changes to practice of circulating planning applications, this section has been to update the new practice.
5. All Councillors will continue to receive the weekly newsletter for new Planning Applications received.

Changes to Licensing Act 2003 Decisions

6. Following a review of how decisions at Licensing and Gambling Act Committee (LGAC) there are amendments to Part 5.6 in line with advice taken from Counsel by the Council.
7. Advice confirmed that the Licensing Act 2003 is clear in s7 that the LGAC is the proper decision maker in relation to saturation policy / cumulative impact assessment under s5A of the Licensing Act 2003.
8. The Act is set out so that everything rests with Committee for decision unless the Act says otherwise. Therefore, there are some approvals that remain with Full Council under s7, including the decision to approve the Statement of Licensing policy under s5, but otherwise the LGAC is the proper decision maker on all other matters. Committee Procedure Amendments

Public Speaking – Consistency

9. Following the Constitution Review in July 2025 which amended the public speaking for Cabinet and Council, further amendments are proposed to address some practical issues that have occurred in the interim and to ensure that there is consistency across meetings. As such the amendments now require in the rules for Council (11.13), Cabinet (12.10), Scrutiny Committee (13.16) and all other Committees (14.8), that full address should be submitted to the Director of Law, Governance and Strategy ahead of the deadline.
10. Planning Committee, General Purposes Licensing Casework Sub-Committee and Licensing and Gambling Acts Casework Sub-Committee, where there are separate rules around public speaking, would not be impacted with this proposed change.
11. As part of 14.13 (d), a minor amendment was proposed to clearly show the difference between the public speaking rules at the Licensing Committees and the Licensing Sub-Committees.
12. As part of 14.13 (e), the requirement of approving the minutes at the Licensing Sub-Committees was removed as part of the template agenda, as it is not best practice

to approve a set of minutes where the membership of each sub-committee is different.

13. There was also the provision for urgent business included within the order of business for full Council, as per part 11.25 of the constitution.

Contract Rules

14. There are a number of changes to the contract rules, primarily resulting from the commencement of the Procurement Act 2023.
15. The wording within the Constitution has been updated to reflect that the Public Procurement Act 2023 is now in force for all new contracts.
16. The wording has been updated to refer to Public Procurement thresholds rather than FTS (Find a Tender Service). Thresholds are published on the Councils intranet for easy user reference.
17. Clarity has been provided for the storage of hard copy contracts.

Taxi Licensing Policy

18. Taxi Licensing policy has always been reserved to Council in the Constitution.
19. The Local Authorities (Functions and Responsibilities) (England) Regulations 2000 ("the Regulations") set out that either Council or Cabinet can take decisions relating to taxi licensing policy, but the default is Cabinet unless a clear and explicit decision is taken by Council to reserve the decision to itself.
20. Historically, though Council have approved the Constitution year on year, there is no explicit decision to reserve the function to itself.
21. As such, Counsel advised that it therefore remains a decision of Cabinet.
22. Given the intention of Council has been to reserve the decision making on taxi licensing policy to itself, Council are asked to affirm this position and make the explicit resolution at the outset of his report.

Alternative Options Considered

23. Council could consider to not implemented the amendments set out in Appendix 1, however this would be considered to not be appropriate as this is updating certain practices and providing clarity to some of the rules.

Financial implications

24. There are no financial implications arising from the recommendations contained in this report.

Legal issues

25. A local authority is under a duty to prepare and keep up to date its Constitution under section 9P of the Local Government Act 2000 as amended. The Constitution must contain:
- the Council's standing orders/procedure rules;
 - the Council's members' code of conduct;
 - such information as the Secretary of State may direct; and

- such other information (if any) as the authority considers appropriate.
26. A Constitution Direction was issued by the Secretary of State in December 2000 that required around 80 matters to be included within constitutions, covering members' allowances schemes, details of procedures for meetings, details of joint arrangements with other local authorities and a description of the rights of inhabitants of the area, amongst other things.
27. All other legal issues arising from the recommendations are contained in body of this report.

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Service area or department	Law, Governance and Strategy
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Background Papers:	
1	Section 9P Local Government Act 2000
2	Report to Council Constitutional Amendments July 25 - FINAL.pdf

Appendix 1 – List of Proposed Amendments to the Constitution

Part 4 Who carries out executive responsibilities? Annex 1 Matters Delegated to Individual Cabinet Members

Cabinet Member	Date of Delegation	Delegation
Cabinet Member for Citizen Focused Services and Council Companies	19 September 2025	<p><i>Decision as Shareholder in relation to the submission of bids by Oxford Direct Services Limited and Oxford Direct Services Trading Limited for tender opportunities as reserved to the Shareholder in the Shareholder Agreement with the companies</i></p> <p><i>(For information: The Leader, on behalf of the Shareholder, resolved on 19 September 2025 to delegate the authority for decisions in relation to Bids for Oxford Direct Services Limited and Oxford Direct Services Trading Limited. The amendment to the constitution will ensure this is captured for transparency.)</i></p>

Part 5 Who carries out Council responsibilities?

