



## ***Delegated Decisions by Cabinet Member for Finance***

***Friday, 13 December 2024 at 1.00 pm***

***Room 3 - County Hall, New Road, Oxford OX1 1ND***

If you wish to view proceedings, please click on this [Live Stream Link](#).  
However, that will not allow you to participate in the meeting.

### ***Items for Decision***

The items for decision under individual Cabinet Members' delegated powers are listed overleaf, with indicative timings, and the related reports are attached. Decisions taken will become effective at the end of the working day on Friday 20 November unless called in by that date for review by the appropriate Scrutiny Committee.

Copies of the reports are circulated (by e-mail) to all members of the County Council.

### **These proceedings are open to the public**

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Reeves".

Martin Reeves  
Chief Executive

December 2024

Committee Officer: **Democratic Services**  
[committeesdemocraticservices@oxfordshire.gov.uk](mailto:committeesdemocraticservices@oxfordshire.gov.uk)

Note: Date of next meeting: 10 January 2025

**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.**

## Items for Decision

### 1. Declarations of Interest

See guidance below.

### 2. 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 Member'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.

### 3. 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.*

*Requests to speak must be submitted by no later than 9am four working days before the meeting. Requests to speak should be sent to [committeesdemocraticservices@oxfordshire.gov.uk](mailto:committeesdemocraticservices@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 9 am 2 working days before the meeting. Written submissions should be no longer than 1 A4 sheet.*

### 4. Minutes of the Previous Meeting (Pages 1 - 2)

To agree the minutes of the meeting held on 8 November 2024 as a correct record.

### 5. Union Street Phase 1.5 & 2 - Refurbishment and Decarbonisation Project (Pages 3 - 42)

Cabinet Member: Finance

Forward Plan Ref: 2024/340

Contact: Michael Hawthorne, Project – Property and Assets

([Michael.Hawthorne@oxfordshire.gov.uk](mailto:Michael.Hawthorne@oxfordshire.gov.uk))

Report by Executive Director of Resources and Section 151 Officer **(CMD5)**

**The Cabinet Member is RECOMMENDED to:**

- a) Approve the release of funding greater than £1m for the provision of construction services to carry out upcoming design and construction works as part of the Phase 1.5 & 2 Asset Rationalisation Project at the Blackbird Leys Children and Family Centre, Union Street, Oxford.**
- b) Approve delegation of the authority to procure and award the contracts for the upcoming design, early works and construction works to the Director of Property & Assets in consultation with the Head of Legal and Deputy Monitoring Officer.**

## **Councillors declaring interests**

### **General duty**

You must declare any disclosable pecuniary interests when the meeting reaches the item on the agenda headed 'Declarations of Interest' or as soon as it becomes apparent to you.

### **What is a disclosable pecuniary interest?**

Disclosable pecuniary interests relate to your employment; sponsorship (i.e. payment for expenses incurred by you in carrying out your duties as a councillor or towards your election expenses); contracts; land in the Council's area; licenses for land in the Council's area; corporate tenancies; and securities. These declarations must be recorded in each councillor's Register of Interests which is publicly available on the Council's website.

Disclosable pecuniary interests that must be declared are not only those of the member her or himself but also those member's spouse, civil partner or person they are living with as husband or wife or as if they were civil partners.

### **Declaring an interest**

Where any matter disclosed in your Register of Interests is being considered at a meeting, you must declare that you have an interest. You should also disclose the nature as well as the existence of the interest. If you have a disclosable pecuniary interest, after having declared it at the meeting you must not participate in discussion or voting on the item and must withdraw from the meeting whilst the matter is discussed.

### **Members' Code of Conduct and public perception**

Even if you do not have a disclosable pecuniary interest in a matter, the Members' Code of Conduct says that a member 'must serve only the public interest and must never improperly confer an advantage or disadvantage on any person including yourself' and that 'you must not place yourself in situations where your honesty and integrity may be questioned'.

### **Members Code – Other registrable interests**

Where a matter arises at a meeting which directly relates to the financial interest or wellbeing of one of your other registerable interests then you must declare an interest. You must not participate in discussion or voting on the item and you must withdraw from the meeting whilst the matter is discussed.

Wellbeing can be described as a condition of contentedness, healthiness and happiness; anything that could be said to affect a person's quality of life, either positively or negatively, is likely to affect their wellbeing.

Other registrable interests include:

- a) Any unpaid directorships



- b) Any body of which you are a member or are in a position of general control or management and to which you are nominated or appointed by your authority.
- c) Any body (i) exercising functions of a public nature (ii) directed to charitable purposes or (iii) one of whose principal purposes includes the influence of public opinion or policy (including any political party or trade union) of which you are a member or in a position of general control or management.

### **Members Code – Non-registrable interests**

Where a matter arises at a meeting which directly relates to your financial interest or wellbeing (and does not fall under disclosable pecuniary interests), or the financial interest or wellbeing of a relative or close associate, you must declare the interest.

Where a matter arises at a meeting which affects your own financial interest or wellbeing, a financial interest or wellbeing of a relative or close associate or a financial interest or wellbeing of a body included under other registrable interests, then you must declare the interest.

In order to determine whether you can remain in the meeting after disclosing your interest the following test should be applied:

Where a matter affects the financial interest or well-being:

- a) to a greater extent than it affects the financial interests of the majority of inhabitants of the ward affected by the decision and;
- b) a reasonable member of the public knowing all the facts would believe that it would affect your view of the wider public interest.

You may speak on the matter only if members of the public are also allowed to speak at the meeting. Otherwise you must not take part in any discussion or vote on the matter and must not remain in the room unless you have been granted a dispensation.

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# Agenda Item 4

## DELEGATED DECISIONS BY CABINET MEMBER FOR FINANCE

**MINUTES** of the meeting held on Friday, 8 November 2024 commencing at 9.00 am.

**Present:**

**Voting Members:** Councillor Dan Levy – in the Chair

**Officers:** Mohamed Cassimjee (Democratic Services Officer),  
Henry White (Operational Manager- Assets and Investment)

*The Cabinet Member 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/the following additional documents:] and agreed as set out below. Copies of the agenda and reports [agenda, reports and schedule/additional documents] are attached to the signed Minutes.*

### **27 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST** (Agenda No. 1)

There were none

### **28 QUESTIONS FROM COUNTY COUNCILLORS** (Agenda No. 2)

There were none

### **29 PETITIONS AND PUBLIC ADDRESS** (Agenda No. 3)

There were none

### **30 MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING** (Agenda No. 4)

The minutes of the meeting held on 13 September 2024 were approved as a correct record.

## **DECISION ON OPTIONS FOR SITE SOUTH OF OXFORD CITY CENTRE - DEVELOPMENT AND DISPOSAL OF LAND NORTH OF IFFLEY VILLAGE, OXFORD**

(Agenda No. 5)

The Cabinet Member considered a report regarding land at Iffley which was a former playing field on the northern edge of Iffley Village, within the boundaries of Oxford City. The site was historically used as playing fields for the former St Augustine's School (now re-developed into housing). The site was used as a works compound for the building works at the neighbouring Iffley Academy and had been vacant since.

The former St Augustine's School site was redeveloped in 2008, and the site was identified by Oxford City Council as a potential housing site. At the time, the site was being looked at for alternative playing fields for a nearby school. When this need fell away in 2015/16 the site was promoted by OCC in response to Oxford City Council's Strategic Housing Land Assessment (SHLAA) and allocated for residential development in October 2016.

The site was placed on the disposals list and the decision was made to progress with an outline planning application for residential development. Following the Pre-Application process an application was submitted. When/if planning permission is achieved, the intention was for the land to be marketed for sale having already been declared surplus.

The Cabinet Member said that it was a site that had been identified by the City Council, as suitable for housing and that it is was a good initiative. However, he indicated that if the likely income was less than indicated, another decision would be required.

The Cabinet Member agreed to the recommendations in the report.

