



To: **Members of the Cabinet**

## ***Notice of a Meeting of the Cabinet***

**Tuesday, 19 July 2022 at 11.30 am**

**Council Chamber - County Hall, New Road, Oxford OX1 1ND**

If you wish to view proceedings online, please click on this [Live Stream Link](#).

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Stephen T Chandler".

Stephen Chandler  
Interim Chief Executive

July 2022

Committee Officer: **Colm Ó Caomhánaigh**  
Tel: 07393 001096; E-Mail:  
[colm.ocaomhanaigh@oxfordshire.gov.uk](mailto:colm.ocaomhanaigh@oxfordshire.gov.uk)

### **Membership**

#### *Councillors*

Liz Leffman	Leader of the Council
Liz Brighthouse OBE	Deputy Leader of the Council
Glynis Phillips	Cabinet Member for Corporate Services
Dr Pete Sudbury	Cabinet Member for Climate Change Delivery & Environment
Tim Bearder	Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care
Duncan Enright	Cabinet Member for Travel & Development Strategy
Calum Miller	Cabinet Member for Finance
Jenny Hannaby	Cabinet Member for Community Services and Safety
Mark Lygo	Cabinet Member for Public Health & Equality
Andrew Gant	Cabinet Member for Highway Management

*The Agenda is attached. Decisions taken at the meeting will become effective at the end of the working day on unless called in by that date for review by the appropriate Scrutiny Committee. Copies of this Notice, Agenda and supporting papers are circulated to all Members of the County Council.*

***Date of next meeting: 20 September 2022***

## Declarations of Interest

### The duty to declare.....

Under the Localism Act 2011 it is a criminal offence to

- (a) fail to register a disclosable pecuniary interest within 28 days of election or co-option (or re-election or re-appointment), or
- (b) provide false or misleading information on registration, or
- (c) participate in discussion or voting in a meeting on a matter in which the member or co-opted member has a disclosable pecuniary interest.

### Whose Interests must be included?

The Act provides that the interests which must be notified are those of a member or co-opted member of the authority, **or**

- those of a spouse or civil partner of the member or co-opted member;
- those of a person with whom the member or co-opted member is living as husband/wife
- those of a person with whom the member or co-opted member is living as if they were civil partners.

(in each case where the member or co-opted member is aware that the other person has the interest).

### What if I remember that I have a Disclosable Pecuniary Interest during the Meeting?.

The Code requires that, at a meeting, where a member or co-opted member has a disclosable interest (of which they are aware) in any matter being considered, they disclose that interest to the meeting. The Council will continue to include an appropriate item on agendas for all meetings, to facilitate this.

Although not explicitly required by the legislation or by the code, it is recommended that in the interests of transparency and for the benefit of all in attendance at the meeting (including members of the public) the nature as well as the existence of the interest is disclosed.

A member or co-opted member who has disclosed a pecuniary interest at a meeting must not participate (or participate further) in any discussion of the matter; and must not participate in any vote or further vote taken; and must withdraw from the room.

Members are asked to continue to pay regard to the following provisions in the code that *“You must serve only the public interest and must never improperly confer an advantage or disadvantage on any person including yourself”* or *“You must not place yourself in situations where your honesty and integrity may be questioned.....”*

Please seek advice from the Monitoring Officer prior to the meeting should you have any doubt about your approach.

### List of Disclosable Pecuniary Interests:

**Employment** (includes *“any employment, office, trade, profession or vocation carried on for profit or gain”*.), **Sponsorship, Contracts, Land, Licences, Corporate Tenancies, Securities.**

For a full list of Disclosable Pecuniary Interests and further Guidance on this matter please see the Guide to the New Code of Conduct and Register of Interests at Members’ conduct guidelines. <http://intranet.oxfordshire.gov.uk/wps/wcm/connect/occ/Insite/Elected+members/> or email [democracy@oxfordshire.gov.uk](mailto:democracy@oxfordshire.gov.uk) for a hard copy of the document.

**If you have any special requirements (such as a large print version of these papers or special access facilities) please contact the officer named on the front page, but please give as much notice as possible before the meeting.**

# AGENDA

## 1. Apologies for Absence

## 2. Declarations of Interest

- guidance note opposite

## 3. Minutes (Pages 1 - 22)

To approve the minutes of the meeting held on 21 June 2022 (CA3) and to receive information arising from them.

## 4. Questions from County Councillors

Any county councillor may, by giving notice to the Proper Officer by 9 am two working days before the meeting, ask a question on any matter in respect of the Cabinet's delegated powers.

The number of questions which may be asked by any councillor at any one meeting is limited to two (or one question with notice and a supplementary question at the meeting) and the time for questions will be limited to 30 minutes in total. As with questions at Council, any questions which remain unanswered at the end of this item will receive a written response.

Questions submitted prior to the agenda being despatched are shown below and will be the subject of a response from the appropriate Cabinet Member or such other councillor or officer as is determined by the Cabinet Member, and shall not be the subject of further debate at this meeting. Questions received after the despatch of the agenda, but before the deadline, will be shown on the Schedule of Addenda circulated at the meeting, together with any written response which is available at that time.

## 5. Petitions and Public Address

*Members of the public who wish to speak at this meeting can attend the meeting in person or 'virtually' through an online connection.*

*To facilitate 'hybrid' meetings we are asking that requests to speak are submitted by no later than 9am four working days before the meeting i.e., 9am on Wednesday 13 July 2022. Requests to speak should be sent to [colm.ocaomhanaigh@oxfordshire.gov.uk](mailto:colm.ocaomhanaigh@oxfordshire.gov.uk)*

*If you are speaking 'virtually', you may submit a written statement of your presentation to ensure that if the technology fails, then your views can still be taken into account. A written copy of your statement can be provided no later than 9am 2 working days before the meeting. Written submissions should be no longer than 1 A4 sheet.*

## 6. Cowley LTN Experimental TRO (Pages 23 - 36)

*Cabinet Member:* Highway Management

*Forward Plan Ref:* 2022/051

*Contact:* Naomi Barnes, Project Manager, 07824528681

Report by Corporate Director Environment & Place.

**\*\*\* The Annexes are published as Supplementary Documents due to their number and length. \*\*\***

To make permanent or remove.

**The Cabinet is RECOMMENDED to:**

- a) **Incorporate the provisions of the current Experimental Traffic Regulation Orders (ETRO) into a Traffic Regulation Order (TRO) for the Church Cowley, Florence Park and Temple Cowley areas that are Low Traffic Neighbourhoods (LTNs).**
- b) **Undertake further community and stakeholder engagement in order to further refine and improve the scheme, with any changes to be implemented by Spring 2023.**
- c) **Undertake a process of monitoring and reviewing all elements of the scheme, and to bring forward proposals for changes through the consultation process which may include (but not necessarily be limited to): replacing some hard closures with ANPR-controlled traffic filters; reviewing the exact location of some installations within a road; replacing others with elements such as parklets in order to deliver public realm improvements**

## **LUNCH BREAK**

The meeting will resume at 2pm.

## 7. Reports from Scrutiny Committees (Pages 37 - 96)

The following reports are presented from scrutiny committees:

- Report of the Carbon Reduction Targets Working Group – Commissioned by the Place Overview & Scrutiny Committee (**CA7a**)
- Report of the Place Overview & Scrutiny Committee: Scrutiny of Local Transport and Connectivity Plan (**CA7b**)
- Recommendations of the Performance & Corporate Services Overview & Scrutiny Committee re 2022/23 Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Action Plan (**CA7c**)

## **8. Business Management & Monitoring Report - May 2022 (Pages 97 - 168)**

*Cabinet Member:* Cabinet Member for Finance

*Forward Plan Ref:* 2022/016

*Contact:* Louise Tustian, Head of Insight & Corporate Programmes Tel: 07741 607452/Kathy Wilcox, Head of Financial Strategy Tel: 07788 302163

Report by Corporate Director Customers, Organisational Development & Resources and Director of Finance (**CA8**).

To note and seek agreement of the report.

**The Cabinet is RECOMMENDED to**

- a) **note the report.**
- b) **agree the virements set out in Annex B-2a**
- c) **note the virements and supplementary estimate set out in Annex B-2b and B-2c**
- d) **agree the proposed update to the Review of Charges for 2022/23 as set out in paragraphs 94 and 95 of Annex B.**
- e) **note the additional £5.9m Business Rate funding set out in Annex B paragraph 130 and agree that this should be added to the Business Rates Reserve pending agreement about the use of this funding.**

## **9. Capital Programme Update and Monitoring Report - May 2022 (To follow)**

*Cabinet Member:* Finance

*Forward Plan Ref:* 2022/015

*Contact:* Kathy Wilcox, Head of Financial Strategy Tel: 07788 302163

Report by Director of Finance (**CA9**).

Financial Report on capital spending against budget allocations, including any necessary capital programme approvals.

**The Cabinet is RECOMMENDED to:**

### **Re-profiling**

- a) **Agree the re-profiling of HIF1, HIF2, A40 and the Banbury & Bicester programmes (paragraphs 19,20)**

### **Grant funding**

- b) **Agree the inclusion in the Capital Programme of the following grant funding updates and allocation:**
  - **High Needs Provision Capital Allocations for 2022/23 and 2023/24 of £15.7m to the basic need programme to address SEN provision (Paragraph 61),**
  - **£2.2m Sustainable Warmth Fund for Home Upgrade grant (Paragraph 70),**

- **Highways Structural Maintenance Programme between 2022/23 and 2024/25 of £25.2m towards the annual maintenance programmes (Paragraph 65)**

#### **Capital Programme Governance and prioritisation**

- c) **Endorse the changes to Capital Programme governance, noting the enhanced role of Cabinet and rollout of changes to strengthen internal structures and procedures. (paragraph 78 and annex 3, structure chart).**
- d) **Agree to a full review of the Capital Programme, in light of pressures and rising inflation costs (paragraph 80)**
- e) **Agree that the Housing & Growth Deal should be reported at project level rather than programme level, as set out in paragraph 32.**
- f) **Endorse the latest capital monitoring position for 2022/23 set out in Annex 1, noting the return of £1.7m corporate funds from the Defect Liability Programme.**
- g) **Approve the updated Capital Programme at Annex 2 incorporating the changes set out in this report.**

#### **10. Oxfordshire-Cherwell Partnership Transition Plan (Pages 169 - 178)**

*Cabinet Member:* Leader

*Forward Plan Ref:* 2022/071

*Contact:* Robin Rogers, Programme Director, [robin.rogers@oxfordshire.gov.uk](mailto:robin.rogers@oxfordshire.gov.uk)

Report by Interim Chief Executive (**CA10**).

SUPPLEMENTARY DOCUMENT:

Oxfordshire-Cherwell Partnership Transition Arrangements Summary

To approve the transition plans for the discontinuance of the Oxfordshire County Council – Cherwell District Council s113 Agreement.

**Cabinet is RECOMMENDED to:**

- a) **Note the conclusions of the Joint Shared Services and Personnel Committee (JSSP) as set out in Table 1;**
- b) **Agree the transition arrangements as set out in Table 1;**
- c) **Note the financial implications as set out in Annex A, which are incorporated in the Business Management & Monitoring Report for 2022/23 elsewhere on this agenda;**
- d) **Note that the on-going financial impact will be addressed as part of the Budget and Business Planning process for 2023/24;**

- e) **Delegate to the Interim Chief Executive powers to operate, terminate, extend or vary the new arrangements with Cherwell District Council where they relate to executive functions.**

## **11. Oxfordshire Strategic Rail Freight Interchange (Pages 179 - 220)**

*Cabinet Member:* Travel & Development Strategy

*Forward Plan Ref:* 2021/164

*Contact:* Joy White, Principal Transport Planner Tel: 07554 103522

Report by Corporate Director Environment & Place (**CA11**).

To seek delegated authority for officers to respond in the council's statutory consultee role, to consultations on this proposed development, which, as Nationally Significant Infrastructure Project, falls outside the council's current Scheme of Delegation.

**The Cabinet is RECOMMENDED to approve Oxfordshire County Council's response to a non-statutory public consultation on the proposals for the Oxfordshire Strategic Rail Freight Interchange.**

## **12. Digital Inclusion Strategy (Pages 221 - 266)**

*Cabinet Member:* Corporate Services

*Forward Plan Ref:* 2022/021

*Contact:* Elena Grant, Policy Officer Tel: 07825 403173

Report by Corporate Director Customers, Organisational Development & Resources (**CA12**).

To seek approval of the Oxfordshire Digital Inclusion Strategy and agree the actions that the County Council will undertake.

**The Cabinet is RECOMMENDED to**

- a) **Approve the OCC Digital Inclusion Strategy.**
- b) **Approve the annual review by Cabinet and People Overview & Scrutiny Committee of our progress against the commitments set out in the strategy.**
- c) **Approve the Oxfordshire Digital Inclusion Charter.**

## **13. Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Action Plan 2022-23 (Pages 267 - 280)**

*Cabinet Member:* Public Health & Equality

*Forward Plan Ref:* 2022/069

*Contact:* Lauren Rushen, Senior Policy Officer, 07990367851

Report by Corporate Director Customers, Organisational Development & Resources (**CA13**).

To agree the equality, diversity and inclusion action plan for 2022-23.

**Cabinet is RECOMMENDED to**

- a) **adopt the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Action Plan for 2022-2023;**
- b) **agree delegated authority to the Corporate Director Customers, Organisational Development and Resources to agree minor typographical changes to the action plan and an updated foreword from the Leader.**

**14. Provision of Services for Adults and children affected by Domestic Abuse (Pages 281 - 326)**

*Cabinet Member:* Public Health & Equality

*Forward Plan Ref:* 2022/043

*Contact:* Rosie Winyard, Interim Senior Public Health Principle, 07564055880

Report by Corporate Director for Public Health & Wellbeing (**CA14**).

Cabinet approval is sought for: permission to commence a procurement exercise for accommodation and support services for adults and children affected by domestic abuse and; provide a support service for perpetrators to reduce associated harms in line with the Domestic Abuse Act 2021.

**Cabinet is RECOMMENDED to**

- a) **Agree the proposed commencement of a procurement exercise for Oxfordshire domestic abuse services, including IDVA (Independent Domestic Violence Advocates) and Perpetrator provision in 2022.**
- b) **Agree the progress of the statutory duties set out in the Domestic Abuse Act 2021, including the Needs Assessment and Overarching Domestic Abuse Strategy 2022**

**15. Oxfordshire Voluntary and Community Sector Strategy (Pages 327 - 358)**

*Cabinet Member:* Public Health & Equality

*Forward Plan Ref:* 2022/025

*Contact:* Emily Schofield, Acting Head of Strategy Tel: 07881 311707 / Karina Russell, Senior Policy Officer Tel: 07917 921511

Report by Acting Head of Strategy (**CA15**).

To seek approval for the draft Oxfordshire Voluntary and Community Sector Strategy.

**Cabinet is RECOMMENDED to approve the Voluntary and Community Sector (VCS) Strategy for 2022 – 2027.**

**16. Oxford 'Street Voice' Citizen's Jury (Pages 359 - 362)**

*Cabinet Member:* Corporate Services

Forward Plan Ref: 2022/089

Contact: Claire Taylor, Corporate Director – Customers, Organisational Development and Resources, [claire.taylor@oxfordshire.gov.uk](mailto:claire.taylor@oxfordshire.gov.uk)

Report by Corporate Director – Customers, Organisational Development and Resources (CA16).

**\*\*\* ANNEX TO FOLLOW \*\*\***

To note the independent research project undertaken by the consortium of researchers from Oxford University and request that Overview and Scrutiny consider a dedicated event in September 2022 to consider the findings in committee. To formally record its thanks to the residents who participated in the Jury and commit to consideration and response to the recommendations from the Jury.

**The Cabinet is RECOMMENDED to**

- a) **Note the independent research project undertaken by the consortium of researchers from Oxford University (annex 1) and request that Overview and Scrutiny consider a dedicated event in September 2022 to consider the findings in committee.**
- b) **Formally record its thanks to the residents who participated in the Jury and commit to consideration of and response to the recommendations from the Jury and any subsequent Overview and Scrutiny Committee considerations.**

### **EXEMPT ITEM**

In the event that any Member or Officer wishes to discuss the information set out in the restricted parts of Annex A, Appendix 8b and Annex B for Agenda Item 17, the Cabinet will be invited to resolve to exclude the public for the consideration of the Annex by passing a resolution in relation in the following terms:

**"that the public be excluded during the consideration of the Annexes since it is likely that if they were present during that discussion there would be a disclosure of "exempt" information as described in Part I of Schedule 12A to the Local Government Act, 1972 and specified below the item in the Agenda".**

#### **NOTE:**

The report and other annexes do not contain exempt information and are available to the public.

**THE EXEMPT PAGES IN THE ITEM NAMED HAVE NOT BEEN MADE PUBLIC AND SHOULD BE REGARDED AS 'CONFIDENTIAL' BY MEMBERS AND OFFICERS ENTITLED TO RECEIVE THEM.**

### **17. Didcot Garden Town HIF1 - Compulsory Purchase and Side Road Orders (Pages 363 - 384)**

*Cabinet Member:* Travel & Development Strategy

*Forward Plan Ref:* 2021/134

*Contact:* Timothy Mann, Senior Project Manager, Tel 07922 848408

Report by Director of Growth & Economy (**CA17**).

The information in this case is exempt in that it falls within the following prescribed categories:

2. Information which is likely to reveal the identity of an individual.

and since it is considered that, in all the circumstances of the case, the public interest in maintaining the exemption outweighs the public interest in disclosing the information.

The CPO Schedules in Annex A, Appendix 8b and in Annex B, containing exempt information under the above paragraph are attached.

**\*\*\* The Annexes are published as Supplementary Documents due to their number and length. \*\*\***

To seek approval of the Statement of Reasons and Orders Plans and approval to make the Compulsory Purchase and Side Road Orders.

**The Cabinet is RECOMMENDED to:**

- a) **Confirm that the acquisition of the land and new rights identified on the map attached to this report (Annex B) (“the Order Map”) being the map accompanying The Oxfordshire County Council (Didcot Garden Town Highways Infrastructure – A4130 Improvement (Milton Gate to Collett Roundabout), A4197 Didcot to Culham Link Road and A415 Clifton Hampden Bypass) Compulsory Purchase Order 2022 (“the CPO”) is necessary for highway purposes;**
- b) **Approve the CPO, the Order Map, the SRO, the plans accompanying the SRO (“SRO Plans”) and the Bridge Scheme all substantially in the form annexed to this report but to delegate to the Director of Transport and Infrastructure following consultation with the Director of Law & Governance, authority to modify them as necessary;**
- c) **Authorise the Director of Law & Governance to make The Oxfordshire County Council (Didcot Garden Town Highways Infrastructure – A4130 Improvement (Milton Gate to Collett Roundabout), A4197 Didcot to Culham Link Road and A415 Clifton Hampden Bypass) Compulsory Purchase Order 2022 pursuant to Sections 239, 240, 246, 250 and 260 of the Highways Act 1980 (as amended) and Parts II and III of Schedule 2, and Schedule 3 to the Acquisition of Land Act 1981 for the purpose of acquiring the land and interests shown on the Order Map and described in the Schedules to the CPO (or such lesser area of land should this in his opinion be appropriate) to facilitate the construction of new highway and other necessary and related works and mitigation on such land and to affix the Common Seal of the Council to the CPO and to the Order Map;**
- d) **Authorise the Director of Law & Governance to make The Oxfordshire County Council (Didcot to Culham Thames Bridge) Scheme 2022 (“the Bridge Scheme”) pursuant to Section 106(3) of the Highways Act 1980 (as**

amended) for the purpose of allowing construction of a bridge over a navigable waterway, being the Thames River and to affix the Common Seal of the Council to the Bridge Scheme and its accompanying plan(s);

- e) Authorise the Director of Law & Governance to make The Oxfordshire County Council (Didcot Garden Town Highways Infrastructure – A4130 Improvement (Milton Gate to Collett Roundabout), A4197 Didcot to Culham Link Road and A415 Clifton Hampden Bypass) (Side Roads) Order 2022 (“the SRO”) pursuant to Sections 14 and 125 of the Highways Act 1980 (as amended) to enable the stopping-up, diversion, alteration, improvement and creation of new lengths of highway or reclassification of existing highways, enabling the stopping up of private means of access as necessary where the scheme design necessitates and re-provision of private means of access and giving authority for the acquisition of necessary land pursuant to the CPO and to affix the Common Seal of the Council to the SRO and to the SRO Plans;
- f) Authorise the Director of Law & Governance to remove from the CPO any plot (or interest therein) no longer required to be acquired compulsorily, to amend the interests scheduled in the CPO (if so advised) and to request that the Secretary of State makes any modifications to the CPO prior to confirmation as may be appropriate;
- g) Authorise the Director of Law & Governance to amend and finalise the draft Joint Statement of Reasons (Annex A) for the CPO and The Oxfordshire County Council (Didcot Garden Town Highways Infrastructure – A4130 Improvement (Milton Gate to Collett Roundabout), A4197 Didcot to Culham Link Road and A415 Clifton Hampden Bypass) (Side Roads) Order 2022 (“the SRO”) and The Oxfordshire County Council (Didcot to Culham Thames Bridge) Scheme 2022 (“the Bridge Scheme”) considered necessary prior to its submission to the Secretary of State;
- h) Authorise the Director of Law & Governance to advertise the making of the CPO, the SRO and the Bridge Scheme and to submit the CPO, SRO and Bridge Scheme to the Secretary of State for Transport for confirmation, together with authorising the Director of Law & Governance to take all other relevant action thereon to promote the confirmation and/or publication of the CPO, SRO and Bridge Scheme (including by statutory instrument for the Bridge Scheme);
- i) In the event that any Public Inquiry is convened to consider objections to the CPO and/or SRO and/or Bridge Scheme and/or planning application (by way of a call-in decision), to authorise the Director of Law & Governance, in consultation with the Director of Transport and Infrastructure to prepare and submit such evidence as is necessary in support of the CPO and/or SRO and/or Bridge Scheme and/or planning application, including enlisting the assistance of outside consultants, legal advisors and Counsel to assist in the preparation and presentation of such evidence.
- j) As soon as the CPO, the SRO and the Bridge Scheme have been confirmed and become operative, to authorise the Director of Law & Governance to comply with all associated requirements in respect of personal, site and

press notices of confirmation and at the appropriate time thereafter to make, seal and give notice of a General Vesting Declaration (or declarations where more than one is required) under the Compulsory Purchase (Vesting Declarations) Act 1981 and/or to serve Notices to Treat and Notice of Entry in respect of those properties to be acquired compulsorily;

- k) Authorise the Director of Transport and Infrastructure in consultation with the Director of Law & Governance to negotiate terms with interested parties for the purchase by agreement or payment of compensation in accordance with the Compensation Code in respect of any interests or rights in or over any land included in the CPO and, where appropriate, to agree terms for relocation;
- l) Authorise the Director of Property in consultation with the Director of Law & Governance to complete the acquisition of such interests or rights and execute their legal transfer/grant to the Council;
- m) In the event that compensation for the acquisition of land and/or rights cannot be agreed between the relevant parties, to authorise the Director of Law & Governance to make a reference to the Upper Tribunal (Lands Chamber) for determination of such compensation together with such other questions as may be necessary to determine, including the engagement of appropriate external legal advisors and surveyors and other experts, as required;
- n) In the event that any question of compensation in relation to the acquisition of land and/or rights is made by way of a reference to the Upper Tribunal (Lands Chamber) (whether by the claimant or the Council) to authorise the Director of Law & Governance to take all necessary steps in relation thereto, including advising on the appropriate uses and compensation payable and issuing the appropriate certificates.
- o) Be notified of the Statutory Blight regime that requires the Council to respond to claims for Statutory Blight pursuant to Part VI, Chapter II and Schedule 13 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended).
- p) In respect to Statutory Blight delegate authority to the Director for Property Services and the Director of Law & Governance to agree appropriate terms in accordance with statutory provisions.

## **18. Delegated Powers - July 2022 (Pages 385 - 388)**

*Cabinet Member:* Leader

*Forward Plan Ref:* 2022/017

*Contact:* Colm Ó Caomhánaigh, Committee Officer Tel: 07393 001096

Report by Director of Law & Governance (**CA18**).

To report on a quarterly basis any executive decisions taken under the specific powers and functions delegated under the terms of Part 7.1 (Scheme of Delegation to Officers) of the Council's Constitution – Paragraph 6.3(c)(i). It is not for Scrutiny call-in.

## **19. Forward Plan and Future Business (Pages 389 - 390)**

*Cabinet Member: All*

*Contact Officer: Colm Ó Caomhánaigh, Committee Officer Tel: 07393 001096*

The Cabinet Procedure Rules provide that the business of each meeting at the Cabinet is to include “updating of the Forward Plan and proposals for business to be conducted at the following meeting”. Items from the Forward Plan for the immediately forthcoming meetings of the Cabinet appear in the Schedule at **CA19**. This includes any updated information relating to the business for those meetings that has already been identified for inclusion in the next Forward Plan update.

The Schedule is for noting, but Cabinet Members may also wish to take this opportunity to identify any further changes they would wish to be incorporated in the next Forward Plan update.

***The Cabinet is RECOMMENDED to note the items currently identified for forthcoming meetings.***

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## CABINET

**MINUTES** of the meeting held on Tuesday, 21 June 2022 commencing at 2.00 pm and finishing at 5.10 pm

**Present:**

**Voting Members:** Councillor Liz Leffman – in the Chair  
Councillor Liz Brighthouse OBE (Deputy Chair)  
Councillor Glynis Phillips  
Councillor Dr Pete Sudbury  
Councillor Tim Bearder  
Councillor Duncan Enright  
Councillor Calum Miller  
Councillor Jenny Hannaby  
Councillor Mark Lygo  
Councillor Andrew Gant

**Other Members in Attendance:**

Councillors David Bartholomew, Robin Bennett, Ted Fenton, Donna Ford, Charlie Hicks, John Howson, Dan Levy, Kieron Mallon, Ian Middleton, Sally Povolotsky, Eddie Reeves, Ian Snowden

**Officers:**

Whole of meeting Stephen Chandler, Interim Chief Executive; Kevin Gordon, Corporate Director for Children's Services; Steve Claire Taylor, Corporate Director Customers, Organisational Development & Resources; Lorna Baxter, Director of Finance; Anita Bradley, Director of Law & Governance; Karen Fuller, Interim Corporate Director for Adult Services; Owen Jenkins, Director of Transport & Infrastructure; Colm Ó Caomhánaigh, Committee Officer.

*The Committee considered the matters, reports and recommendations contained or referred to in the agenda for the meeting, together with a schedule of addenda tabled at the meeting, and decided as set out below. Except insofar as otherwise specified, the reasons for the decisions are contained in the agenda, reports and schedule, copies of which are attached to the signed Minutes.*

**70/22 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

(Agenda Item. 1)

There were no apologies for absence.

**71/22 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

(Agenda Item. 2)

There were no declarations of interest.

**72/22 MINUTES**

(Agenda Item. 3)

The minutes of the meeting held on 24 May 2022 were approved as an accurate record and signed by the Chair.

**73/22 QUESTIONS FROM COUNTY COUNCILLORS**

(Agenda Item. 4)

See attached Annex.

**74/22 PETITIONS AND PUBLIC ADDRESS**

(Agenda Item. 5)

10. Report from the Oxfordshire Joint Health Overview & Scrutiny Committee  
Cllr Jane Hanna

11. SEND top-up funding for schools  
Carole Thomson

13. Local Transport and Connectivity Plan  
Cllr Charlie Hicks  
Graham Smith  
John Center  
Deborah Glass Woodin  
Danny Yee

14. Vision Zero  
Alison Hill  
Peter Barnett  
Danny Yee  
Cllr Dan Levy

15. National Bus Strategy – Enhanced Partnership  
Danny Yee

17. HIF1 Grant Determination Agreement  
Greg O’Broin  
Chris Hancock  
Richard Harding  
Cllr Robin Bennett  
Cllr Charlie Hicks  
Cllr Ian Middleton

**75/22 ANNUAL PERFORMANCE REPORT 2021-2022 AND PROVISIONAL REVENUE OUTTURN 2021/22**

(Agenda Item. 6)

Cabinet considered a report presenting the Council's annual performance report and provisional year-end finance position for 2021/22.

Councillor Glynis Phillips, Cabinet Member for Corporate Services, introduced the report which acknowledged the challenges presented by the Covid pandemic and the excellent partnership working with the NHS and city and district councils. The partnerships were continuing to work well in supporting refugees from Ukraine and host families. The report showed the initial progress made in the first year of the administration's strategic plan.

Councillor Calum Millar, Cabinet Member for Finance, referring to the Provisional Revenue Outturn, particularly noted the underspend of \$4.6m and its transfer to general balances which he believed was a prudent approach in challenging times.

The Chair put the recommendations which were agreed.

**RESOLVED:**

- a) **To note the Annual Report for 2021/22.**
- b) **To note the summary of the provisional year - end financial position for 2021/22 along with the year-end position on general balances and earmarked reserves as set out in Annex B.**
- c) **To note the virements set out in Annex B-2.**
- d) **To agree that the surplus on the On-Street Parking Account at the end of the 2021/22 financial year that has not yet been applied to fund eligible expenditure in accordance with Section 55(4) of the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984, can be carried forward to the 2022/23 financial year as set out in Annex B-3c.**
- e) **To approve the transfer of £4.6m underspends to general balances as set out in paragraph 6.6.**
- f) **To approve the updated risk share arrangements for the pooled budgets for Live Well and Age Well services from 1 April 2022 to 31 March 2023 as set out in paragraph 8.1.**
- g) **To approve the use of directorate underspends to offset the £1.2m overspend on COVID-19 costs related to High Needs in Children's Services as set out in paragraph 7.1.**

**76/22 PROVISIONAL CAPITAL OUTTURN 2021/22**

(Agenda Item. 7)

Cabinet considered a report setting out the performance against the Capital Programme shown in the latest monitoring report for 2021/22 and also comparing back to the capital programme agreed by Council in February 2021. The figures shown reflected those to be included in the Council's Statement of Accounts for 2021/22.

Councillor Calum Millar, Cabinet Member for Finance, drew attention to the table in paragraph 14 of the report which showed the underspend in the programme for 2021/22. Some of this related to significant projects that

were being re-profiled for the new financial year and did not represent a risk to the grant funding.

He took the opportunity to report that there were significant pressures across the programme as a result of construction and other inflation. Officers have been asked to assess the programme as a whole, and particularly the projects that have fixed grant funding, and report back to Cabinet.

The Chair moved the recommendations which were agreed.

**RESOLVED: to note the performance against the capital programme for 2021/22 as set out in the report.**

## **77/22 TREASURY MANAGEMENT ANNUAL PERFORMANCE REPORT**

(Agenda Item. 8)

Cabinet had before it the Treasury Management performance for the 2021/22 financial year measured against the original budget agreed by Council in February 2021.

Councillor Calum Millar, Cabinet Member for Finance, described it as a broadly positive story. Despite interest rates in the period being slightly lower than anticipated, the Council held slightly higher balances and mildly exceeded expectation in terms of income generation within treasury management. The charts in Annex 5 showed that the team performance had significantly exceeded the benchmarking index. He thanked the team for their hard work in a volatile period and hoped that their success would continue.

The recommendations were moved by the Chair, seconded by Councillor Millar and agreed.

**RESOLVED: to note the report, and to RECOMMEND Council to note the council's treasury management activity in 2021/22.**

## **78/22 WORKFORCE REPORT AND STAFFING DATA - QUARTER 4 - JANUARY-MARCH 2022**

(Agenda Item. 9)

Cabinet considered a report providing an update for Quarter 4 on key HR activities along with a refreshed workforce profile at Appendix 1.

Councillor Glynis Phillips, Cabinet Member for Corporate Services, drew attention to the main points:

- The apprenticeship programme was going in the right direction with 163 new apprenticeships in 2021/22 compared to 93 the previous year. This was helping the Council to 'grow its own' staff in a competitive marketplace.

- Spending on agency staff remained a concern at over £8m in Q4. There was an urgent need for the Environment & Place directorate to finalise its structure to recruit to permanent places and Children's Services was managing to reduce its numbers of agency staff.
- A lack of qualifications in English and Maths had been identified as a barrier resulting in an imbalance in having a higher proportion of females in lower grade positions in the Council. To redress this, staff were being given the opportunity to achieve Level 2 qualifications – the equivalent of GCSE qualifications.

The recommendations were moved by Councillor Phillips, seconded by Councillor Hannaby and agreed.

**RESOLVED: to note the report.**

**79/22 REPORT FROM THE JOINT HEALTH OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE: CARE HOMES/NATIONAL COVID ENQUIRY**

(Agenda Item. 10)

Cabinet was asked to consider a letter endorsed by the Joint Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee at its meeting on 9 June 2022 in relation to care homes and the national Covid enquiry.

Councillor Jane Hanna, Chair of the Oxfordshire Joint Health and Scrutiny Committee (OJHOSC), noted that the scrutiny committee had previously made a request for an Oxfordshire review of the discharges to care homes at the start of the Covid pandemic. There was no doubt that hard working officers had followed the national guidance at the time but there was a need to understand the lessons learned.

The request had been accepted in the context of a national review taking place. However, it was now clear that the national review was going to take a very long time. There had also been a recent court judgment that concluded that the discharges had been illegal and an Oxfordshire resident had been one of the litigants. The scrutiny committee wished therefore to renew its request for a local review which could at least get started on early work.

Councillor Hanna accepted that the executive might not be able to organise a cross-system review in the time it is required to respond to a scrutiny report but she hoped that Cabinet could give a positive response which would be considered at the following scrutiny committee meeting.

Following comments from Cabinet Members the following points were agreed:

- Consultation will take place with the Leader, Cabinet Member and Corporate Director for Adult Services to consider the terms of reference, timeline and resources required for a review and if costs could be shared with system partners.

- The review should align with the national review as far as possible in order for comparisons to be made.

Cabinet will respond formally to the next OJHOSC meeting. The Chair thanked all those working across the health and care systems for their hard work on behalf of residents of the county during the pandemic.

## **80/22 SEND TOP-UP FUNDING FOR SCHOOLS**

(Agenda Item. 11)

Cabinet had before it a report on providing Top-Up funding for Early Years settings, mainstream Primary, mainstream Secondary and Special Schools.

Carole Thomson, Chair of the Oxfordshire Schools' Forum, stated that the consultation process on this item had fallen well short of what was required by the Department's good practice guide. The Forum's meeting on 26 April was presented with a totally changed paper published just three working days before the meeting. It was promised that information would be circulated to Headteachers but this did not happen. If the Council was to implement its SEND Strategy it was essentially to adopt a policy of investing to save in our mainstream schools. There was no increased funding for special schools who may no longer be able to employ sufficient staff. The Schools' Forum was fully supportive of recommendation b).

Councillor Liz Brighthouse, Cabinet Member for Children, Education & Young People's Services, stated that she had attended the Schools' Forum and heard the concerns expressed at this paper. However, this paper was just extending a policy already in place. She agreed that there was a need to consult with schools on how to take it further than this and that the Council needed to consider, in making its budget for next year, how it could provide the funds to support the strategy. This administration was committed to building our own special schools and children's homes to avoid sending children out-of-county.

Kevin Gordon, Corporate Director for Children's Services, added that significant reform was expected in this area as recognised in a recent Green Paper. In the meantime, this temporary measure was needed. He was pleased that, even with a deficit in the High Needs Block, it had been possible to invest in some additional top-ups.

Councillor Brighthouse moved the recommendations, Councillor Phillips seconded and they were agreed.

### **RESOLVED: to**

- a) Agree to continue the current enhancement in Top-Up funding for Early Years settings, mainstream Primary, mainstream Secondary and Special School forecast at approximately £4.1M for academic year 2022-23.**

- b) **Agree an approach that timetables the 2023-24 Top-Up funding decision as part of the Councils annual budget setting process to allow schools more time for planning**

**81/22 CABINET RESPONSE TO TRANSGENDER MOTION FROM COUNCIL**

(Agenda Item. 12)

Cabinet considered a paper setting out the key areas of focus and recommendations for the Cabinet response to the motion agreed at Council in April 2022 requesting action to support our transgender and non-binary residents.

Councillor Glynis Phillips, Cabinet Member for Corporate Services, summarised the report which included:

- Proposed focused engagement with the LGBTIQA+ community on access to Council services and, through Healthwatch, to similarly engage on NHS services, leading to the development of a guidance document.
- Updating the Including Everyone framework to ensure a clearer commitment to supporting our Transgender and non-binary residents.
- Consideration of the implications of gender-inclusive bathrooms in the current review of property strategy.
- A review in one year with an offer of discussion at the appropriate scrutiny committee.

Councillor Lygo proposed the recommendations which were seconded by Councillor Sudbury and agreed.

**RESOLVED to:**

- a) **Agree the commissioning of research to provide an evidence base to underpin prioritisation and delivery**
- b) **Agree to update our Including Everyone framework to set out our commitment to transgender and non-binary residents**
- c) **Agree the approach to providing gender inclusive bathrooms through the council's Property Strategy**
- d) **Agree the approach to providing consistent and inclusive language**
- e) **Agree to the development of an LGBTIQA+ guidance document**
- f) **Agree to an annual review of progress**

**82/22 LOCAL TRANSPORT AND CONNECTIVITY PLAN (LTCP)**

(Agenda Item. 13)

Cabinet considered a report updating on the Local Transport and Connectivity Plan (LTCP), summarising the results of the LTCP consultation and outlining the key changes to the final LTCP.

Before discussing the report the meeting heard from the following speakers:

John Center stated that he believed Councillor Leffman was being hypocritical supporting traffic measures that did not affect her own town. He criticised the Low Traffic Neighbourhoods for inconveniencing drivers, forcing them to take longer journeys. He complained that the bus service where he lived in Littlemore was inadequate and that blue badge parking was not being enforced. Complaints from him to the Council had gone unanswered.

Councillor Charlie Hicks, Deputy Chair of the Place Overview & Scrutiny Committee, summarised the report from the Transport Policy Development Working Group:

- There was really good ambition on active travel plans but this was not matched by the necessary resources.
- Car congestion was the major barrier to safer walking and cycling and to better bus services. Solving this in the city would help rural services too.
- There was a lack of ambition on rail. Providing more stations should be considered.
- A tougher stance was needed with the freight sector which was resisting change.
- Modelling being used was not reliable and there was a lack of evidence base.
- Land use and transportation needed to be considered together more closely.
- There was a need to identify why previous local transport plans fell short on achievement.
- The three main messages were: better data, stronger system leadership and understanding behaviour.

Graham Smith, urban designer, stated that ideals were not enough: they had to be linked through appropriate design ideas to the fabric of the built environment itself. Without change in guidance and practice what will happen is that the old ways of doing things will continue to create formless places just like now. The review of the previous LTP4 simply failed to identify key problems and blithely spent millions on poor, incoherent design and even missing out changes on major junctions.

Deborah Glass Woodin, Co-chair of the Coalition for Healthy Streets and Active Travel, noted that previous LTP plans had great words and that the problem was with implementation. If they had been implemented the Council would not be spending £300m on new roads. She welcomed co-production and urged working with local campaign groups. On a personal level she was disappointed to see the commitment to 'net-zero' rather than 'zero-carbon'.

Danny Yee, commended officers for their work and taking on feedback. He recommended adopting the report but shared the concern that much of it will be ignored. It had been policy for many years to promote walking and cycling but yet every new junction design had prioritised motor vehicles. There was a need to provide clear guidance for designers, contractors and housing developers.

Councillor Duncan Enright, Cabinet Member for Travel & Development Strategy, thanked the speakers and noted the common view that implementation was key. More detailed plans and area strategies will come with the next stage and the comments from the Working Group and others will be considered. This draft had particularly taken onboard criticism that the Plan had been focussed on urban problems. The partnership work involved in the Oxfordshire Plan 2050 was a move towards bringing consideration of land use and transportation closer together and there was a need to ensure that was effective.

Other Cabinet Members added the following comments:

- The report from the working group was comprehensive, detailed and progressive.
- With plans in place for 100,000 new houses it was vital to get active travel plans embedded in the new developments.
- 90% of carbon emissions from transport were in rural areas so it was pleasing to see rural issues had been brought into the plan.
- The needs of disabled residents needed to come higher up the agenda and be specifically addressed in all plans.
- The lack of implementation of plans in the past was down to previous administrations. This administration accepted the challenge.
- Developers were making a lot of money and thought needed to be given to how to feed some of that back into the communities.

It was proposed to amend the recommendations to take account of the report from the Working Group. Councillor Enright moved the amended recommendations which were seconded by Councillor Gant and agreed.

**RESOLVED: to**

**a) Approve the content of the LTCP document, and the supporting strategies subject to consideration of the recommendations from the Place Overview and Scrutiny Committee, for adoption by the County Council on 12th July 2022, and**

**b) Delegate the decision on the final LTCP document, including consideration of the recommendations from the Place Overview and Scrutiny Committee and graphical format to the Corporate Director for Environment and Place in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Travel and Development Strategy.**

**83/22 VISION ZERO**

(Agenda Item. 14)

Cabinet had before it a report providing an overview of the proposed approach and scope of Vision Zero for Oxfordshire to try and reach a target of zero for fatalities and life changing injuries from road traffic collisions by 2050.

Before considering the report, the Chair had agreed to requests from a number of speakers to address the meeting.

Alison Hill, Chair of Cyclox, welcomed the report and the funding allocated and added that active travel campaign groups were ready to help. Some local authorities were allocating £20 per person per year towards active travel and Oxfordshire needed to be up there with them. However, the decision approving £294m expenditure on new roads would make targets more difficult to achieve. Her group was also disappointed at what she described as the abandonment of the Banbury Road and Woodstock Road schemes.

The Chair responded that those schemes had not been abandoned. The administration will find a way to make them happen but it will not necessarily be with Growth Deal money.

Peter Barnett stated that this was a fundamentally different approach that would need strong leadership from councillors and senior officers to make it happen. He was disappointed to see no evidence of outside collaboration in its development. Open access to data was important as well as the development of an action plan to lay out how the strategy would be achieved.

Danny Yee urged councillors to use the collision and injuries mapping tool that was available to see the extent of the problem. Many rural roads had a worse rate of accidents on a per trip basis and due to higher speeds, more fatalities and serious injuries. A cross-system approach was needed with guidelines provided and political willingness to restrict motor traffic.

Councillor Dan Levy, the County's Active Travel Champion, stated that most accidents involving fatalities and serious injury to pedestrians and cyclists occurred at junctions, which were primarily designed for motorists. Cycling needed to be made more convenient and having to mix with lorries seriously discouraged cycling. Many of the changes needed will result in slowing down traffic. This might be unpopular in the short term but he asked Cabinet to approve this new policy to promote a healthier more active county.

Councillor Andrew Gant responded to a number of points made by the speakers:

- He thanked the campaign groups for their valued input into all such policies of the Council.

- With regard to the expenditure on roads versus active travel, central government dictated most of this in their decisions on allocation of funds.
- The number of accidents was not a good measure of the safety of a road. There may be fewer accidents because people are afraid to walk or cycle on the road.
- Schemes needed to take into account their connectivity beyond their boundaries.

Other Cabinet Members reiterated the commitment to listen to expert advice and see the implementation of this policy through.

The recommendations were proposed by Councillor Gant, seconded by Councillor Enright and agreed.

**RESOLVED to:**

- (a) Approve the County Council Vision Zero commitment to: “Eliminate all fatalities and severe injuries on Oxfordshire’s roads and streets, to have a safer, healthier, and more equitable mobility for all. Work closely with partners and stakeholders to take a whole system approach, working together on infrastructure, behaviour, technology and legislation to achieve this change”**
- (b) To note the proposed ‘Vision Zero’ programme and governance arrangements being assembled as set out within this report.**
- (c) To note the drawdown of initial funding of £0.25m from the Budget Priorities Reserve to develop and start to progress the implementation of Vision Zero. Required for additional resources and delivery of key infrastructure changes at known areas of concern for road users.**

**84/22 NATIONAL BUS STRATEGY - ENHANCED PARTNERSHIP**

(Agenda Item. 15)

Cabinet received a report setting out the proposals for the Oxfordshire Bus Enhanced Partnership (EP), reflecting the Council’s indicative Bus Service Improvement Plan (BSIP) funding allocation and the schemes / measures which this is proposed to fund. It also asked for agreement to the draft EP, including the Governance arrangements for the Partnership.

Before considering the report, the Chair had approved a request to speak.

Danny Yee was disappointed that the proposals did not include integrated ticketing or a revival of the “Pick Me Up” service. However, he urged Cabinet to adopt the plan. He believed that giving the political leadership required to make difficult decisions was going to be more important than the technical

details of proposals. He noted that the potential 10-month implementation date would be difficult to meet and would require emergency planning.

An amendment was proposed by Councillor Tim Bearder, seconded by Councillor Sudbury and agreed as follows:

Annex A of Oxfordshire Enhanced Partnership Plan & Scheme:

On Agenda Page 667 in the row headed "Bus Lanes" it currently states under "Timescale": "Existing facilities to be retained at least at current hours of operation".

Append " – bus lanes will only be removed if modelling can show that alternative bus priority measures would improve bus journey times and cycle and pedestrian safety."

Councillor Andrew Gant, Cabinet Member for Highway Management, responded that, while the "Pick Me Up" service had not been economically viable, it was not far off and he hoped that improving conditions generally for bus services might enable it to be looked at again.

Councillor Gant congratulated officers on achieving the indicative offer which was better than many local authorities have achieved. He drew particular attention to the £1 flat fare in the city for under-19s which would get them into the habit of using public transport. He hoped that could be extended to the whole county in the future.

Other Cabinet Members commented as follows:

- Mobility hubs were the key to improving services across the county. These proposals demonstrated the Council's commitment to improving bus services.
- The flat fare rate should be available to young people across the county.
- The current service was not inclusive and consideration should be given to reviving the 'Pick Me Up' service.
- It was hoped that a wide interpretation of the term 'user groups' could be taken in consulting on proposals to include for example the Children in Care Council, Age UK and disability groups.

Councillor Gant responded that the report included extending under-16 fares to those under-19 outside the city.

Councillor Gant proposed the recommendations with the amendment to Annex A of the Partnership Document. Councillor Millar seconded and they were agreed.

**RESOLVED to:**

- (i) **Approve the draft Oxfordshire Enhanced Partnership Document (attached as Annex 1) for submission to the Department for Transport.**
- (ii) **Consult on the draft Enhanced Partnership Document with all Oxfordshire Bus Operators, for the statutory 28 objection period.**

#### **85/22 EXEMPT ITEMS**

(Agenda Item. 16)

It was agreed that there was no need to go into private session.

#### **86/22 HIF1 GRANT DETERMINATION AGREEMENT**

(Agenda Item. 17)

Cabinet had before it a report outlining the renegotiated position and options considered as requested by the meeting of Cabinet in March.

Before considering the report the Chair agreed to hear the following speakers:

Richard Harding emphasised that reducing car traffic was an important part of all local and central government policies in order to reduce carbon emissions. Studies had shown that by-pass schemes generally result in more traffic than predicted and ultimately fail to even reduce traffic in the town centres. He believed that this plan would induce more traffic and result in demands to link to the M40. He asked that the scheme be paused while the administration considered how to transition to a low carbon future.

Gregory O'Broin, Chair of Appleford Parish Council and the Neighbouring Parish Council Joint Committee, stated that all five Parish Councils in the Joint Committee strongly opposed this road. HIF was a solution from an earlier decade. It was not necessary to deliver housing and there were alternative infrastructures available. The HIF scheme was not designed to promote sustainable modes of travel and it will not improve air quality or reduce CO2 emissions. He asked Cabinet to pause and consider alternatives.

Chris Hancock stated that the current estimated cost of £294m for this road was the highest expenditure of 31 future HIF1 schemes in the UK and one of the most expensive per new home realized. It could be anticipated that the three bridges could approach 1/3 of the total scheme cost whereas redesigned bridges to a reduced scale to support a dedicated busway with lightweight cycleway/footpath bridges alongside could be constructed at less cost and with much less risk.

Councillor Robin Bennett, Berinsfield & Garsington, recognised that this was a legacy project. He supported the letter to Highways England making clear opposition to any kind of East-West expressway. However, this project

risked locking in car dependency. It was not fully funded requiring borrowing by the Council which was already under all kinds of funding pressures. He would not be minded to proceed as the government had not given sufficient assurance.

Councillor Charlie Hicks stated that there was a high risk of this project becoming a financial black hole. Inflation at current rates was likely to add £30m to the costs. Policies on transport were changing and new roads would shortly be consigned to the history books. These houses were for future generations and each generation drives less. There were alternatives in rail and active travel and providing more facilities locally and he asked Cabinet to explore those.

Councillor Ian Middleton suggested that Cabinet call the government's bluff on this project and let them build the roads if that's what they want. It was a most controversial project and the Council will be held responsible. It was at odds with everything the administration stood for. The government was calling for more climate friendly development so there was an opportunity to pause this project and examine alternatives.

The Chair noted the letter from Homes England included in the latest Addenda in which they made it clear they were open to rescoping projects.

Councillor Duncan Enright, Cabinet Member for Travel & Development Strategy, responded that the existing infrastructure in the Didcot area was inadequate. The high traffic levels could not be reduced without this route. The project had the support of Didcot Town Council and the District Councils. It will be possible to reduce the embedded carbon and the roads will be highly capable for active travel and buses. The County Council had built a very strong relationship with Homes England and through them could access the Department of Transport and the Treasury. He would not rest until there was an exemplar scheme in place.

Councillor Calum Millar addressed the financial concerns. He was pleased to say that officers had succeeded in securing an increase in the funding envelope as well as an extension of the period in which funds will be made available. He noted that 25% of the cost was already allocated to contingency and risk. OCC will retain the option to stop the project at key decision points to manage financial risk without any clawback of funds by Homes England. He was content that measures had been taken to reduce the risk and was happy to support the project. He asked the Leader to respond to the Homes England letter reflecting the concerns expressed in this debate and to emphasise that £30m really was the limit on what the Council can provide.

Councillor Pete Sudbury outlined why he would abstain on the vote while accepting collective Cabinet responsibility. Climate change was accelerating and the UK's own climate committee had said that we were falling ever further behind on emissions. He was concerned that the evidence base for the project involved studies of towns and cities at least three times the size of

Didcot that did not have the same problems. Modal shift was much harder in semi-rural areas with lower concentrations of population. Cultural norms that lie behind travel patterns were hard to shift. It will only happen if we ruthlessly prioritise the modes we want people to use.

Councillor Tim Bearder outlined why he could not support the scheme. He stated that all of the other policies of the Council were aimed at radically reducing motor traffic but yet this project was creating a whole new network of roads. The project was already £70m over budget before construction even started. It was believed that construction costs of other projects had increased by up to 25%. It was built on a car-dependent model which could facilitate further road building and the Council could not stop Highways England from stepping in. A paradigm shift was needed and this was not it.

The Chair concluded the discussion stating that she was confident that the work done by officers, Cabinet Members and the Cabinet Advisory Group had resulted in a scheme very different from that approved by the previous administration.

The recommendations were proposed by Councillor Enright and seconded by Councillor Millar. The proposal was passed with 8 votes in favour, 1 against and 1 abstention.

**RESOLVED to:**

- a) **Approve the amendments to the Grant Determination Agreement (GDA)**
- b) **Seek an additional letter of comfort from Homes England and Department of Levelling Up, Housing and Communities (DLUHC).**
- c) **Authorise the signing of the Grant Determination Agreement by the Director for Transport and Infrastructure, in consultation with the Director of Law & Governance, Director of Finance, Cabinet Member for Travel and Development Strategy and Cabinet Member for Finance.**

**87/22 HIF 2 SMART CORRIDOR – AMENDMENT OF GRANT DETERMINATION AGREEMENT / DEED OF VARIATION**

(Agenda Item. 18)

Cabinet considered changes to the HIF Grant Determination Agreement (GDA) agreed in principle, between Oxfordshire County Council and Homes England, which include:

- (d) Inclusion of the delivery of the Science Transit scope within the Infrastructure to be delivered under the GDA.
- (e) Update to the Milestones schedule and Delivery Plan to reflect an integrated programme for HIF2 and Science Transit.

- (f) Draw down of Homes England funds against costs incurred on the Science Transit programme.

Councillor Duncan Enright, Cabinet Member for Travel & Development Strategy, summarised the proposal which was to merge two pots of funding in order to achieve greater flexibility in the two schemes.

Councillor Tim Bearder responded that he did not particularly value either scheme however there was no commitment from the Council to put a large amount of money into this and both schemes had been developed a long way so he would not oppose this move.

The recommendations were proposed by Councillor Enright, seconded by Councillor Brighthouse and agreed.

**RESOLVED to:**

- a) **Note the draft terms of the proposed Deed of Variation**
- b) **Authorise the Director of Transport & Infrastructure, in consultation with the Director of Law & Governance and Director of Finance, to finalise the terms of, and enter the Deed of Variation to the Grant Determination Agreement.**

**88/22 FORWARD PLAN AND FUTURE BUSINESS**

(Agenda Item. 19)

The Cabinet considered a list of items (CA19) for the immediately forthcoming meetings of the Cabinet together with changes and additions set out in the schedule of addenda.

**RESOLVED:to note the items currently identified for forthcoming meetings.**

.....in the Chair

Date of signing .....

Questions	Cabinet Member
<p><b>1. COUNCILLOR FREDDIE VAN MIERLO</b></p> <p>Streetlights around Cuxham Road roundabout, industrial estate and Willow close in Watlington have not been working for 9 months. SSE had been contracted to fix the lights on 06/04/2022 but have failed to do so, despite requests by myself and officers to do so. Will the cabinet member for highways write to SSE to urgently rectify the issue?</p>	<p><b>COUNCILLOR ANDREW GANT, CABINET MEMBER FOR HIGHWAY MANAGEMENT</b></p> <p>We echo your concerns with this issue and as you will appreciate that as SSE own this network, we have to rely on the timescales they present. However, we have contacted them again and pushed for them to confirm when the work will be carried out and that they endeavour to prioritise this work.</p>
<p><b>2. COUNCILLOR SALLY POVOLOTSKY</b></p> <p>The Household Support Fund, how much is being requested from government to support our most vulnerable, and increasingly vulnerable families and individuals in the county, what agencies are we working with and how is this funding being distributed into our society given the funding has to be committed between April 2022 and September 2022? Also what % of increase does this council project will need additional help, and how will be resource that</p>	<p><b>COUNCILLOR CALUM MILLER, CABINET MEMBER FOR FINANCE</b></p> <p>Residents in Oxfordshire, as across the UK, are facing a cost of living emergency. As food, fuel and transport costs rise well beyond the planned increases in welfare payments and the proposed increases in wages the Council does expect many households to be increasingly affected. As an example, many households are now struggling with the costs of fuel and power – which together account for a higher proportion of family spending in low income households. Extrapolating from national data (<a href="https://www.ons.gov.uk/articles/economy/cost-of-living-cost-of-living-in-great-britain">The rising cost of living and its impact on individuals in Great Britain - Office for National Statistics (ons.gov.uk)</a>), and adjusting for Oxfordshire's levels of deprivation, we estimate that 24,000 adults in</p>

<b>Questions</b>	<b>Cabinet Member</b>
<p>assistance, throughout our services and the wider community initiatives that are being created by the week and lifelines to their local residents.</p>	<p>Oxfordshire would state that they are behind on payments for gas and electricity. The scale of the challenge is beyond the means of the Council so we will continue to press for a more ambitious and sustained response from national government. For now, direct support from government is limited and time-bound. Taking account of this, the Council has can play a role in directing our support to the most economically vulnerable in our communities.</p> <p>Government determines the allocation of Household Support Fund (HSF) to each upper tier local authority. Oxfordshire will receive £3.4m in the second round (approximately £5 per resident). The previous round of £3.4m (October 2021-March 2022) was 100% utilised. For the second round, we will continue our approach of funding free school meal equivalent support in school holiday periods through schools, colleges and early years provides. This works alongside the delegation of funds for emergency welfare schemes delivered through the city and district council in partnership with the voluntary and community sector. FSM support was funded for May half term and the City and District schemes will formally relaunch in mid-June. In developing plans we have engaged with county-wide and local advisory services and the wider voluntary and community sector.</p> <p>In addition to HSF, Council agreed £500,000 of annual revenue funding for emergency welfare support for 2022/23-2025/26. In response to the cost of living emergency we are focussing our limited funding on where we can make the most difference to the most vulnerable through two schemes. Firstly, plans are well underway for a rapid expansion of the</p>

Questions	Cabinet Member
	<p>Better Housing Better Health scheme (BHBH). BHBH works with the most at risk households to identify energy and cost saving measures that can improve quality of life and help mitigate the impact of energy price rises. Phone consultations will increase from 400 to 2700 during the year and home visits to the most vulnerable from 200 to 500 reaching in total approximately 10% of fuel poor households. The BHBH steering group are building relationships with key partners who serve residents who are likely to be in fuel poverty, such as the Agnes Smith Centre in Blackbird Leys and Citizens Advice. BHBH are training frontline staff about fuel poverty and promoting the BHBH service. The provider of the service is an expert in the field of fuel poverty and is able to triage the offer of home visits and use data to ensure we are reaching those who are most likely to be in need. Secondly, we have agreed to support the critical debt and money advice teams from our partners at Citizens Advice with a grant of £210,000 to maintain capacity through 2022/23. Details of these schemes will be fully announced in the coming weeks as details are finalised with the providers.</p> <p>In addition working in partnership with the Oxfordshire Community Foundation, Community First Oxfordshire, Good Food Oxfordshire and OCVA, the Council has used one off grant funding to provide a further round of community resilience grants which will support grass-roots organisations who play a critical role in supporting the most vulnerable remain sustainable into the winter period. £300,000 will support projects across the county. The deadline for applications closed on Thursday 16 June and will be reviewed by a cross-sector grants panel. As part of this grants round, the VCS led a number of workshops to expand access to</p>

Questions	Cabinet Member
	the scheme.
<p><b>3. COUNCILLOR FREDDIE VAN MIERLO</b></p> <p>The Watlington Relief Road is an important piece of local infrastructure that, when delivered, will relieve heavy traffic through the centre of the historic market town, which can then be remodelled to prioritise local business and people.</p> <p>Concerns have been expressed by some that the route would see an increase in HGV traffic. Can the cabinet member confirm that the Watlington Relief Road will fall within the existing area weight restrictions around Watlington thereby preventing through traffic of HGVs, and confirm that there are no plans to change the weight restrictions around Watlington?</p>	<p><b>COUNCILLOR DUNCAN ENRIGHT, CABINET MEMBER FOR TRAVEL &amp; DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY</b></p> <p>OCC can confirm that the Watlington Relief Road scheme has no plans to amend or alter the current weight restriction that is currently enforced around Watlington. The Watlington Relief Road will remain within the existing area weight restriction band which is currently 7.5 tonnes.</p>
<p><b>4. COUNCILLOR JOHN HOWSON</b></p> <p>How long do you anticipate the 'pause' in the Woodstock Road corridor scheme will last?</p>	<p><b>COUNCILLOR DUNCAN ENRIGHT, CABINET MEMBER FOR TRAVEL &amp; DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY</b></p> <p>This scheme will be considered by Cabinet in July as part of the review of the Capital Programme.</p>

Questions	Cabinet Member
<p><b>Supplementary</b>                      The Banbury Road scheme has clearly already been abandoned before even reaching the consultation stage so today I want to ask on behalf of my residents that the proposals for Moreton Road, considered part of the Banbury Road study, be actioned as a distinct small scale scheme. This would have the benefit of making any Marston Ferry Road bus gate unnecessary but also prevent traffic aiming for the ill-advised Oxford North scheme from using the Marston Ferry Road and the Moreton Road as a cut-through.</p>	<p><b>Response</b>                      Local Members' input is extremely important on this and all other schemes. I'll take those comments and discuss them further.</p>



## **Divisions Affected – OXFORD – CHURCH COWLEY, TEMPLE COWLEY AND FLORENCE PARK AREAS**

### **CABINET**

**19 July 2022**

## **OXFORD – CHURCH COWLEY, TEMPLE COWLEY AND FLORENCE PARK AREAS: LOW TRAFFIC NEIGHBOURHOODS ('COWLEY LTNS') - EXPERIMENTAL TRAFFIC REGULATION ORDER (ETRO)**

Report by Bill Cotton, Corporate Director Environment & Place

### **RECOMMENDATION**

#### **1. The Cabinet is RECOMMENDED to:**

- a) Incorporate the provisions of the current Experimental Traffic Regulation Orders (ETRO) into a Traffic Regulation Order (TRO) for the Church Cowley, Florence Park and Temple Cowley areas that are Low Traffic Neighbourhoods (LTNs).**
- b) Undertake further community and stakeholder engagement in order to further refine and improve the scheme, with any changes to be implemented by Spring 2023.**
- c) Undertake a process of monitoring and reviewing all elements of the scheme, and to bring forward proposals for changes through the consultation process which may include (but not necessarily be limited to): replacing some hard closures with ANPR-controlled traffic filters; reviewing the exact location of some installations within a road; replacing others with elements such as parklets in order to deliver public realm improvements**

### **Executive Summary**

1. The current Experimental Traffic Regulation Orders (ETRO) covering the Cowley schemes come to an end in September. Bearing this in mind, the Cabinet is asked to choose one of two options, these being to: either incorporate the ETRO into a TRO; or to remove the schemes altogether.
2. The Central Oxford Transport Strategy seeks to maximise trips by sustainable modes of transport informed by the Oxford Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan (LCWIP). Low Traffic Neighbourhoods (LTNs) are a key

policy to increase use of sustainable modes of transport in Oxfordshire. LTNs are designed to support:

- promoting a healthy liveable society, addressing health inequalities and obesity levels in Oxfordshire,
- improving air quality,
- creating an inclusive, active and sustainable travel network,
- providing safer streets for children and young people

Which are all included in our policy and targets: e.g., Vision Zero and our targets to address climate change.

The LTNs are in line with the approved Local Transport and Connectivity Plan as well as the Council's priorities to take action to tackle the climate emergency and cut carbon emissions, prioritise the health and well-being of residents and invest in an inclusive, integrated, and sustainable transport network.

3. The Cowley LTNs are being trialled in three areas of Oxford's eastern arc: Church Cowley, Temple Cowley and Florence Park. These locations were chosen as priority areas as a result of monitoring records showing high volumes of through traffic and indicating lower levels of cycling (as identified in the Local Cycling and Walking Improvement Plan (LCWIP), for East Oxford).
4. Following extensive engagement and consultation, approval was given to implement the Cowley LTNs in February 2021 using ETROs. The works, which consist of installing planters, bollards, waiting restrictions and signs, were completed in April 2021.

A modification to permit refuse vehicles and trial e-scooters through the restrictions was made to the ETRO, on 19 May 2021, which re-started the six-month consultation process, with the consultation concluding on 19 November 2021.

5. Traffic monitoring data shows improved air quality, decreased traffic and increased walking within the LTNs. While not conclusive, there are also positive signs of increases in cycling. The LTNs are therefore contributing to achieving the Council's policies.
6. However, it is also recognised that they have created disbenefits for some, including longer and more unpredictable journey times for less mobile individuals who cannot easily achieve modal shift away from a car, Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) transport, certain trades and professions, and (combined with other factors) public transport. Communities outside the immediate area of the scheme have experienced inconvenience but little direct benefit within their own neighbourhoods.
7. When assessing surrounding roads, the traffic volumes are still slightly higher and air quality is slightly worse (although still within the legal limit). However, the trend is improving and will continue to be monitored.
8. The ETRO consultation, monitoring and ongoing engagement are summarised in this report and detailed in Annexes 1 to 7(i).

## Background

9. It is widely recognised that increasing traffic levels are becoming unsustainable and have an adverse effect on the local environment, health and economy. Increased levels of congestion and air pollution can contribute to poor health and mental wellbeing creating a barrier to people cycling and walking. Traffic calming, such as road humps and chicanes, while successful in reducing speeds, do not reduce traffic volume or pollution in local streets with limited impact on the uptake of alternative sustainable modes of transport.
10. LTNs are areas where motorised traffic is prevented from travelling through a residential area by use of traffic filters or other measures. In doing so they seek to encourage and facilitate better opportunities for sustainable transport by creating quieter, safer and more liveable streets challenging the modal choice for short to medium journeys and providing the right environment to enable people to choose sustainable modes of transport such as walking and cycling.
11. In March 2020, the Council approved the Oxford Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan (LCWIP). The LCWIP includes a target to increase cycling in Oxford by 50% by 2031 and cites LTNs as one of its eight interventions to help achieve this.
12. The LTNs have an important role in addressing health inequalities and obesity levels in Oxford. From Active Oxfordshire Active Lives Data 2021:

- During the pandemic physical activity levels worsened with 120,000 people reported as stopping walking for travel in Oxfordshire.
- Inactivity rates are highest in areas of deprivation, including East Oxford, with 26% of the population doing less than 150 minutes of exercise per week.
- Children and young people from low affluence families have some of the lowest levels of activity and experience a large inequality compared to those from higher affluence families. This is particularly the case for children aged 7-11.
- There is also a gender inequality gap with women walking and cycling for travel 40% less than men.

LTNs have the potential to promote modal shift by increasing residents' confidence in the safety of cycling and walking which is currently a key barrier to behaviour change – particularly for children. Local communities can benefit through reduced vehicle traffic and having a greater ownership of the streets through planting and activities enabling use of the space for community activity.

13. In May 2020, in response to COVID-19, the Government issued statutory guidance as an update to the 2004 Traffic Management Act (TMA) requiring councils to take measures to reallocate road space to promote cycling and walking, including the use of traffic filters to create LTNs. These travel choices have the added benefit of:

- a) improving personal health and fitness
- b) contributing to cutting congestion
- c) decreasing pollution

14. The key measures of success for an LTN scheme (which have been monitored during the trial) are:

- Reduced traffic volumes
- Increased pedestrian volumes
- Increased levels of cycling
- Reduced vehicle speeds
- Improved bus journey times
- Improved air quality recordings against pre-LTN (lockdown and non-lockdown) figures
- Negligible impact on emergency services response time/accessibility
- Alignment with OCC policy
- Residents' perceptions

15. High levels of consultation and engagement have been undertaken during the project including working with groups such as Oxfordshire Liveable Streets and local members prior to going to informal consultation in November 2020. The outcome of that consultation was reported to the Cabinet Member for Environment in January 2021. High levels of support for the trial were seen and the scheme was approved for implementation under an ETRO. The report can be found [here](#) with summary tables below:

Table.1 Support for Church Cowley LTN filters

	Filter	Church Cowley Residents support	Other areas support	Church Cowley Residents oppose	Other areas oppose	All % support	All % oppose
CC1	Church Hill Rd	48	2	15	3	74%	26%
CC2	Beauchamp Lane	13	5	4	2	75%	25%
CC3	Littlemore Road	21	3	41	14	30%	70%
CC4	Mayfair Road	15	1	33	8	28%	72%
CC5	Liddell Road	2	0	2	1	40%	60%
CC6	Bartholomew Rd	18	9	16	15	47%	53%
	<b>Total</b>	<b>117</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>111</b>	<b>43</b>	<b>47%</b>	<b>53%</b>

Table.2 Support for Temple Cowley LTN filters

	Filter	Temple Cowley Residents support	Other areas support	Temple Cowley Residents oppose	Other areas oppose	All % support	All % oppose
TC1	Crescent Road	74	1	19	6	75%	25%
TC2	Junction Road	9	1	6	5	48%	52%
TC3	Salegate Lane	7	0	0	2	78%	22%
TC4	Temple Road	10	3	21	11	29%	71%
	<b>Total</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>46</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>60%</b>	<b>40%</b>

Table. 3 Support for Florence Park LTN filters

	Filter	Florence Park Residents support	Other areas support	Florence Park Residents oppose	Other areas oppose	All % support	All % oppose
FP2	Rymers Lane	41	45	8	10	83%	17%
FP3	Littlehay Road	48	9	11	9	74%	26%
FP1	Cornwallis Road	41	13	24	2	68%	33%
FP4	Clive Road	7	1	2	0	80%	20%
	<b>Total</b>	<b>137</b>	<b>68</b>	<b>45</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>76%</b>	<b>24%</b>

16. The scheme was implemented in March and April 2021 and subject to a statutory consultation which ran until November 2021, the outcome of which is detailed in this report.

## Monitoring

17. A series of data sets were collected to inform the evaluation of the LTNs covering motorised traffic, pedestrian and cycle volumes; air quality, bus times, journey times and speed and noise within and surrounding the Cowley LTNs. In addition, perception surveys were undertaken to assess changing views over time within the LTNs. The key outputs of these have been summarised below.

18. On boundary roads (the roads immediately surrounding and outside of the LTNs) over the period of March 2021 to April 2022, traffic was higher than both control and 2019 levels until April 2022, when traffic volumes dipped below 2019 levels for the first time since LTN implementation.

Control sites and pre-LTN data were used to isolate the LTN data from other factors such as the effect of COVID-19. Factored in this way, traffic over the full period increased by 2.3%. Over time, however, traffic levels seem to be improving, with the increase for the period between March and November 2021 being 3.1%, while the increase in the period between December 2021 and April 2022 was 1.5%.

19. Within the LTNs, car volumes have decreased over the period from March 2021 to April 2022, with greater reductions over time. When accounting for the relatively lower car levels within the LTN area prior to its implementation compared to controls, the factored reduction over the full evaluation period was 47%.
20. Pedestrian levels have increased within the LTNs compared to 2019 and against control sites, discounting January as an anomaly. April 2022 shows a peak where footfall was almost 47% higher than 2019 in comparison to control sites. In April 2022, footfall was greater than 2019 levels, unlike control sites which show footfall consistently much lower than 2019 levels. Overall, for the full evaluation period, the adjusted increase in footfall was 17%.
21. Cycle volumes show less clear trends. Having reached and exceeded 2019 levels in November and December, they dropped below 2019 levels again between January and March 2022; however, by April, they had recovered above

2019 levels again. When comparing average cycle counts in the LTN with the control areas over the period from March 2021 to April 2022, we see a decrease of 17.7%. However, because the levels of cycling were so much lower in the LTN compared to the control areas when monitoring began in February 2021, pre-LTN implementation, we can factor in this difference and say that there was a 24% increase in average cycling counts in the LTN over the period March 2021 to April 2022. However, this conclusion must be treated with caution because of the variability in the cycling counts recorded in the LTN over the monitoring period.

22. The air quality analysis period is restricted to 2021 (March to December) because formal ratification of data has to be undertaken on an annual basis. The analysis shows that annual average nitrogen dioxide (NO<sub>2</sub>) levels from the four LTN monitoring sites located on boundary roads have increased by an average of 13% compared to the average of 2017-2019 and when corrected for the effects of COVID-19. Cowley Road/Oxford Road continues to have the most significant relative worsening of air quality. It should be noted however that at none of the LTN boundary road monitoring sites were there any breaches of the current UK NO<sub>2</sub> annual mean limit value of 40ug/m<sup>3</sup>. The annual average corrected NO<sub>2</sub> levels at the testing sites ranged from 26 to 35ug/m<sup>3</sup>. By way of comparison, St Christopher's school, which is within the LTN, recorded 13ug/m<sup>3</sup>. As monitoring commenced in May 2021, there is currently insufficient historic data here to deduce a trend.
23. Data from bus services suggest that the PM peak outbound bus services have been negatively impacted, in comparison to control routes, for routes on the Cowley Road, where journey times are now longer than they were in 2019. Some periods of the day have shown improvements in journey times along this route, however – notably AM and PM peak inbound services. Iffley Road saw a general trend towards increased journey times from March 2021 for most times of the day in both directions, albeit overall journey times for this route are still generally shorter than in 2019.
24. For journey times, Henley Avenue shows an increase in both directions (specifically between November 2021 and April 2022 of 6 to 9%), whereas Oxford Road generally shows a decrease in or similar journey times for most times of the day.
25. Vehicle speed data (INRIX telematics data) suggests that traffic speeds increased within the LTNs between 2019 and 2021 after initial deployment, though levelled off in June 2021, when monitoring ceased.
26. In an experimental study to capture noise impact in relation to changes in traffic movement, ten acoustic sensors were deployed in and around Temple Cowley LTN from March 2021 to May 2022. Almost all locations experienced a reduction in the loudness of noise after the introduction of the LTN. Regarding the quality of sound, the amount of noise which is believed to be human-generated (anthropogenic) reduced everywhere, by approximately 10%, with larger shifts seen inside the LTN itself.

### **Perception surveys**

27. The council used perception surveys as an ongoing means of assessing how people felt about the LTNs over time. Those responding to the first perception

survey were asked to repeat the same survey at six month and one-year intervals – giving them the opportunity to let us know if their experience of the Cowley LTNs changed during the trial.

28. It should be noted that the trial LTNs were first implemented during COVID-19 restrictions and so perceptions of increased traffic and/or reduced air quality may be influenced by on-the-ground experience comparing a period of extremely low traffic in 2020 and early 2021 against post-lockdown traffic trends. Overall, the responses to the perception survey largely mirrored the main consultation but did show evidence of people starting to think about alternative ways to travel in the area.
29. Perception has shown to be highly polarised with a range of contributing factors including national and local press focus, political elections, and divided campaign groups. There was a significant shift within the LTNs, from individuals who replied to both surveys: with respondents moving from *tend to object, neutral or tend to support* categories into the either *strongly object or strongly support* categories.
30. A full report on the outcome of the monitoring exercise and perception survey is detailed in Annex 6.

## **Corporate Policies and Priorities**

31. The Oxford Transport Strategy seeks to maximise trips by sustainable modes of transport informed by the Oxford Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan (LCWIP). Low Traffic Neighbourhoods (LTNs) are a key policy to increase sustainable modes of transport in Oxfordshire. LTNs are designed to support:
  - promoting a healthy liveable society, addressing health inequalities and obesity levels in Oxfordshire
  - improving air quality,
  - creating an inclusive, active and sustainable travel network,
  - providing safer streets for children and young people

which are all included in our policy and targets: e.g., Vision Zero and our targets to address climate change.

The LTNs are in line with the recently approved Local Transport and Connectivity Plan as well as the Council's priorities to take action to tackle the climate emergency and cut carbon emissions, prioritise the health and well-being of residents and invest in an inclusive, integrated and sustainable transport network.

## **Financial Implications**

32. The Cowley LTNs were implemented using funding from the Government's Active Travel Tranche 1 programme. Ongoing work has been funded through the Active Travel Tranche 2 programme. The Active Travel Tranche 2 programme is predominantly earmarked for other schemes namely Quickways, Quietways and east Oxford LTNs.

- a) the scheme is removed, the cost for removal is estimated at £20,000. If Funding from the Active Travel Tranche 2 (ATT2) budget has been allocated for this work if required. (The total available capital funding for ATT2 is £3.254m).
- b) Should the recommendations from this report be approved, the estimate for amendments to the Cowley LTNs and development of more permanent features including further engagement, design and construction will require a further budget allocation. This is likely to be in the range of £200,000 to £500,000 depending on the interventions.
- c) In relation to ongoing enforcement with Automatic Number Plate Recognition (ANPR) the cost of works is approximately £35,000 per site excluding set up and back-office costs. Funding is available through a separate funding stream for investigation, consultation and implementation of ANPR cameras.
- d) Allowance for ongoing maintenance has not been provided for in the funding received through Active Travel Tranche 2. If implemented, it is anticipated that these costs will fall within the Council's existing maintenance budgets and as such the maintenance budget will need to be increased or work prioritised to free up the budget. Local groups have shown interest in maintaining planters in their local areas which could minimise ongoing maintenance costs.

### **Mini-Holland funding**

- a) In August 2021, the Council submitted an expression of interest (EOI) to the Department for Transport (DfT) to submit a Mini-Holland bid for the wider east Oxford area, including Cowley. The fact that the Council had already installed the Cowley LTNs and was about to install east Oxford LTNs was highlighted in the EOI as evidence of the Council's commitment to the Mini-Holland project.
- b) In March 2022, the Council was awarded £78,947 to develop the Mini-Holland bid. Along with the invitation to bid, the DfT issued guidance setting out the assessment criteria, stating that LTNs are the main focus of the area-based treatments with most of the guidance setting out how to develop and implement LTNs. While the level of future Mini-Holland funding is likely to depend on the scale of the bid, the Cowley LTNs will put the Council in a better position to successfully bid for this funding.
- c) Removing the Cowley LTNs could put this funding bid at risk.

### **ZTEC funding**

- a) In February 2022, the Council was invited to submit an EOI for Zero Emission Transport Cities (ZETC) as part of the Government's Pilot Programme. To comply with the funding requirements, there was a need to demonstrate a commitment to deliver a comprehensive cycle network, a zero-emission bus fleet and restrictions that discourage

petrol and diesel cars, taxis and light vans in the city centre. The introduction of the Cowley LTNs featured in the EOI. Oxfordshire County Council was one of only three local authorities to be awarded funding to develop a ZTEC bid.

Comments checked by: Rob Finlayson, Finance Business Partner

### **Legal Implications**

33. The scheme has been led by Oxfordshire County Council as Highway Authority. Oxfordshire County Council will continue to receive legal advice from the legal team in development of the ETROs and TRO's.

Comments checked by: Jennifer Crouch, Principal Solicitor (Environment)

### **Staff Implications**

34. There is ongoing correspondence and engagement activity from the wider LTNs programme that is putting considerable pressure on teams. Additional resources are being sought to deal with this.
35. Should the recommendation be approved, the additional measures and the implementation of ANPR will require additional project resources and associated budget.

### **Equality & Inclusion Implications**

36. An Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) and Climate Impact Assessment (CIA) have been completed - see Annexes 7 and 8.
37. The key items identified include:
  - People who cannot use sustainable methods of travel such, as those with some disabilities, will have longer journey times.
  - Increased journey times and travel costs for groups reliant on cars, such as some disability groups, health care workers and voluntary carers.
  - Increased journey times, reducing number of visits possible for health care workers, and impact on some services.
  - Concerns that pupils using Special Educational Needs Transport will have longer journeys.
  - Impact on funeral attendance, particularly for those who must conclude the ceremony by dusk, with increased journey times.
  - Journey times and costs for carers have increased.
  - Some local schools are reporting issues regarding journey times, with those further afield unable to use alternative modes of transport.

### **Sustainability Implications**

38. The Cowley LTNs have been identified as part of the Oxford LCWIP and are consistent with Oxfordshire County Council's aim to achieve zero carbon emissions by 2050. They also support the wider Oxford Transport Strategy which promotes increased cycling, walking and use of public transport.

39. The LTNs encourage the use of sustainable transport modes as perception survey results show that people are starting to rethink how they might travel, and we are starting to see an increase in walking and cycling. This supports the delivery of wider transport initiatives, including the Oxford LCWIP target of increasing cycling by 50%.

### **Risk Management**

40. Legal challenges could be made by consultees that strongly oppose the scheme. However, the scheme has gone through both an informal and statutory consultation process and a robust monitoring exercise has been undertaken. While some consultation responses are not favourable, monitoring suggests that a change in behaviours in line with corporate policies is happening. As such the aims and objectives of the scheme are being met.
41. Cowley LTNs formed part of the Tranche 1 Emergency Active Travel funding streams which had a limited budget. While some changes were made to the scheme the budget did not allow for ongoing changes to the trial. Funding will need to be identified for any substantial future changes. This will be dealt with through the normal council budget process.
42. Some vandalism has occurred to traffic filters including bollards being knocked down or uprooted, graffiti on planters and highways and incidents of attempted arson to a lighting column ANPR camera and a planter, putting added pressure on the maintenance budgets. A few months after implementation, vandalism significantly reduced. However, an increase in vandalism has been seen since the implementation of the neighbouring east Oxford LTNs. Measures are being considered to mitigate these issues.
43. Monitoring has identified that there have been some immediate negative impacts on traffic volumes / journey times on boundary roads. However, there is evidence that travel behaviours are starting to change and impacts starting to reduce. As has been seen in other authorities' LTN implementations, behaviour change is not instantaneous and can take several years for travel habits to take effect. Engagement continues with public transport providers.
44. Special Educational Needs transport is a statutory service with maximum travel target times for students – some experience higher levels of anxiety on longer journeys. There is a risk that additional contracts may need to be procured by the council to overcome any potential impact of the LTNs on travel times in the short term if they breach statutory requirements and could result in budget pressures in other areas of the Council. The potential mitigations referred to in the recommendations will be designed to specifically mitigate and remove this risk
45. OCC social care, NHS and community nurses, continue to express concerns about the impacts on their services, including reduction in the number of patients they can see, delivery of medications and delays. The future investigation of ANPR will be prioritised to alleviate any remaining issues now that ANPR powers have been secured.

