

Oxford City Council Business Plan 2023-2024

Priority 1: Enable an inclusive Economy

	Council Strategy 2020-2024 Outcome	Year 4 (2023-2024) Actions
Deliver	1. Our Council-owned companies will have increased their profits to help maintain the services we provide, and we will have supported more local businesses, including social enterprises and cooperatives, by changing the way we buy our goods and services.	Continue to provide capital investment to enable the Council's wholly owned housing company, OX Place, to continue to deliver new housing.
		ODS to continue to look to expand its reach across the city and county, by securing new public and commercial contracts. Council to work with partners in the Oxfordshire Resources and Waste Partnership to influence Government changes in waste & recycling and mitigate impacts on ODS.
		Embed the Council's new Procurement Strategy, which ensures social value is a key part of the assessment process for new contracts.
		Deliver on the Procurement Strategy action plan, including rolling out Contract Management and Training, finalising the 'OxTOMS' tool for the measurement and management of social value in our procurement, and reviewing how to further incorporate Equality, Diversity & Inclusion (EDI) and sustainability into the procurement process.
Deliver	2. Our staff will be more skilled and confident in delivering services our citizens want and our workforce will better reflect Oxford's diverse population.	Embed Oxford's Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Strategy and delivery action plan.
Partner	3. Oxford's economy will be stronger, with diverse sectors providing a wider range of accessible business and employment opportunities for all.	Ensure the development of the draft Local Plan 2040 supports economic growth in the city in an inclusive and sustainable way by allocating much needed employment space, balanced with housing and other key uses and infrastructure needs. Explore the inclusion of an affordable workspace policy to support start-ups and third sector groups to contribute to a more inclusive economy.

	4. We will have secured different types of new workspace in the city to support business and employment growth	<p>Publish the Asset Management Action Plan and a review progress over the first year. Identify new income streams from the Council's assets to support the Council's broader ambitions, including workspace.</p> <p>Commence the redevelopment of new and enhanced Council-owned employment space at Cave St - Standingford House, including the provision of affordable workspace.</p> <p>Complete and open new Council-owned city centre workspace at 1-3 George Street, including the provision of affordable workspace</p> <p>Continue to work with landowners and developers on our allocated employment and mixed-use sites to bring forward high quality employment space, including across the growth areas identified in the economic strategy at Oxford North, Oxford West End, Oxford Science Park, Oxford Business Park, and Headington. Support the evolution of the Botley Road retail parks into laboratory-led commercial development in line with the Botley Road planning brief.</p>
	5. The movement of people and goods into and within the city will have improved, resulting in less traffic congestion, better air quality and faster journey times.	<p>Partner with Oxfordshire County Council to move towards delivery of the core transport schemes including Traffic Filters, Workplace Parking Levy and wider rollout of the Zero Emission Zone and better use of our Park & Ride assets.</p> <p>Commence work on the detailed design and planning (including a full business case) to open up the Cowley Branch Line to passenger services. Undertake feasibility work for supporting cycle and pedestrian connections linked to the two proposed new stations. Continue to work with landowners to explore how best to secure a local contribution to future delivery.</p>
Influence	6. We will improve the resilience of the city centre and its relevance to more of our citizens	<p>Continue to work with other major retail owning landlords in the city centre to support the delivery of the City Centre Action Plan.</p> <p>Work with Oxfordshire County Council to scope out and secure funding for a city centre movement action plan, to identify improvements to pedestrian, cycle and bus routes.</p>

		Implement key City Centre Action Plan projects, including further improvements to pedestrianised St Michael St; and work to implement the Covered Market masterplan, including developing a planning application, bringing forward major improvements to Market St, the creation of a new public square in the market, and improved entrances.
7. The city centre will be expanding to the west. Attractive new areas will be emerging around Oxford station, in Oxpens and Osney Mead - but not at the expense of the health and vibrancy of the existing city centre.		Facilitate the Oxford West End Strategic Board, involving local and central government, and landowners to coordinate and align priorities and development in line with the West End and Osney Mead SPD, design guide and strategic framework.
		Submit a planning application for Osney to Oxpens Pedestrian and Cycle Bridge across the river and if permitted, commence delivery.
		Work with partners at Network Rail, Oxfordshire County Council and Great Western Railways to refine options for redeveloping the eastern side Oxford Station including Becket Street Car Park.
		As part of the OxWED joint venture, secure planning permission for the redevelopment of Oxpens to deliver a mix of residential and commercial floor space, a hotel and significant public open space.
8. More organisations in Oxford will be socially and environmentally responsible - paying the Oxford Living Wage and adopting practices that deliver clean economic growth which benefits all residents.		Partner with key developers to facilitate successful Community Employment Plans and exploration of meanwhile uses in the city.
		Agree and deliver pledges as a signatory to the Oxfordshire Inclusive Economy Charter.
9. Oxford will have improved the workforce skills it needs through higher educational attainment and more training for the jobs of the future.		Work with key partners including OxLEP and the Oxfordshire Inclusive Economy Partnership to increase the sector-based higher and advanced level apprenticeship programmes delivered locally, and promote the increased use of the new Community Employment Plan Toolkit across Oxford's new developments.
		Work with OxLEP and neighbouring authorities to on a refreshed economic strategy for Oxfordshire.