Paragraph	Current	Change	Reason
5.3 Planning (b) who carries out the responsibilities	deciding planning applications that would otherwise be decided by officers that have been called in by councillors by 5pm on the last day of the period of 21-days starting with the day on which notice of the application is sent to councillors (via the weekly planning list) (Part 17.3). <i>In instances where there are significant changes to material planning considerations, as determined by the</i>	deciding planning applications that would otherwise be decided by officers that have been called in by councillors by 5pm on the last day of the period of 21-days starting with the day on which notice of the application is sent to councillors (via the weekly planning list) (Part 17.3). <i>In instances where there are significant changes to material planning considerations, as determined by the</i>	<p>This amends the call-in deadline to running from when it is published on the website.</p> <p>Councillors will continue to receive the</p>

	<p><i>Director of Planning and Regulation, after the initial notice of the application is sent to councillors via the weekly planning list, those applications should be re-notified as such to councillors via the weekly list. In instances such as these the period of 21-days would restart at the point at which the application is re-notified to councillors</i></p>	<p><i>Director of Planning and Regulation, after the initial notice of the application is published on the Council website, those applications should be re-notified as such to councillors via the weekly list. In instances such as these the period of 21-days would restart at the point at which the application is re-notified to councillors</i></p>	<p>weekly planning list via email.</p>
<p>5.4 Licensing of alcohol, entertainment and late night refreshments (b) who carries out the responsibilities</p>	<p>Council sets policies on licensing other than those contained in Section 7, including the Cumulative Impact / Selective Licensing Policy. The Licensing and Gambling Acts Committee:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • reviews and recommends those policies on licensing to Council • reviews and recommends to Council fees and charges as necessary in line with the relevant legislation • appoints licensing and gambling acts casework sub-committees to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ decide whether to give, change to transfer premises licences or club registration certificates when there are objections ○ decide whether to give a temporary premises licence to a replacement licence holder when there are objections ○ review premises licences and 	<p>Council sets policies on licensing as set out in s5 of the 2003 Act other than those contained in Section 7 and which the 2003 Act states are a matter for Committee, including the Cumulative Impact / Selective Licensing Policy. The Licensing and Gambling Acts Committee:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • reviews and recommends those policies reserved to Council under S5 of the 2003 Act • Approve all other policies not reserved to Council in the 2003 Act, including the Cumulative Impact / Saturation Policy • reviews and recommends to Council fees and charges as necessary in line with the relevant legislation • appoints licensing and gambling acts casework sub-committees to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ decide whether to give, change to transfer premises licences or club registration 	

	<p>club registration certificates after a closure order</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ decide valid applications for a review of a premises licence or club registration certificate ○ deal, when there are objections, with applications for a statement saying the Council expects to give a licence to premises that are yet to be built or converted ○ decide whether to prevent one-off events when there are objections from the police ○ decide applications to change the premises supervisor or appoint a temporary supervisor when there are objections from the police ○ decide applications for personal licences when there are objections from the police ○ decide whether to withdraw a personal licence on hearing of a conviction ○ respond to consultation on an application by another body that gives licences. <p>The Director of Planning and Regulation. has responsibility for everything else within the Licensing Act 2003.</p>	<p>certificates when there are objections</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ decide whether to give a temporary premises licence to a replacement licence holder when there are objections ○ review premises licences and club registration certificates after a closure order ○ decide valid applications for a review of a premises licence or club registration certificate ○ deal, when there are objections, with applications for a statement saying the Council expects to give a licence to premises that are yet to be built or converted ○ decide whether to prevent one-off events when there are objections from the police ○ decide applications to change the premises supervisor or appoint a temporary supervisor when there are objections from the police ○ decide applications for personal licences when there are objections from the police ○ decide whether to withdraw a personal licence on hearing of a conviction 	
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		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ respond to consultation on an application by another body that gives licences. <p>The Director of Planning and Regulation. has responsibility for everything else within the Licensing Act 2003.</p>	
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Part 11 Council Procedures

