

**To:** Cabinet  
**Date:** 18 March 2026  
**Report of:** Scrutiny Committee  
**Title of Report:** Recommendations from the Scrutiny Committee

<b>Summary and recommendations</b>	
<b>Decision being taken:</b>	To submit the recommendations of the Scrutiny Committee for Cabinet's consideration.
<b>Key decision:</b>	No
<b>Lead Member:</b>	Councillor Alex Powell, Chair of the Scrutiny Committee
<b>Corporate Priority:</b>	A Well-Run Council
<b>Policy Framework:</b>	None

<b>Recommendation(s): That the Cabinet:</b>
1. <b>Consider and respond</b> to the recommendations made by the Scrutiny Committee as set out in the report.

<b>Information Exempt From Publication</b>	
N/A	N/A

<b>Appendix No.</b>	<b>Appendix Title</b>	<b>Exempt from Publication</b>
N/A	N/A	N/A

## Overview and Summary

- The Scrutiny Committee met on 10 March 2026 and reviewed the following items:
  - More Leisure Annual Service Plan (Year 3) and Update
  - Nighttime Economy
  - Fly-tipping and Litter Management
- Working Group meetings were also held to consider a range of reports:

## **Climate and Environment Working Group on 25 February 2026**

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

## **Housing and Homelessness Working Group on 26 February 2026**

- Allocations Scheme Review
- Measures to meet growing demand for Temporary Accommodation

3. Section 9F of the Local Government Act 2000 grants the power to the Scrutiny Committee to make reports or recommendations to the Cabinet with respect to the discharge of any functions which are the responsibility of the Executive; and on matters which affect the authority's area or the inhabitants of that area.
4. Following the meetings, Cabinet Members, in consultation with the relevant Officers were asked to agree, agree in-part, or disagree with the recommendations.
5. The tables below detail the recommendations made by Scrutiny for each report, which Cabinet will consider at their meeting on 18 March 2026. Cabinet has provided commentaries to inform the Committee of the rationale behind its decision. No table was produced for items where no recommendations were suggested.
6. Scrutiny wish to put on record:

### Climate and Environment

The Climate and Environment Working Group noted concerns which 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 of Heat Network.

### Housing and Homelessness

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.

7. Minutes of the Scrutiny meeting held on 10 March 2026 can be viewed [here](#).
8. The Scrutiny Committee would like to thank Cabinet particularly Cllr Anna Railton (Zero Carbon Oxford), Cllr Linda Smith (Housing and Communities), Cllr Chewe Munkonge (A Healthy, Fairer Oxford), Cllr Alex Hollingsworth (Planning and Culture) and Cllr Nigel Chapman (Citizen Focused Services and Council Companies) for their contributions. The Committee was also grateful to Tina Mould (Environmental Sustainability Business Lead), Vikki Robins (Environmental Sustainability Manager), Rose Dickinson (Environmental Sustainability Manager), Richard Wood (Housing Needs and Strategy Manager), Tom Porter (Senior Strategy and Service

Development Officer), James Baughan (Leisure and Active Wellbeing Manager), Hagan Lewisman (Active Communities Manager), Rob Jennings (Contract Manager – Oxford), Diana Fawcett (City Centre Manager), Maria Warner (Social Value and Sustainability Lead), Helen Bishop (Director of Communities and Citizens Services), Bruce Thompson (Head of Environmental Services, ODS) for their work and presenting the reports.

### **Financial implications**

9. Financial implications for the reports listed above were outlined within the reports presented at Scrutiny Committee or Working Group.
10. Where appropriate, any further financial implications were reviewed when considering the recommendations.

### **Legal issues**

11. Legal implications for the reports listed above were outlined within the reports presented at Scrutiny Committee or Working Group.
12. Where appropriate, any further legal implications were reviewed when considering the recommendations.

### **Level of risk**

13. Risk Registers, where appropriate, were linked to the reports presented at Scrutiny Committee or Working Groups.
14. Where appropriate, the risk register was reviewed when considering the recommendations.

### **Equalities impact**

15. Equalities Impact Assessments, where appropriate, were linked to the reports presented at Scrutiny Committee or Working Groups.
16. Where appropriate, the Equalities Impact Assessments was reviewed when considering the recommendations.

### **Carbon and Environmental Considerations**

17. Consideration for Carbon and Environmental impacts, where appropriate, were linked to the reports presented at Scrutiny Committee or Working Groups.
18. Where appropriate, the Carbon and Environmental impacts were reviewed when considering the recommendations.

### **Implications of Local Government Reorganisation**

19. Implications of Local Government Reorganisation for the reports listed above were outlined within the report when presented at Scrutiny Committee or Working Group.
20. 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](#)

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**Table 1 – Draft Cabinet response to recommendations of the Scrutiny Committee –  
More Leisure Annual Service Plan (Year 3) and Update**

The table below sets out the draft response of the Cabinet Member to recommendations made by the Scrutiny Committee on 10 March 2026 concerning the More Leisure Annual Service Plan (Year 3) and Update. The Cabinet is asked to amend and agree a formal response as appropriate.