Priority 2: Deliver more, affordable Housing

	Council Strategy 2020-2024 Outcome	Year 4 (2023-2024) Actions
Deliver	1. We will have increased the supply of high quality, energy efficient, accessible, and affordable housing, including new council housing as well as other types of homes to rent and for sale at different prices.	Implement the new Housing, Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy 2023-28, with an annual review and refresh of the strategy Action Plan.
		Work alongside OX Place to progress the development of sites as laid out in the OX Place Business Plan.
		Identify further opportunities for improving the quality and energy efficiency of existing Council-owned housing stock, as well as redevelopment opportunities, where appropriate.
		Create a framework to enable the development of small sites owned by the Council for housing - including community-led housing - or to agree other possible uses for these sites.
	2. In regeneration projects such as Blackbird Leys, our new housing will be high quality with improved public spaces and served by good public transport and cycling and walking routes.	Secure planning permission for new affordable homes as part of the regeneration of the district centre at Blackbird Leys and - through our joint venture OxWED - at Oxpens. Continue to look to secure additional affordable homes at Oxford North, including on land owned by the City Council.
	3. More Council and private sector tenants will have been supported to stay in their homes when they face the prospect of eviction.	Embed new ways of working within our homelessness services that are focussed on prevention, including advice, guidance and support with household's finances. Evaluate our service offer to Private Rented Sector (PRS) landlords and tenants and use approaches that work to reduce evictions.
Partner	4. More developers, housing associations and others will view Oxford as a good place to build a range of different housing types.	Develop a Local Plan 2040 to set the planning policy framework for the city which will form the basis of planning decisions over that period; involving development of an evidence base, engagement and consultation with stakeholders and the public and an awareness of changing government policy. Work closely with neighbouring authorities on cross-boundary issues including housing provision.

	5. Working with neighbouring authorities we will be implementing the agreed countywide approach to meeting housing needs.	Work closely with neighbouring authorities to deliver homes and associated infrastructure on the allocated Oxford's unmet sites around the edges of the city. Work with neighbours to help frame both the policies of the Oxford Local Plan 2040 and the policies of their Local Plans to ensure Oxford's needs continue to be addressed and delivered.
	6. Working with housing associations we will have delivered more move on accommodation for people in need.	Collaborate with the key Registered Providers and explore opportunities for the further development of homes locally, and to use enabling grants where appropriate, to help facilitate this.
	7. Working with landlords we will have improved the quality and energy efficiency of privately rented homes in Oxford.	Progress and embed the Selective Licensing scheme by commencing enforcement against unlicensed properties and carrying out an inspection programme to check for compliance. In addition, continue to ensure compliance in Houses in Multiple Occupation (HMOs) using the existing HMO licensing scheme. Extend and improve the online application system Metastreet to HMO licensing.
Influence	8. New housing including new urban extensions will be being built to create strong communities with good local amenities and sustainable transport links into the city. Sites valued by local people for leisure and recreation will be protected.	Work with neighbouring authorities, Oxfordshire County Council, and landowners to influence the planning applications coming forward for the urban extensions to the South, East and North of the city that will address Oxford's unmet housing needs. Through this process ensure that pedestrian, cycle and public transport movement and more broadly shared infrastructure planning and delivery are aligned.