Comments checked by: Jennifer Crouch, Principal Solicitor,  
jennifer.crouch@oxfordshire.gov.uk (Legal)

## Consultations

46. The statutory consultation launched in March 2021 on completion of the works, with key stakeholders and the public invited to respond. Emails were sent to statutory consultees on 1 March, 8 March and 15 March 2021 as each LTN came into force and leaflets were sent to all residents and businesses within the LTNs. The consultation closed on 19 November 2021. Reports detailing the outcome of that consultation, along with monitoring of modal shift, traffic volumes and air quality within the LTN areas and on the boundary roads, as well as information related to ongoing engagement are detailed in Annexes 1 to 8.
47. The Council received 2,433 responses (from 2,205 individuals) to the online consultation, plus 59 emails. The responses were analysed by an independent company and the report can be found in Annexes 1 and 1a. Overall, these comprised of:

Location	Objections	Neutral	Support
Church Cowley	68.1%	12.5%	19.4%
Temple Cowley	67.2%	10%	36.3%
Florence Park	54.5%	9.2%	22.8%

48. Levels of support could also be analysed for individual streets in the six-month post-implementation survey and the pre-implementation survey. There were higher levels of support from residents living on cut-through streets than other streets particularly cul-de-sacs, but for all streets: the level of support declined, and the number of objections increased compared with the informal consultation before implementation.
49. Those supporting the LTNs identified a number of benefits including:
- LTNs have transformed the neighbourhood for the better, creating a greater sense of community
  - Less motor traffic, less speeding, more cycling and improved sense of safety
  - A number of responses in support have come from families who feel that their children are safer walking and cycling with journeys to and from school being safer using filtered streets
  - Streets are quieter with improved air quality
  - The benefits of the LTNs outweigh the inconvenience of slightly longer car journeys and the hope that longer-term modal shifts will reduce the number of cars making short journeys and reduce the journey time by car.
50. The key concerns raised by the public in the consultation were:
- Displacement of traffic onto main roads and neighbouring streets leading to congestion and more pollution on these roads

- Pockets of cleaner air on filtered streets creating a sense of division amongst residents
- Some people with no choice but to use the car in daily life – in particular people with disabilities, workers and carers – making multiple trips in tight timescales are experiencing longer journey times
- Single exits out of LTNs being inconvenient, difficult and dangerous while potentially pushing more traffic weight onto fewer junctions and increasing the potential for collisions

A full list can be found in Annex 2

51. The percentage of businesses responding negatively was high - at 84%. Overall, however, the percentage of responses that came from businesses was considerably low – at 4%.
52. However, correspondence was continually monitored following closure of the consultation which saw a significant level of support for the LTNs. In February 2022 the council received 375 emails from residents and businesses regarding the implementation of the Cowley LTNs. Some of these emails refer to the wider LTNs proposal in general, or to a group of them and not just the Cowley LTNs. Of those referring to Cowley LTNs, 238 (67%) expressed support for the LTNs and 115 (33%) were opposed. A copy of the emails is in Annex 4.
53. Fire and Ambulance services report that they are continuing to meet response times but have raised some concerns relating to the introductions of further LTNs in the area having a greater impact on journey times, particularly those not undertaken on blue lights.
54. Thames Valley Police have reported a reduction in general vehicle patrols as a result and we await confirmation of redeployment on by walking or cycling. Copies of correspondence from the emergency services is included in Annex 4.
55. Emergency services, and other key service units including waste collections have expressed positivity towards the possible introduction of ANPR camera enforcement.
56. Engagement is ongoing with OCC, NHS and community nurses, they continue to express concerns about the impacts on their services. A full list of concerns covering nine services are shown in Annex 5.
57. As well as general comments, respondents raised specific concerns outlined in Annex 3 that if addressed could improve how the LTNs perform. Some of these concerns raised are being addressed through other projects within OCC to improve movement around Oxford. However, it is recommended that if the recommendation for a TRO is approved, opportunities to address some of these specific issues are investigated alongside working with the community to provide more attractive features such as parklets, greener infrastructure, seating areas and bike storage.

## **Evidence in support of Council goals**

58. Cowley LTNs were informed by the evidence emerging from London's Mini-Holland schemes. Research shows people living in areas with LTNs are 24% more likely to have cycled weekly with residents walking or cycling for 41

minutes per week. LTN areas saw a 6% reduction in car ownership, which is essential to meet our climate emergency carbon targets.

### Six month consultation LTN support

59. An analysis of the 923 responses of people living inside the LTN areas showed higher levels of support compared to all responses. These were:

Location	Objection	Concern	Support
Florence Park:	42%	8%	51%
Temple Cowley	51%	9%	39%
Church Cowley	63%	12%	25%

60. An analysis of the six month consultation showed that support was even higher on the four busiest main through-routes-runs (short cuts) with support higher than objections. These routes are part of the main Oxford cycle network as set out in the Oxford LCWIP.

Location	Objection	Concern	Support
Rymers Lane	24%	6%	69%
Cornwallis Road- Littlehay Road	43%	9%	49%
Crescent Road	41%	9%	51%
Littlemore Road- Cowley Road	44%	6%	50%

**Report by** Bill Cotton - Corporate Director Environment & Place

**Annex:**

June 2022

- Annex 1 Report on Cowley LTNs Public Consultation Survey by Marketing Means
- Annex 1A Summary of Consultation Response
- Annex 2 Summary of Main Comments
- Annex 3 Specific Issues Identified
- Annex 4 Email Correspondence Post 19 November 2021
- Annex 5 Oxford Health engagement
- Annex 6 Cowley LTNs interim evaluation (contains short summaries of the outcomes including the perception surveys and monitoring of traffic volumes, journey times and air quality)

Annex 7 Equalities Impact Assessment  
Annex 8 Climate Impact Assessment

Report by Bill Cotton - Corporate Director Environment & Place  
Contact Team East Oxford LTN Team

## **CARBON REDUCTION TARGETS WORKING GROUP – COMMISSIONED BY THE PLACE OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**

Cllr Kieron Mallon  
Chair of the Place Overview & Scrutiny Committee  
June 2022

### **RECOMMENDATION**

**The Cabinet is RECOMMENDED to agree —**

1. to consider and respond to the recommendations of the Carbon Reduction Targets Working Group (Annex 1).

### **CONSIDERING THE REPORT**

2. This report refers to the Cabinet the report and recommendations of the Carbon Reduction Targets Working Group agreed by the Place Overview & Scrutiny Committee on 15 June 2022.
3. In accordance with section 9FE of the Local Government Act 2000, the Place Overview & Scrutiny Committee hereby requires that, within two months of the consideration of this report, the Cabinet publish a response to the Working Group's report and its recommendations.

### **Next steps:**

3. The Cabinet response to the report and recommendations of the Working Group be published within two months of this meeting.
4. On 16 November 2022, the Place Overview & Scrutiny Committee shall consider the Cabinet response in accordance with part 6.2, 13(f), of the Constitution of the Council.

Annex: Report of the Carbon Reduction Targets Working Group

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# **Report of the Carbon Reduction Targets Working Group – Commissioned by the Place Overview & Scrutiny Committee**

## **CONCLUSIONS**

The Carbon Reduction Targets Working Group concludes that —

1. The council is effectively measuring much of its carbon emissions.
2. The council is welcome leading the way by developing robust plans to reduce its own emissions. Nevertheless, the council's carbon emissions account for only 0.22% of Oxfordshire's emissions and the council's commitment to developing countywide decarbonisation route map informed by the Pathways to a Zero Carbon Oxfordshire Report is highly important.
3. The council has developed robust plans to reduce its carbon emissions and is already making good progress against them.
4. The council has developed a clear and insightful dashboard for close monitoring of its carbon emissions and performance against its targets.

## **RECOMMENDATIONS**

**The Cabinet is RECOMMENDED to implement the following recommendations:**

1. The council continue to work to understand and quantify its emissions, particularly supply chain emissions.
2. The council continue to provide leadership through its focus on reducing its own carbon emissions, develop a route map to a zero-carbon Oxfordshire and engage other organisations and the public in respect of why they should, and how they can, reduce their emissions, including by sharing the learning generated by the council's decarbonisation initiatives.
3. The council continue to educate staff and service providers on the importance of carbon and emissions accountability and seek improvements and feedback to improve, accelerate and engage staff wherever possible.
4. The council closely monitor the financial saving generated by initiatives which reduce energy use and carbon emissions; and such financial savings be reinvested in further such initiatives.
5. The council report publicly on its carbon emissions and progress against its carbon targets at least quarterly so that the public can hold decision-makers to account.
6. The carbon emissions of maintained schools and the council's supply chain be included in the dashboard once reliable data are available.

7. The council continue to drive reductions in the carbon emissions of maintained schools and academies in Oxfordshire.

## Executive Summary

1. The Carbon Reduction Targets Working Group was established by the Place Overview & Scrutiny Committee to review the council's targets in relation to reducing its carbon emissions, and related initiatives. It discharged its terms of reference by considering written reports and oral evidence.
2. The Working Group welcomes the council's ambitious target for its buildings and operations to be carbon neutral by 2030. The council is effectively measuring much of its emissions, although there remain areas where more work is needed. While only responsible for 0.22 per cent of Oxfordshire's carbon emissions, the council is providing leadership by getting its own house in order whilst also working to develop a pathway to decarbonising the county as whole. The council is also using its position as a local education system leader to support schools, including academies, to decarbonise their operations.
3. Overall, the Working Group was assured of, and supports, the council's plans and progress.

## The Working Group's Inquiry

4. On 24 November 2021, the Place Overview and Scrutiny Committee established this Working Group to review the council's carbon reduction targets for its estates and operations, and related initiatives, in the context of the council's strategic priority to *put action to address the climate emergency at the heart of [its] work*.<sup>1</sup>
5. The 'council's carbon emissions' are defined herein as those generated by its buildings and operations and excludes the emissions of maintained schools, which are operationally independent of the council and not included in its net zero by 2030 commitment. The council's carbon emissions are referred to variously as the 'council's own emissions', the 'council's emissions' and 'its emissions' herein.
6. The following Members were appointed by the Committee to the Working Group:
  - Councillor Yvonne Constance (Chair)
  - Councillor Sally Povolotsky (Deputy Chair)
  - Councillor Charlie Hicks
7. The Working Group met twice: 3 March and 27 April 2022. At its first meeting, the Working Group elected Cllr Constance as its Chair and Cllr Povolotsky as its Deputy Chair and agreed a project plan. At its second meeting, the Working Group reviewed a draft of the council's draft Carbon Management Plan 2022-25<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> [Oxfordshire County Council, 'Strategic Plan 2022 – 2025'](#)

<sup>2</sup> Appendix 2

and draft Climate Dashboard<sup>3</sup> and the initiatives in place to support schools with carbon reduction<sup>4</sup> and heard oral evidence from the following council officers:

- Rachel Wileman, Assistant Director – Strategic Infrastructure and Planning
- Vic Kurzeja, Director of Joint Property Services
- Anthony Hulsman, Group Manager – Traffic and Road Safety
- Kunal Prasad, Climate Action Delivery Manager
- Sandra Fisher-Martins, Programme Manager – Climate Action
- Tom Layzell, Climate Action Policy Officer

## The Council's Climate Commitments

8. In April 2019, Oxfordshire County Council declared a climate emergency and pledged to be carbon neutral by 2030 for its own operations and estate, excluding maintained schools. In October 2020, the Cabinet adopted a Climate Action Framework.<sup>5</sup>

9. The first strategic priority in the council's [Strategic Plan 2022-2025](#) is,

*'put action to address the climate emergency at the heart of work.'*

10. The priority is followed by the commitment that the council,

*'will lead by example, setting ambitious targets to reduce our own carbon emissions and aligning our carbon net zero commitments to the principles of the Climate and Ecology Bill. Our environmental and planning ambitions will prioritise climate action and community resilience.'*

11. There are seven areas of focus underpinning the strategic priority, which may be summarised as:

- Working with partners to implement a comprehensive plan for decarbonising Oxfordshire.
- Working to bring the council's own buildings and operations to net zero by 2030, introducing science-based emissions reduction targets for the council's major suppliers and supporting the retrofit of homes to improve energy efficiency.
- Accelerating work on supporting biodiversity and nature recovery while adapting to and considering the impacts of climate change, including extreme weather and supply chain disruption.
- Supporting community and business activity to cut carbon emissions and accelerate a shift to a resilient and locally focused zero carbon economy.

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<sup>3</sup> Appendix 3

<sup>4</sup> Appendix 4

<sup>5</sup> [Agenda for Cabinet on Tuesday, 13 October 2020, 2.00 pm \(oxfordshire.gov.uk\)](#)

- Supporting and promoting a shift towards active travel, reducing the need for private cars and accelerating the transition to electric vehicles by expanding charging capacity across Oxfordshire.
- Accelerating and sustaining the benefits of Project Local Energy Oxfordshire, which is running trials to build a greener, more resilient, fairer renewable energy network.
- Accelerating the council's LED street lighting replacement programme and further reducing the energy, visual and environmental impacts of street lighting.

## **The Council's Carbon Emissions and Management Plan**

12. Between 2010/11 and 2020/21, the council's emissions from its operations and estate have decreased by 60 per cent. However, there are issues with the council's data, which it is seeking to address. The council has achieved such reductions through the following initiatives:

- *38 per cent of street lighting replaced with LEDs*
- *£2.1m for heat decarbonisation and energy efficiency measures at 7 corporate buildings and 4 schools funded by Public Sector Decarbonisation Scheme*
- *23 electric vehicles and 44 charge points on council sites*
- *Virtual meetings and agile working policies*
- *Benson Library off the gas grid with solar panels, battery storage and heat pump*
- *42 solar panels at Ron Groves House in Kidlington*
- *LED and Building Management System upgrades in corporate buildings<sup>6</sup>*

13. The council categorises its emissions as follows,

Scope 1: direct emissions from fuel used on the council's estate and fleet.

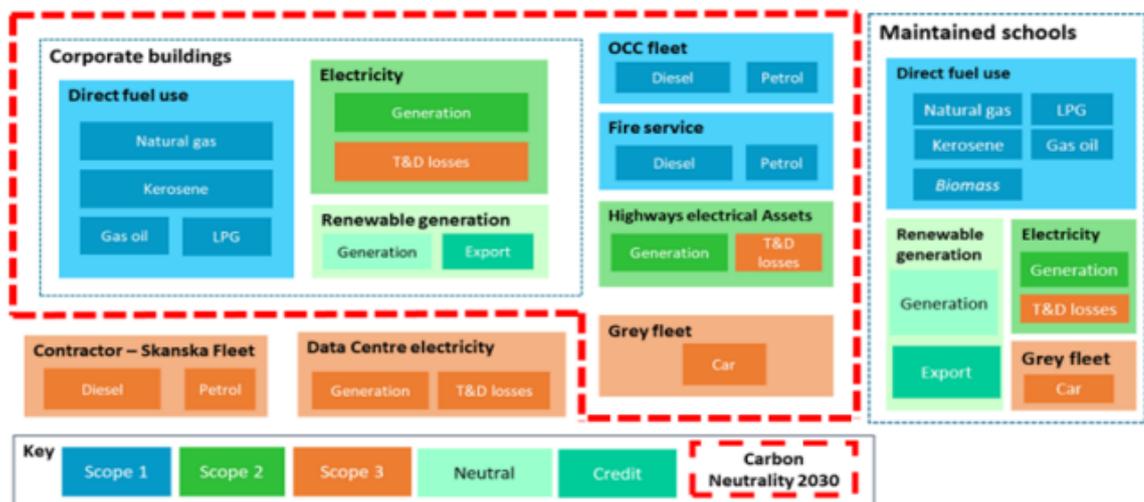
Scope 2: indirect emissions from purchased electricity.

Scope 3: indirect emissions from staff travel and electricity distribution.

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<sup>6</sup> Appendix 2

**Image 1: The council's carbon emissions within the scope of its 2030 net zero target<sup>7</sup>**



14. It was reported that, when excluding maintained schools, the council's largest areas of carbon emissions are street lighting (33%), property heat (20%), property electricity (14%), followed by fleet (8%) and staff miles (3%). However, while acknowledging the importance of supply-chain emissions – which typically contribute 80 per cent of a local authority's carbon footprint – due to a lack of available data, the council only reports a limited subset of its Scope 3 emissions.

*Consequently, [the council] has committed to consider the climate and carbon implications of our key investment decisions and working with suppliers to reduce the emissions associated with the delivery of council contracts.*

*[... we] will expand our capacity to develop a comprehensive view of the council's supply chain emissions. We will work collaboratively with the supplier base to design and implement measures to inform, support and encourage suppliers to deliver contracts that are increasingly aligned with science-based targets on net-zero emissions.*

**Conclusion 1:** *The council is effectively measuring much of its carbon emissions.*

**Recommendation 1:** *The council continue to work to understand and quantify its emissions, particularly supply chain emissions.*

## **Carbon Management Plan 2022-25**

15. The Carbon Management 2022-25 (Appendix 2) sets out the council's approach to reducing its carbon emissions from its buildings, highways assets, fleet and staff business travel; maintained schools are again out of scope. It contains direct actions that generate measurable emissions reductions – e.g. replacing lighting with LEDs – and enabling actions that create the conditions for further reductions – e.g. introducing a fleet management system. Progress is to be monitored monthly and reported to the Climate Action Programme Board (quarterly), the

<sup>7</sup> Greenhouse Gas Report 2020 - 2021

Senior Leadership Team and Members (quarterly via the Corporate Performance Report) and Cabinet (annually).

16. The following conditions must be met to ensure delivery of the longer-term actions in the Plan and a pathway towards net zero by 2030:

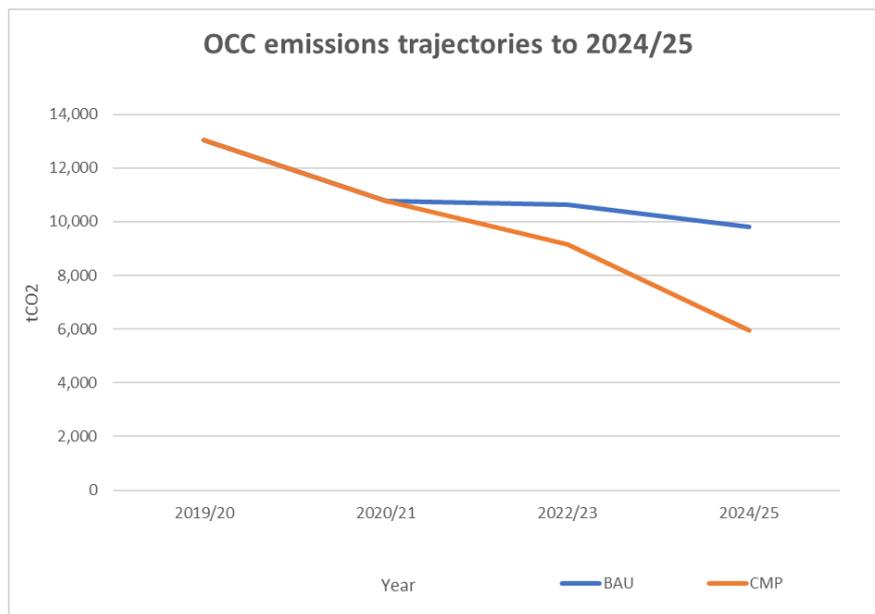
- a. *Identifying a way to continue decarbonising our estate in the face of changing service needs for assets – the Agile Working Strategy (currently under development) will address this issue*
- b. *Implementing One Fleet, integrated asset management system for fleet – estimated to be in place by March 2023*
- c. *Implementing an integrated energy management system for buildings*
- d. *Identifying the measures and investment required to decarbonise the estate; determining which offer a viable invest-to-save payback and which require external funding*
- e. *Estimating the investment required to decarbonise the fleet*
- f. *Securing adequate funding for approved decarbonisation measures*
- g. *Agreeing an offset threshold above which alternative investment options will be considered*
- h. *Implementing a council-wide programme to minimise emissions from staff travel, linked to a corporate KPI.<sup>8</sup>*

17. The Carbon Management Plan combined with the decarbonisation of electricity supply were reported to put the council on a trajectory to reduce its carbon emissions by approximately 6,000 tonnes of CO<sub>2</sub>e by 2024/25, a 75 per cent reduction from its 2010/11 baseline.

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<sup>8</sup> Appendix 1

**Chart 1: The council's emissions trajectories 2019/20 to 2024/25<sup>9</sup>**



18. The council's carbon emissions account for only 0.22% of emissions in Oxfordshire.<sup>10</sup> There was discussion amongst the Working Group as to whether it would be more beneficial for the council to prioritise supporting countywide emissions reduction. However, the Working Group notes that working with partners to decarbonise the county is an area of focus under the council's Strategic Plan and acknowledges the benefits of the council providing leadership by reducing its own emissions and identifying portable solutions that can be used by others in the county and further afield. In joining UK100, a network of local government climate leaders, the council committed to annual county-wide greenhouse gas reporting.

**Conclusion 2:** *The council is welcomely leading the way by developing robust plans to reduce its emissions. Nevertheless, the council's carbon emissions account for only 0.22% of Oxfordshire's emissions and the council's commitment to developing countywide decarbonisation route map informed by the Pathways to a Zero Carbon Oxfordshire Report is highly important.*

**Recommendation 2:** *The council continue to provide leadership through its focus on reducing its own carbon emissions, develop a route map to a Zero Carbon Oxfordshire and engage other organisation and the public in respect of why they should, and how they can, reduce their emissions, including by sharing the learning from the council's decarbonisation initiatives.*

**Recommendation 3:** *The council continue to educate staff and service providers on the importance of carbon and emissions accountability and seek improvements and feedback to improve, accelerate and engage staff wherever possible.*

<sup>9</sup> Appendix 2

<sup>10</sup> Appendix 2

19. Some carbon reduction programmes are likely to deliver financial savings. For example, the replacement of streetlighting with LEDs has a 9.7-year payback period and will deliver £77m of savings over 20 years and zero-carbon buildings and electric vehicles incur lower operating costs. An invest-to-save programme is to be developed and business cases are to be put forward for funding, including from grant sources such as the Public Sector Decarbonisation Scheme.

***Recommendation 4:*** *the council closely monitor the financial saving generated by initiatives which reduce energy use and carbon emissions; and such savings be reinvested in further such initiatives.*

### **Decarbonisation approach**

20. The council's decarbonisation approach is guided by three principles: demand reduction; inclusive transition; and innovation.

#### *Demand reduction*

21. The council is to prioritise actions that avoid energy consumption and then actions that save energy. Once energy demand has been minimised, it is to replace fossil fuels with cleaner energy sources, ideally locally produced renewables, with offsets only used as a last resort.

#### *Inclusive transition*

22. The council is to consider the potential impacts of its decarbonisation measures on local communities and adopt a participatory approach, ensuring communities are engaged and supported to take action, particularly those most vulnerable to the impacts of the climate and ecology emergency.

#### *Innovation*

23. The council describes its estate as a 'living lab' to trial new ideas and accelerate innovation; it is to share learning and is actively seeking new business models to make investment for zero carbon viable.

### **Buildings**

24. The Working Group heard that the council's estate is too large with too many antiquated buildings which cost too much to maintain and operate.

25. The council's building decarbonisation strategy is based on the following principles:

- *Adhere to the new design standard in any new buildings to minimise consumption and use renewable energy e.g., using low-carbon heating systems instead of gas boilers.*
- *Encourage staff behaviours that save energy in our buildings.*
- *Improve the way we manage energy consumption in our buildings, drawing on the data provided by our energy management systems to identify savings opportunities and move towards smart buildings.*

- *Focus upon rationalisation of our estate to minimise travel and consolidate assets to support service delivery in light of the growth in population.*
- *Deliver low carbon retrofit measures in our properties:*
  - *carry out investment grade energy building audits and condition surveys to identify a full suite of measures*
  - *determine which measures offer a viable invest-to-save payback and which require external funding.*
- *Explore opportunities to buy renewable energy for our estate via a power purchase agreement in order to support local generation and a resilient local energy system.*
- *Identify an offset threshold above which alternative investment options will be considered (aligned with the council's offset strategy to be developed).*

26. The Working Group heard that the council recently held a two-day workshop with its senior leadership team and has recruited a decarbonisation manager to support the delivery of its building decarbonisation strategy.

27. The developing property strategy will connect with emerging agile and IT strategies, which are to be reviewed by the Performance and Corporate Services Committee in June 2022. Once finalised, the strategy will be used to develop a strategic investment plan and corporate initiatives will be aligned with it as the council moves into the 2023/24 budget setting process.

### **Highways assets**

28. The council's highways assets include streetlighting, traffic signals and signage. In 2018, the council launched a six-year £40 million streetlighting LED conversion programme. The Working Group heard that the council failed to meet its streetlight conversion target in 2021 but had met its carbon reduction target for streetlighting by installing different, more energy efficient lanterns than originally planned. There had been some challenges around the procurement of materials and components, but those had been addressed by the council. Witnesses were confident that the programme would be delivered on time.

29. The council is also considering reducing streetlighting at night to decrease energy usage and support biodiversity at night. The Working Group notes the importance of balancing the safety of residents, particularly women and girls, with the environmental benefits of reducing streetlighting at night.

30. The council is converting eight traffic signals per year to LED, is to deliver a Department for Transport-funded project to convert a further six sites in 2022/23 – a business case for the conversion of a further 40 sites has also been submitted – and is reviewing opportunities to convert bollards to solar when replacing LED traffic signals.

### **Fleet vehicles**

31. The council's vehicle fleets total over 380 vehicles. The largest fleets are in the Fire and Rescue Service, Supported Transport, Community Support and

Highways. To decarbonise its fleet, the council is to prioritise the avoidance of emissions by rationalising the fleet, encourage the sharing of vehicles and replacing fossil fuels with zero-tailpipe-emissions alternatives.

32. The council is to implement an integrated fleet management system and a dedicated team to centralise all fleet information from March 2023, which will enable the development of a fleet management plan.
33. The council has an electric-by-default policy that stipulates that it will work to phase out petrol and diesel vehicles where operationally feasible and will consider other ultra-low emissions alternatives where zero-emissions is not feasible. To minimise the additional costs of this, the council is to replace vehicles when they are already due for renewal. The council has to date introduced 44 electric vehicle charging points and 24 electric vehicles and aims to have electrified all its cars and vans by 2028. By mid-2023/24, a pipeline for a fully electric fleet will be developed to inform the further expansion of the council's charging infrastructure.
34. The Carbon Management Plan notes an innovation and viability gap in respect of the electrification of large vehicles, such as heavy goods vehicles and fire appliances. The council is to explore alternatives and innovative solutions and bring forward business cases as such solutions become financially and operationally viable. In practice, it is currently working with a technology partner, ULEMCo, on a feasibility study for a hydrogen fuel cell fire appliance. The first phase of the project was to produce a full specification and detailed engineering design for a prototype vehicle. The council is to subsequently seek additional funding for a second phase in which to construct a prototype vehicle in 2022/23.

**Staff business travel**

35. The council's decarbonisation approach for business travel undertaken by staff in their own vehicles prioritises avoiding travel (such as by meeting online), reducing miles travelled (such as through route optimisation), and replacing car travel with active travel (a pool of e-bikes is available). An electric car scheme with tax benefits is also available to staff.
36. The council has introduced carbon emissions targets for business miles which allow for a post-covid-19 increase in emissions. The focus on carbon emissions, rather than miles, supports services to travel while encouraging more carbon-efficient modes. The targets are to be reviewed in 2022/23 once data for the previous year has been analysed to provide a more accurate picture of post-pandemic emissions.

**Table 1: Council Services CO2e targets**

Directorate	2019/20 tCO2e	2022/23 target reduction	2022/23 tCO2e	2024/25 target reduction	2024/25 tCO2e
<b>Adult &amp; Housing Services</b>	170.4	10% reduction	153.3	25% reduction	127.8

<b>Children's Services</b>	744.5	10% reduction	670.0	25% reduction	558.4
<b>Commercial Development, Assets &amp; Investment</b>	54.8	10% reduction	49.3	30% reduction	38.4
<b>Customers, Organisational Development &amp; Resources</b>	82.9	10% reduction	74.6	30% reduction	58.0
<b>Environment &amp; Place</b>	84.4	10% reduction	76.0	40% reduction	50.7
<b>Members</b>	15.5	10% reduction	13.9	10% reduction	13.9

**Conclusion 3:** *The council has developed robust plans to reduce its carbon emissions and is already making good progress against them.*

## Monitoring

37. A draft of the Carbon Neutrality Dashboard (Appendix 3), which is being developed to enable progress to be monitored by Members and senior officers, was shared with the Working Group. It contains monthly data on energy and fuel consumptions, carbon emissions and progress on key projects, along with KPIs and targets agreed with services. In its current form the dashboard does not contain information on supply chain emissions, due to it not yet being available, and does not contain data on the significant carbon emissions of maintained schools (discussed below), which are responsible for their own operations and most of their maintenance and are not included in the council's net zero by 2030 commitment.

**Conclusion 4:** *The council has developed a clear and insightful dashboard for close monitoring of its carbon emissions and performance against its targets.*

**Recommendation 5:** *The council report publicly on its carbon emissions and progress against its carbon targets at least quarterly so that the public can hold decision-makers to account.*

**Recommendation 6:** *The carbon emissions of maintained schools and the council's supply chain be included in the dashboard once reliable data are available.*

## Carbon Reduction Initiatives for Schools

38. In 2019/20, the council's 137 maintained schools contributed 5,260 tonnes of carbon emissions, with a combined energy bill around £2 million pounds. Energy

is the second largest cost for schools, after staffing, and reducing their energy consumption will free up significant financial resources for them. While the council does not include maintained schools' significant emissions within its net zero by 2030 target, it does measure and report on maintained schools' emissions in its annual Greenhouse Gas Report.

39. It was reported that schools, which are responsible for their own operations, including energy and maintenance budgets, often lack the knowledge and capacity to reduce energy use and carbon emissions, particularly as they seek to support pupils' development following the covid-19 pandemic. The council, having committed to reducing carbon emissions from all areas of its influence, is implementing a range of programmes to support maintained schools and academies to reduce their emissions and energy use.

### **Oxfordshire Action on Carbon and Energy in Schools (ACES)**

40. The Environment Information Exchange, Oxford Brookes University, has been commissioned at cost of £60,000 per annum to provide a range of support to both maintained schools and academies in Oxfordshire to reduce the carbon emissions associated with their operations. The two-year contract commenced in April 2022, with the option to extend for a further year.

41. The ACES programme will provide schools with different levels of support appropriate to their needs and levels of progress towards carbon reduction. Such support will range from workshops for governors and senior leaders to in-depth assessments of energy-saving opportunities for individual schools. Advice and guidance will be available to school staff and resources will be available to engage pupils on climate action and energy issues. There is also a fund to provide boiler insulation to at least ten schools per year.

**Table 2: Anticipated ACE support activities during initial two-year contract**

<b>Activity</b>	<b>Year 1</b>	<b>Year 2</b>
Schools survey	1	-
Webinars	5	5
Workshops	2	2
Network meetings	4	4
Day events	4	4
No. of energy assessments	10	10
No. of schools for boiler room insulation	10	10
No. of schools receiving thermal imaging	5	5

### **Schools Capital Works and Finance**

42. The council has a Schools Structural Maintenance Plan (SSMP) and annual capital budget to carry out high-priority structural works for its maintained schools, such as boiler replacements, major roof repairs, and double-glazing projects. Where possible, works undertaken through the SSMP prioritise low-carbon replacements and where that entails significant additional costs, the Public Sector

Decarbonisation Scheme has been used to secure additional funding – £950,000 to date.

43. Detailed building condition surveys to enable better forward planning are due to be completed by September 2022. They are to include catering facilities and consider innovative ways to reuse waste heat.
44. The availability and affordability of finance for the implementation of energy-saving and carbon reduction measures is a key barrier to reducing energy use and carbon emissions in schools. As the Public Sector Decarbonisation Scheme is limited to heat decarbonisation initiatives, the council is developing an in-house financing scheme to provide financing opportunities for energy efficiency projects for maintained schools. Initially, £400,000 from the Budget Priority Reserve will be made available to schools, with repayments used to replenish the fund in subsequent years. The ACES scheme will provide a pipeline of projects requiring financing and promote the financing scheme to schools.

### **Zero Carbon New Build Policy**

45. The council is currently developing a policy under which new council buildings, including maintained schools, will be designed to net-zero emissions standards. The council is already making progress with two schools, in Shrivenham and North East Didcot, which are to be constructed to net-zero specifications for regulated and operational energy uses respectively.

***Recommendation 7:*** *The council continue to drive reductions in the carbon emissions of maintained schools and academies in Oxfordshire.*

Councillor Yvonne Constance OBE  
Chair of the Carbon Reduction Targets Working Group

- Appendices:
- Appendix 1: Briefing – Carbon Management Plan and climate and ecology additional funding
  - Appendix 2: Draft Carbon Management Plan
  - Appendix 3: Draft Carbon Neutrality Dashboard
  - Appendix 4: Briefing – Initiatives in place to support schools with carbon reduction

Contact Officer: Ben Awkal, interim Scrutiny Officer  
[ben.awkal@oxfordshire.gov.uk](mailto:ben.awkal@oxfordshire.gov.uk) | 07840 857007

June 2022

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## **Divisions Affected -**

### **CARBON REDUCTION SCRUTINY WORKING GROUP**

**11 MARCH 2022**

#### **Briefing #2: Carbon Management Plan and climate and ecology additional funding**

### **RECOMMENDATION**

1. **The Scrutiny Working Group is RECOMMENDED to**
  - Note the council's draft Carbon Management Plan 2022-25 (appendix 1)
  - Note the breakdown of additional funding for climate and ecology agreed in the 21/22 Budget setting process (appendix 2).

### **Executive Summary**

2. A draft Carbon Management Plan (CMP) 2022-25 has been developed setting out the council's decarbonisation approach for buildings, highway assets (streetlighting, traffic signals and signage), fleet, and staff business travel in their own vehicles. The plan includes short-term and longer-term actions that amount to a 75% reduction in emissions by 2024/25 from our 2010/11 baseline.
3. The full cost of delivering the CMP is not known. Actions planned for 22/23 will assess the level of investment required.

### **Draft Carbon Management Plan 2022-25**

4. The Carbon Management Plan 2022-25 (CMP) sets out the approach to reducing the emissions included in the 'net zero by 2030' target, as well as short-term and longer-term actions that add up to the council's emissions trajectory to 2024/25.
5. The CMP acknowledges that these council's emissions represent only 0.22% of Oxfordshire's total but recognises a leadership role for OCC in inspiring

residents and local businesses to take action. It also acknowledges that the emissions in scope for the 'net zero by 2030' don't include the totality of the council's scope 3 emissions. It highlights that steps are being taken to develop a comprehensive view of our supply chain emissions, while simultaneously working with suppliers to deliver contracts that are increasingly aligned with science-based targets on net-zero emissions.

6. The CMP echoes the key guiding principles of the Climate Action Framework. It emphasizes a 'avoid-shift-improve' approach to decarbonisation that prioritises reducing energy demand and uses offsets only as a last resort.
7. The actions included in the CMP 2022-25 place the council on a trajectory to reduce emissions to about 6,000t CO<sub>2</sub>e by 2024/25, which is equivalent to a 75% reduction from our 2010/11 baseline. During this period, the most significant reductions will come from:
  - (a) the streetlight LED conversion programme (72% of the estimated reduction from BAU)
  - (b) release of leased buildings (12%)
  - (c) commitments to work to reduce staff travel (9%)
  - (d) fleet electrification (3%).
8. The key emissions-reduction initiative – streetlighting LED conversion – is fully funded and in progress. However, the full costs of delivering the plan are not currently known.
9. The following conditions must be met to ensure delivery of the longer-term actions in the Plan and a pathway towards net zero by 2030:
  - (a) Identifying a way to continue decarbonising our estate in the face of changing service needs for assets – the Agile Working Strategy (currently under development) will address this issue
  - (b) Implementing One Fleet, integrated asset management system for fleet – estimated to be in place by March 2023
  - (c) Implementing an integrated energy management system for buildings
  - (d) Identifying the measures and investment required to decarbonise the estate; determining which offer a viable invest-to-save payback and which require external funding
  - (e) Estimating the investment required to decarbonise the fleet
  - (f) Securing adequate funding for approved decarbonisation measures
  - (g) Agreeing an offset threshold above which alternative investment options will be considered
  - (h) Implementing a council-wide programme to minimise emissions from staff travel, linked to a corporate KPI.

10. The CMP 2022-25 will be endorsed by the Climate Action Programme Board on 14 March and sent for Cabinet approval in May.
11. The governance structure for the CMP will also be approved by the Climate Action Programme Board on 14 March. It will be proposed that a delivery group is formed, led by the Director of Joint Property Services, to report quarterly to the Climate Action Programme Board, which will in turn report to Cabinet every six months. At the moment, the Board reports annually to Scrutiny.
12. When possible, progress will be monitored using the council's Carbon Neutrality dashboard, which displays the latest monthly data on energy and fuel consumption, carbon emissions, and progress on key projects, along with KPIs and targets agreed with services.
13. The CMP actions and targets will be reviewed annually.
14. The Plan is part of a wider Climate Action Programme that also includes actions to embed climate and ecological considerations into the organizational DNA and to enable Oxfordshire's transition to net zero across transport and connectivity, buildings, schools, energy systems, waste and consumption, and the natural environment.

## **Climate and ecology investment budget**

15. The revenue budget for 2022/23 includes £740k in additional funding to support climate change initiatives. Please see Appendix 2 for breakdown of the funding and how it will be used.

## **Corporate Policies and Priorities**

16. Addressing the climate emergency is the council's top priority. The carbon neutrality target and the Carbon Management Plan are key pieces of the Climate Action Programme, as set out in the council's Climate Action Framework.

## **Financial Implications**

17. CMP actions planned for 2022/23 will provide the data to assess the level of investment required to transition OCC's buildings and fleet to net zero. An invest-to-save programme will be developed, and business cases will be put

forward for funding through the Budget & Business Planning process from 2023/24 onwards.

18. Funding sources include the existing invest-to-save loan facilities such as the Salix Recycling Funds and grant sources such as the Public Sector Decarbonisation Scheme.

## **Legal Implications**

19. This briefing raises no legal implications.

## **Staff Implications**

20. Staff involvement in current programme delivery is funded by agreed resource allocation and grant funding. The Climate Action Team is providing centralised support. The Property team is recruiting a decarbonisation manager to develop an investment pipeline and implement building energy management good practice.
21. Staff requirements of future programme developments will be put forward through the service and resource planning process.

## **Equality & Inclusion Implications**

22. When developing and implementing its climate change and carbon reduction strategies and projects, the council must take an inclusive approach, ensuring the costs and benefits of the transition to a low-carbon economy are fairly shared.
23. While acting on climate change will bring benefits to all, it is most likely to have additional positive impacts on several of the protected and disadvantaged groups considered within the Council's equality framework

## **Sustainability Implications**

24. One of the three pillars of the council's response to the climate emergency is achieving net zero emissions in its estate and operations by 2030.

Appendix 2: Climate and Ecology Investment budget

Background papers:

Nil

Contact Officer:

Sarah Gilbert, Climate Action Team Leader,  
07867467797, Sarah.Gilbert@Oxfordshire.gov.uk

March 2022

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# OCC CMP 2022-25

Draft v06 – 7.3.2022

## Introduction

OCC committed to reaching net-zero carbon emissions in our estate and operations by 2030 and to embed climate considerations into all our decision making. In 2020, we published our Climate Action Framework, setting out how we are going to reduce our emissions, transform into a climate active organization and play our part in Oxfordshire's transition to net zero.

Since then, addressing the climate and ecological emergency became the council's number one priority. The Climate Action Framework is been complemented by the Climate and Ecological Policy, in development.

The Carbon Management Plan 2022-25 sets out the approach to reducing the emissions from our buildings, highway assets (streetlighting, traffic signals and signage), fleet, and staff business travel in their own vehicles. These are the emissions that we committed to reduce to net zero this decade. The Plan is part of a wider Climate Action Programme that also includes our actions to embed climate and ecological considerations into the organizational DNA and importantly to enable Oxfordshire's transition to net zero across transport and connectivity, buildings, schools, energy systems, waste and consumption, and the natural environment.

## Putting our own house in order

While our emissions represent only 0.22% of Oxfordshire's total<sup>1</sup>, we are conscious that we all need to play our part in the transition to net zero, adopting more efficient ways of working, travelling, and consuming. By leading the way and seeking to become net zero significantly ahead of the national 2050 timeline, we hope to demonstrate what can be achieved and inspire residents and local businesses to join us on this rewarding journey.

The Carbon Management Plan 2022-25 outlines the decarbonisation approach taken for each area of our 'net-zero by 2030' target, as well as short-term and longer-term actions that add up to the council's emissions trajectory to 2024/25.

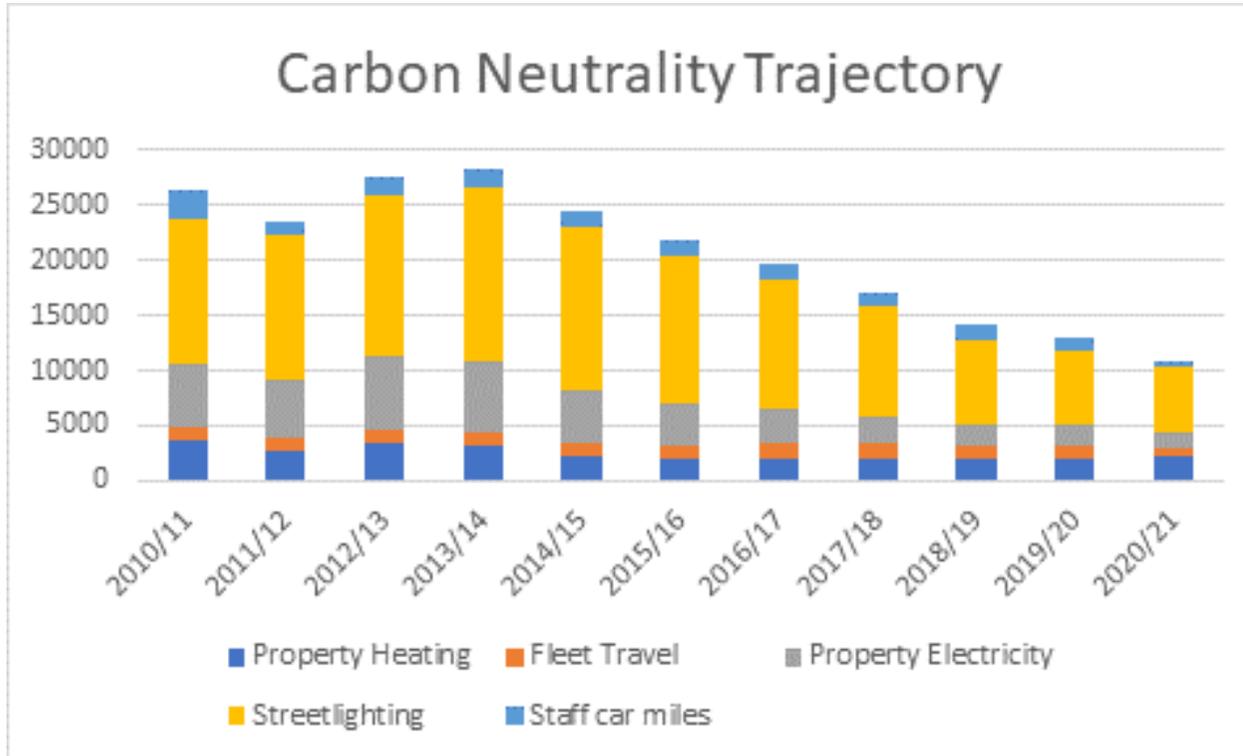
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<sup>1</sup> Oxfordshire total 2018 emission as provided by SCATTER

## Progress so far

In the decade between our baseline year of 2010/11 and 2020/21, our emissions have decreased 60%<sup>2</sup>.

2010/11	2011/12	2012/13	2013/14	2014/15	2015/16	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21
26,510	23,491	27,644	28,328	24,444	21,813	19,671	17,132	14,179	13,047	10,774



<sup>2</sup> Total figures per year might change as internal data review has identified the following issues:

- OCC Highways fleet being reported in Scope 3 along with Skanska; this should have been included in our scope 1
- New bunkfuel data from Wallingford depot
- Business mileage being done by agency staff

Key past projects and initiatives to decarbonise our estate and operations:

- 38 per cent of street lighting replaced with LEDs
- £2.1m for heat decarbonisation and energy efficiency measures at 7 corporate buildings and 4 schools funded by Public Sector Decarbonisation Scheme
- 23 electric vehicles and 44 charge points on council sites
- Virtual meetings and agile working policies
- Benson Library off the gas grid with solar panels, battery storage and heat pump
- 42 solar panels at Ron Groves House in Kidlington
- LED and Building Management System upgrades in corporate buildings

## **Our emissions**

About half of our emissions come from streetlighting and 30% from our buildings. Fleet and staff travel emissions represent about 20%.

In 2020/21, due to COVID restrictions and changes in work practices, fleet and staff travel emissions dropped by 27% and 67% respectively. We expected that, in 2021/22, emissions from highways assets and electricity usage in buildings will continue to decline, while fleet and staff travel emissions are likely to show a degree of bounce back as services resume.

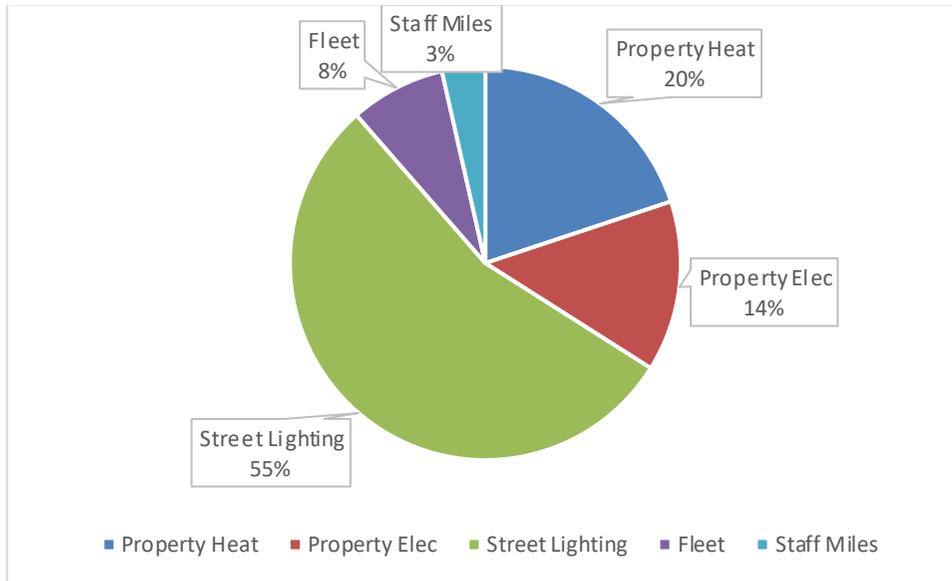


Figure 1: OCC emissions 2020/21 Source: 2020/21 Greenhouse Gas report

**Scope 1, 2 and 3 emissions**

This carbon management plan covers the following emissions, as described in our annual greenhouse gas report:

Scope 1	direct emissions from fuel use on council estate and fleet
Scope 2	indirect emissions from purchased electricity
Scope 3	indirect emissions from staff travel and electricity distribution

**Tackling our Scope 3 emissions**

Due to data availability, we currently report on a limited subset of our Scope 3 emissions. However, we are aware of their importance – supply chain emissions typically account for more than 80 per cent of a local authority’s total carbon footprint. Consequently, we have committed to consider the climate and carbon implications of our key investment decisions and working with suppliers to reduce the emissions associated with the delivery of council contracts.

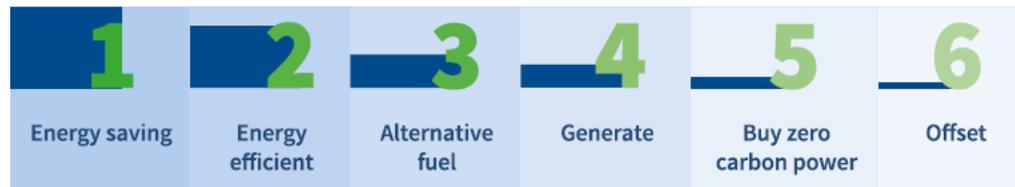
Building on the progress that has already been made in understanding emissions of specific contracts and capital projects, we will expand our capacity to develop a comprehensive view of the council’s supply chain emissions. We will work collaboratively with the supplier base to design and implement measures to inform, support and encourage suppliers to deliver contracts that are increasingly aligned with science-based targets on net-zero emissions.

## Our approach

### Guiding principles

Our decarbonisation approach is guided by the following principles:

**Demand reduction (avoid-shift-improve).** Our actions embody the ‘energy hierarchy’ to reduce demand and ensure best value. We prioritise actions that avoid energy consumption, such as avoiding unnecessary journeys, and actions that save energy, such as replacing streetlighting with LEDs. Saving energy not only reduces the amount of carbon emitted but protects against price increases. Once energy demand has been minimized, fossil fuels are replaced with cleaner energy, ideally locally produced renewables. Offsets are only used as a last resort.



**Inclusive transition.** We consider the potential impacts of our decarbonisation measures on local communities. We take a participatory approach, ensuring communities are engaged and supported to take action, particularly those most vulnerable to the impacts of the climate and ecological emergency.

**Innovation.** Our estate is a ‘living lab’ to trial new ideas and accelerate innovation. We share our learning and are actively seeking new business models to make investment for zero-carbon viable.

## Decarbonisation approach

### **Buildings**

The buildings decarbonisation strategy is based on the following principles:

- Adhere to the new design standard in any new buildings to minimise consumption and use renewable energy e.g., using low-carbon heating systems instead of gas boilers
- Encourage staff behaviours that save energy in our buildings
- Improve the way we manage energy consumption in our buildings, drawing on the data provided by our energy management systems to identify savings opportunities and move towards smart buildings
- Focus upon rationalisation of our estate to minimise travel and consolidate assets to support service delivery in light of the growth in population.
- Deliver low carbon retrofit measures in our properties:
  - carry out investment grade energy building audits and condition surveys to identify a full suite of measures
  - determine which measures offer a viable invest-to-save payback and which require external funding
- Explore opportunities to buy renewable energy for our estate via a power purchase agreement in order to support local generation and a resilient local energy system
- Identify an offset threshold above which alternative investment options will be considered (aligned with the council's offset strategy to be developed).

### **Highway assets (streetlighting, traffic signals and signage)**

OCC's highways assets include streetlighting, traffic signals and signage (signage includes illuminated bollards, illuminated signs and miscellaneous other).

The approach to decarbonisation involves delivery of the £40m, six-year streetlighting LED conversion programme that started in 2018. To decrease energy usage and support biodiversity, the possibility of reducing illumination at night when appropriate is also being explored.

The approach for traffic signals currently involves the conversion of eight traffic signals a year to LED and delivery of the Department for Transport-funded project to convert a further six sites in 2022/23. A business case for the conversion for an additional 40 sites is awaiting funding approval.

The approach for signage involves reviewing opportunities to convert bollards to solar when replacing the LED traffic signals.

**Fleet**

OCC's fleet include 382 vehicles<sup>3</sup>, with the largest fleets in Fire and Rescue Service, Supported Transport, Community Support, and Highways.

Type of vehicle	Total	EVs
Car	56	10
SUV/4x4	27	-
Car-derived van	4	-
Large van	11	11
Multi-purpose vehicle	43	1
Large minibus	89	2
Fire appliance	56	-
Other HGV	1	-
Other machinery	5	-

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The approach to fleet decarbonisation will prioritise avoidance of emissions by rationalising the fleet, encouraging sharing of resources, and replacing fossil fuels with zero emissions alternatives.

The first step will be putting in place an integrated fleet management system and a dedicated team to centralise all fleet information. The 'One Fleet' system, which will be up and running by March 2023, will rationalise fleet usage and support the development of a fleet replacement plan.

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<sup>3</sup> 2018/19 data, adjusted to know changes in 2020

The council has an 'electric by default'<sup>4</sup> policy that stipulates that we will work to phase out petrol and diesel vehicles in our own fleet, ensuring where operationally feasible all new vehicle acquisitions are zero tail pipe emission by default. We will consider other ultra-low emission alternatives where zero emission is not feasible. To minimise the cost on the public purse we will undertake this transition as vehicles come up for renewal.

Electric alternatives for different vehicle types are at a variety of stages of maturity. Currently, the upfront costs of most electric cars and vans are compensated by lower lifetime running and maintenance costs, making electric the preferred option. For larger vehicles, such as heavy goods vehicles and specialist vehicles such as fire engines, there is still an innovation and/or a viability gap. We will actively explore alternatives and innovative solutions, bringing forward business cases as they become financially and operationally viable.

### ***Fleet electrification***

OCC has been transitioning to a net-zero fleet and increasing its charging infrastructure, with 24 EVs and 44 charge points currently in place.

By mid 2023/24, a pipeline for a full EV fleet will be developed by Property, Procurement and Finance, which will inform the expansion of council's EV charging infrastructure.

OCC aims to electrify all cars and vans by 2028.

### ***Fleet innovations***

The council's specialist vehicles fleet, such as fire engines are a challenging area to decarbonise by 2030. Working with partners to explore options for these challenging assets is an important step on our journey to net zero.

An example is Innovate UK-funded project HySPERT (Hydrogen Special Purpose Electric Vehicle Platform for Refuse Collection and Fire Trucks). Oxfordshire County Council is currently working with technology partner ULEMCo on a feasibility study for a hydrogen fuel cell fire engine. The first phase of the project will create a full specification and detailed engineered design for a prototype vehicle to be completed by 31st March 2022. We will then seek to secure additional funding for second phase to physically build a prototype hydrogen fuel cell vehicle in 2022/23.

### ***Staff business travel (in staff's own vehicles)***

The decarbonisation approach for staff business travel prioritises avoiding travel (e.g., by meeting online when possible), reducing miles (e.g., by optimising routes), and replacing travel in cars with walking and cycling (e.g., using one of the pool e-bikes available). When needing to use a car, staff will be

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<sup>4</sup> Ultra-Low Emission Vehicle (ULEV) Policy Statement 2019

encouraged to use pool EVs. An electric car benefit scheme is also available for staff looking to get a new electric or plug-in hybrid car, with payments deducted from gross salary and consequently savings in income tax and national insurance contributions.

The approach involves retaining some of the mileage-saving initiatives put in place due to Covid-19 restrictions and new ways of working. In 2020/21, staff business travel mileage and associated carbon emissions decreased by almost 70% compared to 2019/20 (from over 4.2 million miles to 1.4 million miles).

To maintain a low level of travel-related emissions while ensuring service provision, the following CO2e reduction targets were proposed to services:

<b>Directorate</b>	<b>2019/20 tCO2e</b>	<b>2022/23 target reduction</b>	<b>2022/23 tCO2e</b>	<b>2024/25 target reduction</b>	<b>2024/25 tCO2e</b>
<b>Adult &amp; Housing Services</b>	170.4	10% reduction	153.3	25% reduction	127.8
<b>Children's Services</b>	744.5	10% reduction	670.0	25% reduction	558.4
<b>Commercial Development, Assets &amp; Investment</b>	54.8	10% reduction	49.3	30% reduction	38.4
<b>Customers, Organisational Development &amp; Resources</b>	82.9	10% reduction	74.6	30% reduction	58.0
<b>Environment &amp; Place</b>	84.4	10% reduction	76.0	40% reduction	50.7
<b>Members</b>	15.5	10% reduction	13.9	10% reduction	13.9

The targets allow for post-Covid bounce back and are reductions in carbon emissions associated with business travel, not necessarily reductions in the number of miles. This way, services are not restricted in their ability to travel, but encouraged to use low-carbon modes of transport.

Staff business travel targets will be reviewed next year following analysis of the 2021/22 mileage data, which will provide a more realistic post-Covid picture of carbon emissions.

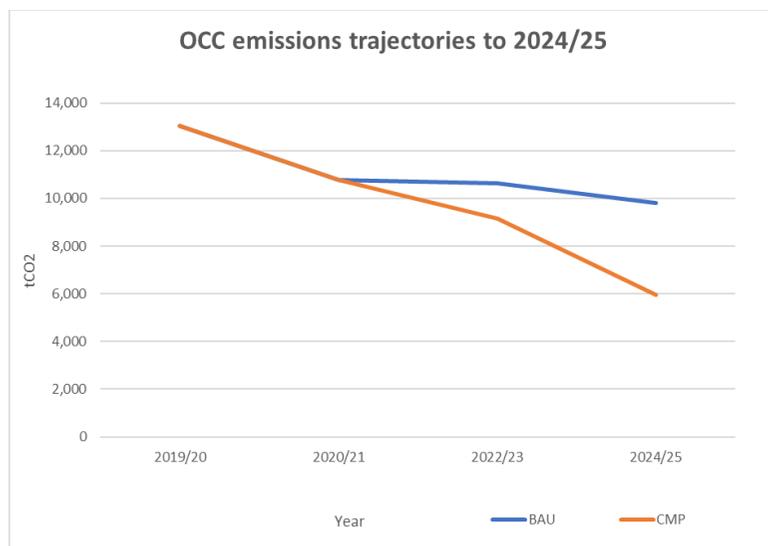
Implementation of the **staff business travel programme** will support services to meet their targets:

Year	Staff business travel programme activities
2022/23	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Promote uptake of electric car benefit scheme</li><li>• Continue 'digital by default' policy for training and internal meetings</li><li>• Enforce the travel hierarchy and encourage active travel</li><li>• Explore opportunities for service-specific electric pool cars and/or vans</li></ul>
2023/24	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Encourage better route planning</li><li>• Offer driver training</li></ul>
2024/25	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Promote car sharing</li></ul>

#### **Estimated emissions reduction**

The actions set out in this plan, combined with the decarbonisation of the electricity supply, are likely to put the council emissions on a trajectory to reduce emissions to about 6,000t CO<sub>2</sub>e by 2024/25, which is equivalent to a 75% reduction from our 2010/11 baseline. An estimated 8,500 t CO<sub>2</sub>e will be saved over this period, equivalent to 3,447 return flights from London to New York or the amount of CO<sub>2</sub> absorbed by 1.4 million trees over the 3-year period.

The annual carbon savings from each action will only be realised in full in the following year and reflected in that year's greenhouse gas report.



### Financing the transition

Some elements of the transition to net zero are likely to deliver financial savings. For example, the ongoing replacement of streetlighting with LEDs, which represents an investment of £40m, has a payback period of 9.7 years and will deliver £77m savings over 20 years. It will also reduce streetlighting energy consumption by 75% and carbon emissions by 95% (from 2019/20 baseline).

On the other hand, retrofitting our buildings and replacing specialist vehicles will require significant investment that is unlikely to generate a financial return within the council's normal payback period.

Activities planned for 2022/23 will provide the data to assess the level of investment required to transition our buildings and fleet to net zero. An invest-to-save programme will be developed, and business cases will be put forward for funding, including from grant sources such as the Public Sector Decarbonisation Scheme.

### Carbon Management Plan 2022-25

### **Types of actions**

The carbon management plan includes **direct actions** that generate measurable emissions reductions – e.g., replacing lighting with LEDs – and **enabling actions** that create the conditions for future reductions – e.g., putting in place a fleet management system.

### **Monitoring and reporting**

Progress on the actions will be monitored monthly and reported to:

- Climate Action Programme Board quarterly
- SLT and Members quarterly via Corporate Performance report
- Cabinet annually.

When possible, progress will be monitored using the council’s Carbon Neutrality dashboard, which displays the latest data on energy and fuel consumption, carbon emissions, and progress on key projects, along with KPIs and targets agreed with services.

### **Planned actions for 2022/23**

Action	Type	Estimated investment	Status and source of funding	KPI	Estimated annual CO2e savings <sup>5</sup>	Officer Lead	Cabinet Lead
<b>Highway assets</b>							
Continue conversion of streetlighting to LED	Direct	£41m total (£17m 22/23)	Approved funding – capital programme Delivery ongoing	% streetlights converted to LED	1,395 tCO2e	Head of Highway Maintenance	Cabinet Member for Highways Management
Convert 14 traffic signals to LED	Direct	£755k	Approved funding – revenue budget (£340k)	Energy or carbon intensity (kWh or	5 tCO2e	Head of Highway Maintenance	Cabinet Member for Highways Management

<sup>5</sup> The full year carbon savings for actions implemented in 2022/23 will be realised in 2023/24 & reported in the 2023/24 GHG report

			and DfT (£415k) Delivery ongoing	CO2e per asset)			
Convert 40 traffic signals to LED	Direct	£104k	Approved funding – capital programme	Energy or carbon intensity (kWh or CO2e per asset)	18 tCO2e	Head of Highway Maintenance	Cabinet Member for Highways Management
Develop and implement policy for streetlight dimming to support Dark Skies	Direct	TBD	Pending funding	Energy or carbon intensity (kWh or CO2e per asset)	TBD	Head of Highway Maintenance	Cabinet Member for Highways Management

Action	Type	Estimated investment	Status and source of funding	KPI	Estimated annual CO2e savings <sup>6</sup>	Officer Lead	Cabinet Lead
<b>Buildings</b>							
Develop and implement an Agile Working Strategy	Enabling	TBD	Pending funding – revenue (HR) and capital (Property)	--	--	Director of Joint Property Services	Cabinet Member for Finance
Recruit a Decarbonisation Manager	Enabling	£60k	Fully funded - revenue budget	--	--	Director of Joint Property Services	Cabinet Member for Finance
Implement active building energy management	Direct	£27-33k	Recycling fund – pending parameter setting	Energy or carbon intensity (kWh or CO2e per m2)	99 tCO2e	Director of Joint Property Services	Cabinet Member for Finance
Seek funding for works on 9 priority sites	Enabling	--	Capital bids and grants funding	--	--	Director of Joint Property Services	Cabinet Member for Finance
Carry out investment grade energy & condition audits	Enabling	£5-8k per site	Pending funding – Low Carbon Skills Fund, revenue budget, capital programme	--	--	Director of Joint Property Services	Cabinet Member for Finance
Release 1 leased building (estate rationalisation)	Direct	--	Revenue saving	% CO2e reduction	237 t CO2e <sup>7</sup>	Director of Joint Property Services	Cabinet Member for Finance
Delivery of heat decarbonisation measures at Hook Norton Fire Station	Direct	£20k	Funding approved – Public Sector Decarbonisation Scheme 3	% CO2e reduction	13 t CO2e	Director of Joint Property Services	Cabinet Member for Finance

<sup>6</sup> The full year carbon savings for actions implemented in 2022/23 will be realised in 2023/24 & reported in the 2023/24 GHG report

<sup>7</sup> Assumed release of Abbey House end 2022/early 2023

Implementing Zero-carbon policy for new builds (action TBD)							
---	--	--	--	--	--	--	--

Action	Type	Estimated investment	Status and source of funding	KPI	Estimated annual CO2e savings <sup>8</sup>	Officer Lead	Cabinet Lead
<b>Fleet</b>							
Set up One Fleet – integrated fleet management system	Enabling	c. £250k	Fully funded – ICT and Property	--	--	Director of Joint Property Services	Cabinet Member for Finance
Evaluate EV lease vs ownership model	Enabling	--	Staff time only (part of One Fleet work)	--	--	Director of Joint Property Services/ Head of Procurement	Cabinet Member for Finance
Procure electric vehicles to replace end-of-life/lease vehicles in Fire, Hard FM and Highways	Direct	TBD	Pending funding – Service revenue budgets	% fleet electrification	0 (EVs delivered in 23/24)	Head of Procurement	Cabinet Member for Finance
Shift diesel fire fleet to HVO subject to feasibility study	Direct	TBD	Feasibility – staff time only Implementation cost - TBD	% CO2e reduction	TBD	FRS Business Manager	Cabinet Member for Community Services and Safety
Trial of IHAT technology for fire engines subject	Direct	TBD	Business case – staff time only	% CO2e reduction	TBD	FRS Business Manager	Cabinet Member for Community Services and

<sup>8</sup> The full year carbon savings for actions implemented in 2022/23 will be realised in 2023/24 & reported in the 2023/24 GHG report

to business case			Trial costs - TBD				Safety
Launch HySPERT Phase2	Enabling	TBC 31 <sup>st</sup> March 22	Pending funding – Innovate UK	--	--	Head of iHub	Cabinet Member for Corporate Services?
<b>Staff travel</b>							
Implement staff business travel programme	Direct	--	Staff time only	% CO2e reduction % staff green miles	143 tCO2e <sup>9</sup>	TBD	TBD

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<sup>9</sup> Assumed directorates agree to carbon reduction targets. Actions to support this reduction include a 'digital by default' approach to meetings, engagement with high-mileage users, enforcement of the travel hierarchy, take up of the electric car benefit scheme, explore opportunities for electric pool cars and vans, and encouraging better route planning.

## Later actions for 2023-25

Action	Type	Estimated investment	Status and source of funding	Estimated annual CO2e savings <sup>10</sup>	Officer Lead	Cabinet Lead
<b>Highway assets</b>						
Complete conversion of streetlighting to LED	Direct	£41m total £6.8m 23/24	Fully funded – capital programme Delivery ongoing	384 tCO2e	Head of Highway Maintenance	Cabinet Member for Highways Management
Convert 16 traffic signals to LED	Direct	£500k	Fully funded – revenue budget Delivery ongoing	2 tCO2e	Head of Highway Maintenance	Cabinet Member for Highways Management
<b>Buildings</b>						
Deliver funded energy efficiency projects	Direct	TBD (pending audit results)	Pending funding – PSDS4, recycling fund, capital governance process and/or revenue bid	TBD (pending audit results)	Director of Joint Property Services	Cabinet Member for Finance
Deliver energy management programme (e.g., behaviour change, smart systems)	Direct	--	Staff time only	TBD	Director of Joint Property Services	Cabinet Member for Finance
Carry out investment grade energy & condition audits	Enabling	£5-8k per site	Pending funding – Low Carbon Skills Fund, revenue	--	Director of Joint Property Services	Cabinet Member for Finance

<sup>10</sup> The full year carbon savings for actions implemented between 2023-25 will be realised in either 2024/25 or 2025/26 & reported in the 2024/25 and 2025/26 GHG report.

			budget, capital programme			
Submit business cases for funding	Enabling	--	--	--	Director of Joint Property Services	Cabinet Member for Finance
Release 4 leased buildings (estate rationalisation)	Direct	--	Revenue saving	237 tCO <sub>2</sub> e <sup>11</sup>	Director of Joint Property Services	Cabinet Member for Finance
<b>Fleet</b>						
Replace end-of-life cars and vans with electric vehicles when suitable for service needs	Direct	TBD	Pending funding for cost difference of electric vehicles	110 tCO <sub>2</sub> e <sup>12</sup>	Head of Procurement/ Director of Joint Property Services	Cabinet Member for Finance
Expand EV charging infrastructure	Enabling	TBD	Partly funded - £400k available	--	Director of Joint Property Services	Cabinet Member for Finance
<b>Staff travel</b>						
Implement low carbon staff travel programme	Direct	--	Staff time	190 tCO <sub>2</sub> e <sup>13</sup>	TBD	TBD

<sup>11</sup> Assumed release of Nash Court, Knights Court, Samuelson House and Speedwell House in either 2023/24 or 2024/25

<sup>12</sup> Assumed 50% of Hard FM and 75% of Highways fuel use can be electrified and 10 Fire & Rescue diesel cars to be converted to fully electric cars in 2023/24.

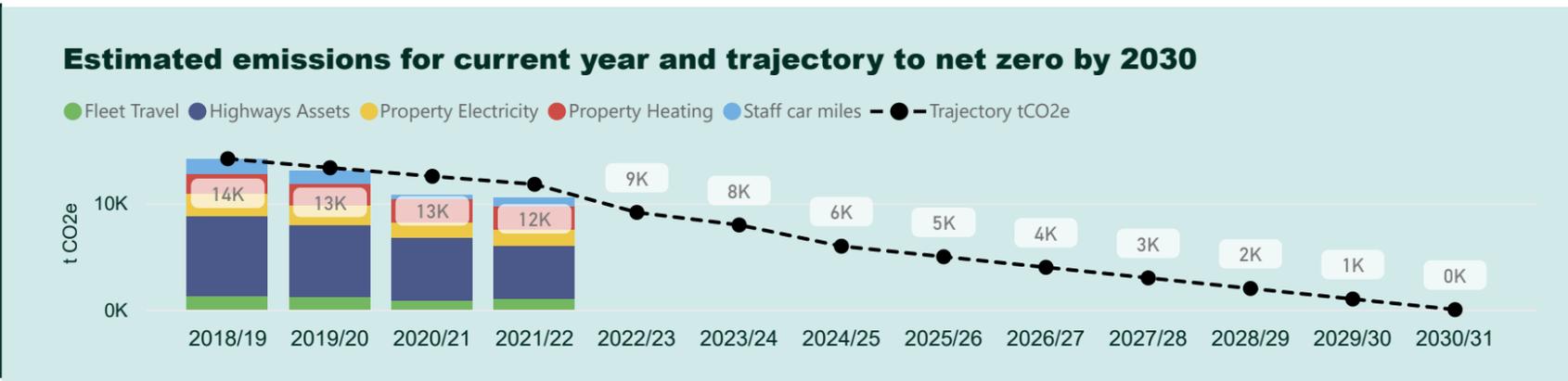
<sup>13</sup> Assumed directorates agree to carbon reduction targets. Actions to support this reduction include continuation of a 'digital by default' approach to meetings, continued enforcement of the travel hierarchy, continued take up of the electric car benefit scheme, continued take up of electric pool cars and continued better route planning and from 2024/25 offer driver training and promote car sharing.

### Total carbon emissions

YTD Previous YTD

**9,606** -5% **10,094**  
t CO2e t CO2e

TARGET -6.0%

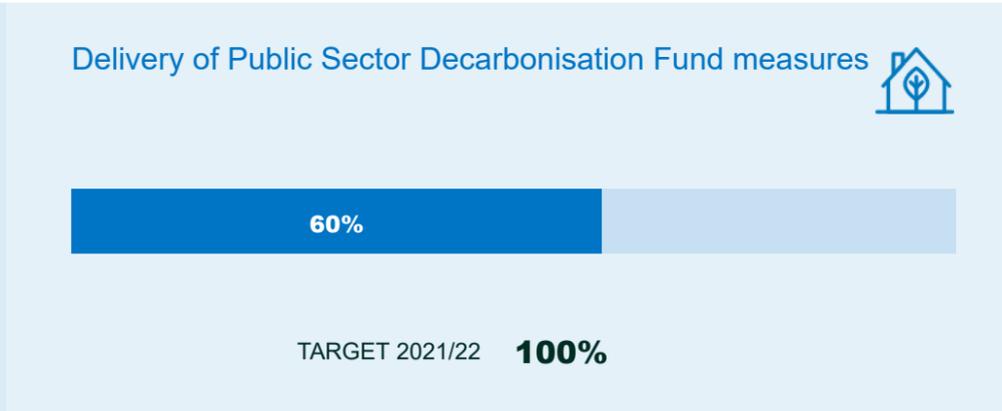


### Property

YTD Previous YTD

**3,133** -2.3% **3,205**  
t CO2e t CO2e

TARGET -6.0%



### Intensity Metrics

Per m2 per year

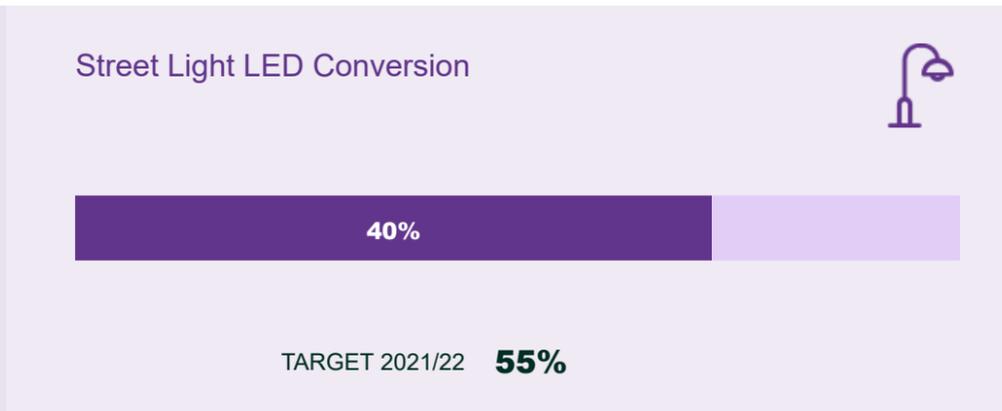
Metric	This Yr	% Change	Last Yr	Target
kWh	<b>166</b>	<span style="background-color: #dc3545; color: white; padding: 2px 10px; font-weight: bold;">0.8%</span>	<b>165</b>	<b>TBD</b>
kg CO2e	<b>33</b>	<span style="background-color: #28a745; color: white; padding: 2px 10px; font-weight: bold;">-3.3%</span>	<b>34</b>	<b>TBD</b>

### Highway Assets

YTD Previous YTD

**4,943** -16.0% **5,885**  
t CO2e t CO2e

TARGET -6.0%



### Intensity Metrics

Per asset per year

Metric	This Yr	% Change	Last Yr	Target
kWh	<b>137</b>	<span style="background-color: #28a745; color: white; padding: 2px 10px; font-weight: bold;">-9.1%</span>	<b>151</b>	<b>TBD</b>
kg CO2e	<b>32</b>	<span style="background-color: #28a745; color: white; padding: 2px 10px; font-weight: bold;">-17.0%</span>	<b>38</b>	<b>TBD</b>

### Fleet

YTD Previous YTD

**857** 24.2% **689**  
t CO2e t CO2e

TARGET -6.0%



### Intensity Metrics

Per mile

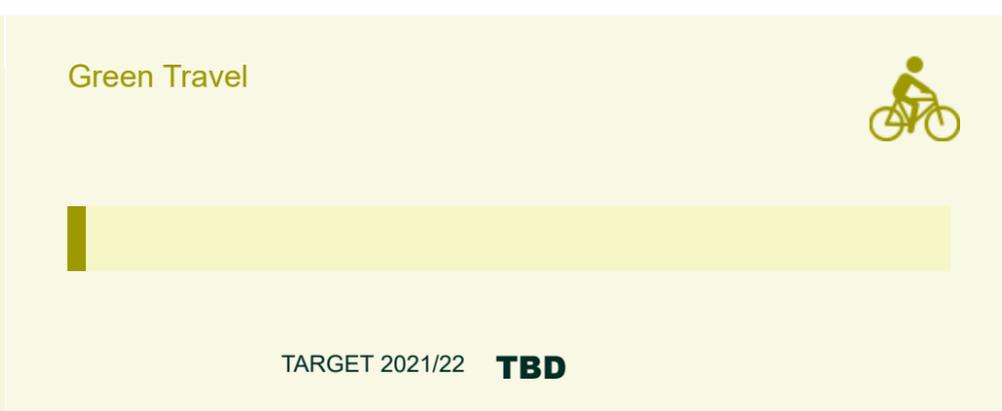
Metric	This Yr	% Change	Last Yr	Target
kWh	<b>137</b>	<span style="background-color: #28a745; color: white; padding: 2px 10px; font-weight: bold;">-9.1%</span>	<b>151</b>	<b>TBD</b>
kg CO2e	<b>32</b>	<span style="background-color: #28a745; color: white; padding: 2px 10px; font-weight: bold;">-17.0%</span>	<b>38</b>	<b>TBD</b>

### Staff Travel

YTD Previous YTD

**673** 113.9% **315**  
t CO2e t CO2e

TARGET -6.0%



### Intensity Metrics

Per mile

Metric	This Yr	% Change	Last Yr	Target
kWh	<b>137</b>	<span style="background-color: #28a745; color: white; padding: 2px 10px; font-weight: bold;">-9.1%</span>	<b>151</b>	<b>TBD</b>
kg CO2e	<b>32</b>	<span style="background-color: #28a745; color: white; padding: 2px 10px; font-weight: bold;">-17.0%</span>	<b>38</b>	<b>TBD</b>



**Year to Date**

**4,943**  
t CO2e

**-16.0%**

Previous year

**21.4M**  
kWh

**-8.0%**

Previous year

**This Month**

**422**  
t CO2e

**-14.2%**

Same month last yr

**1.8M**  
kWh

**-6.0%**

Same month last yr

**LED streetlights**

**39.6%**

**0.0%**

Previous month

**Per asset per year**

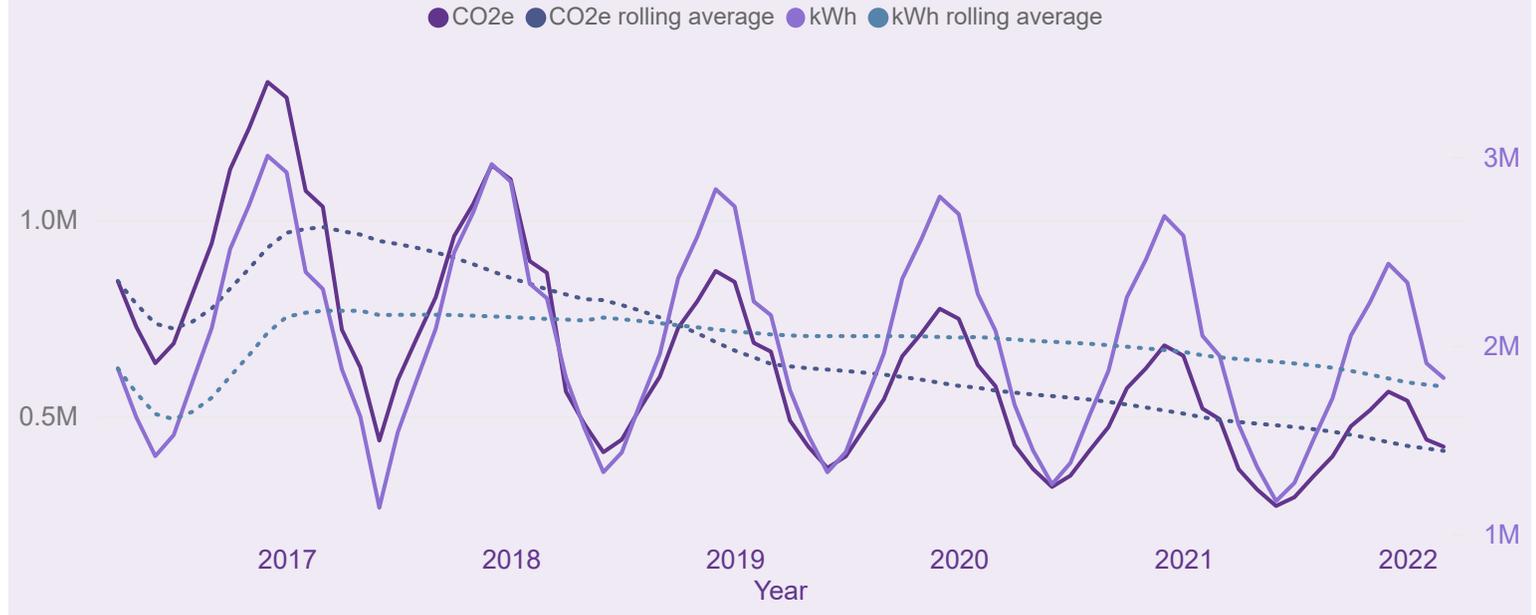
**137.3**  
kWh

**-9.1%**

Previous month

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**Highway assets energy usage and carbon emissions - last 5 years**





**Year to Date**

**673**

t CO2e

**113.9%**

Previous year

**This Month**

**46**

t CO2e

**42.2%**

Same month last yr

**Green miles**

**2.1%**

**0.0%**

Previous month

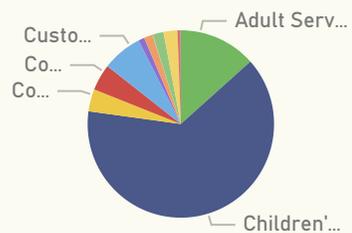
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**Staff travel mileage and carbon emissions - last 5 years**



Directorate	Average miles per month	CO2e last month	CO2e variation last year
Adult Services		5,807.90	16.55%
Children's Services		31,961.69	54.41%
Commercial Development Assets and Invest		3,620.60	33.94%
Communities		0.00	
Customers and Organisational Development		2,229.23	85.27%
Elected Members		162.26	3360.33%
Environment & Place		2,690.89	-4.31%
Growth Deal		0.00	
OCC Casuals		0.00	-100.00%
OxCam Ar		0.00	
Planning and Growth		0.00	
<b>Total</b>		<b>46,472.56</b>	<b>42.22%</b>

**CO2e by Directorate**





**Year to Date**

**857**

t CO2e

**24.2%**

Previous year

**This Month**

**75**

t CO2e

**8.0%**

Same month last yr

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Fleet electrification

Number of EVs

**4.3%**

**23**

Green miles

**0.7%**

**-7.1%**

Previous month

**Fleet carbon emissions - last 5 years**

● CO2e ● CO2e rolling average





**Electricity : Year to Date**

**1K** t CO2e **-9.2%** **4931K** kWh **-0.5%**  
 Previous year Previous year

**This Month**

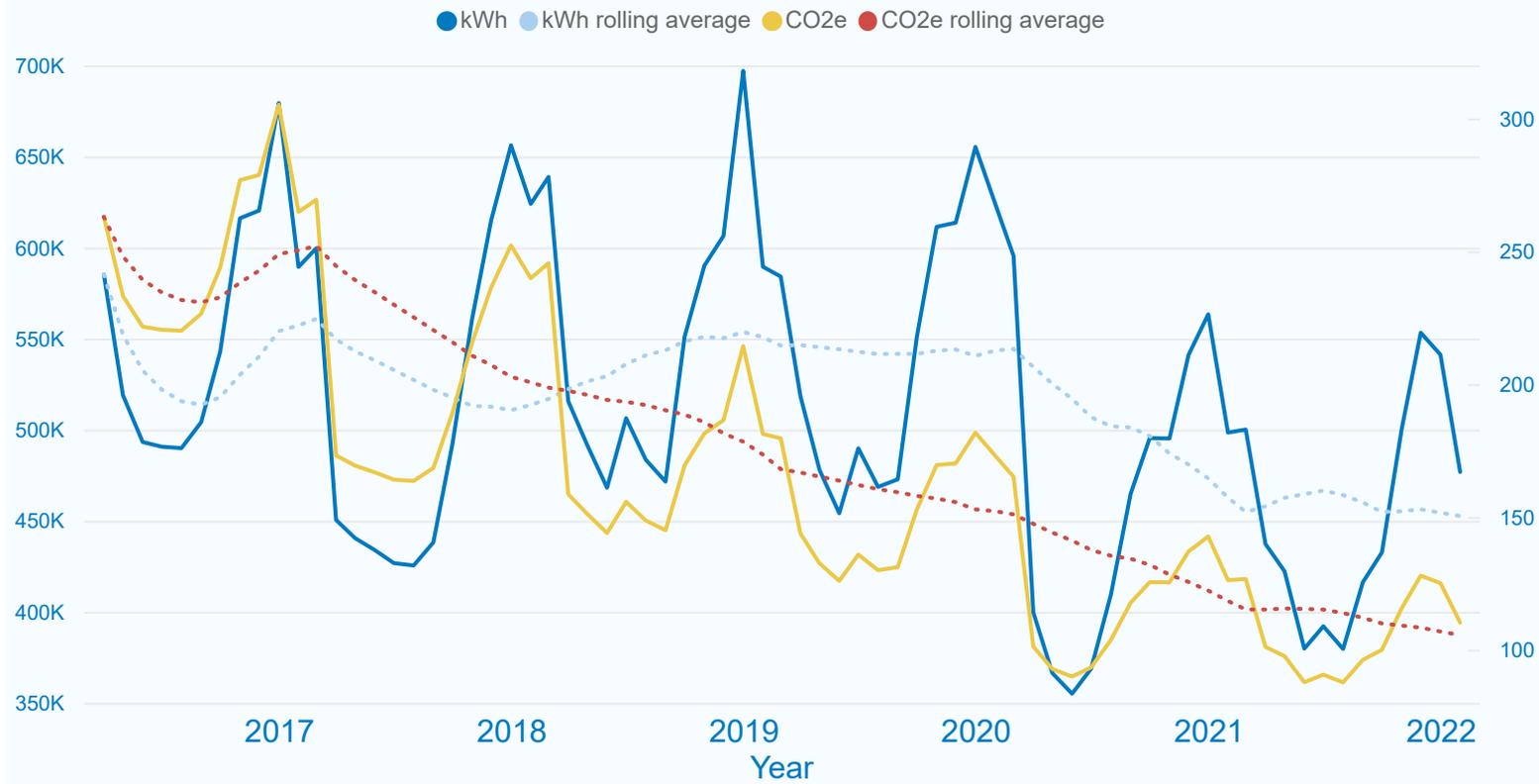
**110** t CO2e **-12.7%** **476.7K** kWh **-4.3%**  
 Same month last yr Same month last yr

Per m2 this month

**13** kg CO2e **-10.8%** **55.4** kWh **-2.2%**  
 Same month last yr Same month last yr

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**Property electricity usage and carbon emissions - last 5 years**



**Gas : Year to Date**

**2K** t CO2e **2.2%** **10.9M** kWh **2.4%**  
 Previous year Previous year

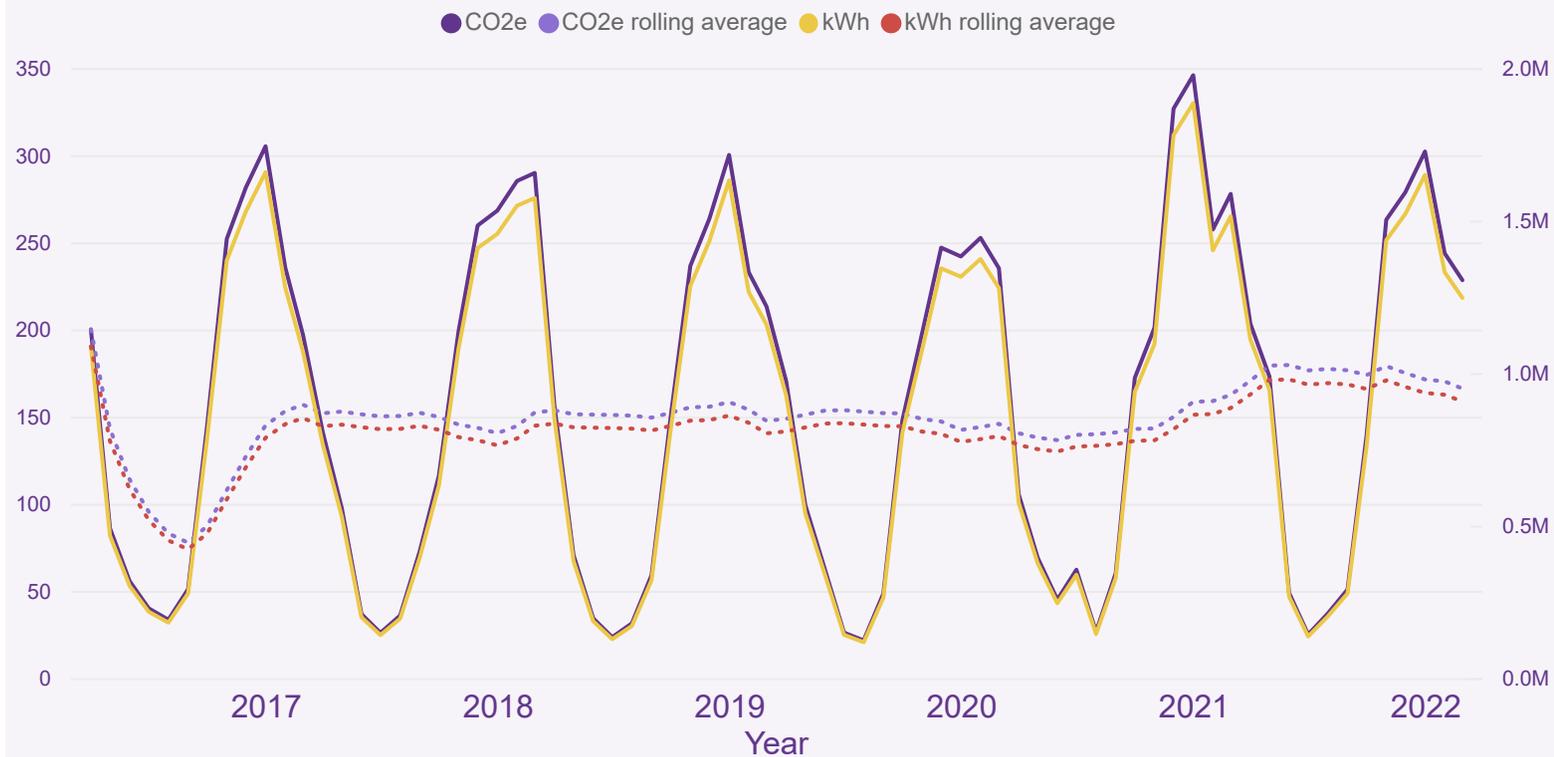
**This month**

**228** t CO2e **-17.8%** **1.2M** kWh **-17.7%**  
 Same month last yr Same month last yr

Per m2 this month

**20** kg CO2e **2.2%** **111.0** kWh **2.4%**  
 Same month last yr Same month last yr

**Property gas usage and carbon emissions - last 5 years**



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Guidance is given in square brackets under each of the headings below. Headings which are discretionary are also in square brackets. Please delete as you go along and remove heading and sections not needed.

