

To: Scrutiny Committee
Date: 10 March 2026
Report of: Chair of the Scrutiny Committee
Title of Report: Recommendations from the Working Groups for endorsement at the Scrutiny Committee

Summary and recommendations	
Decision being taken:	To endorse the recommendations from the Working Groups.
Key decision:	No
Lead Member:	Chairs of the Scrutiny Working Groups
Corporate Priority:	A Well-Run Council
Policy Framework:	None

Recommendation(s): That the Scrutiny Committee resolves to:
1. Endorse the recommendations from the Climate and Environment and Housing and Homelessness Working Groups.

Information Exempt From Publication
n/a

Appendix No.	Appendix Title	Exempt from Publication
n/a	n/a	n/a

Overview

- The Scrutiny Committee is asked to endorse the recommendations from the following Working Groups held since the previous meeting:

Climate and Environment Working Group – 25 February 2026

- EV Infrastructure Update
- Heat Network Update
- Net Zero Tracker

Housing and Homelessness Working Group – 26 February 2026

- Allocations Scheme Review
 - Measures to meet growing demand for Temporary Accommodation
2. Cabinet Members, in consultation with the relevant Officers, will either, agree, agree in-part, or disagree with the recommendations. The tables below detail the Working Groups' recommendations for endorsement by the Committee. No table was produced for items where no recommendations were suggested.
 3. The Working Groups wish to put on record:
Climate and Environment
 4. The Climate and Environment Working Group noted that concerns have previously been raised by this Working Group regarding the risk of monopolistic behaviour and the potential for the Council to have limited leverage once infrastructure is installed and operational, further noting the importance of a robust approach to procurement.
Housing and Homelessness
 5. The Housing and Homelessness Working Group noted the proposed changes to the Allocations Scheme and asked questions relating to relocation capabilities under unique circumstances such as trauma or mental health challenges, and noted the role of the Exceptional Circumstances Panel in dealing with these types of scenarios. The Working Group also delved into the practice envisioned for the new face-to-face offer in the city centre as means to prevent homelessness noting similar and successful practices by other local authorities. No recommendations were agreed; both reports were supported by the Working Group.
 6. The Working Groups wish to thank Cabinet Members and Officers who contributed to the meetings.

Financial implications

7. Financial implications for the reports listed above were outlined within the reports presented at Working Groups.

Legal issues

8. Legal implications for the reports listed above were outlined within the reports presented at Working Groups.

Level of risk

9. Risk Registers, where appropriate, were linked to the reports presented at Working Groups.

Equalities impact

10. Equalities Impact Assessments, where appropriate, were linked to the reports presented at Working Groups.

Carbon and Environmental Considerations

11. Consideration for Carbon and Environmental impacts, where appropriate, were linked to the reports presented at Working Groups.

Implications of Local Government Reorganisation

12. Implications of Local Government Reorganisation for the reports listed above were outlined within the report when presented at the Working Groups.

13. Where appropriate, any further implications were reviewed when considering the recommendations using the linked guidance from Government: [Financial decisions before local government reorganisation - GOV.UK](#)

Report author	Celeste Reyeslao
Job title	Scrutiny and Governance Advisor
Service area or department	Law, Governance and Strategy
Telephone	01865 252946
e-mail	creyeslao@oxford.gov.uk

Table 1 – Recommendations of the Climate and Environment Working Group – Heat Network Update

The table below sets out the recommendations made by the Climate and Environment Working Group on 25 February 2026 for endorsement by the Scrutiny Committee at its meeting on 10 March 2026. The Cabinet will be asked to amend and agree a formal response as appropriate.

<i>Recommendation</i>	<i>Agree?</i>	<i>Comment</i>
1) That Cabinet formally write to Central Government seeking inclusion of Oxford in the first tranche of Heat Network Zones to be designated following the commencement of Heat Network Zoning Regulations, so that the Council will have clear statutory powers to enforce delivery against agreed plans, intervene in cases of non-compliance or underperformance, prevent monopolistic practices, as well as ensure transparency and appropriate safeguards.		