



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

***Friday, 11 April 2025 at 10.00 am***

***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 22 April 2025 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**

Martin Reeves  
Chief Executive

April 2025

Committee Officer: **Democratic Services**  
*committeesdemocraticservices@oxfordshire.gov.uk*

Note: Date of next meeting: 16 May 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)

The Cabinet Member is asked to approve the minutes of the last meeting of 14 February 2025 as an accurate record of proceedings.

### 5. Fire Remedial Project Phase 2&3 (to follow) (To Follow)

Cabinet Member: Finance

Forward Plan Ref: 2025/058

Contact: Anthony Hulsman, Head of Facilities Management

[Anthony.hulsman@oxfordshire.gov.uk](mailto:Anthony.hulsman@oxfordshire.gov.uk)

Report by Director of Property and Assets

## **6. Outline business case for Property decarbonisation programme 2025/26 (Pages 3 - 10)**

*Cabinet Member:* Finance

*Forward Plan Ref:* 2025/060

*Contact:* Sam Thomas, Property Decarbonisation Manager

Sam.thomas@oxfordshire.gov.uk

Report by Director of Property and Assets

1. **The Cabinet Member Finance is RECOMMENDED to**
  - a) **Note that the total Property Decarbonisation Programme Budget included in the capital programme for 2025/26 will be £10m for works to 20 sites**
  - b) **Approve the commencement of the procurement of decarbonisation works for the sites in the programme of works, noting that where sites are batched together into a single procurement exercise these may have a combined value in excess of £2m**
  - c) **Delegate authority to the Executive Director of Resources & Section 151 Officer to agree the procurement strategy and approve the award of contracts associated with the 2025/26 Property Decarbonisation Programme**

## **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, 14 February 2025 commencing at 10.00 am and finishing at 10.05 am.

**Present:**

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

**Officers:** Nick Tomkins – Strategic Liaison Manager  
Colm O'Caomhanaigh – Democratic Services Manager

*The Cabinet Member considered the matters, reports and recommendations contained or referred to in the agenda for the meeting and agreed as set out below. Copies of the agenda and reports and additional documents are attached to the signed Minutes.*

### **6/25 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST** (Agenda No. 1)

There were no declarations of interest.

### **7/25 QUESTIONS FROM COUNTY COUNCILLORS** (Agenda No. 2)

There were no questions.

### **8/25 PETITIONS AND PUBLIC ADDRESS** (Agenda No. 3)

There were no requests.

### **9/25 MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING** (Agenda No. 4)

The minutes of the meeting held on 10 January 2025 were approved.

### **10/25 WOOD GREEN SCHOOL, WITNEY** (Agenda No. 5)

Councillor Levy noted that the school was expanding to cope with the growing number of students in the Witney area following the development of new housing.

He was satisfied that the project was deliverable and was in line with the carbon reduction targets. The building was to be funded by Section 106 monies and therefore would have no negative impacts on the Council funds.

Councillor Levy approved the recommendation.

**RESOLVED to**

Approve the completion of the Funding Agreement with Acer Trust which will release funding greater than £1m to Acer Trust to enable the construction of a new teaching block at Wood Green Secondary School in Witney.

..... in the Chair

Date of signing ..... 2025



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

**11 April 2025**

### **Outline business case for Property decarbonisation programme 2025/26**

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

## **RECOMMENDATION**

1. The Cabinet Member Finance is **RECOMMENDED** to
  - a) Note that the total Property Decarbonisation Programme Budget included in the capital programme for 2025/26 will be £10m for works to 20 sites
  - b) Approve the commencement of the procurement of decarbonisation works for the sites in the programme of works, noting that where sites are batched together into a single procurement exercise these may have a combined value in excess of £2m
  - c) Delegate authority to the Executive Director of Resources & Section 151 Officer to agree the procurement strategy and approve the award of contracts associated with the 2025/26 Property Decarbonisation Programme

## **Executive Summary**

2. The Council has secured central government grant funding of £0.36m, requiring £10m match funding, to conduct full scale property decarbonisation of 20 buildings, putting these buildings on the pathway to net zero. This includes the electrification of heating, building fabric improvements, electrical efficiency improvements and deployment of renewable electricity generation technology.

