

Decision type: **Decision Specifically Delegated to Officers**

Decision date: 05 January 2026

Decision maker: Helen Bishop, Director of Communities and Citizens Services

Decision title: Charging Model for entry into the Museum of Oxford from January 2026

Summary	
Decision being taken:	The decision being made is to confirm minor changes to the charging model for the Museum of Oxford as delegated by Cabinet to the Director of Communities and Citizens Services
Key decision:	No
Source of delegation:	<p>The authority was delegated by Cabinet, pursuant to section 4.4 of the Constitution, to delegate the implementation of charging entry to the Museum of Oxford from January 2026 and the authority to make minor changes to the charging model for the museum to the Director of Communities and Citizens Services</p> <p>This delegation was made at the Cabinet meeting on 22 October 2025 at 6pm, minute 70, resolution 5 - the minutes are here.</p>
Cabinet Member:	Councillor Alex Hollingsworth, Cabinet Member for Planning and Culture
Corporate Priority:	Thriving Communities
Policy Framework:	Thriving Communities

The Director of Communities and Citizens Services decides as follows:

1. To confirm minor changes to the charging model for the Museum of Oxford as delegated by Cabinet to the Director of Communities and Citizens Services as outlined in Appendix 1

Appendix No.	Appendix Title	Exempt from Publication
Appendix 1	Entry Fees to the Museum of Oxford Galleries from January 2026	No
Appendix 2	Equalities Impact Assessment	No
Appendix 3	Risk assessment	No

Introduction and background

1. On 22 October 2025, the Director of Communities and Citizens submitted a report to Cabinet to consider options for charging a small entry fee to visit the Museum of Oxford. The report also considered options for eligibility for concessionary and free entry.
2. Whilst Oxford City Council Cabinet voted unanimously to introduce a small entry fee to the Museum of Oxford galleries, and approved the list of concessions and free entry proposed in the report, they requested minor changes were undertaken to:
 - a) give more detail regarding free and concessionary entry for those in receipt of state benefits and for those who have no recourse to public funds
 - b) ensure alignment, where possible, with Leisure Services
 - c) consider the access for people who had contributed to a temporary exhibition to be able to visit the museum
3. The Cabinet meeting delegated the decision to make these minor changes to the charging model for entry to Museum of Oxford galleries to the Director of Communities and Citizens Services.
4. This report confirms the detail of the decision taken by the Director of Communities and Citizens Services.

Reasons for the decision

5. Oxford City Council Leisure Services give discounts to people on most benefits and those who have no recourse to public funds – see [Leisure Centre Discounts | Oxford City Council](#).
6. On 22 October 2025, Cabinet voted that those in receipt of state benefits and those who have no recourse to public funds would gain free entry to the Museum of Oxford. Appendix 1 of this report brings the list of state benefit and no recourse to public funds eligibility for entry to the museum in line with Leisure Services. A one-year pass will be given to all those who qualify.
7. On 22 October 2025, Cabinet voted to allow Museum of Oxford volunteers to have a free entry plus one to the museum.
8. In response to considering access for people who had contributed to a temporary exhibition, it was recognised that the people who are involved in this often come from marginalised groups as the exhibitions are designed to tell the stories of people whose voices may not otherwise be heard. It was also recognised that significant volunteering hours are undertaken by communities to create these exhibitions.
9. In order to ensure fairness, the decision is to recognise the volunteering involved in creating exhibitions and enable those who have contributed a significant amount of

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volunteer hours to have free entry with a plus one for a year, along with others who volunteer e.g. those who run town hall tours, workshops and walks as volunteers and those who volunteer as trustees on the Museum Development Trust.

10. The decision ensures the Museum of Oxford remains accessible for Oxford residents who may not otherwise be able to afford to visit.
11. It acknowledges and rewards community engagement, fostering stronger community relationships.
12. It encourages participation in exhibitions and projects supporting the museum's cultural development goals.
13. The decision provides clarity to the public and staff regarding who is eligible for free and concessionary entry ensuring fairness and consistency in applying discounts.
14. It provides staff with a reference guide for verification, reducing ambiguity and disputes.
15. The decision will also enable the Museum of Oxford to continue to provide warm space support for those who need it most during colder months.
16. If the decision is not taken, there is a risk that people may not be clear about the eligibility for free and discounted entry and that this could affect access to the museum, including for those who need warm space support in colder months.

Alternative Options Considered

17. The alternative option considered was to restrict free entry for people who had contributed volunteer hours towards the creation of an exhibition only for the duration of the exhibition. The decision to make this for a year was to enable fairness between different types of volunteering as not everyone can give time on a regular basis and to encourage more visits by people from diverse backgrounds.