### **RESOLVED to:**

- a) approve, as a key decision, the freehold sale of land to the north of Iffley Village in Oxford in consideration of Oxfordshire County Council (OCC) receiving a capital receipt once planning permission has been granted.**
- b) delegate authority to the Executive Director of Resources and Section 151 Officer, in consultation with the Director of Property, to consider officer recommendations and agree the final purchaser and sale price.**

..... in the Chair

Date of signing .....

Divisions Affected – St Clement's and Cowley Marsh

## **DELEGATED DECISIONS BY CABINET MEMBER FOR FINANCE**

**13 December 2024**

### **Union Street Phase 1.5 & 2 Asset Rationalisation Programme (ARP)**

**Report by Executive Director of Resources and Section 151 Officer**

## **RECOMMENDATION**

The Cabinet Member is **RECOMMENDED** to

- a) **Approve the release of funding greater than £1m for the provision of construction services to carry out upcoming design and construction works as part of the Phase 1.5 & 2 Asset Rationalisation Project at the Blackbird Leys Children and Family Centre, Union Street, Oxford.**
- b) **Approve delegation of the authority to procure and award the contracts for the upcoming design, early works and construction works to the Director of Property & Assets in consultation with the Head of Legal and Deputy Monitoring Officer.**

## **Executive Summary**

1. This project will carry out the remaining work to relocate Children's Services staff workspace into the building on Union Street. The release of funds will allow the design and construction contracts to be let to complete these works. These contracts will comprise and pre-construction services agreement for the design element followed by a construction contract. The procurement of these contracts will be undertaken using the Procure Partnerships Framework; the specific lot being used is yet to be decided.
2. The Initial Business Case recommended for this project to be included in the Capital Programme, and was presented to Cabinet on 18<sup>th</sup> June 2024, with a budget of £1.45m; the anticipated Stage 3 (Construction) budget was set at £1.176m, therefore requires a Key Decision to be taken to allow the contract for the construction works to be let.
3. The project is partially funded by external grant money based on decarbonisation works within the building; programme is a key project restraint, so delegation of the authority to let the construction contract, together with the earlier contract for design and any required contract for early works is

recommended to be given to the Director of Property & Assets to ensure this can be achieved as efficiently as possible.

## **Project Context**

4. As part of the City Centre Accommodation Strategy, it was identified that 394 workspaces would be required across the OCC estate.
5. The Phase 1 alteration works at Union Street facilitated the staff move from Nash Court, and was completed in 2022. This phase captured modifications to the front of the Union Street building, and was prioritised due to the requirement to locate the Nash Court workforce onsite urgently. Therefore, the remaining works were split into Phase 1.5 & 2 to address the other two areas of the building.
6. The Phase 1.5 & 2 works will provide a permanent location for the Knights Court staff, who are temporarily located in these spaces awaiting the modernisation of the building. This is anticipated to generate in excess of 40 workspaces in the city, reducing the burden on other OCC sites such as Speedwell House
7. The number of workspaces required by Children's Services is estimated to be around 20-25, and so the remaining workspaces (15-20) can be allocated for agile working for OCC staff from other departments as required. There is also a collaboration space planned within the renovation to promote this approach.

## **Corporate Policies and Priorities**

8. This project aligns with a number of the Council's objectives as set out in the OCC Strategic Plan, such as:
  - (a) Put Action to address the climate emergency at the heart of our work
  - (b) Create opportunities for children and young people to reach their full potential
  - (c) Support carers and the social care system
  - (d) Prioritise the health and wellbeing of residents
9. The remodelling and decarbonisation elements of this project align with the Council's Property and Assets Strategy, as below:
  - (a) Facilitating service delivery
  - (b) Supporting Oxfordshire communities
  - (c) Decarbonising our corporate buildings
  - (d) Enabling agile working and rationalisation of the estate
10. These changes will also contribute to the Council's objectives to be a Place Shaper of Choice and an Employer of Choice.

## Financial Implications

11. The funding for this project has been agreed at the IBC stage; this consists of two primary funding sources, detailed below.

Asset Rationalisation Programme (OCC internal)	£0.919m
Property Decarbonisation Programme (OCC external)	£0.531m
Total Funding	£1.450m

12. As the decarbonisation grant money is externally funded, there are conditions which need to be met to receive the funds; this forms part of a wider agreement with the external funder across more than 25 sites within the OCC portfolio.
13. The external funding requirement for this project is to begin works onsite by the end of the current financial year (March 2025). This presents a significant challenge to the project, as there is substantial design work which needs to be completed before works can begin.
14. To mitigate this risk, the professional team have identified areas of work which can be completed at an early stage of construction, as part of the Pre-Construction Services Agreement with the contractor, in order to meet this funding requirement. An example of this is upgrading the electrical supply to the Phase 1.5 & 2 areas of the building to accommodate the additional mechanical kit being introduced as part of the decarbonisation works.

Comments checked by:

Drew Hodgson  
Strategic Finance Business Partner  
[Drew.Hodgson@oxfordshire.gov.uk](mailto:Drew.Hodgson@oxfordshire.gov.uk)

## Legal Implications

15. The procurement of the design and construction works is to follow what is known as a two-stage design and construction process. The contractor first enters into a contract known as a pre-construction services agreement with OCC to cover the first stage of undertaking the design and other preparatory activities such as tendering the necessary packages for the works phase. OCC then has the option to proceed to award a second contract to cover the construction phase of the works in the second stage. The second contract will be a design and build construction contract.
16. In addition, these contractual arrangements will need to be structured so as to allow OCC the option of instructing early works to be carried out during the first stage.

17. These contracts will be procured following a single competitive procurement process under a framework. Legal Services will support this process by advising on the suitability of the framework and advising on the procurement process and preparing suitable contract documentation.
18. The procurement of the contracts must be undertaken in compliance with procurement rules and OCC's Contract Procedure Rules.

Comments checked by: Jayne Pringle

Head of Law and Legal Business Partner (Contracts & Conveyancing)  
Law & Governance (Legal Services), [jayne.pringle@oxfordshire.gov.uk](mailto:jayne.pringle@oxfordshire.gov.uk)

## **Staff Implications**

19. The project budget includes allowance for internal staff costs from the relevant teams (Major Projects, Commercial, Legal etc.) to ensure the project is delivered to the required standards.

## **Equality & Inclusion Implications**

20. The project does not have any direct equality and inclusion implications; however, the internal remodelling planned within the works should provide better access around the building for those with mobility issues. These remodelling works will also provide a better layout for the public users of the building, which will have a positive impact on their experience as a whole.

## **Sustainability Implications**

21. While this decision does not have an impact on sustainability, the ability to let the contract in an efficient manner is imperative in order to meet the funding requirements set out in the external grant. There is a strong focus on decarbonisation throughout the building, which will improve the performance of the building long term.

## **Risk Management**

22. Risks will be managed by the Project Lead throughout the project. The key risk to the Council currently is the potential loss of funding if the external funding requirement is not met. This risk is more significant than the funding allocated for this project, as the entire grant (circa £3m) could be withdrawn if not achieved.



## Consultations

23. Children's Services have been consulted throughout the project to ensure the proposed building plans are fit for purpose.
24. The neighbouring school – East Oxford Primary School – have also been engaged to ensure they are aware of the planned works and to minimise disruption. The school and premises are owned and operated by OCC, so there are no external stakeholders to engage with.
25. No further consultation has been undertaken.

**Lorna Baxter**

**Executive Director of Resources and Section 151 Officer**

Annex: Nil.

Background papers: Nil.

Other Documents:  
OCC Strategic Plan 2022/23  
Property and Assets Strategy

Contact Officer: Michael Hawthorne, Project Lead (Major Projects, Property Services)  
[Michael.hawthorne@oxfordshire.gov.uk](mailto:Michael.hawthorne@oxfordshire.gov.uk)  
  
Chris Dyer, Operational Manager and Senior Project Lead (Major Projects, Property Services)  
[Chris.dyer@oxfordshire.gov.uk](mailto:Chris.dyer@oxfordshire.gov.uk)

[November 2024]

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# Strategic plan

## 2023 - 2025

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Leading positive change  
by working in partnership  
to make Oxfordshire  
a greener, fairer and  
healthier county.



