

Oxford City Council's Corporate Plan 2016 - 20

With a population of 158,000 that grew by 12% in the decade 2004 - 2014, Oxford is the eighth fastest growing English city. As a global centre for research, education and health, and with a growing high-tech sector the city is the economic and cultural hub of Oxfordshire's world-class knowledge economy. The city's heritage environment and outstanding cultural attractions attract millions of visitors each year. It is an ethnically and culturally diverse city with the third highest ethnic minority population in the South East. And with the highest proportion of students in England and Wales, it is also a youthful and mobile city.

With our success come many opportunities, but also considerable challenges that must be addressed if the city is to achieve its full potential and make an appropriate contribution to the UK economy. A lack of land for housing and employment, transport infrastructure that is at full capacity, and major skills gaps threaten to constrain the city's growth potential. Key employers such as the BMW Group, the University of Oxford and the NHS cite high housing costs as a challenge to the recruitment and retention of staff. The housing crisis is causing increasing hardship for many people in the city, particularly the most vulnerable and least well paid.

For many of our residents Oxford offers great opportunities for work and leisure. But there are major inequalities in residents' life chances and life expectancy, and ten of the areas of the south and east of the city are among the 20% most deprived in England. People in these areas can expect to live on average six years less than those in the more affluent areas. While 43% of Oxford residents have degree level qualifications or above, 22% have no or low qualifications.

Our ambition, which has been developed with our partners among local businesses, community organisations, unions, the health and education sectors and the County Council, is to make Oxford a world-class city for all our citizens. This plan sets out our vision and strategy, focusing on five interlinked priorities which address the key needs of the city:

- A Vibrant and Sustainable Economy
- Meeting Housing Needs
- Strong and Active Communities
- A Clean and Green Oxford
- An Efficient and Effective Council

The City Council has achieved much already as is recognised as one of the best councils in the country for excellence of our services. We are proud to have achieved numerous awards including the MJ award for the highest achieving council in 2014; the APSE Overall Council of the Year in service delivery in 2015 and Investors in People Champion status acknowledging our achievements as an exemplar employer.

We continue to pursue this ambition in the context of a new era for Local Government. The City and County Councils face massive reductions in central Government funding whilst demand for our services increases. On-going cuts in social security systems and changes to central Government policy present new challenges to the way we deliver services and in particular, impact on our plans for investment in affordable housing.

Our approach in recent years of prudent long-term financial management and delivery of increasingly efficient and effective customer focused services stands us in good stead to manage the impact of these challenges. Since 2010, we have lost 47% of

our grant from Government and it will disappear altogether by 2020. The City Council has saved £8.5 million over the last four years and will achieve further cumulative efficiency savings of £7 million over the next four years. We aspire to maintaining all the services at their current level or better, so we will need to find new ways to manage demand and make access easier and cheaper. We will continue to increase income from asset management, trading and charging for services and seeking external funding.

The City Council will work to secure long term investment that supports growth and prosperity to benefit all our residents. Supporting vulnerable people and safeguarding people at risk of crime or exploitation is a priority. We aim for all our residents to benefit from good local services recognising that some people will require more support than others. We will target our resources proportionately to reflect different needs and reduce inequality.

We cannot achieve our vision without our partners - councils, public agencies, business and voluntary and community organisations. The City Council is focused on building strong partnerships, collaboration and influencing others. We play a lead role in the Oxford Strategic Partnership (OSP) that brings together key city organisations to focus on how we can best realise our shared ambitions for economic development, urban regeneration, tackling deprivation, improving education and skills, reducing crime and promoting a low carbon Oxford. With our neighbouring district councils, the County Council, the Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP) and other partners we are currently seeking greater local control over finances and decision making so we are better able to target our resources where they are needed most.

Oxford City Council - building a world class city for everyone

By creating successful places in which to live and work and supporting people to reach their potential we will create a strong local economy and a city in which all our residents can thrive.