Paragraph	Current	Change	Reason
11.3 order of business	<p>The order of business will be:</p> <p>Part 1 – Public Business</p> <p>(a) Election of chair (if the Lord Mayor and Deputy Lord Mayor are absent)</p> <p>(b) Apologies for absence</p> <p>(c) Declarations of interests</p> <p>(d) Announcements from the Lord Mayor, Sheriff, Leader, Head of Paid Service, Chief Finance Officer and Monitoring Officer</p> <p>(e) Appointments to committees</p> <p>(f) Approval of the minutes of the last meeting of Council as a correct record, and those of any earlier meetings that have not already been approved</p> <p>(g) Public addresses that relate to a decision at the meeting (Part 11.12 and 11.13)</p>	<p>The order of business will be:</p> <p>Part 1 – Public Business</p> <p>(a) Election of chair (if the Lord Mayor and Deputy Lord Mayor are absent)</p> <p>(b) Apologies for absence</p> <p>(c) Declarations of interests</p> <p>(d) Announcements from the Lord Mayor, Sheriff, Leader, Head of Paid Service, Chief Finance Officer and Monitoring Officer</p> <p>(e) Appointments to committees</p> <p>(f) Approval of the minutes of the last meeting of Council as a correct record, and those of any earlier meetings that have not already been approved</p> <p>(g) Public addresses that relate to a decision at the meeting (Part 11.12 and 11.13)</p>	<p>To include the provision for urgent business within the order of business for Council. Details of this provision is found at part 11.25 of the Constitution</p>

	<p>(h) Any unfinished business from the last meeting (but motions not dealt with in the time available do not count as unfinished business)</p> <p>(i) Recommendations from the Cabinet</p> <p>(j) Reports for decision by the meeting</p> <p>(k) Minutes from the Cabinet</p> <p>(l) Questions by councillors to members of the Cabinet and committee chairs (Part 11.11 (b))</p> <p>(m) Any other business for decision or information including any business for which a motion to exclude the press and public is to be put to Council Part 2 – Public Involvement and Scrutiny</p> <p>(n) Public addresses other than those taken in part 1 of the meeting (Part 11.12 and 11.13)</p> <p>(o) Consideration of petitions (Part 11.15);</p> <p>(p) Reports and questions about organisations the Council is represented on (Part 11.16)</p> <p>(q) Report by the Chair of the Scrutiny Committees (Part 11.17)</p>	<p>(h) Any unfinished business from the last meeting (but motions not dealt with in the time available do not count as unfinished business)</p> <p>(i) Urgent Business (Part 11.25)</p> <p>(j) Recommendations from the Cabinet</p> <p>(k) Reports for decision by the meeting</p> <p>(l) Minutes from the Cabinet</p> <p>(m) Questions by councillors to members of the Cabinet and committee chairs (Part 11.11 (b))</p> <p>(n) Any other business for decision or information including any business for which a motion to exclude the press and public is to be put to Council Part 2 – Public Involvement and Scrutiny</p> <p>(o) Public addresses other than those taken in part 1 of the meeting (Part 11.12 and 11.13)</p> <p>(p) Consideration of petitions (Part 11.15);</p> <p>(q) Reports and questions about organisations the Council is represented on (Part 11.16)</p> <p>(r) Report by the Chair of the Scrutiny Committees (Part 11.17)</p>	
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	(r) Recommendations and reports from scrutiny committees Part 3 – Motions – Representing the City (s) Motions on notice (Part 11.18).	(s) Recommendations and reports from scrutiny committees Part 3 – Motions – Representing the City (t) Motions on notice (Part 11.18).	
11.13 rejecting addresses	<p>The Director of Law, Governance and Strategy can reject a public address or a question on notice by a councillor, and the Lord Mayor can reject an address or question without notice, if:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • it is not about something the Council is responsible for, unless it directly affects people in the City, the Council is able to make representations on the issue. • In all cases where it is considered potentially defamatory, or otherwise frivolous, trivial or offensive • it requires the Council to make public exempt or confidential information (Part 15.4) • it relates to individual personal circumstances • a substantially similar address has been submitted on the topic within the last six months, whether or not by the same individual 	<p>The Director of Law, Governance and Strategy can reject a public address or a question on notice by a councillor, and the Lord Mayor can reject an address or question without notice, if:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It is not in a full prose format but is provided in short bullet points and does not reflect a copy of a speech to be made in its entirety • it is not about something the Council is responsible for, unless it directly affects people in the City, the Council is able to make representations on the issue. • In all cases where it is considered potentially defamatory, or otherwise frivolous, trivial or offensive • it requires the Council to make public exempt or confidential information (Part 15.4) • it relates to individual 	This will ensure the full address has been received and reviewed by the Monitoring Officer

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> the request is made in relation to a matter for decision before Council but relates solely to the wider topic and not the recommendations for consideration <p>If an address or question is rejected by the Director of Law, Governance and Strategy or the Lord Mayor reasons must be given.</p>	<p>personal circumstances</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a substantially similar address has been submitted on the topic within the last six months, whether or not by the same individual the request is made in relation to a matter for decision before Council but relates solely to the wider topic and not the recommendations for consideration <p>If an address or question is rejected by the Director of Law, Governance and Strategy or the Lord Mayor reasons must be given.</p>	
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Part 12 Cabinet Procedures