**OXFORDSHIRE**  
COUNTY COUNCIL

# ABOUT THIS PLAN

Our strategic plan 2023 - 2025 sets out our vision to lead positive change by working in partnership to make Oxfordshire a greener, fairer and healthier county.

Oxfordshire is a county full of ideas, innovation, inspiration and an ambition to deliver. It is a great place to live, work, learn and raise a family.

The county has many strengths: it is home to world-class academic and research institutions; we have one of the strongest economies in the UK, with over 400,000 jobs and 30,000 businesses; and our vibrant rural and urban communities are supported by an active voluntary and community sector. These make Oxfordshire a very special place.

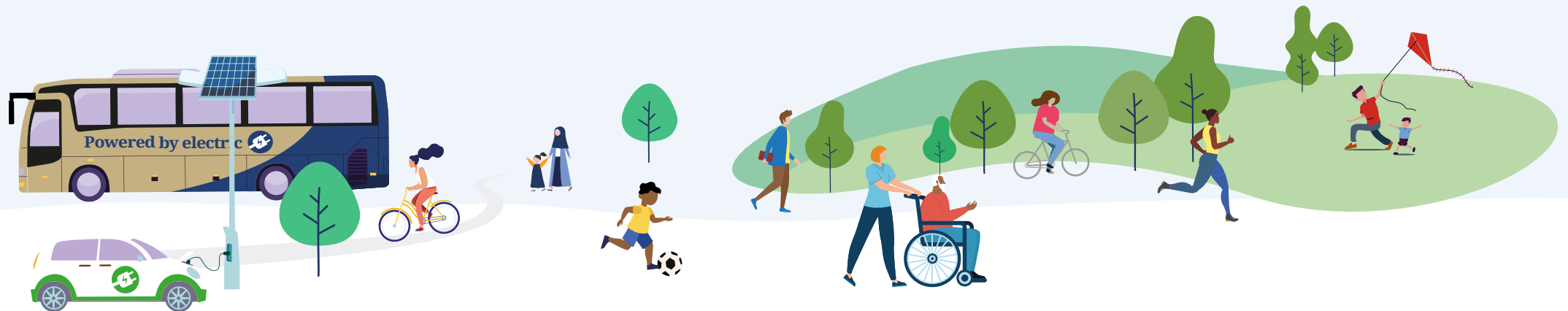
However, the county does face challenges, which our strategic plan needs to address. It has a growing population, which puts pressures on our services. Oxfordshire's population grew by 71,500 (10.9 per cent) since the last census in 2011, when it stood at 653,800 residents. This level of increase was above the growth seen across England (6.6 per cent).

Between now and 2030, Oxfordshire's population is expected to rise from 725,300 to 853,500 residents.

Oxfordshire's strong economy has also led to it becoming one of the most expensive places to live in the country. There is a shortage of affordable and social housing, and the growth in population has led to increasing congestion on our roads. The county includes ten neighbourhoods that fall within the 20 per cent most deprived in England.

We want to make sure that everyone in Oxfordshire can take full advantage of what the county has to offer. Our strategic plan sets out our vision and the nine cross-cutting priorities that we are committed to, and describes how we will deliver them.

A separate measures framework accompanies our strategic plan to help monitor and measure our progress. Both will be reviewed on an annual basis to ensure we are continuing to meet the needs of our residents.





## LEADER'S FOREWORD

We want to make sure that everyone in Oxfordshire can take advantage of the opportunities that our vibrant, diverse and innovative county has to offer.

We have a vision to lead positive change by working in partnership to make Oxfordshire a greener, fairer and healthier county. This means working closely with our residents, partners and wider communities to make Oxfordshire the very best place it can be. Our vision for the county is centred around strong local communities, healthy places to live, and a zero-carbon economy that benefits everyone. Oxfordshire is a place focused on equality and inclusivity – it has to work for everyone.

Tackling climate change underpins all we do. The climate emergency is the biggest challenge the planet faces and we are committed to not only reaching our own net zero target as a council by 2030 but to enabling Oxfordshire to be carbon neutral by 2050 at the latest.

Investing in an inclusive, integrated and sustainable transport network is also key to driving climate action and tackling inequality. We understand that cars still have a role to play in our transport system, but we want to make it quicker, cheaper and safer for residents across the county to leave their cars at home and travel actively by walking or cycling or by using alternative sustainable modes of transport, such as buses. This will make our streets cleaner, safer, and less congested and help those who need to use cars to make their essential journeys.

We are focused on tackling inequality and disadvantage; working with our partners locally and speaking up for Oxfordshire nationally; investing in people; using our resources wisely; and being inclusive and open.

Including everyone means providing inclusive services with equal access for all; working with communities to tackle disadvantage, inequality, public health and care issues; and providing an inclusive workplace with equality of opportunity. We want to enable people across the county to be happy, healthy, safe and successful, from getting the best start in life to ageing well and remaining as independent as possible for as long as possible.

We also want to ensure that our decision-making process is inclusive and open to scrutiny. We are making it easier for communities to make their views known on the issues that matter to them so that as many voices as possible are heard.

This strategic plan is by no means the end of the process – it is just the beginning. We will review it annually, including our supporting policies, service plans and ways of working, to ensure that we deliver our priorities in line with our principles and the needs of our residents.

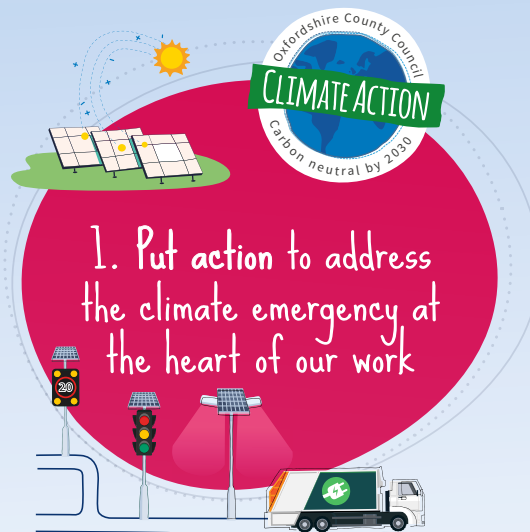
With our ambitious plans for climate action and tackling inequality, change is inevitable, which will mean doing things differently. That is why we need to build the foundations for positive change and action by working closely with our partners and our residents. This will enable us not only to protect the Oxfordshire that we all love, but to provide the greatest opportunities possible for every resident to live their best life.

**Councillor Liz Leffman**  
**Leader of Oxfordshire County Council**

# OUR NINE PRIORITIES

## Our vision:

To lead positive change by working in partnership to make Oxfordshire a greener, fairer and healthier county.



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3. Prioritise the health and wellbeing of residents

This graphic features a central teal circle with the text '3. Prioritise the health and wellbeing of residents'. Above the circle is an illustration of a person riding a bicycle. To the right is an illustration of a woman walking with a child and carrying a shopping bag.

4. Support carers and the social care system

This graphic features a central purple circle with the text '4. Support carers and the social care system'. Above the circle is an illustration of a person pushing a person in a wheelchair. Below the circle is an illustration of two people sitting on a bench.

5. Invest in an inclusive, integrated and sustainable transport network

This graphic features a central pink circle with the text '5. Invest in an inclusive, integrated and sustainable transport network'. Above the circle is an illustration of a green bicycle parked at a charging station. Below the circle is an illustration of a blue and white bus with the text 'Powered by electric'.

6. Preserve and improve access to nature and green spaces

This graphic features a central green circle with the text '6. Preserve and improve access to nature and green spaces'. Above the circle is an illustration of a bird perched on a branch. To the right is an illustration of a tree. Below the circle is an illustration of two children playing in a park.