Priority 3: Support thriving communities

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	Council Strategy 2020-2024 Outcome	Year 4 (2023-2024) Actions
Deliver	1. Our services, grants, community and leisure facilities, parks and cultural events will have helped reduce inequality, increase cohesion and improve health and wellbeing across Oxford's communities.	Work with key partners to tackle health Inequalities and help underpin our leisure and community services including the Primary Care Networks, Integrated Care Systems, and partners in our Active Lifestyles Commissioning Group
		Work with key partners through the Active Lifestyles Commissioning Group to develop and design our new Active lifestyle model. Increase referrals from targeted groups into social prescribing activities. Maximise opportunities from the success of GO Active and Move together programmes and increase the number of people physically active.
		Mobilise a new model for operation of Oxford's three leisure centres, seasonal heated outdoor pool and ice rink.
		Confirm a plan to secure long term replacement of ice rink.
		Enable arts, culture, sport, community activities and grants to provide and promote opportunities for everyone, and foster a sense of pride and belonging in Oxford's leisure, cultural and community assets.
		Expand the offer in Oxford Town Hall via its events spaces, the Museum of Oxford and café to attract a wider audience from the local community and beyond with the aim of becoming one of the leading events and cultural venues in the city.
		Work with key partners through the Active Lifestyles Commissioning Group to develop and design our new Active lifestyle model. Increase referrals from targeted groups into social prescribing activities. Maximize opportunities from the success of GO Active and Move together programmes and increase the number of people physically active
		Commence refurbishment and extension of East Oxford Community Centre.
	2. Children and young people's resilience and confidence will have increased through the	With Oxfordshire County Council, which is now investing in youth service provision in Oxford, review our Youth Ambition programme and seek closer partnership working to achieve a more efficient and effective joint approach to support children and young people.

	educational and recreational activities we offer.	
	3. As a good landlord, we will have worked with our Council tenants and residents to strengthen local communities; and worked with other major landlords to improve the services they provide.	Embed the new locality-based model for supporting our tenants and residents, shaped by their views and needs, and work with other landlords to improve engagement and service delivery.
		Transform the way we deliver services to our tenants leading to improved satisfaction rates aligned to RSH Tenant Satisfaction Measures. This work will be informed by: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • responses to the latest tenant and leaseholder survey, • recommendations of an external review of our Landlord Services function, • a review of our tenants' engagement and tenants' involvement function, • changes to building safety regulation, • changes to the Decent Homes standards • ensuring compliance with the Social Housing White Paper.
		Deliver a rolling stock condition survey which will validate our initial capital investment programme to improve the standard of the Council's housing stock and other buildings.
		Introduce a new asset management system to create and deliver a proactive longer-term repairs and maintenance programme.
	4. Our parks and public spaces will remain clean, safe, and well maintained, and will be accessible to more people to people to enjoy the health and wellbeing benefits they provide.	
Partner	5. Working with neighbouring councils and partners, we will prevent homelessness, move people in temporary accommodation more rapidly into secure housing, and ensure that	Work with partners to continue to implement the countywide rough sleeping and single homelessness strategy to reduce homelessness and rough sleeping. Work with commissioning partners and the alliance of organisations delivering services to evaluate the delivery of a housing-led approach – including supporting people through more flexible and responsive services - to ensure that the new services are effective.

	no one has to sleep rough on the streets of Oxford.	
	6. Local voluntary and community groups will be better engaged with, supported and enabled to take a greater role in improving the city and the lives of citizens.	Increase participation, inclusivity and accessibility of Oxford's three leisure centres, seasonal heated outdoor pool and ice rink, and community centres, arts venues and parks, ensuring they work for everyone.
		Continue to integrate council services and seek out opportunities to better align our work with partner agencies, including co-location and co-production.
	7. Increasing numbers of people who walk and cycle around the city, benefitting their health and wellbeing.	Work closely with advice centres and other community and voluntary sector organisations to extend their support and reach across Oxford's diverse communities, linking with Locality Teams (Council teams that support residents), Welfare Reform and the Contact Centre
		Embed healthy place-shaping by integrating health prevention into neighbourhoods, helping to create more connected neighbourhoods with cycle and walking routes and providing affordable public transport, particularly focusing on areas with the greatest health inequalities.
	8. Our work with Thames Valley Police will keep communities safe and help reduce hate crime, human trafficking, modern slavery, domestic abuse, sexual violence, drug-related crime and antisocial behaviour.	Chair the Oxford Safer Communities Partnership to tackle the city's community safety priorities - modern slavery, serious violence, disruption of organised crime, violence against women and girls, and anti-social behaviour.
	9. Vulnerable people will continue to be safeguarded against harm.	Continue to work towards Domestic Abuse Housing Alliance accreditation - work started in December 2022 and may take up to 2 years for full accreditation.
Influence	10. Oxford's diversity will continue to be celebrated, with a	Embed the Oxford Anti-racism Charter.