3. This funding is time limited and need to be spent by 31 March 2026. A complex programme of works to replace aged equipment in a poor state of repair will generate potential carbon savings of 333 Tonnes of CO<sub>2</sub>e<sup>1</sup>.
4. A range of options are presented within the report, with the recommendation to approve the full set of works to achieve the maximum decarbonisation benefits.

## Exempt Information

5. The table 2 in appendix 1 is to be exempted on the basis that the information relates to the financial or business affairs of the council. The Council has yet to procure these works. Disclosing the budget per site would distort the proper process of open competition and prejudice the position of the council in the future procurement of the contracts and the Council's standing generally in relation to such procurements in future, to the detriment of the Council's ability to properly discharge its fiduciary and other duties as a public authority.

## Background

6. The Council declared a climate emergency in 2019 with a target of 2030 to bring the Council's operations and activities to carbon neutrality. This target is reflected in the Council's Climate Action Framework and Property Strategy.
7. In 2023/24 the Council's property accounted for approximately 35% (2,706 tCO<sub>2</sub>e) of the emissions that need to be reduced to meet the carbon neutrality target by 2030. In addition, a reactive only maintenance approach has left much of the Council's estate in very poor-quality condition, with many components past their expected working life and in need of replacement irrespective of the carbon neutrality target.
8. To reduce emissions the aim is to stop fossil fuelled activities within the Council's properties, which is predominantly heating, via the electrification of these components. Although there will be a carbon component remaining by 2030 from the use of electricity, this will be much reduced according to the government's [Clean Power 2030 Action Plan](#) and will be on the pathway to fully net zero by 2050 in line with the decarbonisation of the electricity grid. This should enable an ever-reducing need for carbon offsetting by 2030 and beyond which is outside of this scope of works but is recognised by the industry to be a significant unknown, given the currently few recognised and accepted methods of carbon offsetting.
9. The transition to electric heating will predominantly be via heat pumps and infrared heating. Due to the lower operating temperatures of the heat pumps improvements are required in thermal building fabric (e.g. single glazing to double or triple glazing, insulation installations, etc.) to decrease the potential

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<sup>1</sup> This is a preliminary estimation, and the final carbon reductions expected from these projects may change as we produce detailed assessments of carbon reductions.

running costs. Nonetheless even with these improvements because of the, currently, low cost of gas compared to electricity the running costs would be increased. As part of the strategic approach the Council would seek to install renewable electricity measures (solar PV) and upgrade electrical components (particularly lighting to LED), to ensure the overall running costs do not increase.

## Public Sector Decarbonisation Funding

10. The Public Sector Decarbonisation Fund (PSDS) is a central government grant fund awarded to public sector bodies to replace fossil fuelled heating systems from buildings, whilst also conducting thermal fabric improvements, electrical efficiency improvements and solar PV deployments amongst other measures.
11. The council has secured £0.36 m of central government grant funding, alongside £10m approved matched funding, agreed by Council in February 2025 as part of the Capital Programme to 2033/34, to conduct works to 20 properties, with the grant funding needing to be spent within 12 months. The potential carbon savings associated with these properties have been estimated to be 333T CO<sub>2</sub>e per year<sup>2</sup>. The 20 properties are detailed in Table 1 and Appendix 1:

*Table 1: Site List*

Wallingford Community Support Service	Ron Groves House	Berinsfield Library
Wantage Fire Station	Wantage Library	Summertown Library
Abingdon Children and Family Centre	Oxford Community Support Service	Drayton Highways Depot
Didcot Fire Station	Holton Library HQ	Witney Resource Centre
Thornhill Park and Ride	Oxford Parkway	Bicester Fire Station
Abingdon Fire Station	Deddington Depot	Blackbird Leys Library
Bampton Fire Station	Henley Fire Station	

12. The Council will seek to utilise a combination of existing procurement frameworks alongside self-tendered contracts for smaller valued works, in accordance with the Contract Procedure Rules. Some of the works are likely to be batched up and procured as a single procurement exercise and awarded to a single contractor to deliver with a potential award value over £2m.
13. Some of the proposed measures will enable a component of future proofing of the building in relation to climate adaptation, by installing heating systems that can provide cooling in the summer months and alleviate existing overheating problems within the buildings.

<sup>2</sup> This is a preliminary estimation, and the final carbon reductions expected from these projects may change as we produce detailed assessments of carbon reductions.