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

This graphic features a central dark green circle with the text '7. Create opportunities for children and young people to reach their full potential'. Above the circle is an illustration of a group of children standing together. Below the circle is an illustration of a woman pushing a stroller.

8. Play our part in a vibrant and participatory local democracy

This graphic features a central grey circle with the text '8. Play our part in a vibrant and participatory local democracy'. Above the circle is an illustration of a globe with a plant growing out of it. To the right is an illustration of two speech bubbles.

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

This graphic features a central blue circle with the text '9. Work with local businesses and partners for environmental, economic and social benefit'. Above the circle is an illustration of a person holding a solar panel. To the right is an illustration of a lightning bolt and a leaf with a plug symbol.

# THE CLIMATE EMERGENCY

## Our strategic priority

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

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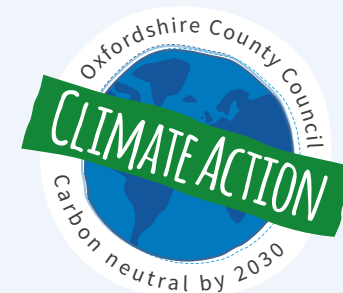
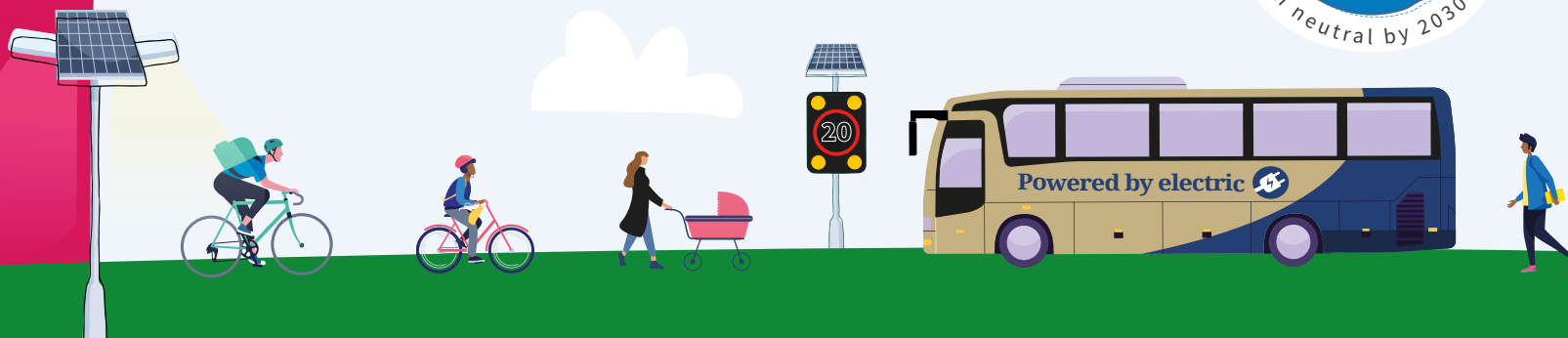
## Our commitments

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.

GREENER

## Our objectives

- Implement together with partners the county's 'pathways to zero carbon' route map, a comprehensive plan for decarbonising Oxfordshire.
- Work to bring our own buildings and operations to net zero by 2030 and increasingly align our supply chain emissions with our net zero ambitions. Support the retrofit of residential homes to improve energy efficiency.
- Accelerate work on supporting biodiversity and nature recovery in parallel with adaptation to climate change, including potential impacts of extreme weather and supply chain disruption.
- Support community and business activity to cut carbon emissions and accelerate a shift to a resilient and locally focused zero carbon economy.
- Support and promote a shift towards active travel (walking, cycling and use of public transport), reducing the need for private cars and accelerate the transition to electric vehicles by expanding charging capacity across the county.
- Work with partners to continue to build a greener, more resilient and fairer renewable energy network.
- Deliver our LED street lighting replacement programme to further reduce the energy, visual and environmental impacts of street lighting.





## Our strategic priority

Invest in an inclusive, integrated and sustainable transport network

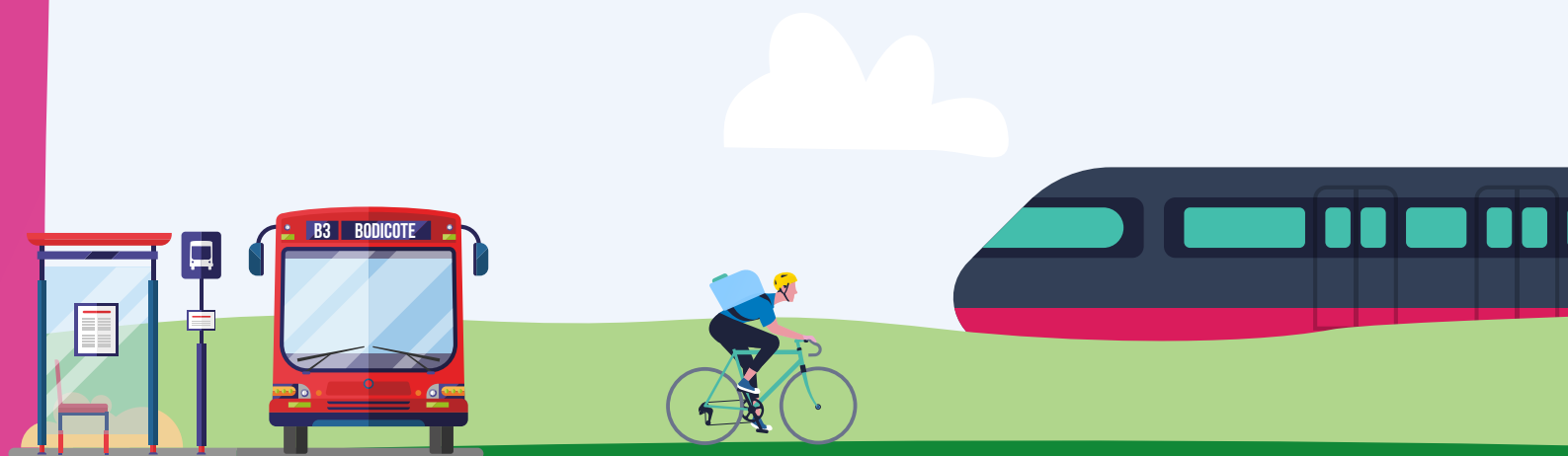
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## Our commitments

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.

## Our objectives

- Prioritise active travel and public transport on the existing and planned highway network to support healthy lifestyles and address inequalities in transport.
- Develop and approve priority local transport and connectivity plan part 2 — area travel plans.
- Deliver our commitments within the bus service improvement plan and enhanced bus partnership.
- Develop and implement a plan for improved strategic routes for freight, including exploring rail and reducing large vehicle movements on non-strategic roads.
- Deliver the countywide 20mph programme in line with our agreed policy.





# NATURE AND GREEN SPACES

## Our strategic priority

Preserve and improve access to nature and green spaces

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## Our commitments

We will work with partners to provide safe, clean and green spaces across the county that support the physical and mental wellbeing of our residents. We will take action to protect and increase biodiversity, supporting nature recovery, in both rural and urban environments.

## Our objectives

- Support and enable the activities from Oxfordshire's community action groups to improve local environments and make nature more accessible.
- Develop a countywide nature recovery strategy, including a tree and woodland plan that involves taking part in the Queen's Green Canopy programme, and support the development of a new local nature partnership for Oxfordshire.
- Improve the amount and distribution of accessible and safe natural green space within Oxfordshire in conjunction with partners.
- Ensure our public rights of way network is safe and effectively maintained.



## Our strategic priority

Tackle inequalities in Oxfordshire

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## Our commitments

We will work with our partners and local communities to address social, economic, health 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 and connectivity to access our services and provide alternative options for those who cannot access our services digitally.

