

**Decision type:** **Decision Specifically Delegated to Officers**  
**Decision date:** 25/3/26  
**Decision maker:** Director of Sustainability Regeneration and Economy

**Decision title:** Agreement to enter into the funding agreement with the Environment Agency and transfer the HIF funds identified for OFAS

### Summary

<b>Decision being taken:</b>	Agreement to enter into a funding agreement with the Environment Agency to transfer the Housing Infrastructure Funds received from Homes England for Oxford Flood Alleviation Scheme
<b>Key decision:</b>	Yes <a href="#">Issue details - Funding Agreement for the transfer of the HIF funding for Osney Mead to the Environment Agency for OFAS   Oxford City Council</a>
<b>Source of delegation:</b>	Cabinet Report 13 September 2023 <a href="https://mycouncil.oxford.gov.uk/documents/g7518/Printed%20minutes%20Wednesday%2013-Sep-2023%2018.00%20Cabinet.pdf?T=1">https://mycouncil.oxford.gov.uk/documents/g7518/Printed%20minutes%20Wednesday%2013-Sep-2023%2018.00%20Cabinet.pdf?T=1</a>
<b>Cabinet Member:</b>	Councillor Ed Turner, Deputy Leader (Statutory) - Finance and Asset Management
<b>Corporate Priority:</b>	None
<b>Policy Framework:</b>	None.

The Director Sustainability Regeneration, Economy & Affordable Housing decides as follows:

1. To enter into a grant agreement with the EA for the transfer of £4.35m of Housing Infrastructure Funding to be used for the OFAS
2. Subject to the completion of the grant agreement to transfer the grant funding of £4.35M HIF funding to the Environment Agency

## **Introduction and background**

1. The Council applied for funding from the Homes England, Housing Infrastructure Fund (HIF), and was successful in securing funding to be used for Oxford Flood Alleviation Scheme (OFAS) and walking and cycling infrastructure in connection with proposed development at Osney Mead. £4.35m of the funding secured was identified towards the delivery of OFAS by the Environment Agency (EA). The matter has been reported to Cabinet on a number of occasions, on the 13 September 2023, 16 November 2022, 20 January 2021 and Nov 2019.
2. Under the grant agreement with Homes England (the HIF Agreement) the City Council is responsible for meeting a number of requirements and milestones. If these are not met there is a risk funding could have to be repaid. Some of these obligations are connected to the OFAS and in order to comply with them the Council required the Environment Agency to deliver the flood alleviation scheme. Funding has to be claimed and evidence of relevant expenditure has to be provided. The funding from this HIF agreement has been paid and is currently held by the City Council.
3. This decision is to enter into the grant agreement with the EA to pass the grant funding to the EA subject to their compliance with the relevant requirements from the Council's HIF agreement.

## **Reasons for the decision**

This decision allows for the steps necessary to implement the part of the HIF agreement related to flood reduction and provide the claimed funding to EA for the OFAS scheme. This supports the overall delivery of the HIF infrastructure that facilitates development at Osney Mead.

## **Alternative Options Considered**

4. The alternative is not to use the HIF OFAS funding and return it to Homes England. This has been rejected as it would leave a funding gap for the OFAS scheme.

## **Equalities Impact**

5. The delivery of the OFAS scheme has been subject to separate planning and regulatory process during which the equalities issues have/will be considered. This decision relates simply to the implementation of an approach that has already been agreed through the original funding agreement.

## **Risks**

6. The entering of a grant agreement and transfer of the funding to the EA does not add risk to the City Council as the funding agreement will ensure appropriate safeguards are in place should the scheme not proceed or does not proceed in accordance with the terms of the HIF agreement.
7. The failure to proceed with the grant agreement and transfer of funds would leave a funding gap and could impact the delivery of the OFAS scheme, which will protect existing properties from flooding.