A Vibrant, Sustainable Economy	Meeting Housing Needs	Strong and Active Communities	A Clean and Green Oxford	An Efficient and Effective Council
Partnership – Building strong and effective partnerships with business, communities, universities and the public sector to join up investment and services				
Devolution – Working with neighbouring councils and our partners to ensure that Oxford has greater control over decisions on investment and services				
Oxford will be a centre of world-leading technology and business innovation, with growth and increased investment in enterprise and the knowledge economy.	A greater supply and more diverse mix of housing in and around the city with better, sustainable transport links will provide homes that are more affordable to all and help local employers to attract and retain employees.	All residents will have the opportunity to participate in high quality community, leisure and cultural activities that improve health and the quality of life and enable them to fulfil their potential.	The city's environmental performance will demonstrably improve, leading to an efficient and renewable energy rich, sustainable urban environment.	Residents will continue to benefit from high quality services due to strong financial management and new ways of working and despite reductions in Government funding.
Improvements to housing provision, infrastructure & public transport across the city will tackle affordability, congestion and support businesses to grow.	Investment in new affordable homes will help key workers, those on low incomes and the most vulnerable to find a home that they can afford and meets their needs.	Our diverse communities will benefit from high quality, safe neighbourhoods and good local services, with support targeted to reflect differing levels of need and deprivation across the city.	Better public transport and more opportunities to walk and cycle will mean that roads are less clogged with traffic and the air is cleaner and health is improved through exercise.	Customers will receive the assistance they need at the first point of contact and have greater access to services through the internet and phone apps.
Use of new technology and better data will enable the city to grow in a way that is efficient, environmentally sustainable and that benefits future generations.	People renting their home from a private landlord in Oxford will know that their home will be well maintained, safe and free from overcrowding.	Young people in Oxford will have a positive transition to adulthood through good education, skills training and opportunities for work and leisure.	Residents, visitors and commuters in Oxford will enjoy a high quality environment with streets, neighbourhoods and open spaces that are attractive, safe, clean and free from litter.	The City Council will actively manage its investment property portfolio to achieve higher returns to support further investment in our communities and services.
Residents in Oxford will be able to acquire the range of skills they need to join our world class workforce and meet employers' needs.	Council tenants will benefit from high quality, energy efficient homes in good quality environments.	Inequality will be reduced by providing low income households with support to maximise their income.	The amount of waste will be reduced, and more waste recycled through excellent recycling services, saving money and energy.	The City Council will build on its reputation for reliable and effective services and seek to provide them to external organisations to generate additional income.
Development in and around the city that will enable businesses and organisations to locate, start and grow locally.	There will be fewer rough sleepers and homeless people, and families will get appropriate accommodation and support to get back on their feet.	Our residents, especially the vulnerable and those at risk, will be protected from crime and anti-social behaviour.	The city will become more resilient to the impacts of climate change and extreme weather, for example, flooding.	The City Council will be an exemplar employer which champions innovation and diversity, pays a living wage, and has high quality staff who feel supported and perform to the best of their abilities.

A Vibrant Sustainable Economy –a smart and entrepreneurial city with a thriving local economy supported by improved infrastructure, training and skills

Oxford is the economic and cultural hub of Oxfordshire’s world-class knowledge economy. The city’s economic output was valued at £6.1 billion in 2013, making it an important net contributor to the Treasury. It is a diverse economy: a global centre for education, health, bioscience, digital and car manufacturing; a lead area for publishing and creative industries and high performance engineering; and a growing high-tech sector.

However, this success brings challenges:

- there is a lack of land and premises for commercial and residential uses;
- shortage and cost of housing, transport costs and congestion are barriers to growth and staff recruitment and retention;
- labour shortages and skills needs are a barrier to entry level jobs;
- Oxford is constrained by its boundaries, and infrastructure is at full capacity.

Traffic congestion and pollution are already severe and significant investment in our transport networks and infrastructure is needed to attract businesses to the city and help them to grow. Half of Oxford’s workforce is employed in public services, including the two universities and four NHS hospitals; the City Council is seeking to improve the balance of the local economy by promoting growth in industry and enterprise. For this we need to protect and increase the amount of employment land available in the city, invest in transport infrastructure and ensure that the local workforce has the skills that businesses require. Oxford’s prosperity is not shared equally by all its residents with some areas of the city experiencing significant pockets of severe deprivation: for these reasons, a key priority for the City Council remains to ensure that all our residents benefit from the opportunities offered by a thriving local economy.

The City Council is addressing these issues by investing directly in improving the city’s infrastructure, working alongside our partners to develop smart city initiatives, to support local businesses and Small and Medium-sized Enterprises (SMEs) to grow, to improve the skills of the local workforce through investment in educational attainment, apprenticeships and training. These constraints cannot be tackled in isolation and the City Council will need to build on our strong partnerships with neighbouring authorities, public sector partners, developers and business to capitalise on the unique opportunities presented by the knowledge economy and concentration of high-tech businesses. The City Council plays a key role in promoting and shaping development, working with investors, developers and landowners. We will review our Local Plan in 2018 to make sure it continues to make the most of opportunities for development to meet the city’s needs. In partnership with the County and four Oxfordshire District Councils, the LE P and the universities, we have developed an ambitious Strategic Economic Plan to deliver 100,000 new homes and 85,600 new jobs across the County by 2031. We are working together to deliver the Oxford and Oxfordshire City and Growth Deals, agreed with Government that will see significant investment in infrastructure to boost growth.

These are strong foundations, but more is needed to achieve our full potential. In particular we are still unable to provide the infrastructure that is needed to support growth, and central control of skills funding does not adequately address the needs of our local economy. We are therefore working with the other Oxfordshire authorities and the LEP for a Devolution Deal that could provide greater local control over investment for transport, housing, skills training and health services.