## **Divisions Affected -**

### **CARBON REDUCTION SCRUTINY WORKING GROUP**

**27 April 2022**

### **Briefing #3: Initiatives in place to support schools with carbon reduction**

#### **RECOMMENDATION**

1. **The Scrutiny Working Group is RECOMMENDED to**
  - Note the council's commitment to supporting Oxfordshire's schools to reduce their carbon emissions and energy use.
  - Note the ongoing development of work programmes and initiatives to enable schools to reduce their energy use and carbon emissions.

#### **Executive Summary**

2. In October 2020 the council published the Climate Action Framework, committing to prioritising action on climate change across the Council and achieving net-zero emissions from the Council's corporate estate by 2030. The Council has also committed to reducing emissions from all of its areas of influence, including supporting maintained schools to reduce their emissions.
3. In 2019/20 maintained schools contributed 5,260 tCO<sub>2</sub>e, representing 27.4 per cent of total reported emissions.
4. The combined annual gas and electricity spending of the 137 OCC Maintained schools is currently around £2million, representing the 2<sup>nd</sup> highest cost for many schools after staffing costs. From April 2022, significant increases in energy costs can be expected for schools of around 65% and 205-210% for electricity and gas respectively.
5. Schools are responsible for their own operations, including their energy and most of their maintenance budgets (OCC retain responsibility for boiler replacements, large-scale double-glazing replacements and roof replacements) but often lack the knowledge and capacity to reduce energy costs and carbon.
6. Schools in Oxfordshire face a range of challenges and barriers, including the availability of finance for carbon reduction measures, awareness of opportunities around carbon and energy use reduction, as well as the capacity of school staff to implement identified measures.

7. OCC is therefore supporting schools to reduce their emissions and energy use through a range of programmes, with further initiatives being developed.

## **Oxfordshire Action on Carbon and Energy in Schools (ACES)**

8. The Environmental Information Exchange (EIE), a unit of Oxford Brookes University, have been commissioned to provide a range of support to both OCC maintained schools and academies in Oxfordshire to reduce the carbon emissions associated with their operations.
9. The contract commenced in April 2022 for an initial two-year term, with the option to extend for a further year.
10. EIE have subcontracted Low Carbon Hub (LCH) to help implement the support programme. Both EIE and LCH have extensive experience of working with schools across Oxfordshire to implement energy focussed initiatives.
11. The focus of ACES will be on reducing energy and emissions associated with school buildings. However, the programme will also support other related initiatives such as active travel and school transport by raising awareness and signposting such initiatives.

### **Support Highlights through ACES**

12. The Oxfordshire ACES programme will provide different levels of support to schools to accommodate their varied needs and levels of progress towards carbon reduction (see table 1 below). This will range from workshops to engage governors and senior leadership on the importance and benefits of carbon reduction to an in-depth assessment of energy-saving opportunities at individual schools.
13. Available support will include a helpline for schools to receive advice on implementing carbon reduction measures, tutorials, case studies and webinars to develop the capacity of school staff to implement carbon reduction measures. There will also be resources available to engage pupils on climate and energy issues, which has been identified as a key element in developing and maintaining momentum for schools to take climate action. A standalone website will be developed to host these resources.
14. Focussed one-to-one support through thermal imaging, on-site energy assessments and bespoke action plans will enable those schools who are in a more advanced stage of taking climate action and progress carbon reduction measures. There is also a £4000 fund to provide boiler insulation to schools, which covers a minimum of 10 schools per year.

**Table 1:** Expected provision of support activities through ACES in the initial 2 year period.

<b>Activity</b>	<b>Year 1</b>	<b>Year 2</b>
Schools survey	1	-

Webinars	5	5
Workshops	2	2
Network meetings	4	4
Day events	4	4
No. of energy assessments	10	10
No. of schools for boiler room insulation	10	10
No. of schools receiving thermal imaging	5	5

15. The programme is currently in the planning and development phase with development of the website, marketing plan and a survey to circulate with schools representing some of the initial steps being undertaken.

## **Schools Structural Maintenance Plan and the Public Sector Decarbonisation Scheme**

16. Through the Schools Strategic Maintenance Programme (SSMP), OCC has an assigned capital budget every year to carry out high priority/ structural works for OCC maintained schools, such as boiler replacements, major roof repairs and double-glazing projects. Schools receive funding from the SSMP on a priority basis.
17. The Public Sector Decarbonisation scheme (PSDS) is a government scheme, administered through a series of funding rounds and provides grant funding to the public sector for heat decarbonisation measures.
18. Where possible, OCC looks to ensure any works undertaken through the SSMP prioritise low-carbon replacements. Where this involves significant additional costs, PSDS has been successfully utilised to secure additional grant funding for heat decarbonisation measures, including heat pumps.
19. To date, OCC has secured more than £950,000 in grant funding through PSDS to enable the installation of heat decarbonisation measures at 9 schools, which were identified as priorities to receive funding through the SSMP.

## **Energy Efficiency Finance Scheme for Schools**

20. Availability and affordability of finance to enable the implementation of energy-saving and carbon reduction measures is regularly cited as a key barrier to schools looking to reduce their energy use and carbon emissions.
21. Whilst PSDS provides the opportunity to bid for grant funding for such measures, there are challenging eligibility criteria associated with the scheme, which is also focussed primarily on heat decarbonisation and doesn't therefore offer funding for all energy saving/ renewable energy measures. The application for funding is also a resource-intensive exercise, which requires detailed assessments of the building for which the funding is sought, which is both costly and time-consuming.

22. Prior to the launch of the PSDS scheme, Salix Finance Ltd (a non-departmental public body dedicated to the provision of low-cost loans to the public sector for energy efficiency projects) offered a 0% interest energy efficiency loan (Salix Energy Efficiency Loan) to schools and other public sector organisations, which covered a wide range of energy efficiency measures and was repayable over a 10-year payback period.
23. OCC is currently developing an in-house financing scheme for OCC maintained schools, which will look to provide similar financing opportunities for energy efficiency projects as the Salix Energy Efficiency Loan (SEELS).
24. The scheme will take the form of a recycling fund, where an initial £400k is available for schools per annum, with repayments by schools being used to replenish the funding available through the scheme in subsequent years.
25. The programme will benefit from the recent launch of the Oxfordshire ACES scheme, which will both provide a pipeline of projects that require such financing and promote the scheme to other schools.

## **OCC Zero Carbon New Build Policy**

26. A proposed zero carbon new build policy was presented to CEDR in December 2021, which would ensure that new OCC buildings would be designed to net zero emission standards. The proposed policy includes new school buildings. Development of the policy is ongoing.
27. To this end, OCC has already made progress with regard to new schools planned at Shrivenham and North East Didcot.
28. NE Didcot is being designed to achieve the Net Zero Carbon (NZC) approach for operational energy uses working in accordance with the Department for Education (DfE) construction framework net-zero specifications. To achieve this, the design has used a range of strategies such as utilising a 'fabric first' approach for thermal efficiency depicted within the energy hierarchy, Be Lean, Be Clean and Be Green. Overall, the building will not rely on any gas supplies using electrical power only and is anticipated to use approximately 59.7% less energy than a building with fabric and services complying with building regulations Part L2A recommendations.
29. The Shrivenham CofE Primary School design has been enhanced beyond the base requirements of the DfE's Output Specification for schools through the inclusion of Air Source Heat Pumps and additional Photovoltaic cells to achieve net-zero carbon on regulated energy. These changes will mean that the school will not be connected to the gas grid and will rely solely on electricity, therefore that any decarbonisation of the electrical grid will have a positive impact on the school's generation of carbon. In addition, the school will have electrical vehicle charging provision with additional ducting in place to enable future expansion of the charging facilities.

## **Challenges and opportunities**

30. A range of challenges have been identified with regard to the implementation of carbon reduction measures at schools, which will need to be taken into account with the support provided to schools. These include:
  - (a) Constrained school staff time and capacity to pursue carbon reduction measures, as well as a lack of understanding of potential energy reduction measures.
  - (b) Competing investment priorities – decarbonising Oxfordshire’s schools will require significant investment, which will be evaluated against other investment needs.
  - (c) As a result of the ongoing pandemic, school resources have been considerably stretched with more immediate priorities, leaving little scope for perceived longer-term priorities such as climate action. In addition, schools have taken preventative measures to improve ventilation (such as leaving windows open, which has implications for energy use).
31. Providing support to schools to take climate action creates significant additional opportunities for those schools, in addition to carbon reduction:
  - (a) A key approach to reducing carbon emissions is through improving the energy efficiency characteristics of school buildings and subsequently reducing overall energy usage. Reducing the energy use of schools will have potentially significant financial benefits for schools, with energy costs typically representing a significant cost for schools.
  - (b) Upgrading the energy efficiency characteristics of schools is likely to improve the controllability of heating systems in school buildings and reduce drafts, allowing for an improved learning and teaching environment.
  - (c) Implementing carbon reduction measures at schools can be used as an important tool to engage pupils on climate change and energy efficiency.

## **Corporate Policies and Priorities**

32. Addressing the climate emergency is the council’s top priority. Supporting schools to reduce their carbon emissions is a priority action in the Climate Action Programme, as set out in the council’s Climate Action Framework.
33. The initiatives available to schools for carbon reduction support our target to halve carbon emissions in the county by 2030.

## **Financial Implications**

34. There is a fixed annual fee of £60,000 per annum for an initial two years to commission EIE to implement the Oxfordshire ACES programme, including developing, coordinating and running online networking, training and information awareness events available to both OCC maintained schools and academies as well as more focussed support for selected schools. This cost has been allocated from the Climate Action team budget.
35. It is proposed that the initial £400,000 required for the energy efficiency finance scheme will be allocated from the Budget Priority Reserve. Should the scheme be successful, a business case will be developed to extend the scheme.
36. Financial implications associated with the implementation of a net-zero new build policy for OCC are currently being evaluated as part of the policy development process.

## **Legal Implications**

37. This briefing raises no legal implications.

## **Staff Implications**

38. Staff involvement in current programme delivery is funded by agreed resource allocation and grant funding. The Climate Action Team is providing centralised support.
39. The Property team has recruited a decarbonisation manager, whose role will include the optimisation of the energy efficiency elements of our delivery programmes with schools.
40. Staff requirements of future programme developments will be put forward through the service and resource planning process.

## **Equality & Inclusion Implications**

41. When developing and implementing its climate change and carbon reduction strategies and projects, the council must take an inclusive approach, ensuring the costs and benefits of the transition to a low-carbon economy are fairly shared.
42. While acting on climate change will bring benefits to all, it is most likely to have additional positive impacts on several of the protected and disadvantaged groups considered within the Council's equality framework

**Sustainability Implications**

43. The Climate Action Framework includes a commitment to support maintained schools to reduce energy costs and carbon. Supporting schools to reduce carbon emissions also contributes towards the target to halve countywide emissions by 2030.

Annex: Nil

Background papers: Nil

Contact Officer: Sarah Gilbert, Climate Action Team Leader,  
07867467797, Sarah.Gilbert@Oxfordshire.gov.uk

April 2022

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# **REPORT OF THE PLACE OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE: SCRUTINY OF LOCAL TRANSPORT AND CONNECTIVITY PLAN**

Cllr Kieron Mallon  
Chair of the Place Overview & Scrutiny Committee  
June 2022

## **RECOMMENDATION**

**The Cabinet is RECOMMENDED to agree —**

1. To implement the recommendation of the Place Overview & Scrutiny Committee that the Cabinet Member for Travel and Development Strategy report to the November 2022 meeting of the Committee on the implementation and outcomes of the Local Transport Plan 4, the lessons learnt therefrom, and the policy links between Local Transport Plan 4 and Local Transport and Connectivity Plan.

## **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

1. This report refers to the Cabinet the observations of the Place Overview & Scrutiny Committee in respect of the Local Transport and Connectivity Plan and a related recommendation.

## **REQUIREMENT TO RESPOND**

2. In accordance with section 9FE of the Local Government Act 2000, the Place Overview & Scrutiny Committee hereby requires that, within two months of the consideration of this report, the Cabinet publish a response to this report and its recommendation. The Committee suggests the response be published at the same meeting as this report, which has been shared with relevant officers and Cabinet Members in advance.

## **PUBLIC SCRUTINY OF LTCP BY THE COMMITTEE**

4. On 15 June 2022, the Place Overview & Scrutiny Committee considered the Local Transport and Connectivity Plan (LTCP) (item 12) and agreed that the Cabinet Member for Travel and Development Strategy should report to the November 2022 meeting of the Committee with analysis of the implementation and outcomes of Local Transport Plan 4 and its connections with the LTCP. It was also agreed that the Head of Transport Policy would inform the Committee of the proportion of Officers who worked on the LTCP who had also worked on (a) Local Transport Plan 4 and (b) on Local Transport Plan 3.
5. The Committee also resolved to report to the Cabinet its observations in respect of the LTCP:

## CA7b

- a. The LTCP contains insufficient evidence and explanation of the capability of its policies to deliver its commendable vision and headline targets.
- b. The LTCP does not address the fact that existing local plans in Oxfordshire are collectively likely to increase demand for travel, contrary to the LTCP's aim of reducing travel.
- c. Previous local transport plans had previously been only partially implemented. The LTCP contains insufficient analysis of the delivery and impact of previous local transport plans, which are in many ways similar to the LTCP, and lacks a clear methodology by which the LTCP's implementation and impact is to be evaluated.
- d. There has been a lack of consistency between the content of previous local transport plans and the highways asset management strategy and network management strategy. It was questioned whether those strategies will reflect the LTCP when remade in September 2022, as they should.
- e. There is an apparent disconnect between the LTCP and reality. For example, a member of the Committee who is the director of a stakeholder organisation referenced as working with the council in relation to transport, was unaware of that work.
- f. There is a disconnect between national policy, Oxfordshire County Council policy and between the latter and the policy of lower-tier authorities in Oxfordshire. It is unclear how the LTCP is to integrate in wider decision-making in respect of where people live and work.
- g. The LTCP does not reference or take into account the differences between how men and women tend to travel. For example, women are more likely to 'trip chain'.

## NEXT STEPS

6. The Place Overview & Scrutiny Committee will review the published Cabinet response to this report and its recommendation at the November 2022 meeting of the Committee in accordance with part 6.2, 13(f), of the Constitution of the Council.

Contact Officer: Ben Awkal, interim Scrutiny Officer  
[ben.awkal@oxfordshire.gov.uk](mailto:ben.awkal@oxfordshire.gov.uk)

# **RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE PERFORMANCE & CORPORATE SERVICES OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE RE 2022/23 EQUALITY, DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION ACTION PLAN**

Cllr Eddie Reeves

Chair of the Performance & Corporate Services Overview & Scrutiny Committee  
July 2022

## **RECOMMENDATIONS**

**The Cabinet is RECOMMENDED to consider and implement the recommendations of the Performance and Corporate Services Overview & Scrutiny Committee that –**

1. the implementation and impact of the 2022/23 equality, diversity and inclusion action plan be publicly reported at least annually; and
2. the council publish an accessible overview of its work to deliver its strategic priority 'Tackle inequalities in Oxfordshire' and a dashboard of all relevant indicators of inequality to demonstrate its progress.

## **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

1. On 17 June 2022, the Performance & Corporate Services Overview & Scrutiny Committee considered a report and heard oral evidence regarding the council's equality, diversity and inclusion (EDI) action plan for 2022/23, prepared in accordance with its EDI framework, 'Including Everyone.'
2. This report refers to the Cabinet the recommendations of the Performance & Corporate Services Overview & Scrutiny Committee agreed after the meeting in accordance with decision of the Committee to enable its Chair and Deputy Chair to agree recommendations arising from its scrutiny of the action plan via email in consultation with the Committee.

## **REQUIREMENT TO RESPOND**

3. In accordance with section 9FE of the Local Government Act 2000, the Performance & Corporate Services Overview & Scrutiny Committee hereby requires that the Cabinet consider this report and its recommendations and, within two months of receipt, publish a response to the report and its recommendations indicating what, if any, action the Cabinet proposes to take.

## REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

### Recommendation 1:

*the implementation and impact of the 2022/23 equality, diversity and inclusion action plan be regularly publicly reported.*

4. When it asked what measures were used to understand how well the council performs in respect of the EDI, the Committee heard that there were specific outcome measures associated with different activities, some of which were harder to define outcome measures for than others; external validation and human resources casework are useful indicators of performance; and the council had consulted staff communities when introducing the EDI framework and it was important to continue that dialogue, particularly staff networks.
5. While the implementation of the action plan is an element of the outcomes framework for the council's Strategic Plan 2022-2025,<sup>1</sup> in the interests of transparency, the Committee would also like to see evidence of the action plan's impact also published.

### Recommendation 2:

*the council publish an accessible overview of the work the council is undertaking to deliver its strategic priority 'Tackle inequalities in Oxfordshire' and a dashboard of all relevant indicators of inequality to demonstrate its progress.*

6. The Committee heard that while the action plan is key to delivering the council's strategic priority 'Tackle inequalities in Oxfordshire', the council's work to deliver the priority went beyond the action plan – equitable outcomes in education and addressing the rising cost of living are outside the scope of the action plan, for example. However, it is unclear to the Committee how Including Everyone and the action plan interact with the council's wider work to tackle inequality. The Head of Insight and Corporate Performance is delivering an action to identify how the council's various strategies interface.
7. The Committee would like to see an accessible ('easy-read') document which draws together the council's work that supports 'Tackle inequality in Oxfordshire' and for this to be published to provide clarity for Members and residents. Noting that the council is to create a public performance portal to enable residents and stakeholders to monitor the delivery and impact of its Strategic Plan, the inclusion within that of an easy-to-access dashboard of all relevant indicators of inequality further to those included the outcomes framework would also be useful to enable more detailed monitoring of progress in relation to inequality.

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<sup>1</sup> [Item 34/22 - Agenda for Cabinet on Tuesday, 15 March 2022, 10.00 am \(oxfordshire.gov.uk\)](https://www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/agenda)

## NEXT STEPS

8. The Performance & Corporate Services Overview & Scrutiny Committee will review the published Cabinet response to this report and its recommendations at the next meeting of the Committee in accordance with part 6.2, 13(f), of the Constitution of the Council.
9. The Committee is to scope a potential item for consideration in approximately 12 months on the council's delivery of its priority 'Tackle inequalities in Oxfordshire', likely including the implementation and impact of the 2022/23 EDI action plan and the merits and disadvantages of the council voluntarily adopting the socio-economic duty in the Equality Act 2010.

Contact Officer: Ben Awkal, interim Scrutiny Officer  
[ben.awkal@oxfordshire.gov.uk](mailto:ben.awkal@oxfordshire.gov.uk)

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## CABINET REPORT

### BUSINESS MANAGEMENT AND MONITORING REPORT May 2022

Report by the Corporate Director for Customers, Organisational  
Development & Resources and the Director of Finance

#### RECOMMENDATION

The Cabinet is RECOMMENDED to

- a) note the report.
- b) agree the virements set out in Annex B-2a
- c) note the virements and supplementary estimate set out in Annex B-2b and B-2c
- d) agree the proposed update to the Review of Charges for 2022/23 as set out in paragraphs 94 and 95 of Annex B.
- e) note the additional £5.9m Business Rate funding set out in Annex B paragraph 130 and agree that this should be added to the Business Rates Reserve pending agreement about the use of this funding.

#### Executive Summary

1. This report presents the May 2022 performance and finance position for the Council.
2. The Council recognises the importance of timely, accurate and accessible performance, risk overview and budget management information as part of its commitment to both transparency and demonstrating efficiency and effectiveness.
3. These business management reports are part of a suite of performance, risk overview and budget documents which set out our ambitions, priorities and financial performance. The new 2022 – 2025 Strategic Plan sets out the Council's ambitions for the next four years. It also shows our priority activities for the current financial year.
4. Our new 2022 – 2025 Strategic Plan, Medium Term Financial Plan, Outcomes Framework and business management reports, can be found on the Council's website.
5. This report summarises the performance and finance position for the council. Further information is provided in the following annexes to the report:

Annex A: Performance May 2022  
Annex B: Finance May 2022

6. The performance section of this report concentrates on the Performance Exceptions (Measures reporting Red (off target), or Amber, (slightly off target, amber for the last two consecutive months). The full performance report is included at Annex A.

### Performance Overview

7. The Outcomes Framework for 2022/23 reports on our nine strategic priorities, and tenth running the business priority which includes the customer contact centre and finance measures.
8. This report includes 52 monthly measures. As at the end of May 2022 the indicators were rated as follows (2 measures to be updated from June onwards):

Month	Green	Amber	Red	Monitoring only (n/a)	Data to be updated	Total
May 2022	54%	13%	19%	10%	4%	52
	28	7	10	5	2	

**Figure 1** – Summary of May performance for all indicators. RAG = Green – meets or exceeds the target, Amber – misses target by narrow margin and Red – misses target by significant margin. Please note the margins vary depending on set thresholds for each measure, established using national targets, forecasting and other calculation

9. The following table lists the 10 measures reporting as Red for this period. Full details can be found in Annex A.

Performance measures reporting Red for May 2022 (10)	
OCC 2.04:	Number of physical visits to the library
OCC 07.01:	Number of Contacts into the MASH
OCC 07.02:	Number of early help assessments
OCC 07.03:	Number of early help assessments completed by health visitors
OCC 07.06	No. of children we care for (excluding unaccompanied children)
OCC 07.10:	Percentage of Education Health & Care Plans completed within 20 weeks
OCC10.03:	Achieve a high level of customer satisfaction across the telephony channel in the CSC
OCC11.02:	Achievement of planned savings
OCC11.05:	Directorates deliver services and achieve planned performance within agreed budget
OCC11.11:	Debt requiring impairment - ASC contribution debtors

**Figure 2** – Summary of the Red measures

10. This table indicates the direction of travel of measures compared to April 2022.

Status changes – April to May 2022	
Amber to Green	OCC07.07: Number of child protection plans
Green to Red	OCC10.03: Achieve a high level of customer satisfaction across the telephony channel in the CSC
Amber to Red	OCC 11.02: Achievement of planned savings
Green to Red	OCC 11.05: Directorates deliver services and achieve planned performance within agreed budget
Green to Amber	OCC 11.08: % of agreed invoices paid within 30 days

**Figure 3** – changes since the last reporting period

11. The number of measures reported will fluctuate throughout the year as the reporting frequency is measure specific, monthly, quarterly, termly, bimonthly and annually as detailed in the outcomes framework. During May, the majority of measures are delivering to plan, however there is an increase in the numbers reporting behind schedule. These are included in the report as exceptions.
12. Financial (year to date) tracking of RAG monthly measures (not including monitoring only and data to be updated):

Month	Green	Amber	Red	Total
April	22	6	6	34
May	28	7	10	45

**Figure 3** - Please note that the total number of indicators fluctuates as some measures are quarterly, 6monthly and annually.

### Performance Exceptions

13. This section of the report details each measure reporting Red or Amber status (Amber consecutive for two months) with supporting commentary from the Directorate and analysis from the performance and insight team. The exception report focusses on the 10 measures that have red outcomes and the 6 measures that have reported amber outcomes for two months consecutively.
- 19.1 **Priority OCC 01: Put action to address the climate emergency at the heart of our activities**

This priority has 3 monthly measures being reported in May: 1 Amber and 2 Green.

Priority OCC 01 overall performance:			Table illustrates the measure within <b>Priority OCC 01</b> that are performing under target and the RAG status.		
April	May	June	<b>Measure:</b>	<b>Status:</b>	<b>Director:</b>
July	August	September	<b>OCC 01.09:</b> Total % waste which is reused recycled and composted	<b>Amber</b>	<b>Bill Cotton</b>
October	November	December			
January	February	March			

**Comments from directorate:**

The figure reported is for April (one month in arrears) and is the provisional end of year performance. This is the combined effort of OCC, Oxford City Council and the District Councils. Achieving target is challenging and will require coordinated work. Last year Oxfordshire was named the **best performing county council waste disposal authority in England** with a recycling rate of 59.5%. Oxfordshire councils have set an ambitious target. Much of the waste currently disposed could be recycled, and there is a need to continue to strive to drive out that material to secure environmental, climate and financial benefits.

## 19.2 Priority OCC 02: Tackle inequalities in Oxfordshire

This priority has 4 monthly measures being reported in May: 1 Red, 3 Green:

Priority OCC 02 overall performance:		
April	May	June
July	August	September
October	November	December
January	February	March

Table illustrates the measure within Priority OCC 02 that are performing under target and the RAG status.		
Measure:	Status:	Director:
OCC 02.04: Number of physical visits to Libraries	Red	Mark Haynes

### Comments from directorate:

Visits to libraries continue to increase and May 2022 represents another highwater-mark for visits post-COVID. Numbers have fallen slightly below target. Efforts continue to encourage customers back into libraries. Library staff is developing an exciting programme of activities, including for the Summer Reading Challenge.

## 19.3 Priority OCC 04: Support carers and the social care system

This priority has 5 monthly measures being reported in May: 2 Amber and 3 Green.

Priority OCC 04 overall performance:		
April	May	June
July	August	September
October	November	December
January	February	March

Table illustrates the measure within Priority OCC 04 that are performing under target and the RAG status.		
Measure:	Status	Director:
OCC 04.04: % of residents aged under 65 receiving ASC who manage their care by using direct payment	Amber	Karen Fuller
OCC 04.05: % of older residents who receive long term care and are supposed to live in their own home	Amber	Karen Fuller

### Comments from directorate:

39% of people under 65 supported with long term care at home, received direct payment, just above the national average of 38%. We continue to offer payments to people to ensure everyone that wishes to use the service is able to do so. And we believe that most over 65's, want to live in their own home wherever possible. 59.4% were supported by adult social care in their home. National figure is 63%. The figure is rising, and we continue to develop services to support care, extra care housing and direct payments. The number of new placements in care homes, although better, remains lower than target, but given this measure's characteristics, it will take some time to move.

#### 19.4 Priority OCC 07: Create opportunities for children and young people to reach their full potential

This priority has 11 monthly measures being reported in May: 5 Red, 1 Amber and 1 Green.

Priority OCC 07 overall performance:		
April	May	June
July	August	September
October	November	December
January	February	March

Table illustrates the measure within <b>Priority OCC 07</b> that are performing under target and the RAG status.		
Measure	Status	Director:
<b>OCC 07.01:</b> Number of Contacts into the MASH	Red	Kevin Gordon
<b>OCC 07.02:</b> Number of early help assessments	Red	Kevin Gordon
<b>OCC 07.03:</b> Number of early help assessments completed by health visitors	Red	Kevin Gordon
<b>OCC 07.05:</b> No of children we care for who are Unaccompanied Asylum Seeking Children	Amber	Kevin Gordon
<b>OCC 07.06:</b> No. of children we care for (excluding unaccompanied children)	Red	Kevin Gordon
<b>OCC 07.10:</b> Percentage of Education Health & Care Plans completed within 20 weeks	Red	Kevin Gordon

#### Comments from directorate:

In 20/21 the number of contacts into the MASH rose by 35%. In 21/22 they rose again by 18%. In the first two months of this year there have been 4848 contacts. This is a 3% increase on the same period last year. Demand is being managed by additional temporary staff. We are reviewing activity in the MASH to see what can be managed elsewhere.

As part of the Early Help Strategy, the Children's Trust has set an ambitious target to increase the number of Early Help Assessments to 5000 this year from 2732 in 2021/22. We are currently agreeing targets for different agencies. You are currently more than twice as likely to be assessed by social care than have an early help assessment. We want to flip this round. There is evidence of avoidable demand in the system which is not in the best interest of children and families.

The number of children we care for continues to rise, but we remain below the national rate. We had expected the numbers to fall with the implementation of family solutions plus model, but this has not yet happened. We have seen an increase in younger children becoming looked after which may reflect the impact of the pandemic, where we have seen a higher level of need was much higher in presenting cases. There has been a slowdown in the rate children leave the cared for system both locally and nationally which may also reflect the documented delays in courts.

Education Psychologist Service delays still significant which impact on the ability to meet the 20-week deadline.

## 19.5 Priority OCC 10: Running the business

**Customer contact centre:** Of the 6 measures 1 Red, 1 Amber and 2 Green with 2 measures being reported from June onwards.

**Finance:** Of the 14 measures 3 Red, 2 Amber and 9 Green.

Priority OCC 10 overall performance:		
April	May	June
July	August	September
October	November	December
January	February	March

Measure	Status	Director
<b>OCC10.03:</b> Achieve a high level of customer satisfaction across the telephony channel in the CSC	Red	Mark Haynes
<b>OCC10.04:</b> Resolve customer enquiries received through the telephony channels at the first point of contact	Red	Mark Haynes
<b>OCC10.05:</b> Number of telephone calls to CSC abandoned	Amber	Mark Haynes
<b>OCC11.02</b> Achievement of planned savings	Red	Lorna Baxter
<b>OCC11.05</b> Directorates deliver services and achieve planned performance within agreed budget	Red	Lorna Baxter
<b>OCC11.08:</b> Percentage of agreed invoices paid within 30 days	Amber	Lorna Baxter
<b>OCC11.11:</b> Debt requiring impairment – ASC Contribution Debtors	Red	Lorna Baxter
<b>OCC11.15:</b> Invoice Collection Rate – ASC Contribution debtors	Amber	Lorna Baxter

### Customer Contact Centre Comments from directorate:

May had 158 customers surveyed, out of 13,753 calls received, which was 1.14% 56.7% of customers were satisfied with the service they received 60.5% of customers were satisfied with the adviser they spoke to.

Additional Customer Satisfaction measures are going to be used to produce this measure and increase the overall satisfaction of our customers.

An options paper has been submitted to the Director of Customer Experience & Cultural Services and a project group has been set up to implement the recommendations - this includes short term/quick wins and a longer-term vision.

### Finance Comments:

The final balance of bad debt as at the end of 2021/22 was £3.7m. The balance at the end of May 2022 increased to £4.1m. During 2021/22 the trailing impacts of COVID-19 had a significant effect on the means tested social care contributions bad debt. In quarter four of 2021/22 Adult Services, with support from Finance, created an 18-month plan to reduce the levels of bad debt to £2.5m. Additional resources have been brought in and a task group has been assembled to ring-fence and clear the bad debt cases over the next 12 to 18 months. The task group went live in May 2022 but reductions to bad debt are not expected until quarter three of 2022/23 onwards as the task group establish working arrangements,

assess, and prioritise the caseload and commence recovery activity. This is identified as a priority ahead of legislation changes to social care charging.

The Invoice Collection Rate – ASC Contribution Debtors, of 120 days, has dropped marginally from 89.9% to 89.3% and remains below the 92% target. Direct debit collection rates increased in quarter 4 of 2021/22 and we would expect some improvement from next month. Reminder communications have been revised to improve responses to reminder letters, which should have a direct impact on collection rates. However, these are pending partner wide agreement and IT allocation to be implemented and are not expected until Autumn 2022, at the earliest.

Achievement of planned savings. The 2022/23 budget agreed includes planned directorate savings of £17.4m. 68% of these are currently on track to be delivered in year compared to a target of 95% set out in the budget agreed in February 2022. £1.7m savings assessed as red relate to street lighting and a further £1.4m transformation savings in Commercial Development, Assets and Investment for Property Services are not expected to be achieved in 2022/23, although they are anticipated to be achieved in 2023/24. There are also £1.5m savings in Children's and £0.8m in Commercial Development, Assets and Investment assessed as amber. The impact of the anticipated delivery of the savings is built into the forecast for each directorate.

The forecast directorate overspend of £5.5m (or 1.1% of the budget) relates to Children's Services which is managing significant pressures reflecting the need for agency social workers to fill vacancies within the front-line social care teams plus an increase in the forecast cost of placements for children that the council cares for.

## **Performance Highlights**

14. This section of the report concentrates on the successes achieved during this reporting period.
15. In connection with **Put action to address the climate emergency at the heart of our work** this month Oxfordshire County Council (OCC) has created a more environmentally focussed food strategy. The new strategy has been developed in partnership with organisations including Good Food Oxfordshire, district and city councils, community groups, local farmers and other food businesses, to improve Oxfordshire's food system and make it more sustainable, affordable and resilient.
16. The council is setting an excellent example in driving down in its own carbon emissions and is planning to do more with plans to drive down carbon emissions approved. Cabinet approved plans which could see its own corporate carbon emissions almost halved by 2024/25. The council produced 10,774 tonnes of CO<sub>2</sub> in 2020/21, but measures outlined in its carbon management plan could see this cut to 6,000 tonnes within three years.

17. While OCC remains committed to the global fight against climate change it hasn't forgotten its responsibilities to the **health and wellbeing of residents**. In the case below illustrates that even helping one person is important. OCC worker overcomes sight loss to thrive in the world of work. A reliable worker at Oxfordshire County Council with sight loss since birth, needing a magnifier or large print to be able to read, requiring a stick to help him navigate steps. The RNIB recently recognised County Print Finishers for support of people with sight loss - obtaining 'Visibly Better' standard.
18. Talking about loneliness this Mental Health Awareness Week, residents were encouraged to follow in the footsteps of local hairdressers and barbers and think about how they can help those that may be feeling lonely as OCC marked Mental Health Awareness Week (9 - 16 May).
19. **Support carers and the social care system**, this is particularly true when the cost of living is increasing. OCC and The Care Workers' Charity have partnered to provide grants to care workers in need working or living in the Oxfordshire area. We have also provided funding to enable eligible care providers to reimburse the cost of the Blue Light Card to their employees. This will be administered by the Care Workers' Charity. People who have supported people with care needs by sharing their homes were given recognition at the recent Oxfordshire Association of Care Providers (OACP) Awards. The Oxfordshire Shared Lives programme, operated by OCC, places people in a home setting, where care is provided by a family who share their lives with that person
20. **Create opportunities for children and young people to reach their full potential** has seen the following initiatives target the needs of the disadvantaged and those with special needs. Children and young people with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) were at the heart of major proposals debated by Cabinet, on Tuesday 24 May. Residents have already contributed to plans for this local area SEND strategy through public consultation, which took place between January and March 2022. There were 866 responses with over 90 per cent agreeing with the five strategic objectives. These are:
- Improving outcomes for children with special educational needs and disabilities.
  - Developing a continuum of local provision to meet the requirements of these children and young people.
  - Good physical and mental health and wellbeing.
  - Improving post-16 education, learning, employment and training opportunities.
  - Facilitating a positive move into adulthood for young people with special educational needs and disabilities.
21. In relation to **Invest in an inclusive, integrated and sustainable transport network** OCC has made a number of investments. Cyclists, pedestrians and residents in Oxfordshire will benefit from a £10.4 million government grant to improve walking and cycling infrastructure in the county. We have been

awarded funding from the third phase of the government's active travel fund, who previously awarded grants of £600,000 to phase one and £2.98m to phase two. The funding will support infrastructure improvements across the county including £2m to improve Witney High Street, £1.8m to improve Bicester's A41 and £237,500 for the School Streets programme. In awarding the funding, the Department for Transport recognised the council's high quality cycling infrastructure including within highways projects, planning and designing for commercial cycling and cycle parking and other equipment. The funding is expected to be received in July.

## 22. Risk Management Overview

The below table reflects an overview of the current strategic risk position. All risks are being fully reviewed.

Risk Title	Residual Risk Score	Comment
Demand management - Children	20 High Risk	Risk reviewed and updated
Safeguarding of vulnerable children	15 Medium Risk	Risk reviewed and updated
High needs block funding	15 Medium Risk	Risk reviewed and updated
Recruitment and Retention of Children's Social Workers	16 High Risk	Risk reviewed and updated
Insufficient placement availability for children we care for	20 High Risk	Risk reviewed and updated
Safeguarding of vulnerable adults	9 Low Risk	Risk reviewed and updated
Demand management - Adults	16 High Risk	Risk reviewed and updated
Capital Infrastructure Programme Delivery	20 High Risk	Risk reviewed and updated
Local resilience, community resilience, cohesion	8 Low Risk	Risk reviewed and updated
Management of partnerships (non-commercial)	6 Low Risk	Risk reviewed and updated
Supply chain management	9 Low Risk	Risk reviewed and updated
Corporate governance	4 Low Risk	Risk reviewed and updated
Workforce management	12 Medium Risk	Risk reviewed and updated
Organisational Change and Service Design	12 Medium Risk	Risk reviewed and updated
Financial resilience	10 Medium Risk	Risk reviewed and updated
Health and Safety	6 Low Risk	Risk reviewed and updated
Business Continuity and recovery plans	9 Medium Risk	Risk reviewed and updated
Cyber security	15 Medium Risk	Risk reviewed and updated
Construction, Resources and Skills Shortages	16 High Risk	Risk reviewed and updated
Deprivation of Liberty Authorisations (Care Homes and Community)	12 Medium Risk	Risk reviewed and updated
HIF1 Didcot Garden Town Major Infrastructure Programme	20 High Risk	Risk reviewed and updated

## Financial Management

23. This report is the first financial monitoring update for the 2022/23 financial year and is based on the period up to May 2022.
24. There is a forecast Directorate overspend of £5.5m or 1.1%. The overall forecast variation is £4.4m or 0.8% after taking account of an increase in interest receivable on balances held by the council.

## CA8

Directorate	Latest Budget	Forecast Spend	Variance May 2022	Variance May 2022
	£m	£m	£m	%
Adult Services	212.1	212.1	0.0	0.0
Children's Services	148.8	154.3	5.5	3.7
Public Health	0.6	0.6	0.0	0.0
Environment & Place	62.8	62.8	0.0	0.0
Commercial Development, Assets and Investments	48.0	48.4	0.4	0.9
Customers, Organisational Development & Resources	36.2	35.8	-0.4	-1.2
<b>Total Directorate Budgets</b>	<b>508.5</b>	<b>514.0</b>	<b>5.5</b>	<b>1.1</b>
<b>Budgets Held Centrally</b>				
Capital Financing Costs	26.1	26.1	0.0	
Interest on Balances	-13.0	-14.1	-1.1	
Inflation and Contingency <sup>1</sup>	12.3	12.3	0.0	
Un-ringfenced Specific Grants	-31.2	-31.2	0.0	
Insurance	1.4	1.4	0.0	
Contributions to reserves	16.3	16.3	0.0	
<b>Total Budgets Held Centrally</b>	<b>11.9</b>	<b>10.8</b>	<b>-1.1</b>	<b>-10.3</b>
<b>Net Operating Budget</b>	<b>520.4</b>	<b>524.8</b>	<b>4.4</b>	<b>0.8</b>
Business Rates & Council Tax funding <sup>2</sup>	-520.4	-520.4	0.0	
<b>Forecast Year End Position</b>	<b>0.0</b>	<b>4.4</b>	<b>4.4</b>	

25. The forecast deficit for High Needs is £17.5m in 2022/23. In line with a change to the CIPFA code of practice on DSG High Needs deficits an unusable reserve was created in 2020/21 to hold negative High Needs DSG balances. The net forecast deficit of £17.5m would increase the total deficit held in this reserve to £47.3m.
26. Issues and volatility in the wider economy, including inflation and workforce shortages, have increased the risk to the financial position for the council and the overall landscape looks much more challenging than when the budget was set in February 2022. On-going budget held as contingency as part of the 2022/23 budget is likely to be needed to meet the cost of additional on-going pay inflation as well as other inflationary and demand pressures. One off funding in general balances was higher than the risk assessed level at the end of 2021/22 and can be used to support pressures in 2022/23. The on-going impact will need to be considered through the 2023/24 Budget & Business Planning process.
27. The **Budget Priorities Reserve** includes £7.7m one - off funding to support the council's priorities that was agreed as part of the 2022/23 budget in

<sup>1</sup> This includes £4.4m for pay inflation assumed at 2.5% in Budget approved by Full Council in February 2022.

<sup>2</sup> As set out in paragraph 130 of Annex B additional Business Rates funding of £5.9m is proposed to be added to the Business Rates Reserve pending agreement about the use of this funding.

February 2022. £0.250m of the available funding has been agreed to be used for the implementation of the "Vision Zero" concept. £0.250m will be used to support partners in the delivery of a food strategy action plan. This will seek to address food poverty, inequality, access to healthy food and supporting/enhancing local food supply.

28. As set out in the Earmarked Reserves and General Balances Policy Statement for 2022/23 £7m from the Budget Priorities Reserve was agreed to be used to contribute to the Capital Reserve to help meet the costs of the 20 MPH Speed Limit Programme and the Zero Emission Buses Regional Areas (ZEBRA) Schemes.
29. **COVID-19 Reserve** - The balance held in the reserve after taking account of £8.4m used to support directorate budgets in 2022/23 is £17.9m. A further £11.7m has been agreed to be used to fund COVID-19 related pressures in future years as part of the 2022/23 budget and Medium Term Financial Strategy. £0.5m is being used to fund IT equipment delivered in April 2022 that was originally agreed to be spent in 2021/22 and £0.1m has been committed for additional costs within the Coroner's service.
30. The balance of £5.5m is available to support further pressures arising from COVID-19 on a one-off basis.
31. **General Balances** were £39.2m at 31 March 2022 and will reduce to £37.2m after taking account of budgeted contribution of £1.0m and the agreed use of £3.0m to support the help meet the costs of the 20 MPH Speed Limit Programme and the Zero Emission Buses Regional Areas (ZEBRA) Schemes. The risk assessed level for 2022/23 is £28.9m. As noted in paragraph 100-101 of Annex B £0.5m one – off funding for the schools' condition survey has also been agreed to be met from balances.
32. If general balances are used to fund the projected overspend of £4.4m, the total balance will reduce to £32.3m. This is £3.4m above the risk assessed level.
33. See Annex B for further details and commentary on the Finance position.

## Financial Implications

34. This report includes an update on the forecast financial position and risks for the council along with action being taken to manage the budget within the position agreed by Council in February 2022. The report notes that on-going impacts will need to be considered through the Budget & Business Planning process for 2023/24.

Comments checked by:  
Lorna Baxter, Director of Finance

<b>CLAIRE TAYLOR</b> Corporate Director for Customers, Organisational Development and	<b>LORNA BAXTER</b> Director of Finance
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Contact Officers:

Louise Tustian, Head of Insight and Corporate Programmes

Kathy Wilcox, Head of Financial Strategy

## Put action to address the climate emergency at the heart of our work

We will lead by example, setting ambitious targets to reduce our own carbon emissions and aligning our carbon net zero commitments to the principles of the Climate and Ecology Bill. Our environmental and planning ambitions will prioritise climate action and community resilience.

Status of Indicators	31/05/2022
OCC01 - Put action to address the climate emergency at the heart of our work	★

Measure	Director	Portfolio Holder	Period Actual	Period Target	Status	Comment	YTD	YTD Target	YTD
OCC01.02 Total No. of streetlights fitted with LED Lanterns by March 2023	Bill Cotton	Cllr A Gant	1,949	1,500	★	The programme delivered above its target for this month meaning energy and carbon savings have been met. this puts the programme on target for delivery by March 22.	4,339	3,000	★
OCC01.05 Total number of electric vehicle charging points by end of March 2023	Tim Spiers	Cllr P Sudbury	88	168	★	Current Park and Charge project is planned to be completed by end June 2022. Currently 14 (of 20) car parks have been opened for public use. Work on Local EV Infrastructure (LEVI) grant application involving all district and city councils is well advanced. Plan is for a further c.15 car parks to have EV infrastructure installed. Note central government grants for EV infrastructure is limited this year; the LEVI funding is a pilot and limited to a total of £10M across 8-10 projects. Existing On street Residential Charging Scheme (ORCS) is being targeted at councils who haven't previously applied - OCC previously received £1.2M as part of Park and Charge project. LEVI application must be submitted by 17/06/22 and we should know whether we have been successful by September.	260	254	★
OCC01.09 Total % of household waste which is reused, recycled or composted	Bill Cotton	Cllr P Sudbury	57.97%	62.00%	●	Waste performance is reported a month in arrears. The figure reported is for April and is the combined effort of OCC, Oxford City Council and the District Councils. Last year Oxfordshire was named the best performing county council waste disposal authority in England with a recycling rate of 59.5% and the Oxfordshire Resources and Waste Partnership (ORWP) have set an ambitious target to improve further. Achieving the recycling target is challenging and will require coordinated work by all partner councils across the ORWP. This is difficult to plan for while ORWP are waiting for the outcome of Government consultations on implementing the national Resources and Waste Strategy, particularly proposals to make collections consistent throughout the country, plus the implementation of a deposit return scheme and extended producer responsibility for packaging, all of which are expected to have significant impacts on waste streams and their management but may not be introduced until 2025. In the meantime much of the waste currently disposed of could be recycled and there is a need to continue to strive to drive out that material to secure environmental, climate and financial benefits. To help achieve this and reduce the amount of food waste put in residual waste bins, OCC with support from our composting contractor is carrying out a targeted food waste door stepping campaign across the county this summer which aims to increase participation in kerbside food waste collections.	57.97%	62.00%	●

## Tackle inequalities in Oxfordshire

We will work with our partners and local communities to address health, social and educational inequalities focusing on those in greatest need.

We will seek practical solutions for those most adversely affected by the pandemic.

We will support digital inclusion initiatives that give our residents the skills, connectivity and accessibility to our services and provide alternative options for those who cannot access our services digitally.

Status of Indicators	31/05/2022
OCC02 - Tackle inequalities in Oxfordshire	★

Measure	Director	Portfolio Holder	Period Actual	Period Target	Status	Comment	YTD	YTD Target	YTD
OCC02.02 No of active borrowers (library members who have borrowed at least one item a year)	Mark Haynes	Cllr J Hannaby	58,413.00	53,000.00	★	Excellent progress is being made against this target, which is reflective of the efforts being made across the service to 'get back to normal' following the pandemic. A significant range of customer engagement activity (displays, events) has been organised/stood back up by local staff; new initiatives, such as the BIPC, have been launched; and additional content (eBooks / eAudio) has benefited from an injection of 'COVID' funding, which in turn has led to a sustained growth in borrowing in this area.	115,835.00	103,000.00	★
OCC02.03 Digital engagement with Heritage services (Museums Service and Oxfordshire History Centre)	Mark Haynes	Cllr J Hannaby	144,822.00	113,000.00	★	History Service figure was 60% above target, mainly due to a larger than average number of visits to Picture Oxon historic images' web pages. The Museum Service's successful campaign to tweet an archaeological object from every parish in the County has ended, resulting in a major reduction in engagement in May. The service has also adopted a tighter definition of 'engagement' in respect of social media which will reduce its forecast performance figures by approximately 40% for the remainder of the year. Victoria County History figure was 4% below target.	264,871.00	226,000.00	★
OCC02.04 Number of physical visits to Libraries	Mark Haynes	Cllr J Hannaby	129,447.00	160,000.00	▲	Visits to libraries continue to increase month-on-month, and May 2022 represents another high watermark for library visits post COVID. Numbers have fallen slightly below target. Efforts continue to encourage customers back into libraries, with library staff developing an exciting programme of activities, including for the Summer Reading Challenge.	244,179.00	310,000.00	▲
OCC02.10 No of people contacted via Making Every Conversation Count	Mark Haynes	Cllr J Hannaby	528.00	300.00	★	Following a review of reporting in this area in January 2022, renewed attention has been made on accurate recording of MECC conversations, which is partly behind the strong performance in this area (i.e. improved tracking). Added to which, Health and Wellbeing has been set as a service priority via the Libraries and Heritage strategy and the supporting Service Delivery Plan, which has been backed up by recent management briefings across Libraries (May 2022) on these priorities and what local staff can do to support our impact in this area.	899.00	600.00	★

## Prioritise the health and wellbeing of residents

We will work with the health and wellbeing board and our partners to deliver and support services that make a vital contribution to our residents' physical and mental wellbeing. We will support the wellbeing of those in our community who have been affected, physically and mentally, by the COVID-19 pandemic and will continue to support our volunteers and the voluntary sector.

Status of Indicators	31/05/2022
OCC03 - Prioritise the health and wellbeing of residents	★

Measure	Director	Portfolio Holder	Period Actual	Period Target	Status	Comment	YTD	YTD Target	YTD
OCC03.05 Number of library issues (books, DVD, CD's, E-books)	Mark Haynes	Cllr J Hannaby	258,586.00	260,000.00	★	Performance is recovering after the pandemic at a pleasing rate, and a lot of effort is being targeted at displays (e.g. LGBTQ+, Jubilee) and 're-engagement' with a focus on bringing activities (story times, class visits etc.) back into libraries - all Library Managers have been given this as an objective via our 12:3:2 process and have had a recent away day to discuss this.	515,395.00	510,000.00	★
OCC03.06 Digital engagement with library services	Mark Haynes	Cllr J Hannaby	117,724.00	115,000.00	★	The way digital engagement is to be accounted for has been modified for this particular metric so as to make it a more meaningful and a more accurate reflection of performance. A new target will be considered in due course once a trend has been set over the first quarter.	237,510.00	230,000.00	★
OCC03.14 No of physical visits to Heritage services	Mark Haynes	Cllr J Hannaby	8,915.00	8,375.00	★	Museum Service's in person visits and engagements with schools and communities continues to recover post COVID. History Service figure was 6% above target, partly due to a successful Film Oxford students' visit. Victoria County History figure was 7% below target and comprises a single talk at Iffley.	17,465.00	16,050.00	★

## Support carers and the social care system

We will engage nationally to push for a fair deal for the funding of social care.

Locally, we will support carers, including young carers and help those who want to live independently.

We will work with communities and the voluntary sector to explore new ways to provide services and focus on preventative services, helping people to stay active and supported at all stages of their lives.

We will support intergenerational programmes to build strong and resilient communities.

We will work in collaboration across the health and social care system.

Status of Indicators	31/05/2022
OCC04 - Support carers and the social care system	★

Measure	Director	Portfolio Holder	Period Actual	Period Target	Status	Comment	YTD	YTD Target	YTD
OCC04.01 No of people supported with on-going care	Karen Fuller	Cllr T Bearder	6,228.00		n/a	6228 people are supported in long term care. We are supporting people in a different way as part of the Oxfordshire Way. This includes encouraging greater resilience within our communities; working positively with partner organisations and communities to enable people to be more independent and grow their social connections. This has meant that the number of people supported in long term care in the last 2 years has grown by less than the expected demographic pressure in social care. Monitoring only, agreed data gathering for 2022/23.	6,228.00		n/a
OCC04.02 % of residents aged 18-64 with Learning Disability support who live on their own or with family	Karen Fuller	Cllr T Bearder	87.80%	86.00%	★	We believe that most people want to live in their own home wherever possible. 87.9% of adults aged 18-64 with a learning disability supported by adult social care are supported to live in their home. This compares with the latest published national figure of 78.3%. Of the 151 local authorities Oxfordshire's performance was the 27th best in the country.	87.80%	86.00%	★
OCC04.03 % of residents aged 65 plus receiving ASC who manage their care by using a direct payment	Karen Fuller	Cllr T Bearder	22.00%	22.00%	★	22% of people supported with long term care at home, receive a direct payment. This gives them more choice and control over their care. This compares to the latest national figure of 15% and out of 151 authorities Oxfordshire had the 19th highest level of performance.	22.00%	22.00%	★
OCC04.04 % of residents aged under 65 receiving ASC who manage their care by using a direct payment	Karen Fuller	Cllr T Bearder	39.20%	40.00%	●	39% of people under 65 supported with long term care at home, receive a direct payment. This is just above the national average of 38%. We continue to offer direct payments to people in receipt of services to ensure everyone who wishes to use this service is able to do so.	39.20%	40.00%	●
OCC04.05 % of older residents who receive long term care and are supported to live in their own home	Karen Fuller	Cllr T Bearder	59.40%	60.00%	●	We believe that most people want to live in their own home wherever possible. 59.4% of adults aged 65 or over supported by adult social care are supported to live in their home. This compares with the latest published national figure of 63%. The figure is rising marginally and we continue to develop services to support people at home including home care, extra care housing and direct payments. The number of new placements into care homes remains better (lower) than target but given that people can live on average for over 2 years in a care home this measure will take some time to move.	59.40%	60.00%	●
OCC04.06 No of residents who have received a formal assessment of their role as a Carer	Karen Fuller	Cllr T Bearder	608.00		n/a	We want to support carers to carry on carrying for as long as they feel able. We help to support them by assessing their needs, offering information and advice and on occasions with one off direct payments. In May we assessed 608 informal carers; 80% more than last May. Monitoring only, agreed data gathering for 2022/23.	1,034.00		n/a
OCC04.07 No of Carers who have received a direct payment	Karen Fuller	Cllr T Bearder	217.00		n/a	To help informal support informal carers we offer one-off direct payments. So far this year we have supported 217 carers with a direct payment. Monitoring only, agreed data gathering for 2022/23.	319.00		n/a
OCC04.08 No of visits to Live Well Oxfordshire	Karen Fuller	Cllr T Bearder	5,865.00	5,450.00	★	5685 visits to Live Well Oxfordshire reflecting people proactively making their own changes as they have choice and control through the website.	11,429.00	10,900.00	★

## Invest in an inclusive, integrated and sustainable transport network

We will create a transport network that makes active travel the first choice for short journeys and invest in public transport to significantly reduce our reliance on car journeys.

In areas of planned housing growth, we will prioritise active and public transport over road capacity for cars.

Status of Indicators	31/05/2022
OCC05 - Invest in an inclusive, integrated and sustainable transport network	★

Measure	Director	Portfolio Holder	Period Actual	Period Target	Status	Comment	YTD	YTD Target	YTD
OCC05.01 No of students who have successfully completed a travel model shift	Bill Cotton	Cllr A Gant	281.00	260.00	★	Increase in numbers due to more parents/carers accepting Direct Travel Payments. One student has been trained.	556.00	510.00	★
OCC05.02 % of contracted seats designated to school children	Bill Cotton	Cllr A Gant	75.44%	75.00%	★	A slight drop in seat usage, probably due to some school children leaving after exams	75.67%	75.00%	★
OCC05.03 3 Highway resurfaced	Bill Cotton	Cllr A Gant	78.20km	73.50km	★	The annual plan target for 2022 total surfacing programme has been firmed up so far as 115.3 km (2.58% of the network (excluding patching). The Micro-Asphalt programme is due to be discussed on Friday 24th June and there will be an agreement on the expected km target (%) increase this programme will bring about. Including the Micro-Asphalt programme, the final overall surface programme target is expected to be similar to the 2021 programme at 135 km (3%). As at 31st May '22, 78.2 km (1.7%) of the network has been treated and is slightly above the expected target.	91.70	86.20	★

## Create opportunities for children and young people to reach their full potential

We will support all our children and young people, and their families, to achieve their very best and to prepare them for their future, including safeguarding, and supporting those more vulnerable and with additional needs.

We will continue to work with partners to provide help early so children and families are less likely to be in need.

Status of Indicators	31/05/2022
OCC07 - Create opportunities for children and young people to reach their full potential	▲

Measure	Director	Portfolio Holder	Period Actual	Period Target	Status	Comment	YTD	YTD Target	YTD
OCC07.01 Number of contacts into the MASH	Kevin Gordon	Cllr L Brighouse	2,817.00	1,516.00	▲	In 20/21 the number of contacts into the MASH rose by 35%. In 21/22 they rose again by 18%. In the first two months of this year there have been 4848 contacts. This is a 3% increase on the same period last year. Demand is being managed by additional temporary staff. We are reviewing activity in the MASH to see what can be managed elsewhere	4,848.00	3,032.00	▲
OCC07.02 Number of early help assessments	Kevin Gordon	Cllr L Brighouse	99.00	356.00	▲	As part of the Early Help Strategy, the Children's Trust has set an ambitious target to increase the number of Early Help Assessments to 5000 this year from 2732 in 2021/22. We are currently agreeing targets for different agencies. You are currently more than twice as likely to be assessed by social care than have an early help assessment. We want to flip this round. There is evidence of avoidable demand in the system which is not in the best interest of children and families	236.00	597.00	●
OCC07.03 Number of early help assessments completed by health visitors	Kevin Gordon	Cllr L Brighouse	7.00	67.00	▲		9.00	134.00	▲
OCC07.04 Number of social care assessments	Kevin Gordon	Cllr L Brighouse	642.00		n/a	1194 social care assessments have been started in 2 months. Currently around a half of social care assessments do not lead to a social care plan. We are working to reduce this by risk assessing the and reducing the number of assessments completed which do not result in a social care plan and offering these children and families early help assessments instead. Monitoring only, agreed data gathering for 2022/23.	1,194.00		n/a
OCC07.05 No of children we care for who are Unaccompanied Asylum Seeking Children	Kevin Gordon	Cllr L Brighouse	2.00	4.00	●	The council is committed to housing 103 unaccompanied children and young people by March 2023 as part of the national transfer scheme.	61.00	66.00	●
OCC07.06 No of children we care for (excluding Unaccompanied Children)	Kevin Gordon	Cllr L Brighouse	794.00	750.00	▲	The number of children we care for continues to rise, but we remain below the national rate. We had expected the numbers to fall with the implementation of family solutions plus model, but this has not yet happened. We have seen an increase in younger children becoming looked after which may reflect the impact of the pandemic, where we have seen a higher level of need was much higher in presenting cases. There has been a slowdown in the rate children leave the cared for system both locally and nationally which may also reflect the documented delays in courts.	794.00	750.00	▲
OCC07.07 Number of child protection plans	Kevin Gordon	Cllr L Brighouse	533.00	550.00	★	In 2020/21 we saw a sharp drop in children the subject of child protection plans to 450. This rose in 2021/22, but as started to drop again and is better than target. The figure is still 200 fewer than 3 years ago. Only 14% are subject to a plan for more than 12 months and only 8 children for 2 more than years.	1,089.00	1,100.00	▲
OCC07.10 % of Education Health & Care Plans completed within 20 weeks	Kevin Gordon	Cllr L Brighouse	16.00%	60.00%	▲	Education Psychologist Service delays still significant which impact on the ability to meet the 20 week deadline.	16.50%	60.00%	▲
OCC07.11 Monitor the number of children with an Education, Health and Care Plan	Kevin Gordon	Cllr L Brighouse	5,290.00		n/a	Monitoring only, agreed data gathering for 2022/23.	10,407.00		n/a

## Work with local businesses and partners for environmental, economic and social benefit

We will help Oxfordshire become a recognised centre of innovation in green and sustainable technologies.

We will use our purchasing power for environmental, social and economic benefit and ensure that our pandemic recovery planning supports sustainable job creation.

Status of Indicators	31/05/2022
OCC09 - Work with local businesses and partners for environmental, economic and social benefit	★

Measure	Director	Portfolio Holder	Period Actual	Period Target	Status	Comment	YTD	YTD Target	YTD
OCC09.02 Participation in innovation funding bids or new projects in support of Living Oxfordshire	Tim Spiers	Cllr D Enright	4.00	2.00	★	We have submitted 4 bids for EV infrastructure investment and 2nd phase Innovate UK bids.	7.00	4.00	★
OCC09.05 No of new Community Micro Enterprises supporting people in the community	Karen Fuller	Cllr T Bearder	2.00	2.00	★	To help encourage greater resilience within our communities 54 community micro enterprises have supported 915 people in their communities by helping to provide the assets to enable people to live well and safely in their community.	4.00	4.00	★

Running the business

Status of Indicators	31/05/2022
OCC10 - Customer Service	▲
OCC11 - Finance	●

Measure	Director	Portfolio Holder	Period Actual	Period Target	Status	Comment	YTD	YTD Target	YTD
OCC10.01 % of Statutory Complaints (Stage1 or 2) responded to outside the response time	Mark Haynes	Cllr G Philips		5.00%	?	This information will not be available until June due to system implementation		5.00%	?
OCC10.02 % of Corporate Complaints (Stage1 and 2) responded to outside of the response time	Mark Haynes	Cllr G Philips		5.00%	?	This information will not be available until June due to system implementation		5.00%	?
OCC10.03 Achieve a high level of customer satisfaction across all channels in the CSC	Mark Haynes	Cllr G Philips	57%	65%	▲	<p>Latest satisfaction survey – May – 158 customers surveyed out of 13,753 calls received, which was 1.14%</p> <p>56.7% of customers were satisfied with the service they received</p> <p>60.5% of customers were satisfied with the adviser they spoke to.</p> <p>Additional Customer Satisfaction measures are going to be used in order to produce this measure and increase the overall satisfaction of our customers. An options paper has been submitted to the Director of Customer Experience &amp; Cultural Services and a project group has been set up to implement the recommendations - this includes short term/quick wins and a longer term vision.</p>	62%	65%	●
OCC10.04 Resolve customer enquiries received through the telephony channels at the first point of contact	Mark Haynes	Cllr G Philips	75%	75%	★	<p>For May, across inbound phones &amp; webchat, First Contact Resolution was: 75% of calls answered were resolved at first point of contact.</p> <p>81.8% of webchats answered were resolved at first point of contact.</p> <p>The First Contact Resolution (FCR) has been implemented into the Customer Service Centre telephony platform, making it a mandatory requirement for advisors when completing their contact, which has seen an increase in numbers.</p> <p>In May, 26% of inbound phones were recorded on our Service Improvement Log (SIL) by all areas of the Customer Service Centre, resulting in the FCR target.</p>	77%	75%	★
OCC10.05 No of telephone calls to CSC abandoned	Mark Haynes	Cllr G Philips	13.10%	10.00%	●	<p>During May, the Customer Service Centre received 13,753 inbound calls, up 14.7% against April. Compared to May 2021, they are up by 5.5%.</p> <p>The abandonment rate was down to 13.2%, compared to 14.2% in April. Compared to May 2021, it is down 0.75%</p> <p>We also dealt with 347 webchats across seven service areas of our website. We also dealt with 13 social media contacts from the official OCC Twitter &amp; Facebook pages.</p>	13.60%	10.00%	●
OCC10.06 Overall customer satisfaction rates for standard Registration Service	Mark Haynes	Cllr G Philips	98%	95%	★	<p>Overall customer satisfaction remained high at 98% in May. Some of the comments received from customers:</p> <p>The Registrars who conducted our service were excellent. Professional, personable, competent and fun. They really put us at our ease and were a credit to your Registration Services.</p> <p>The registrar was fantastic! Very professional and funny too.</p> <p>I was unavoidably a little late and the staff agreed to see me and were very gracious and professional. An excellent service.</p>	98%	95%	★
OCC11.01 Overall forecast revenue variance across the Council	Lorna Baxter	Cllr C Miller	0.80%	0.00%	★	<p>The overall forecast variation for the council is £4.4m or 0.8% of the budget. This includes a £5.5m forecast overspend for Children's Services offset by additional interest expected to be received on balances held by the council.</p> <p>The Directorate position is an overspend £9.1m (in Children's Services) which equates to 1.8%. This could be partly offset by using the contingency budget held corporately.</p>	0.40%	0.00%	

Measure	Director	Portfolio Holder	Period Actual	Period Target	Status	Comment	YTD	YTD Target	YTD
OCC11.02 Achievement of planned savings	Lorna Baxter	Cllr C Miller	68.00%	95.00%	▲	<p>The 2022/23 budget agreed includes planned directorate savings of £17.4m. 68% of these are currently on track to be delivered in year compared to a target of 95% set out in the budget agreed in February 2022. £1.7m savings assessed as red relate to street lighting and a further £1.4m transformation savings in Commercial Development, Assets and Investment for Property Services are not expected to be achieved. There are also £1.5m savings in Children's and £0.8m in Commercial Development, Assets and Investment assessed as amber.</p> <p>The impact of the anticipated delivery of the savings is built into the forecast for each directorate.</p> <p>The 2022/23 budget includes £17.1m savings. 72% are on track to be delivered in year. £1.7m is Red relating to savings in Street Lighting. Environment &amp; Place is forecasting a year end breakeven position so this pressure is being met by underspends elsewhere within the service. There are £3m Amber savings split jointly between Children's and CDAL.</p>	81.50%	95.00%	
OCC11.03 General balances are forecast to remain at or above the risk assessed level	Lorna Baxter	Cllr C Miller	£32,300,000	£28,900,000	★	<p>General Balances were £39.2m as at 31 March 2022 and will reduce to £37.2m after taking account of a budgeted contribution of £1.0m and the agreed use of £3.0m to support help meet the costs of the 20 MPH Speed Limit Programme and the Zero Emission Buses Regional Areas in the capital programme. £0.5m one – off funding for the schools' condition survey has also been agreed to be met from balances. After taking account of the forecast overspend of £4.4m, the total balance will reduce to £32.3m which is £3.4m above the risk assessed level.</p>	£71,500,000	£57,800,000	★
OCC11.05 Directorates deliver services and achieve planned performance within agreed budget	Lorna Baxter	Cllr C Miller	1.1%	1.0%	▲	<p>The forecast directorate overspend of £5.5m (or 1.1% of the budget) relates to Children's Services which is managing significant pressures reflecting the need for agency social workers to fill vacancies within the front-line social care teams plus an increase in the forecast cost of placements for children that the council cares for.</p>	1.1%	1.0%	
OCC11.06 Total outturn variation for the dedicated schools grant (DSG) funded services	Lorna Baxter	Cllr C Miller	0.00%	0.00%	★	<p>Assume all Dedicated Schools Grant will be spent in year</p>	0.00%	0.00%	★
OCC11.07 Use of non-DSG revenue grant funding	Lorna Baxter	Cllr C Miller	95.00%	95.00%	★	<p>All non-DSG grants are expected to be spent during 2022/23.</p>	95.00%	95.00%	★
OCC11.08 % of agreed invoices paid within 30 days	Lorna Baxter	Cllr C Miller	93.73%	95.00%	●	<p>This measure tracks invoices paid within 30 days of receipt and includes invoices paid via the self-service purchase order process, as well as invoices processed by Oxfordshire's Social Care Payments team via the social care finance systems. Social Care invoices account for 30% of invoices paid this month.</p> <p>In April 96.75% of invoices were paid on time, in May this dropped to 93.73%, below the target of 95%. 95.08% of invoices processed via the self-service portal were paid, invoices processed by Oxfordshire's Social Care Payments team were slightly under target at 94.84%.</p>	95.24%	95.00%	★
OCC11.09 Invoice collection rate - Corporate Debtors	Lorna Baxter	Cllr C Miller	96.27%	95.00%	★	<p>This measure identifies the percentage of invoices issued by Oxfordshire that have been paid within 120 days; by 120 days all standard recovery effort should have been completed and the invoice referred to the Corporate Senior Recovery officer if not paid.</p> <p>In this period we are measuring invoices issued in February 2022. The collection rate, based on invoice volumes, is 96.3%, 1.3% above target and above the 2021-22 average. The collection rate, based on value, is 97.1%.</p>	96.76%	95.00%	★
OCC11.10 Debt requiring impairment - Corporate Debtors	Lorna Baxter	Cllr C Miller	£344,918	£300,000	★	<p>Debt requiring impairment is the value of invoices with potential to become unrecoverable, the potential loss requires recording in the accounts at year end. If at year end there is an overall increase in the value of invoices at risk, we are required to top up the impairment balance, consequently this figure is tracked through the year. Debt requiring impairment this month is £0.34m, £0.01m above target. The top two cases account for 30% of the total bad debt and are being managed with the service.</p>	£344,918	£600,000	★
OCC11.11 Debt requiring impairment - ASC contribution debtors	Lorna Baxter	Cllr C Miller	£4,071,612	£2,500,000	▲	<p>In 2021-22 the trailing impacts of Covid-19 had a significant effect on the means tested social care contributions bad debt and a £1million top up to the impairment was required. In quarter four of 2021-22 the Adults directorate with support from Finance created a 18 month plan to address the levels of bad debt; additional resources have been brought in and a multi skilled task group has been assembled to ring-fence and clear the bad debt cases over the next 12 to 18 months. The task group went live in May 2022, reductions to bad debt are not expected until quarter three of 2022-23 onwards as the task group establish working arrangements, assess and prioritise the caseload and commence recovery activity.</p>	£8,103,079	£5,000,000	
OCC11.12 Average cash balance compared to forecast average cash balance	Lorna Baxter	Cllr C Miller	£460,576,000	£442,000,000	★		£460,576,000	£442,000,000	★

Measure	Director	Portfolio Holder	Period Actual	Period Target	Status	Comment	YTD	YTD Target	YTD
OCC11.13 Average interest rate achieved on in-house investment portfolio	Lorna Baxter	Cllr C Miller	0.72%	0.35%	★	The forecast average return was based on an average bank of England Base Rate of 0.35%. Bank of England Base Rate started the year at 0.50% and is only likely to increase, therefore the average return will be significantly above the original budgeted forecast.	0.72%	0.35%	★
OCC11.14 Average annualised return achieved for externally managed funds	Lorna Baxter	Cllr C Miller	3.75%	3.75%	★		3.75%	3.75%	★
OCC11.15 Invoice Collection Rate - ASC contribution debtors	Lorna Baxter	Cllr C Miller	89.32%	92.00%	●	The 120-day invoice collection rate has dropped marginally from 89.9% to 89.3% and remains below the 92% target. Direct debit collection rates increased in quarter 4 of 2021-22 and we would expect that to translate into some improvement from next month.  As previously reported, reworked reminder communications are being developed by our partners to improve responses to reminder letters and should have a direct impact on collection rates. However, they are pending partner wide agreement and IT allocation to implement and are not expected until Autumn 2022 at the earliest.	89.59%	92.00%	●

## Introduction

1. This annex sets out the first financial monitoring information for the 2022/23 financial year and is based on information to the end of May 2022. Key issues, as well as risks relating to inflation, demand and other factors, plus areas of emerging pressure are explained below.

The following additional information is provided to support the information in this Annex:

Annex B – 1 (a) to (f)	Detailed directorate positions
Annex B – 2a	Virements to approve
Annex B – 2b	Virements to note
Annex B – 2c	Supplementary estimate to note
Annex B – 3	Earmarked reserves
Annex B – 4	Government grants
Annex B – 5	General Balances

## Overall Financial Position

2. As shown below there is a forecast Directorate overspend of £5.5m or 1.1%. The overall forecast variation is £4.4m or 0.8% after taking account of an increase in interest receivable on balances held by the council.

Directorate	Latest Budget 2022/23 £m	Forecast Spend 2022/23 £m	Variance May 2022 £m	Variance May 2022 %
Adult Services	212.1	212.1	0.0	0.0
Children's Services	148.8	154.3	5.5	3.7
Public Health	0.6	0.6	0.0	0.0
Environment & Place	62.8	62.8	0.0	0.0
Commercial Development, Assets and Investments	48.0	48.4	0.4	0.9
Customers, Organisational Development & Resources	36.2	35.8	-0.4	-1.2
<b>Total Directorate Budgets</b>	<b>508.5</b>	<b>514.0</b>	<b>5.5</b>	<b>1.1</b>
<b>Budgets Held Centrally</b>				
Capital Financing Costs	26.1	26.1	0.0	
Interest on Balances	-13.0	-14.1	-1.1	
Inflation and Contingency <sup>1</sup>	12.3	12.3	0.0	
Un-ringfenced Specific Grants	-31.2	-31.2	0.0	
Insurance	1.4	1.4	0.0	
Contributions to reserves	16.3	16.3	0.0	
<b>Total Budgets Held Centrally</b>	<b>11.9</b>	<b>10.8</b>	<b>-1.1</b>	<b>-10.3</b>
<b>Net Operating Budget</b>	<b>520.4</b>	<b>524.8</b>	<b>4.4</b>	<b>0.8</b>
Business Rates & Council Tax funding <sup>2</sup>	-520.4	-520.4	0.0	
<b>Forecast Year End Position</b>	<b>0.0</b>	<b>4.4</b>	<b>4.4</b>	

<sup>1</sup> This includes £4.4m funding for pay inflation assumed at 2.5% in Budget approved by Full Council in February 2022.

<sup>2</sup> As set out in paragraph 130 additional Business Rates funding of £5.9m is proposed to be added to the Business Rates Reserve pending agreement about the use of this funding.

3. The budget for 2022/23 agreed by Council in February 2022 included £15.8m funding for pressures within services as well as inflation and the cost to the council of the new Health & Social Care Levy that was implemented through National Insurance contributions from April 2022.
4. In addition to £5.7m investments agreed previously, there was a further investment of £6.2m in Council priorities for 2022/23. To enable new investments and help meet the cost of pressures, new savings of £12.7m were identified for 2022/23 in addition to existing planned savings of £4.7m.
5. The forecast 2022/23 deficit compared to Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) funding for High Needs is £17.5m after taking account of £1.2m of COVID-19 costs being met from council resources. This has reduced compared to forecast in the Budget & Business Planning report to Cabinet on 18 January 2022 which set out that the spend on High Needs was expected to exceed grant funding by £20.3m in 2022/23. In line with a change to the CIPFA code of practice on DSG High Needs deficits an unusable reserve was created in 2020/21 to hold negative High Needs DSG balances. The forecast deficit would increase the negative balance held in this reserve to £47.3m at 31 March 2023.
6. Issues and volatility in the wider economy, including inflation and workforce shortages, have increased the risk to the financial position for the council and the overall landscape looks much more challenging than when the budget was set in February 2022. On-going budget held as contingency as part of the 2022/23 budget is likely to be needed to meet the cost of additional on-going pay inflation as well as other inflationary and demand pressures. One off funding in general balances was higher than the risk assessed level at the end of 2021/22 and can be used to support pressures in 2022/23. The on-going impact will need to be considered through the 2023/24 Budget & Business Planning process.

## Directorate Forecasts

### Adult Services

7. The service is currently forecasting a breakeven position against a budget of £212.1m.

Service Area	2022/23 Latest Budget	Year End Variance May 2022
	£m	£m
Age Well Pooled Budget	87.5	0.0
Live Well Pooled Budget	102.5	0.0
Non- Pool Services	15.4	0.0
Commissioning	6.7	0.0
<b>Total Adult Services</b>	<b>212.1</b>	<b>0.0</b>

### **Age Well Pooled Budget**

8. The Age Well pool combines health and social care expenditure on care homes, activity relating to hospital avoidance and prevention and early support activities

for older people.

9. A breakeven position is forecast for the council elements of the pool. However, there are on-going risks and uncertainties around activity levels, the impact of the Hospital Discharge Scheme ceasing and the impact on the market of the continuing increase of inflation, particularly in relation to new placements. The position requires the delivery of the £2.6m savings built into the 2022/23 budget.
10. An uplift of 6% has been applied to the contract rates for care providers operating within Oxfordshire whose current rates are within the ceiling threshold outlined below. The uplift will not be applied to packages of care which are wholly funded by Health. Providers above these rates are required to apply for an uplift with supporting evidence.

Services	Ceiling Threshold Unit Rate £
Residential Care Homes (Weekly)	£1,000.00
Nursing Care Homes (Weekly)	£1,200.00
Short Stay / Intermediate Beds	No Ceiling
Live Well at Home - Homecare Support (Hourly)	£25.20
Community Support (Hourly)	£25.20
Extra Care Housing (On-Site Care - Weekly Charge)	£59.24
Extra Care Housing (Hourly)	£25.20
Supported Living (Hourly)	£19.90
Day Services	No Ceiling
Direct Payments	No Ceiling

11. The budget contributions to the pooled budget for 2022/23 have yet to be agreed by the Joint Commissioning Executive (JCE). Oxfordshire Clinical Commissioning Group (OCCG) ceased to exist from 30 June 2022 and has been replaced by the Integrated Care Board (ICB) for Buckinghamshire, Oxfordshire and Berkshire West (BOB). A budget covering the first three months of the financial year has been agreed with OCCG with the expectation that the remaining budget will be agreed by the ICB after 1 July 2022. The expectation is that each partner will continue to manage their own variations against the agreed contributions for the whole of the financial year, which will be confirmed with a new section 75 agreement.
12. The council's share of the Better Care Fund held within the pool is expected to be £27.7m in 2022/23 and has increased by £1.4m compared to 2021/22. This is based on an expected minimum increase of at least 5.3% nationally.

#### **Live Well Pooled Budget**

13. The pool supports a mix of health and social care needs for adults of working age with learning disabilities, acquired brain injury or mental health needs and adults with physical disabilities.
14. A breakeven position is forecast for the council elements of the pool. There are

on-going risks and uncertainties around activity levels, complexity of new packages of care, the impact on the market of the continuing increase of inflation and the position requires the delivery of £2.5m savings agreed as part of the 2022/23 budget.