Paragraph	Current	Change	Reason
12.10 Addresses from Members of the Public	Members of the public can submit addresses in writing about any item for decision at the meeting. Questions, stating the relevant agenda item, must be received by the Director of Law, Governance and Strategy by 5.00pm three clear working days before the meeting. An address may last for no more than five minutes.	Members of the public can submit addresses in writing about any item for decision at the meeting. The full text of the address, stating the relevant agenda item, must be received by the Director of Law, Governance and Strategy by 5.00pm three clear working days before the meeting. An address may last for no more than five minutes. The public speaker must	This will ensure the full address has been received and reviewed by the Monitoring Officer to avoid any issues on the day of the meeting leading to a need to interrupt a speaker

	<p>Addresses can be submitted either by letter or by email (cabinet@oxford.gov.uk).</p> <p>Responses to the addresses will be provided in writing at the meeting; supplementary addresses will not be allowed. If it is not possible to provide an answer at the meeting it will be included in the minutes.</p> <p>The Chair has discretion in exceptional circumstances to agree that a submitted address or related statement (dealing with matters that appear on the agenda) can be asked verbally at the meeting. In these cases, the address is limited to 3 minutes and will be answered verbally by the Chair or another Cabinet member or an officer of the Council.</p> <p>For this agenda item the Chair's decision is final.</p> <p>There will be 15 minutes in total for this item.</p>	<p>stick to the submitted address and the Leader has discretion to curtail the address if the public speaker departs from the submitted address.</p> <p>Addresses can be submitted either by letter or by email (cabinetreports@oxford.gov.uk).</p> <p>Addresses may be rejected by the Monitoring Officer on the basis as set out at Part 11.13 of this Constitution.</p> <p>Responses to the addresses will be provided in writing at the meeting; supplementary addresses will not be allowed. If it is not possible to provide an answer at the meeting it will be included in the minutes.</p> <p>The Chair has discretion in exceptional circumstances to agree that a submitted address or related statement (dealing with matters that appear on the agenda) can be asked verbally at the meeting. In these cases, the address is limited to 3 minutes, and will be answered verbally by the Chair or another Cabinet member or an officer of the Council.</p> <p>For this agenda item the Chair's decision is final.</p>	
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Paragraph	Current	Change	Reason
13.16 Public Speakers at Scrutiny Committee	<p>Members of the public can submit Addresses, in writing about any item for discussion at the meeting. Addresses, stating the relevant agenda item, must be received by the Director of Law, Governance and Strategy (acscrutiny@oxford.gov.uk) by 5pm at least three clear working days Questions can be submitted either by letter or by email. An address may last for no more than five minutes.</p> <p>Members of the Scrutiny Committee can ask questions to the public speaker.</p>	<p>Members of the public can submit addresses in writing about any item for discussion at the meeting. The full text of the address, stating the relevant agenda item, must be received by the Director of Law, Governance and Strategy (acscrutiny@oxford.gov.uk) by 5pm at least three clear working days. Addresses can be submitted either by letter or by email and may last for no more than five minutes. The public speaker must stick to the submitted address and the Chair of the Committee has discretion to curtail the address if the public speaker departs from the submitted address.</p> <p>Addresses may be rejected by the Monitoring Officer on the basis as set out at Part 11.13 of this Constitution.</p> <p>Members of the Scrutiny Committee can ask questions to the public speaker.</p>	<p>This will ensure the full address has been received and reviewed by the Monitoring Officer</p>

Paragraph	Current	Change	Reason
14.8 Speaking on agenda items	<p>Specific rules on public speaking apply to meetings of Planning Committee, Planning Review Committee, General Purposes Licensing Casework Sub-Committee and Licensing and Gambling Acts Casework Sub-Committee.</p> <p>For all other committees where the press and public are not excluded (Council, Cabinet, Scrutiny Committee, Audit and Governance Committee, Standards Committee, General Purposes Licensing Committee and Licensing and Gambling Acts Committee) any member of the public can speak on any agenda item for up to five minutes and should register to speak by 5.00 pm three clear working days before the meeting, including a draft of the speech submitted to the Director of Law, Governance and Strategy</p>	<p>Specific rules on public speaking apply to meetings of Planning Committee, Planning Review Committee, General Purposes Licensing Casework Sub-Committee and Licensing and Gambling Acts Casework Sub-Committee.</p> <p>For all other committees where the press and public are not excluded (Council, Cabinet, Scrutiny Committee, Audit and Governance Committee, Standards Committee, General Purposes Licensing Committee and Licensing and Gambling Acts Committee) any member of the public can speak on any agenda item for up to five minutes and should register to speak by 5.00 pm three clear working days before the meeting, including a draft of the full text of the address speech submitted to the Director of Law, Governance and Strategy (democraticservices@oxford.gov.uk). The public speaker must stick to the submitted address and the Chair of the Committee has discretion to curtail the address if the public speaker departs from the submitted address.</p> <p>Addresses may be rejected by the Monitoring Officer on the basis as</p>	<p>This will ensure the full address has been received and reviewed by the Monitoring Officer</p>