Key facts

- Oxford has the ninth highest GVA per capita of cities in the UK.
- 73% of Oxford jobs are in ‘knowledge’ sectors.
- A third of Oxfordshire’s jobs are in Oxford and 46,000 people commute into the city each day.
- Oxford is the least affordable city in the UK for housing (Centre for Cities, 2015).
- Over the last five years, the city has lost an average of 2.5 hectares of employment land per annum, largely to development of residential and student accommodation.
- Oxford has a low unemployment benefit claimant rate of 0.6% however there are also 4,550 people on Employment Support Allowance many of whom need to be supported into work.
- While 43% of Oxford’s residents have degree-level qualifications or above, 22% have no or low qualifications and children in our state schools are under-performing compared with the national average.

A Vibrant Sustainable Economy –a smart and entrepreneurial city with a thriving local economy supported by improved infrastructure, training and skills

<p>Over the next four years and beyond we will work with our partners to:</p> <p>Make the case for greater local control and devolution of decisions and investment in transport, housing, skills and business growth to better meet the needs of our economy.</p> <p>Promote growth and increased investment in enterprise and the knowledge economy.</p> <p>Improve infrastructure, public transport and opportunities for walking and cycling across the city to reduce congestion and support economic and housing growth.</p> <p>Deliver effective support to attract new businesses and allow local businesses to prosper and grow.</p> <p>Improve workforce skills to meet local demand by working with Oxfordshire Skills Board to support educational attainment, traineeships, apprenticeships and better targeting of funding for skills across the spectrum.</p> <p>Promote and shape development and unlock land for housing and employment sites to help meet the needs of the city.</p>	<p>What is going to happen as a result?</p> <p>We will</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work in partnership with the other councils in Oxfordshire, the LEP and others to negotiate an ambitious Devolution Deal with Government. • With our partners, deliver the Oxford and Oxfordshire City and Growth Deals to invest over £160 million to improve infrastructure, create 18,000 high tech jobs, 30,000 jobs in construction and accelerate the delivery of 7,500 new homes across the County by 2018. • Review our Local Plan to ensure our policies and plans for development reflect the needs of the city and set a framework for development up to 2036. • Work with developers, local residents and other stakeholders on development and regeneration of mixed use and employment-led sites, where possible within the city, such as the Oxford rail station, Northern Gateway, Barton, Headington, Westgate, Oxpens, and Osney Mead. • Develop partnerships with investors and landowners to increase the supply of commercial space and residential property, and make efficient use of our land and property assets. • Work with our neighbouring councils and partners to bring forward development outside the city boundaries. • Attract European and national funding to support innovation in the private, academic and public sectors. • Work with the County Council to deliver the city’s priorities in the Oxford Transport Strategy and unlock transport blockages. • Invest £3.2 million in improvements to our car parks, and expand capacity at Seacourt Park and Ride so more people can travel into the city by public transport. • Work with the LEP and local businesses to improve skills training and create more apprenticeships and make the case for greater local control of funding for skills. • Support business start-ups and enable businesses to grow, through a coordinated approach to business advice and information services alongside the LEP and Oxfordshire councils. • Invest in improvements to the city centre, working with Experience Oxfordshire to improve the quality of the tourism offer and support city traders. • Work with our partners through the Oxford Strategic Partnership’s ‘Smart Oxford’ initiative to use data, new technology and new processes to deliver more efficient and effective services. • Grow the low-carbon economy through our OxFutures project to mobilise investment in renewable energy and work with the Oxford Strategic Partnership through the Low Carbon Oxford project to create a low-carbon economy. • Ensure that developments meet high environmental and energy performance standards. 	<p>Find out more –</p> <p>City Council’s Economic Development page; Oxford Economic Growth Strategy; Oxford Strategic Partnership</p>
<p>How will we measure our progress?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Amount of employment space permitted for development • Number of jobs created or safeguarded in the city • Number of businesses starting up in the city 		

Meeting Housing Need – improving Oxford residents’ access to affordable and high quality homes in good environments that are close to jobs and facilities.

High demand for and scarce availability of homes mean there is a severe housing crisis in Oxford that is causing increasing hardship for people and families and threatening the local economy. The high cost and limited availability of housing is a major barrier to growth. Many of the main businesses in the local economy including the BMW Group, the universities and the NHS, as well as the growing high tech sector identify housing as the most significant barrier to the recruitment and retention of staff. Oxford is now the least affordable city to live in the UK both in terms of home ownership and private rented housing. Households are being priced out of the market and rising rents and restricted benefits are set to further squeeze households on the lowest incomes. There are also challenges in meeting the demand for housing from Oxford’s large student population. The scarcity of homes means that one in five of Oxford’s residents live in a Multi-Occupation dwelling. High demand and high rental values in Oxford have meant that private landlords can charge high rents for poorly managed and badly maintained properties. The City Council is tackling this through its HMO Licensing Scheme which since 2011 has seen around 3,000 homes improved by private landlords.