15. A £3.5m overspend on social care costs related to the Outcome Based Contract within the Mental Health element of the pool is anticipated. This pressure was also seen in 2021/22 and there are ongoing contract meetings between the council and the Oxford Health NHS Foundation Trust (OHFT) to further understand how this can be managed in 2022/23 and future years. £1.5m of this increase is to be funded from in - year budget with the remaining £2.0m expected to be met from a one-off contribution from reserves.
16. The OCCG contribution to the pool is £18.3m and is unchanged from the previous year. It has been agreed that the council will continue to manage the majority of any variation for the whole of the financial year as was the case in previous years. The added expectation that each partner will continue to manage their own variations against the agreed contributions for the whole of the financial year for the physical disability area of the pool. This will be confirmed as part of a new Section 75 agreement.
17. Under Section 75 of the NHS Act 2006 Oxfordshire Clinical Commissioning Group (OCCG) and the Council have pooled health and social care commissioning budgets since April 2013. The arrangements from 1 April 2022 include the agreement of a single, fully integrated pooled budget and risk share for Live Well and Age Well services. While the other changes are being implemented, further discussions have taken place about the risk share in the context of the current development of the Buckinghamshire, Oxfordshire and Berkshire West Integrated Care System (ICS). As noted in the Provisional Outturn Report considered by Cabinet on 21 June 2022, the risk share will continue under the same arrangements as in 2021/22.

#### **Non-Pool Services**

18. A breakeven position is being reported for all non-pool services. The current assumption is that all staffing budgets will be fully utilised, although recruitment and retention through the year may impact on this position.

#### **Health, Education and Social Care Commissioning**

19. A breakeven position is being reported.

#### **Reserves**

20. As set out in the Provisional Outturn Report to Cabinet on 21 June 2022, £10.6m held in the council's reserves is available to support pressures in 2022/23 and the risks as outlined above. £5.1m of this is available to be used to meet future cost pressures within Adult Social Care (ASC). £2.0m is earmarked against the pressure related to the Outcome Based Contract for Mental Health as noted in paragraph 15. Updates on the use of the remaining balance will be included in future reports.
21. A further £5.5m held in reserves was released from the council's contribution to

the Better Care Fund Pool as a result of additional contributions from OCCG over the last three financial years. This has been committed in agreement with OCCG through Joint Commissioning Executive, with the majority of the funding expected to be used during 2022/23.

22. £0.6m held within the Government Initiatives reserve relates to un-ringfenced funding allocated to Oxfordshire from the Omicron Support Fund in 2021/22. This will be used to provide further sustainability support to providers and an extension of the Recruitment and Retention scheme.

### **Medium Term Financial Plan Savings**

23. The 2022/23 budget includes planned savings of £5.6m. All of these savings are currently expected to be delivered by year end. The process to maintain the saving is on-going but any variation is expected to be managed within the funding available.

### **Virements**

24. Cabinet is recommended to approve the virement allocating expenditure budget funded by the Charging Reform Implementation Support Grant 2022/23 of £0.1m to Adult services to support the implementation of charging reform.
25. Cabinet is also recommended to approve the virement relating to the centralisation of a budget contribution towards Customer Service Centre budgets from Adults to Customers, Organisational Development and Resources and to note the virement allocating funding for inflation to the pools.

### **Grants**

26. The council has received £1.5m Market Sustainability & Fair Cost of Care grant. This ringfenced grant must be used to implement the fair cost of care. Up to 25% of the fund can be used to carry out and implement a fair cost of care exercise, with the remaining 75% to be used to increase rates where these fall below the fair cost for that service.

### **Children's Services**

27. As at the end of May 2022, Children's Services is experiencing significant pressures in three of its budget areas - staffing (particularly agency costs), placement costs and high needs (Schools Budget). The service is undertaking early in-year budget mitigation activity to manage these. The current forecast overspend is £17.5m on High Needs (DSG budget) and £5.5m on other services, as shown in the table on the next page.

<b>Service Area</b>	<b>2022/23 Latest Budget £m</b>	<b>Year End Variance May 2022 £m</b>
Education & Learning	36.5	0.0
Children's Social Care	35.9	1.5
Children's Social Care Countywide	71.5	4.0
Schools <sup>3</sup>	0.2	0.0
Children's Services Central Costs	4.8	0.0
<b>Total Children's Services</b>	<b>148.8</b>	<b>5.5</b>
<b>Overspend on High Needs DSG that will be transferred to unusable reserve</b>		<b>17.5</b>

### **Use of agency staffing to support statutory case allocation in the front-line social work team**

28. The continued workload pressure, increased vacancies and recruitment difficulties within front-line services has necessitated a higher use of agency staff within the front-line teams undertaking assessment and safeguarding activity. This is essential to manage caseloads and to maintain safe working practices.

29. Work is underway to reduce the overall staffing spend by;

- Addressing the flow of referrals at the 'front-end' (MASH) by revising thresholds and working practices;
- Reducing the backlog of assessments and intervention measures through the investment of managed teams in the Family Solutions Plus (FSP) service. The forecast includes costs to the end of June/early July of about £1.1m. If extended for a further three months, the additional cost will be £1.1m. The committed costs to June/July are funded by additional COVID-19 funding; and
- Attracting more permanent front-line workers, thereby reducing the need for agency staff, currently costing about £0.5m per month.

30. In addition to the plans outlined above, the directorate is also undertaking in-year mitigation measures to ensure overall staffing costs are managed within the budget. These include.

- Ensuring that maximum use is made of reserves and income streams including government grants and health income. A decision has been made to release some of the Supporting Families funding held in the Government Initiatives reserve, (money received by social care for meeting Troubled Families targets for intervention); and
- In-year vacancy management. In practice this means that all non-Social Work and SEN vacancies in Children's Services will be held until the overall staffing pressures are managed.

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<sup>3</sup> \*Maintained Schools are funded by Dedicated Schools Grant

31. Work has begun to profile these mitigations and around £2.6m has already been identified and included in the forecast, including £1.5m from reserves. Continued management actions will be taken to find further savings. Further savings will also be identified to manage these staffing pressures should the need for additional agency expenditure continue.

**Placement costs in Children We Care For (CWCF).**

32. On placements, the service has had an exceptionally difficult period in finding suitable placements for some children, resulting in some being accommodated in very high-cost arrangements. It is not unusual to have one or two such placements, but the increase reported at the end of last financial year has further accelerated this year. There are 10 placements that are currently included in the forecast for this financial year, with plans to arrange suitable placements as soon as possible.
33. In order to address the overall position of CWCF within Corporate Parenting, a brokerage action plan is being implemented to ensure more timely, suitable and cost-effective placements are sourced. The forecast includes provision for the current arrangements to be replaced by new placements during the year, with further provision for potential new arrangements to March 2023.
34. There is a variation in the unit cost of these placements. However, on average, there would be a net saving of about £9,000 per week per placement if suitable residential accommodation were found for these children. The forecast is based on both known and estimated dates for the current arrangements to end and for the children to move to more suitable and cost-effective placements. Beyond this, provision is made in the forecast for an average of two such arrangements.
35. On foster care, the recruitment of foster carers should reduce the reliance on Independent Foster Agencies (IFAs) and the 'step down' from residential care to foster care is also helping to reduce costs. These are accounted for in the figures. Continued management action should provide further savings beyond that included in the current forecast.
36. Since the 2022/23 budget was prepared, there have been a number of changes that have required a 're-setting' or 're-basing' of budgets to take place, in order to more accurately reflect current and future demands. This work is still in progress and will be fully reflected in the next report to Cabinet (September), based on July forecasts, which will also reflect the further management actions being taken to eradicate the budget pressure.
37. The Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) budget, which is ring-fenced specifically for schools, has a forecast variance of £17.5m overspend, due to continuing pressures on High Needs. This is £2.8m lower than the planned deficit set out in the Budget & Business Planning report to Cabinet in January 2022.
38. It is too early in the financial year to fully assess the impact of inflationary pressures. However, broadly speaking, budget assumptions of 2.0% to 2.5% were anticipated. Some block contracts were agreed at these levels but other services, such as spot purchases, were subject to market conditions. The fuel price increase

has particularly affected home to school transport, where some contracts have had price rises of 12%. Further analysis will be done to build up a more complete picture.

### **Education & Learning**

39. Within Education & Learning, the Home to School Transport and the Special Educational Needs (SEN) service continue to be the 'high risk' areas in terms of budget variance.
40. There was a significant underspend of -£1.5m in Home to School Transport in 2021/22 that was mainly due to the following:
- Very stringent eligibility checks;
  - Increasingly efficient lets of mainstream contracts;
  - Increasing direct transport payments to families where it is cost efficient to do so; offset by
  - Increased SEN pupil usage arising from Education Health and Care Plans (EHCPs).
41. The 2022/23 budget includes an additional £1.3m for demographic changes (which is still considered likely), a £1.0m savings target and a £0.5m investment for active travel and green travel plans i.e. a net increase of £0.8m. The increase in fuel prices is having an impact on contract prices, with some increases as much as 12%. However, no overall variance is reported at this stage. This budget is being closely monitored in 2022/23 and further information will be included in the next monitoring report.
42. Within the Special Education Needs service there are considerable ongoing pressures on the SEN casework team and Educational Psychologists due to the continued high number of Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP) requests. An additional £0.3m COVID-19 funding and an extra £0.9m have been included in the 2022/23 budget, for additional staff to manage the demand.

### COVID-19 Impact – Education & Learning

43. Committed and agreed spend on COVID-19 is forecast to be £1.7m. This includes £1.2m funding for High Needs (DSG), which is the same figure as applied in 2021/22. Last year, following representations to the Education and Schools Funding Agency (ESFA), permission was given to offset from council resources COVID-19 related High Needs (DSG) costs arising from increased demand for Education, Health and Care Plans (EHCPs), estimated at £1.2m per annum.

### **Social Care**

44. The two key areas of pressure are staffing costs and placement costs.
45. On staffing, the main focus remains on the recruitment and retention of social workers, particularly in relation to those in the 'frontline' services of Family Solutions Plus (FSP), the Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) and Youth Justice and Exploitation services. This is primarily to address the caseload numbers, reduce the workflow, bring down the requirement for expensive agency staff and ultimately reduce the numbers of children coming into care.

46. The cost of these managed teams will be about £2.2m if they all remain in place until September/October. The current commitment is about £1.1m, up to June/July 2022 and this cost is being met from COVID-19 funding of £1.1m. The plan is to phase out the teams as and when staffing and caseloads are considered to be sustainable.
47. Based on the current use of agency social workers to fill vacancies it is anticipated that there will be an overspend within the front-line social care teams of at least £3m in 2022/23. However, it is estimated that the actions referred to above should reduce agency staff costs, resulting in a reduced cost of about £1m compared with the current underlying forecast. There is also pressure within the Youth Justice and Exploitation service. Whilst there is some additional funding in 2022/23 to meet ongoing pressures, the priority remains to manage down these pressures as much as possible.
48. The regional Agency Worker Memorandum of Co-operation (MoC), which was reinstated on 1 April 2022, is coming under significant pressure. The agency social work market is also becoming increasingly problematic as many of the available staff are now opting to join project (or managed) teams. This is dramatically reducing the available supply of locums across the region.
49. Non-staff costs include a forecast overspend on legal costs of £0.3m, a continuing pressure from 2021/22 and £0.4m on other costs.
50. There is also a pressure of £0.3m within management and central costs, arising partly from agency costs. However, these budgets are being reviewed to identify potential offsetting savings.
51. Within the Youth service, there is a forecast underspend of -£0.2m, as the new staffing budget is based on a full year and some appointments will start in September.
52. The uncommitted balance of £1.5m Supporting Families funding held in reserves will be used to offset the pressures within the Social Care budget.

### **Social Care Countywide**

#### **Disabled Children services**

53. There is a forecast overspend on services for disabled children of £1.0m, which largely reflects the increased number, and complexity, of placements during 2021/22, which has continued into 2022/23. The increase from April 2021 to March 2022 was 10 (49 to 59), with a disproportionate increase since October 2021 of seven. In previous financial years there were lower rates of increase.
54. The average number of placements in 2021/22 was 52.5, which was about the number when the budget was set. An additional £0.2m was included in the budget in respect of demographic pressures, accounting for an average increase of about three placements. Currently, there are 60 placements meaning that, if this number were to stay the same throughout 2022/23, the unbudgeted additional cost of four

placements would be about £0.3m. Should the increase continue, there could be additional costs above this, potentially another £0.5m based on the previous year's trend.

### Children We Care For (CWCF)

55. The forecast overspend on CWCF, excluding disabled children, is £4.0m. This incorporates a number of variances across the placement types.
56. The number of CWCF at 31 March 2022 was 854. Figures are updated and backdated as the plans are captured in the system. Some children are recorded as 'Becoming Looked After' (BLA), and most of these will actually be CWCF but, because of a time lag, retrospective adjustments are made. Taking this into account, the total forecast number of CWCF included in the 2022/23 budget at 31 March 2022 was about 850, which includes disabled children and unaccompanied children and young people (UCYP).
57. However, the most significant variance (£4.5m overspend) relates to a few, very high cost, placements. There has been an unprecedented period of difficulty in finding suitable placements for some children, often at very short notice, and to meet the particular individual circumstances of the children. At the time the 2022/23 budget was prepared, there was only one such placement and a budget of £0.1m. These placements increased during the latter part of 2021/22 and have continued to increase in 2022/23. Including two placements at the start of June (one costing £12,000 per week and the other £20,000 per week), there are 10 such placements included in the forecast. The provision within the forecast is an estimated cost of £4.6m.
58. As part of a wider brokerage action plan, alternative, lower cost, placements are being sourced for these and other high cost placements.
59. Excluding UCYP, there was little difference between the forecast included within the budget and the actual position at 31 March 2022 (796). However, there was an increase in the more expensive placements offset by reductions in the less expensive placements. For example, the following table shows the difference in foster care placement mix and the additional annual cost of about £0.3m:

	Forecast number March 2022	Actual number March 2022	Variation to Forecast number	Unit cost per week £	Difference per annum £m
In house	156	121	-35	430	-0.8
Independent Foster Agencies (IFA)	197	221	24	890	1.1
<b>Total</b>	<b>353</b>	<b>342</b>	<b>-11</b>		<b>0.3</b>

60. The recruitment of foster carers has had some success, following the slow down caused by the pandemic. There were a net 10 placements with in-house foster carers in 2021/22 and the forecast for 2022/23 is for a net 12 new placements

(offset by a corresponding reduction in IFA placements). To date this year, there have been three new registrations and four de-registrations. However, the four de-registrations were households that were not actively fostering (for various reasons).

61. The total number of CWCF at 31 May 2022 was 860 (excluding those with BLA status), made up as follows:

Children We Care For – category	April	May
Mainstream	722	737
Disabled Children	61	60
<b>Sub-total</b>	<b>783</b>	<b>797</b>
Unaccompanied Children and Young People (UCYP)	61	63
<b>Total</b>	<b>844</b>	<b>860</b>

62. Taking into account those with ‘Becoming Looked After’ (BLA) status, the totals are around 870 for April and 880 for May.

63. The target number of UCYP is 102, in accordance with the Home Office threshold of 0.07% of the child population in Oxfordshire. The grant received for children under 18 is either £114 per day or a higher rate of £143 per day (subject to the threshold and for the National Transfer Scheme). So, a maximum of about £1,000 per week. When a child reaches 18, the funding falls to £237 per week. As many UCYP are 17 years old, this means that there will be a significant drop in funding for them. £0.1m is available in reserves to help mitigate costs this year.

64. The forecast for 2022/23 assumes that the number of placements remains the same for the rest of the financial year, excluding UCYP. However, certain assumptions that reflect the directorate plans are incorporated, including:

- Finding alternative placements for the very high-cost placements. The forecast assumes that current plans for individual placements are met, and the rest are moved by 31 December. A contingency of £0.1m per month is included for two high-cost placements to the end of the financial year.
- ‘Step-down’ from residential care to foster care; and
- The recruitment of foster carers, resulting in a target net 12 increase in in-house placements and a corresponding reduction in Independent Foster Agency (IFA) placements.

65. There are signs that the number of CWCF should reduce, as the number of children subject to a child protection plan (CPP) is reducing. Furthermore, the work to both reduce the backlog of assessments and stem the flow of referrals should start to have some impact on caseloads and, ultimately, should lead to fewer children coming into care. However, until the impact of the actions described above is more certain, forecasts will be made based on current knowledge.

#### COVID-19 Impact

66. An additional £2.9m is included in the budget for COVID-19 related spend. This reflects both ongoing costs and the adverse impact on savings plans. Included

within this figure is £1.1m that is being used to fund the costs of the managed teams within the Family Solutions Plus (FSP) service (in paragraph 46), £0.6m for the Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) and £0.6m to offset unachievable foster care savings included in the previous Medium Term Financial Plan (MTFP).

### **Schools' Costs (other than DSG)**

67. There are no significant variances to report

### **Children's Services Central Costs**

68. There are no significant variances to report.

### **Overall COVID-19 funding**

69. Total COVID-19 grant funding of £4.6m is included in the Children's Services budget for 2022/23. Some of this has been used to fund the shortfall in savings targets included in the previous Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) that have been deferred due to the ongoing impact of COVID-19. Likewise, additional funding is included to meet ongoing pressures that had previously been considered would abate by now, particularly in relation to staffing.

### **Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG)**

70. The current position on DSG is a forecast deficit of £17.5m in 2022/23, as shown below:

<b>Summary of DSG funding</b>	<b>2022/23 Budget</b>	<b>2022/23 Projected Outturn</b>	<b>Variance May 2022</b>
	<b>£m</b>	<b>£m</b>	<b>£m</b>
Schools block	127.2	127.2	0.0
Central Services Schools block	4.8	4.8	0.0
High Needs block	75.1	92.6	17.5
Early Years block	39.2	39.2	0.0
<b>Total</b>	<b>246.3</b>	<b>263.8</b>	<b>17.5</b>

71. The forecast variance for the High Needs Block has reduced compared to the position in the Budget & Business Planning report to Cabinet on 18 January 2022. This set out that spend on High Needs was expected to exceed the grant funding available in 2022/23 by £20.3m. The reduction is due to a lower number of expected independent placements than initially budgeted due to lower numbers of young people in schools in 2021/22 and the expansion of resource bases. In addition, funding set aside for contract pressures is expected to be lower.

72. Key risks to the forecast are the number of additional placements in September (over and above those currently planned), tribunal challenges to placement decisions and the impact of inflation on providers' fees.

73. The existing High Needs deficit management plan which sits behind the High Needs budget agreed at Cabinet in January 2022 is progressing well and savings are being delivered. The existing plan is an initial step towards financial stability and further work is being undertaken.

74. The DfE have a SEND support programme that consists of Safety Valve Agreements for those local authorities with the highest deficits and Delivering Better Value for the remaining deficit authorities. Oxfordshire does not qualify for the DfE Safety Valve scheme. The Delivering Better Value scheme is a national programme investing £85m over 3 years for 55 local authorities. Oxfordshire is in the first tranche of Delivering Better Value with an initial visit due this Summer. The first step is a diagnostics activity of underlying cost drivers of the high needs system, and to then consider potential reforms to manage/mitigate these cost drivers more effectively.
75. The learning from this support will be included in a new version of the Deficit Management plan alongside other initiatives being worked on, including the provision of additional special school places. Despite the initiatives, the deficit will not be eradicated quickly due to increasing numbers of children requiring support.

### **Public Health**

76. The service is currently forecasting a break-even position.

<b>Service Area</b>	<b>2022/23 Latest Budget</b>	<b>Year End Variance May 2022</b>
	<b>£m</b>	<b>£m</b>
Public Health Functions	32.6	0.0
Public Health Recharges	0.6	0.0
Grant Income	-32.6	0.0
Transfer to Public Health Reserve	0.0	0.0
<b>Total Public Health</b>	<b>0.6</b>	<b>0.0</b>

77. The majority of the Public Health budget is funded by ring-fenced Public Health Grant of £32.6m.
78. The Public Health budget also includes £0.6m of council funding for inequalities and domestic abuse.
79. In addition to this, it has been confirmed that the council will receive £1.2m un-ringfenced grant in 2022/23 to support the provision of accommodation-based support to victims of domestic abuse and their children as well as £0.6m un-ringfenced grant in relation to Supplementary Substance Misuse Treatment and Recovery. The conditions linked to the substance misuse funding are that the level of investment in drug and alcohol treatment and recovery is maintained in line with the 2021/22 outturn position. This is the first year of a three-year scheme where the Office for Health Improvement and Disparities (OHID) is working alongside other government departments to support a process of investment in a whole system approach to tackling illicit drug use, including enforcement, diversion, treatment and recovery interventions. Because both of these are grants are un-ringfenced the funding will be held centrally and it is proposed to add the equivalent expenditure budget within Public Health.

### **Government Grants**

80. The Public Health grant is £32.6m in 2022/23. This includes £0.2m awarded to Oxfordshire to support the delivery of routine commissioning in relation to pre-exposure prophylaxis (PrEP) for HIV.

### **Reserves**

81. Public Health earmarked reserves are expected to be £5.0m at 31 March 2023. Work is ongoing to develop a plan to utilise this funding in line with the grant conditions over the medium term.

### **Medium Term Financial Plan Savings**

82. All savings within the 2022/23 budget are to be delivered by year end.

### **Virements**

83. The Cabinet is asked to approve virements to add budgets related to the Supplementary Substance Misuse Treatment and Recovery Grant and grant to support to victims of domestic abuse and their children to Public Health as noted in paragraph 79.

### **Environment & Place**

84. The Directorate is currently made up of three service areas: Planning & Place, Community Operations and Growth & Economy and a directorate management area, which includes the redesign budget saving. Each area is responsible for a specific function to ensure an effective delivery of council's priorities through an effective and efficient use of council's resources.

85. The directorate is currently forecasting a break-even position for 2022/23 although there are inflationary risks that may impact this as the year progresses depending on whether they can be mitigated. This includes increases in the cost of street lighting reflecting the price of energy, increases in the cost of highways maintenance and the impact of increases in the cost of fuel on transport contracts.

<b>Service Area</b>	<b>2022/23 Latest Budget</b>	<b>Year End Variance May 2022</b>
	<b>£m</b>	<b>£m</b>
Planning & Place	2.9	0.0
Community Operations	58.9	0.0
Communities Management	-0.4	0.0
Growth & Economy	1.4	0.0
<b>Total Environment &amp; Place</b>	<b>62.8</b>	<b>0.0</b>

86. Planning & Place is currently forecasting a breakeven position. There is a forecast pressure of £0.3m relating to staffing costs but the service area is aiming for a breakeven position by offsetting this pressure through the utilisation of developer contributions and seeking to fill vacancies through active recruitment. Interim staff cost pressures are expected to be offset by a short-term staffing underspend.

87. There are further staffing shortages that could impact on the ability of the service to deliver a number of projects unless additional capacity is found through successful recruitment.
88. Growth & Economy is forecasting a balanced year end position with a potential pressure of £0.5m relating to an accelerated transport strategy work. If realised, this may mean that the service would overspend by the year end. Further work is being undertaken to understand the impact of this and an update will be given in the next report.
89. Communities Management is currently working through the planned restructure. The first phase of the restructure is currently under way with an anticipated breakeven position. The second phase is expected to be delivered towards the end of the year meaning that the budgeted staff savings may not materialise until the following financial year. Therefore, the budgeted target for 2022/23 will be achieved through a sustainable cost reduction and additional income generation within the directorate.
90. Community Operations is currently forecasting a balanced position providing that the risks around extreme adverse weather or increased vegetation growth does not materialize. The forecast also assumes that the cost of preparing the highway for the Women's Cycle Tour route can be funded within the base budget by reprioritising or combining with other works.
91. The service is likely to realise a level of abnormal inflationary pressure this year, however it is still in the process of confirming the potential impact in 2022/23. A firmer position will be included in the next report.
92. Waste services are currently forecasting a breakeven position. However, it is still early in the financial year so there is insufficient waste tonnage data to provide an accurate forecast for the year. The service has identified further pressures through abnormal contract inflation. If the on-going tonnage data indicates that the waste levels return toward pre COVID-19 levels this pressure may be absorbed. This will be actively monitored throughout the year.
93. Integration & Improvement is currently projecting a balanced year end position. There is a small risk of an overspend due to staff vacancies and difficulties with recruitment resulting in a reliance on interim staff. However, this will be monitored throughout the year and reported in future reports if that risk materialises.

### **Review of Charges**

94. In line with a joint decision to encourage patronage back to the Oxford Park and Ride care parks and to reduce traffic on the network, a number of changes have been proposed that both Oxford City Council and Oxfordshire County Council need to approve. For a trial period of six months starting from 30 September 2022 all of the park and ride sites in Oxford will introduce a combined parking and bus ticket at a reduced rate. The council receives a contribution for each ticket sold and that contribution will reduce from £2.00 to £1.20. The parking period for standalone parking charges is proposed to change from 1-11 to 1-16 hours and

11-24 to 16-24 hours but the charges for both periods will remain the same. The impact of the loss of income is difficult to estimate, but this could be around £0.105m for the six month period. The changes are summarised in the table below.

Park & Ride Thornhill & Water Eaton only Charge Type	Previously approved unit	Revised unit	Previously approved charge	Revised charge
Parking only	1-11 hours	1-16 hours	£2	£2 (no change)
Parking only	11-24 hours	16-24 hours	£4	£4 (no change)
Combined Park and Bus	Not previously reported	Single person	n/a	Contribution to OCC reduced from £2 to £1.20
Combined Park and Bus	Not previously reported	Two or more people	n/a	Contribution to OCC reduced from £2 to £1.20

95. The Emergency Notice charge for a Temporary Traffic Regulation Order is currently continuing to be charged at the 2021/22 rate of £1,460.00 as this charge was omitted from the updated Review of Charges (RoC) agreed by Cabinet in January 2022. It is proposed to increase this by 2% to £1,490.00 from 1 August 2022. Temporary Traffic Regulation orders with "5 days notice" (updated from "Emergency Notice" in the Review of Charges (RoC) agreed by Cabinet in January 2022) will continue to be charged at £910.

### **Commercial Development, Assets & Investment**

96. The Commercial Development, Assets and Investment forecast directorate position is a £0.4m overspend against a budget of £48.0m.

Service Area	2022/23 Latest Budget	Year End Variance May 2022
	£m	£m
Property & Facilities Management	15.3	0.3
Law & Governance	7.8	0.0
Fire & Rescue and Community Safety	24.8	0.1
CDAI Management Costs	0.1	0.0
<b>Total Commercial Development, Assets &amp; Investments</b>	<b>48.0</b>	<b>0.4</b>

97. This overspend is due to higher utilities costs in Property Services and the impact of supporting a large court case in Trading Standards.

98. An underspend arising from vacancies in the Procurement Hub is forecast to offset an overspend in Law & Governance arising from agency staffing needed to cover vacant posts.

99. All other services are currently forecasting breakeven.

### **Supplementary Estimate**

100. A school condition survey is being carried out during the summer holiday period. Each maintained school will have a detailed building and asset condition report compiled and to compliment this it is planned that an energy audit will also be carried out as part of this process. It is envisaged the reports will be ready for end of September 2022 and each school will be provided with their individual copy. The condition report will provide a more detailed view of the condition of the school stock and help inform the schools structural maintenance program and also feed the carbon neutral agenda identifying opportunities to improve the council's carbon footprint.

101. In line with the virement rules, the Cabinet Member for Finance and the Section 151 officer have approved the use of one-off funding from General Fund balances to support the £0.5m cost in 2022/23 (see Annex B – 2c).

### **Customers, Organisational Development & Resources**

102. The Customers, Organisational Development and Resources Directorate forecast is an underspend of -£0.4m against a budget of £36.2m.

<b>Service Area</b>	<b>2022/23 Latest Budget</b>	<b>Year End Variance May 2022</b>
	<b>£m</b>	<b>£m</b>
Corporate Services	1.4	0.0
Human Resources & Organisational Development	3.9	-0.3
Communications, Strategy & Insight	3.4	0.0
ICT & Digital	11.4	0.0
Culture & Customer Experience	9.2	-0.1
Finance	6.9	0.
<b>Total Customers, Organisational Development &amp; Resources</b>	<b>36.2</b>	<b>-0.4</b>

103. Additional funding for the new structure for Human Resources will not be fully utilised this year due to vacancies to be filled later in the year, and likely unfilled vacancies from continued recruitment market challenges. This underspend is -£0.3m.

104. Culture and Customer Experience is forecasting a total of -£0.1m underspend with small movements across all services.

105. All other services are forecasting breakeven.

### **Medium Term Financial Strategy Savings**

106. The 2022/23 budget agreed includes planned directorate savings of £17.4m.

68% are on track to be delivered in year compared to a target of 95% set out in the budget agreed by Full Council in February 2022.

107. £1.7m savings are assessed as red and relate to anticipated savings in Street Lighting. Environment & Place is forecasting a year end breakeven position so this pressure is currently forecast to be met by underspends elsewhere within the service.
108. £1.4m transformation savings in Commercial Development, Assets and Investment for Property Services are not expected to be achieved. The service is reviewing how it can address this but forecast underspends elsewhere should mitigate this pressure.
109. There are also £1.5m Amber savings in Children's and £0.8m in Commercial Development, Assets and Investment.
110. The anticipated delivery of the savings is built into the directorate positions reported above.

### **Debt Management**

#### **Corporate Debtors**

111. The collection rate based on invoice volumes for the first two months is 96.5%, 1.5% above the 95% target, and is 98.4% based on value of invoices.
112. At the end of 2021/22 debt requiring impairment totalled £0.33m. This rose to £0.35m as at the end of May 2022, however this is still within the target range. Mediation is likely to resume on the top value debt case previously reported, however, is now not expected to be resolved in quarter 1 of 2022/23.

#### **Adult Social Care Debtors**

113. The 120-day invoice collection remains at 89%, below the 95% target, however in line with performance throughout last year. The collection rate is impacted by several factors; these processes are being reviewed and should improve collection rates through 2022/23. In addition, the proportion of people paying by direct debit continues to increase.
114. The final balance of bad debt as at the end of 2021/22 was £3.7m. The balance at the end of May 2022 increased to £4.1m. During 2021/22 the trailing impacts of COVID-19 had a significant effect on the means tested social care contributions bad debt. In quarter four of 2021/22 Adult Services, with support from Finance, created an 18-month plan to reduce the levels of bad debt to £2.5m. Additional resources have been brought in and a task group has been assembled to ring-fence and clear the bad debt cases over the next 12 to 18 months. The task group went live in May 2022 but reductions to bad debt are not expected until quarter three of 2022/23 onwards as the task group establish working arrangements, assess, and prioritise the caseload and commence recovery activity. This is identified as a priority ahead of legislation changes to social care charging.

### **Discontinuance of the Oxfordshire County Council – Cherwell District Council Section 113 Agreement**

115. As set out in the update elsewhere on the agenda, Council agreed to formally notify Cherwell District Council of Oxfordshire County Council's decision to give 6 months' notice of its intention to terminate the Section 113 Agreement regarding joint working between the two authorities in February 2022. Estimated costs of £0.7m arising from the implementation of this decision will be met from the contingency budget in 2022/23 and the on-going impact will be addressed through the Budget & Business Planning process for 2023/24.

### **Budgets Held Centrally**

116. There is a combined underspend of £1.1m against budgets held centrally.

#### Capital Financing Costs

117. The borrowing costs and minimum revenue provision for capital projects funded by Prudential Borrowing are either recharged to directorates where savings arising from the scheme are expected to meet them or met corporately from the budget for capital financing costs. Based on the position at the end of 2021/22 it is anticipated that there will be an underspend against this budget in 2022/23 but further work is required to confirm that. An update will be included in the next report.

#### Interest on Balances

118. The current forecast outturn position for in house interest receivable is £3.1m, which is £1.6m above budget. This overachievement of budget is due to the council taking advantage of higher than forecast investment rates. Of the £1.6m overachievement, an estimated £1.0m will be applied to Developer Contribution balances. The reference rate at which interest is applied to Developer Contribution balances will be above zero during 2022/23 for the first time since 2019/20.

119. The forecast outturn position for external fund returns is £3.8m, in line with the budget.

#### Inflation and Contingency

120. Contingency budget is held to cover:

- the risk that demographic pressures are higher than forecast;
- any unfunded new burdens or unfunded elements of government grant;
- any potential pay awards beyond budgeted assumptions plus other inflationary risk; and
- the risk that proposed savings are not achieved in full, based on the performance targets set out in the Financial Strategy.

121. The inflation and contingency budget for 2022/23 totals £12.3m. This includes £4.4m funding for pay inflation assumed at 2.5% in the budget approved in February 2022. The three NJC unions (UNISON, GMB and Unite) have submitted their pay claim for local government services (Green Book) employees for 2022. The claim seeks "a substantial increase with a minimum of £2,000 or the current

rate of the Retail Price Index (RPI) – whichever is greater – on all spinal column points. Each 1.0% increase above 2.5% is estimated to cost £1.8m and would need to be met from on-going contingency budget which would be moved into directorate budgets after the increase is agreed.

122. The latest estimate from the Office of National Statistics indicates that CPI inflation is currently at 9.1% for the 12 months up to May (up from 9.0% in April). Inflation is likely to have a significant impact on the council's services that will need to be managed and mitigated as the year progresses and then be considered through the Budget & Business Planning Process for 2023/24.

### **Reserves**

123. As set out in Annex B - 3 Earmarked Reserves are forecast to be £193m at 31 March 2023.

124. **Budget Priorities Reserve** – This includes £7.7m one - off funding to support the council's priorities that was agreed as part of the 2022/23 budget in February 2022. £0.250m has been agreed to be used to support the implementation of "Vision Zero". A further £0.250m will be used to support partners in the delivery of a food strategy action plan. This will seek to address food poverty, inequality, access to healthy food, and supporting/enhancing local food supply.

125. As set out in the Earmarked Reserves and General Balances Policy Statement for 2022/23 £7m from the Budget Priorities Reserve was agreed to be used to contribute to the Capital Reserve to help meet the costs of the 20 MPH Speed Limit Programme and the Zero Emission Buses Regional Areas (ZEBRA) Schemes.

126. £10.6m of the total held in the reserve relates to Adult Social Care. £2.0m is earmarked against the pressure related to the Outcome Based Contract for Mental Health as noted in paragraph 15. A further £5.5m was released from the council's contribution to the Better Care Fund Pool as a result of additional contributions from OCCG over the last three financial years. As noted in paragraph 21 the majority of this funding is expected to be used during 2022/23.

127. **COVID-19 Reserve** - The balance held in the reserve after taking account of £8.4m used to support directorate budgets in 2022/23 is £17.9m. A further £11.7m has been agreed to be used to fund COVID-19 related pressures in future years as part of the Medium Term Financial Strategy. £0.5m is being used to fund IT equipment delivered in April 2022 that was originally agreed to be spent in 2021/22 and £0.1m has been committed for additional costs within the Coroner's service.

128. The uncommitted balance of £5.5m is available to support further COVID-19 pressures on a one-off basis.

129. **Council Tax Collection Fund Reserve** – as part of the 2022/23 budget, £3.0m of the £6.0m balance held in this reserve was agreed to be used to contribute to the Capital Reserve to help meet the costs of the 20 MPH Speed Limit Programme and the Zero Emission Buses Regional Areas (ZEBRA) Schemes.

130. **Business Rates Reserve** – This reserve is held to manage fluctuations in

Business Rate income that the Council receives. As noted in the budget agreed by Council in February 2022, Business Rate income for 2022/23 was estimated as information about both the 2022/23 income and 2021/22 deficit position was received from the district councils after the budget was agreed. The in - year income is £5.9m more than estimated in the budget. This is proposed to be added to the Business Rates Reserve pending agreement about the use of this funding. A further update will be provided later in the year when grant funding for the council's share of the 2021/22 deficit is confirmed.

131. An unusable reserve was created in 2020/21 to hold **negative High Needs DSG balances** in line with a change to the CIPFA code of practice on DSG High Needs deficits. The net deficit of £17.5m for 2022/23 (see paragraph 71) will increase the total deficit held in the reserve to £47.3m. The regulations which require the negative balance to be held in an unusable reserve will come to an end on 1 April 2023. The on-going impact will need to be considered as part the Budget & Business Planning process for 2023/24.

### Grants

132. As set out in Annex B - 4 government grants totalling £395.1m are expected to be received by the Council during 2022/23. Changes compared to the budget agreed in February 2022 include the addition of the Market Sustainability and Fair Cost of Care grant (£1.5m), Domestic Abuse Grant (£1.1m) and Substance Misuse Treatment and Recovery grant (£0.6m).

### Homes for Ukraine

133. The Homes for Ukraine scheme was launched on 14 March 2022. The scheme is open to Ukrainian nationals who were residents in Ukraine prior to 1 January 2022 and also to their immediate family members to be sponsored to come to the UK. Guests will be able to live and work in the UK for up to 3 years and access benefits, healthcare, employment, and other support. Local councils are responsible for initial accommodation and safeguarding checks, including at least one in person visit, payments to sponsors and an initial £200 payment to guests on arrival, social care assessments and ongoing support, school places, and information about the local area.
134. Grant funding of £10,500 per person is being provided to upper tier councils to enable them to work with district councils and other partners to provide support to families to rebuild their lives and fully integrate into communities. This funding is un-ringfenced but has a number of conditions attached. Funding for councils to administer optional 'thank you' payments at the £350 per sponsoring household per month rate will also be provided through a separate ringfenced grant. Payments will be based on the actual number of Homes for Ukraine guests (for the £10,500 tariff) and the actual number of sponsoring households (for the £350 'thank you' payments) within each area. More detailed grant conditions providing more information about how this will operate are awaited but for both the £10,500 and £350 grants DLUHC have indicated that "if the amount of grant paid to an authority exceeds the authority's actual pressures based on the number of guests and sponsorship households in their area, the difference will need to be repaid". The Homes for Ukraine Scheme is being extended to include unaccompanied Children. The guidance has not yet been updated, but briefings have indicated the scheme would be for three years in relation to unaccompanied children, and that there would be no additional funding so this will need to be met from the existing £10,500 tariff per guest.

135. The Department for Education (DfE) will allocate funding to councils on a per pupil basis to provide education services and support for children with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) for children from families arriving from Ukraine.

136. As at 31 May 2022, 1,014 Ukrainian nationals had moved into Oxfordshire. £10.6m grant funding has been received to date and is available to support the operation of the scheme in Oxfordshire for those people. Updates on the number of guests and the funding arrangements will continue to be provided throughout the year.

#### **General Balances**

137. As set out in the Provisional Outturn Report to Cabinet on 21 June 2022, general Balances were £39.2m as at 31 March 2022 and will reduce to £37.2m after taking account of a budgeted contribution of £1.0m and the agreed use of £3.0m to support the help meet the costs of the 20 MPH Speed Limit Programme and the Zero Emission Buses Regional Areas (ZEBRA) Schemes. The risk assessed level of balances for 2022/23 is £28.9m. As noted in paragraph 100-101 £0.5m one – off funding for the schools' condition survey in summer 2022 has also been agreed to be met from balances.

138. After taking account of the projected overspend of £4.4m, balances will reduce to £32.3m. This is £3.4m above the risk assessed level.

**Business Management & Monitoring Report**  
**Position to the end of May 2022**  
**Budget Monitoring**

Directorate	Net Budget (Latest Estimate)	Projected Full Year Spend	Projected Year End Variance underspend- overspend+	Projected Year End Variance	Projected Year End Traffic Light
	£000	£000	£000	£000	Red > 1.5% Amber >1.1% <1.5% Green on track
Adults Services	212,099	212,099	0	0.00%	G
Children's Services	148,793	154,293	5,500	3.70%	R
Public Health	612	612	0	0.00%	G
Environment and Place	62,810	62,810	0	0.00%	G
Commerical Development, Assets and Investments	48,045	48,459	414	0.86%	G
Customers, Organisational Development and Resources	36,155	35,726	-429	-1.19%	G
<b>Directorate Total Net</b>	<b>508,514</b>	<b>513,999</b>	<b>5,485</b>	<b>1.08%</b>	<b>A</b>

**Business Management & Monitoring Report**  
**Position to the end of May 2022**  
**Budget Monitoring**

Directorate	Net Budget (Latest Estimate)	Projected Full Year Spend	Projected Year End Variance underspend- overspend+	Projected Year End Variance	Projected Year End Traffic Light
	£000	£000	£000	£000	Red > 1.5% Amber >1.1% <1.5% Green on track
<b>Budget held Centrally</b>					
Capital Financing	26,119	26,119	0		
Interest on Balances	-13,007	-14,107	-1,100		
Contingency	12,284	12,284	0		
Unringfenced Specific Government Grants	-31,232	-31,232	0		
Insurance	1,364	1,364	0		
Contributions to (+)/from (-)reserves	16,328	16,328	0		
Contribution to (+)/from(-) balances	0	0	0		
<b>Total Budget held Centrally</b>	<b>11,856</b>	<b>10,756</b>	<b>-1,100</b>		
<b>Net Operating Budget</b>	<b>520,370</b>	<b>524,755</b>	<b>4,385</b>	<b>0.84%</b>	
Business Rates & Council Tax Funding	-520,370	-520,370	0		
<b>Forecast Year End Position</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>4,385</b>	<b>4,385</b>		

**Business Management and Monitoring Report: Adult Services**  
**Position to the end of May 2022**  
**Revenue Budget Monitoring**

		Net Budget (Latest Estimate)	Projected Full Year Spend	Projected Year End Variance	Variance Last Month	Change in Variance
		£000	£000	underspend- overspend+	£000	£000
<b>SCS1</b>	<b><u>Adult Social Care</u></b>					
<b>SCS1-1A</b>	<b>Better Care Fund Pool Contribution</b>	<b>87,579</b>	<b>87,579</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>SCS1-1B</b>	<b>Adults with Care and Support Needs Pool Contribution</b>	<b>102,481</b>	<b>102,481</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>SCS1-2 to 9</b>	<b>Other Adult Social Care Services</b>					
SCS1-2	Adult Protection & Mental Capacity	4,082	4,082	0	0	0
SCS1-3	Provider & Support Services	3,384	3,384	0	0	0
SCS1-4	Domestic Violence & Abuse Support Service	0	0	0	0	0
SCS1-5	Housing Related Support	1,368	1,368	0	0	0
SCS1-6	Other Funding	-7,599	-7,599	0	0	0
SCS1-8	Adult Social Care Recharges	6	6	0	0	0
SCS1-9	Adult Social Care Staffing & Infrastructure	14,140	14,140	0	0	0
	<b>Total Other ASC Services</b>	<b>15,381</b>	<b>15,381</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>
	<b>Total Adult Social Care</b>	<b>205,441</b>	<b>205,441</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>SCS2</b>	<b>Commissioning</b>	<b>6,658</b>	<b>6,658</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>
	<b>Total Adult Services</b>	<b>212,099</b>	<b>212,099</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>

**Business Management & Monitoring Report: Children's Services**  
**Position to the end of May 2022**  
**Revenue Budget Monitoring**

		Net Budget (Latest Estimate)	Projected Full Year Spend	Projected Year End Variance	Variance Last Month	Change in Variance
		£000	£000	underspend- overspend+	£000	£000
<b>CEF1</b>	<b><u>Education &amp; Learning</u></b>					
CEF1-1	Management & Central Costs	1,209	1,209	0	0	0
CEF1-2	SEND	6,758	6,758	0	0	0
CEF1-3	Learning & School Improvement	1,166	1,166	0	0	0
CEF1-4	Access to Learning	27,023	27,023	0	0	0
CEF1-5	Learner Engagement Service	312	312	0	0	0
	<b>Total Education &amp; Learning</b>	<b>36,468</b>	<b>36,468</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>CEF2</b>	<b><u>Children's Social Care</u></b>					
CEF2-1	Management & Central Costs	5,263	5,263	0	0	0
CEF2-2	Social Care	30,635	32,135	1,500	0	1,500
	<b>Total Children's Social Care</b>	<b>35,898</b>	<b>37,398</b>	<b>1,500</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>1,500</b>

**Business Management & Monitoring Report: Children's Services**  
**Position to the end of May 2022**  
**Revenue Budget Monitoring**

		Net Budget (Latest Estimate)	Projected Full Year Spend	Projected Year End Variance	Variance Last Month	Change in Variance
		£000	£000	underspend- overspend+	£000	£000
<b>CEF3</b>	<b><u>Children's Social Care Countywide Services</u></b>					
CEF3-1	Corporate Parenting	57,659	61,659	4,000	0	4,000
CEF3-2	Safeguarding	3,739	3,739	0	0	0
CEF3-3	Services for Disabled Children	9,195	9,195	0	0	0
CEF3-4	Youth Offending Service	876	876	0	0	0
	<b>Total Children's Social Care Countywide Services</b>	<b>71,469</b>	<b>75,469</b>	<b>4,000</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>4,000</b>
<b>CEF4</b>	<b><u>Schools</u></b>					
CEF4-1	Delegated Budgets	0	0	0	0	0
CEF4-2	Nursery Education Funding (EY)	0	0	0	0	0
CEF4-3	Non-Delegated School Costs	216	216	0	0	0
CEF4-4	School Support Non-Negotiable Recharges	-46	-46	0	0	0
CEF4-5	Capitalised Repairs & Maintenance	0	0	0	0	0
	<b>Total Schools</b>	<b>170</b>	<b>170</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>

**Business Management & Monitoring Report: Children's Services**  
**Position to the end of May 2022**  
**Revenue Budget Monitoring**

	Net Budget (Latest Estimate)	Projected Full Year Spend	Projected Year End Variance	Variance Last Month	Change in Variance
	£000	£000	underspend- overspend+	£000	£000
<b>CEF5 Children's Services Central Costs</b>					
CEF5-1 Management & Administration	945	945	0	0	0
CEF5-2 Premature Retirement Compensation	3,243	3,243	0	0	0
CEF5-3 Commissioning Recharge	600	600	0	0	0
<b>Total Children's Services Central Costs</b>	<b>4,788</b>	<b>4,788</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>Total Children's Services</b>	<b>148,793</b>	<b>154,293</b>	<b>5,500</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>5,500</b>
<b>MEMORANDUM: DEDICATED SCHOOLS GRANT - DSG Funded Expenditure (Gross)</b>					
Schools DSG	127,190	127,190	0	0	0
High Needs DSG	75,095	75,095	0	0	0
Early Years DSG	39,160	39,160	0	0	0
Central DSG	4,820	4,820	0	0	0
<b>Total DSG Funded Expenditure</b>	<b>246,265</b>	<b>246,265</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>

**Business Management & Monitoring Report : Public Health**  
**Position to the end of May 2022**  
**Revenue Budget Monitoring**

		Net Budget (Latest Estimate)	Projected Full Year Spend	Projected Year End Variance	Variance Last Month	Change in Variance
		£000	£000	underspend- overspend+	£000	£000
<b>PH 1 &amp; 2</b>	<b>Public Health Functions</b>					
PH1-1	Sexual Health	6,440	6,440	0	0	0
PH1-2	NHS Health Check Programme	645	645	0	0	0
PH1-3	Health Protection	8	8	0	0	0
PH1-4	National Child Measurement Programme	154	154	0	0	0
PH1-5	Public Health Advice	150	150	0	0	0
PH1-6	0 - 5 year olds	8,848	8,848	0	0	0
PH2-1	Obesity	1,104	1,104	0	0	0
PH2-2	Physical Activity	90	90	0	0	0
PH2-3	Public Health General	2,161	2,161	0	0	0
PH2-4	Smoking and Tobacco Control	615	615	0	0	0
PH2-5	Children's 5-19 Public Health Programmes	2,297	2,297	0	0	0
PH2-6	Other Public Health Services	1,892	1,892	0	0	0
PH2-7	Drugs and Alcohol	7,683	7,683	0	0	0
PH2-8	Domestic Violence	461	461	0	0	0
	<b>Total Public Health Functions</b>	<b>32,548</b>	<b>32,548</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>PH3</b>	<b>Public Health Recharges</b>	<b>633</b>	<b>633</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>PH4</b>	<b>Grant Income</b>	<b>-32,569</b>	<b>-32,569</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>
	<b>Transfer to Public Health Reserve</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>
	<b>Total Public Health</b>	<b>612</b>	<b>612</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>

**Business Management & Monitoring Report: Environment and Place**  
**Position to the end of May 2022**  
**Revenue Budget Monitoring**

		Net Budget (Latest Estimate)	Projected Full Year Spend	Projected Year End Variance	Variance Last Month	Change in Variance
		£000	£000	underspend- overspend+	£000	£000
PG1	Planning & Growth Management	0	0	0	0	0
PG2	Planning & Place	2,946	2,946	0	0	0
PG3	Growth & Economy	1,416	1,416	0	0	0
COM1	Communities Management	-436	-436	0	0	0
COM2	Community Operations	58,884	58,884	0	0	0
<b>TOTAL ENVIRONMENT AND PLACE</b>		<b>62,810</b>	<b>62,810</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>

**Business Management & Monitoring Report: Commercial Development, Assets & Investment**  
**Position to the end of May 2022**  
**Revenue Budget Monitoring**

		Net Budget (Latest Estimate)	Projected Full Year Spend	Projected Year End Variance	Variance Last Month	Change in Variance
		£000	£000	£000	£000	£000
				underspend- overspend+		
CDAI1	Property, Investment & FM	15,352	15,659	307	0	307
CDAI2	Law & Governance	7,785	7,826	41	0	41
EE4	Fire & Rescue and Community Safety	24,776	24,842	66	0	66
CDAI4	CDAI Management Costs	132	132	0	0	0
<b>Total Commercial Development, Assets &amp; Investment</b>		<b>48,045</b>	<b>48,459</b>	<b>414</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>414</b>

**Business Management & Monitoring Report: Customers, Organisational Development & Resources**  
**Position to the end of May 2022**  
**Revenue Budget Monitoring**

		Net Budget (Latest Estimate)	Projected Full Year Spend	Projected Year End Variance underspend- overspend+	Variance Last Month	Change in Variance
		£000	£000	£000	£000	£000
COD1	Corporate Services	1,440	1,440	0	0	0
COD2	Human Resources & Organisational Development	3,875	3,564	-311	0	-311
COD3	Communications, Strategy & Insight	3,379	3,350	-29	0	-29
COD4	ICT & Digital	11,298	11,298	0	0	0
COD5	Culture & Customer Experience	9,232	9,149	-83	0	-83
COD6	Finance	6,931	6,925	-6	0	-6
<b>Total Customers, Organisational Development &amp; Resources</b>		<b>36,155</b>	<b>35,726</b>	<b>-429</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>-429</b>

**Business Management & Monitoring Report: Adult Services**  
**Position to the end of May 2022**  
**Revenue Budget Monitoring**

		<b>BUDGET 2022/23</b>		
		<b>Original Budget</b>	<b>Movement to Date</b>	<b>Latest Estimate</b>
		<b>£000</b>	<b>£000</b>	<b>£000</b>
<b>SCS1</b>	<b>Adult Social Care</b>			
SCS1-1A	Better Care Fund Pool Contribution			
	Gross Expenditure.	65,069	22,510	87,579
	Gross Income.	0	0	0
		65,069	22,510	87,579
SCS1-1B	Adults with Care and Support Needs Pool Contribution			
	Gross Expenditure.	120,077	-17,596	102,481
	Gross Income.	0	0	0
		120,077	-17,596	102,481
SCS1-2 to SCS1-9	Other Adult Social Care Services			
	Gross Expenditure	40,141	-4,891	35,250
	Gross Income	-19,869	0	-19,869
		20,272	-4,891	15,381
	<b>Total Adult Social Care</b>	<b>205,418</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>205,441</b>
<b>SCS2</b>	<b>Commissioning</b>			
	Gross Expenditure	6,761	2,208	8,969
	Gross Income	-765	-1,546	-2,311
	<b>Total Commissioning</b>	<b>5,996</b>	<b>662</b>	<b>6,658</b>
	Expenditure Total	232,048	2,231	234,279
	Income Total	-20,634	-1,546	-22,180
	<b>Total Adult Services Net Budget</b>	<b>211,414</b>	<b>685</b>	<b>212,099</b>

**Business Management & Monitoring Report: Children's Services**  
**Position to the end of May 2022**  
**Revenue Budget Monitoring**

		<b>BUDGET 2022/23</b>		
		<b>Original Budget</b>	<b>Movement to Date</b>	<b>Latest Estimate</b>
		<b>£000</b>	<b>£000</b>	<b>£000</b>
CEF1	Education & Learning			
	Gross Expenditure	114,885	266	115,151
	Gross Income	-78,560	-123	-78,683
		36,325	143	36,468
CEF2	Children's Social Care			
	Gross Expenditure	38,041	2,630	40,671
	Gross Income	-2,680	-2,093	-4,773
		35,361	537	35,898
CEF3	Children's Social Care Countywide Services			
	Gross Expenditure	76,190	273	76,463
	Gross Income	-4,994	0	-4,994
		71,196	273	71,469
CEF4	Schools			
	Gross Expenditure	200,279	131	200,410
	Gross Income	-200,063	-177	-200,240
		216	-46	170
CEF5	Children's Services Central Costs			
	Gross Expenditure	5,168	19	5,187
	Gross Income	-386	-13	-399
		4,782	6	4,788
	Expenditure Total	434,563	3,319	437,882
	Income Total	-286,683	-2,406	-289,089
	<b>Total Children's Services Net Budget</b>	<b>147,880</b>	<b>913</b>	<b>148,793</b>
<b>MEMORANDUM: DEDICATED SCHOOLS GRANT - DSG Funded Expenditure (Gross)</b>				
	Schools DSG	127,190	0	127,190
	High Needs DSG	75,095	0	75,095
	Early Years DSG	39,160	0	39,160
	Central DSG	4,506	314	4,820
	<b>Total Gross</b>	<b>245,951</b>	<b>314</b>	<b>246,265</b>

**Business Management & Monitoring Report: Public Health**  
**Position to the end of May 2022**  
**Revenue Budget Monitoring**

		<b>BUDGET 2022/23</b>		
		<b>Original Budget</b>	<b>Movement to Date</b>	<b>Latest Estimate</b>
		<b>£000</b>	<b>£000</b>	<b>£000</b>
PH 1 & 2	Public Health Functions			
	Gross Expenditure	33,296	-86	33,210
	Gross Income	-650	-12	-662
		32,646	-98	32,548
PH3	Public Health Recharges			
	Gross Expenditure	633	0	633
	Gross Income	0	0	0
		633	0	633
PH4	Grant Income			
	Gross Expenditure	0	0	0
	Gross Income	-32,569	0	-32,569
		-32,569	0	-32,569
	Expenditure Total	33,929	-86	33,843
	Income Total	-33,219	-12	-33,231
	<b>Total Public Health Net Budget</b>	<b>710</b>	<b>-98</b>	<b>612</b>

**Business Management & Monitoring Report: Environment and Place**  
**Position to the end of May 2022**  
**Revenue Budget Monitoring**

		<b>BUDGET 2022/23</b>		
		<b>Original Budget £000</b>	<b>Movement to Date £000</b>	<b>Latest Estimate £000</b>
PG1	Planning & Growth Management			
	Gross Expenditure	0	0	0
	Gross Income	0	0	0
		0	0	0
PG2	Planning & Place			
	Gross Expenditure	10,448	-251	10,197
	Gross Income	-7,250	-1	-7,251
		3,198	-252	2,946
PG3	Growth & Economy			
	Gross Expenditure	1,943	10	1,953
	Gross Income	-537	0	-537
		1,406	10	1,416
COM1	Communities Management			
	Gross Expenditure	-412	-24	-436
	Gross Income	0	0	0
		-412	-24	-436
COM2	Community Operations			
	Gross Expenditure	106,329	582	106,911
	Gross Income	-47,878	-149	-48,027
		58,451	433	58,884
	<b>Expenditure Total</b>	<b>118,308</b>	<b>317</b>	<b>118,625</b>
	<b>Income Total</b>	<b>-55,665</b>	<b>-150</b>	<b>-55,815</b>
	<b>Total Environment and Place Net Budget</b>	<b>62,643</b>	<b>167</b>	<b>62,810</b>

**Business Management & Monitoring Report: Commercial Development, Assets & Investment**  
**Position to the end of May 2022**  
**Revenue Budget Monitoring**

		<b>BUDGET 2022/23</b>		
		<b>Original Budget</b>	<b>Movement to Date</b>	<b>Latest Estimate</b>
		<b>£000</b>	<b>£000</b>	<b>£000</b>
CDAI1	Property, Investment & FM			
	Gross Expenditure	23,463	-207	23,256
	Gross Income	-8,070	166	-7,904
	<b>Total Property, Investment &amp; Facilities Management</b>	<b>15,393</b>	<b>-41</b>	<b>15,352</b>
CDAI2	Law & Governance			
	Gross Expenditure	9,172	117	9,289
	Gross Income	-1504	0	-1,504
	<b>Total Law &amp; Governance</b>	<b>7,668</b>	<b>117</b>	<b>7,785</b>
CDAI3	Community Safety			
	Gross Expenditure	27,929	38	27,967
	Gross Income	-3,226	35	-3,191
	<b>Total Community Safety</b>	<b>24,703</b>	<b>73</b>	<b>24,776</b>
CDAI4	Management Costs			
	Gross Expenditure	130	2	132
	Gross Income	0	0	0
	<b>Total Mangement Costs</b>	<b>130</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>132</b>
	Expenditure Total	60,694	-50	60,644
	Income Total	-12,800	201	-12,599
	<b>Total Commerical Development, Assets &amp; Investment Net Budget</b>	<b>47,894</b>	<b>151</b>	<b>48,045</b>

**Business Management & Monitoring Report: Customers, Organisational Development & Resources**  
**Position to the end of May 2022**  
**Revenue Budget Monitoring**

		<b>BUDGET 2022/23</b>		
		<b>Original Budget</b>	<b>Movement to Date</b>	<b>Latest Estimate</b>
		<b>£000</b>	<b>£000</b>	<b>£000</b>
CODR1	Corporate Services			
	Gross Expenditure	2,010	22	2,032
	Gross Income	-592	0	-592
		1,418	22	1,440
CODR2	Human Resources & Organisational Development			
	Gross Expenditure	4,909	54	4,963
	Gross Income	-1,088	0	-1,088
		3,821	54	3,875
CODR3	Communications, Strategy & Insight			
	Gross Expenditure	4,350	54	4,404
	Gross Income	-1,025	0	-1,025
		3,325	54	3,379
CODR4	ICT & Digital			
	Gross Expenditure	14,115	548	14,663
	Gross Income	-3,341	-24	-3,365
		10,774	524	11,298
CODR5	Culture & Customer Experience			
	Gross Expenditure	16,350	38	16,388
	Gross Income	-7,382	226	-7,156
		8,968	264	9,232
CODR6	Finance			
	Gross Expenditure	9,010	49	9,059
	Gross Income	-2,130	2	-2,128
		6,880	51	6,931
	Expenditure Total	50,744	765	51,509
	Income Total	-15,558	204	-15,354
	<b>Total Customers &amp; Organisational Development and Resources Net Budget</b>	<b>35,186</b>	<b>969</b>	<b>36,155</b>

**Business Management Report  
Position to the end of May 2022**

**CABINET IS RECOMMENDED TO APPROVE THE VIREMENTS AS DETAILED BELOW:**

Directorate (CD = Cross Directorate)	Month of Cabinet meeting	Month of Directorate MMR	Narration	Budget Book Line	Service Area	Permanent / Temporary	Expenditure + increase / - decrease £000	Income - increase / + decrease £000		
CD	Jul	May	Domestic Abuse Grant	PH1 & 2	Public Health Functions	T	1141	0		
				VSMMGT	Strategic Measures	T	0	-1141		
	Jul	May	Substance Misuse Treatment & Recovery Grant	PH1 & 2	Public Health Functions	T	620	0		
				VSMMGT	Strategic Measures	T	0	-620		
				BCFPOOL	Live Well Pool	CEP2-1	Management & Central Costs	P	-16	0
						CEP2-2	Social Care	P	-55	0
						COD5	Culture & Customer Experience	P	1,142	0
				Charging Reform Implementation Support Grant	SCS1-9	Adult Social Care Staffing &	T	103	0	
	VSMMGT	Strategic Measures	T		0	-103				
EP	Jul	May	Change of Cost Centre	COM2-1	Community Operations Management	P	1,919	306		
				COM2-2	Infrastructure Operations	P	-1,919	-306		
				SAP231 Budget Tidy	COM2-2	Infrastructure Operations	P	914	-914	
CODR	Jul	May	Removal of ASC income target	COD5	Culture & Customer Experience	P	-1,071	1,071		
Grand Total							566	-566		

**Business Management Report**  
**Position to the end of May 2022**

**NEW VIREMENTS THAT HAVE BEEN ACTIONED FOR CABINET TO NOTE**

Directorate (CD = Cross Directorate)	Month of Cabinet Meeting	Month of Directorate MMR	Narration	Budget Book Line	Service Area	Permanent / Temporary	Expenditure + increase / - decrease £000	Income - increase / + decrease £000			
CD	Jul	May	School Admissions to Customer Services	CEF4-4	Schools Support Service Recharges	P	-45.7	0			
				COD5	Culture & Customer Experience	P	45.7	0			
			County Hall reception to Customer Service funds	CDAI1	Property & Community Facilities Management	P	-30	0			
				COD5	Culture & Customer Experience	P	30	0			
			for new countywide digital hybrid post service & new cost centre K10223 held centrally by corporate Facilities Management CDAI	CDAI1	Property & Community Facilities Management	P	41	0			
				CDAI2	Law & Governance	P	-2	0			
				CEF1-2	SEND Service	P	-1	0			
				CEF1-3	Learning & School Improvement	P	-7	0			
				CEF3-1	Corporate Parenting	P	-6	0			
				COD1	Corporate Services	P	-1	0			
				COD2	Human Resources & Organisational Development	P	-2	0			
				COD5	Culture & Customer Experience	P	-7	0			
				COD6	Finance	P	0	0			
				COM2-2	Infrastructure Operations	P	-4	0			
				COM2-5	Integration & Improvement	P	-1	0			
				EE4-1	Fire & Rescue	P	-9	0			
				EE4-2	Emergency Planning	P	0	0			
				EE4-4	Trading Standards	P	-1	0			
				PG2	Planning & Place	P	0	0			
			VSMGMT	Strategic Measures	P	-1	0				
			Llewelyn Morgan costs	COD4	ICT & Digital	P	113	0			
				PG2	Planning & Place	P	-113	0			
			N93170 Pressures Code Adjustments	COD4	ICT & Digital	P	67	0			
				PG2	Planning & Place	P	-67	0			
			CS	Jul	May	In year expenditure and income budgets for salary recharge	CEF3-2	Safeguarding	T	24	-24
							DSG Central Block Adjustments	CEF1-1	Management & Central Costs	P	12
						CEF1-3	Learning & School Improvement	P	0	0	
CEF1-4	Access to Learning	P				22	-22				
CEF1-5	Learner Engagement	P				88	-88				
CEF4-3	Non-Delegated Schools Costs	P				-135	135				
CEF4-5	Capitalised Repairs & Maintenance	P				313	-313				
CEF5-1	Management & Admin	P				14	-14				
CDAI	Jul	May	Pre-year internal adjustments to meet cost centre forecasts	EE4-1	Fire & Rescue	T	-79	0			
				EE4-2	Emergency Planning	T	43	0			
				EE4-3	Gypsy & Traveller Services	T	0	36			

**Business Management Report**  
**Position to the end of May 2022**

**NEW VIREMENTS THAT HAVE BEEN ACTIONED FOR CABINET TO NOTE**

Directorate (CD = Cross Directorate)	Month of Cabinet Meeting	Month of Directorate MMR	Narration	Budget Book Line	Service Area	Permanent / Temporary	Expenditure + increase / - decrease £000	Income - increase / + decrease £000
EP	Jul	May	To move the remaining staff budget to the new cost centre following the virement last year.	COM2-2	Infrastructure Operations	P	134	0
				COM2-4	Commissioning	P	-134	0
			COM2-2	Infrastructure Operations	P	98	-98	
			COM2-2	Infrastructure Operations	P	50	-50	
AS	Jul	May	Market Sustainability & Fair Cost of Care Fund	SCS2	Commissioning	T	1,547	-1,547
PH	Jul	May	Domestic Abuse Realign Budgets	PH1 & 2	Public Health Functions	P	12	-12
CODR	Jul	May	Removal of income target	COD5	Culture & Customer Experience	P	-46	46
			Removal of Request for Information income target	COD5	Culture & Customer Experience	P	-16	16
			Removal of MASH income target	COD5	Culture & Customer Experience	P	-55	55
			Removal of income target	COD5	Culture & Customer Experience	P	-109	109
Grand Total							1,783	-1,783

**Business Management Report  
Position to the end of May 2022**

**CABINET IS RECOMMENDED TO NOTE THE SUPPLEMENTARY ESTIMATE REQUEST AS DETAILED BELOW:**

	Month of Cabinet meeting	Month of Directorate MMR	Narration	Budget Book Line	Service Area	Permanent / Temporary	Expenditure + increase / - decrease £000	Income - increase / + decrease £000
CD	Jul	May	Schools Condition Survey	CDAI 1	Corporate Facilities Management	T	500	0
Grand Total							500	

**Business Management & Monitoring Report**  
**Position to the end of May 2022**  
**Earmarked Reserves**

	2022/23			Commentary
	Balance at 1 April 2022	Movement	Forecast Balance at 31 March 2023	
	£m	£m	£m	
Schools' Reserves	14.6	0.0	14.6	In accordance with the Education Reform Act 1988, the scheme of Local Management of Schools provides for the carry forward of individual schools surpluses and deficits. These reserves are committed to be spent on schools. Other School Reserves cover a number of miscellaneous education activities, including amounts loaned to individual schools against school reserves, and School Partnership Accounts which are operated in respect of inter-school activities.
Vehicle and Equipment Reserve	2.7	0.0	2.7	This reserve is to fund future replacements of vehicles and equipment.
Grants and Contributions Reserve	24.7	-0.6	24.1	This reserve has been set up to hold unspent grants and contributions committed to be spent in future years. This includes the Public Health Grant
Government Initiatives	3.4	-2.3	1.1	This reserve is used to hold underspends on budgets funded by unringfenced grants held that relate to specific agreed outcomes or the implementation of Government initiatives.
Trading Accounts	0.4	0.0	0.4	This reserve holds funds relating to traded activities to help manage investment.
Council Elections	0.1	0.2	0.3	This will be used to fund future elections. In years where no County Elections take place any underspend on the Council Elections budget will be transferred to this reserve.
Partnership Reserves	2.4	0.0	2.4	This relates to funding for the Growth Deal
On Street Car Parking	4.0	0.0	4.0	This surplus has arisen under the operation of the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984 (section 55). The purposes for which these monies can be used are defined by statute.
Transformation Reserve	2.2	0.0	2.2	This reserve is needed to fund the implementation costs of the Council's Transformation programme.
Demographic Risk Reserve	9.0	4.0	13.0	In light of the significant pressures relating to High Needs DSG and other budgets with demographic volatility. This reserve will help to manage demographic risk.
Youth Provision Reserve	0.2		0.2	£1.0m allocated over 2019/20 and 2020/21 to provide seed funding for locality based youth provision

**Business Management & Monitoring Report**  
**Position to the end of May 2022**  
**Earmarked Reserves**

	2022/23			Commentary
	Balance at 1 April 2022	Movement	Forecast Balance at 31 March 2023	
	£m	£m	£m	
Budget Priorities Reserve	18.5	-6.7	11.8	This reserve is being used to support the implementation of the Council's priorities and the Medium Term Financial Strategy.
Budget Equalisation	0.0	1.6	1.6	This reserve is set up to manage the timing differences between funding changes and emerging pressures over the period of the MTFS.
Insurance Reserve	11.8		11.8	This reserve covers the County Council for insurance claims that, based on the previous experience of the County Council, are likely to be received, as well as a number of insurance related issues.
Business Rates Reserve	4.1	5.9	10.0	This reserve is to smooth volatility in Business Rates income.
Capital Reserves	47.9	19.3	67.2	This reserve has been established for the purpose of financing capital expenditure in future years.
Investment Pump Priming Reserve	2.0		2.0	This reserve is held to fund feasibility costs of schemes, which until the point of scheme approval remain a revenue cost.
Council Tax Collection Fund Reserve	6.0	-3.0	3.0	This reserve holds any surplus/ deficit as a result of income from council tax being more or less than originally estimated
Redundancy Reserve	3.3		3.3	This reserve is available to fund redundancy costs arising from the Medium Term Financial Strategy
Covid-19 Reserve	26.3	-9.0	17.3	This reserve holds funding for ongoing pressures and longer term service demands arising from the COVID-19 Pandemic. £20.2m funding from the reserve in 2022/23 - 2025.26 is built into the council's Medium Term Financial Plan agreed in February 2022.
<b>Total Reserves</b>	<b>183.6</b>	<b>9.4</b>	<b>193.0</b>	

**Business Management Report**  
**Position to the end of May 2022**  
**Government Grants 2022/23**

Ringfenced	Directorate	Issued By	Esimate 2022/23 £000	In year Adjustments / New Allocations reported previously reported £000	In year Adjustments/ New Allocations reported this time £000	Latest Allocation £000
	<b>Adult Services</b>					
R	Improved Better Care Fund	DHSC	8,099	0	0	8,099
R	Winter Pressures	DHSC	2,292	0	0	2,292
R	Market Sustainability and Fair Cost of Care Fund	DHSC	0	0	1,547	1,547
	<b>TOTAL ADULT SERVICES</b>		<b>10,391</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>1,547</b>	<b>11,938</b>
	<b>Children's Services</b>					
	<b>Dedicated School Grants</b>					
R	Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) - Schools Block	DfE	127,190	0	0	127,190
R	Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) - Central Block	DfE	4,506	0	314	4,820
R	Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) - Early Years Block	DfE	39,160	0	0	39,160
R	Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) - High Needs Block	DfE	75,095	0	0	75,095
	<b>Subtotal DSG Grants</b>		<b>245,951</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>314</b>	<b>246,265</b>
	<b>School Grants</b>					
R	Pupil Premium	DfE	7,073	0	0	7,073
R	Education Funding Agency - Sixth Form Funding and Threshold	DfE	191	0	0	191
R	PE and Sport Grant	DfE	2,265	0	0	2,265
R	Universal Infant Free School Meals	DfE	3,867	0	0	3,867
R	Teacher's Pay Grant	DfE	98	0	0	98
R	Teacher's Pension Grant	DfE	278	0	0	278
R	Coronavirus (Covid-19) Schools Fund	DfE	3,083	0	0	3,083
	<b>Subtotal School Grants</b>		<b>16,855</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>16,855</b>

**Business Management Report**  
**Position to the end of May 2022**  
**Government Grants 2022/23**

Ringfenced	Directorate	Issued By	Esimate 2022/23 £000	In year Adjustments / New Allocations reported previously reported £000	In year Adjustments/ New Allocations reported this time £000	Latest Allocation £000
	<b>Other Children's Services Grants</b>					
R	Youth Justice Board	YJB	548	0	0	548
R	Asylum (USAC and Post 18)	HO	1,904	0	0	1,904
R	Extended Personal Adviser Duty Grant	DfE	103	0	0	103
R	Staying Put Implementation Grant	DfE	271	0	0	271
R	Remand Framework	YJB	77	0	0	77
	<b>Subtotal Other Children's Services Grants</b>		<b>2,903</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>2,903</b>
	<b>TOTAL CHILDREN'S SERVICES</b>		<b>265,709</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>314</b>	<b>266,023</b>
	<b>Public Health</b>					
R	Public Health Grant	DHSC	32,569	0	0	32,569
	<b>TOTAL PUBLIC HEALTH</b>		<b>32,569</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>32,569</b>
	<b>Environment &amp; Place</b>					
R	Bus Service Operators Grant	DfT	559	0	0	559
R	Natural England	DEFRA	227	0	0	227
	<b>TOTAL ENVIRONMENT &amp; PLACE</b>		<b>786</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>786</b>
	<b>Customers, Organisational Development &amp; Resources</b>					
R	Music Service	AC	1,045	0	0	1,045
R	MaaS:CAV	Innovate UK	313	0	0	313
R	OmniCAV	Innovate UK	1	0	0	1
R	Park & Charge	Innovate UK	206	0	0	206
R	Virgin Park & Charge	Innovate UK	7	0	0	7
R	Data Driven Safety Tool	Innovate UK	91	0	0	91

**Business Management Report**  
**Position to the end of May 2022**  
**Government Grants 2022/23**

Ringfenced	Directorate	Issued By	Esimate 2022/23 £000	In year Adjustments / New Allocations reported previously reported £000	In year Adjustments/ New Allocations reported this time £000	Latest Allocation £000
R	Quantum Gravitometer	Innovate UK	69	0	0	69
R	Resilient CAV	Innovate UK	25	0	0	25
R	Heart Park Project	DFT	90	0	0	90
R	GTC DfT Congestion Tool	DFT	59	0	0	59
R	CAVL4R	DFT	11	0	0	11
	<b>TOTAL CUSTOMERS, ORGANISATIONAL DEVELOPMENT&amp; RESOURCES</b>		<b>1,917</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>1,917</b>
	<b>Commercial Development , Aseets &amp; Investment</b>					
R	Fire Fighter's Pension Fund Grant	DLUHC	1,361	0	0	1,361
R	Fire Fighter's New Dimensons Grant	DLUHC	40	0	0	40
	<b>TOTAL COMMERCIAL DEVELOPMENT, ASSETS &amp; INVESTMENT</b>		<b>1,401</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>1,401</b>
	<b>Strategic Measures</b>					
U	Lead Local Flood Authority	DEFRA	45			45
U	Extended Rights to Free Travel	DfE	278			278
U	Fire Revenue Grant	DLUHC	213			213
U	Supporting Families - previously Troubled Families	DLUHC	915			915
U	New Homes Bonus	DLUHC	2,923			2,923
U	Local Reform & Community Voices Grant	DfE	515			515
U	Independent Living Fund	DfE	3,454			3,454
U	School Improvement and Brokering Grant	DfE	0			0
U	Social Care Support Grant	DLUHC	17,343			17,343
U	COVID-19	DLUHC	0			0
U	New Social Care Grant	DLUHC	572			572

**Business Management Report**  
**Position to the end of May 2022**  
**Government Grants 2022/23**

Ringfenced	Directorate	Issued By	Esimate 2022/23 £000	In year Adjustments / New Allocations reported previously reported £000	In year Adjustments/ New Allocations reported this time £000	Latest Allocation £000
U	Local Council Tax Support Grant	DLUHC	0			0
U	Services Grant	DfE	4,960			4,960
U	Section 31 Grant for Business Rate Compensation	DLUHC	5,327			5,327
U	Business Rates Top-Up	DLUHC	40,546			40,546
U	Substance Misuse Treatment & Recovery Grant	OHID	0		620	620
U	Domestic Abuse Duty Grant	DLUHC	0		1,144	1,144
U	Omicron Support Fund	DLUHC	0			0
	<b>Subtotal Strategic Measures</b>		<b>77,091</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>1,764</b>	<b>78,855</b>
	<b>Grants held on behalf of Local Enterprise Partnership</b>					
R	Oxford Innovation Business Support	BEIS	205			205
R	European Regional Development Fund		900			900
R	DCLG (Local Enterprise Partnership Funding)	DLUHC	500			500
	<b>Subtotal Grants held on behalf of Local Enterprise Partnership</b>		<b>1,605</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>1,605</b>
	<b>TOTAL STRATEGIC MEASURES</b>		<b>78,696</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>1,764</b>	<b>80,460</b>
	<b>Total All Grants</b>		<b>391,469</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>3,625</b>	<b>395,094</b>

R Ringfenced grant  
 U Un-ringfenced grant

Issued by

HO Home Office  
 DHSC Department of Health & Social Care  
 DfT Department for Transport  
 DfE Department for Education

DLUHC Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities  
 BEIS Department for Business, Energy & Industrial Strategy  
 OHID Office for Health Improvement and Disparities  
 DEFRA Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs  
 AC Arts Council  
 YJB Youth Justice Board

**Business Management & Monitoring Report**  
**Position to the end of May 2022**  
**General Revenue Balances**

Date	Forecast 2022/23	
	£m	£m
General Balances: Outturn 2021/22	39.200	
County Fund Balance		<b>39.200</b>
Budgeted Contribution to Balances	1.000	
Budgeted Contribution from Balances (20 MPH Speed Limits)	-3.000	
<b>Original forecast outturn position 2022/23</b>		<b>37.200</b>
<b>Additions</b>		
		0.000
<b>Calls on balances deducted</b>		
Schools Condition Survey (Supplementary Estimate)	-0.500	
		-0.500
<b>Automatic calls on/returns to balances</b>		
		0.000
<b>Additional Strategic Measures</b>		
Forecast Strategic Measures Overspend /Underpend		0.000
		0.000
<b>Net General Balances</b>		<b>36.700</b>
<b>Total Gross Expenditure Budget</b>		<b>793.111</b>
<b>Balances as a % of Gross Expenditure</b>		<b>4.63%</b>
<b>Net Balances</b>		<b>36.700</b>
<b>Calls on / returns to balances agreed but not actioned</b>		
Forecast Overspend as at May 2022	-4.400	
		-4.400
<b>Calls on / returns to balances requested in this report</b>		
		0.000
<b>Forecast Variation at Year End</b>		
Less forecast overspend (as set out in Annex 1)		0.000
		0.000
<b>Forecast Outturn position</b>		<b>32.300</b>
<b>Risk Assessed Level of Balances for 2022/23</b>		<b>28.900</b>

Surplus/(deficit) balances compared to risk assessed level

3.400

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## Divisions / Wards Affected - All

### **CABINET** **19 July 2022**

#### **Transition arrangements and financial implications following the decision to discontinue the Oxfordshire County Council – Cherwell District Council s.113 Agreement.**

#### **Report of the Interim Chief Executive**

### **RECOMMENDATION**

1. **Cabinet is RECOMMENDED to:**
  - a) Note the conclusions of the Joint Shared Services and Personnel Committee (JSSP) as set out in Table 1;
  - b) Agree the transition arrangements as set out in Table 1;
  - c) Note the financial implications as set out in Annex A, which are incorporated in the Business Management & Monitoring Report for 2022/23 elsewhere on this agenda;
  - d) Note that the on-going financial impact will be addressed as part of the Budget and Business Planning process for 2023/24;
  - e) Delegate to the Interim Chief Executive powers to operate, terminate, extend or vary the new arrangements with Cherwell District Council where they relate to executive functions.

### **Executive Summary**

2. In February 2022, Oxfordshire County Council and Cherwell District Council agreed to give notice to terminate the current s.113 partnership between the two Councils. In-line with this decision and associated delegations, subsequent detailed decisions have been made on the future of individual services by the Joint Shared Services and Personnel Committee (JSSP). This report sets out the decisions made on each service, the transition arrangements away from the current partnership, and the financial implications of the termination.

## Matters for consideration

3. In February 2022, Cherwell District Council and Oxfordshire County Council agreed to the required six months' notice for the termination of the s.113 agreement dated 31 August 2018 which governs joint working between the two councils.
4. In order to ensure appropriate separation of decision making and to fully serve the interests of each council through the termination process, the Councils also agreed to separate the statutory roles of Head of Paid Service (Chief Executive), Monitoring Officer and s151 Officer, with immediate effect. The Councils also subsequently agreed to separate Housing Services. A further set of decisions were taken on the partnership role of individual senior officers as their responsibilities with respect to Cherwell District Council ended. The decisions on senior officers and Housing Services are collectively termed as 'Phase 0'.
5. In the decision to terminate the agreement, both councils agreed an ongoing role of the Joint Shared Services and Personnel Committee (JSSP) with revised terms of reference, to provide suitable oversight and decision-making concerning the termination of the agreement. A Joint Officer Transition Working Group (JOTWG) was established and a three-phase programme of due diligence and service reviews was undertaken, with the aim of keeping the best interests of residents at the centre of decision making.
6. This process has now concluded with the final JSSP held on 4 July 2022. The JSSP has decided for all affected services whether partnership arrangements should be decoupled or, where future partnership would be beneficial to both Councils, what the form of future partnership should be. Termination arrangements and the agreements of new forms of partnership were delegated to officers where relevant. Finally, as future partnership arrangements are of significantly narrower scope and impact to the previous arrangements, the JSSP agreed to recommend to each Council that it should be disbanded with the future management of ongoing partnerships reverting to the respective Chief Executives. Appropriate recommendations are being made to County Council on 12 July 2022 to disband the JSSP, delegate any necessary non-executive functions to the Interim Chief Executive and make the resultant changes to the Council's Constitution.
7. Table 1. below sets out a summary of the future state agreed for each service. Transition plans to new arrangements are now underway, also summarised in Table 1. All service delivery under the existing s.113 agreement will cease from on 31 August 2022 or before, with any ongoing partnership functions requiring new agreements to be in place from that date or agreed subsequently for newly developed initiatives.