## Our objectives

- Address the drivers and impact of disadvantage through practical plans delivered with partners to create a more inclusive and sustainable Oxfordshire.
- Work with those communities most at risk of poor health, gathering insight to understand the causes of poor health and developing funded action plans to improve residents' health.
- Implement the delivery plan for Oxfordshire's digital inclusion strategy together with partners, including how assistive technology can support vulnerable groups to access services and lead a better quality of life.
- Provide technology to improve processes around signposting, self-assessment and information about sources of help for local residents.
- Deliver support programmes to help mitigate the impact of ongoing rises to the cost of living, including launching a crisis fund to support those in most financial need.
- Address local health inequalities through the establishment of a Health Inequalities Forum for Oxfordshire within the new integrated care system.



## Our strategic priority

Play our part in a vibrant and participatory local democracy

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## Our commitments

We are committed to taking decisions in an open and inclusive way. We will engage and listen to Oxfordshire residents. We will be open to scrutiny and regularly provide progress updates. We will put the impact on the climate and future generations at the heart of decision making. We will manage our own resources carefully.

## Our objectives

- Build greater confidence in our consultation and engagement processes by clearly describing how residents' feedback will be used and where it has helped shape policy or decision-making.
- Provide regular opportunities for residents to engage in open dialogue with cabinet members, including Oxfordshire Conversation Q&A events.
- Improve our approach to equality and climate impact assessments, ensuring that we set out the effects of our decisions on particular groups of residents.
- Demonstrate the contribution of each scrutiny committee to the development of policy and decision-making through the publication of an annual report.



# LOCAL BUSINESSES AND PARTNERS

## Our strategic priority

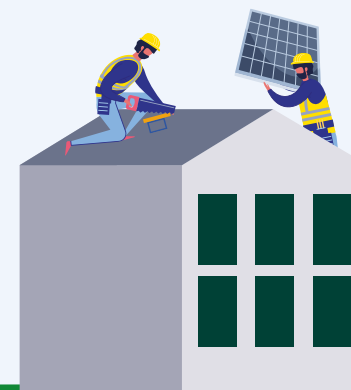
Work with local businesses and partners for environmental, economic and social benefit

## Our commitments

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.

## Our objectives

- Work with partners, including the Oxfordshire Local Enterprise Partnership (OxLEP), to enable long-term job creation for local businesses through apprenticeships and business support.
- Promote career pathways in health and social care for local people and encourage those who are looking to change their careers to start their own enterprises in the sector.
- Work with suppliers to maximise additional social and environmental value, as part of our progressive procurement policy and development planning processes, which will benefit local communities.
- Facilitate research and collaboration between businesses, the universities, OxLEP and our health and local authority partners to maintain Oxfordshire as a centre of innovation, turning ideas into real-life solutions in areas including transport, climate, energy and healthcare.
- Work with partners and contractors to develop green skills, promote jobs and investment in the green sector, encouraging sustainable and inclusive development as we transition to a circular economy.
- Provide a long-term support offer for our voluntary and community sector partners through the implementation of the voluntary and community sector strategy, enabling a strong, diverse and vibrant voluntary and community sector in Oxfordshire.



# HEALTH AND WELLBEING

## Our strategic priority

Prioritise the health and wellbeing of residents

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## Our commitments

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 communities who have been affected, physically and mentally, by COVID-19 and we will continue to support our volunteers and the voluntary sector.

## Our objectives

- Lead on an update to the Oxfordshire health and wellbeing strategy, which includes: implementing the domestic abuse strategic action plan, and combatting the harm caused in local communities from illicit drug use.
- Make Oxfordshire smoke free by 2025, promoting better mental wellbeing and preventing self-harm and suicide.
- Maximise access to the opportunities provided by libraries, museums, nature and green spaces and other services to support the health and wellbeing of residents.
- Address worsening rates of unhealthy weight in Oxfordshire, including addressing a range of underlying factors that cause this trend.
- Provide a long-term support offer for our voluntary and community sector partners through the implementation of the voluntary and community sector strategy, enabling a strong, diverse and vibrant voluntary and community sector in Oxfordshire.



# CARERS AND SOCIAL CARE

## Our strategic priority

Support carers and the social care system

## Our commitments

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, in collaboration with the health and social care system and voluntary sector to explore new ways to provide services. We will focus on preventative services, helping people to stay active and supported at all stages of their lives.

## Our objectives

Champion strengths-based approaches across the health and social care system to reduce demand and ensure resources are used as effectively as possible:

- Invest in assistive technology and apps which promote independence and enable self-assessment where appropriate.
- Work with service users and providers to find new ways to promote self-directed support, increasing choice and control for individuals.
- Help people to live independently and support themselves through personal and local facilities, using the Oxfordshire Way approach.
- Facilitate access to resources across communities through social prescribing and other referral routes that divert demand away from statutory services.
- Focus resources on areas of high deprivation to tackle social isolation and reduce health inequalities.
- Co-produce with carers a refreshed all-ages carers strategy for the health and social care system, which improves carers' wellbeing, and invest in practical solutions to help carers maintain their caring roles.
- Co-produce a refreshed workforce development strategy that addresses challenges around recruiting and retaining social care workers, focusing on outcomes for our residents, evaluating what we do well and what we can continue to improve.
- Prepare for care quality commission assurance, working with residents and partners to triangulate evidence and further embed continuous improvement.





# CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE

## Our strategic priority

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

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## Our commitments

We will support all our children and young people, and their families, to achieve their very best and to prepare them for their future. This includes 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.

## Our objectives

- Support the emotional mental health and wellbeing of children and young people by increasing the number of interventions in schools and places which young people frequent.
- Expand the range of provision for young people and increase take-up in areas of high deprivation.
- Deliver our children's home programme to provide more places in Oxfordshire.
- Increase activity that supports pupils with special educational needs and disabilities to have their needs met in mainstream school settings and deliver our special school capacity expansion programme.
- Work with partners to increase early help, ensuring that children's needs are met earlier.
- Support families to care for their children at home where it is safe to do so, integrating assessments and support in the community to prevent children needing to come into the care system.
- Respond to the findings of our newly established Education Commission.



# WORKING IN PARTNERSHIP

Ways of joint working developed during the COVID-19 pandemic are helping the council and its partners to respond swiftly and comprehensively to complex and urgent new challenges facing our communities.

## Tackling the cost of living crisis

Working with our local authority partners and the voluntary and community sector, we will continue to bring forward new initiatives to support our most vulnerable residents during the ongoing cost of living crisis. By ensuring that funding is used as close to communities as possible and collaborating with our partners, we are making our money go further and maximising the benefit for residents.

## Welcoming displaced Ukrainian families

We will continue to support those who have sought refuge from the war in Ukraine and help them integrate into our communities. We will also continue to support the many local households who have so generously opened their doors to those in need. With partners, we have established a dedicated joint team to oversee our response to the government's Homes for Ukraine programme and are working to ensure that those who wish to remain in Oxfordshire in the long term can do so.