Lack of affordability puts severe strain on social housing; there are 3,300 households on the city’s housing waiting list. Homelessness is increasing despite our work to tackle it through the use of temporary accommodation. The effects of Government’s austerity measures and changes in social security provisions are imposing additional pressures on housing and increasing the incidence of homelessness and hidden homelessness. At the same time, the Government’s budget and housing policies including the reduction in social rents, extending the right to buy and the forced sale of council homes will mean a significant scaling back of the City Council’s ambitious plans to invest in improving homes and estates and in building new homes. Whilst the full impact of these new Government policies cannot yet be assessed, we estimate that it will reduce the amount that is available to invest in social housing by £54 million over the next four years. We know that the City Council will face difficult choices about how we continue to provide affordable housing in the future. We are exploring options, including a new Local Housing Company that could provide an alternative model for investment and delivery of homes for those on low and moderate incomes who cannot afford home ownership. This includes a wide range of employees who provide vital functions for the city and community - teachers, nurses, and academics.

To deal with our housing crisis, between 24,000 and 32,000 new homes are needed in the period 2011-2031. The city is constrained by its boundaries so not all of these homes can be built in Oxford and will need to be located in adjacent areas. The Districts have agreed 15,000 additional homes are needed beyond the city boundaries by 2031 to meet Oxford’s housing needs and we are working with them to identify locations for housing to sustainably meet these needs. Amongst the solutions which need to be considered is a review of current Green Belt boundaries so that homes can be located near to Oxford.

We will need significant investment in roads, public transport and cycle routes to support new housing within and around the city. We are working with neighbouring authorities and the LEP through the Oxford and Oxfordshire City Deal and our emerging Devolution Deal to secure the investment needed to deliver infrastructure and build 100,000 new homes across the county by 2031. We are playing an active role in promoting housing development in the city wherever possible, working through partnerships such as our joint venture with Grosvenor Development Ltd. to build nearly 900 homes at Barton Park; and building affordable homes on council land, for example in partnership with GreenSquare Housing Association at Cowley and Northway; and a prospective partnership for the development of the Oxpens site.

Key facts

- House prices in Oxford are 16 times average earnings (Average full-time earnings in Oxford are £26,500; average house prices are £426,700).
- The number of people who own their own home in Oxford is well below national average at 47% compared to 63% in England as a whole.
- 24% of Oxford’s adult population are students – this is the highest in England.
- The median private rent for a three-bedroom house is £300 per week, over half median earnings and 30% above the Local Housing Allowance Rate of £230 per week.
- There are over 3,300 people on Oxford City Council’s Housing Register.
- HMO Licensing Scheme has resulted in landlords investing over £3.2 million in home improvements.

<p>Meeting Housing Need – improving Oxford residents’ access to affordable and high quality homes in good environments that are close to jobs and facilities.</p>	
<p>Over the next four years and beyond we will work with our partners to:</p> <p>Tackle the city’s housing crisis by promoting high quality development in the city and in locations near to Oxford with good transport links working in partnership with developers, universities, businesses and neighbouring District Councils to build the homes that Oxford needs.</p> <p>Build more affordable homes in partnership with developers, housing associations, universities and health sector to meet the needs of different income groups and types of employment in the city, including those on low incomes and those who are vulnerable.</p> <p>Improve conditions for private tenants by proactively enforcing standards for private landlords and managing the impact on neighbourhoods of Houses in Multiple Occupation (HMOs).</p> <p>Improve homes for our existing tenants by refurbishing our properties above national standards, making homes more energy efficient and improving the general environment of our estates.</p> <p>Tackle homelessness and rough sleeping by securing appropriate accommodation and support for those affected.</p>	<p>What is going to happen as a result?</p> <p>We will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work with neighbouring councils to bring forward sites and the investment needed to develop 24,000 – 32,000 new homes by 2031 to meet Oxford’s housing need. • Work in partnership to build 900 homes at Barton Park through our joint venture company with Grosvenor Development Ltd. and to build further new homes at sites such as Cowley, Northway and Oxpens. • Develop new models to secure future investment in and delivery of affordable homes including considering a local housing company to ensure the City Council can continue to invest in affordable homes in the light of changes to Government housing policies. • Use our planning policies to ensure high quality development in good quality environments and to secure affordable housing. • Work with partners to develop a greater range of housing options, such as co-housing, shared ownership schemes, and housing for key workers, to meet the varied requirements of people who work in the city, this includes continuation of our Equity Loan Scheme for teachers. • Invest £46 million in refurbishing the five tower blocks and a programme to improve homes to the “Oxford Standard” improving kitchens, bathrooms, security, heating, and in making properties more energy efficient to save people money. • Invest £13.5 million to improve the environment around our housing stock through our Great Estates programme and the regeneration of Blackbird Leys, Barton and Rose Hill. • Investing £2 million over four years in Disabled Facilities Grants in adaptations to help disabled people have better access to and movement around their homes. • Continuing to invest through our revolving fund to bring empty properties back into use. • Expand our HMO Licensing Scheme to cover 85% of HMO properties in the city. • Maintain our innovative partnership for the procurement of homes for homeless families with £5 million council investment matched by our partners to give a total investment of £10 million. • Work to ensure sufficient homes for temporary accommodation to prevent homelessness and work with Oxfordshire County Council to redesign support for homeless people in the light of cuts to County Council’s budgets. • Continue to support residents affected by changes to social security systems to support in finding work and by providing advice on housing and benefits.
<p>How will we measure our progress?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of new homes granted permission in the city • The percentage of HMOs licensed in the city • Limit our use of temporary accommodation at 2015 levels. 	<p>Find out more -</p> <p>City Council's Housing Strategy page, Homelessness Strategy Asset Management Plan</p>
<p>Strong and Active Communities – socially cohesive and safe communities</p>	