	<b>SERVICE</b>	<b>FUTURE STATE DECISION</b>	<b>TRANSITION ARRANGEMENTS</b>
Phase 0	Chief Exec, s151 and Monitoring Officer Functions	Full separation of statutory officer functions	Implemented from 9 February 2022 with interim Chief Executive in-post
	Housing Services	Full separation of joint management	Implemented from 21 February 2022
	SLT Separation	Full separation of the senior leadership team and support arrangements.	Full implementation completed from 1 July 2022
Phase 1 Budget 171	Climate Action Team	Decouple joint working with provision of specialist services to CDC via a service level agreement (SLA)	Joint activity ceased 17 June 2022 with a new SLA for delivery of specialist services to be developed.
	Healthy Place Shaping	Full separation	Implemented from 1 May 2022
	Corporate Health and Safety	Full separation	Implemented from 1 May 2022
	Communications, Strategy and Insight (Policy and Strategy)	Full separation	Implemented from 1 May 2022
	Internal Audit	Ongoing provision of service to CDC via an SLA	New SLA in development
	Counter Fraud	Ongoing provision of service to CDC via an SLA	New SLA in development
Phase 2	Communications, Strategy and Insight (Strategic Marketing)	Decouple joint working with provision of specialist services to CDC via an SLA	Joint working arrangements ceased from 1 July 2022 with ongoing support via the existing s113 until new arrangements are in place
	Communications, Strategy and Insight (Communications)	Full separation	Implemented from 1 July 2022
	Communications, Strategy and Insight (Consultation and Engagement)	Decouple joint working with provision of specialist services to CDC via an SLA	Joint working arrangements ceased from 1 July 2022 with ongoing support via the existing s113 until new arrangements are in place
	Communications, Strategy and Insight (Performance and Insight)	Full separation	Implemented from 1 May 2022

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	Communications, Strategy and Insight (Corporate Programmes)	Full separation	Joint posts ceased 1 July with some provision of Programme support agreed to 31 August 2022 under existing s.113
	Legal Services	Full separation	Implemented from 16 May 2022
	Democratic Services	Full separation	Implemented from 1 July 2022
	Information Governance	Full separation	To be implemented from 1 September 2022
	Freedom of Information	Full separation	To be implemented from 1 September 2022
Page 172 Phase 4	IT and Digital Services	Separation of joint management arrangements with future services delivered to CDC via an SLA	To be implemented from 1 September 2022
	Procurement and Contracts	Full separation	To be implemented from 1 September 2022
	Property, Investment and Facilities Management	Full separation	To be implemented from 1 August 2022
	Customer Service and Continuous Improvement (including Land Charges)	Full separation	Joint management ceased from 1 July 2022 with close-down of joint improvement projects ongoing to 31 August 2022.
	Emergency Planning	Separation of joint management arrangements with future services delivered to CDC via an SLA	To be implemented from 1 August 2022
	Regulatory Services and Community Safety	Delivery of joint management arrangements through the agreement of a new s113 agreement	To be implemented from 1 August 2022

**Table 1: Future state and transition summary**

## Future Opportunities

8. With the future state agreed, County Council services will now review the design of services to ensure they meet current needs. Services will need to consider future capacity required, available resources, and mitigations for the costs of separation. The Council also now has an opportunity to review future opportunities for wider partnership development, building on the positive lessons of the partnership with Cherwell District Council. This may include, for example, pursuing further opportunities for joint procurement, property rationalisation and improvements to customer services. The Council prioritises collaboration and will need to retain the resources and skills needed for successful partnership building, in the interests of residents. In addition, with a single leadership team fully focused on whole-county objectives, decoupling from the current arrangements with Cherwell District Council will improve capacity to address challenges, deliver service improvement and develop new collaborative opportunities.

## Financial Implications

9. Annex A sets out the financial implications to the Council of each service review for 2022/23 and the full year effect in 2023/24. Some initial mitigation measures have already been identified and further work will be required. The overall impact of the termination following the implementation of initial mitigation measures is assessed to be £0.7m in 2022/23 rising to £0.9m in 2023/24. As set out in the report to Council in February, the potential impact has been incorporated in the Business Management & Monitoring Report for 2022/23 elsewhere on the agenda and will be addressed on a permanent basis through the Budget and Business Planning process for 2023/24.

Comments checked by:

Lorna Baxter, Director of Finance, Oxfordshire County Council,  
[lorna.baxter@oxfordshire.gov.uk](mailto:lorna.baxter@oxfordshire.gov.uk)

## Legal Implications

10. To the extent that services are delivered under the revised partnership arrangements the Council has the relevant statutory powers to do so under either s1 of the Local Authorities (Good and Services) Act 1970 or section 9EA of the Local Government Act 2000. In addition, the application of the public procurement regime will have to be considered in each case. The most likely route to being able to provide the Services between Oxfordshire County Council and Cherwell District Council without triggering the Public Contracts Regulations 2015 (PCR 2015) is a shared service collaboration/cooperation arrangement under the Hamburg Waste exemption as codified in Regulation 12(7) of the PCR 2015.

11. The council will need to make constitutional changes in the event the Joint Committee is disbanded.

Comments checked by:

Anita Bradley, Director of Law & Governance, Oxfordshire County Council,  
anita.bradley@oxfordshire.gov.uk

## **Staff Implications**

12. The high-level staffing implications of each Service Review are set out within the report to the JSSP. No specific posts are put at direct risk through the termination plan set out in this report. However, both Councils will wish to review their future structure and establishment subsequent to the termination of the partnership to ensure that their operating models are fit for purpose and affordable
13. Through the transition process, the general principle has been followed that staff have been retained by their current contracted employer. However, in a small number of cases this would have led to overprovision of resources in one council and under provision in the other. Therefore, through transition planning, the councils have agreed to make specific transfers that support continuity of service provision and minimise risk to individuals. All of the staff members affected have been engaged and transfers have only taken place through mutual consent.

## **Equality & Inclusion Implications**

14. There are no direct equality implications of the recommendations of this report. Any future changes to staffing, policy and operations subsequent to the termination of the partnership, will need to undergo review in the normal way.

## **Risk Management**

15. Risks for the Councils have been considered throughout the review phases presented to the JSSP. No longer term risks for Oxfordshire County Council services related to the termination have been identified beyond the financial implications set out above. Those services putting in place new partnership arrangements will now need to consider any operational and strategic risk register through their service planning processes.

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Stephen Chandler, Interim Chief Executive, Oxfordshire County Council

Annex A: Financial implications of decoupling the OCC/CDC partnership

Supplemental paper: Transition arrangements summary

Contact Officer: Robin Rogers, Programme Director (Partnerships & Delivery), Oxfordshire County Council,  
robin.rogers@oxfordshire.gov.uk

July, 2022

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## ANNEX A

### Detail of shared arrangements

Directorate/Service	Arrangement	Impact on OCC of lost CDC contribution	
		2022/23 £000	2023/24 £000
<b>SLT</b>	Split		
Total		376.9	399.0
<b>Service Areas</b>			
Housing	Split	-	-
Healthy Place Shaping	Split	19.0	28.4
Climate Team	Split	50.0	50.0
Legal	Split	32.8	35.8
Information Governance	Split	12.8	22.0
FOI	Split	-	-
Procurement & Contract Management	Split	99.0	169.6
Property	Split	80.8	121.2
Regulatory Services	Continue	-	-
Emergency Planning	Continue	-	-
Customer Services & Continuous Improvement	Split	50.4	73.9
Communications, Strategy & Insight	Split	217.3	289.7
IT	Provided service	-	-
Internal Audit	Continue	-	-
Counter Fraud	Continue	-	-
HR and H&S Management	Split	36.9	39.2
<b>TOTAL Cost Pressure</b>		<b>975.8</b>	<b>1,228.8</b>
Initial mitigation measures		- 257.5 -	368.6
<b>LATEST Cost Pressure</b>		<b>718.2</b>	<b>860.2</b>

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## Divisions Affected - Ploughley

### REPORT FOR CABINET

19 July 2022

## OXFORDSHIRE STRATEGIC RAILFREIGHT INTERCHANGE

### Report by Corporate Director for Environment and Place

#### RECOMMENDATION

1. **The Cabinet is RECOMMENDED to** approve Oxfordshire County Council's response to a non-statutory public consultation on the proposals for the Oxfordshire Strategic Rail Freight Interchange.

#### Executive Summary

2. A strategic rail freight interchange, with an accompanying 600,000 sqm of warehousing and distribution space, is being promoted by Oxfordshire Railfreight Ltd, south of Ardley village and adjacent to Heyford Park. Whilst the concept of SRFIs is supported by Government policy and by the emerging Oxfordshire Freight and Logistics Strategy, due to its scale and rural location, the proposals are likely to generate significant local opposition.
3. As it meets the criteria for a Nationally Significant Infrastructure Project, permission for the development will be sought via a Development Consent Order (DCO), determined by the Secretary of State under Planning Act 2008. The council is a statutory consultee in this process, and while responding to a consultation on a planning proposal would fall under matters delegated to the Corporate Director, given the scale and significance of the development, officers consider that Cabinet should have the opportunity to approve the council's response to the first public consultation by the promoter. Cabinet may also wish to approve the response to the later, statutory consultation.

#### The proposed development and its impact

4. Oxfordshire Railfreight Ltd. is proposing a rail freight interchange close to the site of the former Ardley railway station, with associated container storage and up to 675,000 sqm of warehousing (storage and distribution) including ancillary office accommodation south of the railway, plus additional floorspace in the form of mezzanines. HGV access would be taken from the B430 and a new Ardley by-pass road leading to M40 Junction 10. The proposals also include a relief road for Middleton Stoney between the B430 and B4030, the closure of the

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unnamed road linking Heyford Park and the B430 and its replacement on a new alignment, and the relocation within the site of the Ashgrove Farm in-vessel composting plant. Significant changes are proposed to M40 Junction 10 to accommodate the traffic.

5. Plans and other information about the proposals can be found on the promoter's website at [Document Downloads | OXSRFI](#).
6. The site would operate 24 hours a day and provide around 9,500 jobs, and the predicted total daily traffic movements generated by the site are over 20,500, of which almost 5,000 would be HGVs. HGVs would be routed directly to M40 J10. The freight terminal is intended to handle up to 12 trains per day, taking containers off lorries and onto trains and vice versa. However, the capacity of the rail network to provide this number of train paths is not yet established, and the minimum requirement for an SRFI is 4 trains per day.
7. There are other significant warehousing and employment sites proposed close to M40 Junction 10. Officers are seeking to ensure that the cumulative impacts of the proposals are assessed and are working closely with National Highways.

### Public Consultation

8. A first stage, non-statutory public consultation was carried out by the promoter between 9 May and 4 July 2022. The consultation materials can be found at <https://oxsrfi.co.uk/document-downloads/> Exhibitions were held in Ardley, Heyford Park and Middleton Stoney, along with webinars open to the public. The promoter's planning consultant wrote to local county councillors within their letter drop area, which included parts of adjacent divisions, and provided briefings where requested. A further, statutory consultation is expected later in 2022, ahead of the DCO application to the Planning Inspectorate in early 2023, with a decision by the Secretary of State expected in 2024.
9. A draft response to the public consultation has been prepared by officers and is attached at Annex 1.
10. A key part of the response is that there is insufficient evidence provided in the consultation materials of the demand for a rail freight interchange at this location. Although the rail freight terminal is aiming to handle up to 12 trains per day, the minimum requirement is for it to be capable of handling 4 trains per day, which would be equivalent to approximately 368 HGV trips transferred to/from rail. These would be mainly removed from the strategic road network, between the site and ports. If there is only very limited demand, the stated environmental benefits of the development in reducing carbon emissions by transferring freight onto rail, will not be realised, and the development could in effect become largely a standard logistics park in a rural area.

Furthermore, it is stated that the Environmental Statement will include a section on the how other locations were considered, but this has yet to be provided. Therefore, there is incomplete evidence at this stage to demonstrate that this is

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the most suitable location. Other sections of the Environmental Statement have yet to be completed, and work on the transport assessment is still ongoing. Our response stresses the importance of completing this work prior to the next, statutory consultation.

11. Another key element of the response concerns the large amount of new road building proposed. Traffic impact assessment has not yet been completed, so it remains to be seen whether the additional road building is truly necessary to provide capacity for the development, and whether it will induce traffic demand. The rural location of the site, and the likely dispersed nature of the workforce, mean that it is likely to be highly dependent on car travel, thereby undermining the challenging LTCP5 headline targets for the reduction of car trips.
12. Nevertheless, the Ardley Bypass and Middleton Stoney Relief Road proposed as embedded infrastructure would provide relief for those villages, and the public rights of way, walking and cycling measures proposed will improve connectivity, and restore links that were severed by the M40 at Ardley.
13. A public transport strategy for the site is being developed, and our response asks the promoters to consider the potential for modal interchange at the site. The development does not include a passenger rail station, but our response asks for land for a possible future rail station to be safeguarded.
14. The investment into the site and construction of the proposed development will create substantial temporary employment opportunities and contribute Gross Value Added (GVA) during the build period. There will also likely be training and apprenticeship opportunities for local residents. Once operational, the proposed development could provide over 9,600 Full Time Equivalent direct jobs on site, across a wide range of skills. The draft Environmental Statement states that the development could generate around £333.2 million in GVA per annum to the economy, and an estimated £20.6 million in business rates. It estimates that the multiplier effects of the development (indirect jobs and supply chain) could generate a further £344.5m in GVA.
15. Notwithstanding the above mentioned benefits, the lack of evidence in respect of demand for the freight terminal, consideration of alternative locations, and the necessity of new road infrastructure will need to be addressed in order for the county council to be supportive of the proposals.
16. To ensure that, in the event that the development is approved by the Secretary of State, its impacts are adequately mitigated, officers will continue to work with the applicant to seek appropriate mitigation for traffic and other environmental impacts and will aim to ensure that these are secured through conditions and legal agreements.

### Corporate Policies and Priorities

17. SRFIs are supported by Government policy in the form of the National Policy Statement (NPS) on National Networks, which can be found at [National policy](#)

[statement for national networks - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](http://www.gov.uk). They are also supported in the county council's emerging Freight and Logistics Strategy, subject to caveats concerning suitability of location. The proposals are not within the Cherwell Local Plan (CLP) 2015-2031.

18. Notwithstanding the local concentration of traffic, SRFIs in principle fit with the council priority to tackle climate change, because transferring freight from road to rail results in significant reductions in carbon emissions.

## Financial Implications

19. There are no financial implications of the recommendations in this report.

Comments checked by: Rob Finlayson, Finance Business Partner  
(Environment & Place), [rob.finlayson@oxfordshire.gov.uk](mailto:rob.finlayson@oxfordshire.gov.uk)

## Legal Implications

20. Unlike section 20 of the Transport and Works Act 1992, which requires the Council to put a report to full Council if it proposes to raise concerns about a proposed Transport and Works Act Order, there is no such equivalent provision in the Planning Act 2008 or in the Infrastructure Planning (Examination Procedure) Rules 2010 requiring a report to be put to full Council in respect of an application for a Development Consent Order for a nationally significant infrastructure project.
21. In addition to its role as a statutory consultee on the proposals for the DCO application under section 42 of the 2008 Act, by virtue of section 60 of the Act the Council will be invited to submit a Local Impact Report giving its view of the likely impact of the proposed development on the Council's area.
22. As part of the negotiations with the promoter the Council should seek to conclude a section 106 agreement to secure contributions and/or works to mitigate the impact of the proposals, such as for highway improvements and improvements to bus services.

Comments checked by:  
David Mytton, Solicitor [david.mytton@oxfordshire.gov.uk](mailto:david.mytton@oxfordshire.gov.uk)

## Staff Implications

23. There are no new staffing or human resource implications of the recommendations of this report.

## Equality & Inclusion Implications

24. There are no equality and inclusion implications of the recommendations in this report, because this does not relate to a county council proposal.

## Sustainability Implications

25. There are no direct sustainability implications of the recommendations in this report. As the report is not proposing a policy, procedure, service change, project or programme, it is not relevant to complete a Climate Impact Assessment. However, the scheme promoter's environmental impact assessment will include an assessment of climate change impacts.

## Risk Management

26. The only risks arising from the recommendations of the response would be political.
27. If the OxSRFI is granted permission, its proposed works to M40 J10 would result in the majority of the Growth Deal scheme at the junction being superseded. There is the opportunity to revisit our plans and possibly feed the money back into the capital programme.

## Consultations

28. No consultations have been carried out by OCC in respect of the development proposals. Public consultation has been carried out by the promoter and this report seeks Cabinet approval of the county council's response to that consultation.

## Bill Cotton, Corporate Director Environment and Place

Annex: Annex 1 – draft OCC response to public consultation.  
Annex 2 - Plans

Background papers: Consultation documents are available on the promoter's website at <https://oxsrfi.co.uk/document-downloads/>

[National policy statement for national networks - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/policies/national-policy-statement-for-national-networks)

Contact Officer: Joy White, Principal Transport Planner, Telephone 07554103522, email [joy.white@oxfordshire.gov.uk](mailto:joy.white@oxfordshire.gov.uk)

June 2022

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## **Oxfordshire Strategic Rail Freight Interchange**

### **Response to non-statutory consultation**

**June 2022**

## **Contents**

Section 1	Introduction
Section 2	Key Issues
Section 3	Compulsory Acquisition (Land owned by Oxfordshire County Council)
Section 4	Highways
Section 5	Archaeological impact
Section 6	Flood Water Management and Drainage
Section 7	Public Health
Section 8	Minerals and Waste
Section 10	Ecology
Section 11	Landscape
Section 12	Climate Impact

## Introduction

1. These written representations are made by Oxfordshire County Council in response to the non-statutory consultation (9<sup>th</sup> May to 4<sup>th</sup> July 2022) undertaken by Oxfordshire Rail Freight Limited, for a Development Consent Order for a rail-served warehousing and freight interchange facility.
2. The proposed site is located to the east of the former Upper Heyford Air Base, South of the Chiltern railway line and southwest of Junction 10 of the M40 motorway. All the works covered by the Development Consent order are contained within the administrative area of Oxfordshire County Council.
3. Oxfordshire County Council will continue to engage in pre-application discussions with the promoter to ensure that the impacts of the development are fully, and accurately assessed and suitable mitigation proposed. It should be noted that officers' comments should not be interpreted as representing the views of parish councils, local elected members or people living in the vicinity of the development, all of whom have been separately consulted by the promoter.
4. As part of the non-statutory consultation, the promoter has published a number of supporting documents including plans, a briefing document, and Environmental Statement to support their consultation. We note that this published consultation information is preliminary and further work is required, so this response sets out the interim position statement of Oxfordshire County Council in this matter.
5. These representations are variously made by the County Council:
  - In respect of Key Issues as local planning authority;
  - In respect of Compulsory Acquisition as landowner;
  - In respect of Highways as highway and local transport authority;
  - In respect of Archaeological impact as local planning authority;
  - In respect of Flood Water Management and Drainage as lead local flood authority;
  - In respect of Public Health as local planning authority;
  - In respect of Minerals and Waste as Minerals and Waste authority;
  - In respect of Ecology as local planning authority;
  - In respect of Landscape as local planning authority;
  - In respect of Climate Impact as local planning authority.

## **Key Issues**

1. This is an interim position statement in response to this initial non-statutory consultation period prior to the submission of a Development Consent Order (DCO) application to the Planning Inspectorate (PINs). The Project is at an early stage so as the process moves forward, we will revisit and amend our interim position statement.

### The need for the development at this location

2. The National Policy Statement for National Networks (NPSNN), published in December 2014, sets out the need for SRFIs and policies to guide and deliver NSIPs on the national road and rail network in England.
3. The NPSNN seeks to create a network of Strategic Rail Freight Interchanges (SRFIs) which shifts the focus from road to rail. The County Council recognises the importance of securing jobs and the potential contribution towards the local economy.
4. The following is a list of all Nationally Significant Project applications that are planned to be submitted, under examination and those that have been decided (Sourced 24/05/22):
  - Daventry International Rail Freight Limited;
  - East Midlands Gateway Rail Freight Interchange;
  - Hinckley National Rail Freight Interchange;
  - Northampton Gateway Rail Freight Interchange;
  - Oxfordshire Strategic Rail Freight Interchange.
5. No information has been provided that clarifies whether the other Interchanges are at capacity, and nor has there been any consideration of the overlap of the Northampton Gateway with the proposed Ox SRFI proposal.

### Suitability of the site

6. The proposed site is situated between the B430 and former Upper Heyford Airfield and immediately south of the Chiltern Main Line. It consists of an area of land that is predominantly agricultural land that is not allocated within the Adopted Cherwell Local Plan.
7. Given the proximity of the Oxfordshire Strategic Rail Freight Interchange (Ox SRFI) proposals to the M40 motorway and Junction 10, the impact on the County's local highway network needs to be assessed alongside Highways England's assessment of the impact on the strategic road network.
8. There is a Severn Trent Green Waste site within the Ox SRFI area boundary, which is a safeguarded waste site. The proposal includes an alternative site for the Severn Trent Green Waste facility, but the proposal would need to show that this proposed site is appropriate and sustainable as a replacement for the existing facility.

9. The detailed officers' comments set out later in this report identify the need for a number of further evidence studies that need to be undertaken to assess the potential impacts of the proposal and the suitability of the site.

#### Alternative sites

10. The County Council considers it necessary to review whether or not there exists alternative sites that perform as well as, or better than the Ox SRFI proposal in meeting the Government's aim of creating a national network of SRFIs.
11. This review should also consider the Graven Hill site (Policy Bicester 2) as allocated in the Cherwell Local Plan under Policy SLE 4 which supports rail freight at Graven Hill. The Graven Hill site could also support policy BIC 1 in the Oxfordshire Local Transport Plan 2015-31 which proposes a South East Perimeter route linking the A41 at Graven Hill with the A41 south of Bicester, close to Junction 9 of the M40, through the provision of this route as embedded infrastructure.

#### Cumulative impacts

12. We have not seen the consideration of other strategic developments coming forward in the local area and recommend that the promoter assesses the potential cumulative impacts of the SRFI, combined with the other strategic development proposals that are coming forward around Junction 10.

#### Oxfordshire Plans and Strategies

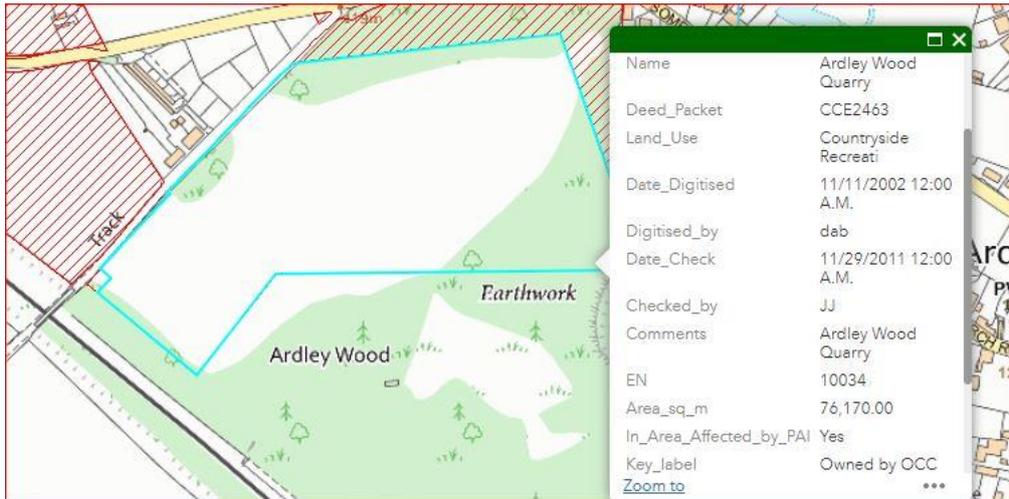
13. A number of Oxfordshire Plans and Strategies should be referenced in the process including Oxfordshire County Council's Local Transport Connectivity Plan 5 (LTCP5) which includes supporting strategies for freight, Oxfordshire Plan 2050, Adopted Cherwell Local Plan, and the emerging Cherwell Local Plan Review.

**Detailed officer comments**

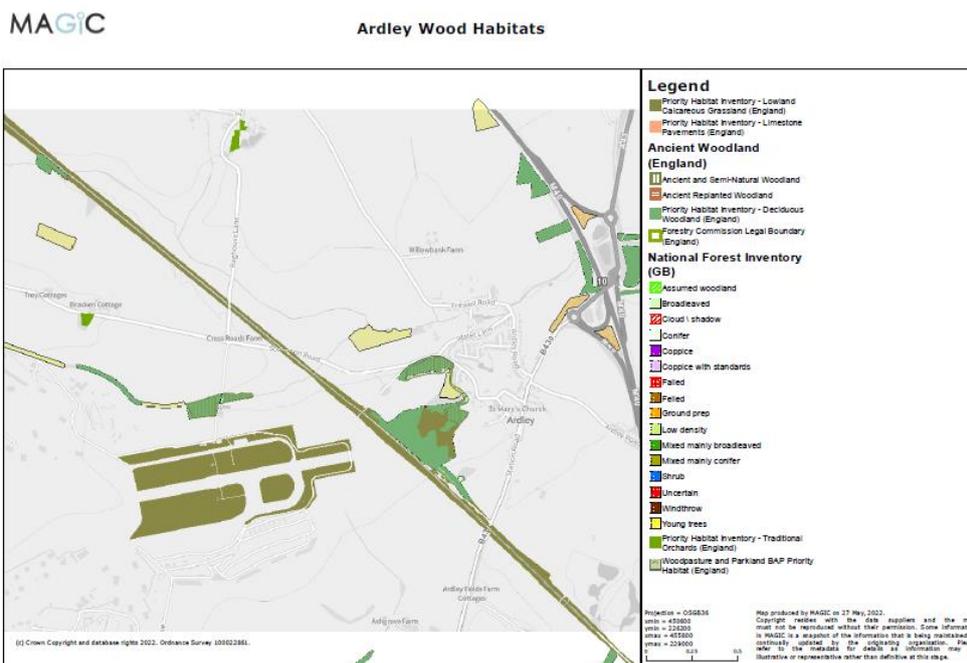
**1) Compulsory Acquisition**

Land owned by Oxfordshire County Council

14. There is one area of Oxfordshire County Council (OCC) land that appears to be affected (other than highway land) and that is part of the Ardley Wood Quarry site (See below OCC land ownership plan for Ardley Wood, and the scheme works plan with the works area No 26 circled in blue that affects the OCC land).



15. We would like to seek clarification of the purpose of the new access (Works No 26) and remind the applicant that the land is held for countryside / recreation purposes and contains a variety of Priority Habitats (See map below from the Government's 'Magic.gov.uk' website) which may not be compatible with the use for which the land is held.



## 2) Highways

### Introduction and scope

16. Oxfordshire County Council continues to engage in pre-application discussions with the promoter. This engagement is welcomed, and OCC will continue to work to ensure that the impacts of the development are fully, and accurately assessed and suitable mitigation proposed. This ongoing engagement is referenced throughout the consultation documents. It is vital that the transport assessment and environmental statement work is completed before the statutory consultation, to provide sufficient information for consultees to comment.
17. The response discusses the need for the development and the suitability of the location in transport terms and provides the county council's highways and transport related comments on the plans, drawings and relevant chapters of the draft environmental statement provided for consultation. These are primarily Chapter 3, Transport, but also some observations on Chapter 4 (Air Quality), 5 (Noise and Vibration), and 6 (Ecology including Arboriculture), on which other officers within the county council and/or Cherwell District Council will comment more fully. Comments are also provided on the need to consider transport innovations.
18. Comments are not provided on the draft Development Consent Order document and Draft Explanatory Memorandum included in the consultation documents at this stage, other than to note that the Highway Authority will in due course seek legal agreement(s) referred to in Article 20.
19. It should be noted that the officer comments should not be interpreted as representing the views of parish councils, local elected members or people living in the vicinity of the development, all of whom have been separately consulted by the applicant.

### Key issues

#### The need for the development at this location

20. To qualify as an NSIP, the site must be capable of handling four trains per day and there must be capacity on the rail network for these trains. The proposal is that this could be increased to twelve trains per day, which is dependent on rail capacity being achievable.
21. However, while it would be a requirement of the DCO that the rail freight terminal is provided, this ongoing use of the site cannot be enforced, and there is a risk that rail handling could remain a very minor or even negligible part of the operations of what is in effect, a large logistics park with the added benefit of freight handling if desired. If this were to be the case, then it means the environmental benefits of the development are overstated.
22. We have not seen in this consultation much evidence that this location is an optimal place for an SRFI. Oxfordshire Rail Corridor Study (ORCS): Strategic

Report - How can the rail system in Oxfordshire best support economic growth? – June 2021, Network Rail et al - provides an evidence-based set of rail outputs and enhanced train services required to support forecast passenger and freight growth in the short-term to 2024; in the medium term to 2028 and the long-term (2033). This identifies, at a high level, the railway system interventions required to enable the enhanced indicative train service to be provided to accommodate this future growth up to 2033. However, it does not seem to identify a need for an SRFI in this area on the Chiltern Line.

23. It is stated in the consultation materials as being not yet known which ports would be the origin/destination of containers handled at the site, which suggests that the demand is uncertain. Also, which markets are being served: i) what locations are goods to be loaded on to rail coming from; and ii) where are goods coming off of rail going to? This also impacts traffic modelling assumptions in that there is a danger of under-estimating likely road-based trips (i.e., two-way HGV trips not involving the rail terminal at all) because the rail opportunities are lower at Ox SRFI compared to other SRFIs.
24. It is also not clear whether the Chiltern Line is or is planned to be a key freight corridor. Two maps published by Network Rail do not show it as such. [Freight UK Base Map - Rail Freight Commodities Final v1.0\\_PDF \(networkrail.co.uk\)](#); and [Network Rail freight map - intermodal sector \(with gauge clearance\)](#).
25. Furthermore, a government report 'Understanding the UK Freight Transport System, Future of Mobility: understanding the UK Freight Transport System' (publishing.service.gov.uk), set out that SRFIs need to be located on main lines with a loading gauge that can accommodate cost-effective intermodal trains and located close to the strategic highway network and close to major urban conurbations; the latter provides both consumers for the cargo passing through them and a local source of labour. We question whether the site could be considered close to major urban conurbations.
26. Finally, the selection of this site could be pre-empting the evidence base being developed by Network Rail and National Highways as part of their 'Solent to the Midlands Multimodal Freight Strategy – Phase 1': Solent to the Midlands Multimodal Freight Strategy; Phase 1, June 2021 (networkrail.co.uk).
27. It is noted that a Rail Report is proposed to be included in the Statutory consultation but is not included with this consultation. OCC request that this information is provided as soon as possible.

#### Consideration of alternative sites

28. No information is provided in the draft ES about the alternative sites that were considered. It is stated that this will follow with the next consultation. We trust that this will include Graven Hill. The Cherwell Local Plan states that the Graven Hill site (Policy Bicester 2) has the major potential to capitalise on upgrading the national freight network (Para B.80), and Policy SLE 4 supports rail freight at Graven Hill. The Graven Hill site could also support policy BIC 1 in the Oxfordshire Local Transport Plan 2015-31 which proposes a South East

Perimeter route linking the A41 at Graven Hill with the A41 south of Bicester, close to Junction 9 of the M40, through the provision of this route as embedded infrastructure.

#### Possible future passenger rail station

29. Whilst there are no policies currently regarding the reopening of Ardley railway station, we reiterate our request that the proposals do not rule out this possibility as a future opportunity. We have heard that the plans do not affect the footprint of the former Ardley railway station, but further information should be provided to demonstrate how a passenger station could be accommodated alongside the freight terminal. We further request that the land required, including access, is safeguarded.

#### Significant new road building

30. Whilst it is important for the transport assessment to be realistic, and we acknowledge the need to ensure that local communities do not suffer from the traffic impacts of the development, the embedded infrastructure proposed is very significant. Free flow links are being provided at M40 J10 which will provide capacity over and above that required to mitigate the impact of the development, and there is a risk that provision of additional capacity will induce additional car journeys.

#### Dominance of car travel

31. The rural location and likely dispersed workforce mean that the majority of employees are likely to travel to work by private car. The trip generation assessment has been based on 92% single car occupancy and while this provides a robust assessment of the impact of the development, it leads to an assumption of need for the significant additional highway infrastructure proposed, which is at odds with the 'Decide and Provide' approach set out in the [Oxfordshire Local Transport and Connectivity Plan \(LTCP5\)](#), which was approved by Cabinet on 21 June 2022.

32. The stated ambition of the development's travel plan is to reduce single occupancy car modal share by 10%, which in our view is insufficiently ambitious when set against the headline target of the emerging LTCP5 to remove 1 out of every 4 current car trips in Oxfordshire by 2030 and 1 out of every 3 by 2040.

#### The need for further mitigation

33. The draft ES acknowledges that further off-site mitigation measures could be required for the traffic impacts of the development. These will be established through the further traffic modelling as part of the development of the transport assessment, but it should be noted that the need for measures may be generated by a range of environmental factors rather than solely for highway safety or to relieve congestion. The applicant should carry out local engagement on any proposed schemes.

34. OCC will seek Requirements and a S106 agreement as necessary once mitigation is established. Mitigation is likely to include Mitigation likely to include contributions to provide bus services, travel plan and travel plan measures, schemes to mitigate off site traffic impacts, and improvements to public rights of way in the vicinity.

#### Public rights of way and non-motorised user connectivity

35. The developer has considered most aspects for non-motorised users of roads and public rights of way and has proposed a wide range of mitigation measures that seem wide ranging and inclusive. The detail of these needs to be worked up and agreed. However, there is not yet any walking, cycling and horse-riding assessment and review to consider so full endorsement cannot be provided. This must be carried out as soon as possible so that OCC can assess it.

36. A commitment to providing wide green access and landscape corridors, better connectivity, and full year-round accessibility for all NMUs for new and upgraded routes needs to be built in at early stages, along with provision for ongoing maintenance and replacement costs. There also needs to be a contribution towards offsite (beyond DCO limits) mitigation measures focused on NMU safety, accessibility, and connectivity.

37. The detail of crossings, underpasses, diversions, widths, surfaces, and furniture needs to be agreed at earliest stages. Likewise, for potential environmental and amenity improvements like seating and viewing points, information panels, landscape, biodiversity, and habitat enhancements. Any proposals for diversions and replacement routes, including temporary ones, will benefit from early engagement with OCC countryside access colleagues.

38. Additional measures are required where bridges separate bridleway routes, requiring NMUs to join the carriageway to cross the bridge. These are the subject of ongoing discussion with the promoter, as are the types of crossing to be provided at each point where a PRow crosses highway. Details of proposed underpasses will be required.

39. The highway proposals at Junction 10 have provided a welcome opportunity to create links between Ardley and the public rights of way network to the northeast of the M40, which are currently severed by the M40.

#### Comments on highway plans and draft Environmental Statement

40. These are provided in Table 1 below.

#### Innovation

41. A considerable amount of change is likely to be experienced from innovation over the next ten years and the SRFI briefing documents do refer to many of these. If planning and construction proceeds as planned, the site may be fully operational

in 2031, by which time a new horizon with other innovations will be in sight. The designs therefore need to retain flexibility and be ‘futureproofed’ for innovations in the medium to long term. Some of these are considered below.

#### Vehicle charging capacity

42. The Dft report ‘Decarbonising Transport’ considers that by 2030 larger zero emission vehicles will be increasing in numbers on our roads and that by 2035 sales of non-zero emission HGVs under 26 tonnes will cease. In addition, by 2040 non-zero HGVs over 26 tonnes will no longer be sold. Trials are underway of alternative ways of powering HGVs including pure battery; hydrogen; and power from overhead lines picked up by a pantograph – the ‘electrified road’. Assuming a need for HGVs to ‘refuel’ at the SRFI, this will have an implication for energy supplies and space at the operational site.
43. Either onsite electrolysis to generate hydrogen, or, perhaps more likely, 1000 kW DC chargers for each HGV charging station will be needed. Either way, the electricity required is not insubstantial. If ‘electrified roads’ become the norm, then HGV batteries will be smaller and charging capacity less demanding. Electric site service vehicles will further increase the charging capacity required. It should also be noted that the Oxfordshire Electric Vehicles Infrastructure Strategy (OEVIS) requires at least 25% of all new vehicle parking spaces to be provided with electric charging – this is an increase from the 10% mentioned in the consultation documents. Public transport to and from the site will also be electrified, adding to the charging load.

#### Local power generation

44. It may be that additional locally generated, renewable power with battery storage and smart network connectivity is needed to supplement the planned photo voltaic (PV) cell installation for warehouse and building base needs, to meet the needs of the electric charging load described above. It is noted that the Viridor Ardley Energy Recovery plant is nearby and that may provide a possible source of power.

#### Communications

45. Communications networks will be essential to innovation in transport and the built environment and will be more cost effective if planned for the SRFI and highways at the outset. 5G is already being rolled out and 6G is set to become available to the public by 2030. 5G and 6G require the same infrastructure as each other, but differ from previous generations, since the wavelengths used cannot travel as far. This means that a greater level of small-scale infrastructure is required to support their update.

#### Monitoring sensors

46. Provision for monitoring sensors should be considered for counts of movement for all types of transport modes including cycling and walking. Also, for air quality

and noise measurement (including noise quality). These can be used for reporting and to learn and make improvements.

### Changes in modes of transport

47. Consideration should be given to the impact of changes in the modes of transport that are expected, such as connected and autonomous vehicles (CAVs) and unmanned aerial vehicles (UAVs). It is anticipated that the initial growth of CAVs will be in shared, public use and so this will need to be considered as part of the flexible public transport approach outlined in the consultation document. Targets in the Oxfordshire Local Transport and Connectivity Plan (LTCP) are to replace or remove 1 out of every 4 car trips in Oxfordshire by 2030 and 1 out of every 3 by 2040. Therefore, consideration should be made for space initially allocated for private car parking to be flexible enough to be repurposed in the longer term.

**Table 1: Detailed comments on documents and plans**

Ref	Plan/Document/Para	
001	Development Parameters Plan (Main Site)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Limits of deviation for roads – these appear to be incomplete and do not allow for protected visibility splay at the relocated waste facility access.</li> <li>• Parameter’s plan should be updated to show pedestrian/cycle routes.</li> </ul>
002	Principal Access Roundabout General Arrangement SK018-S1-P03	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Signalised crossing facilities for pedestrians and cyclists will be required – the drawing does not currently show any crossing facilities.</li> <li>• Segregated left turn should be single lane according to CD 116 6.2.</li> <li>• Streetlighting would be required.</li> <li>• Roundabout must be designed to CD116. Geometric parameters, forward visibility etc should be added to the drawing to demonstrate compliance.</li> <li>• The proximity of the roundabout to the existing access to Ardley landfill site and Household Waste Reception Centre may affect visibility at that junction. A drawing should be provided showing both junctions in order to assess this. Improvements may be required at the HWRC junction.</li> <li>• Cycle paths will need to be designed in accordance with LTN 1/20</li> <li>• Design may require change, subject to capacity assessment and road safety audit.</li> <li>• Extent of future adoption by OCC to be confirmed. Further detail required on measures to prevent HGVs turning right out of the site. The height restriction would need to be outside</li> </ul>

		the adoptable area. ANPR camera monitoring will also be required.
003	Heyford Park Link Road west GA SK023 -S1-P03	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• We are concerned about safety at the junction of the new waste facility – visibility from the junction and forward visibility to right turning traffic.</li> <li>• Have the designers considered a roundabout junction incorporating this access and the secondary site access?</li> <li>• Tie in with Chilgrove Drive/Camp Road: Requirements will need to cover eventuality of Heyford Park works not being triggered by the time works are required for SRFI. Further detailed discussion required.</li> <li>• Footway/cycleway between the site and Heyford Park must be segregated to LTN 1/20 standards – verge separation looks too narrow.</li> <li>• Beyond Heyford Park unsegregated would be acceptable, as there are likely to be very few pedestrians, but again, verge separation looks too narrow for high-speed road.</li> <li>• How would the secondary access be enforced as bus only?</li> <li>• Cycle/ped crossing point should be set back, with the route cutting the corners rather than hugging the radii – see LTN 1/20 examples.</li> </ul>
004	Middleton Stoney Relief Road SK025-S1-P03	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• See comments relating to public rights of way strategy</li> <li>• Form of crossing on Middleton Stoney arm of roundabout will need to be appropriate to the traffic flow.</li> <li>• Pedestrians and cyclists on Middleton Road need to be considered</li> <li>• Cycle facility could ‘cut the corner’ instead of hugging the roundabout.</li> <li>• Suitable crossing should be provided for PRow</li> <li>• Lower speed should be considered.</li> </ul>
005	Signalised junction arrangements on B430	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• How many separate sets of signals will cyclists and pedestrians need to wait at? Would it be better to take cycle route along E side of B430 between the junctions?</li> <li>• The number of lanes may be providing too much capacity. Capacity assessments following traffic modelling will need to justify this level of provision.</li> <li>• Is it possible to simplify the arrangement and reduce the amount of infrastructure?</li> </ul>

006	Ardley bypass	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Will this road be lit?</li> <li>• See PRow comments for treatment of bridleway over Ardley Road Bridge.</li> <li>• Tie in of Ardley Road not shown at eastern end. Will access to Ardley Boarding Kennels be affected, including visibility?</li> <li>• Plans need to be extended to include the existing bridge of Ardley Road over the M40 – see PRow comments for treatment of bridleway over bridge.</li> <li>• OCC will need to be involved in engagement with Network Rail regarding the bridge over the Chiltern mainline and sidings. OCC is not expecting to adopt these structures, just the surface of the road over the top – discussions are needed to establish the detail.</li> <li>• Capacity assessment of Ardley Roundabout required as part of further transport modelling. Details of traffic signals required. We are expecting that these will all be within NH control but please confirm.</li> <li>• There is no mention of any treatment to the existing B430 through Ardley, e.g., to downgrade the road and make it more attractive for walking/cycling, decommissioning of signalised crossings etc. Further discussion is required.</li> <li>• Archaeological investigations on the alignment of this road have not been concluded. Dependent on the outcome, this could be a constraint on the design.</li> </ul>
007	M40 J10 proposed layout	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The works are very significant, and we question whether the cost would be viable for the development. The creation of excess capacity over and above that required to make the development acceptable could induce demand.</li> <li>• Cycle/ped route from Ardley across M40: This is welcomed as it allows a safe connection over the motorway to the facilities the village relies on at Cherwell Valley MSA. As the B430 north of Ardley Roundabout is still likely to carry a significant amount of traffic, the off-carriageway facility should be continued south to Ardley Road.</li> <li>• Cycle ped route should be separated from the carriageway more where space allows, i.e., it does not need to follow the kerb.</li> </ul>

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Options to enable cyclists to cycle over the motorway bridge without dismounting should be explored.</li> <li>• The connection into the existing bridleway leading to Stoke Woods is welcomed, as is the new proposed bridleway leading southeast running parallel to the M40.</li> <li>• Direct connection into the MSA should be sought.</li> <li>• Why is the Ardley approach to the roundabout not signalised? Needs consideration of safety, given the flows.</li> <li>• Very tight turn for HGVs leaving the M40 northbound and turning left onto the Ardley bypass.</li> <li>• Free flow links between A43N and M40S – will these need to be lit?</li> <li>• The applicant will be aware of the planning applications for development either side of the A43, which would be affected by this development. The additional roundabout at Baynards Green would conflict with the proposed access arrangements. However, it has been suggested that access could be gained from Padbury Roundabout.</li> <li>• It is noted that the arrangement at Baynards Green is substantially different from the improvement scheme proposed there (the ‘Growth Deal’ scheme)</li> <li>• It is not clear from the details, but OCC would expect the additional roundabout at Baynards Green to be within NH control as it will effectively form part of the Baynards Green junction.</li> <li>• The layout would be extremely intimidating for cyclists using the B4100. Cycle facilities should be provided through the junction to allow them to negotiate it off carriageway.</li> <li>• There is a high risk of local traffic travelling E-W along the B4100, accidentally taking the free flow link, and ending up on M40S. The layout, with the number of lanes and short distance between the roundabouts, could make it difficult for people to get into the correct lanes.</li> <li>• Retention of woodland within the free flow link loop would be welcomed.</li> </ul>
008	Highway works - general	Sustainable drainage methods should be used to drain new highway. No indication is given of swales, balancing ponds etc. for which sufficient

		land must be included. See LLFA comments provided separately.
009	Highway works - general	The draft order makes provision for a highways legal agreement. OCC will seek this agreement, in order to secure provisions to replicate S278 Highways Act 1980 and other legislation that is replaced by the Development Consent Order.
010	Draft ES - Ch 2 – Description of Development and Alternatives	2.5.7 states that 'detail on alternative locations ... will be included for the Stage 2 Public Consultation process'. Given that work to select the location must have been carried out already in order to select the chosen site, it is disappointing that no details are provided here. A key question being asked by local people and councillors is 'why here?'. Rather than wait till the next consultation stage, a statement should be provided to the county council and made public on the project website. See policy section.
011	ES Chapter 3 – Transport	See comments listed by paragraph number below.
012	ES Ch 3 3.1.2	The document acknowledges that the detailed assessment work is ongoing, and the definition of the study area is subject to the outputs from the strategic modelling work.
013	ES Ch 3 3.2.2	The document acknowledges that engagement with the councils and National Highways will continue throughout the remainder of the preapplication period. This is welcomed.
014	ES Ch 3 Appendix 3.1	The file for this is incorrectly titled. It is in fact Technical Note 2 – Transport Modelling Methodology. (Referred to in para 3.2.3 of Ch 3) Comments: 3.7 It is noted that the simulation network of the Bicester Transport Model extends southwest along the A34 but not quite as far as the A40. It is not entirely clear which junctions north of Oxford are included. Depending on the proportionate impact on the A34 (which will be established through the modelling) there may be a need for assessment of junctions on the A34 beyond the edge of the simulation network, for which a methodology will need to be agreed. It should also be noted that the impacts of traffic from the development may be significant in Northamptonshire. 4.11 The table sets out the various modelling scenarios to be carried out. Additional scenarios may be required to establish the phasing of embedded highway mitigation. The 'with Albion

		Land sensitivity test' DS4 is welcomed. A sensitivity test may also need to be considered for DS1 to agree suitable phasing of embedded highway mitigation if appropriate.
015	ES Ch 3 3.2.10	States that strategies to address access via sustainable transport are being developed, but what assumptions are being made in the modelling of traffic impact?
016	ES Ch 3 – 3.2.15	IEMA Guidance is now 29 years old. The role of cycling in policy has changed in that time. While IEMA considers pedestrian delay and amenity, it does not specifically consider cyclist delay and amenity. This should be added as an environmental effect.
017	ES Ch 3 – 3.2.28	Identification of sensitive receptors should be established through engagement with communities, but is likely to be wider than this list, for example including churches and sporting facilities if not covered under community facilities. Private/business equestrian facilities should also be considered. Also, even modest pedestrian movement should be considered, including enjoyment of public rights of way.
018	ES Ch 3 – 3.3	Policy context section should refer to Cherwell Local Plan transport related policies and the Oxfordshire Local Transport and Connectivity Plan (LTCP 5) which is expected to be approved by Cabinet in June 2022.
019	ES Chj3 – 3.4.38	States that trains at Lower Heyford run between Banbury and Bicester – this is incorrect – they run between Banbury and Didcot Parkway.
020	ES Ch 3 3.5.55	Public transport strategy. Detailed comments are not provided here, as development of the strategy is ongoing in consultation with officers. The potential for a mobility hub should be explored.
021	ES Ch 3 – 3.5.65	What evidence is there for the shift times? As this paragraph says, there could be some variation depending on individual occupier requirements.
022	ES Ch 3 – 3.5.66	No information is provided on the capacity of the rail network to accommodate 12 trains per day, nor evidence of demand. How important is this volume to the business case for the development?
023	ES Ch 3 – 3.5.70	I am assuming the average maximum through-put of containers of 984 per day (12 trains) relates to two-way movements. The figures quoted in this paragraph for HGV trips/mileage savings assume the development is operating at full capacity, whereas to qualify as an NSIP, rail capacity for only 4 trains per day is the minimum requirement.

		Therefore, the HGV trips/mileage savings could remain at one third of that quoted (or even less if the demand isn't there). There is no guarantee that rail capacity will be available for any more than 4 trains per day. Also, the savings should be considered in the context of background HGV trips on the network.
024	ES Ch 3 – 3.5.72	States that many of the remaining HGV trips would already be present on the highway network. This may be true to some extent for trips on the M40 or A43 but not for trips on the B430.
025	ES Ch 3 – 3.5.74	States that to ensure the full impact of the proposed development is modelled in the vicinity of the site, the transport modelling will assume that all HGV trips would be new trips to the highway network. This may be realistic for the B430 and B4030 and other local roads but given that many of the HGV trips would already be on the strategic road network (M40 and A43) this could mean that the impact on M40 J10 is considerably over-estimated, leading to the provision of excess capacity through the proposed works to J10. This additional capacity would induce additional traffic and would conflict with the targets in the emerging Oxfordshire LTCP5 to remove 1 out of every 4 current car trips in Oxfordshire by 2030 and 1 out of every 3 by 2040.
026	ES Ch 3 – 3.5.77	The trip generation assumptions of a single occupancy vehicle rate of 92% are perhaps realistic for the rural location and dispersed workforce in 2022, but in the context of declining car use and the sustainable transport strategy for the site, it could be considered inappropriate to plan for this modal share, as it will lead to overcapacity in the highway network and induce additional traffic. Furthermore, faster journey times by private car will not incentivise the use of sustainable transport.
027	ES Ch 3 – 3.5.88	The significant capacity improvements at M40 J10 are stated to be a permanent beneficial impact of very large significance with regard to highway operation. However, in terms of environmental impact generally, they represent a huge amount of construction, with significant lengths of new carriageway and additional bridges, with consequent negative environmental impacts, only some of which can be mitigated. The scheme provides up to 63% additional capacity on some elements of the junction, which must surely be over-provision for the development, and needs to be justified.

028	ES Ch 3 – 3.5.84	It is acknowledged that the HGV traffic from the development on the B430 would present an unacceptable environmental impact on Ardley village, therefore the Ardley bypass is considered necessary to make the development acceptable.
029	ES Ch 3 – 3.5.86	The impact of the Middleton Stoney Relief Road and the proposed bus gate requires further investigation following the traffic modelling. Nevertheless, it is acknowledged that the proposed cycle facility alongside the relief road, and carrying on alongside the B4030 to Bicester, is necessary to mitigate the impact of the development by providing opportunity for sustainable travel.
030	ES Ch 3 – 3.5.91	No information has been provided yet on phasing or construction access. Early discussions are recommended with local communities and the highway authority, ahead of inclusion of this information in the next round of consultation. The impact of construction traffic has the potential to be very significant.
031	ES Ch 3 – 3.6.2	A 10% modal shift from single occupancy car use, from a base of 92%, will still leave a very high SOV modal share. This is not consistent with the emerging Oxfordshire LCTP target of removing 1 out of every 4 current car trips in Oxfordshire by 2030 and 1 out of every 3 by 2040.
032	ES Ch 3 – 3.6.8 and 9	States that reducing congestion and journey time reliability at M40 J10 will help contribute to targets on reducing greenhouse gas emissions. Further evidence is required to support this claim, as providing additional capacity at the junction is likely to induce more traffic.
033	ES Ch 3 – 3.8.6	We look forward to working with the TWG to identify additional mitigation measures that may be required. The promoter should carry out engagement with the community on any proposed measures.
034	ES Ch 4 – Air Quality	The impact on the Air Quality Management Area on the A34 at Botley, Oxford may need to be considered in the ES, depending on the outcome of the traffic modelling.
035	ES Ch 5 -Noise and Vibration Appendix 5.3	It is noted and welcomed that consultation will be undertaken with council officers and National Highways regarding the noise surveys already undertaken, the proposed Highway Works and whether any additional monitoring is required.
036	ES Ch 6 – Ecology and Arboriculture	Attention is drawn to the County Council's newly adopted Tree Policy for Oxfordshire, which should be listed in the policy section. <a href="#">Tree Policy for</a>

		<a href="#">Oxfordshire</a> . In transport terms, with particular relevance to trees within the highway boundary.
037	ES Ch 8 – Lighting	This chapter does not appear to cover the impact of lighting emitted from embedded highway infrastructure, which must be covered in the ES.
038	Draft Public Rights of Way Strategy Plan	<p>The detail of this is still the subject of discussion with officers . The following points have been raised:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• WCHAR needs to be carried out as soon as possible to allow OCC to comment before next consultation stage.</li> <li>• The detail of crossings, underpasses, diversions, widths, surfaces, and furniture needs to be agreed at earliest stages. Likewise, for potential environmental and amenity improvements like seating and viewing points, information panels, landscape, biodiversity, and habitat enhancements.</li> <li>• Any proposals for diversions and replacement routes, including temporary ones, will benefit from early engagement with OCC countryside access colleagues.</li> <li>• Additional measures are required where bridges separate bridleway routes, requiring NMUs to join the carriageway across the bridge. These are the subject of ongoing discussion, as are the types of crossing to be provided at each point where a PRoW crosses highway. Details of proposed underpasses will be required.</li> <li>• A safe crossing point will be required on the B430 to provide a link between the onside NMU route around the south of the site to bridleway 109/27 opposite.</li> <li>• A bridleway connection is required to connect existing bridleway 109/20 to the proposed new bridleway leading to the bridge across the northern end of the railway sidings. Improvements to the existing bridleway through the quarry will be required to ensure it is safe and convenient to all users.</li> <li>• The highway proposals at Junction 10 have provided the opportunity to create links between Ardley and the public rights of way network to the northeast of the M40, which are currently severed by the M40.</li> </ul>

### 3) Archaeological impact

48. The site is located in an area of considerable archaeological interest adjacent to the line of Aves Ditch, a prehistoric tribal boundary. A number of Iron Age banjo enclosures have been recorded along the line of this boundary including one within the proposed site itself. A further banjo enclosure is located within the proposed access road from Ardley.
49. The proposed site also contains a number of archaeological settlement sites identified from aerial photographs and Middle to Late Iron Age settlement has been recorded along Aves ditch in the vicinity of the proposed site. Roman cremations and burials have also been recorded within the site and a number of further burials have been recorded in the vicinity. A possible Anglo-Saxon cemetery has been recorded in the area of the site, but this was recorded in 1865 and the exact location is uncertain.
50. A geophysical survey has been undertaken on the main site and parts of the site have been subject to an archaeological evaluation. This however was not able to investigate the full extent of the site due to ecological constraints and a further programme of evaluation is likely to be required in these areas ahead of the determination of any permission for this development.
51. Although the fieldwork for the evaluation of the accessible parts of the main area has been completed the report has not yet been completed and has not been agreed with County Archaeological Services as set out in the agreed written scheme of investigation. This evaluation did record a number of archaeological sites within the development area including a possible Roman building or villa with a tile roof and a well-preserved Banjo enclosure.
52. Once this evaluation report has been agreed then it will be used to assess the significance of these sites in order to provide appropriate advice as to whether or not the impact of this development on the significance of these sites is acceptable. This evaluation report will also need to be used to inform the assessment of the impact of this development on these features within the cultural heritage chapter of the EIA.
53. The applicant has submitted a draft cultural heritage chapter which does include assessments of the significance of these features, but we would highlight that this should be based on the findings of the evaluation report once agreed and is therefore premature at this stage.
54. A geophysical survey has been undertaken along the routes of the original proposed new roads into the site, but these have since changed and so does not include the full extent of these new roads. A programme of archaeological evaluation will need to be undertaken along these proposed roads in advance of the granting of any permission for this site so that the impact of this development on surviving heritage assets can be appropriately assessed and take into account in any decision.

55. This must be carried out by a professionally qualified archaeological organisation and should aim to define the character and extent of the archaeological remains within the application area, and thus indicate the weight which should be attached to their preservation. This evaluation must be undertaken in line with the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists standards and guidance for archaeological evaluation including the submission and agreement of a suitable written scheme of investigation.
56. Once these evaluation reports have been agreed then the cultural heritage chapter, including the assessment of significance, will need to be updated based on the results of the evaluation.

#### **4) Flood Water Management and Drainage**

57. Oxfordshire County Council is Lead Local Flood Authority in Oxfordshire, responsible for managing local sources of flood risk. The detailed design of the surface water drainage scheme will need to be submitted to and approved by the County Council in order to ensure it provides adequate mitigation.

#### **5) Public Health**

58. The Healthy Place Shaping team acknowledges that the proposals include a dedicated access into the main site for bus, pedestrian and cycles. While it is welcomed that transport methods alternative to the private car will be enabled, it is important that this infrastructure is promoted through a range of activation methods. This may be in the form of workplace travel plans, the provision of secure cycle storage, lockers, and shower facilities, and with careful consideration as to the bus routes which will use this route so as to maximise the ability for users of the proposed site to reach home destinations. Given the proximity of the site to residential areas at Heyford Park, Ardley and Middleton Stoney, specific cycle routes should be provided to support sustainable active travel from these locations to the site for work purposes.
59. It is welcomed that the proposals include a reference to Public Rights of Way which include improving existing routes as well as providing new ones. Due to the rural location of the proposed development, there will naturally be a lack of major transport infrastructure that would normally be present in towns and cities, so it is vital that opportunities to travel sustainably to the site are provided. A site management plan should consider how the site will manage and maintain public rights of way within the site and which connect to it; these include legible signage, vegetation cutback and other hazard removal.
60. The proposal includes new landscaping and planting across all elements of the scheme, including habitat creation to deliver a net gain in biodiversity. These plans should carefully consider areas for people to stop and rest, especially when walking or cycling considerable distances to and from the site. This should tie in with strategic planting to deliver shade and cooling from the sun on hot days. Planting within the site should consider the mental wellbeing of those who might use the area during breaks. This should also include canopy shading and shrubs

that give seasonal interest.

61. Given the proximity of the development site to residential housing at Heyford Park, it is important that the detailed assessment of operational phase road traffic emissions on local air quality identifies any potential impact on the nearest housing units to the development. It is noted that a construction phase dust assessment will be included; a construction phase dust management plan should also be provided.
62. The applicant's commitment to the climate emergency by providing EV charging points and solar PV energy generation is noted. There should be a sufficient number of EV charging points to meet future demand and charge points should be free to use in order to make electric vehicle ownership more appealing.
63. Within the key documents accompanying this consultation, there are chapters on a number of Public Health issues, such as air quality, climate change and socio-economic factors. Given that this is a Nationally Significant Infrastructure Project (NSIP) and as such, the proposals will be subject to an application for a Development Consent Order (DCO), a Health Impact Assessment will need to be completed as part of the planning application; please see here for guidance on the methodology to be used for such an assessment. The results of the HIA should be reported in a specific healthy place shaping chapter.

## **6) Minerals and Waste**

### General Comments

64. There is a Severn Trent Green Waste site within the SRFI area, which is a safeguarded waste site. Policy W11 of the Oxfordshire Minerals and Waste Local Plan Part 1 – Core Strategy (OMWCS) states that development that would prevent or prejudice the use of a safeguarded site will be not be permitted unless, among other things, an equivalent waste management capacity can be appropriately and sustainably provided elsewhere. The proposal includes an alternative site for the Severn Trent Green Waste facility, but the proposal would need to show that this proposed site is appropriate and sustainable as a replacement for the existing facility.
65. The site is in close proximity to an existing Household Waste Recycling Centre, Energy from Waste Plant, and a former landfill site to the east. The proposal should demonstrate that it would not prevent or prejudice the operation of the Household Waste Recycling Centre or the EfW plant.
66. The site is within a mineral safeguarded area (crushed rock). Policy M8 of the OMWCS states that development preventing or otherwise hindering future mineral development of safeguarded areas will not be permitted unless:
  - The site has been allocated in an adopted local plan or neighbourhood plan;
  - The need for the development outweighs the economic and sustainability considerations relating to the mineral resource; or
  - The mineral will be extracted prior to the development taking place.

- The site is not an allocated site, there is no proposal to extract the mineral prior to the development taking place, and so it is necessary to demonstrate how the development outweighs the mineral considerations.

In relation to Chapter 13 of the Environmental Statement

13.2.15

This refers to a “minimal level” of mineral being required. This is a large site and so even a minimal level could be significant. If the proposal is to use mineral from the cut and fill operations, it should be included in the ES as this would be relevant to policy M8 of the OMWCS.

13.2.51

If climate change is not going to be covered in this part of the ES it should reference where it has been considered,

Table 13.9

Good to see that mineral safeguarding will be considered in the ES, but it’s not clear why this is in the waste section.

13.2.55

We welcome this approach as prevention is at the top of the waste hierarchy.

13.2.56

It would be worth mentioning in this section that inert waste used in the restoration of an unrestored quarry is considered to be recovery. This should be used in preference to landfill at a site that does not require restoration.

13.3.13

The proposed SRFI is being determined as a Nationally Significant Infrastructure Project. Therefore, it is right to think of the waste as being the project’s rather than that of Oxfordshire’s community. Having said that, in the interest of reducing the transport effects on climate change, proximity should be considered in the waste management options.

13.3.27

It is also worth saying here that Policy W6 of the OMWCS states that “Priority will be given to the use of inert wastes that cannot be recycled as infill material to achieve the satisfactory restoration and after use of active or unrestored quarries.”

13.3.28

The policy in the OMWCS that relates to the disposal of wastewater and sewage sludge is policy W10, so this should be referred to in the OMWCS section.

13.4.2

Policy W11 of the OMWCS safeguards existing waste facilities such as the Severn Trent IVC facility. This should be referred to here and in the OMWCS section.

13.4.8

The latest Local Aggregates Assessment (2021) should be used.

#### Table 13.14

This refers to the District Council as the Local Authority. In this case it is the County Council that is the Local Planning Authority, and it would therefore be sensible to refer to the County authority in each case. Buckinghamshire is now a unitary authority. The exception in Oxfordshire's case is the Blenheim Palace permission which was granted by West Oxfordshire District Council. In all cases, the latest information from the Authority Monitoring Reports, and the Waste Data Interrogator should be used.

#### 13.4.17

The review of waste management facilities is restricted to the two Oxfordshire Districts of Cherwell and West Oxfordshire. However, some areas of South Oxfordshire are closer to the proposed site than parts of West Oxfordshire. Waste is in any event a County Matter, so it would more sense to refer to counties with or without a radius around the SRFI site.

#### 13.6.28

Depletion of finite mineral resources is also caused by sterilisation. This proposal would cause a loss of workable mineral deposits, and this should be considered in the ES.

## 7) Ecology

### Habitats

67. The proposed SRFI will result in the partial loss of Ardley Cutting & Quarry Site SSSI, a site notified for its geological and ecological interest. The geological interest concerns Jurassic rock exposures whilst the ecological interest refers primarily to the calcareous grassland, but also the scrub, ancient woodland and wetland habitats, and part of a great crested newt population. Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI's) are sites of National level importance. It's' most recent condition assessment was 'unfavourable – recovering'. The sustained recovery of the habitats is reliant on the appropriate management being carried out, which seems to be undertaken to a limited extent by Network Rail.
68. It is estimated that about 1.36ha (approx. 11%) of the SSSI will be permanently lost and another 1.46ha subject to temporary disturbance. It may also be adversely affected by construction impacts such as dust, noise and pollution. A detailed botanical survey of Ardley Cutting & Quarry Site SSSI found that whilst none of the calcareous grassland communities on site matched any of the specific communities noted in the SSSI citation, nor any specific published National Vegetation Community (NVC), they were still representative of the species-rich calcareous grassland for which the site is partly designated. As such it is considered that the site remains of national significance. Further detailed botanical surveys are planned for this summer.
69. Ardley Trackways SSSI lies partly within the application area but is designated for it is geological interest only.

70. The main part of the application area lies almost entirely within the Ardley & Heyford Conservation Target Area (CTA). The targets for this CTA include calcareous grassland, great crested newts, and geological conservation. There will also be some habitat loss from Ardley Fields Quarry Local Wildlife Site (LWS), an area of species-rich grassland, ponds, and wet ditches, adjacent to the site.
71. Ardley Road Verge Nature Reserve (RVNR) lies adjacent to the main site and will be partly impacted (although none of the grassland itself will be lost) by the creation of a new footpath/cycleway. Whilst lacking the most appropriate management it still supports some species-rich areas of calcareous grassland and a population of the nationally scarce species meadow clay. Therefore, this RVNR is considered to still be of County level importance.
72. Within the main application site, none of the hedgerows were found to meet the criteria to be classified as Important under the Hedgerow Regulations 1997. However, three hedgerows potentially impacted by the highways works meet the criteria.

### Species

73. There are three great crested newt (GCN) metapopulations around the main site, one of which spans the railway line, and the works have the potential to cause loss of habitat and disrupt migration to breeding ponds. The large size of these populations means they are of County level importance. No evidence of GCN was found in the three ponds within the main site. Two attenuation basins within the highway works areas were found to support GCN. Further survey works in 2022 will confirm whether or not a fourth metapopulation is present within the area of the Ardley bypass.
74. Two bat roosts have been confirmed at a farmhouse and outbuilding, both of which are proposed for retention and refurbishment; therefore, a licence will be required to undertake these works. No tree roosts have yet been confirmed. Small populations of reptiles (common lizard, grass snake and slow worm) were found within the main site. The railway embankments could not be surveyed but provide excellent habitat for reptiles and they will almost certainly be present in and around the SSSI in good numbers. Low numbers will likely also be present in the highway works areas.
75. The breeding bird assemblage was as expected for the habitats on site, with the exception of spotted flycatcher, which if confirmed breeding makes it of County level importance for the species. Two probable barn owl nesting/roosting sites will be lost. The overwintering bird assemblage was of local value, with the exception of skylark and yellowhammer, which were recorded in high numbers. If these kinds of numbers are recorded in three out of the past five years, the main site could meet the criteria for a LWS for wintering birds (this data is not yet available). These two species are associated with open field habitats and as such the proposed development will have a significant impact on them.

76. The badger survey report was not available to comment on, but they will be present within the main site.

77. The grassland and scrub habitats within the Ardley Quarry & Cutting SSSI provide excellent habitat for invertebrates, most notably the rare Duke of Burgundy butterfly; further butterfly surveys are scheduled for this summer.

78. No evidence of otter or water vole was found on the Gaggle brook.

#### Biodiversity Net Gain

79. The Environmental Statement (Ecology 6.5.9) states that an Impact Assessment using the DEFRA 3.0 metric has been carried out, which demonstrated the scheme could deliver more than a 10% net gain. The calculations have not been made available and as such I cannot comment further on this aspect.

80. Once all the additional surveys have been carried out this year the Impact Assessment should be re-calculated using the latest 3.1 version of the metric.

#### Mitigation/compensation

81. Since updated/further surveys are required for many of the species, the existing mitigation proposals are fairly general. They will be required for bats, badgers, GCN, birds, reptiles as well as the SSSI grassland and also possibly invertebrates. A Farmland Bird Strategy is proposed. Measures to prevent and reduce construction and long-term impacts on the SSSI and nearby LWS's will need to be covered in greater detail in a Construction and Environment Management Plan (CEMP).

82. Overall, from the information currently available, I cannot say whether the mitigation and compensation are sufficient and/or appropriate.

### **8) Landscape**

NPPF (2021)

83. Para 174 requires planning policies and decisions to contribute to:

a) protecting and enhancing valued landscapes, sites of biodiversity or geological value and soils (in a manner commensurate with their statutory status or identified quality in the development plan);

b) recognising the intrinsic character and beauty of the countryside, and the wider benefits from natural capital and ecosystem services – including the economic and other benefits of the best and most versatile agricultural land, and of trees and woodland; and enhance the natural and local environment by recognising the intrinsic character and beauty of the countryside.

Cherwell Local Plan 2011-2031 (Part 1)

- a) Policy ESC10 (Protection and Enhancement of Biodiversity and the Natural Environment) states amongst other things that the protection of trees will be encouraged, with the aim to increase the number of trees in the District
- b) Policy ESD13 (Local Landscape Protection and Enhancement) seeks the restoration, management and enhancement of existing landscapes, features, and habitats. It further requires development to respect and enhance local landscape character, securing appropriate mitigation where damage to local landscape character cannot be avoided. Proposals will not be permitted if they cause amongst other things an undue intrusion into the open countryside, cause undue harm to important natural landscape features, are inconsistent with local character, impact on areas of high tranquillity, harm the settings of settlements or harm the historic value of the landscape.
- c) ESD 15 (The Character of the Built and Historic Environment): Amongst other things this policy requires development to contribute positively to an area's character and identity by creating or reinforcing local distinctiveness and respecting local topography and landscape features, including skylines, valley floors, significant trees, historic boundaries, landmarks, features or views, in particular within designated landscapes within the Cherwell Valley and within conservation areas and their setting.

#### Landscape Character Context

- 84. The site is not located within an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, or its setting.
- 85. The Oxfordshire Landscape and Wildlife Study (OWLS) shows the site to be located in the Landscape Types 'Farmland Plateau' and 'Wooded Estate lands' and the Local Character Areas 'Fritwell' (CW/57) and 'Middleton Stoney' (CW/59).
- 86. Landscape guidelines for the Farmland Plateau landscape type seek amongst other things the conservation of the open and spacious character of the landscape, the environmentally-sensitive maintenance and management of hedgerows, the strengthening of field patterns by planting-up gappy hedges, the conservation of the remaining areas of semi-improved and unimproved grassland, the retention of the sparsely settled rural character of the landscape, the protection of the exposed character of the plateau from visually intrusive developments, the use of local building materials and the appropriate restoration and after uses of quarries.
- 87. Landscape guidelines for this Wooded Estate lands landscape type seek amongst other things the conservation of semi-natural and ancient semi-natural woodland, the environmentally-sensitive maintenance and management of hedgerows, the strengthening of field patterns by planting-up gappy hedges, the conservation of parklands, the strengthening of the character of tree-lined water courses, the use of judicious planting of characteristic trees and shrubs to minimise the visual impact of intrusive land uses and to assist the successful integration of developments into the surrounding countryside.

88. The Cherwell Landscape Character Assessment (LCA) identifies the site to be part of the 'Oxfordshire Estate Farmlands' and 'Upper Heyford Plateau' Landscape Character Areas.

#### Landscape & Visual chapter

- a) The LVIA is at a Draft stage and does not yet include definite findings on the impact of the scheme in landscape and visual terms. I have not reviewed the document in detail but have the following observations:  
The proposed assessment criteria in appendix 7.1 look rather simplistic and might not provide sufficient detail to allow and sufficiently nuanced assessment of the scheme.
- b) The methodology does not include information on the method to be used for photography and for photomontages. Visualisations should be in accordance with the Landscape Institute Technical Note TGN 06/19 - Visual Representation of Development Proposals.
- c) The LVIA chapter does so far not include any information on the extent of the study area considered as part of this assessment. This should be determined by a computer generated ZTV (Zone of Theoretical Visibility), which should be refined by site visits. Without this is it difficult to judge whether the appropriateness of the proposed viewpoints outlined on the viewpoint plan
- d) The viewpoints plan includes some viewpoints to assess the highway infrastructure but the Draft LVIA seems to predominantly focus on the main site. The varying road infrastructure schemes associated with this development are major developments in their own right and will need to be adequately assessed in landscape and visual terms. More viewpoints might potentially be required.
- e) Proposed mitigation measures include the integration of some of the existing mature vegetation into the scheme and the provision of 132ha (44% of the main site) of land for landscaping and green infrastructure including ponds/swales, perimeter mounding and new public access routes. Most of the landscape treatment is focussed on screening the site with bunds and/or vegetation. Although there are some green corridors through the site, they look rather narrow and will be dwarfed by the scale of the buildings. I have not been able to find information on the treatment of these, but the Illustrative Masterplan suggests that landscaping might be rather formal and therefore unlikely to offer the ecological and visual benefits one would hope to see considering the site's context of nature conservation designations.
- f) The assessment of construction and operational effects in Draft LVIA is unspecific at this stage making it difficult to get a sense of the impact of the development in views. However, it recognises that the landscape character of the site will permanently change, which I would agree with.
- g) I note that lighting is addressed separately but the impacts of lighting should also be considered in the context of the LVIA. The LVIA does currently only assess impacts on landscape character, characteristic elements, and views but it should also assess effects on tranquillity and dark skies.
- h) There is a lot of development in the area - the LVIA should take account of indirect, secondary, and cumulative effects. As such the LVIA should also assess the effects on tranquillity caused by increases in car and HGV movements in the wider area.

- i) In line with GLVIA3 it is important that the design process and assessment process are interactive and that the LVIA is used to inform the scheme design, e.g., what road alignment option is chosen, layout of the main site, height and bulk of the buildings, materials, landscape design approach etc. More detail is required to understand to what degree the LVIA has influenced the layout and appearance of the proposal.

### Illustrative Masterplan

89. I have not been able to find information on the size, height, and design of the buildings but the Illustrative Masterplan and consultation boards suggest that the development is of a design, bulk and height that is not in keeping with the surrounding landscape character and is expected to be visible in the landscape. The proposed highway infrastructure works are also substantive and are major developments in their own right. Both the main site and highway works will by their scale and nature have an urbanising major effect on this rural landscape character. Although other large developments such as Dewars Quarry and ERF exist in the vicinity, these developments are in comparison smaller and of a temporary nature, which will assist in reducing their impact in landscape character and visual terms in the long-term.
90. The Illustrative Masterplan suggests that the development is proposed to be screened by vegetated bunds. This is a rather utilitarian approach to screening as bunds are often uncharacteristic, engineered features in the landscape that are not in keeping with the landscape character. I am unconvinced about the appropriateness and effectiveness of these, and I expect parts of the large warehouse buildings to remain visible in views.
91. The draft layout proposes to retain existing mature vegetation within the site, which is welcomed but these areas are dwarfed by the development. The briefing document suggests that 44% of landscape and green infrastructure will be provided but it is unclear what areas are included in this calculation.
92. Overall, the impression is that the landscape proposals focus on screening bunds and landscape treatments along the roads but limited green infrastructure within the site and the wider area to provide comprehensive measures that provide ecological connectivity and offer landscape improvements.
93. Green infrastructure works on all scales and should include the provision of sufficiently wide landscape corridors for the benefits of landscape and ecological connectivity, and with sufficient space for meaningful planting. For a scheme of this size and importance I would also expect green roofs and green walls as well as solar panels to be an integral part of the design. Green roofs and walls could not only assist in reducing the impact of the development in views but could also deliver benefits for biodiversity, Sustainable Urban Drainage (SUDS) and energy efficiency.
94. It is unclear whether or how environmental considerations have influenced the design, but the draft layout suggests a planting approach typically associated with business parks with little regard to existing landscape character. Whilst the development might not affect any landscape designations the main site will

adversely affect a number of statutory and non-statutory nature conservation sites, such as a Scientific Interest (SSSI), Local Wildlife Sites (LWS) and District Wildlife Sites (DWS). It is also located in a Conservation Target Area (CTA) and within the Draft Nature Recovery Network (NRN) highlighting the importance of this area in nature conservation terms. Whilst these are predominantly ecological and geological considerations, they also influence the landscape character, value, and sensitivity, and should guide the approach to the landscape treatment.

95. In addition to the effects associated with the main site, the proposed highway works are substantive and raise landscape and visual concerns in their own right. The development is expected to increase the number of trains, HGVs, and cars on the access roads, all of which are likely to cause increases in views, noise, and activity. The proposed landscape treatment around the extended junction 10 and the bypasses looks minimal and does not deliver any wider landscape benefits. In addition, the development might also result in an increase in vehicle movements in the wider area, which in turn has the potential to adversely affect the tranquillity of villages and the landscape beyond the immediate site context. An appropriate assessment of impacts on tranquillity for the wider area should be provided.

In summary:

96. The landscape approach shown on the illustrative masterplan appears to focus on the need for screening to address adverse visual effects rather than considering how a scheme of this nature could be successfully integrated into the landscape overall. A scheme of this magnitude and importance should not only seek to address mitigation of immediate impacts but should aim to deliver wider landscape and ecological benefits in line with the recommendations of the local landscape character assessments and ecological guidance. This could for example include the provision of substantial nature conservation corridors, woodland planting and additional hedgerow planting and management in the wider landscape area.
97. The draft LVIA suggests that proposed mitigation measures are unlikely to be fully effective in mitigating landscape and visual effects and that residual adverse effects would remain. The development (main site and enabling highway works) by its nature, extent, size, and bulk will have an urbanising effect on the local landscape and will cause an adverse change in the landscape character. Views are also expected to remain adversely affected but the level of impact is yet to be assessed. Indirect adverse effects on tranquillity, dark skies and noise also need assessing.
98. Notwithstanding that the design and assessment process are ongoing; the proposed development raises serious concerns in landscape and visual terms. At this stage it is difficult to judge the level of impact of the development and whether the scheme can be made acceptable in landscape planning policy terms.

## **9) Climate Impact**

99. The County Council notes the OxSRFI Proposed Development seeks to *'contribute to the Government's ambition for more freight to be moved by rail*

*rather than by road and help to create a low carbon sustainable transport system. The transfer of freight from road to rail has a significant role to play in a low carbon economy, helping to address climate change. The proposals will also contribute to Oxfordshire's economic growth and create new employment opportunities'.*

100. Within the development's vision are the climate related guiding principles:
  - the proposals will play a direct role in enabling the transition to a more sustainable economy with rail freight being around 73% more carbon efficient than road freight – It is stated that each freight train can remove up to 76 HGVs from our roads, lowering carbon emissions and reducing congestion;
  - the scheme will deliver a significant net gain in biodiversity;
  - committing to achieve net-zero carbon in construction whilst also seeking to maximise capabilities for customers operationally;
  - the scheme will include sustainable energy consumption and production with a net zero carbon ambition – It is stated that the site will deliver low carbon development with renewable energy generation and buildings which meet at least BREEAM 'Excellent' standards.
  
101. The Preliminary Environmental Information (Work in Progress) Report (PEIR) Draft Environmental Statement includes Chapter 15: Climate Change, which presents the preliminary work undertaken as part of the ongoing preparation of the Environmental Statement (ES) to assess the potential effects of climate change on the Proposed Development and the effects of the Proposed Development on climate change.
  
102. Being 'preliminary', this draft chapter includes details of the scope and methodology of the above assessments which will be undertaken and presented in the final draft ES chapter (at the 'Stage 2' consultation process). Oxfordshire County Council expects more scrutiny will be applied to the final draft of this ES chapter, specifically on operational and construction emissions, and subsequent mitigation measures.
  
103. As stated in paragraph 15.2.43, the GHG Assessment will not be restricted by geographical area but instead assess any increase (or decrease) in emissions as a result of the Proposed Development. The chapter lists the following sources of GHG emissions from this Proposed Development:
  - Emissions relating to on-site construction activities (such as plant use on-site);
  - Operational emissions from site maintenance activities;
  - Operational end user traffic – a comparison has been made between GHG emissions between the 'Do-minimum' (without the Proposed Development) and 'Do-something' (with the Proposed Development) scenarios provided by a GHG assessment based on data from the traffic model and guidance from the Department of Transport;
  - Construction and operational emissions relating to the manufacturing, transport, and disposal of materials, which may be some distance from the location of the Proposed Development (for example, emissions associated with the manufacture of cement and steel).
  
104. Table 15.2 summarises likely Significant GHG Emissions sources.

**Table 15.2: Summary of Significant GHG Emissions Sources**

<b>GHG Emissions Sources</b>	<b>Description</b>
Occupiers (Transport)	User behaviour during the operational phase, including heavy duty vehicles (HDV's) associated with general operation/functionality.
Transport	Employee commuting and other vehicular trips that start or end within the Main Site.
Construction (qualitative)	Direct sources of GHG emissions associated with vehicle and plant movements and function.

105. Table 15.3 outlines which emission sources will be included in the final draft ES Assessment. We note direct emissions from operations (including vehicular) is included. In this assessment we would expect to see included the emissions from vehicles as a result of reduced congestion of the highways, and evidence of how this will not induce further demand from private vehicles.

106. We also note in Table 15.3 that emissions from the construction phase are not to be included in the ES Assessment. We strongly encourage these sources (particularly embodied carbon and energy from construction) to be included in order to ensure mitigation measures are considered early and built into the Proposed Development's design and contract conditions.

**Table 15.3: GHG Emissions Sources Included in / Excluded from the GHG Assessment**

<b>GHG Emissions Sources</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Included?</b>	<b>Stage of Assessment</b>
<b>Construction Phase</b>			
Direct GHG (Energy)	Construction energy – On-site fuel combustion (e.g. construction plant)	X	ES
Indirect GHG (Construction)	Embodied carbon associated with construction (materials, construction process, in-use building component maintenance and eventual demolition)	X	ES
Solid Waste	Waste arising during construction	X	ES
Water	Water demand associated with construction works	X	ES
<b>Operational Phase</b>			
Natural Capital	Green and blue infrastructure (e.g. soft landscaping, water bodies, sustainable drainage features)	X	N/A
Direct GHG (Energy and vehicles)	Operational energy – On-site fuel combustion (e.g. gas, biomass, solar provisions, vehicular emission)	✓	ES
Indirect GHG (Energy)	Operational energy – Off-site generation (e.g. Grid electricity, heat and steam).	X	N/A
Water	Water demand associated with the non-domestic buildings	✓	ES
Solid Waste	Waste arising from building occupants and visitors (non-domestic buildings and different housing typologies)	✓	ES





## Divisions Affected – ALL

**CABINET – 19 July 2022**

### **Digital Inclusion Strategy and Charter**

**Report by Corporate Director Customers, Organisational  
Development & Resources**

#### **RECOMMENDATION**

1. The Cabinet is **RECOMMENDED** to
  - a) Approve the **OCC Digital Inclusion Strategy**.
  - b) Approve the annual review by Cabinet and People Overview & Scrutiny Committee of our progress against the commitments set out in the strategy.
  - c) Approve the **Oxfordshire Digital Inclusion Charter**.

#### **Executive Summary**

1. The importance of digital inclusion has been increased following the lockdowns during the COVID-19 pandemic.
2. Digital inclusion is a multi-faceted issue and includes:
  - Access to good quality and affordable broadband, wi-fi and mobile data.
  - Opportunities for digital skills training and support.
  - Devices that can access the internet, are affordable and good quality, and meet their users' needs.
  - The ability, motivation, confidence, and physical space to safely access the internet.
  - Accessible services that are designed inclusively to meet the needs of service users.

## CA12

3. The “digital divide” refers to the gap between those who have the elements outlined above, and those who do not. People who are disadvantaged or vulnerable in other ways are more likely to be digitally excluded, with this issue being closely linked to other inequalities.
4. The benefits of digital inclusion include access to essential services, education, information, social connection, employment opportunities, and reducing our impact on the environment by reducing travel. Poorer health, educational, and employment outcomes, and an increased risk of poverty can all be a result of digital exclusion.