		set out at Part 11.13 of this Constitution.	
14.9 Councillors Speaking on agenda items	For all other committees where the press and public are not excluded (Cabinet, Scrutiny Committee, Audit and Governance Committee, Standards Committee, General Purposes Licensing Committee and Licensing and Gambling Acts Committee) Oxford City councillors can register to speak for up to five minutes on any agenda item by 5.00 pm three clear working days before the meeting.	For all other committees where the press and public are not excluded (Cabinet, Scrutiny Committee, Audit and Governance Committee, Standards Committee, General Purposes Licensing Committee and Licensing and Gambling Acts Committee) Oxford City councillors can register to speak for up to five minutes on any agenda item by notifying the Director of Law, Governance and Strategy (democraticservices@oxford.gov.uk) by 5.00 pm three clear working days before the meeting.	To include the email address for Members wishing to address the other committees.
14.13 (d) Written statements at licensing sub-committee meetings	Any written statements that members of the public, applicants, or councillors wish to be considered by a licensing committee or sub-committee must be submitted to the Licensing Authority at least two working days before the meeting.	Any written statements that members of the public, applicants, or councillors wish to be considered by a licensing sub-committee must be submitted to the Licensing Authority at least two working days before the meeting.	To clearly state there are different public speaking rules for the Licensing Sub-Committees
14.13 (e) Licensing Committee procedures	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Election of Chair (if the Chair is absent or a Chair has not been appointed for this hearing) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Election of Chair (if the Chair is absent or a Chair has not been appointed for this hearing) Apologies for absence Declarations of interest 	The requirement of approving the minutes at the Licensing Sub-Committees was removed as part of the template agenda, as it is not best practice to approve a set of minutes where

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Apologies for absence • Declarations of interest • Procedure to be followed at the meeting • Minutes of the previous meeting • Items for decision or information • Dates of future meetings 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Procedure to be followed at the meeting • Items for decision or information • Dates of future meetings 	the membership of each sub-committee is different.
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Part 17 Call-in Procedures

Paragraph	Current	Change	Reason
17.3 Who can call in decisions and when do they have to be called in by? Decisions on planning applications (those seeking determinations within 5.3(a)) to be taken by the Director of Planning and Regulation	5pm on the last day of the period of 21- days starting with the day on which notice of the application is sent to councillors (via the weekly planning list) or, in instances where there are significant changes to material planning considerations, as determined by the Director of Planning and Regulation, after the initial notice of the application is sent to councillors via the weekly planning list,	Deadline: 5pm on the last day of the two working day period starting the day after the decision notice is published	This brings the call-in deadline to be in line with when the decision is published on the website. Councillors will continue to receive the weekly planning list via email.

	5pm on the last day of the period of 21-days starting with the day on which councillors are re-notified (via the weekly list).		
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Part 19 Contract Rules

Paragraph	Current	Change	Reason
19.2 When do these rules apply	For Contracts which are exempted contracts under Part 2, section 3 of the Public Contract Regulations 2015 (the Regulations) and, once in force, Schedule 2 of the Procurement Act 2023 (the Act) the following rules will not apply:	For Contracts which are exempted contracts under Schedule 2 of the Procurement Act 2023 (the Act) the following rules will not apply:	The wording has been updated to reflect the Public Procurement Act 2023, which is the only Act now in force for new Contracts.
19.2 When do these rules apply	contracts above the relevant procurement law threshold which are procured using the negotiated procedure without prior publication under Regulation 26 (2)(h) of the Procurement Act 2023, when enacted, except insofar as to require compliance with the Regulations (Service Directors are authorised to take appropriate action subject to agreement with the Monitoring Officer and must report such action and the expenditure incurred to the next meeting of the Cabinet.)	contracts above the relevant procurement law threshold which are procured without prior publication under section 41(1) of the Procurement Act 2023, except insofar as to require compliance with the Procurement Regulations 2024 (Service Directors are authorised to take appropriate action subject to agreement with the Monitoring Officer and must report such action and the expenditure incurred to the next meeting of the Cabinet.)	The wording has been updated to reflect the Public Procurement Act 2023, which is the only Act now in force for new Contracts.
19.6 Before a contract	For all contracts over FTS a	For all contracts over the public	Updating from FTS (Find a