Oxford is steadily growing in population and diversity with the third-highest minority ethnic population in the south-east. Our communities are made up of many diverse groups and interact around place, cultural identity and shared interests.

Our aim is that everyone in the city has the opportunity to:

- be engaged in the diverse social and cultural life of the city
- be active and engaged in leisure and sporting activities in the city
- be protected from the risk of crime, exploitation and anti-social behaviour
- have the support they need to achieve their potential.

For many of its residents, Oxford is a thriving city with a wide range of opportunities for work and leisure; however there are also major inequalities in life chances and life expectancy. Ten areas of the city are among the 20% most deprived areas in England with low skills, low incomes and weaker levels of social integration. Child poverty is a key concern in six neighbourhoods which feature among the 10% worst-affected in England.

Addressing these inequalities in life chances and health is a key priority for the City Council. It underpins the ambition to increase prosperity and economic growth in ways which benefit all our residents, and our financial inclusion strategy which aims to support low income households to maximise their income. Our challenge is to understand the changing needs of our communities and to tailor our resources to the differing levels of support needed to help people achieve their potential. Our Area Forums and Community Partnerships bring together local councillors, the police, health and education providers, business and residents to ensure that services are responsive to local needs.

The City Council has invested heavily in developing high quality activities, services and facilities for our communities that have been recognised by a raft of awards. The award winning Youth Ambition programme invests £240,000 annually to support young people to develop the skills, experience and ambition to achieve their potential. We work with schools to ensure that young people secure social, cultural and health benefits from their education as well as academic achievement, for example by supporting the schools' sports programme in the city. We are investing in community centres across the city, including £4.7 million in the new Rose Hill community centre. Our £1.5 million annual grants programme supports voluntary and community groups across the city to deliver services and support vulnerable groups. In recent years use of our leisure centres has substantially increased and many more people are now taking part in regular physical activity. Looking to the future, we will need to work closely with the local authority and health partners to ensure that community services can be maintained in the face of Government cuts and reduced budgets.

Oxford should be a city where people feel safe, particularly the elderly and those who are in any way vulnerable. We recognise that investment in services for young people and early engagement is a very effective approach to dealing with these issues, backed by the capacity to take appropriate enforcement action. Building safer communities requires a coordinated approach to safeguarding vulnerable children, families and adults. We are recognised for our work in leading the Oxford Safer Communities Partnership and proactively engaging in the local safeguarding boards to ensure a multi-agency approach to protecting those at risk of abuse or exploitation.

Key facts

- 22% of Oxford residents are from a black or minority ethnic group and 14% are from a white but non-British ethnic background.
- Life expectancy is nine years lower for men and four years lower for women in the most deprived areas of Oxford, compared to the least deprived areas.
- Around 20% of Oxford's under 16s live in low-income households.
- In 2014/15 the City Council investment in cultural activities leveraged £6.6 million to the city's economy from grants, donations and income
- Visits to our leisure centres in 2014/15 have increased 53% since 2008 with the highest increases in our target groups; 98% of people are satisfied or very satisfied with our leisure centres.
- Over 6,000 young people have taken part in our Youth Ambition Programme.
- Despite falls in overall crime rates a small number of people in the city are at risk from trafficking, exploitation and abusive crimes.