### Background

5. As a Council, we recognise and value the range of work that is already ongoing to tackle digital exclusion in Oxfordshire, with the local Voluntary Sector (such as [Getting Oxfordshire Online](#) and the [Connect! Project](#)), city and district councils, and health sectors already carrying out a range of initiatives. We also value the work already ongoing within our Council to reduce the digital divide, such as within our Digital Infrastructure Team, Libraries and Heritage Service, and Education Directorate.
6. We also recognise that the digital inclusion landscape within Oxfordshire is fragmented, and that through the Council’s strategy we can provide coordination and signposting around the range of important initiatives already ongoing.
7. The Digital Inclusion Strategy addresses the strategic priority of [Tackling Inequalities in Oxfordshire](#). It also relates to the goals of Oxfordshire County Council strategies including the COVID-19 Recovery and Renewal Strategy, [Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion \(EDI\) Framework](#), Voluntary and Community Sector Strategy, [Climate Action Framework](#), Domestic Violence Strategy, the Oxfordshire Way, Director of Public Health’s Annual Report, Social Value Policy, Consultation and Engagement Strategy, SEND Strategy, Agile Working Strategy, [Digital](#) and [ICT Strategy](#), and our Delivering the Future Together values and behaviours.

### **People Overview and Scrutiny Committee**

8. People Overview Scrutiny recommended that further wording be included in the long-term ambitions and commitments around digital inclusion for businesses, particularly small businesses, and working with Town and Parish Councils, this has been added in.
9. There was also a further recommendation that more consideration be applied to online safety. This will be considered and included in the action plan that will underpin the strategy.

### **Consultation and Engagement**

10. The strategy has been developed by the policy team from the goals, commitments and actions identified by stakeholders during a process of engagement.
11. An internal working group was set up to coordinate the vision for the strategy, align digital inclusion projects across the Council, and signpost to initiatives across Oxfordshire. This group is led by the Policy and Strategy Team and is comprised of representatives from Education, Public Health, Digital Infrastructure, Cultural Services, and Adult Social Care.
12. In October 2021, we held a virtual roundtable discussion with around 35 partners from across the Oxfordshire public, health, education, and voluntary sectors. In this session, we defined what digital inclusion means to us in Oxfordshire and set out the problem that needs to be addressed.
13. We also discussed our vision for a digitally inclusive county, which included joined-up initiatives, digital inclusion by design, and ensuring that no one is left behind. The barriers that were identified included support for those who will never want to be online, funding, duplication of resources due to a fragmented landscape, rurality, online safety, and the cost-of-living crisis.

14. The principles that were identified during the roundtable discussion as needing to underpin collaborative work included signposting access to support, sharing best practice, promoting the benefits of digital, embedding equality, diversity, and inclusion, and recognising that digital inclusion is about people, not just technology.

### Developing the Strategy

15. The strategy is set out to be focussed around three strands: Digitally Inclusive Communities, Digitally Inclusive Service Delivery, and Digitally Inclusive Workplace. In April 2022, we carried out a programme of engagement on these three strands with external and internal stakeholders.

16. We held three virtual workshops focussed on the digitally inclusive communities strand, with around 40 external attendees. These workshops were on a range of themes relating to digital inclusion, such as education, isolation, local businesses, and organisations. There was a specific focus on groups who are more likely to be thought of as digitally excluded.

17. On the digitally inclusive service delivery strand, we have carried out interviews with service users. This has included older people who access our social care services, and younger people, who may have lived experience of digital exclusion to understand barriers in our service delivery.

18. We also held two virtual workshops with around 30 Oxfordshire County Council staff about how we can make our workplace more digitally inclusive. In our action plan, we are committing to engage with non-desk-based and frontline staff about their levels of digital inclusion.

19. On the 8<sup>th</sup> June we held a Digital Inclusion Summit at the Oxford Town Hall. This brought together key stakeholders involved in the digital inclusion landscape in Oxfordshire, and involved speakers giving presentations on the work that they have been undertaking. At the summit, we had a facilitated discussion to develop a digital inclusion charter with partners. This sets out

principles around how we will work together to tackle digital exclusion in Oxfordshire.

### **Digital Inclusion Charter**

20. The charter was developed in facilitated sessions at the end of the summit with partners. It sets out principles and ways of working around digital inclusion, acknowledging that each partner across Oxfordshire has different needs and resources relating to digital inclusion. Partners have fed back and inputted into the drafted charter. OCC will share the charter with partners and develop guidance for signing up to it, as well as a process for agreement.

### **Next Steps**

21. The draft strategy sets out OCC's high-level ambition, while an action plan is in development with input from all services that will set out the operational detail on how we will achieve this.

22. It is recommended that our progress against the commitments set out in the strategy is reviewed annually by the Cabinet and People Scrutiny Committee.

23. The action plan will be updated annually and is recommended to be monitored internally by ELT, due to its operational nature.

### **Financial Implications**

24. This strategy is a long-term approach to reaching digital inclusion to be delivered in line with established strategies and existing budgets, there are no immediate implications and identifying funding options will be an important part of the action plan. Any future project or programme proposals to support digital inclusion that requires budget or grant funding will be developed by the lead service and taken through the relevant sign off process, as part of the action plan. Digital Inclusion actions will be included in Service Planning later in the year.

Comments checked by:

Bick Nguyen-McBride, Assistant Finance Business Partner,  
[Bick.Nguyen-McBride@Oxfordshire.gov.uk](mailto:Bick.Nguyen-McBride@Oxfordshire.gov.uk)

## Legal Implications

25. The strategy has no significant legal implications. Any resulting proposals for changes to existing services, due to the underpinning action plan, will be the subject of formal equality impact assessments.

Comments checked by:

Jonathan Pool, Solicitor, Contracts (Legal Services),  
[Jonathan.Pool@Oxfordshire.gov.uk](mailto:Jonathan.Pool@Oxfordshire.gov.uk)

## Staff Implications

26. The strategy includes a strand focussed on enabling a digitally inclusive workforce. The impact will be positive on staff and has been developed with colleagues across the council and will seek to enhance digital inclusivity and skills within the organisation.

## Equality & Inclusion Implications

27. The Digital Inclusion Strategy has the principles of equality, diversity and inclusion embedded within it. The structure of digitally inclusive communities, service delivery, and workplace mirrors the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Framework, and several actions will cross across both areas of work. Improving digital inclusion will improve access to essential services, education, information, social connection, and employment opportunities.

28. An Equality Impact Assessment has been completed.

## Sustainability Implications

29. Increasing digital inclusion will help to reduce our impact on the environment by reducing travel, through enabling digital means of working or accessing services for our residents and staff.

30. In terms of our own workplace, we will establish clear links with the agile working strategy and the long-term ambition that “technology that supports agile ways of working will facilitate communication and the ability to work well anywhere, any place, and at any time.”

31. A Climate Impact Assessment has been completed.

## **Risk Management**

32. Digital exclusion can impact anyone and any limitations in being able to access digital platforms, whether through lack of devices or confidence, can negatively impact a person’s health, wellbeing, education, or development. This strategy seeks to address these issues and mitigate the long-term risks and disbenefits of digital inclusion.

## **Communications**

33. Communications are planned to communicate the ambitions and commitments of the strategy, both internally and externally.

34. The charter will be communicated with all partners across the county, having already been shared with those who attended for their feedback, in order to encourage sign-up to this commitment.

Claire Taylor  
Corporate Director, Customers, Organisational Development and Resources

Annexes:                      Annex 1: Digital Inclusion Strategy Draft  
                                      Annex 2: Digital Inclusion Charter Draft  
                                      Annex 3: Equality Impact Assessment  
                                      Annex 4: Climate Impact Assessment

Contact Officer:            Elena Grant, Policy Officer, 07825 403173,  
[elena.grant@oxfordshire.gov.uk](mailto:elena.grant@oxfordshire.gov.uk)

July 2022

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# DIGITAL INCLUSION STRATEGY **2022-2025**

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# 1 Foreword

A key part of our commitment to tackling inequalities in Oxfordshire is improving digital inclusion. Digital access can improve the quality of life by increasing opportunities for Oxfordshire residents to get involved in education, employment, community activities, health services, and staying in touch with family and friends.

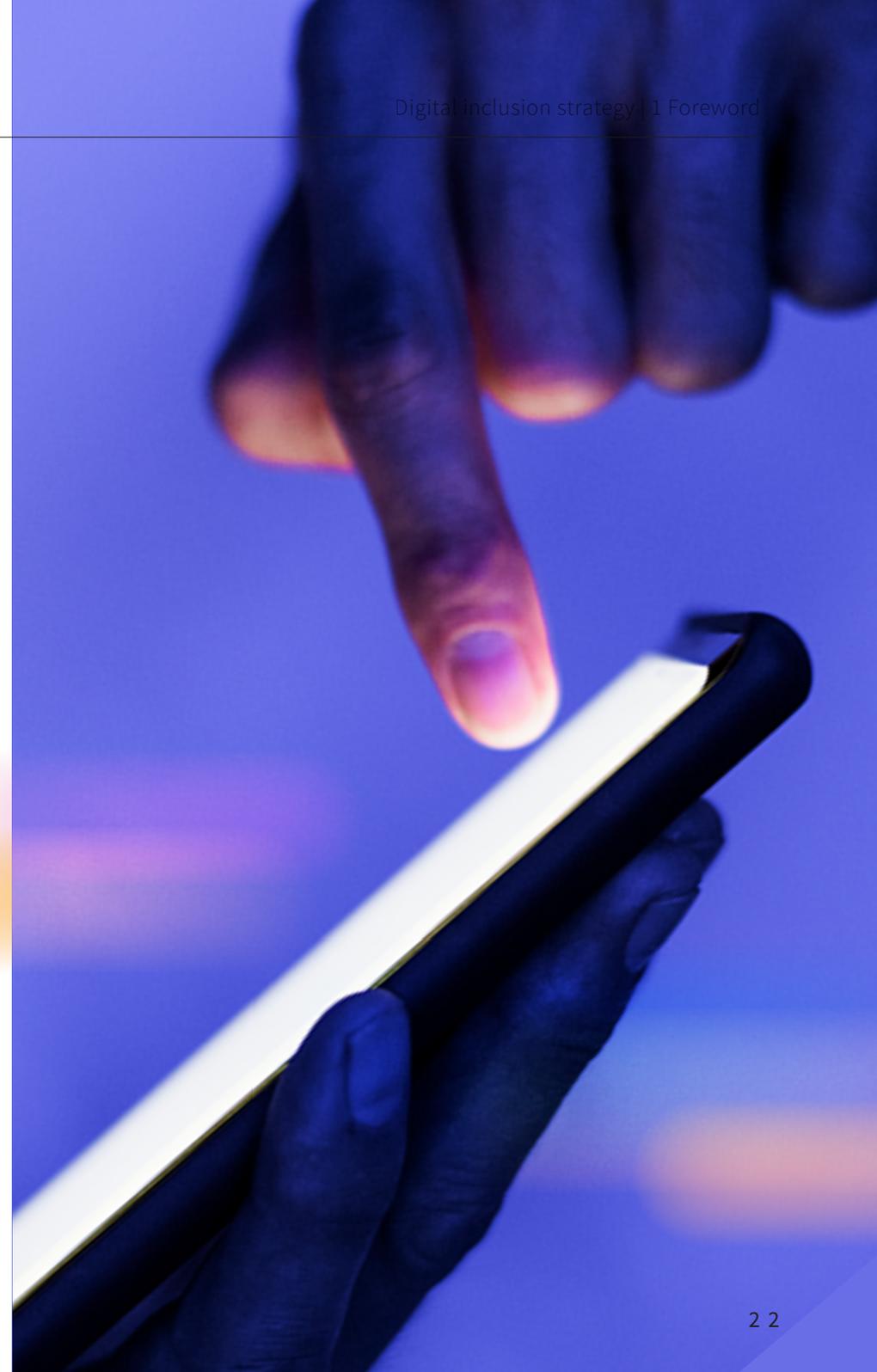
Our strategy involves working with businesses, communities, city, district, town and parish councils, and partners to tackle the digital divide. We know that digital service delivery will not be right for everybody and will work to empower those who want to be more digitally enabled, whilst providing support for those who are unable or choose not to be connected.

There is a detailed action plan which underpins the long-term ambitions and commitments set out in this strategy. This strategy contributes to our wider vision to lead positive change and to work in partnership to make Oxfordshire a greener, fairer, and healthier county.



**Cllr Glynis Phillips**  
Cabinet Member for Corporate Services  
Oxfordshire County Council

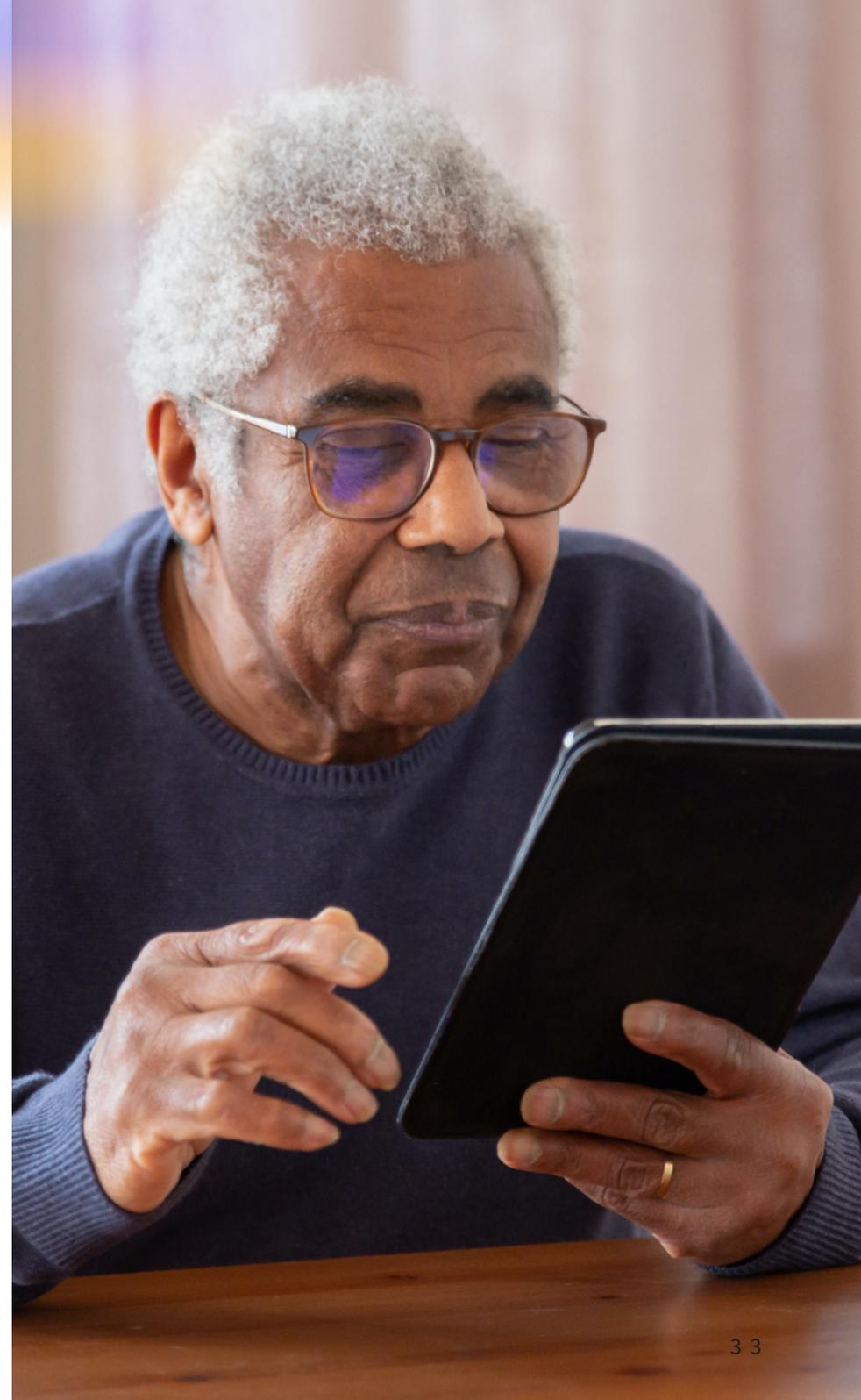
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# 2 Introduction

## Why is digital inclusion important?

**Citizens Online** defines digital inclusion as being “about ensuring the benefits of the internet and digital technologies are available to everyone”. It includes both access to the internet and the ability to use it.

### This is a multi-faceted issue and includes:

1. Access to good quality and affordable broadband, wi-fi and mobile data.
2. Opportunities for digital skills training and support.
3. Devices that can access the internet, that are affordable and good quality, and meet their users’ needs.
4. The ability, motivation, confidence, and physical space to safely access the internet.
5. Accessible services that are designed inclusively to meet the needs of service users.

The “digital divide” refers to the gap between those who have the elements outlined above, and those who do not. People who are disadvantaged or vulnerable in other ways are more likely to be digitally excluded, with this issue being closely linked to other inequalities.

The importance of digital inclusion has been increased following the lockdowns during the COVID-19 pandemic. The benefits include access to essential services, education, information, social connection, employment opportunities, and reducing our impact on the environment by reducing travel.

Poorer health, educational, and employment outcomes, and an increased risk of poverty can all be a result of digital exclusion.

We recognise that digital inclusion is a complex issue, and that those who are “digitally excluded” are hard to define. We acknowledge that anyone could be digitally excluded in their lifetime, that there is no one category of people who fit this label and that individuals might not consider themselves to be “digitally excluded”. However, [research](#) carried out by the Local Government Association and Socitm Advisory shows that there are groups who are more likely to be digitally excluded due to a range of different barriers.

**Therefore, we will place a particular emphasis on improving outcomes for:**

- Young people
- Older people
- People living with disabilities or long-term health conditions
- People living in rural areas
- Refugees
- People with English as a secondary language
- People in lower income groups
- People with few qualifications
- People without a job
- People living in social housing
- Homeless people
- Small businesses
- Carers
- Care leavers
- Armed forces community
- Gypsy, Roma, and Traveller (GRT) communities
- People living with social deprivation

## 3

## What are we already doing?

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“Residents’ access to superfast broadband grew from 69 per cent in 2013 to over 98 per cent today.”

Our digital inclusion strategy addresses our strategic priority of tackling inequalities in Oxfordshire. It also relates to the goals of Oxfordshire County Council’s strategies including our COVID-19 recovery and renewal strategy, equality, diversity, and inclusion (EDI) framework, voluntary and community sector strategy, climate action framework, and the Oxfordshire Way.

In March 2020, Oxfordshire County Council signed-up to the [Local Digital Declaration](#). This is a government initiative which is a commitment to design services that best meet the needs of citizens, challenge the technology market to offer flexible tools and services, protect citizens’ privacy and security, and deliver better value for money.

Our [digital infrastructure strategy](#) is ensuring that Oxfordshire has great connectivity. The council has a dedicated team that has been improving broadband speeds and has seen Oxfordshire residents’ access to superfast broadband grow from 69 per cent in 2013 to over 98 per cent today. The programme incorporates direct contract-driven interventions in areas of market failure, as well as collaboration with all telecoms suppliers/operators.

Digital connectivity is also included as a policy focus area within the local transport and connectivity plan (LTCP) as digital connectivity can help to reduce the need to travel by providing residents with the ability to work, shop and access services from home. When travel is required, digital connectivity is important for supporting connected and autonomous vehicles and improves the journey experience for travellers using mobile phones for navigation, real time journey information or booking tickets.

There are three digital connectivity policies in the LTCP that cover digital infrastructure, 5G technology and remote working. The remote working policy sets out that the county council will work with stakeholders to ensure high quality internet connectivity and other necessary facilities are provided to all residents to reduce the need to travel and support remote working.

“ Digital inclusion is not simply about technical competence; it is also about social inclusion. Digital needs are almost always embedded in social circumstances and needs. ”

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The libraries and heritage strategy sets out several promises, priorities and actions that align to digital access and inclusion. The 2021 report [‘Digital Inclusion and Exclusion in the Arts and Cultural Sector’](#) published by Arts Council England and the Good Things Foundation provides a clear framework for the development of the digital offer across libraries and heritage. The libraries and heritage strategy builds upon library services national universal offer around Information and digital provision ([Information and Digital | Libraries Connected](#)). In line with this, Oxfordshire Libraries already deliver quality digital resources and support, enable individuals and communities to develop digital

skills, and opportunities around creative and innovative technology.

Digital delivery has been growing across the library and heritage sectors and, in response to the pandemic, our services increased the volume and quality of our digital delivery. In 2021 the service carried out local research in partnership with the

University of Oxford – [‘Libraries on the Front Lines of the Digital Divide: The Oxfordshire Digital Inclusion Project Report’](#), to collect data-driven insights on the digital needs of people who are under- or unconnected to the internet and other digital technologies. This review is the largest survey of the use of public computers in Oxfordshire ever undertaken and provided a unique opportunity to assess the status of our digital offer for our customers. The report emphasises the need to move away from the idea of teaching ‘digital skills’ and to focus instead on ‘digital wellbeing’: “digital inclusion is not simply about technical competence; it is also about social inclusion. Digital needs are almost always embedded in social circumstances and needs.” (p.18) Currently, all Oxfordshire libraries provide free access to Wi-Fi and 345 PCs (across 44 libraries) with trained staff and volunteer support to help people get online and access digital resources. Over 9,000 people a year access our digital helper and digital activity programmes, with digital support delivery to over 8,000 adults around online applications for bus passes, parking permits and blue badge permits.



# 4

## Our vision and principles for a digitally inclusive Oxfordshire

### Vision:

To ensure that everyone in Oxfordshire is empowered to access, and experience the wide-ranging benefits enabled by being digitally connected and confident. There are a diverse range of barriers within Oxfordshire, and we will work in partnership to ensure that no one is left behind.

### Principles:

- We will work in partnership to address digital inclusion
- We will establish a shared definition and language of digital inclusion
- We will have an evidence-based approach and continue to research the digital divide
- We will continue to listen to our residents, councillors, partners, and stakeholders

### Our strategy has three strands:

#### 1 Digitally inclusive communities

We recognise that partnership is central to the success of digital inclusion, and will work together with partners, businesses, and residents to coordinate, align, and promote initiatives. We will commit to collaboratively developing a digital inclusion charter for Oxfordshire which will set out principles for signatories to follow.

#### 2 Digitally inclusive service delivery

We will design and deliver our services with a consideration of digital inclusion and will ensure that the council's digital transformation does not sustain or increase the digital divide.

#### 3 Digitally inclusive workplace

We will ensure that our staff, managers, and volunteers have the digital skills, connectivity and devices required for their roles and are included in digital communications.

# 5

## Engagement process to date

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**In October 2021**, Oxfordshire County Council held a virtual roundtable discussion with approximately 35 partners from various organisations including Oxfordshire public, health, education, and voluntary sectors. In this session, we defined what digital inclusion means to us in Oxfordshire and set out the problem that needs to be addressed.

We also discussed our vision for a digitally inclusive county, which included joined-up initiatives, digital inclusion by design, and ensuring that no one is left behind. The discussion also covered barriers that need to be overcome and identified support for those who will never want to be online, funding, duplication of resources due to a fragmented landscape, rurality, online safety, and the cost-of-living crisis as particular challenges.

The principles that were identified as needing to underpin collaborative work include signposting access to support, sharing best practice, promoting the benefits of digital, embedding equality, diversity, and inclusion, and recognising that digital inclusion is about people, not just technology.

**In April 2022**, Oxfordshire County Council undertook a programme of engagement with external and internal stakeholders. There were three virtual workshops focussed on the digitally inclusive communities strand, with approximately 40 attendees. These workshops were on a range of themes relating to digital inclusion, such as education, isolation, local businesses, and organisations. It also included specific focus on groups who are more likely to be thought of as digitally excluded. Interviews were held with service users who have lived experience of digital exclusion or using our online services, to understand barriers in our service delivery.

Finally, a further two virtual workshops were held with Oxfordshire County Council staff about how the workplace can be made more digitally inclusive.

In June 2022, Oxfordshire County Council held a digital inclusion summit. This brought together key stakeholders involved in the digital inclusion landscape in Oxfordshire, and involved speakers giving presentations on the work that they have been undertaking. At the summit, there was a facilitated discussion to develop a digital inclusion charter with partners. This will set out principles around working together to tackle digital exclusion in Oxfordshire.

## 6 Digitally inclusive communities

### Long-term ambitions:

- Digital access is not a barrier to education in Oxfordshire
- Vulnerable children and families have access to support to raise household digital capacity and address digital disadvantage
- No one in Oxfordshire will be isolated from essential services by digital-by-default barriers, or a lack of connectivity
- Oxfordshire businesses and organisations can recruit, train, retain and support their workforce with the necessary digital skills
- Broadband connectivity across Oxfordshire is one of the best in the country.

### We will commit to:

- Coordinating digital inclusion initiatives with partners, aligning funding opportunities and establishing principles for partnership working.
- Supporting the early years sector, schools, further education institutions, youth groups and alternative provision and higher education institutions to safely bridge the digital divide for young people and their families, in education and home settings.
- Ensuring that residential provision and other service access points have safe and suitable digital access to support learning and educational goals.
- Working with the early years sector and schools to engage, empower, and support parental digital literacy, to enable children to access digital platforms for schooling.
- Signposting residents to support around opportunities for digital skills learning on a range of devices and accessing good quality and affordable devices and connectivity.
- Capturing good practice and technological innovation from across a range of settings and sectors in Oxfordshire to share as inspiration for future possibilities.
- Focussing on getting gigabit capable broadband into rural communities to ensure more consistent access to highspeed internet connections across the county.
- Maximising investment in Oxfordshire by broadband infrastructure-build companies.

# 7 Digitally inclusive service delivery

## Long-term ambitions:

- Innovative solutions to problems of digital exclusion are collaboratively developed and delivered in our services.
- Citizens of Oxfordshire are provided with a comprehensive, affordable, and accessible assistive technology offer that meets their needs.
- Our libraries and heritage service provides digital opportunities for people to connect and create, learn, and grow together.

## We will commit to:

- Designing, procuring, and updating systems, software, and websites to be fully compliant to relevant digital and accessibility legislation and government guidance.
- Piloting and adopting new and innovative assistive technology products and approaches.
- Ensuring that our catalogue of assistive technology products available to the public is accessible, affordable, and fit for purpose.
- Designing digital inclusion programmes that adapt to the needs of different audiences.
- Increasing community outreach and awareness of library services (especially in communities that might not know about the digital offer).
- Considering digital inclusion as part of our social value policy, and in our commissioning responsibilities under the Social Value Act.
- Promoting digital inclusion through our supply chain.
- Considering the needs of those who are not digitally included in our customer services.

## 8 Digitally inclusive workplace

### Long-term ambitions:

- Technology that supports agile ways of working will facilitate communication and the ability to work well anywhere, any place, and at any time.
- Our staff, managers, councillors, and volunteers have the learning and development opportunities to develop digital skills.
- Initiatives to improve digital inclusion will be promoted and championed by our staff, managers, councillors, and volunteers.

### We will commit to:

- Being at the forefront of real-world testing of new technology that will benefit our workforce and communities.
- Developing the physical ICT infrastructure and online/digital resource provision to meet growing and changing needs.
- Using technology that enables us and our ‘customers’ to get the best outcomes, and have flexibility, security and access through the right choice of channels.
- Promoting best practice for communicating digitally.
- Embedding and promote digital inclusion at an organisational level, particularly for our frontline, part-time, and non-desk-based staff.
- Continuing to ensure that staff who do not have regular access to digital services, due to the nature of their jobs, still have opportunities to access important information and engagement opportunities.
- Investing in staff capacity, digital mindsets, skills, knowledge, and willingness to deliver digitally.
- Supporting staff with technology that meets their different needs so no one is left behind, everyone delivers their best and can reach their potential.

# 9

## Responsibility for delivering a digitally inclusive Oxfordshire

As part of Oxfordshire County Council’s vision to lead positive change by working in partnership to make Oxfordshire a greener, fairer, and healthier county, we recognise that considerations of digital inclusion need to be embedded into all we do. The diagram sets out how we work together to deliver the digital inclusion strategy.

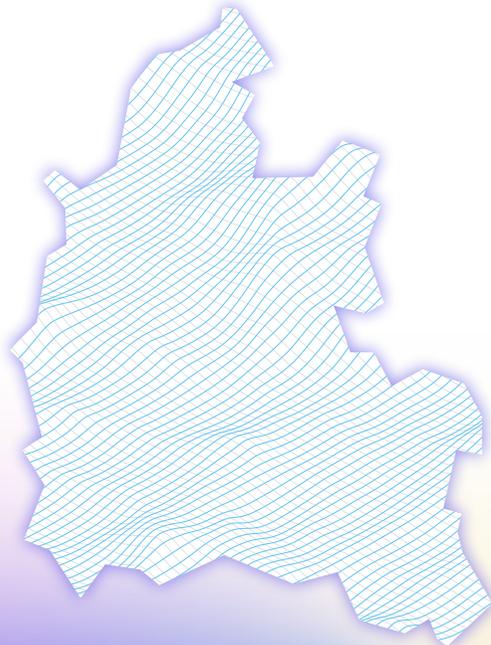


# 10 How we will work in partnership

As a council, we recognise that each organisation in the voluntary and community sSector (VCS), private (including small businesses), public, education and health sectors will have their own challenges, and are accountable for their own digital inclusion activities.

We will align through partnership, with our digital inclusion charter being an example of this. We strongly value the range of work that is already ongoing to tackle digital exclusion in Oxfordshire, with the local VCS (with initiatives such as [Getting Oxfordshire Online](#) and the [Connect! project](#)), city and district councils, and health sectors already carrying out a range of initiatives.

Following our process of engagement, we heard and recognise that the digital inclusion landscape within Oxfordshire is fragmented, and that through the council's strategy we can provide coordination and signposting around the range of important initiatives already ongoing.



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# 11 Monitoring and reporting progress

The long-term ambitions and commitments of our digital inclusion strategy are set every three years. Sitting beneath this strategy will be an annual action plan that will be published on our website.

This reflects the different ways in which we are working to make our organisation, services, and our Oxfordshire communities more digitally inclusive. The action plans will have indicators to help us measure progress against our ambitions.

We will engage in the development of our action plan each year and will seek feedback on our progress as part of the reporting process. An annual report will go to Cabinet and Scrutiny to update on the progress against the action plan, and any work outstanding.



# 12 References and resources

- [Getting Oxfordshire Online](#)
- [Libraries on the Frontline of the Digital Divide - The Oxfordshire Digital Inclusion Project Report](#)
- [Digital Inclusion Strategy - Birmingham City Council](#)
- [Digital Inclusion and Exclusion in the Arts and Cultural Sector, Good Things Foundation, July 2021](#)
- [Digital Exclusion and Health Inequalities - Good Things Foundation, August 2021](#)
- [The Charity Digital Skills Report 2021 - Skills Platform](#)
- [Fostering Digital Inclusion in Oxfordshire - Oxford University Student Consultancy Report for Oxfordshire Community Foundation](#)
- [Four essential steps for delivering digital inclusion projects and initiatives](#) - Local Government Association
- [A new tool: The Digital Exclusion Risk Index](#) - Good Things Foundation
- [UK Digital Poverty Evidence Interim Review](#) - Digital Poverty Alliance
- [Digital Inclusion Toolkit](#)
- [Broadband Coverage and Speed Test Statistics for Oxfordshire](#)
- [Including Everyone](#) - Equalities, Diversity, and Inclusion Framework
- [Digital Inclusion](#) - Citizens Online
- [Digital Infrastructure Strategy](#) - Digital Infrastructure Programme (digitalinfrastructureoxfordshire.co.uk)
- Good Things Foundation - [Improving lives through digital](#)
- [Libraries Connected](#)
- [Cornwall Digital Inclusion Strategy](#)
- [Digital Inclusion Strategy](#) - Norwich City Council
- [Age UK Briefing Paper - Living in a Digital World after Covid-19](#)
- [Digital Glasgow](#)
- [Digital Wigan](#)
- [Getting Online in Kensington and Chelsea](#)
- [Digital Inclusion Resources, Statistics and Reports - Digital Inclusion Toolkit](#)
- [Healthwatch - Rural Isolation in Oxfordshire Report, March 2022](#)
- [Digital Inclusion Innovation Programme - LOTI](#)
- [Evaluation of the Local Digital Skills Partnership](#)
- [100% Digital Leeds](#)
- [Mental Wellbeing Needs Assessment](#) (oxfordshire.gov.uk)

# 13 Alternative formats

If you require this document in an alternative format, i.e., easy read, large text, audio, Braille, or a community language, please get in touch.



## Definition

We believe that digital inclusion is about ensuring that everyone can choose to access the internet and have the skills to use it.

This is a multi-faceted issue and includes:

- Access to good quality and affordable broadband, wi-fi and mobile data.
- Opportunities for digital skills training and support.
- Devices that can access the internet, that are affordable and good quality, and meet their users' needs.
- The ability, motivation, confidence, and physical space to safely access the internet.
- Accessible services that are designed inclusively to meet the needs of service users.

## Principles

1. We will work together in collaboration to coordinate approaches to digital inclusion by:
  - Encouraging the involvement of partners and networking across Oxfordshire.
  - Reducing duplication of efforts and building on existing infrastructure to better support our communities.
  - Raising awareness of digital exclusion and identifying gaps in current provision.
2. We will share priorities and collaborate on opportunities to access funding and resources by:
  - Aligning and maximising our resources.
  - Signposting to information about opportunities and sharing knowledge.
  - Sharing evidence-based approaches and reflecting on the effectiveness of initiatives.
3. We will always be learning and continuously improving by:
  - Understanding and adapting to evolving needs.
  - Identifying digital barriers for our customers and residents.
  - Learning from best practice.

4. We will promote the importance of digital by choice by:
  - Acknowledging that one size does not fit all.
  - Recognising the diversity of needs within Oxfordshire and the importance of inclusion.
  - Encouraging the benefits of getting online.
  
5. We will consider the wider social value of initiatives by:
  - Designing accessibility into digital initiatives and platforms.
  - Prioritising sustainability and supporting environmentally aware choices.
  - Using clear and consistent language to ensure advice is simple and accessible
  
6. We will encourage the development of digital skills and competencies by:
  - Signposting to digital training opportunities.
  - Increasing communications around online safety, wellbeing, and confidence.
  - Enabling a digitally skilled workforce.

We will monitor the progress of this charter and associated actions and will commit to an annual review to ensure that this is fit for purpose.

**Declaration:**

By signing this Digital Inclusion Charter, [I commit / our organisation commits] to the principles set out in this charter to enable Oxfordshire to be a digitally inclusive county.

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**Oxfordshire County Council**  
**Equalities Impact Assessment**

Digital Inclusion Strategy

06/07/2022

## Contents

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## Section 1: Summary details

<b>Directorate and Service Area</b>	Customers, Organisational Development and Resources Communications, Strategy and Insight Policy Team
<b>What is being assessed</b> (e.g. name of policy, procedure, project, service or proposed service change).	Digital Inclusion Strategy
<b>Is this a new or existing function or policy?</b>	New Strategy
<b>Summary of assessment</b>  Briefly summarise the policy or proposed service change. Summarise possible impacts. Does the proposal bias, discriminate or unfairly disadvantage individuals or groups within the community?  (following completion of the assessment).	<p>Citizens Online defines digital inclusion as being “about ensuring the benefits of the internet and digital technologies are available to everyone”. It includes both access to the internet and the ability to use it.</p> <p>This is a multi-faceted issue and includes:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Access to good quality and affordable broadband, wi-fi and mobile data.</li> <li>2. Opportunities for digital skills training and support.</li> <li>3. Devices that can access the internet, that are affordable and good quality, and meet their users’ needs.</li> <li>4. The ability, motivation, confidence, and physical space to safely access the internet.</li> <li>5. Accessible services that are designed inclusively to meet the needs of service users.</li> </ol> <p>The “digital divide” refers to the gap between those who have the elements outlined above, and those who do not. People who are disadvantaged or vulnerable in other ways are more likely to be digitally excluded, with this issue being closely linked to other inequalities. The importance of digital inclusion has been increased following the lockdowns during the COVID-19 pandemic. The benefits include access to essential services, education, information, social connection, employment opportunities, and reducing our impact on the environment by reducing travel. Poorer health, educational, and employment outcomes, and an increased risk of poverty can all be a result of digital exclusion.</p> <p>We recognise that digital inclusion is a complex issue, and that those who are “digitally excluded” are hard to define.</p>

	<p>We acknowledge that anyone could be digitally excluded in their lifetime, that there is no one category of people who fit this label and that individuals might not consider themselves to be “digitally excluded”. However, research carried out by the Local Government Association and Socitm Advisory shows that there are groups who are more likely to be digitally excluded due to a range of different barriers. Therefore, we will place a particular emphasis on improving outcomes for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Young people</li> <li>• Older people</li> <li>• People living with disabilities or long-term health conditions</li> <li>• People living in rural areas</li> <li>• Refugees</li> <li>• People with English as a secondary language</li> <li>• People in lower income groups</li> <li>• People with few qualifications</li> <li>• People without a job</li> <li>• People living in social housing</li> <li>• Homeless people</li> <li>• Small businesses</li> <li>• Carers</li> <li>• Care leavers</li> <li>• Armed forces community</li> <li>• Gypsy, Roma, and Traveller (GRT) communities</li> <li>• People living with social deprivation</li> </ul> <p>The strategy will aim to tackle inequalities around digital access, which in turn will have an impact on other inequalities (e.g., health and education).</p>
<b>Completed By</b>	Elena Grant
<b>Authorised By</b>	
<b>Date of Assessment</b>	06/07/2022

## Section 2: Detail of proposal

<p><b>Context / Background</b></p> <p>Briefly summarise the background to the policy or proposed service change, including reasons for any changes from previous versions.</p>	<p>Citizens Online defines digital inclusion as being “about ensuring the benefits of the internet and digital technologies are available to everyone”. It includes both access to the internet and the ability to use it.</p> <p>This is a multi-faceted issue and includes:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Access to good quality and affordable broadband, wi-fi and mobile data.</li> <li>2. Opportunities for digital skills training and support.</li> <li>3. Devices that can access the internet, that are affordable and good quality, and meet their users’ needs.</li> <li>4. The ability, motivation, confidence, and physical space to safely access the internet.</li> <li>5. Accessible services that are designed inclusively to meet the needs of service users.</li> </ol> <p>The “digital divide” refers to the gap between those who have the elements outlined above, and those who do not. People who are disadvantaged or vulnerable in other ways are more likely to be digitally excluded, with this issue being closely linked to other inequalities. The importance of digital inclusion has been increased following the lockdowns during the COVID-19 pandemic. The benefits include access to essential services, education, information, social connection, employment opportunities, and reducing our impact on the environment by reducing travel. Poorer health, educational, and employment outcomes, and an increased risk of poverty can all be a result of digital exclusion.</p>
<p><b>Proposals</b></p> <p>Explain the detail of the proposals, including why this has been decided as the best course of action.</p>	<p>The strategy was decided as the best course of action as it will plug a gap and set direction for addressing this issue, instead of multiple services acting in an uncoordinated manner.</p>

### Evidence / Intelligence

List and explain any data, consultation outcomes, research findings, feedback from service users and stakeholders etc, that supports your proposals and can help to inform the judgements you make about potential impact on different individuals, communities or groups and our ability to deliver our climate commitments.

In October 2021, OCC held a virtual roundtable discussion with approximately 35 partners from various organisations including Oxfordshire public, health, education, and voluntary sectors. In this session, we defined what digital inclusion means to us in Oxfordshire and set out the problem that needs to be addressed. We also discussed our vision for a digitally inclusive county, which included joined-up initiatives, digital inclusion by design, and ensuring that no one is left behind. The discussion also covered barriers that need to be overcome and identified support for those who will never want to be online, funding, duplication of resources due to a fragmented landscape, rurality, online safety, and the cost-of-living crisis as particular challenges. The principles that were identified as needing to underpin collaborative work include signposting access to support, sharing best practice, promoting the benefits of digital, embedding equality, diversity, and inclusion, and recognising that digital inclusion is about people, not just technology.

In April 2022, OCC undertook a programme of engagement with external and internal stakeholders. There were three virtual workshops focussed on the Digitally Inclusive Communities strand, with approximately 40 attendees. These workshops were on a range of themes relating to digital inclusion, such as education, isolation, local businesses, and organisations. It also included specific focus on groups who are more likely to be thought of as digitally excluded. Interviews were held with service users who have lived experience of digital exclusion or using our online services, to understand barriers in our service delivery. Finally, a further two virtual workshops were held with OCC staff about how the workplace can be made more digitally inclusive.

In June 2022, OCC held a Digital Inclusion Summit. This brought together key stakeholders involved in the digital inclusion landscape in Oxfordshire, and involved speakers giving presentations on the work that they have been undertaking. At the summit, there was a facilitated discussion to develop a digital inclusion charter with partners. This will set out principles around working together to tackle digital exclusion in Oxfordshire.

<p><b>Alternatives considered / rejected</b></p> <p>Summarise any other approaches that have been considered in developing the policy or proposed service change, and the reasons why these were not adopted. This could include reasons why doing nothing is not an option.</p>	<p>The alternative to not create a Digital Inclusion Strategy was not possible as it was identified that a strategy was needed into order to address the inequality gap.</p>
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### Section 3: Impact Assessment - Protected Characteristics

Protected Characteristic	No Impact	Positive	Negative	Description of Impact	Any actions or mitigation to reduce negative impacts	Action owner* (*Job Title, Organisation)	Timescale and monitoring arrangements
Age	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Research has shown that older people, and younger people are more likely to be digitally excluded, with digital needs changing at different ages. The strategy and accompanying action plan will research and look at ways to address this.			
Disability	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Research has shown that people with disabilities are more likely to be digitally excluded. The strategy and accompanying action plan will research and look at ways to address this, with commitments included in the strategy around assistive technology and accessible webpages.			
Gender Reassignment	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Marriage & Civil Partnership	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>				

<b>Pregnancy &amp; Maternity</b>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>				
<b>Race</b>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Research has shown that Black, Asian, and minority ethnic groups are more likely to be digitally excluded. The strategy and accompanying action plan will research and look at ways to address this.			
<b>Sex</b>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Research has indicated links between digital exclusion and victims of domestic violence. The strategy and action plan will look to research and see where more could be done around this.			
<b>Sexual Orientation</b>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	N/A			
<b>Religion or Belief</b>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	N/A			

### Section 3: Impact Assessment - Additional Community Impacts

Additional community impacts	No Impact	Positive	Negative	Description of impact	Any actions or mitigation to reduce negative impacts	Action owner (*Job Title, Organisation)	Timescale and monitoring arrangements
<b>Rural communities</b>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Rural communities have been identified by research as a group that are more likely to be digitally excluded, particularly in terms of broadband access. The strategy and accompanying action plan will research and look at ways to address this.			
<b>Armed Forces</b>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Members of the armed forces and their families have been identified by research as a group that are more likely to be digitally excluded. The strategy and accompanying action plan will research and look at ways to address this.			
<b>Carers</b>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Carers have been identified by research as a group that are more likely to be digitally excluded. The strategy and accompanying action plan will			

Additional community impacts	No Impact	Positive	Negative	Description of impact	Any actions or mitigation to reduce negative impacts	Action owner (*Job Title, Organisation)	Timescale and monitoring arrangements
				research and look at ways to address this.			
<b>Areas of deprivation</b>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	The strategy will be looking to tackle the inequalities associated with digital exclusion, such as data poverty, which may be more likely to be experienced in areas of deprivation.			

### Section 3: Impact Assessment - Additional Wider Impacts

Additional Wider Impacts	No Impact	Positive	Negative	Description of Impact	Any actions or mitigation to reduce negative impacts	Action owner* (*Job Title, Organisation)	Timescale and monitoring arrangements
<b>Staff</b>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	The strategy has a specific strand dedicated to enabling a digitally inclusive workplace. This will help to improve digital skills within our workforce.			
<b>Other Council Services</b>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	The strategy has a specific strand dedicated to enabling digitally inclusive service delivery. This will help to embed considerations of digital inclusion into OCC's service design and delivery.			
<b>Providers</b>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	There is a commitment to promote digital inclusion through our supply chain.			

Additional Wider Impacts	No Impact	Positive	Negative	Description of Impact	Any actions or mitigation to reduce negative impacts	Action owner* (*Job Title, Organisation)	Timescale and monitoring arrangements
Social Value <sup>1</sup>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	There is a commitment to consider digital inclusion as part of our Social Value Policy, and in our commissioning responsibilities under the Social Value Act.			

<sup>1</sup> If the Public Services (Social Value) Act 2012 applies to this proposal, please summarise here how you have considered how the contract might improve the economic, social, and environmental well-being of the relevant area

## Section 4: Review

Where bias, negative impact or disadvantage is identified, the proposal and/or implementation can be adapted or changed; meaning there is a need for regular review. This review may also be needed to reflect additional data and evidence for a fuller assessment (proportionate to the decision in question). Please state the agreed review timescale for the identified impacts of the policy implementation or service change.

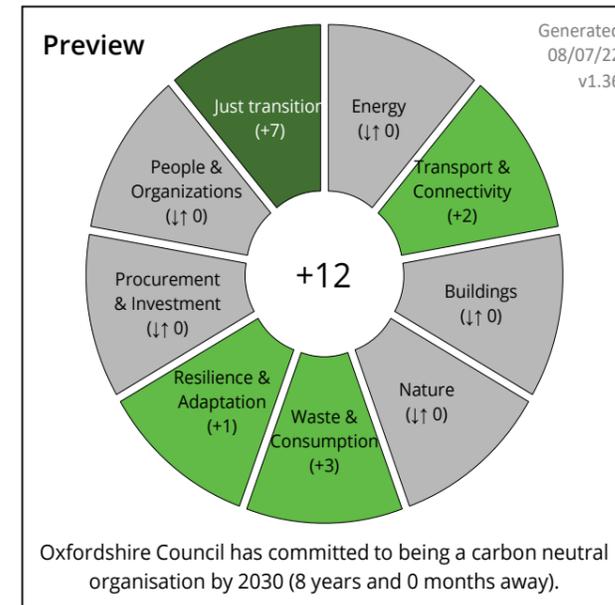
<b>Review Date</b>	<b>06/07/2023</b>
<b>Person Responsible for Review</b>	<b>Elena Grant</b>
<b>Authorised By</b>	

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# Climate Impact Assessment

## Summary

<b>Directorate and Service Area</b>	Customers, Organisational Development and Resources - Communications, Strategy and Insight - Policy Team
<b>What is being assessed</b>	Digital Inclusion Strategy
<b>Is this a new or existing function or policy?</b>	New strategy
<b>Summary of assessment</b>	<p>Citizens Online defines digital inclusion as being “about ensuring the benefits of the internet and digital technologies are available to everyone”. It includes both access to the internet and the ability to use it.</p> <p>This is a multi-faceted issue and includes:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Access to good quality and affordable broadband, wi-fi and mobile data.</li> <li>2. Opportunities for digital skills training and support</li> </ol>
<b>Completed by</b>	Elena Grant
<b>Climate action sign off by</b>	Tammy Marrett
<b>Director sign off by</b>	
<b>Assessment date</b>	44746



## Detail of proposal

<b>Context / Background</b>	<p>Citizens Online defines digital inclusion as being “about ensuring the benefits of the internet and digital technologies are available to everyone”. It includes both access to the internet and the ability to use it.</p> <p>This is a multi-faceted issue and includes:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Access to good quality and affordable broadband, wi-fi and mobile data.</li> <li>2. Opportunities for digital skills training and support.</li> </ol> <p><del>3. Devices that can access the internet, that are affordable and good quality, and meet their users' needs.</del></p>
<b>Proposal</b>	<p>The strategy was decided as the best course of action as it will plug a gap and set direction for addressing this issue, instead of multiple services acting in an uncoordinated manner.</p>
<b>Evidence / Intelligence</b>	<p>In October 2021, OCC held a virtual roundtable discussion with approximately 35 partners from various organisations including Oxfordshire public, health, education, and voluntary sectors. In this session, we defined what digital inclusion means to us in Oxfordshire and set out the problem that needs to be addressed. We also discussed our vision for a digitally inclusive county, which included joined-up initiatives, digital inclusion by design, and ensuring that no one is left behind. The discussion also covered barriers that need to be overcome and identified support for those who will never want to be online, funding, duplication of resources due to a fragmented landscape, rurality, online safety, and the cost-of-living crisis as particular challenges. The principles that were identified as needing to underpin collaborative work include signposting access to support, sharing best practice, promoting the benefits of digital, embedding equality, diversity, and inclusion, and recognising that digital inclusion is about people, not just technology.</p> <p>In April 2022, OCC undertook a programme of engagement with external and internal stakeholders. There were three virtual workshops focussed on the Digitally Inclusive Communities strand, with approximately 40</p>
<b>Alternatives considered / rejected</b>	<p>The alternative to not create a Digital Inclusion Strategy was not possible as it was identified that a strategy was needed in order to address the inequality gap.</p>

Category	Impact criteria	Score (-3 to +3)	Description of impact	Actions or mitigations to reduce negative impacts	Action owner	Timeline and monitoring arrangements
Energy	Increases energy efficiency	N/A				
Energy	Promotes a switch to low-carbon or renewable energy	N/A				
Energy	Promotes resilient, local, smart energy systems	N/A				
Transport & Connectivity	Reduces need to travel and/or the need for private car ownership		2 Enabling people to get online will help reduce the need for journeys, e.g. to complete tasks that could be done online instead.			
Transport & Connectivity	Supports active travel	N/A				
Transport & Connectivity	Increases use of public transport	N/A				
Transport & Connectivity	Accelerates electrification of transport	N/A				
Buildings	Promotes net zero new builds and developments	N/A				
Buildings	Accelerates retrofitting of existing buildings	N/A				
Nature	Protects, restores or enhances biodiversity, landscape and ecosystems	N/A				
Nature	Develops blue and green infrastructure	N/A				
Nature	Improves access to nature and green spaces	N/A				
Waste & Consumption	Reduces overall consumption	N/A				
Waste & Consumption	Supports waste prevention and drive reuse and recycling		2 The strategy will encourage the recycling and donation of devices.			
Resilience & Adaptation	Increases resilience to flooding	N/A				
Resilience & Adaptation	Increases resilience to other extreme weather events (e.g., storms, cold snaps, heatwaves, droughts)	N/A				
Resilience & Adaptation	Increases resilience of council services, communities, energy systems, transport infrastructure and/or supply chains		1 The strategy has a workforce strand that will help the workforce and service to become more agile and work from anywhere, and have the digital skills to do so.			
Procurement & Investment	Procurement practices prioritise low-carbon options, circular economy and sustainability	N/A				
Procurement & Investment	Investment being considered supports climate action/ is consistent with path to net zero	N/A				
People & Organizations	Drives behavioural change to address the climate and ecological emergency	N/A				
People & Organizations	Drives organizational and systemic change to address the climate and ecological emergency	N/A				
Just transition	Promotes green innovation and job creation	N/A				
Just transition	Promotes health and wellbeing		3 Increasing digital inclusion will tackle all sorts of inequality, especially health, and helping to reduce loneliness.	There will be an action plan that underpins the strategy and will implement tangible impacts to deliver change.		

Just transition

Reduces poverty and inequality

<sup>3</sup> This strategy will tackle the digital divide and reduce data poverty.

There will be an action plan that underpins the strategy and will implement tangible impacts to deliver change.

**Divisions Affected – Not applicable**

**Cabinet  
19 July 2022**

## **Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Action Plan 2022-23**

### **Report by Corporate Director Customers, Organisational Development and Resources**

#### **RECOMMENDATIONS**

**Cabinet is RECOMMENDED to**

- a) adopt the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Action Plan for 2022-2023;
- b) agree delegated authority to the Corporate Director Customers, Organisational Development and Resources to agree minor typographical changes to the action plan and an updated foreword from the Leader.

#### **Executive Summary**

1. This report sets out how the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) action plan for 2022-23 has been developed to support the Council's EDI framework known as 'Including Everyone'. The action plan for adoption is attached as annex 1. It has been considered by the Performance and Corporate Services Overview and Scrutiny Committee and their comments have been taken into consideration when finalising the plan and will be considered in the development of further plans.

#### **Background**

2. Under the duties of the Equality Act 2010, all local authorities must produce a four-year equalities framework or strategy. The Council's EDI framework, known as 'Including Everyone', was agreed in November 2020.
3. The 2021-22 action plan has been reported to members as part of the Business Management and Monitoring report twice a year. This report presents the draft 2022-23 action plan for adoption by Cabinet. As with the previous action plan this will also be reported twice a year via the Business Management and Monitoring report. The full draft plan is attached as annex 1 to this report.

## CA13

4. To develop the second action plan, the Council has taken a different approach to the previous year, building on the adoption of the Council's new values and behaviours through the 'Delivering the Future Together' programme. 'Equality and Integrity in All We Do' is one of the new values and, to embed this, actions have been developed through Service Delivery Plans. This builds on the ambition in the Including Everyone framework that inclusion is everyone's responsibility.
5. The draft action plan has been reviewed by the internal Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Steering Group, which is comprised of members of the Senior Leadership Team, Extended Leadership Team and representatives of our staff networks.
6. The draft action plan was also reviewed by the Performance and Corporate Services Overview and Scrutiny Committee in June. The committee requested that a clearer link is established between the action plan and work that is underway to address the increased cost of living. A separate workstream has been established to consider how the Council can address the increased cost of living and officers will work closely together to ensure that our EDI programme aligns with and supports this work.
7. The full 'Including Everyone' framework is attached for reference at annex 2 and a new foreword by the Leader is currently in the process of being produced. The report requests delegated authority to the Director of Customer and Organisational Development to agree typographical changes in conjunction with the appropriate Cabinet member.

### **Commitments from 2022-23**

8. A key learning from the 2021-22 action plan was the need to ensure that actions are more specific and measurable and this has been reflected in the commitments for this year's plan.
9. New actions proposed for this year include:
  - Create a more digitally inclusive website that proudly promotes our commitment to equality, diversity and inclusion
  - Offer additional support to a further 104 asylum-seeking children and young people through the National Transfer Scheme by March 2023
  - Develop community insights into healthy weight and physical activity with a focus on inequality
  - Review the support we offer our armed forces communities through our Armed Forces Covenant following recent legislation changes and look for ways to improve our support to this community group.
10. The action plan will also be updated to reflect Cabinet's response to the recent motion passed at Council calling for greater recognition and understanding of trans and non-binary identities.

## CA13

11. The Council recognises the importance of listening and learning from those with lived experience. The framework was developed during the height of the COVID-19 pandemic and this year we will be looking to engage in greater depth with communities on the issues that they face.

### Future Plans:

12. At the end of this year, the Council will have reached the mid-way point in the lifecycle of the Including Everyone framework. It is recognised that the Council has a long-term vision to tackle inequalities across the county and so the framework will be updated during this year in order to capture the short, medium and long-term aims for the Council's inclusion agenda. This will also seek to address the request from the Performance and Corporate Services Overview and Scrutiny Committee to better establish the link between the EDI action plan and the Council's strategic priority to tackle inequality.
13. The framework will also be updated to reflect the need to foster equity in addition to equality, diversity and inclusion. Equity relates to the need to create equal outcomes for all community members, whereas equality relates to having equal status, rights and opportunities.

### Highlights from 2021-22

14. A more detailed summary of achievements in 2021-22 has been included in the Annual Performance Report, which is also on the agenda for this meeting. However, achievements of particular note were:
  - Reciprocal mentoring pilot scheme: a nine-month reciprocal mentoring scheme was completed with members of the Council's senior leadership team and representatives from the Council's Race Equality and Cultural Heritage (REACH) staff network. The pilot scheme was designed to enable frank and challenging conversations about race and racism to take place with senior managers. Phase 2 of the scheme, which includes a wider roll-out across the organisation will be implemented this year.
  - Updated policies and procedures: during the staff consultation in developing the framework, staff said that policies and procedures for reporting bullying and harassment were not as clear as they could be. Human Resources have since re-designed and publicised these policies, which are now known as the 'Zero Tolerance' and the 'Anti-Bullying, Harassment and Discrimination' policies.
  - Equality, Diversity and Inclusion calendar: this has been developed to plan communications around key inclusion and awareness days across the council. There has been a focus on telling first person stories to highlight the lived experience of staff of particular events and occasions.

15. Additionally, the Council was shortlisted for a Diversity and Inclusion award by the Local Government Chronicle award for the development of the Including Everyone framework.

## Corporate Policies and Priorities

16. The EDI action plan intersects with a number of the Council's strategic priorities in particular:
- Tackling inequalities in Oxfordshire
  - Prioritise the health and wellbeing of our residents
  - Support carers and the social care system
  - Create opportunities for children and young people to reach their full potential
  - Play our part in a vibrant and participatory democracy
  - Work with local businesses and partners for environmental, economic and social benefit

## Financial Implications

17. There are no direct budgetary implications associated with the action plan. Any budgetary implications that arise from actions will be managed within individual directorates and service areas as required.

## Legal Implications

18. The development of the action plan seeks to support the Council's obligations under the Public Sector Equality Duty which are as follows:
- (a) eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by or under the Equality Act 2010;
  - (b) advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it;
  - (c) foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.
- Comments checked by:

## Staff Implications

19. The delivery of actions within the action plan will be delivered within existing council resources.

## Equality & Inclusion Implications

20. The development of the action plan will have a positive impact on equality, diversity and inclusion both for people with protected characteristics under the Equality Act 2010 and more widely. An Equalities Impact Assessment has been completed.

## Sustainability Implications

21. The action plan will have a positive impact on sustainability and contains specific actions in relation to engaging with a diverse range of groups when developing climate action plans. A Climate Impact Assessment has been completed.

## Risk Management

22. There is a risk that by not delivering an action plan, the Council would not be fulfilling its statutory duties under the Equality Act 2010.

Claire Taylor  
Corporate Director Customer, Organisational Development and Resources

Annex: Annex 1 – Draft Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Action Plan 2022-23

Background papers: [Including Everyone – Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Framework](#)

Contact Officer: Emily Schofield, Head of Strategy

June 2022

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Plan	Object	Measure	EDI Commitment	Directorate	Service Area
Inclusive service delivery	Goal 4 - Our services use good data and engage with users to plan and meet their diverse needs	1.1 We will develop and amend the LTCP (including Part 2 and the area strategy work) utilising views from less represented groups through previously targeted engagement. This work will enable the LTCP to be implemented while taking into account the needs of under-represented groups in Oxfordshire	Better understand those using services and their needs by collecting their information and feedback	E&P	Transport Strategy
Inclusive service delivery	Goal 4 - Our services use good data and engage with users to plan and meet their diverse needs	1.2 Engage a diverse range of communities in development and delivery of climate action plans	Engage residents, those using services users and community groups when planning and delivering services	E&P	Environment and Climate
Inclusive service delivery	Goal 4 - Our services use good data and engage with users to plan and meet their diverse needs	1.3 We will work with our partners to better understand and address the reasons for disproportionality of black and mixed heritage children in the youth justice system and report quarterly on the disproportionality action plan	Better understand those using services and their needs by collecting their information and feedback	Children's	Social Care
Inclusive service delivery	Goal 4 - Our services use good data and engage with users to plan and meet their diverse needs	1.4 We will better understand and address the reasons for disproportionality of black, Asian and mixed heritage children in children's services and report back on findings to the safeguarding board by December 2022	Better understand those using services and their needs by collecting their information and feedback	Children's	Social Care
Inclusive service delivery	Goal 4 - Our services use good data and engage with users to plan and meet their diverse needs	1.5 Provide quarterly updates from the Black and mixed heritage disproportionate exclusion task and finish group and implement its findings	Better understand those using services and their needs by collecting their information and feedback	Children's	Education
Inclusive service delivery	Goal 4 - Our services use good data and engage with users to plan and meet their diverse needs	1.6 Evaluate reach of smoke free strategy in the most deprived wards of Oxfordshire and adapt the strategic approach accordingly	Better understand those using services and their needs by collecting their information and feedback	Public Health	Public Health and Wellbeing

Plan	Object	Measure	EDI Commitment	Directorate	Service Area
Inclusive service delivery	Goal 3 - Our information and buildings are accessible for all	1.7 As part of the Digital Presence project we will aim to create a more inclusive digital website, that proudly promote our equality, diversity and inclusion principles and fulfils our legal requirement for accessibility. This will be implemented incrementally from 2022 and fully completed by December 2023.	Ensure our information, website and digital services are accessible for all; including those digitally excluded	CODR	IT
Inclusive service delivery	Goal 3 - Our information and buildings are accessible for all	1.8 We will introduce a clear and consistent policy regarding the translation of our information	Ensure our information, website and digital services are accessible for all; including those digitally excluded	CODR	CSI
Inclusive service delivery	Goal 4 - Our services use good data and engage with users to plan and meet their diverse needs	1.9 The Council has a legal requirement to understand the impact that decisions will have on people with certain protected characteristics through Equalities Impact Assessments. This year we will produce updated guidance and training for all staff about the importance of completing these assessments and where to go to for information	Plan and deliver services that promote inclusion	CODR	CSI
Inclusive service delivery	Goal 4 - Our services use good data and engage with users to plan and meet their diverse needs	1.10 A dedicated cross team group has been created to progress a number of wide ranging activities to improve the ways we collect information about our residents, including the forms we have on our website, customer satisfaction surveys, complaints and equality monitoring information about our residents. We will do this by making our questions consistent across the Council and clearly explaining why we ask for this information. We will then be able to use this information to improve the services we provide to people. (wording on this action to be confirmed)	Better understand those using services and their needs by collecting their information and feedback	CODR	Culture and Customer Experience

Plan	Object	Measure	EDI Commitment	Directorate	Service Area
Inclusive Service Delivery	Goal 4 - Our services use good data and engage with users to plan and meet their diverse needs	1.11 We will continue to improve the quality of our services by co-producing with our residents. We have an ambition for as many services as possible to be co-produced in the future.	Engage residents, those using services, and community groups, when planning services	HESC	Commissioning
Inclusive service delivery	Goal 3 - Our information and buildings are accessible for all	1.12 As part of developing our 'Agile Working Strategy' we will consider how we can make our offices/buildings more accessible for staff and customers	Take action to make our buildings accessible to all residents and staff	CDAI	Property
Inclusive service delivery	Goal 4 - Our services use good data and engage with users to plan and meet their diverse needs	1.13 Develop market statements for older people (underway) and long term illness or disability (not yet started)	Plan and deliver services that promote inclusion	HESC	Commissioning
Inclusive service delivery	Goal 4 - Our services use good data and engage with users to plan and meet their diverse needs	1.14 Our prevention activities are now using a new "Safe and Well" application that captures equality data of the visit, this will assist the service in better evaluate if our prevention activities are targeting underrepresented groups	Better understand those using services and their needs by collecting their information and feedback	CDAI	Community Safety
Inclusive communities	Goal 2 - We work with partners to tackle disadvantage in our communities	2.1 We will work with our partners to increase the number of early help assessments (EHAs) particularly in areas of relative deprivation. We will double the number of EHAs in the 20% most deprived areas in Oxfordshire in 2022/23	Work with all partner organisations to understand diverse needs and create inclusive communities	Children's	Social Care
Inclusive communities	Goal 1 - We work with communities to help them thrive	2.2 We will offer support to 104 additional asylum seeking children and young people through the National Transfer Scheme by March 2023	Work directly with communities to identify inequality and tackle disadvantage	Children's	Social Care

Plan	Object	Measure	EDI Commitment	Directorate	Service Area
Inclusive communities	Goal 1 - We work with communities to help them thrive	2.3 During 2022/23, we will trial a series of Oxfordshire conversation events that will offer opportunities for residents to hear from and ask questions of members of the Cabinet, including outreach activities to ensure the inclusion of seldom heard groups and those who are digitally excluded	Work directly with communities to identify inequality and tackle disadvantage	CODR	CSI
Inclusive communities	Goal 1 - We work with communities to help them thrive	2.4 We will deliver a refreshed online consultation and engagement guidance document by the end of April 2022, including best practice advice on effectively including the digitally excluded, seldom heard and young people in consultation and engagement activity	Engage with, and support, local community groups and organisations	CODR	CSI
Inclusive communities	Goal 1 - We work with communities to help them thrive	2.5 Bid for DfT funding for social prescribing project to support residents into walking and cycling, which will target Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic communities in Oxford city, and focus on residents with mental health issues.	Work directly with communities to identify inequality and tackle disadvantage	Public Health	Healthy Place Shaping
Inclusive communities	Goal 1 - We work with communities to help them thrive	2.6 We will develop a lessons learnt project from installing 3 health routes in Banbury, focusing on deprived and Black Asian and Minority Ethnic communities	Work directly with communities to identify inequality and tackle disadvantage	Public Health	Healthy Place Shaping
Inclusive communities	Goal 2 - We work with partners to tackle disadvantage in our communities	2.7 Working with partners, we will develop a digital inclusion strategy and action plan for Oxfordshire by Summer 2022, which aims to address the barriers preventing people from accessing and adopting digital technology	Work with all partner organisations to understand diverse needs and create inclusive communities	CODR	CSI
Inclusive communities	Goal 2 - We work with partners to tackle disadvantage in our communities	2.8 Establish stronger partnership work with NHS and other partners to address health inequalities via the Oxfordshire Inequalities place board and wider ICS structures	Work with all partner organisations to understand diverse needs and create inclusive communities	Public Health	Public Health and Wellbeing
Inclusive communities	Goal 1 - We work with communities to help them thrive	2.9 Developing community insights into healthy weight and physical activity with a focus on inequalities as part of a programme of upstream prevention to tackle persistent health inequalities	Engage with, and support, local community groups and organisations	Public Health	Public Health and Wellbeing

Plan	Object	Measure	EDI Commitment	Directorate	Service Area
Inclusive communities	Goal 2 - We work with partners to tackle disadvantage in our communities	2.10 Digital Infrastructure Team: Roll-out of Rural Gigabit Connectivity (RGC) project to bring high-speed broadband to rural village halls including staying safe online	Promote equality, diversity and inclusion through our supply chain and strategic partnerships	CODR	IT
Inclusive communities	Goal 2 - We work with partners to tackle disadvantage in our communities	2.11 Social value policy: Once adopted (April 2022) would like to include a measure to capture how many contracts (those over £100k) go through social value policy and impact that these have e.g. % of SV in the contract. This will be reported on three month intervals.	Work with all partner organisations to understand the diverse needs and create inclusive communities	CDAI	Procurement
Inclusive workplaces	Goal 6 - Our staff have the values, skills and knowledge to be inclusive	3.1 Develop IT Service Management System solution articles on current provision of software for neurodiversity and accessibility with advice on working with Occupational Health. A project is being initiated to deliver this, with estimated completion by December 2023.	Provide a supportive environment so that all staff can reach their potential	CODR	IT
Inclusive workplaces	Goal 5 - Our workforce is inclusive, reflecting the diversity of the communities we serve	3.2 Design and roll out of a Wellbeing Strategy to including hybrid working and increased recognition of neurodiversity	Provide a supportive environment so that all staff can reach their potential	CODR	HR
Inclusive workplaces	Goal 6 - Our staff have the values, skills and knowledge to be inclusive	3.3 We will roll out phase two of our reciprocal mentoring scheme	Celebrate and promote diversity in our workforce	CODR	HR
Inclusive workplaces	Goal 6 - Our staff have the values, skills and knowledge to be inclusive	3.4 We embed EDI into all DTFT projects. <i>This will be picked up through DTFT governance (TBC).</i>	Celebrate and promote diversity in our workforce	CODR	HR
Inclusive workplaces	Goal 6 - Our staff have the values, skills and knowledge to be inclusive	3.5 We are proud of the awards we hold that recognise our commitments to equality and inclusion. This year we will work to establish which are the best employee accreditation schemes for our organisation	Celebrate and promote diversity in our workforce	CODR	CSI

Plan	Object	Measure	EDI Commitment	Directorate	Service Area
Inclusive workplaces	Goal 6 - Our staff have the values, skills and knowledge to be inclusive	3.6 We are proud to participate in the Stonewall Workplace Equality Index and we will develop an action plan to improve our workplace for LGBTQIA+ employees based on the feedback we have received from our previous submissions	Celebrate and promote diversity in our workforce	CODR	CSI
Inclusive workplaces	Goal 6 - Our staff have the values, skills and knowledge to be inclusive	3.7 We have introduced ethnicity pay gap reporting and this year we will develop and implement an action plan that will drive meaningful change in the workplace where we have identified pay disparity gaps.	Tackle bias and discrimination in all its forms	CODR	HR
Inclusive workplaces	Goal 5 - Our workforce is inclusive, reflecting the diversity of the communities we serve	3.8 Develop a clear set of expectations for staff and managers that recognises the importance of staff networks, mentors and champions. This will include recognising the time commitments that come with these roles and that staff taking on these additional responsibilities should be supported by their line managers to do so	Celebrate and promote diversity in our workforce	CODR	HR
Inclusive workplaces	Goal 5 - Our workforce is inclusive, reflecting the diversity of the communities we serve	3.9 We will increase the number of accessible apprenticeships/supported apprenticeships in our organisation. We particularly want to encourage younger people from deprived areas, young people leaving care and young people with lower educational outcomes to gain employment	Provide a supportive environment so that all staff can reach their potential	CODR	HR
Inclusive workplaces	Goal 5 - Our workforce is inclusive, reflecting the diversity of the communities we serve	3.10 We will review the support offer we have in place through our Armed Forces Covenant following recent legislation changes and develop an action plan to support our armed forces communities. Part of the recruitment piece for managers.	Provide a supportive environment so that all staff can reach their potential	CDAI	CSI
Inclusive workplaces	Goal 6 - Our staff have the values, skills and knowledge to be inclusive	3.11 Recruitment reach: as part of Equality in the Workplace report we will ensure that managers understand the EDI impact of recruitment both in terms of job descriptions, advertising, interview, selection and interview and branding (timescale to be confirmed)	Improve the diversity of our organisation at all levels so it is representative of our communities	CODR	HR

Plan	Object	Measure	EDI Commitment	Directorate	Service Area
Inclusive workplaces	Goal 5 - Our workforce is inclusive, reflecting the diversity of the communities we serve	3.12 We will continue to support staff who do not presently have a level 2 in English and Maths to achieve these qualifications, with a particular focus on targeting women in the lower pay quartile of the gender pay gap report. We will use this year to establish a data benchmark which will we will report on in future years.	Provide a supportive environment so that all staff can reach their potential	CODR	HR
Inclusive workplaces	Goal 6 - Our staff have the values, skills and knowledge to be inclusive	3.13 We commissioned an independent review of our Equality, Diversity and Inclusion approach to training. This year we will work to review, implement and communicate the recommendations from this review.	Provide a supportive environment so that all staff can reach their potential	CODR	HR
Inclusive workplaces	Goal 5 - Our workforce is inclusive, reflecting the diversity of the communities we serve	3.14 The service will hold positive action "Have a go days" with underrepresented groups to support these groups in joining the Fire and Rescue Service, with a view to increase the diversity of the workforce, which in turn could deliver increased creativity and innovation and will help to ensure that our Prevention and Protection messages have increased reach	Improve the diversity of our organisation at all levels so it is representative of our communities	CDAI	Community Safety

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**Divisions Affected -N/A**

**CABINET**

**DATE: 15 July 2022**

**Provision of Services for  
Adults and Children Affected by Domestic Abuse**

**Report by Corporate Director for Public Health & Wellbeing**

**RECOMMENDATION**

**Cabinet is RECOMMENDED to**

- a) Agree the proposed commencement of a procurement exercise for Oxfordshire domestic abuse services, including IDVA (Independent Domestic Violence Advocates) and Perpetrator provision in 2022.**
- b) Agree the progress of the statutory duties set out in the Domestic Abuse Act 2021, including the Needs Assessment and Overarching Domestic Abuse Strategy 2022**

**Executive Summary**

- 1 This paper highlights the intention to commission Oxfordshire Domestic Abuse services, in time for a contract start date of April 2023. These include provision for safe accommodation and support, specialist support from the IDVA service and Perpetrator support services to assist in the prevention and reduction of harm for individuals and their children affected by domestic abuse.
- 2 The paper highlights recommendations from the consultation of the Overarching Domestic Abuse Strategy due for publication later in July 2022. The strategy will be launched in a stakeholder workshop in September to commence the implementation of the associated action plan.
- 3 Future commissioning arrangements will be informed by this strategy and the previously published Safe Accommodation Strategy and Needs Assessment, highlighting the evidence of effectiveness of interventions, what has been working well and the gaps in service delivery that need to be addressed in future commissioning. The aims are to improve safety, health and care outcomes for adults, young people and children affected by domestic abuse and address inequalities of provision in line with national guidance and the Domestic Abuse Act 2021.

## Corporate Policies and Priorities

- 4 The proposals in this paper support the vision and priorities values of the Council's Strategic Plan, in particular "tackling inequalities in Oxfordshire" and "prioritising the health and wellbeing of residents". There is a focus on ensuring that individuals and families from deprived communities have easy access to domestic abuse prevention and support services wherever they live in Oxfordshire.
- 5 Additional IDVA and emergency accommodation resource will be commissioned to support the needs of people with protected characteristics wherever they reside in Oxfordshire who may be affected by domestic abuse and support access to meet their wider health and care needs from NHS and Care services.
- 6 The Domestic Abuse Act 2021 requires each Tier 1 local authority to develop a strategic partnership board with prescribed members from a range of organisations, including Tier 2 local authorities and people affected by domestic abuse. The Oxfordshire Domestic abuse Strategic Board accepted these responsibilities in 2021. The Board is required to oversee the development of a local Needs Assessment and Safe Accommodation Strategy to ensure appropriate support for adults, children and young people affected by domestic abuse. The DLUHC requires the Board to provide annual reports on spend from the dedicated grant for domestic abuse and annual updates on performance against strategic objectives. Annual funding from DLUHC (£1.14m in 22/23) has been allocated to support delivery of these duties
- 7 Oxfordshire County Council currently co-commissions domestic abuse support and emergency accommodation services for adults, children and young people, jointly with the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner (PCC), City and District Councils in contracts due to expire in March 2023. This partnership approach to commissioning is viewed very positively and set to continue with the new proposed arrangements.
- 8 The future re-commissioning approach will align domestic abuse provision across the system to include existing emergency accommodation and support, specialist Independent Domestic Violence Advocates (IDVA) provision and Perpetrator services. The new contracts will be partly, or wholly funded from the DLUHC grant and co-commissioned with the District Councils, with a value of over £500k. The future recommissioning of Perpetrator contracts and IDVAS will continue to be discussed with the PCC as they plan their future arrangements across the Thames Valley with additional funding from the Ministry Of Justice (MOJ) for this work referenced in the national Domestic Abuse Plan.

## Key Priorities

- 9 This new Overarching Domestic Abuse Strategy is an addition to the Safe Accommodation Strategy published in December 2021 which together set the direction for changes introduced by the Domestic abuse Act 2021.

- 10 The new Overarching Domestic Abuse Strategy 2022-25, due to be published later in July, sets out Oxfordshire priorities and approaches to preventing and responding to domestic abuse. It outlines Oxfordshire's multi-agency response across the whole pathway from prevention, to the provision of high-quality support for victim survivors, including children and young people and work with Perpetrators of domestic abuse. It will help inform key decisions about the future of Oxfordshire's domestic abuse response and services.
- 11 This Overarching Strategy is based on a local need assessment including data and evidence from a range of national and local sources, asking professionals and people with lived experience for their views on what is working, gaps in services and recommendations for improvements to help define proposals for future provision. This information was incorporated into a consultation document corresponding to the 4 national priorities published on the Oxfordshire Let's Talk website to finalize the recommendations. The consultation also included dedicated feedback from children and young people in addition to adults with lived experience of domestic abuse.
- 12 The vision of these strategies is that Oxfordshire has a co-ordinated community response across all services and partnerships informed by consistent and aligned policies, shared system leadership from the domestic Abuse Strategic Board and allocation of resources.
- 13 Key recommendations in the Overarching Strategy were either agreed or strongly agreed by over 50 respondents from members of the public across the 4 priorities: Prevention, Provision, Pursuing and Partnerships (See Appendix document 1). They have also been presented to the Domestic Abuse Strategic Board in May for further refinement. Good progress is being made to ensure the publication and launch dates will be on target.
- 14 This information will be used to inform the service specifications for the new domestic abuse contracts, which include provision for safe accommodation, a range of prevention, early intervention, and specialist support services to include IDVAS for adults, children, and young people. Many of these services are co-commissioned with the City and District Councils and Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner.
- 15 The plan is also to explore opportunities to commission Perpetrator programmes, not currently provided in Oxfordshire for the whole population (apart from existing provision in Family Solutions Plus (FSP) for families requiring statutory interventions for Child In Need or Child Protection. This service is provided by Elmore, funded by Children's Services, and is gaining valuable local experience about the challenges and benefits to inform future commissioning. The intention is to make evidence -based perpetrator services more universally accessible, as part of the wider commissioning of Oxfordshire Domestic Abuse Services and ensure alignment with the FSP service.

- 16 The plan is to commence a procurement exercise in September 2022 for domestic abuse services for the population of Oxfordshire, subject to Cabinet approval, commencing with a market engagement event in June, as the current contracts terminate in March 2023.

## Financial Implications

- 17 In 2021/22 a grant of £1.14million was awarded to OCC by Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (now known as Department for Levelling Up Housing and Communities-DLUHC) for delivery of the duties under the Act. This grant is non- ringfenced. Tier 2 local authorities in Oxfordshire additionally received grants in the region of £33k each to implement their safe accommodation duty. These grants have been awarded again in 2022-23 to local authorities for the same value, following publication of the Oxfordshire Safe Accommodation strategy and on-going commitment to implementing the statutory duties. This additional money has funded a new need's assessment and safe accommodation strategy, added capacity to services in addition to expanding funding to local organisations and councils to increase their capacity to support victim survivors.
- 18 Funding for IDVAS across Oxfordshire and Thames Valley is currently provided by a range of OPCC and OCC grant awards to ensure appropriate coverage for specialist adult, young people's and Court advocacy functions. Future recommissioning will ensure a planned, system wide approach for Oxfordshire to ensure seamless referral pathways between services for adults, children and young people requiring specialist interventions.
- 19 The Joint Commissioning Subgroup including Tier 1 and Tier 2 local authorities are working together with the OPCC to develop a new partnering agreement to include respective contributions for the ODAS contract in Oxfordshire. This continued co-commissioning arrangement will help to ensure a system wide approach to providing an effective referral pathway for victim-survivors of domestic abuse, from emergency safe accommodation to more long-term sustainable housing including appropriate support services.
- 20 The OPCC are reviewing and reconfiguring all their commissioning for domestic abuse and perpetrator services across the Thames Valley. This is in line with potential opportunities to bid for additional funding from the Ministry of Justice later this year to support implementation of evidence-based Perpetrator interventions in line with the recommendations in the Domestic Abuse Act 2021. The OPCC is keen to work with Oxfordshire to consider these opportunities requiring additional funding from local authorities and pilot interventions across the Thames Valley in line with statutory duties to reduce violent crime.
- 21 In 2022/23 the DLUHC grant funding of £1.14million will be used to continue existing domestic abuse services in Oxfordshire, pending recommissioning. The new services will be partly or wholly funded by future DLUHC grants and existing local authority funding in a partnering agreement, awarded on an

## CA14

annual basis until 2024. There is no confirmation of future grant funding via a separate income stream beyond that date from the Ministry, although they have confirmed a verbal commitment to ensure Councils will be able to continue to implement their statutory duties for domestic abuse. Future procurement will include reference to potential changes in funding which could require reconfiguring contract requirements in consultation with service providers, to mitigate this impact.

- 22 There is a national requirement for all Tier 1 Local Authorities to submit an annual return to include local data from Tier 2 authorities on availability of safe accommodation and use of this grant income, in addition to published strategies and needs assessments. This is a new requirement and ensures close co-operation between Tier 1, Tier 2 authorities, and service providers to submit this collated information.

Comments checked by: Thomas James, Finance Business Partner

### **Legal Implications**

- 23 The Council has a statutory duty to provide domestic abuse services pursuant to the Domestic Abuse Act 2021 as detailed earlier in the report.
- 24 The procurement of these services will be conducted in accordance with the Public Contracts Regulations 2015 as applicable.

Comments checked by:

Jayne Pringle, Interim Principal Solicitor (Contracts & Conveyancing)

### **Staff Implications**

There are no OCC staff implications

### **Equality Implications**

- 25 An Equality Assessment has been conducted which demonstrated compliance with planning, delivering, monitoring, and evaluating the strategy and commissioning arrangements that equality and diversity issues were being appropriately considered against the Council's statutory duties under the Equalities Act 2010. Due regard has been made to ensure that people with protected characteristics take part in public life and steps have been taken to meet the needs of disabled people in access to services for domestic abuse. This includes groups and communities living in areas of deprivation and members of the armed forces who will have additional support included in the domestic abuse overarching strategy and future commissioning arrangements for domestic abuse services.

## Sustainability Implications

26 A Climate Impact Assessment report has been completed and demonstrated that Climate Action Implications have been considered in developing the strategy and future commissioning arrangements which will have a positive impact on the carbon footprint for the Council, service provider arrangements and wider communities in Oxfordshire. The intention is to continue this to progress this work through the procurement and implementation stages of the new contract arrangements.

## Risk Management

Risk	Action
<b>Data:</b> The safe accommodation needs assessment highlighted the difficulty in collecting data which helps to identify specific need. This data is required on a n annual return to DLUHC	The Safe Accommodation Working Group, have been tasked with identifying and addressing this challenge, and met the deadline of completing the DLUHC return by the deadline of 30 <sup>th</sup> June 2022.
<b>Funding stability:</b> future services will be commissioned assuming ongoing DLUHC funding, which is only confirmed on a year by year basis.	This will be considered during the commissioning process, and contracts will reflect suitable exit clauses.
<b>Market stability:</b> Small specialist organisations affected by change in funding arrangements. By funding this from the grant we may be disrupting alternative funding for DA services	Ensure new tender has lots designed to enable smaller organisations are able to continue to bid for funding

## Consultations

27 The Domestic Abuse Safe Accommodation Strategy and Overarching Domestic Abuse Strategy have both been subject to public consultation on Let's Talk and comments included in the final versions of these documents. This includes qualitative reports from victim -survivors of domestic abuse in addition to reports from children and young people who may have witnessed domestic abuse and are regarded as victims under the new statutory duties in the Domestic Abuse Act 2021.