	greater sense of togetherness across its communities.	Explore opportunities to improve the inclusivity and sustainability of Oxford's community facilities, and review opportunities as they arise through a business case.
	11. Citizens will increase their active engagement in civic and political life.	<p>Encourage greater participation in the electoral process, particularly in the light of the Parliamentary and County boundary reviews, and introduction of voter identification requirements.</p> <p>Encourage greater participation in open democracy by embedding the hybrid arrangements for all Council and Committee meetings, to live stream all such meetings and improve accessibility by enabling hybrid attendance.</p>

Priority 4: Pursue a zero carbon Oxford

	Council Strategy 2020-2024 Outcome	Year 4 (2023-2024) Actions
Deliver	1. Oxford City Council will have reduced the carbon footprint from its own operations to zero.	Work closely with ODS to develop options for meeting net zero OCC/ODS Fleet by 2030.
		Take further action aligned with the Carbon Management Plan, to reduce or mitigate increases in the Council's energy and water utility costs, consumption and related carbon emissions.
		Deliver a programme of Carbon Literacy training for relevant Council staff and elected members.
	2. All new building by Oxford City Council will be significantly more energy efficient – moving towards near-zero or zero carbon standards.	All OX Place housing development at design and planning stage will meet 40% below national standards, be electrically heated with a fabric first approach, using an energy quality assurance service to ensure energy standard are met, where appropriate.
	3. We will have a significant programme of energy efficiency improvements across of our existing council housing.	Deliver the Social Housing Decarbonisation Fund (SHDF) retrofit programme, develop retrofit plans for void properties, trial new zero carbon technologies in HRA stock and build capabilities in ODS to deliver retrofit works.
Partner	4. All new building by developers in Oxford will be significantly more energy efficient – moving towards near-zero or zero carbon standards, with some examples of carbon-positive development.	Ensure the Local Plan 2040 provides a clear framework to help underpin the move to zero carbon development.
		Deliver a Technical Advice Note to provide further planning guidance on domestic retrofit and EV charger installation.
	5. We will be promoting and enforcing the higher energy efficiency standards that will have been set nationally by the	Promote investment in energy efficiency for the owner occupier and privately rented sectors. Use the Selective Licencing Scheme to support compliance with minimum energy efficiency standards (MEES) regulations. Prepare to extend MEES into commercial premises and work with County Trading Standards to agree a regulatory approach.

	Government for residential and commercial landlords.	
	6. Oxford will have taken a leading role in the adoption of electric vehicles (EVs).	<p>Deliver Phase 2 of the GULO electric vehicle charging infrastructure programme, installing up to 150 additional on- and off-street charge points. Roll out ODS' GULe pavement crossing as a solution for onstreet home charging. Agree an implementation plan to deliver further EV infrastructure in line with the 2022 EVI Strategy.</p> <p>Work with ODS to develop a business case to guide investment decisions on which areas of the EV infrastructure market offer the best returns for the Council and best value for Oxford.</p> <p>All new OX Place developments currently in design stage will have EV chargers.</p>
	7. Air quality throughout the city will have improved.	Maintain an enhanced level of air quality monitoring and reporting across the city. Work with the Canal & River Trust to deliver eco-moorings at Aristotle Lane with electricity connections to enable boats to reduce their reliance on solid fuel for heating which will improve air quality.
	8. Our streets, neighbourhoods and open spaces will be greener with more trees and other plants, and increased biodiversity.	Commission a biodiversity strategy for the Council which addresses the environmental crisis and supports delivery of biodiversity net gain implementation.
	9. The city will become more resilient to climate change including improved flood defences.	Work with the Environment Agency to provide HIF funding that enables delivery of the Oxford Flood Alleviation Scheme. Work with Zero Carbon Oxford Partnership (ZCOP) and Pathways to a Zero Carbon Oxfordshire (PaZCO) partners to develop plans for adaptation to climate change.
Influence	10. We will campaign for the Government to introduce more rigorous energy efficiency standards on new build and bring forward the end of petrol and diesel vehicle sales.	Work with neighbouring authorities through the Future Oxfordshire Partnership to support collaborative delivery of the Zero Carbon Oxford Partnership (ZCOP) and Pathways to a Zero Carbon Oxfordshire (PaZCO) Action Plans, to achieve a zero carbon city and county.

