

To: Council
Date: 23 February 2026
Report of: Group Finance Director
Title of Report: Capital Strategy 2026/27 – 2029/30

Summary and recommendations	
Decision being taken:	To approve the Capital Strategy, following recommendation from Cabinet.
Key decision:	No
Cabinet Member:	Councillor Ed Turner, Deputy Leader (Statutory) - Finance and Asset Management
Corporate Priority:	Well Run Council.
Policy Framework:	Constitution

Recommendation(s): That Council resolves to:
1 Approve the Capital Strategy attached at Appendix 1.

Information Exempt From Publication	
None	

Appendix No.	Appendix Title	Exempt from Publication
Appendix A	Capital Strategy 2026/27 – 2029/30	No

Introduction and background

1. Part 18.11 of the Council's Constitution requires that a Capital Strategy is prepared and reviewed by Cabinet annually which includes:
 - a. The principles the Council will follow in its capital planning and management;
 - b. The methodology for inclusion of schemes within the Capital Programme; and
 - c. The arrangements for the effective management of capital schemes.

The details of capital schemes to be undertaken over the following four financial years are contained in the budget report that will be considered by the Council and the financing of these is detailed in the Treasury Management Strategy which are both considered in reports also on the agenda for this meeting.

2. The CIPFA 2021 Prudential Code includes a requirement that councils prepare and approve a Capital Strategy. This requirement includes consideration of non-treasury investments such as investment properties and loans to other organisations.
3. There is a link between the Council's Capital Strategy and the Treasury Management Strategy through cashflow implications and borrowing strategies and its Medium Term Financial Strategy in respect of the approval of the Council's Capital Programme. To aid clarity the Treasury Management Strategy includes all treasury implications including the Minimum Revenue Provision Policy and the Capital Strategy is restricted to non-treasury management matters where possible, although will refer to the Treasury Management Strategy when appropriate.
4. The Council continues to have a significant capital investment programme and has adopted a methodology for identifying, selecting and monitoring capital projects. The Council believes that capital programme delivery is essential to support the services that the Council provides to its customers but must be affordable within the context of overall Council finances.
5. The Council's updated Capital Strategy, which is attached at Appendix A, sets out the approval process for schemes getting into the Capital Programme as well as the governance arrangements in place to manage delivery. The processes (as detailed in the Capital Strategy) set out a clear path for approving a scheme for inclusion in the Capital Programme. Its aim is to ensure greater clarity about schemes in the Capital Programme and strong monitoring, in order to improve delivery and assist in prioritisation.
6. The Capital Strategy also sets out the various types of funding sources available for capital projects and how these might change over time. It also aims to set out the issues the Council needs to consider over the medium to long term.
7. This Capital Strategy document has been rolled forward a year by updating numbers and references, including references to updated strategies, but otherwise is unchanged in both form and content.

Alternative Options Considered

8. There are no other options.

Financial implications

9. The Capital Strategy provides a rationale for evaluating, managing and monitoring the Council's Capital Programme in order to secure delivery of the programme and its objectives in the most cost effective manner.
10. The Group Finance Director in his capacity as the Council's Chief Finance Officer believes that the Capital Strategy is deliverable and affordable within the parameters of the section 25 report he has prepared on the robustness of the Council's budget and bears acceptable risks within that context.

Legal issues

11. There are no legal implications arising directly from this report.
12. Local authorities have powers to invest under section 12 Local Government Act 2003 and s.1 Localism Act 2011
13. Local authorities also have powers to acquire sell, appropriate and develop land under various legislation including section 120-123 Local Government Act 2003 section 277 and section 233 Town and Country Planning Act 1990. (EG 13 Jan 2026 20301)

Level of risk

14. There are no risks directly arising from this report. Risks to delivery of individual projects are identified and monitored as part of the capital scheme approval and monitoring process.

Equalities impact

15. The procurement of capital works will be undertaken in line with the Council's policies to support the payment of a living wage and making apprenticeship and training opportunities available to local people. Many of the facilities funded out of the Capital Programme – such as community centres and social housing – will facilitate the narrowing of inequality in Oxford. The Equality Act 2010 Section 149 places a duty on public authorities to have due regard to equality impact and equality of opportunity considerations. No adverse impacts on any part of the community have been identified at this stage in relation to the capital strategy, however consideration will be given to the duty to ensure all projects have due regard to the public sector equality duty.

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Background Papers:
1 Treasury Management Strategy (on this agenda)

4 Budget (on this agenda)