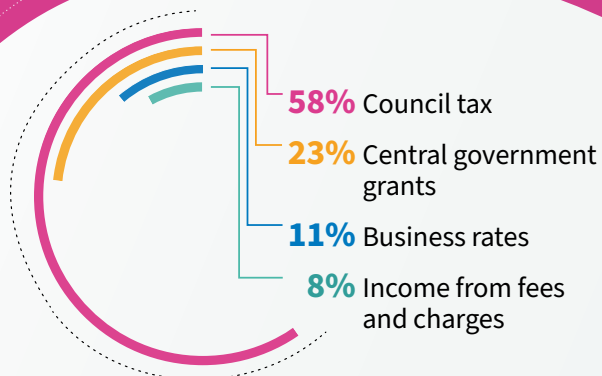


# COUNCIL FUNDING AND SPENDING

## Where the money comes from

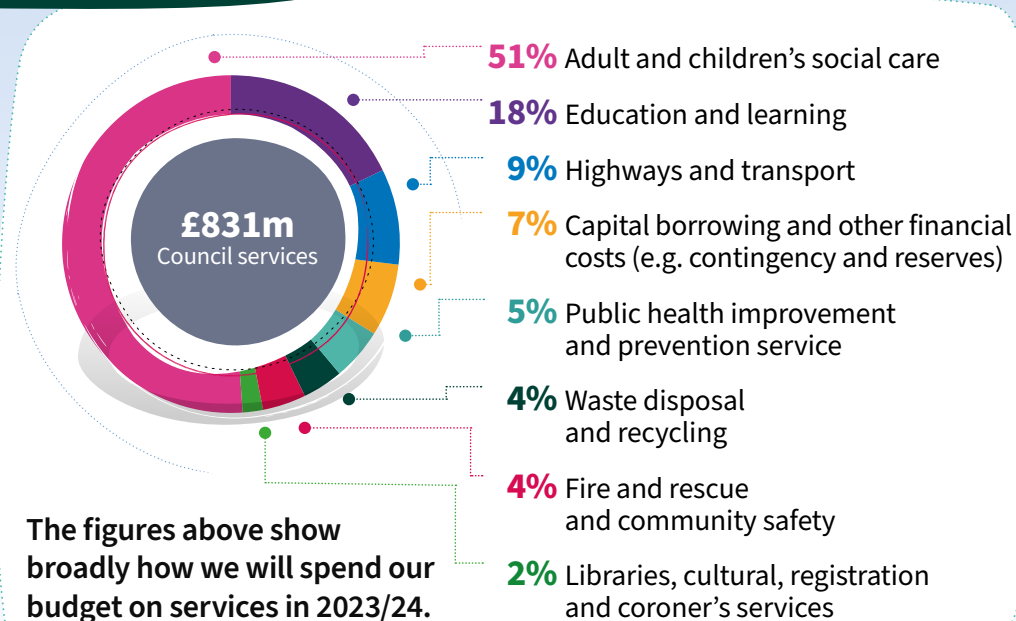
For 2023/24, 58 per cent of the county council's funding for services will come directly from council tax, with the rest coming from charging for services and government grants.

This has increased over the last ten years as central government has cut grants to local government. In 2010/11, 28 per cent came from council tax.



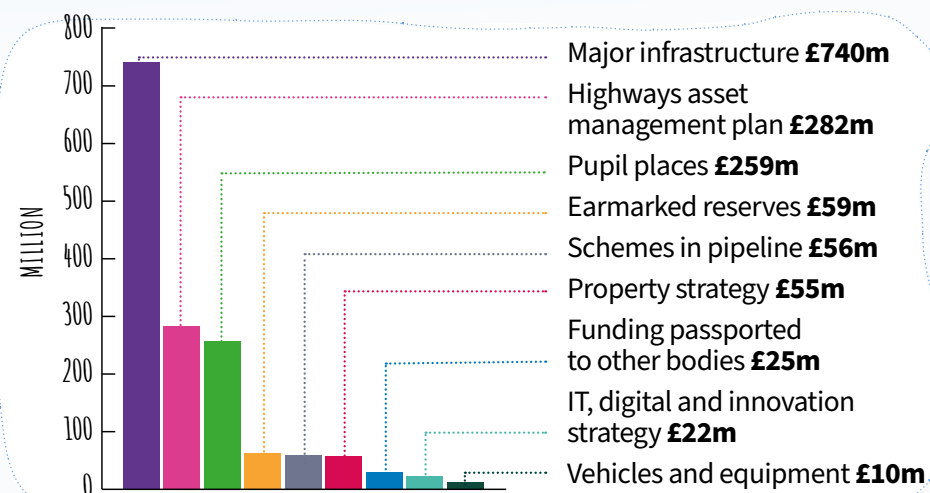
## What we spend on council services

In 2023/24, the council will spend £831 million on services – our gross expenditure budget. In addition, we will also spend £207 million on maintained schools, which covers teachers and running costs, and comes directly from the government.



## Capital programme

Four per cent of your council tax is used to support the cost of borrowing towards our **£1.5 billion** capital programme.



## CONTACT US

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You can apply, book, find, report and pay for a range of services on the county council's website: [oxfordshire.gov.uk](https://oxfordshire.gov.uk)

## LET'S TALK

Have your say in consultations about changes to council services or policies at: [letstalk.oxfordshire.gov.uk](https://letstalk.oxfordshire.gov.uk)

## SIGN UP

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# 1 Foreword



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**Oxfordshire County Council holds a broad range of properties and assets, which play a key role in the delivery of our services. From libraries to schools, office accommodation to fire stations, our buildings provide a network of access to essential public services for residents across the county.**

The management of our estate is important in terms of service delivery, but it comes with a number of challenges. Many of our buildings require significant investment to bring them up to modern environmental standards – essential if we are to meet our net zero carbon commitments. Some of our buildings are not in the most convenient locations nor provide access to a wide range of our services, while some of our assets are under-utilised and are no longer required for their original purpose.

The investment required to meet these challenges is significant. To help us address this, we want to work with our partners to explore opportunities for co-location so that we can reduce our running costs, provide better access for our residents, and offer modern and inviting workplaces.

In addition to our service delivery sites, we hold community and investment assets, provide a maintenance service for our current schools estate, and build new educational facilities. These assets are essential – they provide valued local community spaces and quality schools for young people. In some cases, they also provide income or potential capital

receipts that can be re-invested in service delivery and development.

Our reach is wide and we know the right investment in our buildings can enhance communities. It can also reduce our running costs, provide income and support our financial sustainability.

To deliver these benefits this strategy sets out an ambitious ten-year vision and a series of priorities for our various property portfolios and our service development. Putting service users and our workforce at the heart of our approach, we will seek to create and maintain an estate that meets our environmental and social objectives while creating welcoming and inspirational spaces for our residents and staff. We will invest in properties that support our long-term priorities, for example creating more placements for looked-after children to ensure local provision.

We intend to review this strategy periodically and produce a suite of key performance indicators to demonstrate progress. We will also work to improve the data we publish with regards to our property register and the performance of our buildings.

**Councillor Calum Miller**  
Cabinet Member for  
Finance and Property





## 2 Introduction

**Oxfordshire County Council's property and assets portfolio is a key enabler in achieving the council's long-term strategic priorities as well as supporting communities and the education sector through the provision of property services. Providing inspirational and diverse spaces helps us connect, collaborate and interact with customers and colleagues, and enables us to reach into communities to deliver services where they are most needed.**

The purpose of this strategy is to set out a clear long-term vision for the council's estate and assets and a set of strategic priorities by which to shape and develop property, assets and operational activity. The strategy will be underpinned by a framework of key documents, plans and policies through which the vision and priorities will be delivered. The strategy sets out a direction of travel from which to further develop implementation plans and business cases and by which to base future investment and development decisions.

A long-term vision and strategy enables the county council to create transparency and consistency with regards to the decisions made, sets a clear framework for our wider place shaping and community leadership role and enables prioritisation of resources.

The delivery of the council's long-term strategic priorities sits alongside the requirements of the service to modernise and upgrade the existing estate and contribute to wider policy objectives, such as our climate action and accessibility

commitments. Our property and asset portfolios must also change to reflect socio-economic and demographic change and emerging trends that shape the way in which council services are designed, commissioned and delivered. These changes drive new requirements in terms of both the technology we use and the places and spaces in which our services and activities are delivered.

This property and assets strategy is designed to deliver an efficient, innovative and accessible property estate for our workforce and partners into the future. The strategy directly supports our climate action objectives and aims to generate both social and economic value, through the provision of facilities that are valued by our partners and the use or disposal of assets to support the long-term financial sustainability of the council.

We have developed an agile service delivery model that supports our workforce to operate effectively. Our property strategy supports this new delivery model. Alongside services that are available remotely and digitally, accommodation will be provided in local spaces and community venues so that we can work with partners to deliver face-to-face services where they are most needed. And we will create flexible, collaborative and inspirational spaces for our staff and partners to work together to deliver better outcomes for residents.