Strong and Active Communities – socially cohesive and safe communities

<p>Over the next four years and beyond we will work with our partners to:</p> <p>Tackle inequality through improved prosperity and by targeting resources to those who need most support.</p> <p>Provide high quality community and leisure facilities and seek to increase participation in regular physical activity to improve people’s health and quality of life.</p> <p>Improve opportunities for young people to engage in positive activities and develop the skills and ambition to achieve to the best of their abilities.</p> <p>Celebrate diversity and support our different communities by understanding their needs, supporting voluntary and community groups and delivering high quality cultural events and activities.</p> <p>Promote safe neighbourhoods and tackle anti-social behaviour through education and early engagement with problems, backed by enforcement action if required.</p> <p>Safeguard and support vulnerable people including improving quality of life for older people and protecting children, families and adults at risk of exploitation or crime.</p>	<p>What is going to happen as a result?</p> <p>We will</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure that residents across the city benefit from economic growth and increased economic opportunity, and support low income households to maximise their income. • Ensure that our community buildings and spaces are well used, high quality and inclusive; including investing £220,000 in improving our community centres, £1.3 million in sports and recreation grounds and pavilions and £5 million in the Horspath Athletics Ground • Work with communities and partners to encourage participation and develop new models of service and develop the use of our public buildings for a wide range of community services. • Engage young people in our Youth Ambition programme to improve educational attainment, their skills and ambition; and work with schools to ensure that young people benefit from social, cultural and sports opportunities. • Provide a £1.5 million per annum budget to support voluntary and community organisations and the services they provide. • Invest in improvements to cemeteries and in developing new burial space. • Work with our partners in the Oxfordshire Strategic Partnership and the Health and Well-Being Board to reduce health inequalities, integrate services, and improve health and well-being of residents. • Through our leadership of the Oxford Cultural Partnership, continue to improve the opportunities for Oxford’s diverse communities to engage actively in a wide range of cultural activities. • Work with communities and residents to tackle problems of anti-social behaviour and nuisance and through education, engagement and appropriate enforcement create safer places. • Lead the Oxford Safer Communities Partnership through a change of focus and resources towards crimes such as trafficking, domestic violence, child sexual exploitation and all forms of grooming. • Continue to play a leading role in Oxfordshire’s Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub and the Oxfordshire’s Safeguarding Board to coordinate and improve safeguarding.
<p>How will we measure our progress?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Resident satisfaction with their area as a place to live • The number of people taking part in our Youth Ambition programme • Number of people using leisure centres and sports facilities 	<p>Find out more - Leisure and Well-being Strategy, Community Centres Strategy (new), Culture Strategy, Community Safety Strategy.</p>

A Clean and Green Oxford –an attractive and clean city that minimises its environmental impact by cutting carbon, waste and pollution

Environmental sustainability is key for the planet, the nation and the city. Our vision is for a city that is energy efficient, rich in biodiversity and has a growing resource of fossil free energy and a demonstrably lower environmental footprint. We use our environmental, planning and economic development roles to enhance the sustainability of the city and are working with partners through initiatives like Low Carbon Oxford to use new technology to improve the city’s environmental performance. We aim to be a European centre of innovation and excellence and will benchmark the city against other national and European cities.

The quality and cleanliness of the city is one of the most important factors in maintaining the health and quality of life of those who live and work in Oxford. Visitors to the city contribute £800 million per year to the local economy and clean, safe and attractive streets and open spaces encourage them to stay longer and return to the City. The City Council is working with partners to raise awareness and encourage behaviour that will help to tackle issues such as fly-tipping, littering, and dog fouling. Our achievements are reflected in high levels of satisfaction for our street cleaning service, the Purple Flag status for excellence in our services in the city centre, and six of our parks securing Green Flag awards.

High quality waste collection services are crucial to the quality of life in the city. Reducing total volumes of waste and increasing the proportion of waste that is recycled reduces the city’s environmental impact. Despite challenges of the high churn of our population, the high number of Houses of Multiple Occupation and self-contained flats, Oxford is one of the top-performing cities in the country for recycling. This is a result of our long term investment in improving recycling services, expanding recycling to cover food and garden waste and raising awareness of the importance of waste reduction. Disposal costs for waste and recycling are increasing and our challenge is to further reduce the amount of waste produced and drive down costs by using new technology to improve the efficiency of our workforce.

Reducing carbon emissions is a key element in our drive to minimise our environmental impact and helps to achieve wider priorities: ensuring that economic growth and development is sustainable; using financial resources effectively; and improving the health and quality of life for our residents. We strive to make our buildings, fleet and operations as energy and fuel-efficient as possible and continue to invest in renewable energy to power our offices and leisure centres. We are also investing in insulating social housing and installing solar panels to improve the health and wellbeing of our residents and save them money.

It is vital for Oxford as a growing, sustainable city that we continue our work to improve air quality. The Low Emission Zone has reduced emissions in the city centre and we will build on this in partnership with the County Council to reduce pollution and emissions in the city. For example through improvements to cycle lanes and parking and park and rides to encourage travel by bus and bicycle in the city.

We face enormous challenges dealing with climate change and extreme weather events, from droughts, to floods and storms. In 2013/14 over 70 properties flooded in the city causing damage to homes and the local economy. Through the Oxford Area Flood Partnership and with the Environment Agency we are investing in major flood protection projects to protect homes and businesses against flooding.