is tendered and/or awarded	<p>financial appraisal has been undertaken by the Group Finance Director. The relevant Service Director must not award the contract until it has been approved by the Group Finance Director, and a named contract manager appointed.</p> <p>For all quotes and tenders over the FTS threshold a Procurement Commencement Document (available from the Council's intranet) which evaluates options for the solution to be procured and route to market must be produced and approved by the Procurement Team and the relevant Service Director.</p>	<p>procurement regulatory thresholds a financial appraisal has been undertaken by the Group Finance Director. The relevant Service Director must not award the contract until it has been approved by the Group Finance Director, and a named contract manager appointed.</p> <p>For all quotes and tenders over the public procurement regulatory thresholds a Procurement Commencement Document (available from the Council's intranet) which evaluates options for the solution to be procured and route to market must be produced by the procuring officer and approved by the Procurement Team and the relevant Service Director.</p>	<p>Tender, also known as Central Digital Platform) and stating that this applies to all Contracts over the Public Procurement Regulatory Thresholds which are published on the Councils Intranet. This means that when the value changes there will be one place to update.</p>
19.7 Total contract value	<p>Goods, Services and Works: The total contract value is the total amount (including VAT) that is expected to be paid to the supplier as a result of the contract award during the whole life of the contract. This includes any possible extensions to the contract.</p>	<p>Goods, Services and Works: The total contract value is the total amount (including VAT) that is expected to be paid to the supplier as a result of the contract award during the whole life of the contract. This includes all potential payments from optional extensions, renewals, or additional suppliers adhering to the methodology set out in</p>	<p>Ensuring that this clause is in-line with the PPA 2023 wording and providing guidance to users as to how to evaluate the whole life cost.</p>

		Schedule 3 of the Procurement Act 2023.	
19.9 Framework Agreements and Dynamic Markets	The Council may use Framework Agreements and Dynamic Markets set up by third parties where the Framework Agreement or Dynamic Market entitles the Council to do so, subject to the approval of Procurement Team and Legal Services, other than for contracts under the relevant value where standing approval is given.	The Council may use Framework Agreements and Dynamic Markets set up by third parties where the Framework Agreement or Dynamic Market entitles the Council to do so, subject to the approval of The Procurement Team and Legal Services, other than for contracts under the relevant public procurement regulatory thresholds where standing approval is given.	Changing from FTS to Public Procurement Regulatory Threshold – the same as 19.6
19.10 Format of Contracts	The Council's purchase order terms and conditions or bespoke contract drafted by the Council or call-off form of contract	The Council's purchase order terms and conditions (where the purchase is of low value and low complexity) or Council's Standard terms and conditions or bespoke contract drafted by the Council or call-off form of contract	Adding in the wording (where the purchase is of low value and low complexity) to ensure that if the value of a purchase is low value, but is reliant on integration with other systems, or resource, or is complex that Purchase order Terms are not used.
19.13 Exemptions and Waivers	An Exemption is an approval that, for one of the following reasons, the procurement is exempt from the procurement procedure requirements contained in 19.14, 19.15 and 19.16 only (any other departures require a waiver):	An Exemption is an approval that, for a below public procurement regulatory threshold for one of the following reasons, the procurement is exempt from the procurement procedure requirements contained in 19.14, 19.15 and 19.16 only (any other departures require a waiver):	Wording changed – an exemption cannot be used if the value is above the Regulatory Threshold – the change in wording states that an exemption is for below now. Above threshold would be a Waiver.
19.14 Tendering of	Tenders will be sought in	Tenders will be sought in	Removed (once in force) -

contracts	<p>accordance with the requirements of the procurement law in force from time to time and best practice. If the contract value means the contract is regulated by the Procurement Act 2023 (once in force) and/or the Public Contract Regulations 2015 the Procurement Team will advise of the various options available and which would be the best course of action and will assist with the tender process.</p> <p>Expressions of interest and tenders will be sought via advertisement on the Council's Corporate Tendering Portal, the Government's procurement portal (Central Digital Platform) and the Find a Tender Service (FTS).</p>	<p>accordance with the requirements of the procurement law in force from time to time and best practice. If the contract value means the contract is regulated by the Procurement Act 2023 the Procurement Team will advise of the various options available and which would be the best course of action and will assist with the tender process.</p> <p>Expressions of interest and tenders will be sought via advertisement on the Council's Corporate Tendering Portal, the Government's procurement portal (Central Digital Platform) also known as Find a Tender Service (FTS).</p>	<p>the Procurement Act is in force now.</p> <p>Giving Clarity to FTS</p>
19.15 Corporate Tendering Portal	<p>(a) Tenders £30,000 or over must be submitted via the Corporate Tendering Portal or the electronic system that was used to invite tenders as well as on the Government's procurement portal.</p> <p>(b) Each tender received via the Corporate Tendering Portal is automatically date and time stamped. The tender cannot be</p>	<p>(c) Tenders £30,000 including VAT or over must be submitted via the Corporate Tendering Portal or the electronic system that was used to invite tenders as well as on the Government's procurement portal.</p> <p>(d) Each tender received via the Corporate Tendering Portal is automatically date and</p>	<p>Added the wording "including VAT"</p>