NAME

Ansaf Azhar, Corporate Director of Public Health

Ansaf.Azhar@oxfordshire.gov.uk

## CA14

Background papers:

Appendix 1 Safe Accommodation Strategy 05.01.2022

Appendix 2 Climate Action Impact Assessment

Contact Officers: Kate Holburn, Head of Public Health Programmes  
Kate.Holburn@oxfordshire.gov.uk

Rosie Winyard, Health Improvement Principal  
Rosie.winyard@oxfordshire.gov.uk

July 2022

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# Oxfordshire Domestic Abuse Safe Accommodation Strategy

**2021 – 2024**



# Foreword

We are proud to introduce Oxfordshire's 2021 Domestic Abuse Safe Accommodation Strategy on behalf of all of the partners across the County who have worked together to create it.

Domestic abuse is a crime that can affect anyone, having a devastating impact on the lives of victims-survivors and their families. People who have been affected by domestic abuse often experience poor health and wellbeing, and in extreme cases, death. Women and girls are more likely to be affected and die from the impact of domestic abuse. The consequences extend to the family, as children witnessing domestic abuse experience the adverse effects on their mental and physical health and other factors such as educational attainment. Additionally, harmful effects can last over a lifetime and into future generations, including impacts on attitudes to relationships, mental health and self-esteem.

Access to safe accommodation allows victims-survivors and their families to escape their abuser and can provide them with the first step towards a life without fear. The introduction of the Domestic Abuse Act 2021 demonstrates commitment to transforming the response to this crime and includes duties for local partnerships to provide safe accommodation and support, to ensure victim-survivors are able to remain safe in their own home if they wish, or access alternative safe accommodation and support.

The Oxfordshire Domestic Abuse Strategic Board is a partnership working together to provide the best outcomes for victims-survivors of domestic abuse and is responsible for delivering duties under the Domestic Abuse Act. They have worked together to develop this safe accommodation strategy, which defines the priorities for delivering against the statutory duties. They are also working on an overarching domestic abuse needs assessment and strategy, which will be published in 2022.

**Councillor Mark Lygo**

Cabinet Member for Public Health and Equalities

**Kate Holburn**

Chair, Oxfordshire Domestic Abuse Strategic Board

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# Executive Summary

The Oxfordshire Domestic Abuse Safe Accommodation Strategy 2021 – 2024 outlines how Oxfordshire will implement the statutory duties associated with the provision of safe accommodation, as required by the Domestic Abuse Act 2021.

It is being developed and delivered alongside the overarching Oxfordshire Domestic Abuse Strategy 2019-2024, which is currently in the process of being updated.

The Oxfordshire Domestic Abuse Safe Accommodation Strategy describes how the delivery of support to victims of domestic abuse, including children, in safe accommodation services will be provided over the next three years. The strategy has been aligned with Oxfordshire’s domestic abuse strategic objectives:



## 1. PREVENTION

Preventing domestic abuse from happening by challenging the attitudes and behaviour which foster it and intervening early where possible to prevent it.



## 2. PROVISION

Providing high quality, joined-up support for victims where domestic abuse does occur.



## 4. PARTNERSHIP

Working in partnership to obtain the best outcome for victims, children and their families.

**Objective 3. Pursuing – this relates to perpetrators and is therefore not included in this strategy.**

The delivery plan for the strategy will developed by the Safe Accommodation Working Group’ (SAWG) and approved by the Oxfordshire Domestic Abuse Strategic Board (ODASB) in 2021/22. This will include developing and agreeing baseline measures and targets to monitor the impact of the strategy.

# 1.

## Why is the safe accommodation strategy required?



# What is domestic abuse?

**The Thames Valley Domestic Abuse Coordinators' Network have developed the following definition, which reflects the statutory definition:**

Domestic abuse is any single incident, course of conduct or pattern of abusive behaviour between individuals aged 16 or over who are personally connected to each other as a result of being, or having been, intimate partners or family members, regardless of gender or sexuality. Children who see, hear or experience the effects of the abuse and are related to either of the parties are also considered victims<sup>1</sup> of domestic abuse.

Behaviour is abusive if it consists of any of the following: physical or sexual abuse; violent or threatening behaviour; controlling or coercive behaviour; economic abuse; or psychological, emotional or other abuse. This includes incidences where the abusive party directs their behaviour at another person (e.g. a child). Economic abuse means any behaviour that has a substantial adverse effect on someone's ability to acquire, use or maintain money or other property, or obtain goods or services.

This incorporates harmful traditional practices for example but not limited to 'honour' killings, forced marriage and female genital mutilation.

**Personally connected means two people who:**

- Are, or have been, married to each other
- Are, or have been, civil partners of each other
- Have agreed to marry one another (whether or not the agreement has been ended)
- Have entered into a civil partnership agreement (whether or not the agreement has been ended)
- Are, or have been, in an intimate personal relationship with each other
- Have, or there has been a time when they each have had, a parental relationship in relation to the same child
- Are relatives

**Children as victims of domestic abuse:**

- Sees or hears, or experiences the effect of, the abuse and is related to either person
- The person is a parent of, or has parental responsibility for, the child
- The child and person are related
- Child means person under the age of 18 years

The statutory definition for domestic abuse as defined by the Domestic Abuse Act 2021<sup>2</sup> is outlined in Appendix A.

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1. Throughout this strategy the term victim has been used to denote a victim/survivor/individual with lived experience of domestic violence and abuse. The terms can be used interchangeably recognising that every person who has been subject to abuse will have their own preferred language

2. Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities (DLUHC). Statutory guidance: Delivery of support to victims of domestic abuse in domestic abuse safe accommodation services. Published 1 October 2021. Available at: [www.gov.uk/government/publications/domestic-abuse-support-within-safe-accommodation/delivery-of-support-to-victims-of-domestic-abuse-in-domestic-abuse-safe-accommodation-services](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/domestic-abuse-support-within-safe-accommodation/delivery-of-support-to-victims-of-domestic-abuse-in-domestic-abuse-safe-accommodation-services)

# What is the Domestic Abuse Act 2021 and local authority statutory duty?

On 29 April 2021, the Domestic Abuse Act 2021 received Royal Assent. It brings wide reaching changes in protective legislation and provides a new definition of domestic abuse as outlined previously.

Part 4 of the Act introduces a statutory duty on all local authorities to provide safe accommodation support services. It places duties on Oxfordshire County Council to:

- Appoint a multi-agency domestic abuse local partnership board which it must consult as it performs certain specified functions
- Assess, or make arrangements for the assessment of, the need for domestic abuse support in their area for all victims and their children who reside in relevant safe accommodation, including those who come from outside of their area
- Develop and publish a Safe Accommodation Strategy having regard to the needs assessment.
- Implement the strategy through commissioning / de-commissioning decisions
- Monitor and evaluate local delivery and effectiveness of the strategy
- Report back to central government annually

On 14 April 2021, Oxfordshire County Council appointed the Oxfordshire Domestic Abuse Strategic Board (ODASB) as its domestic abuse local partnership board. This is multi-agency and is made up of both county and local district councils.

As set out in the Act, members of the Board must include representatives from the following (as a minimum):

- Tier 1 authority<sup>3</sup>
- Tier 2 authorities<sup>4</sup>
- Person representing the interests of victims of domestic abuse
- Person representing the interests of children of domestic abuse victims
- Charities and other voluntary organisations
- Health care services
- Policing or criminal justice

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3. Tier 1 authority is a county council e.g. Oxfordshire County Council

4. Tier 2 authorities are district, borough or city councils e.g. Oxford City Council, Cherwell District Council, South Oxfordshire District Council, Vale of White Horse District Council and West Oxfordshire District Council

Table 1: Definitions for different types of safe accommodation<sup>5</sup>

TYPE OF SAFE ACCOMMODATION	DEFINITION
<b>Refuge accommodation</b>	Offers single gender or single sex accommodation and domestic abuse support which is tied to that accommodation. Victims, including their children, have access to a planned programme of therapeutic and practical support from staff. Accommodation may be in shared or self-contained housing, but in both cases the service enables peer support from other refuge residents. The address is not publicly available.
<b>Specialist safe accommodation</b>	Offers single gender or single sex accommodation, alongside dedicated domestic abuse support which is tailored to also support those who share particular protected characteristic(s) and / or who share one or more vulnerabilities requiring additional support. Accommodation may be in shared or self-contained housing. The address is not publicly available.
<b>Dispersed accommodation</b>	<p>i. Safe (secure and dedicated to supporting victims of domestic abuse), self-contained accommodation with a similar level of specialist domestic abuse support as provided within a refuge but which may be more suitable for victims who are unable to stay in a refuge with communal spaces, and/or where peer support from other residents may not be appropriate, due to complex support needs, or where older teenage sons cannot be accommodated in a women only refuge, for example.</p> <p>ii. Safe (secure and dedicated to supporting victims of domestic abuse), self-contained ‘semi-independent’ accommodation which is not within a refuge but with support for victims who may not require the intensive support offered through refuge, but are still at risk of abuse from their perpetrator/s.</p> <p>In both types, where two or more units share any part of the accommodation, including shared hallways or access routes, provision should be single gender or single sex.</p>
<b>Second stage accommodation</b> (sometimes known as ‘move-on’)	Accommodation temporarily provided to victims, including their children, who are moving on from other forms of relevant accommodation and/or who no longer need the intensive level of support provided in a refuge, but would still benefit from a lower level of domestic abuse specific support for a period before they move to fully independent and settled accommodation. Where second stage accommodation is in shared housing it should be single gender or single sex.
<b>Other forms of domestic abuse emergency accommodation</b>	A safe place (single gendered or single sex, secure and dedicated to supporting victims of domestic abuse) with domestic abuse support tied to the accommodation to enable victims to make informed decisions when leaving a perpetrator and seeking safe accommodation. For example, short term (e.g. 2-3 weeks) accommodation providing victims with the space and safety to consider and make informed decisions about the options available to them.

5. Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities (DLUHC). Statutory guidance: Delivery of support to victims of domestic abuse in domestic abuse safe accommodation services. Published 1 October 2021. Available at: [www.gov.uk/government/publications/domestic-abuse-support-within-safe-accommodation/delivery-of-support-to-victims-of-domestic-abuse-in-domestic-abuse-safe-accommodation-services](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/domestic-abuse-support-within-safe-accommodation/delivery-of-support-to-victims-of-domestic-abuse-in-domestic-abuse-safe-accommodation-services)

Privately-owned and managed temporary accommodation, which is not separate or self-contained and with shared toilet, bathroom, or kitchen facilities (such as Bed and Breakfast accommodation) is **not** considered relevant safe accommodation, and is specifically excluded in the regulations.

All support provided under the duties must be provided to victims of domestic abuse, including children, who reside in relevant safe accommodation as set out above and such support should meet the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities (DLUHC) Quality Standards: [Women's Aid National Quality Standards](#), [Imkaan Accredited Quality Standards](#), [Male Domestic Abuse Network Service Standards](#) and / or [DAHA Accreditation Framework for Housing Providers](#).

## What type of domestic abuse support should be provided in safe accommodation?

The Domestic Abuse Act statutory guidance describes domestic abuse support within safe accommodation as:

- **Overall management of services within relevant safe accommodation** – including capacity building, support and supervision of staff, payroll, financial and day to day management of services and maintaining relationships with the local authority. Such functions will often be undertaken by a service manager
- **Support with the day-to-day running of the service** – including scheduling times for counselling sessions, group activities. Such functions may often be undertaken by administrative or office staff
- **Advocacy support** – development of personal safety plans, liaison with other services e.g. GPs and social workers, welfare benefit providers

- **Domestic abuse prevention advice** – support to assist victims to recognise the signs of abusive relationships, to help them remain safe (including online) and to prevent re-victimisation
- **Specialist support for victims**
  - Designed specifically for victims with relevant protected characteristics such as faith services, translators and interpreters, immigration advice, interpreters for victims identifying as deaf and / or hard of hearing, and dedicated support for LGBTQ+ victims
  - Designed specifically for victims with additional and / or complex needs e.g. mental health advice and support, drug and alcohol advice and support, including sign posting accordingly
- **Children's support** – including play therapy, child advocacy or a specialist children's worker e.g. a young people's violence advisor, Independent Domestic Violence Advisor (IDVA) or outreach worker specialised in working with children
- **Housing-related support** – providing housing-related advice and support e.g. securing a permanent home, rights to existing accommodation and advice on how to live safely and independently
- **Advice service** – including financial and legal support, including accessing benefits, support into work and establishing independent financial arrangements
- **Counselling and therapy** – including group support for both adults and children as well as emotional support

Support is limited to accommodation-based support and does not include other support which may be provided to victims of domestic abuse in community-based locations.

## Who should be supported by safe accommodation?

Victims aged 16 or over, and their children, with relevant protected characteristics as per the Equality Act 2010 must be able to access the support that they need within relevant safe accommodation, such as, but not limited to, those from Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic (BAME) backgrounds or who identify as LGBTQ+. See Appendix B for information on supporting all victims.

## The scope of the Oxfordshire Domestic Abuse Safe Accommodation Strategy

The Oxfordshire Domestic Abuse Safe Accommodation Strategy 2021 – 2024 outlines how Oxfordshire will implement the statutory duties that relate to safe accommodation, included within the Domestic Abuse Act 2021. It describes how victims of domestic abuse are supported through the provision of safe accommodation.

An overarching Oxfordshire Domestic Abuse Strategy 2021 – 2024 is being developed alongside the Oxfordshire Domestic Abuse Safe Accommodation Strategy. The overarching Domestic Abuse Strategy incorporates Oxfordshire’s partnership response across the whole care pathway - from preventing

domestic abuse from happening through to provision of high-quality support for victims, including children, and perpetrators of domestic abuse.

Both the Oxfordshire Domestic Abuse Safe Accommodation Strategy and the overarching Domestic Abuse Strategy will be reviewed annually. This will ensure that they are responsive to changes in needs of the population and an evolving evidence base.

## What is the safe accommodation duty funding?

The Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG), recently renamed the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities (DLUHC), has committed to providing a three-year settlement for the delivery of the safe accommodation duty.

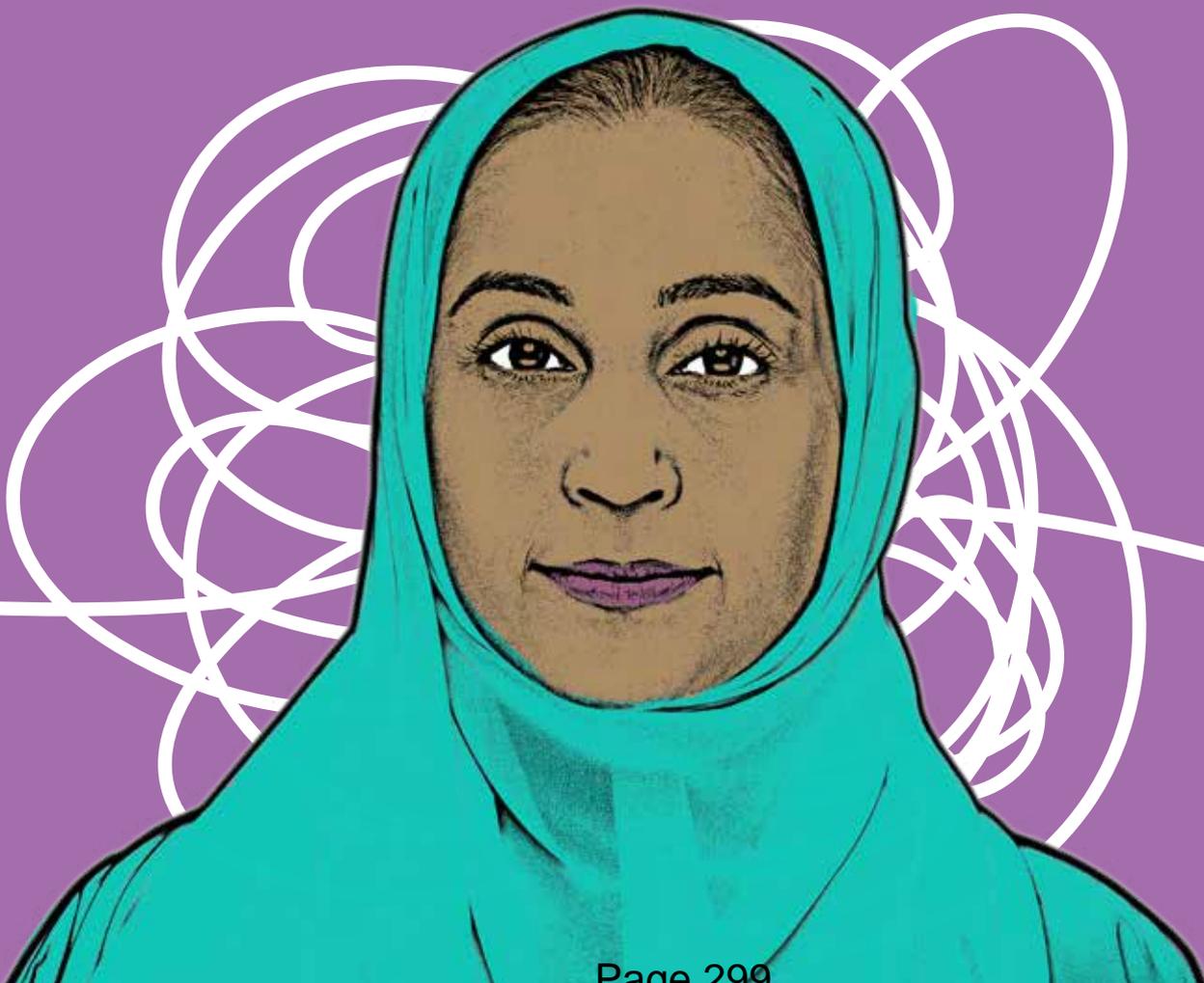
Table 2 provides a summary of the MHCLG/DLUHC funding allocation for 2021/22. Central government has not confirmed whether the same financial allocation awarded in 2021/22 will be continued for years 2 and 3, although it is anticipated the statutory duty implementation will continue to be funded. The budget for 2021-22 has been awarded to individual Tier 1 and 2 local authorities and signed by their chief executives, who are accountable for reporting their budget spend to DLUHC.

Table 2: MHCLG/DLUHC funding allocation for 2021/22

LOCAL AUTHORITY	FUNDING ALLOCATION
Oxfordshire County Council (Tier 1 Authority)	£1,141,151
Cherwell District Council	£34,385
Oxford City Council	£36,788
South Oxfordshire District Council	£33,540
Vale of the White Horse District Council	£35,167
West Oxfordshire District Council	£33,422
<b>Total</b>	<b>£1,314,453</b>

# 2.

## **What is the strategic and local context within Oxfordshire?**



# What is the wider strategic context?

## Role of the Oxfordshire Domestic Abuse Strategic Board (ODASB)

The ODASB is a partnership group responsible for providing strategic leadership for domestic abuse in Oxfordshire. Its purpose is:

- To ensure world-class provision of services for domestic abuse victims-survivors, both adults and children, including services to embed prevention and reduce the prevalence of domestic abuse
- To work in a co-ordinated way to hold perpetrators to account and to change their harmful behaviours
- To identify local priorities in relation to domestic abuse and outline objectives to meet these priorities, committing the necessary resources
- To improve outcomes for adult and child victims-survivors of domestic abuse through a strategic approach to identifying and addressing gaps in support, including those within safe accommodation services
- To work in partnership to identify and remove barriers to reducing domestic abuse and foster close co-operation between all stakeholders to ensure victims-survivors of domestic abuse have access to adequate and appropriate support, including those within safe accommodation services
- To ensure the effectiveness of Oxfordshire's Coordinated Community Response to Domestic Abuse
- To support local authorities in Oxfordshire in meeting their duties under the Domestic Abuse Act 2021
- To lead on strategic communications

The ODASB reports into the Oxfordshire Health Improvement Partnership Board. It will also report back to DLUHC on delivering the duty in line with statutory guidance.

**The Safe Accommodation Strategy has also been informed by, and will support the delivery of:**

- Oxfordshire's Joint Health and Wellbeing Strategy
- Thames Valley's Police and Crime Plan
- Director of Public Health Annual Report
- Safeguarding Board Plans
- County and District Community Safety Plans
- Housing and Homelessness Strategies
- Thames Valley Violence Reduction Unit Strategies

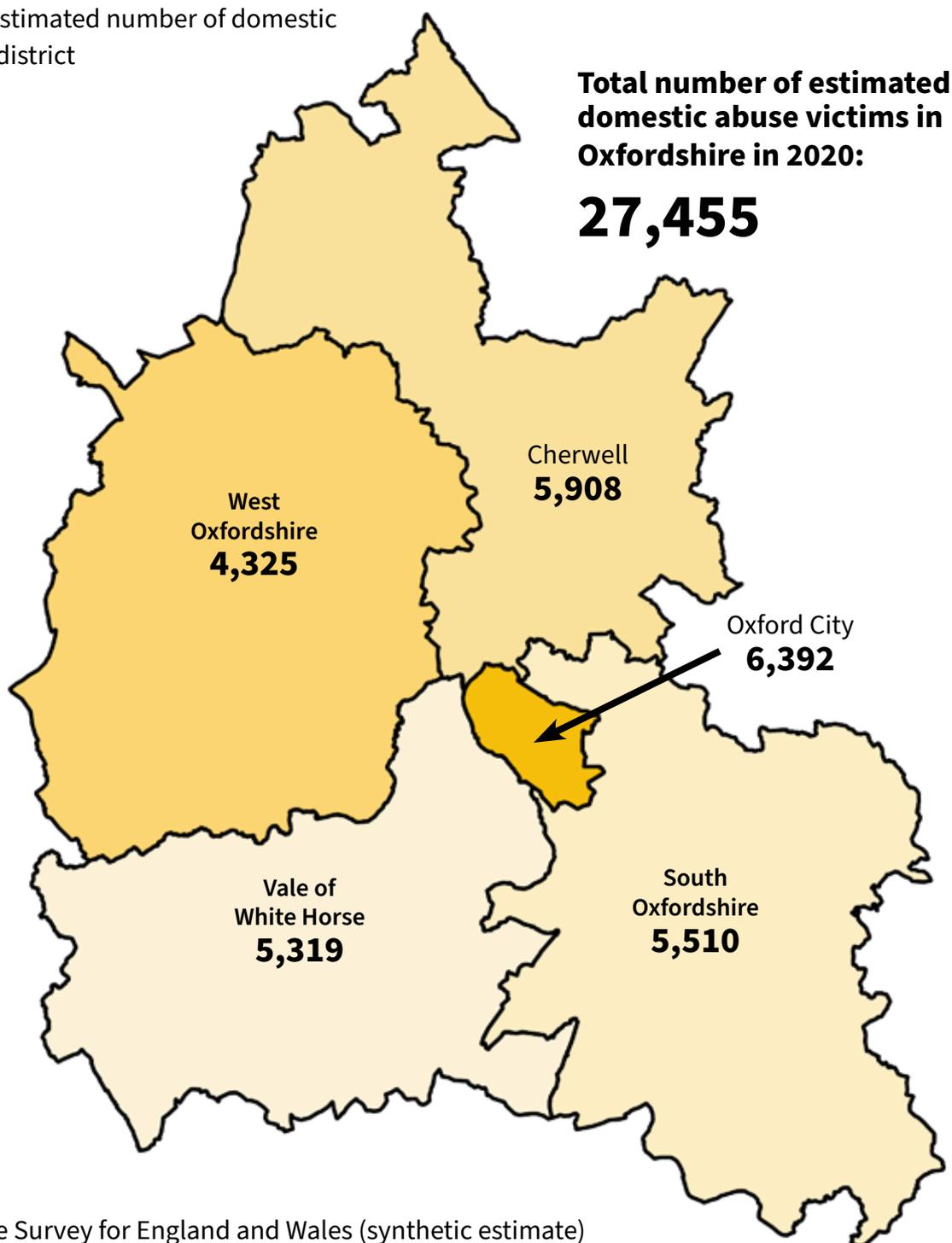
## What is the local context?

Oxfordshire County Council conducted a needs assessment looking at the number of victims of domestic abuse in Oxfordshire and the current provision of safe accommodation to support victims, and their children, in Oxfordshire.

The number of victims of domestic abuse in Oxfordshire is calculated using either national data which is modelled to produce a synthetic estimate for Oxfordshire or local data from police and crime datasets to produce a known number for Oxfordshire.

## What is the **estimated** number of domestic abuse victims in Oxfordshire?

Figure 1: Map of estimated number of domestic abuse victims by district



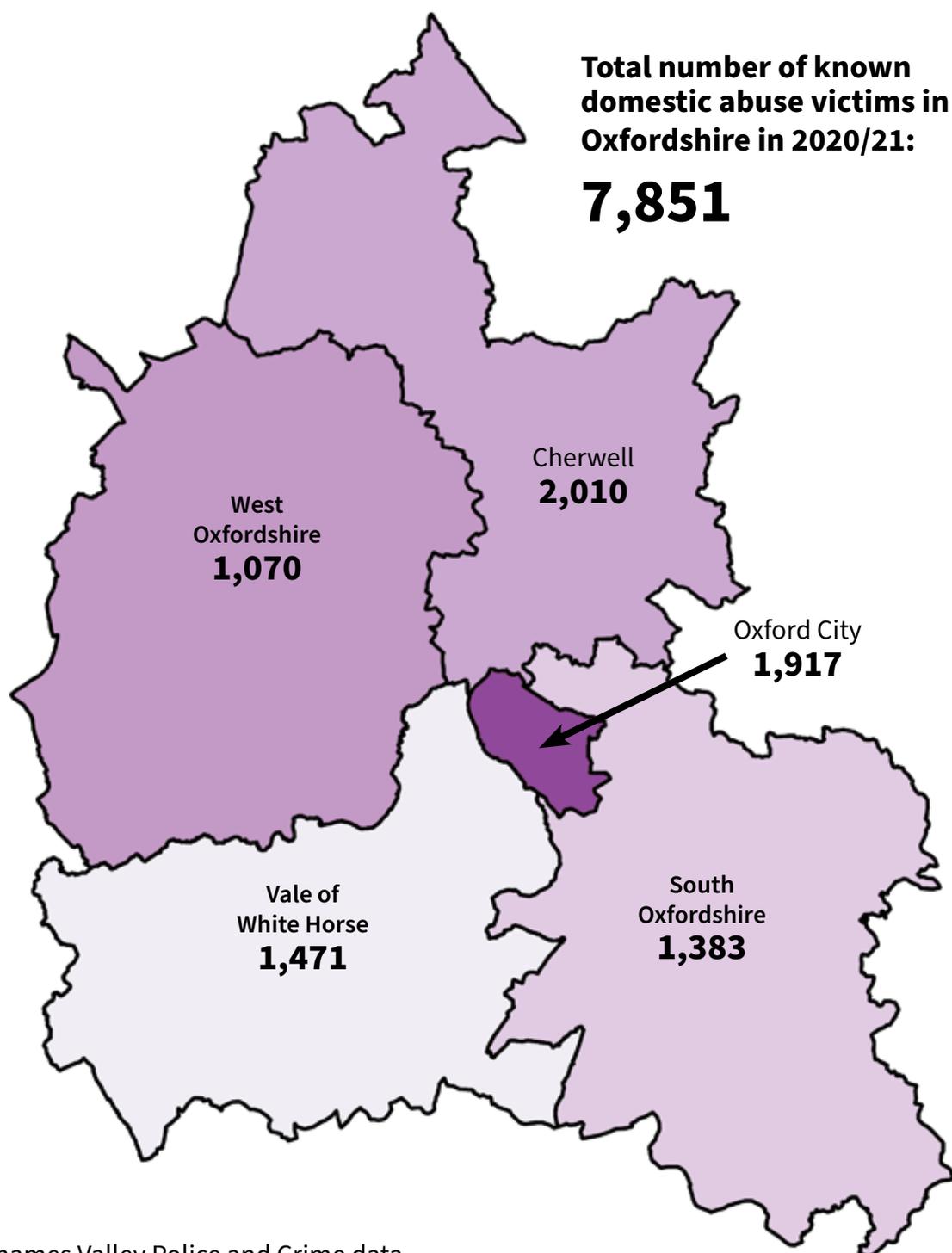
Source: The Crime Survey for England and Wales (synthetic estimate)

## What is the **known** number of domestic abuse victims in Oxfordshire?

The synthetic estimate is significantly higher than the known number as only a proportion of victims report domestic abuse to the police. This highlights that the local dataset represents only a proportion of victims and therefore there is a large unknown number of victims of domestic abuse in Oxfordshire.

Figure 2: Map of known number of domestic abuse victims by district

~70% female		56% aged 25-49	
~30% experience domestic abuse multiple times		325 were part of Multi Agency Risk Assessment Conference (MARAC)	



Source: Thames Valley Police and Crime data

# How many victims have accessed help in Oxfordshire?

## Access to refuge and dispersed accommodation



**59 female victims** accessed refuge or dispersed accommodation in Oxfordshire in 2020/21

**59%** were from outside of Oxfordshire  
Source: Oxfordshire Domestic Abuse Service (ODAS)

## Access to sanctuary schemes



**111 victims accessed** the Oxford City sanctuary scheme in 2020/21

**95%** were female  
**72%** were from a single adult and child(ren) household  
Source: Oxford City Council

## Access to sanctuary schemes



**60 victims accessed** the South and Vale sanctuary scheme in 2020/21

**100%** were female  
**83%** previously resided in social housing

Source: South Oxfordshire and Vale of White Horse District Councils

## Access to sanctuary schemes



No data was available for the Cherwell and West Oxfordshire sanctuary schemes

## Out of area referrals



Most common out of area referrals are from: **West Berkshire, Slough, Reading, Bracknell Forest, Aylesbury Vale**

Source: ODAS. The data was for all calls to the helpline. A proportion of these calls were accessing refuge and dispersed accommodation

## Demographic and socio-economic characteristics



Data is **not routinely collected** by safe accommodation providers on the demographic and socio-economic characteristics of victims

## Victims' views



Victims report positive experiences of refuge and dispersed accommodation and differing experiences of sanctuary schemes across Oxfordshire

Source: Victims of domestic abuse

## Victims' views



Victims report limited awareness of the types and signs of domestic abuse and the domestic abuse services available in Oxfordshire that can support them

Source: Victims of domestic abuse

# What are the gaps in Oxfordshire's safe accommodation provision?

## 1. Insufficient availability of data

- **Number of victims of domestic abuse:** police, crime and MARAC data is available for total numbers of victims of domestic abuse. The availability of local data on victims of domestic abuse across health, social care, homelessness and housing is limited. Further analysis by demographic classifications and socio-economic characteristics is limited or not available
- **Referrals and use of safe accommodation:** no consistent data collection across safe accommodation providers and insufficient data on access to and use of safe accommodation services including by demographic classifications, socio-economic characteristics and family size (e.g. pregnant and/or number and age(s) of children)

## 2. Gaps in provision of safe accommodation

- **Refuge:** Oxfordshire has county-wide refuge provision, but this is only available for women aged over 18 and their children. Although there is no provision for men, it is recognised that men are less likely to request access to refuge and instead require support to access other safe accommodation
- **Dispersed safe accommodation:** Oxfordshire has county-wide provision of dispersed safe accommodation available for people of all genders and for those who are not suitable for refuge, but not for those with multiple complex needs
- **Specialist safe accommodation:** there is no specialist safe accommodation for victims with relevant protected characteristics, additional and/or multiple complex needs in Oxfordshire

- **Sanctuary schemes:** these are available in Oxford City, South and Vale, West Oxfordshire and Cherwell, but the level of support varies across the five districts. The type of sanctuary support depends on whether the victim is a social housing tenant or owner occupied or private rented tenant
- **Moving on from safe accommodation:** there is limited availability of council housing stock in Oxfordshire, a complex social housing registration process, and high cost of private rented accommodation. There is lack of support for victims when they leave safe accommodation and are trying to establish safe independent living

## 3. Inadequate awareness of safe accommodation

- **Service provision:** insufficient awareness of safe accommodation services available in Oxfordshire to support victims of domestic abuse

**Overall, there is insufficient information to identify whether the demand is exceeding supply for safe accommodation, and the level of unmet need particularly for those with protected characteristics. It is predicted that there is a large 'unknown' need and demand for safe accommodation.**

# 3.

**What are the key priorities in the safe accommodation strategy?**



Oxfordshire's Domestic Abuse Strategy (2019-2024) outlined the following strategic objectives:



### 1. PREVENTION

Preventing domestic abuse from happening by challenging the attitudes and behaviour which foster it and intervening early where possible to prevent it.



### 2. PROVISION

Providing high quality, joined-up support for victims where domestic abuse does occur.

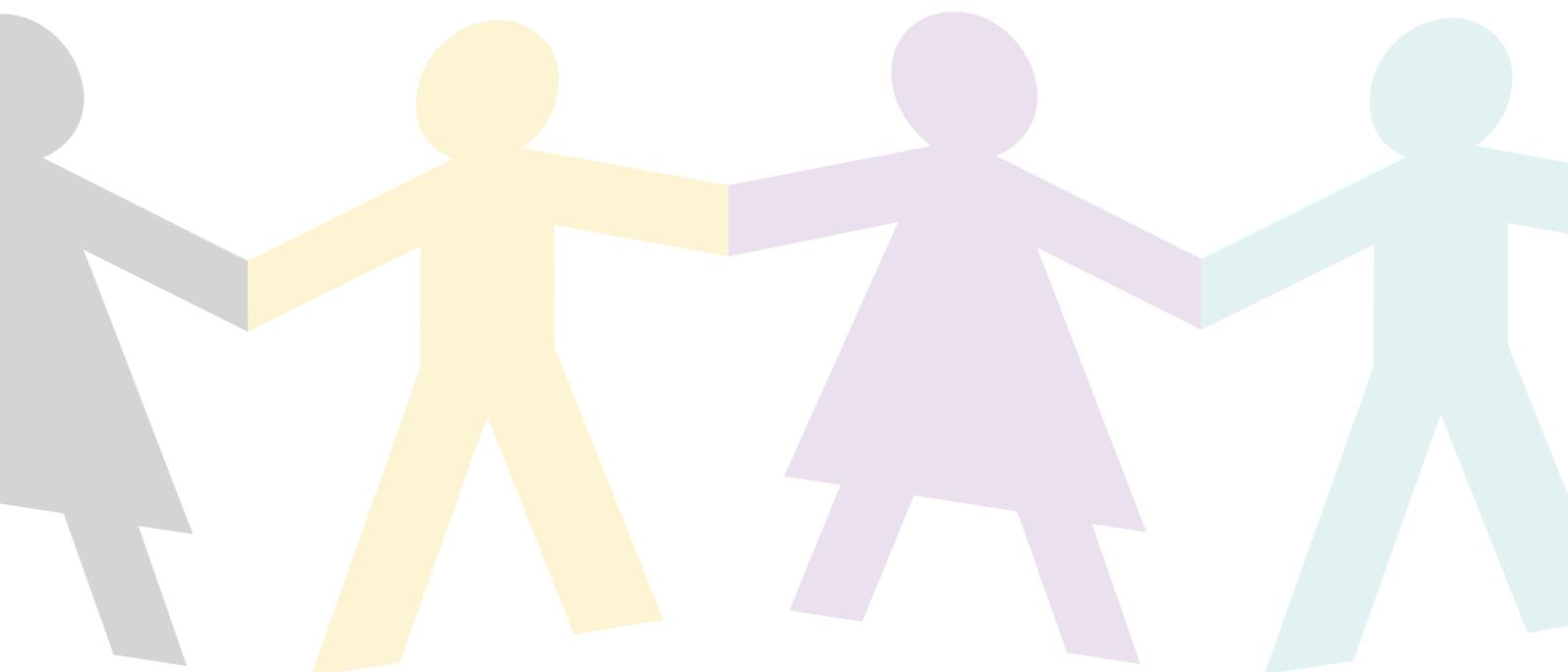


### 4. PARTNERSHIP

Working in partnership to obtain the best outcome for victims, children and their families.

The strategic aims for Oxfordshire's Safe Accommodation Strategy are aligned with the overarching Oxfordshire Domestic Abuse Strategy, in particular, '1. Prevention', '2. Provision' and '4. Partnership'.

**Objective 3. Pursuing – this relates to perpetrators and is therefore not included in this strategy.**



# Strategic Objective 1: Prevention



Preventing domestic abuse from happening by challenging the attitudes and behaviour which foster it and intervening early where possible to prevent it.

## What is Oxfordshire already doing to raise awareness and improve access to safe accommodation?

- **Awareness:** centrally coordinated communications and community engagement activities to ensure a consistent message and enable domestic abuse issues to be more effectively addressed including marginalised communities
- **Access:** Oxfordshire County Council is lead commissioner of the co-commissioned ODAS, which provides a local domestic abuse helpline (not 24/7) and the national domestic abuse helplines also exist. Victims of domestic abuse can access refuge and dispersed accommodation via these helplines
- **Training:** undertook a training needs analysis; developed and delivering a multi-agency domestic abuse training programme for professionals within all services and Oxfordshire residents to improve and increase domestic abuse awareness, identification and response.
- **Champions network:** enabling Domestic Abuse Champions in key teams to provide advice across their organisations

## How will Oxfordshire improve services in the future?

- **Increase promotion and raise awareness** to the public and professionals of safe accommodation provision and how to access it in Oxfordshire
- Review and continue to develop the **multi-agency domestic abuse training** programme

“ There needs to be better advertising...Once I made the call, support was available. There are women staying as they think they can't leave and don't think help is available.”

Victim of domestic abuse

# Strategic Objective 2: Provision



Providing high quality, joined-up support for victims where domestic abuse does occur.

## What is Oxfordshire already doing around safe accommodation?

- **Provision of refuge and dispersed accommodation:** Oxfordshire County Council commissions ODAS to provide refuges and dispersed accommodation for up to 46 spaces over a 12-month period taking into consideration the licence agreement is provided for up to six months. The refuges are for those aged 18 and over and open to women and children. The dispersed accommodation is for people of all genders and their children. They are open to Oxfordshire and non-Oxfordshire residents as per the Domestic Abuse Act. The provision includes domestic abuse support workers for the victims and their children
- **Provision of sanctuary schemes:** provided by each of the five district councils. Offers home security measures to support victims of domestic abuse to feel safe in their homes. Available to anyone who lives in Oxfordshire. The Oxfordshire No Recourse to Public Funds (NRPF) pathway gives victims access to safe accommodation with Sanctuary Hosting until they receive the discretionary grant which allows them to go to refuge and apply for leave to remain

“ They [sanctuary scheme] have been fabulous and I do feel a lot safer in my house.”

Victim of domestic abuse

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## How will Oxfordshire improve services in the future?

- **Undertake a thorough mapping of the current provision of safe accommodation**, in particular the different sanctuary schemes and move-on accommodation, delivered and available across the county
- **Consider taking a Whole Housing Approach (WHA)** across all housing tenure types (social, private rented, privately owned and supported accommodation) to increase victim accommodation sustainment and reduce homelessness. A WHA provides a framework for domestic abuse and housing sectors to work together to address the immediate and longer-term housing needs of victims
- **Refuge and dispersed accommodation to remain available** for victims, and their children, including Oxfordshire and non-Oxfordshire residents
- Explore options for providing refuge, dispersed and / or specialist accommodation, and support services within these types of accommodation, for **male victims of domestic abuse, those from BAME backgrounds or who identify as LGBTQ+**, where necessary and based on identified need. See Appendix B for information on supporting all victims
- Identify how to improve safe accommodation service provision for **victims and family members with complex needs** e.g. substance misuse and/or mental health

- **Consider the specific support needs of children in safe accommodation** including:
  - Child advocacy or a specialist children’s worker
  - Play, art, music therapy, sports and physical activity
  - Children and young people’s mental health practitioners, therapy and counselling services (individual and family)
  - Access to education, training, employment and healthcare close to the safe accommodation. The aim is to maintain a degree of ‘normality’ for children and young people
- **Establish a clearer and more coordinated county wide move-on pathway** to help victims leave safe accommodation and establish independent living
- **Review the existing domestic abuse pathway to determine which people cannot access safe accommodation due to financial constraints** (e.g. those with no recourse to public funds, those who jointly own/rent their property with the perpetrator) and develop a range of options to support them
- **Explore the potential use of ‘respite rooms’** (overnight temporary accommodation) for victims affected by domestic abuse
- **Develop a model of safe accommodation across the county** to address current gaps and inequalities in service provision, which takes into account the MHCLG/DLUHC funding allocation(s)
- All changes in service provision to be supported by **future commissioning of safe accommodation**

“ There should be better advertising about the sanctuary scheme as I did not know about it and had tried to install cameras myself with little money.”

Victim of domestic abuse

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# Strategic Objective 4: Partnership



Working in partnership to obtain the best outcome for victims, children and their families.

## What partnerships relevant to domestic abuse does Oxfordshire have in place?

The following partnership structures are already in place:

- Strategic Board for Domestic Abuse
- Operational Board for Domestic Abuse (OxDAP)
- Multi-agency risk assessment conferences (MARACs)
- Multi agency tasking and co-ordination (MATAC) groups
- [Health and Wellbeing Board](#)
- [Health Improvement Partnership Board](#)
- [Safer Oxfordshire Partnership](#)
- District level Community Safety Partnerships:
  - [Cherwell](#)
  - [Oxford City](#)
  - [South Oxfordshire](#)
  - [Vale of White Horse](#)
  - [West Oxfordshire](#)
- [Oxfordshire Safeguarding Children Board](#)
- [Oxfordshire Safeguarding Adults Board](#)
- [The Children's Trust](#)
- Thames Valley Domestic Abuse Steering Group
- Thames Valley Domestic Abuse Coordinators Network
- Homeless Directors' Group

## How will Oxfordshire improve services in the future?

- **Establish a 'Safe Accommodation Working Group' (SAWG) as a sub-group of ODASB**

The multi-agency sub-group will include representatives from a broad range of commissioners and providers from Tier 1 and Tier 2 local authorities. The main aims of the sub-group will be to:

  - Assess the need and demand for accommodation-based support for all victims and their children, including those who require cross-border support
  - Identify changes to the current provision of safe accommodation and associated support to enable Oxfordshire to meet the needs of all victims and their children across all protected characteristics
  - Inform the commissioning of future safe accommodation services
  - Support joint working required between Tier 1 and Tier 2 local authorities
  - Produce an annual safe accommodation assessment of need
  - Lead on completing the annual return to the DLUHC

“Once I made the call and was on the pathway, the support has been good and they have done everything. You've just got to make the call.”

Victim of domestic abuse

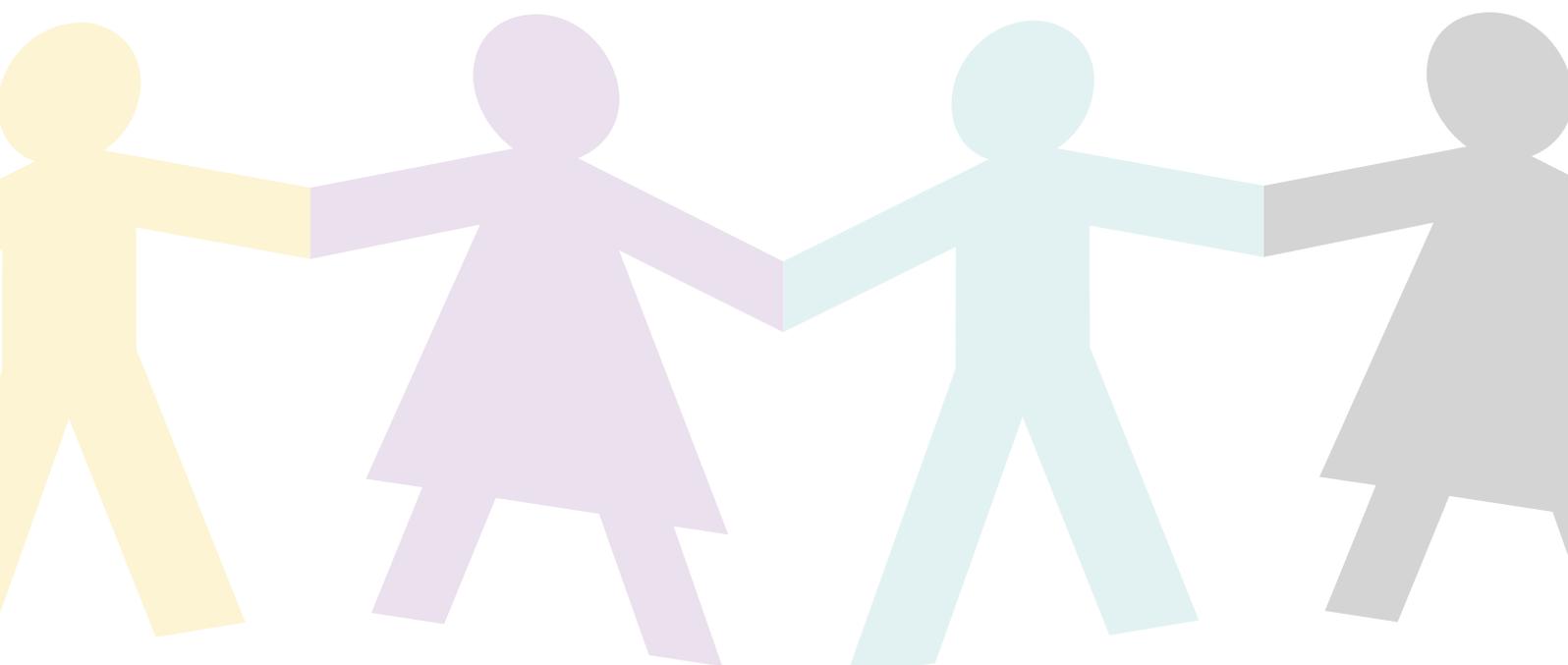
- **Develop an Oxfordshire Domestic Abuse Dashboard** including information on need, demand and supply of safe accommodation. A more coordinated and comprehensive data collection across police and crime, health, social care, housing, homelessness, and safe accommodation providers is needed to build an accurate picture of met and unmet needs of domestic abuse victims in Oxfordshire. This will develop an improved understanding of the local unmet need, especially for those with protected characteristics and/or complex needs, and allow comparison and benchmarking with other local areas. The main aims of the dashboard will be to:
  - Draw on data from a range of local partner agencies and services who support victims of domestic abuse (e.g. health, homelessness, housing, IDVA, MARAC, police and crime, social care, safe accommodation providers, etc.)
  - Agree on a template for quarterly data returns to the ODASB and SAWG. Template to include data on number of victims, number of referrals to safe accommodation services (including inside Oxfordshire and out of area), number accepted or denied access to safe accommodation, and length of time supported in safe accommodation. Data to include demographic and socioeconomic characteristics
  - Compare with reference national data sets on the estimated prevalence of domestic abuse
  - Inform the commissioning of future safe accommodation services, which are based on a robust local dataset
- **Establish a Domestic Abuse MHCLG/DLUHC Funding Task and Finish Group.** The group will discuss and finalise the budget allocation to address the identified unmet needs of victims of domestic abuse, including children, in domestic abuse safe accommodation services
- **Continue to progress the development of a dedicated Lived Experience Advisory Group (LEAG).** This is specifically for hearing the lived experiences, voices and views of victims. The forum must ensure the voices of victims are heard from a range of relevant protected characteristics. This will allow input to and inform future needs assessments, strategies, commissioning decisions, the co-production of services and awareness raising activities
- **Work with key housing stakeholders and link into existing housing workstreams** to ensure provision is made for victims-survivors of domestic abuse using a range of housing options including public private partnerships

# 4.

## How will the safe accommodation strategy be delivered?



- The delivery plan for the Safe Accommodation Strategy will be developed by the SAWG and approved by the ODASB in 2021/22
- The delivery plan will include key actions for each deliverable, timescales (i.e. short-term or longer-term), stakeholders involved, and monitoring and evaluation measures to monitor the impact of the strategy. See Appendix C for action plan template, and Section 5 for possible monitoring and evaluation measures
- The overarching Oxfordshire Domestic Abuse Strategy is currently in the process of being developed. The delivery plan for the Safe Accommodation Strategy will be aligned with the overarching Domestic Abuse Strategy
- Alongside the safe accommodation delivery plan, a financial plan will be developed by the MHCLG/DLUHC Funding Task and Finish Group to discuss and finalise the budget allocation. This will cover the specific funding provided to meet the requirements of the Domestic Abuse Act to support the relevant safe accommodation duties. The provision of community-based domestic abuse support provision will be covered by the overarching domestic abuse strategy



# 5.

**How will we know we are making a difference?**



Oxfordshire's SAWG will develop and agree baseline measures and targets to monitor the impact of the Safe Accommodation Strategy.

Examples of measures to consider including in the quarterly and annual monitoring and evaluation of the strategy are:

## Strategic Objective 1: Prevention



- Awareness of domestic abuse services: victims and professionals (e.g. number of victims and professionals who can name three or more domestic abuse services in Oxfordshire)
- Number and percentage of victims being referred to each type of safe accommodation (by referral source)
- Number and percentage of victims being referred to each type of safe accommodation (by level of risk: high, medium, standard)
- Number and percentage of victims with protected characteristics (i.e. those underrepresented) being referred to each type of safe accommodation
- Numbers attending specific domestic abuse training (by resident or type of professional and organisation)
- Percentage of staff who report increased confidence in areas of their practice, improved communication and increased awareness as a result of training using longitudinal analysis (e.g. end of training and six month post training evaluations)
- Number attending domestic abuse champions training (by type of professional and organisation)
- Number of Domestic Abuse Champions in Oxfordshire (by type of professional and organisation)
- Average waiting time to access training programmes and Domestic Abuse Champions training

## Strategic Objective 2: Provision



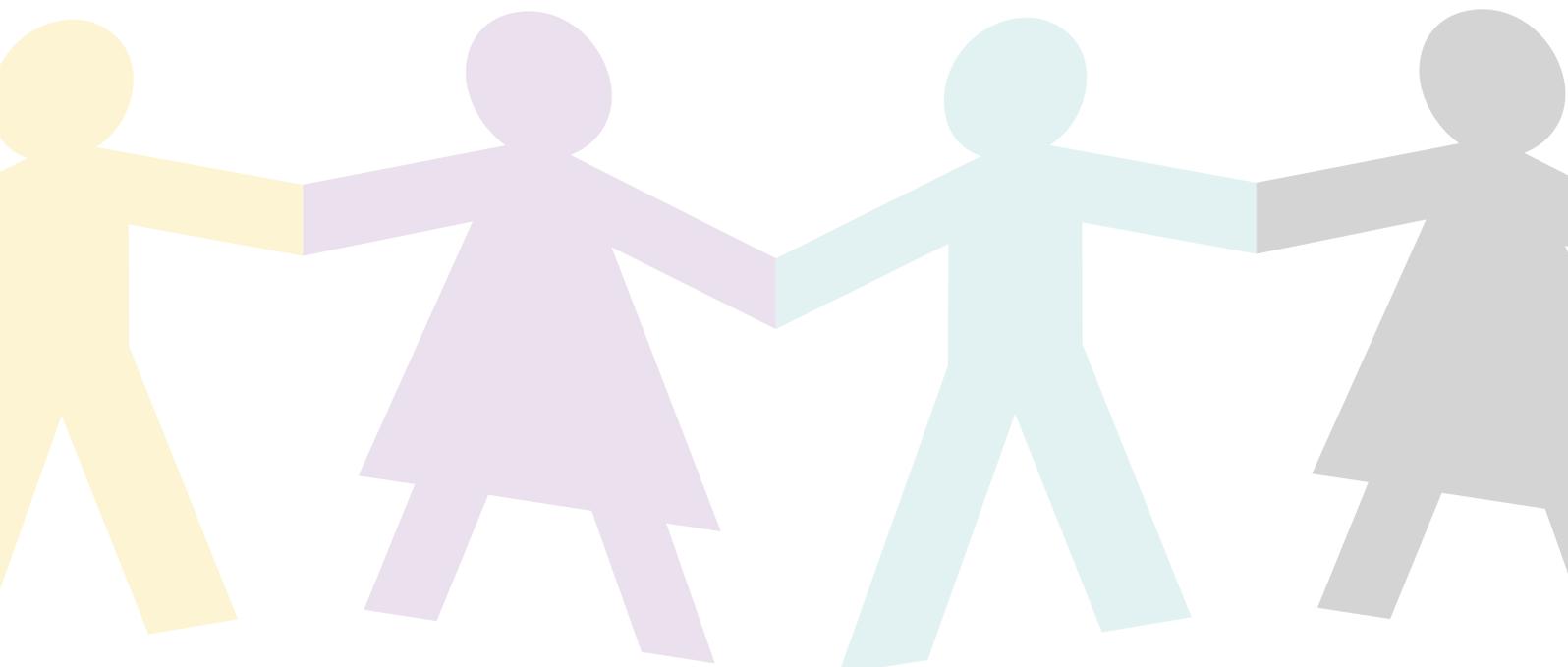
- Number and percentage of victims accessing each type of safe accommodation
- Number and percentage of victims with relevant protected characteristics, additional and/or multiple complex needs (i.e. record age, gender reassignment, sex, ethnicity, disability, language, family/number of children or pregnant, type of housing victim previously resided in, etc.) accessing each type of safe accommodation
- Number and percentage of victims from inside of Oxfordshire and outside of Oxfordshire accessing each type of safe accommodation (record area for those outside of Oxfordshire)
- Number and percentage of victims, and their children, who have a successful or unsuccessful referral to each type of safe accommodation (record reason for unsuccessful referral i.e., reason declined access)
- Average number of referral attempts for victims to gain access to each type of safe accommodation
- Average length of time (days) from victims making contact to accessing each type of safe accommodation (i.e. waiting times)
- Average length of stay (days) victims stay in each type of safe accommodation
- Number and percentage of victims, and their children, who demonstrate improved quality of life and outcomes in economic, health and social situation in each type of safe of accommodation
- Number and percentage of housing providers which are DAHA accredited
- Number and percentage of victims moving on to each type of housing (e.g. private/owner occupied, private rented, social housing, temporary accommodation/supported housing, other supported housing)

## Strategic Objective 4: Partnership



- Completeness of quarterly and/or annual data returns by partners contributing to the Oxfordshire Domestic Abuse Dashboard (e.g. not met, partially met, fully met)
- Number (including range of relevant protected characteristics) actively contributing to LEAP
- Satisfaction of victims and survivors engaged in the development of strategies, commissioning decisions and the co-production of services

Once baseline data has been collected in 2021/22, targets can be set for the subsequent years.



# Acknowledgements

This strategy has been led by the Oxfordshire County Council Public Health Team and produced by Public Health Action Support Team (PHAST) with input from the following collaborators:

Victim-survivors who shared their experiences

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## **Members of the Oxfordshire Domestic Abuse Strategic Board:**

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Berkshire, Buckinghamshire and Oxfordshire Local Medical Committee

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Cherwell District Council

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National Probation Service

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Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner for Thames Valley

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Oxford City Council

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Oxford Health NHS Foundation Trust

---

Oxford University Hospitals

---

Oxfordshire Clinical Commissioning Group

---

Oxfordshire County Council

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South Oxfordshire District Council

---

Specialist providers from the Oxfordshire Domestic Abuse Partnership (OxDAP)

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Thames Valley Local Criminal Justice Board

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Thames Valley Police

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Vale of the White Horse District Council

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West Oxfordshire District Council

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# Appendix A: Definition of domestic abuse from the Domestic Abuse Act, 2021<sup>6</sup>

## Section 1: Definition of “domestic abuse”

(1) This section defines “domestic abuse” for the purposes of this Act.

(2) Behaviour of a person (“A”) towards another person (“B”) is “domestic abuse” if—

(a) A and B are each aged 16 or over and are personally connected to each other, and

(b) the behaviour is abusive.

(3) Behaviour is “abusive” if it consists of any of the following—

(a) physical or sexual abuse;

(b) violent or threatening behaviour;

(c) controlling or coercive behaviour;

(d) economic abuse (see subsection (4));

(e) psychological, emotional or other abuse;

and it does not matter whether the behaviour consists of a single incident or a course of conduct.

(4) “Economic abuse” means any behaviour that has a substantial adverse effect on B’s ability to —

(a) acquire, use or maintain money or other property, or

(b) obtain goods or services.

(5) For the purposes of this Act A’s behaviour may be behaviour “towards” B despite the fact that it consists of conduct directed at another person (for example, B’s child).

(6) References in this Act to being abusive towards another person are to be read in accordance with this section.

(7) For the meaning of “personally connected”, see section 2.

## Section 2: Definition of “personally connected”

(1) Two people are “personally connected” to each other if any of the following applies —

(a) they are, or have been, married to each other;

(b) they are, or have been, civil partners of each other;

(c) they have agreed to marry one another (whether or not the agreement has been terminated);

(d) they have entered into a civil partnership agreement (whether or not the agreement has been terminated);

(e) they are, or have been, in an intimate personal relationship with each other;

(f) they each have, or there has been a time when they each have had, a parental relationship in relation to the same child (see subsection (2));

(g) they are relatives.

(2) For the purposes of subsection (1)(f) a person has a parental relationship in relation to a child if —

(a) the person is a parent of the child, or

6. Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities (DLUHC). Statutory guidance: Delivery of support to victims of domestic abuse in domestic abuse safe accommodation services. Published 1 October 2021. Available at: [www.gov.uk/government/publications/domestic-abuse-support-within-safe-accommodation/delivery-of-support-to-victims-of-domestic-abuse-in-domestic-abuse-safe-accommodation-services](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/domestic-abuse-support-within-safe-accommodation/delivery-of-support-to-victims-of-domestic-abuse-in-domestic-abuse-safe-accommodation-services)

(b) the person has parental responsibility for the child.

(3) In this section –

“child” means a person under the age of 18 years;

“civil partnership agreement” has the meaning given by section 73 of the Civil Partnership Act 2004;

“parental responsibility” has the same meaning as in the Children Act 1989;

“relative” has the meaning given by section 63(1) of the Family Law Act 1996.

### **Section 3: Children as victims of domestic abuse**

(1) This section applies where behaviour of a person (“A”) towards another person (“B”) is domestic abuse.

(2) Any reference in this Act to a victim of domestic abuse includes a reference to a child who –

(a) sees or hears, or experiences the effect of, the abuse, and

(b) is related to A or B.

(3) A child is related to a person for the purposes of subsection (2) if –

(a) the person is a parent of, or has parental responsibility for, the child, or

(b) the child and the person are relatives.

(4) In this section –

“child” means person under the age of 18 years;

“parental responsibility” has the same meaning as in the Children Act 1989 (see section 3 of that Act);

“relative” has the meaning given by section 63(1) of the Family Law Act 1996.

# Appendix B: Supporting all victims<sup>7</sup>

The Act states that victims with each relevant protected characteristics as per the Equality Act 2010 must be able to access the support that they need. Under this duty, they expect authorities to ensure sufficient appropriate support is available within relevant safe accommodation to meet the needs of all victims including those with relevant protected characteristics, additional and / or multiple complex needs, or whose support needs cannot be properly met within non-specialist domestic abuse safe accommodation, such as:

- Black Asian and Minority Ethnic victims (Including Gypsy Roma and Traveller)
- Male victims
- Female victims
- Transgender and Non-Binary victims
- Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual victims, and others who may face barriers as a result of their sexuality
- Disabled victims – includes but is not limited to victims who are deaf or hard of hearing, visually impaired, autistic, wheelchair users, those with learning difficulties, as well as those with age-related disabilities
- Young (aged 16-18 – including care leavers) and older victims (over 65)
- Victims with an offending history
- Victims presenting with complex needs including those with mental health and/or drug and alcohol use support needs
- Victims with histories of sleeping rough
- Victims with histories of offending
- Victims facing multiple forms of abuse within the family such as honour-based violence and forced marriage
- Victims from a particular religion and/or with a spiritual belief, particularly if facing barriers to support as a result
- Migrant victims, including victims having insecure immigration status
- Victims from isolated and/or marginalised communities, including where there is limited English proficiency.
- Victims who have no choice but to move away from their local areas, communities, and friends to escape their perpetrator to stay safe and receive the support they need.
- Children of victims (including adolescent male children) who need to move with their parent into relevant safe accommodation.
- Victims accompanied by children, including large families and those with older adolescence boys (12+)
- Pregnant victims

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7. Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities (DLUHC). Statutory guidance: Delivery of support to victims of domestic abuse in domestic abuse safe accommodation services. Published 1 October 2021. Available at: [www.gov.uk/government/publications/domestic-abuse-support-within-safe-accommodation/delivery-of-support-to-victims-of-domestic-abuse-in-domestic-abuse-safe-accommodation-services](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/domestic-abuse-support-within-safe-accommodation/delivery-of-support-to-victims-of-domestic-abuse-in-domestic-abuse-safe-accommodation-services)

# Appendix C: Action plan template

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE NUMBER	ACTION	LOCAL LEAD (L) & STAKEHOLDERS	ACTION TAKEN (DELIVERABLES OR WORK PLAN)	IMPACT MEASUREMENT	ACTION MET? (FULLY MET, PARTIALLY MET, NOT MET)	ACTION REQUIRED	DEADLINE FOR ACTION REQUIRED
<b>Prevention</b> 							
<b>Provision</b> 							
<b>Partnership</b> 							



Oxfordshire Domestic Abuse  
Strategic Board



## Oxfordshire Domestic Abuse Safe Accommodation Strategy 2021 – 2024

Oxfordshire County Council Public Health Team

[www.oxfordshire.gov.uk](http://www.oxfordshire.gov.uk)

December 2021

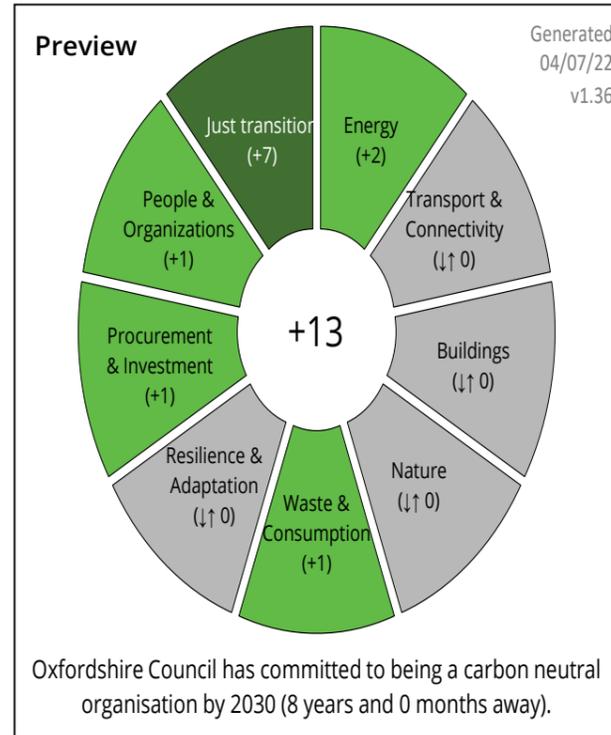
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# Climate Impact Assessment

## Summary

<b>Directorate and Service Area</b>	Public Health
<b>What is being assessed</b>	Overarching Domestic Abuse Strategy and Procurement of Oxfordshire Domestic Abuse Service and Independent domestic Violence Advocate Services (IDVAS) in response to new statutory duty for OCC following the publication of the Domestic abuse Act 2021
<b>Is this a new or existing function or policy?</b>	Existing function
<b>Summary of assessment</b>	
<b>Completed by</b>	Rosie Winyard Health Improvement Principal
<b>Climate action sign off by</b>	Tammy Marrett
<b>Director sign off by</b>	Ansaf Azhar, Executive Director of Public Health
<b>Assessment date</b>	

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## Detail of proposal

<p><b>Context / Background</b></p>	<p>OCC is required to carry out a needs assessment and publish a domestic abuse safe accommodation strategy as part of their statutory duty and in response to the requirements of the Domestic Abuse Act. OCC has completed a public consultation to inform an additional overarching domestic abuse strategy to inform wider system change. The intention is to commission Oxfordshire Domestic Abuse services (ODAS), in time for a contract start date of April 2023. These include provision for safe accommodation and support, specialist support from the IDVA service to assist in the prevention and reduction of harm for individuals and their children affected by domestic abuse.</p>
<p><b>Proposal</b></p>	<p>The Domestic Abuse Act has placed new statutory responsibilities on upper tier local authorities requiring new strategies in response to national guidance included in the Domestic Abuse Plan and new guidance for commissioners published in 2022.</p>
<p><b>Evidence / Intelligence</b></p>	<p>Public Health has carried out a detailed needs assessment due to be published shortly to inform the development of the Safe Accommodation Strategy and Overarching Domestic Abuse Strategy. Both these strategies have been subject to public consultation on Let's Talk and amended with information from these stakeholder consultations which included responses from victim survivors and and children and young people. These documents will inform future commissioning arrangements for new services which are co-commissioned with City, District authorities and Police and Crime Commissioner with dedicated provision for people with protected characteristics. The location of new services will also ensure staff are equipped to deliver telephone and web based solutions to facilitate agile working, reducing the need for staff travel while still ensuring access for people living in rural and urban areas of Oxfordshire, receive advice and support. The impact of climate change will also be taken into account in the service specifications for new services and evaluation to ensure it is an integral part of the future delivery model.</p>
<p><b>Alternatives considered / rejected</b></p>	<p>These proposed changes need to be made to enable the Council to deliver its statutory duty for domestic abuse. The future service specifications will continue to be informed by a market engagement event to ensure that they meet national and local requirements. The current Domestic Abuse Service contracts and IDVA contracts are due to terminate in March 2022, subject to granting of exemptions pending recommissioning a system wide response to future service developments.</p>

Category	Impact criteria	Score (-3 to +3)	Description of impact	Actions or mitigations to reduce negative impacts	Action owner	Timeline and monitoring arrangements
Energy	Increases energy efficiency	1		Opportunity for service specification to include key performance indicators around energy efficiency		annual review with service provider
Energy	Promotes a switch to low-carbon or renewable energy	1		Opportunity for service specification to include key performance indicators around low carbon and renewable energy.		annual review with service provider
Energy	Promotes resilient, local, smart energy systems	N/A				
Transport & Connectivity	Reduces need to travel and/or the need for private car ownership	2	As well as face to face -group work on-line, digital, telephone and webchat are all available and promoted. Plus using co-located basis to see clients where possible. Visits are also planned carefully to reduce car use.			
Transport & Connectivity	Supports active travel	-1		Opportunity to encourage more walking and cycling by service provider-Include in service specification and check bidders policy supports this		annual review with service provider to monitor progress
Transport & Connectivity	Increases use of public transport	-1		Opportunity to encourage service provider to use public transport as often as possible Include in service specification and check bidders policy supports this.		annual review with service provider to monitor progress
Transport & Connectivity	Accelerates electrification of transport	-1		opportunity to promote electric modes of transport with service provider- include in service spec and check bidders policy supports this		annual review with service provider to monitor progress
Buildings	Promotes net zero new builds and developments	N/A				
Buildings	Accelerates retrofitting of existing buildings	N/A				
Nature	Protects, restores or enhances biodiversity, landscape and ecosystems	N/A				
Nature	Develops blue and green infrastructure	N/A				

Nature	Improves access to nature and green spaces	N/A	encourage allow children and adults more access to green spaces	opportunity to add key performance indicators around access to green space for emergency accomodation residents recognizing the importance of access to green space for health and well being	review with service provider on an annual basis
Waste & Consumption	Reduces overall consumption	N/A			
Waste & Consumption	Supports waste prevention and drive reuse and recycling		<sup>1</sup> Use of local food banks helps to reduce food waste		
Resilience & Adaptation	Increases resilience to flooding	N/A			
Resilience & Adaptation	Increases resilience to other extreme weather events (e.g., storms, cold snaps, heatwaves, droughts)	N/A			
Resilience & Adaptation	Increases resilience of council services, communities, energy systems, transport infrastructure and/or supply chains	N/A			
Procurement & Investment	Procurement practices prioritise low-carbon options, circular economy and sustainability		<sup>1</sup> Food is sourced locally	Opportunity in tender process to specify the use of low carbon, circular, sustainably products in emergency accomodation such as eco friendly cleaning products etc.	review on an annual basis to monitor progress
Procurement & Investment	Investment being considered supports climate action/ is consistent with path to net zero	N/A			
People & Organizations	Drives behavioural change to address the climate and ecological emergency		<sup>1</sup>	Opportunity to ensure that service provider staff have or will seek training around carbon literacy- add as a desired specification in the tender doc.	review on an annual basis to monitor progress
People & Organizations	Drives organizational and systemic change to address the climate and ecological emergency	N/A			
Just transition	Promotes green innovation and job creation	N/A			
Just transition	Promotes health and wellbeing		<sup>3</sup>	The overarching strategy is about keeping people safe and investing in their health and wellbeing. For example providing access to GP, providing support around mental health etc.	
Just transition	Reduces poverty and inequality		<sup>3</sup>	The work seeks to address poverty and inequalities by for example providing access to employment and training.	

## Divisions Affected - All

### **CABINET** **– 19<sup>th</sup> July 2022**

## **Voluntary and Community Sector Strategy**

### **Report by Corporate Director for Customers, Organisational Development and Resources**

#### **RECOMMENDATION**

1. **Cabinet is RECOMMENDED** to approve the Voluntary and Community Sector (VCS) Strategy for 2022 – 2027.

#### **Executive Summary**

2. The Council has developed a five year Voluntary and Community Sector (VCS) strategy to set out our commitment to support a sustainable sector, through co-production with the VCS, district and city council colleagues and Oxfordshire County Councillors.
3. The scope of this corporate strategy is to strengthen our relationship with the sector as a whole, and ensure that over the coming years we continue to build on partnership working for the benefit of our residents. Individual service delivery, contracts and grants are out scope of this strategy.
4. The strategy has five priorities and a number of underpinning commitments that were agreed through a VCS and public sector co-production working group, based on the input from externally held workshops, attended by members of the VCS. The priorities are:
  - Collaboration and Networking
  - Volunteering and Social Action
  - Capacity and Skills
  - Supporting a Sustainable Sector
  - Reducing Inequalities

#### **Background**

5. Oxfordshire County Council recognises and values the critical work the local VCS does across Oxfordshire, and the positive impact this has on residents.

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Local Government alone cannot create flourishing people and communities, and the local VCS provides a vital contribution to help achieve this.

6. Collaboration with and across the VCS notably increased during Covid-19, with new groupings of the sector coming together regularly to tackle problems collectively – sharing knowledge and in some cases resources, in ways and at a pace that has not previously been seen. This has included a new level of engagement and collaboration with the statutory sector. There is considerable ambition within the VCS to retain this new culture to drive efficiency, flexibility, and responsiveness.
7. In 2021 the Policy team set up an internal officer working group to consider the future scope of the VCS Infrastructure Contract, which following extensions expired in March 2022, with a Funding Agreement in place for 22/23. However, initial conversations highlighted a broader opportunity and the appetite to collaborate on a cross organisational VCS Strategy that would allow the consideration of the Council's relationship with the sector and commissioning of services as a whole.
8. The internal working group comprises of representatives from Adults and Social Care, Public Health, Children's Services and Cultural Services and is led by the Policy and Strategy team.
9. Following this, in September 2021 Cabinet approved the development of a VCS strategy, to be co-produced with the sector. With the aim to consider the Council's commitment to the sector, and analyse and align relationships and funding – to create a clear and cohesive strategic approach across Oxfordshire as a whole.

### Response to People Overview Scrutiny Committee

10. At its June 2022 meeting, the People Overview and Scrutiny Committee considered the draft Voluntary and Community Sector Strategy.
11. **Recommendation 1: That the Council undertakes specific additional consultation with smaller voluntary sector groups to ensure its proposals support their needs also.** The Council will continue to regularly engage and consult over the next five years with the local VCS. As a part of this, we will reach out to groups that the Committee felt were less represented in the previous engagement and consultation stages.
12. **Recommendation 2: That the Council uses the forthcoming work by the consultation and engagement team to seek informed views on children and young people on the draft voluntary sector strategy.** The Council will seek to engage the views of children and young people on the voluntary and community sector strategy, as part of the consultation and engagement team's workstream. For instance we will explore engaging children and young people on the Reducing Inequalities element of the strategy through the first sounding board event in September, which will focus on EDI.

13. **Recommendation 3: That the Council assures itself that the draft strategy does not deprioritise the needs of young people over older people.** The Council has sought to ensure that the wording in the strategy is reflective to cover all service areas equally. The strategy is designed to be a document that impacts all service areas' relationships with the VCS, to achieve a cohesive Council-wide approach. An internal working group including representatives from Children's Services, Adult Social Care, Public Health and Cultural Services fed into the development of the strategy and will continue to meet regularly over the next five years to proactively review the framework and enable services to deliver tangible outcomes.
14. **Recommendation 4: That the Council investigates the reasons behind the difference in spending on commissioned services for adults and young people, and investigates whether the difference in approach means opportunities for better services or value for money are being missed.** This recommendation is noted and work is underway outside the scope of the strategy to consider spending across the voluntary and community sector.
15. **Recommendation 5: That the Council amends its draft strategy to prevent the impression being given that the needs of children and young people are of lesser priority than older people.** The strategy has been reviewed to provide all encompassing language and to remove any inadvertent perceived prioritisation of service areas or residential groups.

## Scope of Strategy

16. The Voluntary and Community Sector Strategy is a five-year strategy with a vision to enable a strong, diverse and vibrant VCS across Oxfordshire, to help deliver positive change for our communities. It aims to strengthen the relationship between the Council and sector and ensure that over the coming years we continue to build on partnership working for the benefit of our residents.
17. Individual service areas and Council contracts and grants are out of scope and will be reviewed in parallel to the implementation of this strategy.
18. The strategy aims to support the entirety of the local voluntary and community sector, from small informal groups, to larger more established charitable organisations, as well as organisations working in urban and rural areas of the County. The Council recognises that our residents are best supported when the community eco-system around them is supported, and we acknowledge that this is comprised of many varying groups and organisations that face different challenges and have different needs.
19. The strategy is a high-level document which allows for flexibility over the coming years as the sector and Council's needs change. However, it will be underpinned by a framework which will ensure meaningful changes are implemented and monitored. It is intended that services will be able to put

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forward their own actions that will contribute towards the ambitions of the strategy, as well as a central oversight within the Policy team that will allow for coordination of actions at a corporate level that will spread across services.

20. The progress of the strategy will be monitored yearly by Oxfordshire Stronger Communities Alliance (OSCA). A partnership group that represents the interests of the voluntary and community sector in Oxfordshire, and is jointly chaired by the Cabinet Member for Public Health and Equalities, and the Bishop of Dorchester.

### Internal Engagement

21. Co-production and engagement have been central to the development of the strategy, in recognition that it will not achieve its aims unless there is full internal and external buy-in.
22. Alongside the input of the internal officer working group, the Policy team has attended and engaged with all DLTs, ensuring that the strategy is relevant to all directorates and service areas.
23. Member engagement has also been vital, with a Cabinet VCS Strategy Sub-Group created enabling cabinet members to oversee the development of the strategy as a whole. The group is led by the Cabinet Member for Public Health and Equalities, and also attended by the Cabinet members for Children, Education and Young People's Services, Climate Change Delivery and Environment and Adult Social Care.
24. Furthermore, the Cabinet member for Public Health and Equalities, supported by the Policy Team, attended the 2022 January round of Locality meetings to gain input and understand from members the issues the VCS were facing in their local areas.

### Co-production with the Sector

25. The voluntary and community sector have been integral to the development of the strategy, and are the primary audience and stakeholder of the strategy.
26. In December 2021, we held two workshops with the sector to gather evidence about their challenges and priorities, as well as understand how they would want to work in co-production on the strategy. The workshops were aimed at anyone volunteering or working for a VCS organisation, with an open link to sign up in order to reach as many of the sector as possible. Over 90 different representatives registered for the workshops, ranging from very small volunteer run community groups, to larger nationally affiliated charities. District and City Council colleagues also took part and were an important part of the conversation.

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27. Feedback from the workshops demonstrated there was appetite within the sector to be more closely involved in the co-production of the strategy. A VCS Strategy Co-production External Steering Group was set up to take forward the development of the strategy. All representatives that registered to attend the initial workshops were encouraged to put forward their interest in joining, with 10 in total coming forward. District and City colleagues were also invited to be part of the group, to ensure the strategy was in alignment with their priorities.
28. The VCS organisations represented were:
- Active Oxfordshire
  - Age UK Oxfordshire
  - Alzheimer's Society
  - Asylum Welcome
  - CAG Oxfordshire
  - Community First Oxfordshire (CFO)
  - One-Eighty
  - Oxford Neighbourhood Watch
  - Oxfordshire Community and Voluntary Action (OCVA)
  - Oxfordshire Mind
29. The VCS Strategy Co-Production Steering Group agreed to work with the Policy team to co-produce recommendations and commitments for the strategy. The agreed Terms of Reference for the group highlighted this work would be developed through:
- Agreeing the elements of co-production and drafting of the strategy.
  - Outlining challenges and identify key priorities for improvement in ways of working between the VCS and Council.
  - Producing recommendations and proposals for consideration for the VCS Strategy, that will be implemented over the coming years.
30. Following a presentation of the feedback from the December workshops and the sector's challenges, the group agreed on the five priorities, Collaboration and Networking, Volunteering and Social Action, Capacity and Skills, Supporting a Sustainable Sector and Reducing Inequalities. The group, representing the wider VCS, then met between March and May to discuss and agree the commitments that sit underneath the priorities.
31. In May, a four-week consultation was launched on the co-produced priorities and commitments on the Let's Talk Oxfordshire Platform. The consultation was primarily aimed at and promoted to the voluntary and community sector and has also been shared with members, however it was also displayed openly on the public Let's Talk website.
32. The consultation closed on the 12<sup>th</sup> June, with 45 responses. Overall, the feedback was supportive of the priorities and commitments. A full consultation report is included in the annexes.

## Corporate Policies and Priorities

33. The strategy has been developed with the 2022-2025 Strategic Plan priorities and commitments in mind. There is a commitment under the strategic priority to prioritise the health and wellbeing of residents, to develop an enhanced long-term support offer for our voluntary and community sector partners. This strategy, alongside our ambitions for the long-term provision of the VCS Infrastructure Contract, will help to deliver this.
34. Furthermore, there are strong themes throughout the strategy that build upon the commitments within the priorities to support carers and the social care system, tackle inequalities in Oxfordshire, put action to address climate change at the heart of our work as well as the overall aim to work in partnership to achieve our vision.

## Financial Implications

35. There are no immediate financial implications resulting from the strategy, the strategy has a long-term approach with a framework to follow. Many of the commitments, especially those sitting under creating a sustainable sector, have the potential to allow the Council to explore cross service delivery on some service areas and pooling of contracts.
36. Furthermore, any future project or programme proposals to support the VCS and the delivery of the strategy that requires budget or funding will be developed by the lead service and taken through the relevant sign off process

Comments checked by:

Bick Nguyen-McBride, Assistant Finance Business Partner – Commercial Development, Assets and Investment, and Customers, Organisational Development and Resources  
Bick.Nguyen-McBride@Oxfordshire.gov.uk

## Legal Implications

37. There are no legal implications arising from this report

Comments checked by:

Jayne Pringle, Interim Principal Solicitor – Contracts & Conveyancing,  
Jayne.Pringle@Oxfordshire.gov.uk

## Equality & Inclusion Implications

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38. The VCS by its very nature engages with the most vulnerable in our communities. Over the past couple of years, there is new consideration in the VCS of their role in promoting equality and of the diversity within the sector itself. Therefore, one of the priorities within the strategy is 'Reducing Inequalities'.
39. Although reducing inequalities is vital in all of the priority areas of the strategy, it was felt that a dedicated priority to proactively tackle this area would lead to stronger actions. Partnership working with the VCS in this area will be pivotal in helping reduce inequalities across Oxfordshire.
40. An Equalities Impact assessment has been drafted to support the Voluntary and Community Sector Strategy. No negative equalities implications have been identified.

### **Sustainability Implications**

41. There are no negative climate action implications from the strategy. Within the priority 'Reducing Inequalities' there is a specific commitment to continue working with the VCS to address the effects of climate change and promote the circular economy, in order to reduce negative impacts on people living in areas of higher deprivation. This is in recognition of the need for us to work closely with the VCS, including the Climate Action Groups, to affect change in this area.
42. A Climate Impact assessment has been drafted to support the Voluntary and Community Sector Strategy. No negative climate implications have been identified.

### **Risk Management**

43. The creation of the Voluntary and Community Sector Strategy is intended to build upon the strengthened relationship with the local VCS since the Covid-19 pandemic. The strategy also looks to build their capacity and resilience, therefore aiming to reduce risks to the sector, which in turn would reduce the risks of services they deliver to residents.
44. By not creating a Voluntary and Community Sector Strategy, there is a risk that the local sector may not feel like a valued and listened to partner. Furthermore, there is a risk that the Council's approach to the sector continues to be disparate and inconsistent.
45. To reduce any risks that the strategy would not recognise or address the challenges the local VCS is facing, co-production, engagement and consultation was vital throughout the production of the strategy.



# Oxfordshire County Council Voluntary and Community Sector Strategy

2022 - 2027

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**OXFORDSHIRE  
COUNTY COUNCIL**

# Introduction

from Councillor Mark Lygo

Oxfordshire is a vibrant, diverse and innovative rural and urban county, with a voluntary and community sector (VCS) that reflects this. Over the past few years, local government and the voluntary and community sector have worked closer together tackling some of the county's biggest issues. This was notably most visible through the COVID-19 pandemic, and the sector's ability to organise and find solutions for our residents at pace.

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The council is keen to build on the momentum of our closer working relationship and ensure that our voluntary and community sector is empowered and sustained to work alongside us in supporting residents and communities.

Our vision is to enable a strong, diverse and vibrant voluntary and community sector across Oxfordshire, to help deliver positive change for our communities.