	11. Citizens, businesses and other organisations in the city will be taking action to reduce carbon emissions and increase biodiversity.	Guidance in welcome pack provided to all new commercial tenants including building and supply chain energy efficiencies. Use relationship with commercial tenants to encourage reduction of usage of single use plastics. Extend ZCOP learnings, information and support to SMEs.
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Priority 5: Ensure Council service delivery is fit for the future

Outcome	Year 4 (2023-2024) Actions
<p>1. Implement the Council's Technology and Digital Strategy, exploiting digital solutions and robotics to increase efficiency, reduce the number of IT systems, and shift to Cloud-based systems</p>	<p>Provide new and redesigned online forms to enable citizens to self-serve.</p>
	<p>Design and implement an updated Council Website that supports increasing and simplifying digital access to a wider range of council services.</p>
	<p>Apply process simplification and automation, making processes easier, automating high volume and repetitive tasks.</p>
	<p>Develop information tools to enable data-led decision making.</p>
<p>2. Implement a Citizen Experience Programme to simplify and make more accessible the Council's service offer to residents and businesses - with a 'citizen first' approach that meets their needs</p>	<p>Develop and implement a Citizen Experience Strategy and Operating model for Citizen-focused services to improve citizens' experience of accessing council services, while maintaining Customer Service Excellence accreditation.</p>
	<p>Implement an 'assisted support' model for vulnerable residents and for more complex queries, while maximising support available through the Council's locality-focused teams as well as through community groups and other partners.</p>
	<p>Continue the integration of Communities, Housing, Customer Service and Community Safety teams to provide a seamless 'right first time' service to citizens. Use behavioural insight techniques and the Council's links with the advice sector to optimise that service.</p>
<p>3. Implement a People Programme to support the organisation to deliver its objectives and to create a culture embracing the organisation's values. Build the brand of the organisation to become an employer of choice. Transform management structures in the Council to align resources to corporate priorities</p>	<p>Implement a Health and Safety Plan to ensure the wellbeing of staff working on behalf of the Council.</p>
	<p>Develop and deploy a Leadership Development Programme for Oxford City Council staff, encouraging people to have confidence in their leaders to create high performing, highly motivated, inclusive and engaged teams.</p>
	<p>Work with our unions to develop and deploy a new pay deal and revised Reward Strategy for Oxford City Council staff - including a review of pay and grading to improve recruitment and retention of the workforce.</p>
	<p>Develop a People Team that builds confidence in the organisation and develop and deploy systems and processes that support leaders and staff to thrive at work.</p>
	<p>Design and implement an organisational redesign programme.</p>

4. Implement a Flexible Working Programme to make the best use of technology, modern working practices and space to work in the best way to respond to citizens' needs.	Embed the relocation of the Council's main office into the Town Hall together with hybrid working policies and practices.
	Design and implement Phase 2 of the Future Work Styles project, including a project to digitally scan paper document records and the automation of post and scanning into business as usual.
	Deploy MS365 office suite, including training and awareness programmes for staff of the system and associated applications.
5. Implement an updated robust and inclusive integrated Business Planning and Medium Term Financial Planning process, which ensures the sustainability of the Oxford Model.	Develop and deploy a budget process that integrates with the ongoing identification and delivery of change-based efficiencies.
	Embed the principles of good contract management within the organisation, enabling devolved procurement and ensuring that we get the best value for money out of each contract we have.
	Implement a commercial framework in order to strengthen our income generation, trading development and identify new commercial opportunities.
	Develop and deploy a methodology to review service-based operating models across the organisation.
	Drive additional income from our assets and services within the next four-year Medium Term Financial Plan, balanced against an assessment of risk and resource.
	Strengthen our understanding of what drives demand in our services, both internally and externally, and manage it through a range of interventions in order to provide savings and better outcomes to citizens.
	Exploit opportunities for joint working with other local authorities to deliver shared support functions and citizen-facing services.
6. Implement a Business Intelligence Programme to ensure an evidence-led and evidence-based organisation.	Create a 'virtual business insight unit' with the skills and technology to provide integrated, advanced analysis on demand as well as operational and customer insight to support decision making.
	Deliver a sustainable business architecture and performance framework that supports our transformation into a data and intelligence-led, needs-driven high performing organisation.
	Support the delivery of the Council Strategy by providing analytic capability to inform decision and demand and prioritise activities to deliver maximised customer and business value.

	Develop and deploy standardised and streamlined performance reports aligned with our policy objectives.
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