	accessed until after the tender deadline.	time stamped. The tender cannot be accessed until after the tender submission deadline.	
19.19 Copies of contracts and register of contracts	<p>(a) Storage of Contracts</p> <p>Contracts with a value of £30,000 or more (and any variations to such contracts) shall be sent to the Group Finance Director by the relevant procuring officers to be kept securely:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • for a least seven years from its end date if it was signed; • for a least 13 years from its end date if it was sealed, <p>All contracts under £30,000 will be retained by the relevant service area in line with the retention policies of the Council. The Contract Manager/Service area</p>	<p>(c) Storage of Contracts</p> <p>Contracts with a value of £214,000 or more (and any variations to such contracts) shall be sent to the Group Finance Director by the relevant procuring officers to be kept securely:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • for a least seven years from its end date if it was signed; • for a least 13 years from its end date if it was sealed, <p>All contracts under £214,000 will be retained by the relevant service area in line with the retention policies of the Council. The</p>	<p>Increase in value for (a) only. Procurement asks for a scanned version of a contract with the CAM form when the value is above £30,000 and keep those electronically (unless back of order Terms have been used, then that is stored on the Agresso system). Procurement do not have the capacity to store all hard copy below threshold contracts</p>

	<p>must keep hard copies of their contracts and any variation of such contracts for the above detailed period of time.</p> <p>(b) Keeping a register of contracts</p> <p>The Group Finance Director will keep and publish on the Council's website a central register of contracts of £30,000 or over, recording and publishing details as required under the Transparency Code for Local Government and will be published on the Council's website.</p>	<p>Contract Manager/Service area must keep hard copies of their contracts and any variation of such contracts for the above detailed period of time.</p> <p>(d) Keeping a register of contracts</p> <p>The Group Finance Director will keep and publish on the Council's website a central register of contracts of £30,000 or over, recording and publishing details as required under the Transparency Code for Local Government.</p>	
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Changes to table at 19.13:

Contract Value Including VAT	Who can authorise use of an Exemption	Who can authorise a Waiver
£0 - £29,999.99	<p>Service Director in consultation with:</p> <p>Strategic Procurement Manager</p>	<p>Service Director in consultation with the Strategic Procurement Manager, even with the requirement of one quote</p>

£30,000 - public procurement regulatory threshold	Service Director in consultation with:		Legal Services Manager (on behalf of the Director of Law, Governance and Strategy)	Changes to table at 19.16:
	Value Including VAT up to £29,999.99	Type Strategic Procurement Manager and Legal Services Goods	Quotes or tendering Minimum one quote in writing, (local supplier if possible) or	Process led by
	Deputy Chief Executive in consultation with:	Works Services in Concession	Use of an approved Framework, Director of Law, Governance and Strategy with:	Officer authorised by the relevant Service Director
	£30,000.00 and over up to public procurement regulatory threshold (where it is over the procurement regulatory threshold this is for Waivers only, exemptions are not allowed over threshold)	Group Finance Director; Strategic Procurement Manager; and Director of Law, Governance and Strategy	A minimum of three written quotes (one from a local supplier if possible). 6 Group Finance Director and relevant Service Director recommended as best practice. or	Officer authorised by the relevant Service Director or the Procurement Team
Over Key Decision Threshold ((where it is over the procurement regulatory threshold this is for Waivers only, exemptions are not allowed over threshold)			Use of an approved Framework, Director of Law, Governance and Strategy In	Officer authorised by the relevant Service Director with the Procurement Team taking the lead
	£30,000.00 and over up to £999,999.99 Cabinet	Works Concession	Minimum 4 written quotes or consultation with: Use of an approved Framework, Group Finance Director and relevant Deputy Chief Executive and Service Director recommended as best practice.	