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8. To transfer funding without a grant agreement leaves the Council carrying all the risk from the HIF agreement should its terms and conditions not be adhered to.

**Carbon and Environmental Considerations**

9. None

**Implications of making the decision**

<p><b>Financial implications</b></p>	<p>The City Council is holding the OFAS HIF funding. This agreement enables the funding to be passed to the EA to contribute to the delivery of the scheme.</p> <p>Potential financial risk if the UofO doesn't deliver it's housing as agreed. HE would ask for that element to be paid back</p>	<p><b>Completed by:</b> Paul Swaffield Finance Project Accountant</p> <p><b>Date:</b> 26/02/2026</p>
<p><b>Legal implications</b></p>	<p>The Council has entered into a grant agreement with Homes England to receive grant money to enable housing to be delivered in the vicinity of Osney Mead (HIF Agreement). This agreement sets out a number of milestones and outcomes which if not met enable Homes England to clawback some or all of the grant money.</p> <p>Certain milestones/obligations relate to the delivery of specific aspects of OFAS and the Environment Agency (EA) has agreed to do this as part of the wider OFAS.</p> <p>This officer decision is to authorise the entering into of a grant agreement between the Council and the EA which will set out the terms on which the Council will transfer grant monies to the EA.</p> <p>The grant agreement has been drafted to mirror the obligations concerning OFAS under the HIF Agreement. However there are obligations under the HIF Agreement which do not relate to the OFAS and therefore the risk cannot be passed to the EA. In the</p>	<p><b>Completed by:</b> Joanna Williams Acting Team Leader Solicitor</p> <p><b>Date:</b> 31.12.25</p>

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	<p>event one of these obligations is not met the Council could be liable to repay to Homes England all grant money under the HIF Agreement and will not be able to recover the portion paid to the EA.</p> <p>Under part 4.5 of the Constitution the award of Grants is a Cabinet responsibility. On the 13 September 2023 Cabinet delegated the responsibility to finalise and agree to enter into a grant agreement with the EA to the Head of Regeneration and Economy, in consultation with the Deputy Leader (Statutory) – Finance and Asset Management, the Head of Financial Services / S151 Officer and the Head of Law and Governance.</p> <p>Due to value of the proposed grant this decision is a Key Decision.</p>	
<b>Other implications</b>	This decision is necessary to enable the delivery of the HIF agreement that the Council has entered into.	<b>Completed by:</b> Jenny Barker <b>Date:</b> 26/11/25
<b>Member declared interests</b>	None	<b>Completed by:</b> Jenny Barker <b>Date:</b> 26/11/25

<b>Background Documents</b>
<b>None</b>


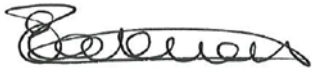
<b>Report author</b>	Jenny Barker
Job title	Regeneration Lead
Service area or department	Regeneration, economy, affordable housing and Sustainability

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Email contact

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### Consultee checklist

<b>Consultees</b>	<b>Name and job title</b>	<b>Date</b>
<b>Senior officer</b> e.g. the relevant service manager / Director where the decision maker is the Chief Executive or a Deputy Chief Executive.		
<b>Group Finance Director</b> Where required by the Constitution or conditions of the delegation	 Nigel Kennedy	19/03/26
<b>Director of Law, Governance and Strategy</b> Where required by the Constitution or conditions of the delegation	 Emma Jackman	20/03/26
<b>Cabinet Member(s)</b> Where required by the conditions of the delegation	Cllr Ed Turner Agreed by email 24/3/26	
<b>Ward Members</b> Where required by the Constitution or conditions of the delegation	N/A	

### Decision Maker Approval

<b>Name and job title</b>	<b>Date</b>
Carolyn Ploszynski 	25/03/2026

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The officer with authority to take the decision, either from a Cabinet delegation or in the Constitution.	
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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 law<sup>1</sup> 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.

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<sup>1</sup> 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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## Key or Non Key Decision

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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