Equalities Impact

18. The equalities impact assessment is attached as Appendix 2.

Risks

19. The risk assessment is attached as Appendix 3.

Carbon and Environmental Considerations

20. NA

Implications of making the decision

Financial implications	As charging for Museum entry is new, we do not have data to estimate what the financial implications of providing free entry for certain groups might be. This key decision however brings the Museum in line with Leisure concessions.	Completed by: Emma Burson, Finance Business Partner Date:18/12/2025 Insert date
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Legal implications	On 22 October 2025, the Cabinet delegated to the Director of Citizens and Community Services “ <i>the implementation of charging from January 2026 and the authority to make minor changes to the charging model for the museum to the Director of Citizens and Community Services.</i> ” and the decision to make minor changes to the charging model is made pursuant to that delegation. The changes proposed appear to be in line with the delegation.	Completed by: Justin Zizys, Contracts Lawyer Date: 24 December 2025
Other implications	See the Equalities Impact Assessment at Appendix 2.	Completed by: Paula Redway, Culture and Community Development Manager Date: 16 December 2025
Member declared interests	NA	Completed by: Paula Redway, Culture and Community Development Manager Date: 16 December 2025

Background Documents

The papers for the Cabinet meeting on 22 October 2025 at 6pm, can be found [here](#).

Report author	Paula Redway
Job title	Culture and Community Development Manager
Service area or department	Communities and Citizen Services
Email contact	predway@oxford.gov.uk

Consultee checklist

Consultees	Name and job title	Date
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Senior officer e.g. the relevant service manager / Director where the decision maker is the Chief Executive or a Deputy Chief Executive.	NA	
Group Finance Director Where required by the Constitution or conditions of the delegation	NA	
Director of Law, Governance and Strategy Where required by the Constitution or conditions of the delegation	NA	
Cabinet Member(s) Where required by the conditions of the delegation	NA	
Ward Members Where required by the Constitution or conditions of the delegation	NA	

Decision Maker Approval

<i>Name and job title</i>	<i>Date</i>
Helen Bishop, Director of Communities and Citizens Services	05.01.26

This form must be completed and sent to Committee and Member Services **on the date that the decision maker signs it. This must be only done once all consultees have given their approval. The decision shall be effective from the date of publication; therefore, it is important that you send to Committee and Member Services as soon as it is completed and dated by the decision maker. Please note that it is not effective until it is published and the call in period has passed.**

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NOTES

The law¹ requires the Council to record executive and non-executive decisions taken by officers under delegated powers and to publish them on the Council's website.

These requirements apply to decisions that would have been taken by Council or the Cabinet if delegated powers had not been given to an officer:

- under an express delegation granted at a meeting of Cabinet, Council or a Committee.
- in accordance with Part 4.4 of the Constitution as follows:
 - Awarding a contract where authority has been specifically delegated to officers by Cabinet or a Cabinet Member (regardless of value)
 - Acquiring or disposing of freeholds or leaseholds granting new leaseholds (excluding assignments and rent reviews) where authority has been specifically delegated to officers by Cabinet or a Cabinet Member (regardless of value)
 - Making a regulatory order which affects a number of people, for example a Public Space Protection Order or a Parking Place Order
 - Where the effect of a decision is to grant a licence or permission or it affects the rights of citizens
 - Discharging any other express delegation from Cabinet or a Cabinet Member a committee or Council.

These requirements **do not** apply to:

- planning and licencing matters where there are established arrangements for recording decisions: or
- decisions which are purely administrative or operational in nature

All other officer decisions should be recorded on an officer decision form but do not need to be published. They must though be stored so as to ensure that they are not lost should an officer leave the authority.

Exempt or Confidential information

Information relating to a delegated officer or single member decision does not have to be made public if it is exempt or confidential. Summary information from this decision sheet (excluding all exempt or confidential information) will be published on the Council's website.

Key or Non Key Decision

¹ the Local Authorities (Executive Arrangements) (Meetings and Access to Information) (England) Regulations 2012/2089 (Regulation 13(4)) and The Openness of Local Government Bodies Regulations 2014/2095 (Regulation 7)

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A key decision is an executive decision which is likely to:

- Have a significant effect on people living or working in a least two wards or
- Involve spending, income, or saving a significant amount – whether an amount is significant depends on the Council's total budget for the service involved. For this Council 'significant' in budgetary terms is:
 - Expenditure, income, or savings of £750,000 or greater in the context of the medium term financial strategy,
 - Acquiring or disposing of freeholds with a consideration over £500,000 in the context of the medium term financial strategy except for disposals pursuant to right to buy legislation
 - Acquiring or disposing of leaseholds where either the rental value is in excess of £250,000 per annum and/or the premium is £750,000 except for statutory lease renewals under Part 2 of the Landlord and Tenant Act 1954 and disposals pursuant to right to buy legislation and disposals pursuant to right to buy legislation.
 - Acquiring or disposing of easements with a value over £750,000 and/or rental value over £250,000 each year

A key decision can only be taken and recorded here if notice of it has been published on the Forward Plan for at least 28 clear days. Key decisions taken by officers may be “called in” by any four councillors or the Chair of the Scrutiny Committee within two days of the notice of decision being published.

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