### 3 Long-term vision

This strategy sets out the council's ten-year ambition for its property portfolios, driven by the need to repurpose the estate to enable new ways of delivering services, agile working and the decarbonisation of buildings. The strategy will support the delivery of council priorities as set out in the corporate strategy, council services and financial sustainability. Where possible property and assets will be used to add social and economic value to Oxfordshire.

The county council's long-term vision for its estate is:

TO CREATE AN EFFICIENT, INNOVATIVE AND ACCESSIBLE PROPERTY ESTATE, WHICH DELIVERS OUR CLIMATE ACTION OBJECTIVES AND GENERATES SOCIAL VALUE FOR OUR RESIDENTS, WORKFORCE AND CUSTOMERS OF THE PROPERTY SERVICE. WHEREVER POSSIBLE WE WILL USE OUR ESTATE TO SUPPORT REGENERATION AND THE LONG TERM FINANCIAL SUSTAINABILITY OF THE COUNCIL.



# 4 Summary of current assets and estates

**Oxfordshire County Council owns around 900,000 m<sup>2</sup> of property assets across 909 sites across the county.**

A significant part of this is controlled by third parties under long-term leasing arrangements, and therefore, whilst not within the direct control of the council, these assets produce around £2.9m per annum of income through 536 lease arrangements.

Oxfordshire County Council assets are divided between three portfolios: operational, community and investment assets. These must be managed and maintained with plans for each portfolio. Across all three portfolios many of our assets require sizeable investment to meet modern office, service delivery and accessibility standards as well as our environmental obligations and ambitions.

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## The operational portfolio

### Corporate and office-based assets

These include buildings that provide our support service and office-based facilities.

**13 sites**

**11,000 m<sup>2</sup> of buildings**

### Educational assets

These sites include nursery, primary, secondary and special schools and supporting facilities such as leisure centres and field study centres that support the curriculum delivery.

**418 sites**

**607,000m<sup>2</sup> of buildings**

### Non-educational assets

These include buildings necessary to deliver services to the communities of Oxfordshire, such as libraries, fire stations, children and family centres and household waste recycling centres.

**156 sites**

**69,000m<sup>2</sup> of buildings**





## The community portfolio



Community assets include buildings and land, most of which are leased out for community purposes, such as playgroups, recreation land, community-run youth facilities, community-led children's support services, scouts, voluntary community sector groups and other similar community-run facilities.

A community asset transfer policy provides the opportunity for transfer of these assets to the community where they are no longer required for operational purposes.

**141 sites**

**23,000 m<sup>2</sup> of buildings**

In addition to community assets the council also holds residential and care assets. These include buildings that provide accommodation for the elderly and have been leased out through agreements that enable the rent received to be used to deliver care provisions, provide housing for fire service personnel or provide land and facilities for the traveller community.

**74 sites**

**53,000m<sup>2</sup> of building**

## The investment portfolio



The county's investment portfolio includes land and buildings, some of which bring opportunity for financial benefit as they are surplus to operational requirements.

These retained sites have been and continue to be promoted within local plans and form a large part of the disposals programme. Capital receipts are used to support the broader capital programme.

**107 sites**

**5,700m<sup>2</sup> of buildings**

# 5 Drivers of change

**The nature of managing a complex and large property and assets portfolio is such that ‘doing nothing’ cannot be an option. The costs of backlog and managed decline in terms of the impact on service delivery and environmental performance alone require a planned response encompassing maintenance, investment in new facilities, disposal and modernisation.**

More fundamentally management of the Oxfordshire County Council estate must also respond to wider drivers of change that encompass factors such as social and technological change as well as a clear focus on environment and financial sustainability.

Oxfordshire as a diverse county combines city and rural localities, with small market towns and areas of economic activity. In addition, there are areas of deprivation with regeneration and service delivery needs. Where services are delivered in person or face to face, the location of these services should be considered alongside size and requirements of local communities.

As a countywide organisation, the property portfolio should contribute to ensuring that residents feel able to access quality local services and accessible representation. As such

the democratic seat of the county should be accessible to the public both in terms of place, quality of the building and technology.

Finally, where county council assets are used by voluntary and community sector organisations for wider community benefit or service delivery a community asset transfer policy should provide mechanisms for the transfer of these assets where certain conditions are met.

## Drivers of change

### Political and democratic factors

- Accessible and public seat of democratic decision making is required.
- Fairness in terms of community access (e.g. balancing rural and urban needs).
- Regeneration opportunities through investment and modernisation of assets.

### Environmental factors

- A property estate that encourages active and public transport options and distribution of service delivery that minimises journey time, distance and frequency.
- The Climate Action for a Thriving Oxfordshire plan sets out the council's commitment to be a zero-carbon organisation by 2030. This will require the decarbonisation of the estate through a programme of rationalisation, release of buildings, improvements and cultural change requiring significant capital investment to deliver on the ambition to be a carbon neutral authority.

## Drivers of change

### Social factors and service delivery

- Some assets are old, inaccessible and unsuitable for service delivery or operational use, either in their current configuration or due to their inherent design.
- Opportunities for co-location with partners that could further contribute to rationalisation.

Investment required in facilities that provide better services for local people: children's homes, special schools, educational assets, adults' provision etc. Investment can contribute to more affordable local capacity and therefore reduce costs and demand (e.g., local placements for children).

- The requirements of a modern workforce result in an underutilisation of office space, as flexible and agile working combined with changing models of service delivery have reduced requirements.

### Technological factors

- Using technology to track and manage the performance of buildings (SMART buildings).
- Paper lite and wireless technology requirements.
- Virtual and hybrid working.
- Asset tracking and management applications.

### Legal factors

- Requirements to statutory services such as schools, waste and recycling centres.
- Requirements to dispose of assets in line with relevant legislation.

### Economic and financial factors

- A dilapidated estate - Investment in many of the council's buildings has not kept pace with maintenance requirements resulting in a large backlog, with some mechanical and electrical systems now also nearing end of life and due for replacement.
- Lease expiry dates are approaching over the next 2-3 years requiring a decision on whether to renew the lease and providing an opportunity to reduce the office footprint and make savings on rent and other running costs.

# Strategic objectives

The long-term vision for Oxfordshire County Council's property and estates assets is underpinned by six strategic objectives.

1

## Facilitating service delivery

- Maintaining fit for purpose operational accommodation in suitable locations and creating places and spaces that support the effective delivery of public services.

Investing in solutions to support outcomes for Oxfordshire residents using our adults and children's services and ensuring our operational estate is welcoming and accessible for service users.

2

## Supporting Oxfordshire communities

- Working closely with our community and voluntary sector stakeholders to maintain facilities in key locations closer to our residents.
- Focussing on social impact and leveraging the role of our assets and activities in supporting community resilience.

3

## Decarbonising our corporate buildings

- Developing and implementing a comprehensive approach to reducing the environmental impact of our estate, in line with our corporate climate commitments.

4

## Enabling agile working and rationalisation of the estate

- Working to improve our existing operational portfolio by creating modern, flexible and functional workplaces.
- We will identify and rationalise underutilised workspaces and seek co-location opportunities with partners wherever possible.

5

## Maximising our potential investments

- Undertaking asset performance review and investing in (or disposing of) assets to support the council's financial sustainability.
- Working to address legacy backlog maintenance and refurbishment to maintain the quality and value of the estate and where appropriate to generate income.

6

## Investing in our schools

- Working to meet the increasing demand for pupil places through delivering new schools and improving existing assets.

# 7 Portfolio priorities

## Priorities: Operational portfolio

**When considering future requirements for operational and service delivery properties the council favours a 'community hub model'. This essentially sets out the requirement for a 'core central office' and democratic facilities with community hubs and local access points that bring together children, families and adults services on single sites, moving away from existing underutilised and leased corporate offices and disparate front-line sites in the main towns.**

This approach recognises the different geographies of the county, and the aim is always ensuring services are delivered effectively to the populations that need them, balancing office locations, community hubs and a spread of access points or community plus locations.

