

Decision type: Decision Specifically Delegated to Officers

Decision date: 7 May 2026

Decision maker: Tom Bridgman Deputy Chief Executive Place

Decision title: Entering into a funding agreement with the University of Oxford for the Oxpens River Bridge

Summary

Decision being taken:	Enter into a funding agreement with the University of Oxford for the provision of £1m of funding towards the Oxpens River Bridge.
Key decision:	Yes Issue details - Oxpens River Bridge Funding Agreement with University of Oxford Oxford City Council
Source of delegation:	Delegated by Cabinet at the Cabinet meeting of 13 August 2025 to the Deputy Chief Executive - Place, in consultation with the Council's Group Finance Director (Section 151 Officer), the Director of Law Governance and Strategy (Monitoring Officer) and the Cabinet Member for Planning and Culture
Cabinet Member:	Cllr Hollingsworth Cabinet Member for Planning and Culture
Corporate Priority:	Enable an inclusive economy; Support thriving communities; and Pursue a zero carbon Oxford
Policy Framework:	Adopted Local Plan policy AOC1 and SP2 and West End SPD

The Deputy Chief Executive - Place decides as follows:

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| 1. | To enter into a funding agreement with the University of Oxford for funding for the Oxpens River Bridge. |
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Appendix No.	Appendix Title	Exempt from Publication
Appendix 1	University of Oxford draft funding agreement for Oxpens River Bridge	Yes

		<p>This information is exempted from publication under Schedule 12A to the Local Government Act 1972 since it is:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Information about someone's finances or business
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Introduction and background

1. The City Council accepted funding from the County Council, as the responsible body for the Oxford Growth Deal funding, to deliver the proposed Oxpens River Bridge. Since the original funding allocation, work on the design and delivery of the bridge has taken place and the project has been delayed resulting in the costs increasing. The University of Oxford has agreed to provide additional funding of £1m, which together with other funding will enable the delivery of the bridge.

Details of the latest funding position on the bridge was set out in the August 2025 Cabinet report:

<https://mycouncil.oxford.gov.uk/documents/s85945/25%2007%2023%20Cabinet%20Report%20v%207%202.pdf>

2. The University of Oxford has agreed to fund £1m of the additional cost of the proposed bridge. An agreement has been drafted. The Agreement sets out the basis on which the University will provide the funding which includes:
 - The funding to be used after other available funding has been committed
 - To return funds not spent within the grant period or unspent or where alternative funding is received
 - To provide access to reporting and information
 - To ensure compliance with statutory consents
3. Following work undertaken on the cost of delivering the bridge, the funding from the University together with other funding that is being secured will be sufficient to deliver the bridge.

Reasons for the decision

4. The securing of the funding from the University is required to deliver the Oxpens River Bridge. The terms of the agreement have been negotiated with the University and will enable the funding to be drawn down when required.

Alternative Options Considered

5. The following alternative options were available;
 - Not to secure the funding. This option was rejected as it would result in a risk that there would not be sufficient funding to deliver the bridge.
 - Not to enter into an agreement with the University. This option was rejected as there would not be certainty of the funding being available when required.

Equalities Impact

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6. This decision related solely to the funding for the delivery of the bridge and therefore does not give rise to new equality issues. An equalities impact assessment was completed for the proposed bridge.

Risks

7. The risks associated in securing the funding are limited to ensuring an appropriate legal agreement is drafted to ensure the funding can be drawn down when required and that the terms of the agreement can be met. This risk is being mitigated by ensuring appropriate legal input is provided.
8. The draft agreement requires repayment of funding if the terms of the agreement are not met.

Carbon and Environmental Considerations

9. This decision does not give rise to any new carbon or environmental considerations as it relates to the securing of funding.

Implications of making the decision

<p>Financial implications</p>	<p>There are risks relating to the potential clawback of funding if certain conditions aren't met. However, these risks are limited as stated above.</p>	<p>Completed by: Paul Swaffield Finance Project Accountant</p> <p>Date: 26/2/2026</p>
<p>Legal implications</p>	<p>Under Parts 4.5(10), 4.5(11) and 19(17) of the Constitution, the Cabinet is responsible for making any Key Decisions. Under Section 9E (3)(c) of the Local Government Act 2000 the Cabinet is empowered to delegate its functions to officers.</p> <p>The Cabinet exercised such powers and delegated the relevant authority in the Cabinet Meeting dated 13 August 2025.</p> <p>The draft terms of the Grant Agreement with the University of Oxford have now been agreed in principle, ensuring that the interests of Oxford City Council are protected.</p> <p>The terms clearly set out the purpose of the funding, reporting and monitoring requirements, and the</p>	<p>Completed by: Justin Zizys, Contracts Lawyer</p> <p>Date: 24 March 2026</p>

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	conditions under which funds may be withheld or reclaimed. JZ/18428	
Other implications	None	Completed by: Jenny Barker Regeneration Lead Date: 23/2/26
Member declared interests	None	Completed by: Jenny Barker Regeneration Lead Date: 23/2/26

Background Documents
Draft Agreement – Confidential

Report author	Jenny Barker
Job title	Regeneration Lead
Service area or department	Regeneration, Economy and Sustainability
Email contact	jbarker@oxford.gov.uk

Consultee checklist

Consultees	Name and job title	Date
Senior officer e.g. the relevant service manager / Director where the decision maker is the Chief Executive or a Deputy Chief Executive.	Carolyn Ploszynski, Director of Regeneration, Economy and Sustainability	05 May 2026
Group Finance Director Where required by the Constitution or conditions of the delegation	Alistair Rush, Group Finance Director	30 April 2026

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Director of Law, Governance and Strategy Where required by the Constitution or conditions of the delegation	Emma Jackman, Director of Law Governance and Strategy	7 May 2026
Cabinet Member(s) Where required by the conditions of the delegation	Councillor Alex Hollingsworth, Cabinet Member for Planning & Culture	24 April 2026
Ward Members Where required by the Constitution or conditions of the delegation	None	

Decision Maker Approval

Name and Job Title	<i>Date</i>
Tom Bridgman Deputy Chief Executive Place	7 May 2026

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.

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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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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