<b><i>Recommendation</i></b>	<b><i>Agree?</i></b>	<b><i>Comment</i></b>
1) That future reports provide More Leisure KPI outcomes broken down by gender, as well as youth participation by geographic venue, acknowledging that demographic in certain geographic areas differ. This is to identify if there are any interventions required to address any gaps or segments that are underrepresented.	Yes	This data will be provided in future reports.
2) That, as part of the service plan, Council and More Leisure set out what could be done to expand into non-traditional sports that are not currently offered in the leisure centres.	Yes	A note on this will be included in the service plan, with the intention to explore opportunities.

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**Table 2 – Draft Cabinet response to recommendations of the Scrutiny Committee –  
Nighttime Economy**

The table below sets out the draft response of the Cabinet Member to recommendations made by the Scrutiny Committee on 10 March 2026 concerning Nighttime Economy. The Cabinet is asked to amend and agree a formal response as appropriate.

<i><b>Recommendation</b></i>	<i><b>Agree?</b></i>	<i><b>Comment</b></i>
1) That when considering the nighttime economy in relation to families and children, age groups are disaggregated into children up to age 11 and young people under 18.	Yes	This distinction is helpful and we also recognise that all ages of children can be different with different interests and needs, and it's important that a nighttime economy appeals to all of them. We will reflect this in our approach to ensure there is inclusivity across all ages and make sure we flag this in discussions with key stakeholders.
2) That the ongoing work maintains an open-minded approach to a wider range of nighttime activities, including bookshops, museums, the Covered Market, and other activities that are non-alcohol related.	Yes	We will reflect this in our approach to ensure there is inclusivity across different ages and interests, and again flag this in discussion with stakeholders.
3) That late night cafés are categorised separately from other food-related venues.	Yes	These will be categorised separately so there is clear data available.
4) That consideration is given to include local promoters as part of the Live Music Taskforce.	Yes	The local promoters will be part of the Live Music Taskforce once assembled.
5) That the Council continues to engage with employers to identify how best to address the issues faced by workers travelling home late at night.	Yes	The Council will continue to engage with employers and Thames Valley Police where feasible.

6) That current analysis includes the capacity of venues, in addition to the number of venues.	Yes	This will be included going forward to ensure appropriate data is collected.
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**Table 3 – Draft Cabinet response to recommendations of the Scrutiny Committee –  
Fly-tipping and Litter Management**

The table below sets out the draft response of the Cabinet Member to recommendations made by the Scrutiny Committee on 10 March 2026 concerning Fly-tipping and Litter Management. The Cabinet is asked to amend and agree a formal response as appropriate.

<b>Recommendation</b>	<b>Agree?</b>	<b>Comment</b>
1) To explore the provision of facilities in parks during the summer period to allow “2-minute litter picks” where this would be beneficial.	Yes	ODS will explore this, especially around appropriate trial locations and discuss funding options with OCC officers.
2) To review the appropriateness of measures businesses have in place to ensure that the waste they produce is managed responsibly and that they are encouraging their customers to dispose of litter appropriately.	No	This was not part of the scope of the paper and is not covered by the author’s roles. It will need to be discussed with the relevant officers. There is a regular dialogue between ODS and businesses, using its commercial services, about the timing of collections but late evening ones are not permissible under our current EA licences. CRT do conduct regulation of businesses and waste issues. The guidance in place specifically for the city centre ensures that commercial waste is removed during the busiest footfall periods in the daytime, to allow for street cleansing and safety.
3) To audit the use of signage in areas with high levels of fly-tipping and to consider where additional signage could be most effectively implemented.	Yes	ODS will explore the logging of fly-tipping activity where fly-tip signs are in place to ascertain effectiveness long-term and help inform future locations. This may require additional funding if more signage is required.

4) That Council consider reengaging with education programmes and resources aimed at addressing behaviours and culture relating to litter and fly-tipping.	Yes	OCC to explore options for a communication / engagement programme for litter and fly-tipping. There is a programme of engagement and education in place for improving residential waste collections, with a focus on increasing recycling.
5) That future reports include a breakdown of locations with high levels of litter across the city, presented visually on a map where possible.	In part	Mapping of litter levels is not currently possible but ODS will explore what data is available from audit activity and how this can be presented.

## Table 4 – Draft Cabinet response to recommendations of the Climate and Environment Working Group – Heat Network Update

The table below sets out the draft response of the Cabinet Member to recommendations made by the Climate and Environment Working Group on 25 February 2026 and endorsed by the Scrutiny Committee on 10 March 2026 concerning the Heat Network Update. The Cabinet is asked to amend and agree a formal response as appropriate.

<b><i>Recommendation</i></b>	<b><i>Agree?</i></b>	<b><i>Comment</i></b>
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.	Yes	This would be done, in hand with progressing to procure a Heat Network Developer for Oxford, via a Development Agreement.