The approach reflects some national policy initiatives, for example the [Department for Education funded hubs programme](#)

Implementation of this approach will require long-term investment and an understanding of population patterns, travel distance and other factors such as repurposing existing assets will be considered as business cases are developed.

### Democratic centre 'HQ / Corporate Services'

- Oxford's central location, historical significance, strong public transport links, access to a larger workforce and a range of facilities in the city mean it will continue to be the prime location for the council's main corporate office provision. A single corporate office is considered appropriate assuming the right location and size can be achieved.
- Agile ways of working and fewer days in the office per week on average mean commuting into Oxford is likely to become more viable for more people. Use of public transport to access the city will support the net zero agenda.
- The nature of the office workplace will need to change to support more collaborative, face to face working in line with the workplace design principles.
- There will continue to be a need for the democratic centre of the council to be in a central location and co-located with or close to the main corporate office HQ.
- Our democratic facilities could become a multi-purpose space for council and committee meetings with wider opportunities for events such as citizenship ceremonies.



## Community hubs

- A move away from traditional offices towards community hubs in the main population centres would bring together children and families, adult and potentially other services in easy to access single locations in the main towns potentially aligned to key areas of deprivation.
- Community hubs could replace existing offices in the main towns, with a streamlined office provision alongside front-line services.
- As well as improving service access these community hubs could help to reduce travel, support regeneration and provide opportunities to co-locate services with partners.

## Access locations – community plus

- Smaller customer access points – for example in the smaller towns. There is potential to repurpose existing libraries to provide additional local services.
- Additional mobile and digital services could support rural / emerging communities.

To deliver the long-term ambition for the community hubs model a business case for the current operational estate will be prepared. The objectives set out below will be used to inform the development of future options for the council's corporate and operational estate.

- Enable and support the council's **agile ways of working** across the county
- **Deliver workplaces that are a real destination for our customers and people**, supporting greater collaboration and staff well-being, in line with the workplace vision
- **Enhance physical customer access** to our buildings to drive improved customer experience
- **Maximise opportunities to co-locate our services and with our partners** where there are service synergies and revenue efficiencies
- Ensure our **building systems and standards are applied consistently** across our workplaces
- **Optimise the use of existing assets** where they meet or can be made to meet future requirements before considering any new provision

- **Reduce the council's exposure to leasehold accommodation** by consolidating within freehold sites where possible
- **Self-fund new investment** in the estate through sale proceeds and income generation as far as possible, whilst reducing overall premises costs
- **Significantly contribute to the council's carbon reduction targets** by minimising travel to work distances and investing in and modernising our buildings
- Where the market supports it, **release surplus space for income generation purposes** and to support the local economy



## Educational assets

These sites include nursery, primary, secondary and special schools and supporting facilities such as leisure centres and field study centres that support the curriculum delivery. Investment and development will be prioritised through the Pupil Place Plan, the Special Educational Needs and Disability Sufficiency of Places Strategy and the conditions survey. These assets sit outside the community hubs approach.

## Priorities: Community portfolio

**Community assets are those used for non-operational purposes. They include buildings and land, most of which are leased out for community purposes, such as playgroups, recreation land, community-run youth facilities, community-led children's support services, youth and voluntary community sector groups.**

The priorities within the management of this portfolio are to support policy objectives such as community use and social value whilst generating the best possible returns. A community asset transfer policy provides the opportunity for transfer of these assets to the community where they are no longer required for operational purposes.

Where opportunities are identified to generate income or enable re-investment in assets without the demand for the use of corporate capital funding the council may consider early termination of agreements where options to break exist.

With regards to residential and care assets, including buildings that provide accommodation for the elderly, provide housing for fire service personnel or provide land and facilities for the traveller community.



### Priorities are:

1. To enable care facilities to be made fit for purpose through third-party funding.
2. To work with service commissioners to understand the timescales for the property being released by a provider and ensure strategies are in place to generate income or capital.
3. To consider the release of travellers' sites to third-party organisations should opportunities arise, particularly to district councils as part of their affordable housing mandate.
4. To enable the transfer of assets to support communities through the use of a community asset transfer policy.
5. To provide options for affordable community rents where appropriate.



## Priorities: Investment portfolio

**The county's investment portfolio includes land and buildings which are retained for investment and growth purposes (e.g. farms, land for development). These assets are managed to protect the long-term interests of Oxfordshire and maximise value while some bring opportunity for economic or social gain as they are surplus to operational requirements.**

The priorities within the management of this portfolio are, wherever possible, practical and viable to:

1. Seek change of use through planning permission to enhance property or land value to maximise income generation opportunities.
2. Develop and invest in assets to maximise ongoing income generation, for example through leasing out.
3. Dispose of assets where development and subsequent lease isn't supported or commercially viable or where the capital receipt enables an alternative priority or opportunity.
4. Take a proactive approach to empty properties and underused assets to secure social or economic value through disposal, investment or transfer.

Investment activities may also be undertaken to support regeneration, town centre development or activities for social value such as keyworker or affordable housing. All projects to develop, acquire or dispose of investment assets are subject to the council's usual business case and capital governance arrangements.





## Service delivery priorities

Delivery of the priorities and objectives across the estate requires an effective and customer focussed property and facilities management service. Service development priorities are:

Working with stakeholders to seek 'one public estate' including opportunities for co-location with partners.

Investment in technology.

Working with human resources to embed agile working principles in the development of our estate.

Investment in our property and facilities management workforce including 'growing our own' staff and the utilisation of apprenticeships.

Focus on customer service with an improved service desk function.

Development and consolidation of the corporate landlord function.

# 9 Implementation priorities

Implementation priorities for the next 12 months are:

1

Agree a road map for Oxford city centre accommodation and the rationalisation of office and operational accommodation across the county.

2

Develop costed business case to implement the agreed road map.

3

Plan to give up leased properties realising savings through rationalisation.

4

Plan to reutilise or dispose of key empty or underused properties across all the asset portfolios.

5

Develop options and feasibility for implementation of community hubs.

6

Ongoing delivery of decarbonisation programme.

Further action plans will be developed to reflect priorities across all portfolios set out in this strategy.

# 10 Monitoring, review and engagement

**This strategy sets out a ten-year vision and is thereby aligned to the council's capital planning process. But it should be recognised that as markets, trends and demographics change the requirements of the various portfolios will also be subject to change, review and development. Likewise, opportunities for investment, disposal or co-location may arise that do not form part of the short-term plan and as such a pragmatic approach will be taken to ensuring that opportunities are not missed.**

## Monitoring

An annual report setting out progress and delivery will be produced, and the service will set key performance indicators to track performance. The county council's relevant overview and scrutiny committee will also be invited to monitor and review performance, relevant internal audit will be undertaken as part of the council's annual audit plan and the outcomes will be reported to the Audit Committee.

## Strategic review

The strategy will be refreshed periodically (not less than once every two years) and stakeholder engagement will be undertaken as part of this review. The service will prepare annual plans to deliver the strategy and work within the council capital governance arrangements to ensure an effective capital programme is established.

In relation to the operational assets portfolio, it is expected that key internal customers or users of the service will set out their long-term requirements; this relates to assets used or required to deliver frontline services, for example the Pupil Place Plan or the Special Educational Needs Sufficiency of Places Strategy. These plans will be subject to their own development timeframes and the results will directly feed into the property strategy and its action plans.

## Arrangements for ongoing engagement

The strategy has been developed through a review of the current portfolios, social, economic, demographic and workforce change and stakeholder engagement. However, it is recognised that long-term strategies are by their nature high level and that individual projects will also require specific consultation as they are developed. This may include various stakeholders such as elected members, service users, commercial partners, public or voluntary sector partners and on occasion may require formal consultation with the workforce and trade unions.

Consultation and stakeholder engagement will therefore be assessed and undertaken on a project-by-project basis as well as in terms of the wider strategy, considering the specific nature of each project and its location.

Each of the portfolios (operational, community and investment) will also have specific engagement requirements, for example community groups or schools, and these key stakeholders will be identified and engaged as appropriate.

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