Over public procurement regulatory threshold	Goods Services	Tender process in compliance with legal requirements undertaken via the Procurement Portal or Use of an approved legally compliant Framework or Dynamic Market	
£1M and over up to public procurement regulatory threshold	Works Concession	Minimum 6 written quotes. A full tender process recommended as best practice or Use of an approved legally compliant Framework or Dynamic Market	Officer authorised by the relevant Service Director with the Procurement Team taking the lead
Over public procurement regulatory threshold	Works Concession	Tender process in compliance with legal requirements undertaken via the Procurement Portal or Use of an approved legally compliant Framework or Dynamic Market	

Changes to table at 19.17:

Contract Value Including VAT	Who may take the decision to award
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£0 – up to public procurement regulatory threshold	Service Director or relevant officer authorised by Service Director.
public procurement regulatory threshold - up to Key Decision Threshold	Group Finance Director or Deputy Chief Executive provided there is a budget and project approval has been given by OCB/Development Board, Corporate Leadership Team or Cabinet
Over Key Decision Threshold	Cabinet

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To: Council

Date: 24 November 2025

Report of: Monitoring Officer

Title of Report: Recommendation from the Standards Committee to censure Councillor Malik

Summary and recommendations	
Decision being taken:	The Local Hearing Panel of the Standards Committee found that Councillor Malik had breached the Council's Code of Member Conduct and that the sanction imposed should be the formal censure of the full Council.
Key decision:	No
Cabinet Member:	N/A
Corporate Priority:	None.
Policy Framework:	None.

Recommendation(s): That the **Council** resolves to:

1. **Censure** Councillor Malik in respect of the finding that he breached the Members' Code of Conduct.

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

Introduction and background

1. Complaints were received by the Monitoring Officer concerning the behaviour of Cllr Malik at the full Council meeting on the 18 March 2024 when interrupting fellow councillor Anna Railton, shouting over her as she spoke.

2. At its meeting on 12 May 2025 the Local Hearing Panel (the Panel) considered two complaints that Councillor Malik had breached the Members' Code of Conduct. It specifically found as that Councillor Malik has breached the Code of Conduct as follows:
 - That Councillor Malik had acted in a way that negatively impacted on the meeting of full Council on 18 March 2024 and the ability for the voices of other councillors and officers to be heard. Whilst the Panel found that Cllr Malik's actions were intimidating, insulting, undermining and denigrating to officers and councillors, it was not agreed upon that bullying had occurred.
 - That Councillor Malik had therefore breached sections 6.1, 6.4 and 6.5 of the Code of Conduct in relation to respect, giving due regard to professional advice and bringing the Council into disrepute.
3. The Panel determined that the sanction to be imposed is the censure of the full Council.

Financial implications

4. There are no financial implications arising from the report.

Legal issues

5. Censure is one of the sanctions available where a councillor is found to have breached the Code of Conduct.

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Background Papers:	
1	(Public Pack)Minutes Document for Standards Committee, 12/05/2025 18:00

To: Council

Date: 24 November 2025

Report of: Monitoring Officer

Title of Report: Recommendation from the Standards Committee to censure Councillor Latif

Summary and recommendations	
Decision being taken:	The Local Hearing Panel of the Standards Committee found that Councillor Latif had breached the Council's Code of Member Conduct and that the sanction imposed should be the formal censure of the full Council.
Key decision:	No
Cabinet Member:	N/A
Corporate Priority:	None.
Policy Framework:	None.

Recommendation(s): That the Council resolves to:
1. Censure Councillor Latif in respect of the finding that he breached the Members' Code of Conduct.

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

Introduction and background

1. Complaints were received by the Monitoring Officer concerning the behaviour of Cllr Latif at the full Council meeting on the 18 March 2024 when he repeatedly challenged the Lord Mayor, Monitoring Officer, Chief Executive, speaking over them and disrupting the meeting.

2. At its meeting on 19 June 2025 the Local Hearing Panel (the Panel) considered two complaints that Councillor Latif had breached the Members' Code of Conduct. The complaints related to conduct at the meeting of the full Council on 18 March 2024. It was specifically found that Cllr Latif had breached the Code of Conduct as follows:
 - The Panel unanimously agreed that Councillor Latif was in breach of the Code of Conduct in relation to a lack of respect and disregard for professional advice.
 - The Panel accepted and agreed with the findings and conclusions of the External Investigator's report.
 - The Panel found Councillor Latif's actions were intimidating, insulting, undermining and denigrating to officers and councillors. However, it was not agreed upon that this had exceeded the threshold to be considered as bullying.
 - The Panel agreed that Councillor Latif's conduct brought the Council into disrepute.
 - That Councillor Latif had therefore breached sections 6.1, 6.4 and 6.5 of the Code of Conduct in relation to respect, giving due regard to professional advice and bringing the Council into disrepute.
3. The Panel determined that the sanction to be imposed is the censure of the full Council. In addition, the Panel recommended that Councillor Latif undertake further Code of Conduct training, specifically around rules of attending committees, and that he issues a formal apology to the Monitoring Officer, Lord Mayor and Chief Executive.

Financial implications

4. There are no financial implications arising from the report.

Legal issues

5. Censure is one of the sanctions available where a councillor is found to have breached the Code of Conduct.

Report author	Emma Griffiths
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Background Papers:	
1	(Public Pack)Minutes Document for Standards Committee, 19/06/2025 18:00