We recognise that alone we cannot create a county that is greener, fairer and healthier. We appreciate and value the critical work

the local VCS does across Oxfordshire, and see first-hand the positive impact this has on residents and communities. As a council, we see our role as supporting and empowering our voluntary and community sector to do what they do best, working in partnership together along the way.

Crucially, this strategy has been driven by co-production and we want to take the opportunity to thank all of you who have contributed, and shared your valuable knowledge and insight with us. You have

been essential to the creation of this strategy, and we look forward to working collaboratively with you over the next five years in bringing it to life.

Councillor Mark Lygo

# Purpose and approach

**This strategy sets out our intentions and ways of working with the sector over the next five years. The priorities and commitments within it will be developed into a framework to guide the approach to how we will achieve our commitments over the coming years.**

It will shape our work with the voluntary and community sector (VCS) across all council services, to provide consistency in how we collaborate and work together. This strategy looks at Oxfordshire as a whole, balancing out the needs of our rural and urban communities and the VCS organisations within them.

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In recent years across the council, we have seen strengthened relationships with our VCS colleagues. Although this was in part due to the need to respond to COVID-19, we have a strong desire to maintain and build upon these relationships. In doing so, we recognise that we need a whole council approach, and a renewed commitment to collaborating with the sector.

The key to this strategy, was co-producing it with the sector. In December 2021, we ran two virtual workshops to gather evidence on the sector's key challenges and priorities for a strategy, as well as understanding the best approach for co-production. This provided us with invaluable feedback that has been the backbone for the development of this strategy.

From this, we formulated a VCS Strategy Co-production Steering Group, comprised of voluntary sector organisations and colleagues from each district and city council. After analysing the evidence from the workshops, the priorities and commitments of the strategy were formulated and agreed by this group. In May 2022 we ran a

consultation exercise available to the whole sector on these co-produced priorities and commitments, with the feedback we received being incorporated into this document.

This strategy is a living document with high level commitments, it will be underpinned by a framework that allows us to be flexible and respond to the sectors' changing needs. Co-production will be an essential throughout, ensuring that we collaboratively tackle challenges and find solutions.

# Vision

**Our vision is to enable a strong, diverse and vibrant voluntary and community sector across Oxfordshire, to help deliver positive change for our communities.**

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We cannot create a greener, fairer and healthier Oxfordshire alone. The voluntary and community sector are often more deeply rooted and uniquely placed in understanding and responding to local communities' needs.

Therefore, we want to use our community leadership and enabling role to build community resilience through empowering our voluntary and community sector.



# What do we mean by the voluntary and community sector?

The voluntary and community sector, sometimes known as the Third Sector, constitutes a diverse range of organisations that all have one thing in common - they are not-for-profit and have wider societal benefits as their primary aim.

Traditionally most people associate registered charities as being VCS organisations, but the picture is a lot broader than this. Not-for-profit groups can take many forms as well as being charities, such as social enterprises, community interest companies, community benefit societies, or faith groups. There are also many small community groups that won't have formalised structures yet are a crucial and active part of the sector.

Throughout this strategy, when we refer to the voluntary and community sector, we refer to any organisation that is not-for-profit and works for the benefit of society, regardless of their size.



# Communities in Oxfordshire

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Despite Oxfordshire's relative affluence there are wide inequalities in health and wellbeing. Males living in the more affluent areas of the county are expected to live around 11 years longer than those in poorer areas. For females the gap in life expectancy is around 12 years.

As of mid-2019, Oxfordshire was the most rural county in the South East. Just under a quarter (22 per cent) of Oxfordshire's population are resident in Oxford City and 38 per cent in the county's main towns. The remaining 40 per cent live in smaller towns and villages.

Whilst Oxfordshire's population is relatively healthy, doing better or similar to national averages on most public health indicators, our population is ageing with a substantial recent and predicted growth in the number of older people. This understandably brings challenges for service provision in regard to health and social care.

Oxfordshire was ranked the 10th least deprived of 151 upper-tier local authorities in England in 2019. However, we also have 1 out of 407 Lower Super Output Area ranked within the 10 per cent most deprived areas nationally, and a further 16 areas were ranked in the 20 per cent most deprived areas nationally.

Oxfordshire is a vibrant, diverse and innovative rural and urban county.

1 in 5 children in Oxfordshire are estimated to be living in poverty – within Oxford City this figure rises to a quarter of children.

As of the 2011 Census 16.4 per cent of Oxfordshire's residents were from non-white British backgrounds. These groups are more likely than the total population to be resident in the most deprived areas in Oxfordshire.

\* All data from [Oxfordshire Health and Wellbeing Joint Strategic Needs Assessment 2021](#)

# Investment in the voluntary and community sector

The voluntary and community sector provide vital services to the residents of Oxfordshire, supporting vulnerable people and helping to create sustainable and vibrant communities. Whether these services are commissioned by the council, are fundraised for by the community or delivered as part of wider objectives, the VCS are a valued and a key partner, particularly in helping us focus on prevention.

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Through commissioning and supporting a wide range of services and initiatives with voluntary and community organisations, Oxfordshire County Council invests over £80million a year in the sector. Around £79.5m of this is made up of contracts, and £500,000 from grants.

Contracts make up the vast proportion of our VCS spend (99per cent). The council holds contracts with the sector that covers

everything from household name charities in adult social care and public health, to less obvious elements such as our Fix My Street software being developed by a not-for-profit social enterprise.

In total around 17 per cent of all of the contracts the council holds are with VCS organisations.

\*data from analysing all grants and contracts in the 2020/21 financial year. Covid-19 support spend was excluded as this would not be usual year on year spend.



# Social value policy

Social value is any additional economic, social or environmental benefit that is achieved in addition to the core deliverables of a contract. Voluntary and community sector groups often already operate in a way that brings additional value to their core services, which makes them very well placed to demonstrate social value in commissioning processes. For instance, many voluntary and community sector organisations will already focus on fostering equality, diversity, inclusion and equity in all they do, or focus on reducing their carbon footprint.

In February 2022, Oxfordshire County Council adopted a [new social value policy](#). The aim of our policy is to enable our spending on services to go further, by ensuring that our suppliers and providers commit to providing additional benefits for our communities. As such, this social value policy acts as the 'golden thread' between the council's strategic plan and procurement, to unlock additional economic, environmental and social benefits to deliver our strategic priorities.

This means, that bids for contracts over £100,000 will be weighted based on their added social value, as well as on their price and quality. Due to the importance for the council to tackle climate change, all climate-related measures will receive maximum prioritisation, with additional selected social, economic and environmental measures receiving other levels of prioritisation.



# Priorities and commitments

We have worked with the local VCS to co-produce these five priorities, that will underpin our collaborative working with the sector over the next five years. All priorities and commitments have equal weighting with each other, and will be worked on at the same time over the coming years.



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# Priorities and commitments

## Collaboration and networking



As the past few years working together through the COVID-19 pandemic has proven, collaboration and networking are vital in supporting our communities. This is true for both relationships between local government and the sector and supporting and enabling partnership working within the sector. The council is committed to fostering new ways of collaborating and working together and increasing co-production.

We also recognise the importance of the closeness the voluntary and community sector has with our residents. This leads to a unique and deep understanding of our communities, especially in terms of harder to reach communities, or those whose voices are often less heard. It is therefore essential that we work collaboratively to address long-term challenges.

### Commitments:

- Promote and champion the work of the VCS
- Conduct an exercise to understand and review the existing internal and external VCS and public partnership networks

- Continue to strengthen partnership working through existing networks or by identifying new networks
- Explore the use of the Compact\* and review our commitment to ways of working with each other
- Gain a deeper understanding of community needs through the expertise, knowledge and support of the VCS
- Listen to and work closely with the VCS, recognising their strengths and local knowledge
- Support greater partnership working and co-production, working collaboratively with

the VCS to address long-term challenges, for instance through the Oxfordshire Way

- Seek opportunities for co-location to enhance collaboration and networking

### \*The Oxfordshire Compact

The Oxfordshire Compact is an agreement which aims to provide a mutual framework for improving and sustaining better working relationships between statutory bodies and the voluntary and community sector. It was developed by the VCS and although it is not a legal document, becoming a signatory is a commitment to uphold the principles of the Compact.

# Priorities and commitments

## Volunteering and social action



Volunteering and social action play a huge part in supporting communities in Oxfordshire to flourish. From residents who take part in informal and small volunteering acts, such as helping neighbours with their shopping, to those who regularly donate their time in more formalised roles – every volunteer in Oxfordshire makes a difference.

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We want to do more to celebrate and recognise our volunteers, as well as raise awareness about the benefits volunteering has for communities and the impact on individuals.

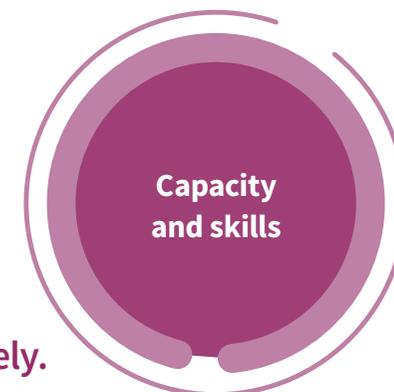
In addition, the council uses volunteers within a range of service areas, from our libraries, to our highways and fire service. These volunteers are crucial in supporting communities, and we want to ensure they are better supported and equipped to fulfil their roles.

### Commitments:

- Actively promote volunteering and social action, and the value it brings to communities and individuals
- Celebrate and recognise the work of volunteers across the county
- Internally promote a culture of volunteering, encouraging council staff to use their volunteering leave and identifying opportunities for them to do so
- Explore how to better recruit, retain and support volunteers that support council services
- Work with the VCS to identify, understand and tackle barriers to volunteering that can be addressed at a local level

# Priorities and commitments

## Capacity and skills



A strong sector is one that has the capacity, skills and capabilities to carry out its work effectively. In order to facilitate this, the local VCS needs access to a range of training opportunities, support services, resources and tools.

In recognition that a strong sector is required to help us deliver our aims, the council provides general capacity support to the sector through a VCS infrastructure contract. The contract covers three main outcomes. That VCS organisations have access to information, advice and tools to build capacity, that volunteering is promoted and developed, and that communities are supported and empowered to find their own solutions.

The council is committed to exploring a range of additional ways that we can offer support to the sector in building capacity and skills, in order to help them flourish and to help us deliver our shared aims.

### Commitments:

- Support the VCS to build capacity and work together to identify sector needs
- Support the sector to understand the council's strategic priorities, and work to understand theirs, to enable closer working on our common goals
- Continue to invest in VCS Infrastructure to support the sector
- Help foster and support strong leadership within the sector
- Enable the sector to support each other, promoting best practice, sharing of skills and a space for strategic conversations
- Explore the potential of hub models in supporting VCS organisations, for instance with centralised training

# Priorities and commitments

## Supporting a sustainable sector



Voluntary and community sector organisations have a unique understanding of local communities, and they are therefore often well placed to deliver innovative solutions. This is especially true for helping us explore models for prevention, from our work with Community Catalysts in adult social care, to increasing our early intervention support for families in our children’s services.

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However, local government procurement can be confusing, especially to smaller groups, or those who have previously not engaged in commissioning processes. We are committed to exploring how we can better communicate and increase transparency around commissioning, and align our processes to make procurement opportunities more accessible.

### Commitments

- Work in co-production to explore and expand our data on the local VCS
- Continue to embed the principles of the council’s new social value policy in commissioning processes

- Explore how the council could simplify and align the commissioning, grants and other funding processes
- Increase transparency and communication behind commissioning, empowering VCS organisations to understand and be better equipped to take part in commissioning processes, including through consortia bids
- Uphold and respect the independence of the VCS
- Support community-based models of prevention and early intervention, to help build resilience within our communities

- Explore with the VCS how best to use our property assets to form long-term partnerships to create stronger, more cohesive and more sustainable communities.

In 2022, the council offered tenants in our community assets, a one-year rent holiday to take account of financial pressures many community and voluntary organisations have faced during the pandemic. We also committed to reviewing the management of these properties and put their arrangements on a more stable, predictable footing from 2023-4.

# Priorities and commitments

## Reducing inequalities



Although work on reducing inequalities will be pivotal across all priorities and strands of this strategy, the council is committed to proactively tackling inequalities across Oxfordshire and believe inclusion is everyone's responsibility. We recognise the need to listen, learn and work collaboratively as we tackle inequalities, but most importantly we know this will only be achieved through concrete actions.

The voluntary and community sector will be essential in helping us to achieve meaningful change, and we therefore want to work collaboratively across the board to ensure we fully understand Oxfordshire's inequalities in order to tackle them together. Furthermore, we want to provide support to the sector in tackling equality, diversity, inclusion and equity issues within the sector, recognising that a lot of important work in this area is already underway.

### Commitments:

- Work collaboratively with the local VCS to develop better ways to use data about our communities to understand diverse needs and create inclusive communities

- Work collaboratively with the local VCS to address inequalities focusing on those in greatest need, to effect sustainable meaningful change, with a focus on healthy place shaping, preventative actions and early intervention projects
- Empower and support the VCS to tackle equality, diversity, inclusion and equity issues within the sector, for instance through the Oxfordshire Equality Framework
- Explore how we can reciprocally increase diversity at senior levels within the VCS and public sectors, such as at leadership and trustee levels.
- Continue to work with the VCS to tackle digital exclusion across Oxfordshire, through

the implementation of the digital inclusion strategy and charter

- Continue to work with the VCS to address the effects of climate change and promote the circular economy, in order to reduce negative impacts on people living in areas of higher deprivation

The circular economy is an approach which aims to keep materials in use for much longer, ensuring they can be reused, recovered and recycled

# How we will implement the strategy

This strategy demonstrates the desire across the county to work in collaboration with each other to make a greener, fairer and healthier Oxfordshire. This document is designed to be living and flexible enough to adjust to our communities changing needs over the next five years.

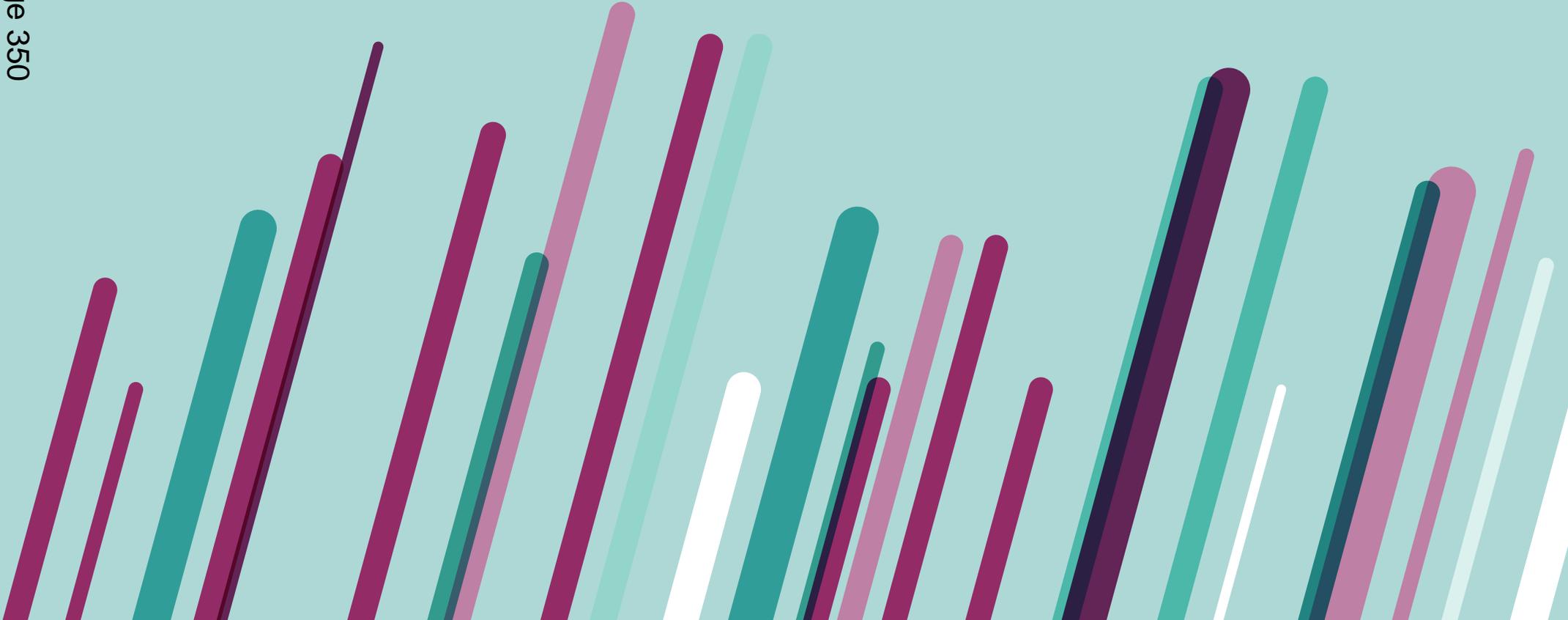
However, we will only be able to meet our commitments by taking real action. In doing so, we will continue working in partnership with the sector to develop a framework around the strategy, that will ensure a collaboration and system-wide approach.

The council will oversee and monitor the framework, updating and reporting yearly to the Oxfordshire Stronger Community Alliance on progress.

## Oxfordshire Stronger

### Community Alliance (OSCA)

OSCA is a partnership group that represents the interests of the voluntary and community sector in Oxfordshire. The main objectives are to build a sustainable voluntary, community and faith sector, and a stronger and empowered community.



# Oxfordshire County Council Voluntary and Community Sector Strategy

2022 - 2027

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**OXFORDSHIRE  
COUNTY COUNCIL**

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# **Voluntary and Community Sector Strategy 2022-2027 Consultation Findings**

## **Executive Summary**

1. The Council has developed a five year Voluntary and Community Sector (VCS) strategy to set out our commitment to support a sustainable sector, through co-production with the VCS, district and city council colleagues and Oxfordshire County Councillors
2. Between 13<sup>th</sup> of May 2022 and 12<sup>th</sup> June 2022, the council invited feedback on the draft priorities and ambitions that underpinned the emerging strategy, that had been developed by a Voluntary and Community Sector Strategy Co-Production Group.
3. In total the council received 45 survey responses.
4. Overall, the consultation findings validate the priorities and ambitions for the Voluntary and Community Sector Strategy, with the majority of respondents agreeing that the priorities and ambitions consulted on were the right ones for the strategy.

## **Methodology and Communication**

5. The strategy consultation was open for over four weeks, between 13<sup>th</sup> of May 2022 and 12<sup>th</sup> June 2022 on the Let's Talk Oxfordshire Platform. Paper copies were available on request.
6. The strategy was co-produced, with a strong approach to engagement throughout. In December 2021, we hosted two virtual workshops which over 90 local VCS organisations registered to attend. The workshops allowed us to gather the initial evidence from the sector about their challenges and decide how to bring forward the co-production of the strategy.
7. From this, we developed a voluntary and community sector strategy co-production group, open to anyone in the local VCS who wanted to join. We then worked in collaboration with the group to analyse the evidence from the workshops held last year and develop the priorities and commitments for the strategy for consultation.
8. The primary audience for the consultation were local voluntary and community sector groups. The consultation link was shared with all participants who registered for the December 2021 workshops, as well as spread widely through council networks. Furthermore, it has been promoted via direct emails to key influencers in the sector, asking them to cascade to other sector colleagues. We have also included articles in stakeholder e-newsletters, and encouraged Oxfordshire County Council members to respond.

## How to interpret this report

9. This is a consultation exercise and has not been designed to be a piece of representative research. Therefore, the council cannot attribute any statistical confidence intervals to the data. The people who participated are entirely self-selecting.
10. The report is presented in two parts, with the first section focusing on the key themes that came through in written answers, and the second section summarising the quantitative data where respondents were asked to what extent they agreed with the priorities and ambitions.
11. In total, the council received **45** survey responses and no written responses. Not everyone chose to answer each question (as was permitted) and this report uses variable base numbers based on the number of people who had their say for each question.
12. This survey contained several open-ended questions, where people responding could share their thoughts. All comments have been read and carefully considered. Where we report on the common themes, we have grouped responses on these areas for reporting purposes.

## Findings

### Common themes:

13. The consultation allowed respondents to comment on each ambition within the priority areas individually, creating a large number of text responses. We have gathered together and grouped feedback on these into themes, as similar comments were made across different ambitions.
14. A general criticism under some of the ambitions was questioning how they would be delivered and implemented in practice. There were also comments raising the question as to whether some of the ambitions were box ticking exercises.
15. There were also several references to the increased need for funding to the sector, as well as funding and resource for the strategy in order to implement it.
16. Within the priority area of **Networking and Collaboration**, a common theme was the need for clarification around terms, and the use of jargon, specifically including 'The Compact' and 'The Oxfordshire Way'.
17. In the priority area for **Volunteering and Social Action**, respondents felt that work was needed with other sectors, such as the private sector and youth groups, to attract volunteering. There was a strong emphasis on the need to ensure that workforces were not undermined by using volunteers for roles that should be paid. Furthermore, other respondents felt large scale changes outside the remit of the strategy were needed to attract more volunteers, for instance through access and cost of childcare. Finally, some respondents felt that the

sector needed to change its approach to volunteering and look at more short-term and flexible ways of offering volunteering opportunities.

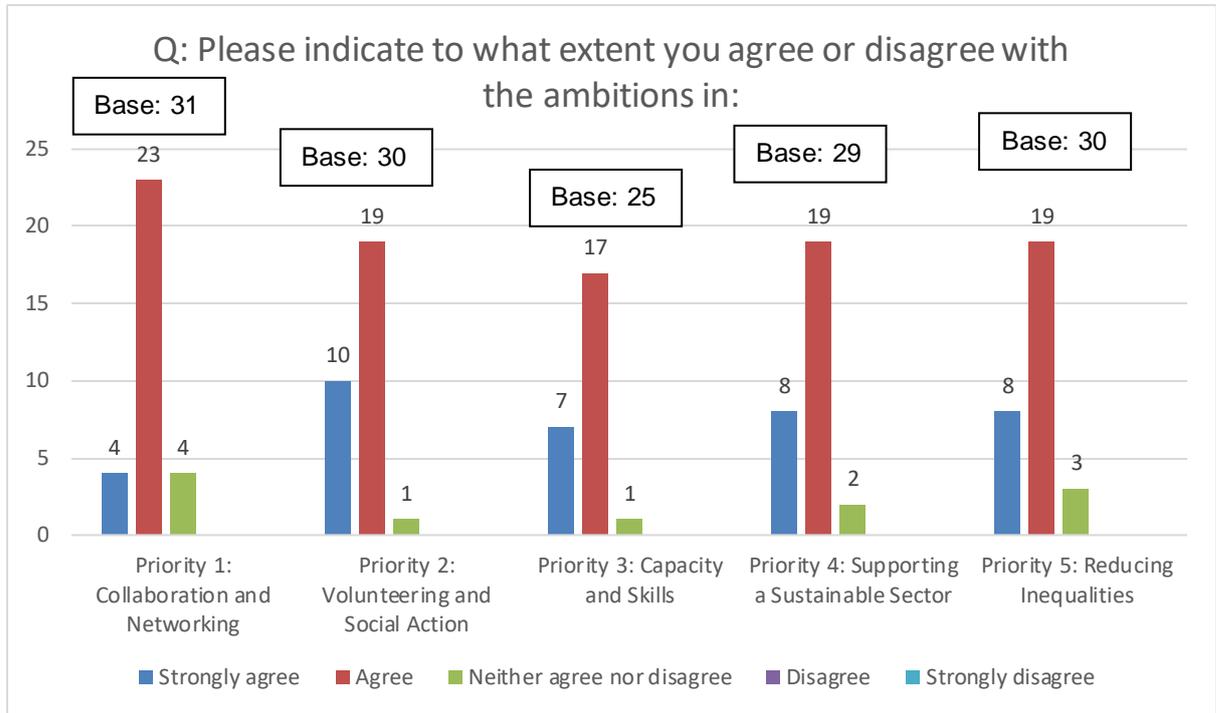
18. In the priority area **Capacity and Skills**, a couple of respondents felt that support for strategic priorities needed to be reciprocal, and not just from the voluntary sector to the council. There was also support for the idea of a hub model to support VCS organisations in areas like training, but respondents felt this needed to be accessible to all organisations.
19. Within the priority area **Supporting a Sustainable Sector**, some respondents felt more information was required on the council's new Social Value Policy. There were also requests for the ambition to explore commissioning processes to also consider grants.
20. There were only a small number of individual comments received for the priority area **Reducing Inequalities**. The feedback was mixed but included respondents who felt the priority needed to be resourced, and a few specific areas within inequalities that needed focus, for instance mental health.

#### Priority and Ambitions:

21. Across each of the priorities, and each of the ambitions that sit within them, respondents were asked to what extent they agreed that that priorities and ambitions were the right ones for the strategy. Respondents could choose from; strongly agree, agree, neither agree nor disagree, disagree, strongly disagree.
22. Overall, the priorities received strong support, with 25% (11) strongly agreeing, 66% (29) agreeing. 5% (2) neither agreed or disagreed, and 2% (1) disagreed and strongly disagreed.



23. The ambitions sitting under the priorities also received broad support, with no respondents disagreeing or strongly disagreeing to any of the priority areas.

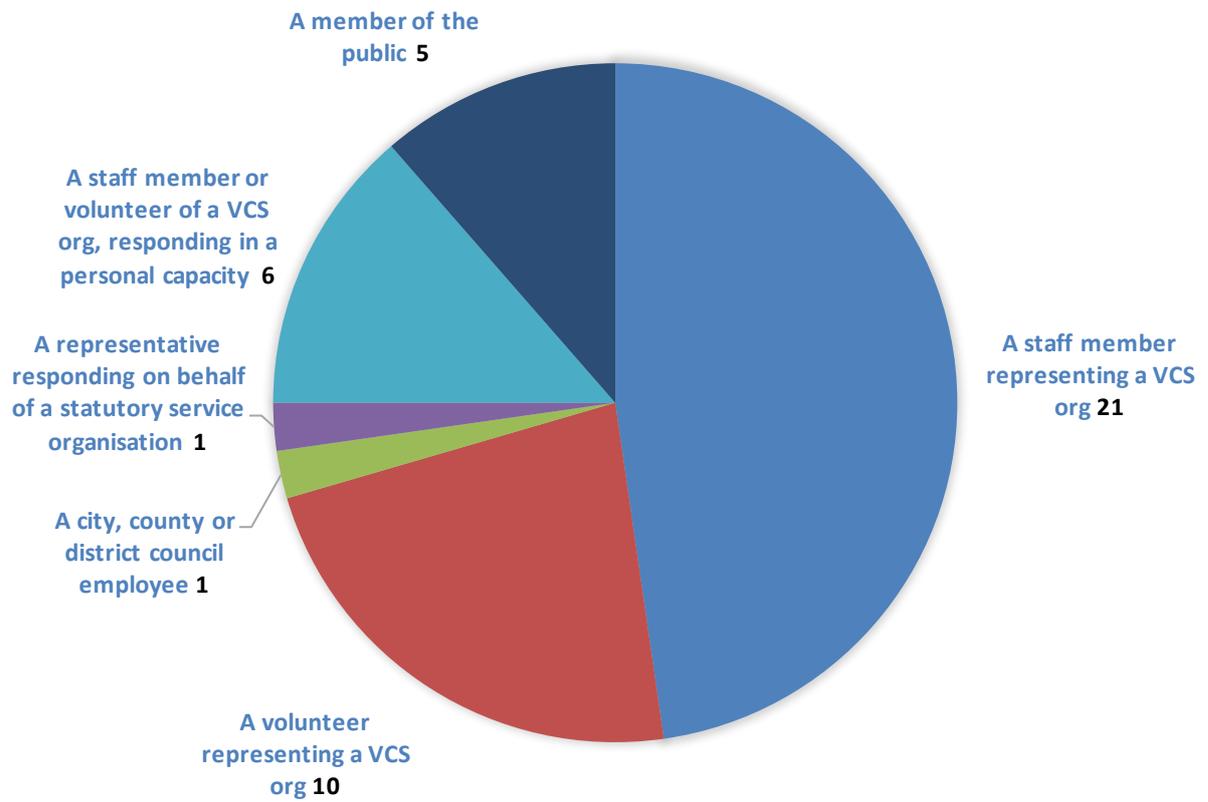


### Types of Respondent

24. Overall, 45 people responded to the survey. As the primary audience for the strategy and consultation is the voluntary and community sector, the usual profile questions were not asked as it was determined this data would not be helpful. Rather, respondents were asked how they were responding, to determine their relationship with the sector.

25. The majority of respondents 48% (21) were staff members of VCS organisations, responding on their behalf. We also received responses from volunteers on behalf of VCS organisations (23%, 10 respondents) and individuals who were staff members or volunteers of a VCS organisation but responding in a personal capacity (14%, 6 respondents). Five members of the public (11%) also responded, as well as one employee from the county, city, or districts, and one respondent representing a statutory service.

## I am responding to this survey as:



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**Divisions Affected: N/A**

**CABINET  
19 July 2022**

**Oxford 'Street Voice' Citizens' Jury Update**

**Report by Corporate Director  
Customers and Organisational Development**

**RECOMMENDATION**

1. **The Cabinet is RECOMMENDED to**
  - a) Note the independent research project undertaken by the consortium of researchers from Oxford University (annex 1) and request that Overview and Scrutiny consider a dedicated event in September 2022 to consider the findings in committee.
  - b) Formally record its thanks to the residents who participated in the Jury and commit to consideration of and response to the recommendations from the Jury and any subsequent Overview and Scrutiny Committee considerations.

**Executive Summary**

2. In November 2021 a group of researchers from Oxford University approached the county council to discuss their aspiration to undertake a deliberative engagement activity (Citizen's Jury) to explore urban transport and health matters within Oxford City.
3. The project was called Street Voice – A Citizens' Jury on Transport, Climate Change and Health in Oxford. The University identified Headington as their preferred locality as an area clearly with the city but not part of pre-existing low traffic neighbourhood (LTN) pilot scheme.
4. The scope of the research was not the consideration of specific transport policies, schemes or LTNs rather a wide exploration of transport planning, climate and health issues and the interdependencies between them. The research question (and sub-questions) posed were:

## CA16

*'How can we travel where we need to in Oxford in a way that's good for health and the climate.*

- *What do people who live in, work in or visit Oxford need so that they can move around safely and easily?*
- *How are people's travel needs best balanced with the need to promote health and fairness and tackle climate change?*
- *What can Oxfordshire County Council do to help achieve these aims?'*

## Background

5. Oxfordshire County Council officers worked with the research team to enable the Jury to take place. This included providing technical specialists to act as a witness for the Jury on matters relating to the role of local government in terms of budgets and decision making and the process of transport planning.
6. The selection of the 16 Jury members from the Headington area was wholly undertaken by the University research team and officers did not participate in the design of the research or the deliberations of the Jury.
7. Political Group Leaders prior were briefed (prior to the commencement of the research) and there was cross-party representation on the advisory group that oversaw the design and development of the Jury (including the divisional member). To ensure the objectivity of the research and any subsequent decision making no elected members participated in the deliberations of the Jury or attended the sessions.
8. Oxfordshire County Council has committed to receiving the recommendations and findings from the research and to considering them in public. The Cabinet is keen to ensure that overview and scrutiny have the opportunity to consider the findings and as such have requested that overview and scrutiny members consider adding this to their work programme at a dedicated event in September 2022. Researchers and participants in the programme could be invited to attend and contribute to scrutiny discussions prior to further Cabinet consideration.
9. The Citizens' Jury was convened over several weekends in June and July 2022 and the first paper was received by the council from the research team just prior to the publication of the Cabinet agenda. It is recognised that a full response and consideration has not yet been undertaken and the Cabinet is committed to this, including by inviting scrutiny views as set out above.
10. Full details of the project are available on the dedicated research website [Street Voice: A Citizens' Jury to find common ground on solutions to the impact of travel on health and climate change in Oxford – Global Centre on Healthcare and Urbanisation \(gchu.org.uk\)](https://www.gchu.org.uk/street-voice) which is run by the Global Centre on Healthcare and Urbanisation, Kellogg College and Nuffield Department of Primary Care Health Services.

## **Corporate Policies and Priorities**

11. The research findings will be considered as part of the ongoing development of county council plans and policies.
12. Oxfordshire County Council has a stated priority set out in the corporate strategy to 'play our part in a vibrant and participatory democracy. In February 2022 the council adopted a new consultation and engagement strategy which provides the framework to supports innovative and new ways to undertake public engagement and consultation, this activity falls within the scope of that strategy.

## **Financial Implications**

13. There are no financial implications arising from this report.

Comments checked by:

Bick Nguyen-McBride, Assistant Finance Business Partner – Commercial Development, Assets and Investment, and Customers, Organisational Development and Resources

## **Legal Implications**

14. There are no immediate legal implications arising from this report. The County Council follows the requirements for formal public consultation and engagement with regards to the development of its plans and strategies using the Let's Talk Oxfordshire Website as a key platform. This Citizens' Jury does not replace the formal consultation required for the development of plans and strategies.

Comments checked by:

Anita Bradley, Director of Law and Governance and Monitoring Officer.

## **Staff Implications**

15. There are no staffing implications arising from this report.

## **Equality and Inclusion Implications**

16. Equality and inclusion impacts were core to the research questions considered within the deliberations of the Citizens' Jury.

## **Sustainability Implications**

17. Sustainability, health and environmental impacts were core to the research questions considered within the deliberations of the Citizens' Jury.

## Risk Management

18. As Oxfordshire County Council is not the commissioner or conductor of the research risks associated with the project are held by the University research team. The most significant areas of risk are ensuring that the requirements for formal consultation are not impacted by this research and that decision making remains objective. Steps have been undertaken to ensure that elected members are not directly involved in the research to ensure objectivity.

## Consultations

19. The activities of the Citizens' Jury do not replace the formal or statutory consultation requirements associated with the development of policies, plans and strategies. Deliberative engagement activities such as these form part of background and development of strategy and service design.

Claire Taylor  
Corporate Director – Customers and Organisational Development

Annex: Oxford 'Street Voice' Citizens' Jury – First Output report  
Report from the Research Group, July 2022.

Background papers: Link to the Research Group Street Voice Website.

[Street Voice: A Citizens' Jury to find common ground on solutions to the impact of travel on health and climate change in Oxford – Global Centre on Healthcare and Urbanisation \(gchu.org.uk\)](#)

Contact Officer: Claire Taylor, Corporate Director – Customers, and  
Organisational Development

[claire.taylor@oxfordshire.gov.uk](mailto:claire.taylor@oxfordshire.gov.uk)

July 2022

## **Divisions Affected – Didcot, Hendreds & Harwell, Sutton Courtenay & Marcham, Berinsfield & Garsington**

### **CABINET**

**19 July 2022**

## **Didcot Garden Town Housing Infrastructure Fund COMPULSORY PURCHASE, BRIDGING SCHEME AND SIDE ROADS ORDERS**

### **Report by Director of Transport and Infrastructure**

#### **RECOMMENDATION**

**1. The Cabinet is RECOMMENDED to:**

- a) Confirm that the acquisition of the land and new rights identified on the map attached to this report (Annex B) (“the Order Map”) being the map accompanying The Oxfordshire County Council (Didcot Garden Town Highways Infrastructure – A4130 Improvement (Milton Gate to Collett Roundabout), A4197 Didcot to Culham Link Road and A415 Clifton Hampden Bypass) Compulsory Purchase Order 2022 (“the CPO”) is necessary for highway purposes;
- b) Approve the CPO, the Order Map, the SRO, the plans accompanying the SRO (“SRO Plans”) and the Bridge Scheme all substantially in the form annexed to this report but to delegate to the Director of Transport and Infrastructure following consultation with the Director of Law & Governance, authority to modify them as necessary;
- c) Authorise the Director of Law & Governance to make The Oxfordshire County Council (Didcot Garden Town Highways Infrastructure – A4130 Improvement (Milton Gate to Collett Roundabout), A4197 Didcot to Culham Link Road and A415 Clifton Hampden Bypass) Compulsory Purchase Order 2022 pursuant to Sections 239, 240, 246, 250 and 260 of the Highways Act 1980 (as amended) and Parts II and III of Schedule 2, and Schedule 3 to the Acquisition of Land Act 1981 for the purpose of acquiring the land and interests shown on the Order Map and described in the Schedules to the CPO (or such lesser area of land should this in his opinion be appropriate) to facilitate the construction of new highway and other necessary and related works and mitigation on such land and to affix the Common Seal of the Council to the CPO and to the Order Map;

- d) Authorise the Director of Law & Governance to make The Oxfordshire County Council (Didcot to Culham Thames Bridge) Scheme 2022 (“the Bridge Scheme”) pursuant to Section 106(3) of the Highways Act 1980 (as amended) for the purpose of allowing construction of a bridge over a navigable waterway, being the Thames River and to affix the Common Seal of the Council to the Bridge Scheme and its accompanying plan(s);
- e) Authorise the Director of Law & Governance to make The Oxfordshire County Council (Didcot Garden Town Highways Infrastructure – A4130 Improvement (Milton Gate to Collett Roundabout), A4197 Didcot to Culham Link Road and A415 Clifton Hampden Bypass) (Side Roads) Order 2022 (“the SRO”) pursuant to Sections 14 and 125 of the Highways Act 1980 (as amended) to enable the stopping-up, diversion, alteration, improvement and creation of new lengths of highway or reclassification of existing highways, enabling the stopping up of private means of access as necessary where the scheme design necessitates and re-provision of private means of access and giving authority for the acquisition of necessary land pursuant to the CPO and to affix the Common Seal of the Council to the SRO and to the SRO Plans;
- f) Authorise the Director of Law & Governance to remove from the CPO any plot (or interest therein) no longer required to be acquired compulsorily, to amend the interests scheduled in the CPO (if so advised) and to request that the Secretary of State makes any modifications to the CPO prior to confirmation as may be appropriate;
- g) Authorise the Director of Law & Governance to amend and finalise the draft Joint Statement of Reasons (Annex A) for the CPO and The Oxfordshire County Council (Didcot Garden Town Highways Infrastructure – A4130 Improvement (Milton Gate to Collett Roundabout), A4197 Didcot to Culham Link Road and A415 Clifton Hampden Bypass) (Side Roads) Order 2022 (“the SRO”) and The Oxfordshire County Council (Didcot to Culham Thames Bridge) Scheme 2022 (“the Bridge Scheme”) considered necessary prior to its submission to the Secretary of State;
- h) Authorise the Director of Law & Governance to advertise the making of the CPO, the SRO and the Bridge Scheme and to submit the CPO, SRO and Bridge Scheme to the Secretary of State for Transport for confirmation, together with authorising the Director of Law & Governance to take all other relevant action thereon to promote the confirmation and/or publication of the CPO, SRO and Bridge Scheme (including by statutory instrument for the Bridge Scheme);
- i) In the event that any Public Inquiry is convened to consider objections to the CPO and/or SRO and/or Bridge Scheme and/or planning application (by way of a call-in decision), to authorise the Director of Law & Governance, in consultation with the Director of Transport and Infrastructure to prepare and submit such evidence as is necessary in

support of the CPO and/or SRO and/or Bridge Scheme and/or planning application, including enlisting the assistance of outside consultants, legal advisors and Counsel to assist in the preparation and presentation of such evidence.

- j) As soon as the CPO, the SRO and the Bridge Scheme have been confirmed and become operative, to authorise the Director of Law & Governance to comply with all associated requirements in respect of personal, site and press notices of confirmation and at the appropriate time thereafter to make, seal and give notice of a General Vesting Declaration (or declarations where more than one is required) under the Compulsory Purchase (Vesting Declarations) Act 1981 and/or to serve Notices to Treat and Notice of Entry in respect of those properties to be acquired compulsorily;
- k) Authorise the Director of Transport and Infrastructure in consultation with the Director of Law & Governance to negotiate terms with interested parties for the purchase by agreement or payment of compensation in accordance with the Compensation Code in respect of any interests or rights in or over any land included in the CPO and, where appropriate, to agree terms for relocation;
- l) Authorise the Director of Property in consultation with the Director of Law & Governance to complete the acquisition of such interests or rights and execute their legal transfer/grant to the Council;
- m) In the event that compensation for the acquisition of land and/or rights cannot be agreed between the relevant parties, to authorise the Director of Law & Governance to make a reference to the Upper Tribunal (Lands Chamber) for determination of such compensation together with such other questions as may be necessary to determine, including the engagement of appropriate external legal advisors and surveyors and other experts, as required;
- n) In the event that any question of compensation in relation to the acquisition of land and/or rights is made by way of a reference to the Upper Tribunal (Lands Chamber) (whether by the claimant or the Council) to authorise the Director of Law & Governance to take all necessary steps in relation thereto, including advising on the appropriate uses and compensation payable and issuing the appropriate certificates.
- o) Be notified of the Statutory Blight regime that requires the Council to respond to claims for Statutory Blight pursuant to Part VI, Chapter II and Schedule 13 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended).
- p) In respect to Statutory Blight delegate authority to the Director for Property Services and the Director of Law & Governance to agree appropriate terms in accordance with statutory provisions.

## Executive Summary

2. The Didcot Garden Town Housing Infrastructure Fund programme (hereon referred to as HIF1) is a £296m investment in new highways and transport and consists of four elements, as follows:
  - A4130 widening from Milton Interchange to a new Science Bridge by making it a dual carriageway;
  - a new Didcot Science Bridge from the A4130 over the Great Western Railway Mainline into the Didcot 'A' Power Station site and re-joining the A4130 Northern Perimeter Road north of the Purchas Road/Hawksworth roundabout;
  - a new river crossing and link road between the A4130 at Didcot and A415 at Culham, including two new bridges;
  - a Clifton Hampden Bypass between the A415 at Culham Science Centre and B4015 north of Clifton Hampden.

and, taken together, these component elements form the Scheme.

3. The Scheme features specifically within Oxfordshire's Local Transport Plan and the policies of both the adopted Vale of White Horse Local Plan 2031 and the South Oxfordshire Local Plan 2035.
4. The Scheme is also essential for the economic and social prosperity of Science Vale UK, one of the first Enterprise Zones, in addition to other newer Enterprise Zones in the area. Whilst the HIF1 programme is based on future growth, the Scheme will also help to alleviate the issues resulting from historic housing and employment growth.
5. The Housing Infrastructure Fund, administered by Homes England, is funding £239.8m towards the Scheme.
6. The grant funding will need to be spent by March 2026, as detailed in the Grant Determination Agreement (contract) with Homes England, following its amendment as authorised by Cabinet in March 2022 (2021/221) and June 2022 (2022/045).
7. The remaining funding is either held in respect to section 106 contributions or underwritten in full by Oxfordshire County Council. The funding that has been underwritten in full is expected to be received before completion of the Scheme. Refer to paragraph 69-74 for further details.
8. Following a report to Cabinet in July 2020, the preferred options were agreed by Cabinet to proceed with the preliminary design and planning application for the Scheme. A subsequent report in June 2021 approved the "in principle" use of statutory powers.
9. There are a range of issues and risks associated with the delivery of the Scheme, which are being actively managed by the Programme team. Whilst a

number of these can be considered as reflective of the scale and complexity of the programme being undertaken, land assembly is a matter of note.

10. Members should be aware of the position of the scheme in relation to Statutory Blight claims, the implications of which are considered in paragraph 61 onwards.

## **Exempt Information**

11. Annex A – Appendix 8b (CPO and Land Reference Schedule) and Annex B (CPO and Land Reference Schedule) to be made exempt due to information which is likely to reveal the identity of an individual. This information will be made available to the general public once/if Orders are made.

## **Background**

### Scheme Purposes

12. The purposes of the HIF1 Scheme are to address:
  - Existing Highway Network Performance
  - Active Travel
  - Public Transport
  - Network Resilience and Safety Improvements
  - Delivery of Housing and Employment Growth

### Objectives

13. The agreed Scheme objectives are to:
  - Reduce congestion and provide capacity on the arterial routes within Didcot;
  - Enable modal shift across the Science Vale;
  - Improve accessibility across the River Thames and the Great Western Main Line in Didcot;
  - Improve resilience of the transport network, including safety enhancements, which will respond to future uncertainties and opportunities;
  - Enable sustainable growth within the Science Vale; and
  - Ensure the Science Vale remains a world-leading research location.

### Scheme Description

14. The HIF1 Scheme is made up of four key elements, which are described in detail below. It should however be noted that although component elements, these elements constitute the Scheme and must be delivered cohesively for the HIF1 benefits to be fully realised.

### Element 1 – A4130 Widening

15. Widening of 1.5km of A4130 east from the A34 Milton Interchange to create a dual carriageway from a single carriageway including:
- a new roundabout junction east of Backhill Lane Tunnel
  - a revised signalised T-junction to access the proposed development site known as Valley Park
  - two new roundabout junctions and link road from the A4130 west of the Great Western Park signalised junction

#### Element 2 – Didcot Science Bridge

16. A new road bridge over the A4130, the Great Western Railway Line, Milton Road and link road (circa 1.5km) including:
- a new road overbridge
  - single carriageway development road in the former Didcot Power Station coal yard with a number of side road junctions
  - potential relocation of RWE nPower Gatehouse
  - single carriageway access link road through the RWE nPower car park (including relocated RWE nPower access road and lagoon), the former cricket field and agricultural field adjacent to the National Cycle Route (NCR) 5
  - a new priority T-junction north of Purchas Road roundabout connecting into the A4130
  - revised alignment of the NCR5 route with improved pedestrian crossing link to Hawksworth and wider cycle network
  - new pedestrian and cycle link within the field boundary adjacent to A4130 (Didcot Northern Perimeter Road)

#### Element 3 – Didcot to Culham River Crossing

17. A single carriageway road between A4130 (Didcot Northern Perimeter Road) and A415 (Abingdon Road) (3.6km) including:
- a replacement four arm roundabout at A4130 (Didcot Northern Perimeter Road and Collett)
  - A new haul road and T-junction for Hanson and FCC Environment operations
  - a new road overbridge spanning the Hanson private railway siding at the Appleford Level Crossing
  - a new priority T-junction on B4016 (Appleford Road) at Appleford
  - a new shared use cycle way with a right of way on foot between the T-junction and Appleford Railway Station
  - a new three arm roundabout junction on B4016 (Appleford Road) from Sutton Courtenay
  - a new road overbridge spanning the restored quarry area and the River Thames

- a new farm access for Zouch Farm agricultural buildings
- a new four arm roundabout junction on the A415 (Abingdon Road)
- a shared use cycle way with a right of way on foot on the southern side of the A415 (Abingdon Road)

#### Element 4 – Clifton Hampden Bypass

18. A single carriageway bypass for Clifton Hampden, between Culham Science Centre and B4015 just north of Clifton Hampden Village (1.8km including link roads) including:
  - a new four arm roundabout and access roads at the Culham No.1 employment site just west of Culham Science Centre
  - a new priority T-Junction east of the Culham Science Centre main gate to link the existing A415 from Clifton Hampden with the new Clifton Hampden Bypass, including new access junctions for the Fullamoor Farms agricultural buildings and residential and commercial properties to the south of the A415
  - a revised access for the Thames Water sewage treatment site
  - a revised farm access and crossing
  - a new priority T-junction on the B4106 (Oxford Road) just north of Clifton Hampden Village
19. The HIF1 Scheme is the cornerstone of the Science Vale transport strategy and helps to support employment and growth ambitions in neighbouring Oxford City. It will benefit a large swathe of Oxfordshire residents that are required to travel from or into the Science Vale area for work, shopping and leisure. The funding awarded will transform Didcot and the surrounding areas and will help deliver the Garden Town aspirations by forward funding essential highway infrastructure, which includes substantial improvements to pedestrian and cycle connectivity, and will help to facilitate new and enhanced bus services.
20. Any future bids to funding bodies for schemes in other priority areas, such as community facilities, affordable housing, and further walking and cycling infrastructure, will be made more viable by the presence of the HIF1 Scheme.
21. OCC's Local Transport Plan: Connecting Oxfordshire 2015-2031 was agreed by Full Council in September 2015, following public consultation on the draft plan earlier that year. This includes the HIF1 elements as specific proposals in policies, SV2.6, SV2.13, and SV2.16 within the Science Vale Transport Strategy.
22. The Evaluation of Transport Impacts (ETI), 2014, which formed part of the evidence base for the Vale of White Horse Local Plan 2031 identified the requirement for significant highway infrastructure intervention in order to support the delivery of homes and jobs growth in the area.
23. Subsequently, the ETI produced in 2017 to support the submitted South Oxfordshire Local Plan 2035 lends further weight to the need for the HIF1

Scheme. These ETIs were undertaken using the Oxfordshire Strategic Model (OSM).

24. The Scheme is also included in the policies of the Vale of White Horse Local Plan 2031 Part 1 and Part 2 (adopted) and the South Oxfordshire Local Plan 2035 (adopted). Both Local Plans include policies to safeguard land for the HIF1 Scheme and were consulted upon extensively with the public and through examination.
25. Without the HIF1 Scheme, the County Council cannot ensure an efficient and safe highway network. Such are the current pressures on the network that the County Council, as the Highway Authority, has objected to planning applications for very small residential developments (single dwellings or extensions) with an identified traffic impact on the river crossing at Culham (comprised of Sutton Bridge and Culham Cut) on the grounds that traffic generated by these proposals would result in a severe impact on the highway network.
26. Four such applications have subsequently received planning committee refusals, with the decisions then being tested at appeal. On each occasion, the Planning Inspectorate has upheld the decision of the local planning authority and dismissed the appeals due to the severe cumulative impact on the highway network, as per Paragraph 109 of the National Planning Policy Framework.
27. With the security of HIF funding, the County Council, together with its partners such as District and Parish Councils, landowners, developers and funders, can manage growth to enable residential and, importantly, commercial development in high tech sectors in the Science Vale area to progress, ensuring economic and jobs growth for residents of Oxfordshire.
28. To support delivery of the HIF1 Scheme, Cabinet has previously authorised (23<sup>rd</sup> April 2019) assembling the necessary land to support the Scheme, including exercising compulsory purchase powers where necessary in the event that the land cannot be acquired by negotiation, along with adding the HIF1 Scheme to the capital programme (15<sup>th</sup> October 2019). The initial funding agreement was signed with Homes England in late June 2020.
29. On 22<sup>nd</sup> June 2021, Cabinet approved the principle and preparation of the Compulsory Purchase Order, Side Roads Order and Bridge Scheme, with a requirement for formal approval for the making of the Compulsory Purchase Order, Side Roads Order and Bridge Scheme to be reported to Cabinet following the submission of the planning application for the Scheme.
30. Reports subsequently approved by Cabinet on 15<sup>th</sup> March 2022 and 21<sup>st</sup> June 2022 set out a revised funding package and delivery timeline for the Scheme.

#### Planning - Current Position

31. One single full planning application (Regulation 3 (Town and Country Planning General Regulations 1992) Development) was submitted and subsequently

validated in November 2021 (application reference R3.0138/21) for the HIF1 Scheme. Determination is targeted for September 2022.

## Explanation of Statutory Powers

32. The Council is the Local Highways Authority (the “LHA”) for the area in which the Order Land is situated. By virtue of Sections 239, 240, 246, 250 and 260 of the Highways Act 1980 (as amended) and Schedule 3 to the Acquisition of Land Act 1981, the Council has the power to acquire compulsorily any land in its area for highway purposes.
33. The Guidance published by the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities (latest version - July 2019) (“the Guidance”) provides updated guidance on the use of compulsory purchase powers. In accordance with the Guidance, the purpose for which an authority seeks to acquire land will determine the statutory power under which compulsory purchase is sought. The Guidance advises that acquiring authorities should look to use *‘the most specific power available for the purpose in mind, and only use a general power where unavoidable’*. The Council relies on the provisions of Part XII of the Highways Act 1980, which provide the specific powers in respect of the compulsory acquisition of land for highway purposes.
34. The Council has been seeking to negotiate the acquisition of all of the legal interests in the land required for the construction of the HIF1 Scheme by agreement and has been successful in agreeing terms for the acquisition of some parts of the land. The Council does, however, need to utilise its powers under the Highways Act 1980 (as amended) and the Acquisition of Land Act 1981 because it considers that it may not be possible to agree terms for the acquisition of all the remaining interests in the land required to facilitate construction of the Scheme. In accordance with Guidance, the Council is therefore using its powers to compulsorily acquire the remaining interests as a matter of last resort, with efforts to acquire interests by private treaty continuing in parallel with this process right up to confirmation and implementation of the CPO.
35. The CPO also incorporates Parts II and III of Schedule 2 to the Acquisition of Land Act 1981, as applied by Section 3 of that Act, commonly referred to as the Mining Code. By virtue of these provisions, the CPO does not seek to compulsorily acquire mineral interests in the Order Land.
36. Paragraphs 201 and 202 of the Guidance state that the Mining Code should not be incorporated automatically or indiscriminately, as this may lead to the sterilisation of minerals, including coal reserves. Acquiring authorities are asked to consider the matter carefully before including the Mining Code, having regard to the existence of statutory rights of compensation or whether repair might provide an adequate remedy in the event of damage to land, buildings or works occasioned by mining subsidence.

37. Incorporation of the Mining Code within an order, thereby engaging Parts II and III of Schedule 2 to the Acquisition of Land Act 1981, provides for the exclusion of mineral right acquisition from the CPO, avoiding sterilisation of the minerals whilst providing a degree of protection for the Acquiring Authority and allowing the Scheme to be taken forward. By incorporating the Mining Code, the Acquiring Authority can take steps to prevent the working of minerals within a specified distance of the surface, provided compensation is paid.
38. The Acquiring Authority has investigated mines and minerals with the County Council's Waste and Mineral Planning Team. It has been confirmed that the majority of workable minerals in the vicinity of the HIF1 Scheme have already been worked or that, where workable minerals exist, the HIF1 Scheme will not impact their ability to be worked in the future. The exception to this relates to the Clifton Hampden Bypass element of the Scheme. Permission to work minerals in this area has been denied by the Mineral Planning Authority ("MPA") twice within the last 15 years, largely as a result of significant objection by local residents. It is considered by the Acquiring Authority that the likelihood of minerals being extracted north of the A415 is very low, due to the area being relatively built up, particularly the Centre of the UK Atomic Energy facility, and due to the water treatment facility being within close proximity.
39. The Acquiring Authority has had regard to the discussions with the MPA and the advice contained in the Guidance in preparing the Order, and considers that in the circumstances of this case, where compensation and repair of damage would not be adequate in view of the public use and nature of the Scheme, together with the potential traffic implications and disruption that might occur if the mines and minerals within the Order Land were to be worked and such damage were to occur, it is appropriate to incorporate the Mining Code to sever from the Order Land the mineral rights that may exist below the land.
40. Having regard to the nature of the proposals and the advice set out in the Guidance, Cabinet is advised that the powers available to it under Sections 239, 240, 246, 250 and 260 of the Highways Act 1980 (as amended), and Section 3, Parts II and III of Schedule 2, and Schedule 3 to the Acquisition of Land Act 1981 are the most appropriate powers to use in order to achieve its objectives for this part of Oxfordshire.
41. Pursuant to Section 106(3) of the Highways Act 1980, the Bridge Scheme will authorise the construction of a new bridge across the River Thames, being a navigable waterway. Without the Bridge Scheme, construction that has an impact on rights of navigation would not be permitted. This Bridge Scheme is in addition to needing to secure the acquisition of the airspace where the bridge structure will be constructed, the land where any bridge supports sit and the acquisition of new rights as required to maintain and repair the bridge structure in the future (together with other such rights as may be necessary).
42. Pursuant to Sections 14 and 125 of the Highways Act 1980, the SRO will authorise the stopping-up, amendment, diversion, improvement and creation of new lengths of highway or reclassification of existing highways, along with providing for the stopping up and reprovision of private means of access. The

CPO will include land that is required to enable the works authorised by the SRO to be carried out. The SRO gives authority to the CPO and the CPO cannot, therefore, be made without the SRO having first been made (i.e., sealed and executed by the Council), though this will happen immediately consecutively.

43. A recommendation to this report seeks delegation to officers to amend the Orders. These amendments will be limited to technical clarifications, noting that no additional land or land interests will be included in excess of the total of those defined in the CPO before Members for approval. This ability to modify is required to ensure that the Orders are accurate in advance of them being made following Cabinet approval. The SRO specifically will be further reviewed to ensure consistency across all four elements of the Scheme relating to how private means of access are treated, alongside those rights secured via the CPO. As a result, additional elements may be included in the SRO but all parties that currently benefit from a private means of access will continue to do so (whether by provision of a new means of access under the SRO, or because another reasonably convenient means of access is already available) following construction of the Scheme.

## **Location and Description of Order Land**

44. Details of the land interests to be acquired are set out in the Schedule to the Order and are shown shaded in pink on the Map. The land where new rights under recommendation 1 of this report are sought is shaded blue on the Map. It should be noted that in respect of those plots where new rights are to be acquired (shaded blue), a cautious view has been taken at this stage. Currently, the CPO provides for all rights listed in the CPO to be acquired over each of these rights plots, to ensure that no rights are missed. However, the rights to be included for each rights plot will be refined and reduced as necessary prior to the making of the CPO, to ensure that only those rights that are specifically required are included. As such, the plots of land impacted will only be subject to a reduction in new rights to be acquired rather than an increase.
45. The Order Land is located within the boundaries of the South Oxfordshire District Council and Vale of the White Horse District Council.
46. The Order Land generally falls in four sections aligned to the four elements of the Scheme:
- The dualling of the A4130 carriageway (A4130 Widening) from the Milton Gate Junction eastwards, including the construction of three roundabouts;
  - A road bridge over the Great Western Mainline (Didcot Science Bridge) and realignment of the A4130 north east of the proposed road bridge, including the relocation of a lagoon;
  - Construction of a new road between Didcot and Culham (Didcot to Culham River Crossing), including the construction of three roundabouts, a road bridge over the Appleford railway sidings and road bridge over the River Thames; and

- Construction of a new road between the B4015 and A415 (Clifton Hampden bypass), including the provision of one roundabout and associated junctions.
47. The draft Joint Statement of Reasons accompanying the CPO, SRO and Bridge Scheme contains a more detailed analysis of the Order Land and of current land uses to be found within the Order Land. The CPO, Order Map and Order Schedule will identify all of the land.

## **The Need for and Benefits of the Scheme**

48. A detailed rationale behind the need for the HIF1 Scheme was set out within the report to Cabinet in June 2021 (2021/052).
49. The reasons can be described as follows:

### Existing Highway Network Performance

50. The highway network currently suffers from severe congestion at key parts of the highway network including the impact of local growth on the strategic road network (A34). The severance effects of the Great Western Mainline Railway and the River Thames results in significant traffic flows and associated queues through historic parishes due to limited route choice to key destinations.

### Active Travel

51. The highway network has an absence of direct, coherent and safe cycling and walking network. Connectivity and accessibility between areas of high housing growth and employment growth provides a barrier to active travel modes.

### Public Transport

52. The area currently has an absence of good quality, reliable and frequent bus services due to the existing congestion between settlements. Due to poor journey time reliability bus operators are unable to run frequent services which in turn discourages bus patronage and bus service viability.

### Network Resilience and Safety Improvements

53. The existing bridges over the River Thames at Clifton Hampden and Culham are located within Flood Zone 3. In February 2021, both the existing bridges over the River Thames at Clifton Hampden and Culham were closed due to flooding, requiring long diversion routes and resulting in a negative impact on other areas of the highway network. Greater resilience is, therefore, required on the network through the provision of alternative routes through this important employment and residential area.
54. In addition, road safety improvements are required given the historic and constrained nature of the current highway network. The highway network is

not designed to current horizontal or vertical design standards and provides poor substandard walking and cycling infrastructure.

#### Delivery of Housing and Employment Growth

55. The current severely congested road network is unable to accommodate the significant housing growth allocated in Local Plans in the area. This severe congestion has resulted in highway objections to major and minor residential planning applications in the area.
56. In addition to the housing growth, the current highway network is also unable to support economic development and employment growth. This has resulted in highway objections to commercial development in a local area that is identified as a significant growth area for local, national and international enterprise.
57. The significant upfront costs of the infrastructure have resulted in viability issues for private developers. In addition, the need for third party land (which is not necessarily attainable by private developers), has determined that it is only public sector organisations that are able to deliver such complex and high value infrastructure.
58. A detailed analysis and consideration of the policy context is found in the draft Joint Statement of Reasons, contained at Annex A.

### **Planning Policy Considerations**

59. In making the Orders, it is relevant to have regard to national planning policy, the Development Plan and other local policy and guidance, together with other material considerations.
60. The relevant national planning policy is contained in the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) and the relevant Development Plan comprises the Vale of White Horse Local Plan 2031 Part 1 and Part 2 (adopted) and the South Oxfordshire Local Plan 2035 (adopted).
61. A detailed analysis and consideration of the policy context can be found in the draft Joint Statement of Reasons, attached at Annex A.
62. The Secretary of State for Transport adopts a practice of not confirming statutory orders until such time as planning permission for the scheme being advanced has been secured. As such, the CPO, SRO and Bridge Scheme are highly unlikely to be confirmed by the Secretary of State for Transport until such time as planning permission for the Scheme has been granted. It is anticipated that planning permission for the Scheme will be granted in September 2022.

### **Legal Implications – The Need for Use of Statutory Powers**

63. The following paragraphs set out at a high level the key aspects of using the compulsory purchase order powers.

## The Compelling Case in the Public Interest

64. Paragraph 2 of the Department of Levelling Up, Housing and Communities CPO Guidance advises that a compulsory purchase order should only be made where there is a compelling case in the public interest. The Scheme will provide numerous and substantial benefits to the public, which are summarised below and which provide a compelling case in the public interest for the acquisition of the Order Land:

- The need for the Scheme is summarised below and detailed in Section 3 Need for the Scheme in the draft Statement of Reasons;
  - Existing Highway Network Performance.
  - Active Travel.
  - Public Transport.
  - Network Resilience and Safety Improvements.
  - Delivery of Housing and Employment Growth.
  
- The benefits of the Scheme are summarised below and set out and explained in Section 5 'Meeting the Scheme Objectives and the Benefits of the Scheme' in the draft Statement of Reasons;
  - Reduce congestion and provide capacity on the arterial routes within Didcot.
  - Enable modal shift across the Science Vale.
  - Improve accessibility across the River Thames and the Great Western Main Line in Didcot.
  - Improve resilience of the transport network, including safety enhancements, which will respond to future uncertainties and opportunities.
  - Enable sustainable growth within the Science Vale.
  - Ensure the Science Vale remains a world-leading research location.
  
- The lack of more appropriate alternative for meeting the objectives of the Scheme are summarised below and set out and explained in Section 6 Alternatives to the Scheme in the Statement of Reasons;
  - The rigorous scheme selection process that the Council has undertaken and its robust approach to ensuring an appropriate range of options have been identified, consulted, refined, and evaluated against available information in coming to the decision that the Scheme is the most appropriate solution to meet the need and objectives.
  - Identification of the preferred scheme option has been progressed in line with Department for Transport WebTag guidance.
  - An Option Appraisal Report (OAR) Part Two was produced and submitted as part of the planning application and includes more detail on the alternatives and optioning process

- The scheme is the most suitable and appropriate means of meeting the identified objectives, with Oxfordshire County Council Cabinet resolving to approve the preferred scheme alignment on 21 July 2020.
- The planning policy support for the scheme is summarised below and set out and explained in Section 8 of the draft Statement of Reasons; and
  - The Scheme is deemed as essential to deliver future growth as identified within the adopted Local Plans for both South Oxfordshire District Council and Vale of White Horse District Council and is also identified in the Science Vale Area Strategy forming part of the Councils Local Transport Plan 4.
  - The Scheme also supports the mitigation of the transport impacts of the planned developments on the road network. Its design has been informed by a detailed environmental assessment as set out within the Environmental Statement submitted in support of this application. This includes consideration of flood risk, heritage, biodiversity and landscape among many other key topic areas.
  - On 2 November 2021, a planning application submitted by Oxfordshire County Council (the Applicant) for the Scheme was validated by Local Planning Authority (Oxfordshire County Council as the determining authority) for the Scheme under application reference R3.0138/21 (the Application).
- Section 10 ‘Compulsory Purchase Justification’ of the draft Statement of Reasons sets out and explain why it is necessary for the Council to be granted compulsory purchase powers in order to secure the timely implementation of the scheme.

#### Appropriateness of Powers

65. The Scheme is a highways scheme and, as such, the Council has statutory powers available for the compulsory acquisition of land and rights to facilitate the Scheme in Part XII of the Highways Act, which are considered to be the most appropriate powers under which to exercise the Council’s powers of compulsory acquisition.

#### Need for Compulsory Acquisition

66. The Council has made and will continue to make reasonable efforts to acquire all necessary interests in and rights over land required to deliver the Scheme (and will continue to do so in parallel to the compulsory purchase process) but it recognises that it may not be possible to agree terms for the acquisition of all the remaining interests. The acquisition of all relevant interests is necessary to enable the delivery of the Scheme.

#### Public Interest Test

67. The Guidance advises that a compulsory purchase order should only be made where there is a compelling case in the public interest. Members should satisfy themselves in approving this report that this requirement is satisfied and that the public benefits of the Scheme outweigh the interference with private rights. Officers consider that the benefits summarised in this report and in the draft Joint Statement of Reasons provide a compelling case in the public interest, which justifies the compulsory acquisition of the Order Land.

#### Statutory Blight

68. In progressing the HIF1 Scheme, the Council could be required to deal with issues of Statutory Blight pursuant to Part VI, Chapter II and Schedule 13 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended). Statutory Blight affects those properties that are 'on-line' of the Scheme and their purchase (or part thereof) is required for the Scheme. A process for dealing with Statutory Blight notices is essential to ensure effective management of the Scheme and this has been established. Officers will manage the process and, with legal advice provided by already appointed specialist solicitors, will liaise with land and property owners with the aim of reaching an agreement for acquisition where the statutory criteria have been met.
69. Statutory Blight is a consequence of legislative 'triggers', one being the approval by the Council of the preferred route. As Cabinet has already approved this in July 2020, the Council became liable for members of the public submitting a Statutory Blight claim in relation to any qualifying land interest and subject to meeting the statutory requirements for eligibility.
70. Based on external property and legal advice, officers are advised that the HIF 1 Scheme potentially affects a very small number of properties where there is a threat of Statutory Blight and its estimated costs are included in the budget. A successful Statutory Blight notice results in the property being acquired as if it was pursuant to a compulsory purchase order and so there are heads of claim that parties will be entitled to outside of the market value of the property itself.
71. The Council can recover all valid costs in relation to property acquisition required to deliver the Scheme via the Homes England funding agreement (GDA). This includes Statutory Blight.
72. Wider impacts of the Scheme on business and residential property that is off-line of the Scheme will be dealt with under Part 1 of the Land and Compensation Act 1973 ('Part 1 Claims'). A Part 1 claim can be applied for one year and one day following the Scheme being opened to the public and covers claims relating to noise, vibration, smell, fumes, smoke, artificial lighting and discharge of water or other substances as a result of the use of the Scheme.

These legal implications have been reviewed by TLT LLP as the Council's appointed legal advisors. TLT has reviewed an earlier version of the CPO (including Order Schedule), CPO Maps, SRO and SRO Plans but has not reviewed the documentation presented to Cabinet. All documentation will require a final legal review before making the Orders.

Comments checked by:

Jayne Pringle, Interim Principal Solicitor, [jayne.pringle@oxfordshire.gov.uk](mailto:jayne.pringle@oxfordshire.gov.uk)

## Consideration of Human Rights

73. The following articles of the Convention are relevant to the determination as to whether the Orders should be made:
- i) Article 1 of the First Protocol protects the right of everyone to peaceful enjoyment of possessions. No one can be deprived of their possessions except in the public interest and subject to the relevant national and international laws. Any interference with possessions must be proportionate and, in determining whether a particular measure is proportionate, a fair balance must be struck between the public benefit sought and the interference with the rights in question;
  - ii) Article 6 entitles those affected by the powers sought in the Orders to a fair and public hearing by an independent and impartial tribunal;
  - iii) Article 8 protects the right of the individual to respect for his private and family life, his home and his correspondence. A public authority cannot interfere with these interests unless such interference is in accordance with the law and is necessary in the interests of, inter alia, national security, public safety or the economic wellbeing of the country.
74. The Guidance explains that a compulsory purchase order should only be made where there is “a compelling case in the public interest”. The Guidance makes it clear that an acquiring authority should be sure that the purposes for which it is making a compulsory purchase order sufficiently justify interfering with the human rights of those with an interest in the land affected. In making this assessment, an acquiring authority should have regard, in particular, to the provisions of Article 1 of the First Protocol and Article 6 of the Convention and, in the case of a dwelling, Article 8 of the Convention. These are summarised and considered in detail in the draft Joint Statement of Reasons.
75. In considering the justification for the CPO, the SRO and the Bridge Scheme, careful consideration has been given by officers to the balance to be struck between the effect of acquisition on individual rights and the wider public interest in the delivery of the Scheme. The compulsory acquisition of land and rights is required in order to deliver the Scheme. Interference with Convention rights is considered to be proportionate and justified in order to secure the construction of the Scheme and its associated benefits.

## Financial Implications

76. The total scheme cost to completion is **£296.155m**.

77. The breakdown of the funding package for the scheme is set out within Table 1 (as previously reported to Cabinet in March 2022 (ref 2021/221)). The project is substantially funded by Housing Infrastructure Fund grant to a capped value of **£239.816m** (the sum of the two Housing Infrastructure Grant figures in Table 1) and, following the approval of the recommendations as set out in the report to Cabinet in March 2022 and June 2022 (2022/045), a Deed of Variation to the Grant Determination Agreement (GDA) with Homes England will now be entered in to.
78. The remaining funding has been secured from the Council's capital programme and Section 106 developer contributions. As noted in Paragraph 7, some of the Section 106 contributions are secured, and others are underwritten by the Council. There is no guarantee of recovery of non-secure Section 106 contributions.

Table 1 – Revised Funding Summary

<b>Source</b>	<b>Value (£'000)</b>
Housing Infrastructure Fund Grant	239,816
Oxfordshire Local Enterprise Partnership	10,000*
Council Capital Borrowing	29,897
S106 Developer Contributions	16,442
<b>Total</b>	<b>296,155</b>

\*secured against future business rates retention and forward funded by Council as part of approved capital programme

79. The risks associated with scheme delivery, including Statutory Blight, are underwritten by a **£52.251m** quantified risk and contingency fund, which is accounted for within the overall forecast budget of £296.155m.
80. Inflation is considered and calculated against the prevailing market indices and the revised delivery programme. This equates to **£26.653m** across the programme and is also accounted for within the overall forecast budget of £296.155m.
81. The current spend profile indicates that the total of the HIF grants would be drawn down in full first, with any additional financial contributions to the scheme backloaded to the latter stages of delivery. Therefore, spend on any additional contributions is anticipated to commence in 2025 onwards.

Comments checked by:

Rob Finlayson, Finance business Partner, [rob.finlayson@oxfordshire.gov.uk](mailto:rob.finlayson@oxfordshire.gov.uk)

## **Equality & Inclusion Implications**

82. The equalities implications of the HIF1 Scheme have been assessed robustly through the design development stages of the Scheme and in reaching the preferred option. These equalities implications have been considered in line

with the Equality Act 2010 through the completion of an Equality Impact Assessment (EqIA), April 22, contained as an Annex to the draft Joint Statement of Reasons.

83. The Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED), to which the County Council is also subject, places additional obligations on public sector bodies to eliminate discrimination, advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations. Recognising and complying with these higher standards is required to discharge the PSED. In particular, steps must be taken to meet the needs of persons who share a relevant protected characteristic that are different from the needs of persons who do not share that characteristic.
84. Work towards this has already taken the form of considering the safety of all pedestrians, cyclists, and horse-riders through a Walking, Cycling and Horse-Riding Assessment & Review, which has formed part of the information presented at planning.
85. Reviewing the EqIA and the County Council's PSED will be a continuous process throughout the subsequent stages of scheme development.

## **Sustainability Implications**

86. The HIF1 Scheme is designed to promote sustainable modes of travel for access into and around Didcot by commuting traffic by modal shift away from the private vehicle and on to public transport or by walking and cycling. High-quality pedestrian and cycling infrastructure will be provided along the full length of the Scheme, with new routes setting the conditions for new bus services between Oxford, Culham, Didcot and Harwell. In reducing traffic congestion levels, this has positive impacts on air quality and carbon emissions, especially in local villages such as Sutton Courtenay, Appleford, Long Wittenham, Clifton Hampden and Burcot.
87. Similar to the above, the successful delivery of the Scheme will form a core part of the promotion and early enabling the use of more sustainable forms of travel for the existing and new developments (new homes and employment) planned for the Didcot area. This will be coupled with promotional activities to achieve the cultural shift required. The HIF1 Scheme funds the essential infrastructure that would have been required from development sites to mitigate harm and will, therefore, enable developments to concentrate their resources on sustainable travel modes to/from their sites as primary mitigation.
88. The Scheme has been developed to be as sustainable as possible in terms of its impact on the environment by using the likes of sustainable urban drainage systems as a core part of its design development to date, non-statutory 10% biodiversity net gain provisions and appropriate levels of flood compensation.
89. During the next stages of Scheme delivery, there will be specific sustainability targets imposed on the design and build contractor with the likes of re-use of

site-won materials as an example of how additional temporary environmental impacts during construction will be reduced.

## **Risk Management**

90. Key risks to Scheme delivery and their relevant mitigation and management were discussed in detail within the report to March 2022 Cabinet, as listed within the background papers. A detailed risk register is being maintained.
91. These risks, particularly those relating to property acquisition are still relevant and are being mitigated by the progress that has been made in relation to land purchase and the potential to CPO if necessary.
92. The risks will be managed and monitored on an ongoing basis as part of the overall governance of the Scheme.

## **Consultations**

93. A series of public consultations have been undertaken over the course of the Scheme development, notably (but not restricted to) engagement events in November 2018 and March/April 2020. The first public consultation took place between Friday 2 November and Sunday 25 November 2018, via in-person and online consultation. Two public exhibitions took place on Wednesday 7 November at the Didcot Civic Hall and Saturday 17 November at the Cornerstone, both in Didcot. Approximately 300 people attended the public exhibitions. Following the 2018 public consultation, the designs for each section of the Scheme were developed further and a second consultation took place between Friday 20 March and Thursday 30 April 2020. The consultation was originally planned to last four weeks, which is the required duration for a non-statutory consultation. However, as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic and national social distancing guidance, this duration was extended to six weeks to allow people more time to respond. In total, 686 consultation responses were received.
94. Frequent engagement meetings (both in person and virtually) have also been undertaken with elected representatives relevant to the Scheme, landowners, developers and key relevant statutory consultees since July 2021. Formal responses have been received during the statutory planning application consultation, which officially ended in December 2021, however statutory consultee responses are still being considered.
95. The Consultation Response Report was included within the report to Cabinet in June 2021, now listed as a background paper.
96. A detailed consideration of the consultation undertaken to inform the Scheme can be found in the draft Joint Statement of Reasons, attached at Annex A.

Owen Jenkins  
Director of Transport and Infrastructure

Annexes:

Annex A – Draft Joint Statement of Reasons  
Annex B – Draft CPO, draft Order Map, draft SRO and draft SRO Plans  
Annex C – Draft Bridging Scheme plan

Background papers:

Cabinet report – July 2020 – FP 2020/043: Didcot Garden Town Housing Infrastructure Fund – Preferred Alignment

Cabinet report – June 2021 – FP 2021/052: Didcot Garden Town Housing Infrastructure Fund – In Principle Use of Statutory Powers

Cabinet report – March 2022 – FP 2021/221: Didcot Garden Town Housing Infrastructure Fund – Amendment to Grant Determination Agreement

Cabinet report – June 2022 – FP 2022/045: Didcot Garden Town Housing Infrastructure Fund (HIF) Revised Grant Determination Agreement

Contact Officer: Shamoon Ahmed, Programme Lead,  
[shamoon.ahmed@oxfordshire.gov.uk](mailto:shamoon.ahmed@oxfordshire.gov.uk)

July 2022

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Division(s): N/A
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## CABINET – 19 JULY 2022

### DELEGATED POWERS – QUARTERLY REPORT

Report by the Director of Law & Governance

#### RECOMMENDATION

1. **Cabinet is RECOMMENDED to note the executive decisions taken under delegated powers, set out in paragraph 4.**

#### Executive Summary

2. Under the Scheme of Delegation in the Council’s Constitution (Part 7.1, paragraph 6.3 (c)(i)), the Chief Executive is authorised to undertake an executive function on behalf of the Cabinet. Cabinet receives a quarterly report on the use of this delegated power in relation to such executive decisions; that is, decisions that might otherwise have been taken by Cabinet.
3. This report refers to executive decisions taken during the period July to September 2021 inclusive.

#### Executive decisions – April to June 2022

4. The following executive decisions were taken during this period:

Date	Subject	Decision	Reason
21 April 2022	Works at Grove Airfield Primary School 1 (now named St John’s Primary Academy)	Approved an exemption from tendering under Contract Procedure Rule (“CPR”) 20 in respect of additional works due to an enhanced scheme design Grove Airfield School.	Persimmon competitively tendered for the main works and it has been determined that it is more cost effective and a better option for buildability and space management for the developer to undertake the additional work. To ensure the September 2023 date can be achieved, and the school delivered by the agreed date of June 2023, the contract needs to be awarded by 22 April 2022.
27 April 2022	Contract for domestic abuse services	Approved an exemption from the Contract Procedure Rules to	It will allow time for a new procurement process to be planned

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Date	Subject	Decision	Reason
		award a 2-year contract commencing April 2021 to A2Dominion to enable the delivery of additional, dedicated emergency safe accommodation and support services to people from minoritized populations, experiencing disadvantage from domestic abuse, whose needs cannot fully be met within the existing service provision.	and carried out during 2022, while essential service provision for vulnerable people affected by domestic abuse can continue in line with the statutory requirements for OCC. There are economies and efficiencies that can be realised with A2D providing the additional services in terms of established infrastructure, management supervision, wider team skills and expertise with A2D. If a different contractor were used, these economies would be lost. This new contract will deliver services covered by the light touch regime and is under the light touch regime threshold of £552,950 excluding VAT.
19 May 2022	2-year contract to Reducing the Risk	Approved an exemption from tendering under Contract Procedure Rule ("CPR") 20 to award a 2-year contract to Reducing the Risk.	This will enable the delivery of additional capacity for Specialist Independent Domestic Violence Advisors (IDVAS) and OSCB training delivery to support high risk victim-survivors and their children in Oxfordshire.
8 June 2022	Oxfordshire Plan Growth Needs Assessment	Approved an exemption from tendering under Contract Procedure Rule ("CPR") 20 to commission an updated Growth Needs Assessment to take into account up to date data such as census information, updated information on the economic effects of Covid-19 and to respond	All previous evidence for the earlier report was undertaken by Cambridge Econometrics and they are able to use existing work from the earlier study to inform the update. CE already have a detailed understanding of the evidence and the local

## CA18

Date	Subject	Decision	Reason
		to public representations on the July 2021 report. The new report will provide information on affordable housing need and housing types building on existing information and will update the original report.	Oxfordshire context. An internal peer review of the existing final report has been undertaken and it has been determined that the fundamental methodology is sound. No new areas of work that differ significantly from that specified in the original brief and contract are required at this time.

### Legal Implications

5. There are no legal implications arising from this report. It is a requirement of the Council's Constitution (Part 7.1, paragraph 6.3(c)(i)) that Cabinet receive a quarterly report on the use by the Chief Executive of executive functions. Each of the decisions reported were undertaken in the context of a legal appraisal.

### Financial Implications

6. There are no financial implications arising from the recommendations in this report. It is a procedural item reporting on decisions previously taken. Each of the decisions reported were undertaken in consultation with the Director of Finance.

#### **ANITA BRADLEY**

Director of Law & Governance

Background Papers: Nil

Contact Officers: Colm Ó Caomhánaigh, Committee Officer: 07393 001096

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Division(s): N/A

## CABINET – 19 July 2022

### FORWARD PLAN AND FUTURE BUSINESS

Items identified from the Forward Plan for Forthcoming Decision

**Cabinet, 20 September 2022**

Topic/Decision	Portfolio/Ref
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ <b>A40 Access to Witney - Compulsory Purchase Order and Side Road Orders</b> To seek approval of the Statement of Reasons and Orders Plans and approval to make the Compulsory Purchase and Side Road Orders.</li> </ul>	Cabinet, 2022/012 - Cabinet Member for Travel & Development Strategy
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ <b>Highways Asset Management Strategy &amp; Policy</b> To seek approval of the updated 2022-2027 Highways Asset Management Plan and new approach.</li> </ul>	Cabinet, 2021/236 - Cabinet Member for Highway Management
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ <b>Network Management Plan 2022-2027</b> To seek approval of the content of the Network Management Plan 2022-2027.</li> </ul>	Cabinet, 2021/238 - Cabinet Member for Highway Management
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ <b>Business Management &amp; Monitoring Report - June/July 2022</b> To note and seek agreement of the report.</li> </ul>	Cabinet, 2022/049 - Cabinet Member for Finance
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ <b>Treasury Management Quarterly Report</b> Cabinet is asked to note the report and recommend Council to note the council's treasury management activity for the first quarter of 2022/23.</li> </ul>	Cabinet, 2022/070 - Cabinet Member for Finance
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ <b>Workforce Report and Staffing Data - Quarter 1 - April to June 2022</b> Quarterly staffing report providing details of key people numbers and analysis of main changes since the previous report.</li> </ul>	Cabinet, 2022/050 - Cabinet Member for Corporate Services

**CABINET MEMBER MEETINGS****Cabinet Member for Highway Management, 8 September 2022**

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ <b>Abingdon and Oxford: Various sites</b> A decision is sought on proposed permanent school streets.</li> </ul>	Cabinet Member for Highway Management, 2022/083 - Cabinet Member for Highway Management
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ <b>Oxford: North Parade- proposed permanent access restrictions</b> A decision is sought on making permanent the provisions of an experimental traffic regulation order restricting access to the street.</li> </ul>	Cabinet Member for Highway Management, 2022/086 - Cabinet Member for Highway Management