Key facts

- 79% of people are satisfied with the street cleaning service in Oxford.
- Recycling rates in Oxford have increased by more than 30% in the last 10 years to 46.5 % making us the third highest performing city in the country.
- Carbon emissions overall in Oxford reduced by 11.4% between 2005 and 2013.
- Each year the City Council successfully reduces emissions from our own estate by 5%, saving over £500,000 a year on utility bills.
- We have insulated 286 properties, and put solar panels on a further 69 houses in the past two years.
- Our Oxford Cycle City project has delivered over £250,000 worth of cycling improvements in Oxford.
- Nitrogen dioxide (NO2) levels have dropped by 35% at roadsides in the City centre over the last 10 years.
- Oxford has the first Low Emission Zone outside of London and is actively planning for the advent of a zero emission zone for the city centre.

<p>A Clean and Green Oxford – an attractive and clean city that minimises its environmental impact by cutting carbon, waste and pollution</p>	
<p>Over the next four years and beyond we will work with our partners to:</p> <p>Save energy and reduce carbon emissions through energy saving and renewable energy schemes that bring down energy bills, tackle fuel poverty and reduce the city’s carbon footprint.</p> <p>Tackle congestion and pollution that frustrates growth and damages peoples’ health through a better public transport offer, our low emission zone and by promoting cycling and walking.</p> <p>Improve cleanliness of our streets, neighbourhoods and open spaces so that Oxford is an attractive, clean and safe place which residents, visitors and those who work in the city enjoy.</p> <p>Reduce the total amount of waste and increase the proportion of the waste stream that is recycled providing excellent recycling services and facilities across the city and working with partners to promote recycling.</p> <p>Protect the city from extreme weather events and flooding by working with partners to invest in effective flood defences.</p>	<p>What is going to happen as a result? We will</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Benchmark our environmental performance, implement the Covenant of Mayors in respect of climate change, and learn from the best in Europe to drive improvement. • Invest in energy efficiency, renewable energy to continue to reduce carbon emissions from our own estate by 5% each year and encourage others to follow suit. • Through Government Salix Scheme and our own Salix-plus fund we will invest in renewable energy, energy efficiency and water savings technology to reduce environmental impact and save money. • Continue to maximise energy efficiency of our tenants homes where possible, including a full upgrade of five tower blocks with external insulation and double glazing, improved loft insulation and a continued heating replacement programme. We will also investigate the feasibility of more solar panel installations. • The OxFutures programme, with a grant from the European Commission, will work to secure £20 million investment in local energy projects by the end of 2016. • Explore all forms of external funding (such as the EC, DEFRA) to make positive differences to environmental quality, health, and carbon reduction. • Increase capacity of our Park and Ride at Seacourt so more people take the bus into the city. • Continue to improve our air quality monitoring; work with the County Council as the highway authority, to tackle pollution hotspots in the city centre; and inform residents. • Continue to drive efficiency of our waste and street cleaning services through better use of technology and investment in our vehicles and machinery. • Continue to invest to maintain our Purple Flag status and Green Flag awards for our green spaces; cherish and enhance our green spaces and work to increase biodiversity. • Reduce the total amount of waste produced and increase the proportion of the waste stream that is recycled by providing incentives and raising awareness through our Blue Bin Recycling League, completing the roll out of our weekly food waste collection to include a further 19,000 flats and promoting recycling of garden waste. • Develop a more cost effective way to recycle waste products to help drive down costs whilst improving recycling levels including a waste transfer station for the city. • Reduce the flood risk to 110 properties in Northway and Marston £2.6 million • Work with partners to deliver the Oxford Flood Alleviation Scheme to protect businesses, households and important transport links in the western and southern parts of the city. £1.5 million
<p>How will we measure our progress?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Satisfaction with our street cleaning services • Decrease in amount of waste produced in the city 	<p>Find out more - Low Emissions Strategy; Sustainability Strategy for Oxford 2011-2020</p>