14. The grant funding needs to be spent by 31 March 2026. Due to the constrained timescale, delegated authority is sought for later stage business cases to ensure that the projects are delivered efficiently.

## **Options Appraisal**

15. The Council has 3 options available:
- Option 1: Do Nothing, this will incur a capital cost of £2.35m to replace components at the end of their useful life.
  - Option 2: Do Minimum, will incur a capital cost of £2.8m, in addition to option 1 this approach will be to focus on technologies that have a high payback, this would utilise the existing funding available and would focus on an unknown set of measures delivering a lower amount of carbon savings. The Council would also need to return the PSDS3c grant incurring a reputational risk.
  - Option 3: Do Maximum, this approach will conduct the full set of measures as set out within the paper costing £10m, with an annual saving of £0.013m and 333T CO<sub>2</sub>e per year.
16. The recommended option is option 3, due to the need to meet the Council's corporate priorities, achieving the maximum carbon savings and utilising grant funding.

## **Corporate Policies and Priorities**

17. The proposal strongly supports the following Council priorities:
- Put action to address the Climate Emergency at the heart of our work.
  - Work with local businesses and partners for environmental, economic, and social benefit
18. The proposals directly support the aims of the Council's climate action framework alongside the Council's property strategy.

## **Financial Implications**

**The financial implications section should be completed by a member of the finance service**

19. The Capital Programme approved by Council in February 2025 includes council funding of £10m for the Decarbonisation Programme.
20. The £0.36m grant funding from the Public Sector Decarbonisation Fund is required to be spent by 31 March 2026. There is a risk that if there is slippage in the programme, that the grant cannot be fully utilised or that additional costs will fall on the Council. Therefore, the programme will need to be carefully managed with updates on progress and any risks reported throughout the year so that any mitigating action can be taken.

21. As a result of the investment, there will be a small annual financial saving from the proposed measures estimated at £0.013m. This is not currently included in the Medium-Term Financial Strategy.

22. Comments checked by:

Kathy Wilcox, Head of Corporate Finance, [Kathy.wilcox@oxfordshire.gov.uk](mailto:Kathy.wilcox@oxfordshire.gov.uk)

## **Legal Implications**

**The legal implications section should be completed by a member of the legal service**

23. Section 1 of the Climate Action Act 2008 placed a duty on the Secretary of State to ensure that the UK carbon account in 2050 is at least 100% lower than the 1990 baseline. The projects identified in this report will help support the Council's Climate Action Framework and Property Strategy and the UK Government's net zero commitment.

24. The procurement of suitable contractors for the delivery of the series of works covered by this programme will be conducted in line with the Council's Contract Procedure Rules and any applicable procurement legislation. The Council's lawyers will support this delivery by providing advice on and preparing contractual documentation.

Comments checked by:

Jayne Pringle, Head of Law – Contracts & Conveyancing  
[Jayne.pringle@oxfordshire.gov.uk](mailto:Jayne.pringle@oxfordshire.gov.uk)

## **Staff Implications**

25. The costs detailed have included suitable provision for staffing costs for managing the delivery of these projects.

## **Equality & Inclusion Implications**

26. Potential impacts are low, and mitigated by ensuring implementation does not bias

## **Sustainability Implications**

27. The proposals have a positive benefit in reducing the carbon footprint of the Council and providing for future proofing of buildings in terms of climate adaptation and further potential carbon savings.

Comments Checked by: Franco Gonzalez, Carbon Analyst,  
[franco.gonzalez@oxfordshire.co.uk](mailto:franco.gonzalez@oxfordshire.co.uk)

## Risk Management

28. There are a number of risks associated with the delivery of this project, the main risks are local electricity grid upgrades, contractors not being able to deliver within budget, contractors not being able to deliver within time. These risks will be managed in line with the Council's corporate approach to risk and the key business cases stages associated with the Capital Governance Programme, to ensure contracts and contractors are managed effectively. The local electricity grid upgrades are an unclear picture that will not be clarified until a grid application is made, however early engagement with the DNO will help clarify this.

Lorna Baxter, Executive Director Resources and Section 151 Officer

Annex: None

Background papers: None

Contact Officer: Sam Thomas, Decarbonisation Manager,  
[sam.thomas@oxfordshire.gov.uk](mailto:sam.thomas@oxfordshire.gov.uk)

April 2025