• Annual reduction in the City Council's carbon footprint.	
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<p>An Efficient and Effective Council- A customer focused organisation, delivering efficient; high quality services that meet people's needs</p>	
<p>The City Council has a highly committed workforce with a track record of delivering excellent services that meet the needs of our customers; ensuring we get it "right first time". We have lost 47% of our Government grant over the last 6 years and in response have achieved £8.5 million of cost savings over four years. We are aiming to achieve another £7 million of cumulative efficiencies on our non-housing budget over the next four years to deal with increasing costs of waste recycling and the cost of business rates appeals at a time when our Government grant will continue to decline, and the future funding arrangements for Local Government remain uncertain.</p>	<p>Key facts</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Oxford City Council has achieved £8.5 million of efficiency savings in the last four years without compulsory redundancies.
<p>The Government's continuing changes and reductions in the systems of personal and family social security, and recently announced changes to housing policy create major new pressures for our forward budget. We are now planning for additional reductions of around £54 million in housing spending over the next four years. Whilst the full implications of the policy changes are uncertain, it is clear the City Council has to expect significant reductions in the net budget and face difficult decisions about maintaining our planned level of service to the community. At the same time, demand for these services will increase due to the effects of the Government's housing policy and changes in social security systems and the reductions in the budgets of our partner organisations. The City Council's aims to deal with these challenges through robust financial planning, continuous service improvement and finding new ways to deliver services. As all areas of the public sector face significant financial pressure we will work collaboratively with our partners to collectively make the best use of our resources, find new ways to improve the services we provide and to safeguard those who are most vulnerable to cuts in services.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Our counter fraud team successfully prevented losses to the City Council of £3.8 million over the last 18 months • Our customer service centres help more than 40,000 people every year and deal with 260,000 calls every year.
<p>We are implementing the Customer Service Excellence standard across the City Council to make sure our staff have the right skills to deliver an excellent customer service. We have reviewed services like waste collection and housing benefit and invested in new technology to streamline processes and reduce costs. Our investment in on line service provision including our Council App, new web site and a tenants' portal enable customers to access services at a time which is convenient to them, costs less and thereby enables resources to be redirected to those who need more support.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 91% of queries are resolved at the first point of contact and 89% of people are satisfied with the service they receive.
<p>The high quality of our services is reflected in our numerous awards and the fact that we now provide these services to external organisations. We will continue to build our external business in areas in which we excel (building works, commercial waste and engineering services) in order to generate additional revenue for reinvestment.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The City Council was awarded the MJ Award for the Highest Achieving Council in 2014 and the APSE Overall Council of the Year in service delivery in 2015.
<p>We will also continue to protect the public purse; and have improved the way we procure goods and services and manage a procurement hub that operates across all councils in Oxfordshire. This, accompanied by training for staff to improve their skills and knowledge of procurement and contract management is delivering greater value for money from our supply chain. We have also reviewed the way we manage our buildings and invest in our property to generate on-going savings. Our counter fraud team have successfully prevented losses to the City Council of £3.8 million over the last 18 months and recent investment in new technology will increase their capability to do more.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The City Council pays a living wage (£8.93 per hour in 2016/17) to all staff and require the same of our contractors and suppliers.
<p>Our staff are key to our current and future success. We are proud to be seen as an exemplar employer and will continue to work with the union and invest in management and skills development to foster a more innovative, commercial culture within which staff are actively engaged in developing ideas to achieve our ambitions for the City.</p>	

<p>An Efficient and Effective Council- A customer focused organisation, delivering efficient; high quality services that meet people's needs</p>	
<p>Over the next four years and beyond we will:</p> <p>Continue to deliver high quality services to residents and businesses in the City ensuring the flexibility to deal with uncertainty about future funding.</p> <p>Continue to invest in technology to provide customers with more flexible and lower cost ways of accessing services.</p> <p>Manage our property and assets effectively to generate savings and maximise returns.</p> <p>Manage our contracts and procurement processes effectively to deliver maximum value for money and continue to develop our anti-fraud capability to protect public money.</p> <p>Recruit, develop and value a diverse workforce which reflects the make-up of the community that we serve, tackling barriers to employment and career progression.</p>	<p>What is going to happen as a result?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Our Medium Term Financial Strategy will deliver £7 million of cumulative efficiency savings over the next four years, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Changes to the way we deliver our business support, multi-skilling our staff and simplifying and automating our procedures will save around £400,000 per year; - Generating further efficiencies in our ICT service to save £220,000 per year. • The new City Council website, the tenants' portal, eClaim and eBilling applications will make it easier for people to access information, report issues, and contact and transact with the City Council on-line. • We will identify opportunities to offer our professional and technical services to other organisations to generate additional resources. • We will invest in projects which generate on-going savings, including more cost effective ways to recycle waste products. • We will achieve Customer Services Excellence status for the whole organisation • We will improve value for money in the services and goods that we procure and ensure that 40% of the council's third party spend is with local SMEs so that it delivers wider benefits to the local economy. • Prioritise investment in our properties to maintain our assets and spend to save initiatives which generate increased income for the City Council. • Develop our investment property portfolio to obtain higher returns. • Our Leadership and Management Development Programme will improve management skill and performance across the organisation. • We will champion the diversity of our workforce and maintain our Investors in People Gold Champion Status. • We will work with the Unions to renegotiate the City Council's pay deal in 2017 to ensure a fair deal for staff and one which is affordable for the City Council. <p>Find out more - Medium Term Financial Strategy Budget Book</p>
<p>How will we measure our progress?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Percentage of customers satisfied at their first point of contact • Delivery of the City Council's identified savings and income targets • Levels of staff engagement based on staff survey results 	

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