

County Council

12 May 2026

Agenda

To: **Members of the County COUNCIL**

Notice of a Meeting of the County Council

Tuesday, 12 May 2026 at 10.30 am

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

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



Martin Reeves
Chief Executive

May 2026

Committee Officer: **Democratic Services**
E-mail: CommitteesDemocraticServices@Oxfordshire.gov.uk

AGENDA

1. **Election of Chair for the 2026/27 Council Year**
2. **Election of Vice-Chair for the 2026/27 Council Year**
3. **Minutes** (Pages 9 - 22)

To approve the minutes of the meeting held on 24 March 2026 (**CC1**).

4. **Apologies for Absence**
5. **Declarations of Interest - see guidance note**

Members are reminded that they must declare their interests orally at the meeting and specify (a) the nature of the interest and (b) which items on the agenda are the relevant items. This applies also to items where members have interests by virtue of their membership of a district council in Oxfordshire.

6. **Official Communications**
7. **Cabinet Membership and Delegation of Cabinet Functions (To Follow)**

Report by the Leader of the Council

Council is RECOMMENDED to note the names, addresses and electoral divisions of the people appointed to the Cabinet by the Leader of the Council for the coming year and their respective portfolios.

8. **Audit and Governance Committee Annual Report** (Pages 23 - 34)

Report by the Deputy Chief Executive & S151 Officer and the Director of Law & Governance & Monitoring Officer

Within recommended practice for Audit Committees (CIPFA, Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy – Audit Committees Practical Guidance 2022), the committee reports on an annual basis to Council on how the committee has discharged its responsibilities.

The Council is RECOMMENDED to note the contents of the Annual Report of the Audit & Governance Committee 2025/26.

9. **Committees and Review of Political Balance** (Pages 35 - 46)

Report by the Director of Law and Governance and Monitoring Officer

The Council is required by the Local Government & Housing Act 1989 to review the political balance on its committees on an annual basis.

Note that Annex 2 will be circulated with the Schedule of Business on the day before the Council meeting.

Council is RECOMMENDED

- a) **To decommission the Horton Joint Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee (Horton HOSC);**
- b) **To appoint the committees and committee positions listed in Schedule 1 in Annex 1 continuing with the existing terms of reference; and**
- c) **To appoint members to the committees of the Council as listed at Schedule 1 in Annex 2.**

or

- d) **To appoint the committees and committee positions, including Horton HOSC, listed in Schedule 2 in Annex 1 continuing with the existing terms of reference; and**
 - e) **To appoint members to the committees of the Council as listed at Schedule 2 in Annex 2.**
- f) **To note the review of political balance of committees to reflect the current formation of the political groups.**

10. Scheme of Delegation to Officers (Pages 47 - 48)

Report of the Director of Law & Governance and Monitoring Officer

As Annual Council is required under the Constitution to consider the Scheme of Delegation to Officers as set out in the Council procedure rules (CPR 1.1.2 (xi)), this report is presented in order to inform Members as to the revised timing of when this will be presented to Council.

Council is RECOMMENDED to note that the Scheme of Delegation to Officers is being considered by the Constitution Working Group and the Council meeting on 30 June 2026 will receive their report.

11. Calendar of meetings 2026/27 (Pages 49 - 54)

Report of the Director of Law & Governance and Monitoring Officer

Council is RECOMMENDED to

- a) **approve moving the meeting of the Education and Young People Overview of Scrutiny Committee, originally scheduled for 30 June 2026, to Friday 26**

June 2026 with a 10:30 am start; and

b) note the Calendar of Meetings in Annex 1.

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.

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.

This page is intentionally left blank

Agenda Item 3

OXFORDSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

MINUTES of the meeting held on Tuesday, 24 March 2026 commencing at 10.30 am and finishing at 3.50 pm

Present:

Councillor Mark Lygo – in the Chair

Councillors:

Ted Fenton (Vice-Chair)	Andrew Gant	Gavin McLauchlan
Thomas Ashby	Emma Garnett	Lesley McLean
Brad Baines	Sean Gaul	Ian Middleton
James Barlow	Stefan Gawrysiak	Toyah Overton
Ron Batstone	Laura Gordon	Glynis Phillips
Tim Bearder	Andy Graham	James Plumb
Will Boucher-Giles	Tom Greenaway	Susanna Pressel
Chris Brant	Kate Gregory	Leigh Rawlins
Liz Brighthouse OBE	Jane Hanna OBE	Judy Roberts
Mark Cherry	Jenny Hannaby	James Robertshaw
Andrew Coles	David Henwood	Paul-Austin Sargent
Nicholas Michael Cotter	Ben Higgins	Geoff Saul
Andrew Crichton	David Hingley	John Shiri
Hao Du	Johnny Hope-Smith	Roz Smith
Imade Edosomwan	Robin Jones	Ian Snowdon
Gareth Epps	Emily Kerr	Peter Stevens
Lee Evans	Liz Leffman	Bethia Thomas
Neil Fawcett	Dan Levy	Liam Walker
Nick Field-Johnson	Diana Lugova	Matt Webb
Maggie Filipova-Rivers	Saj Malik	Tony Worgan
Rebekah Fletcher	Kieron Mallon	
James Fry	Emma Markham	

The Council considered the matters, reports and recommendations contained or referred to in the agenda for the meeting and decided as set out below. Except insofar as otherwise specified, the reasons for the decisions are contained in the agenda and reports, copies of which are attached to the signed Minutes.

9/26 MINUTES
(Agenda Item 1)

The Chair welcomed Members and stated that Item 11 would be considered before Item 10.

RESOLVED:

That the minutes of the meeting held on 10 February 2026 be approved and signed as an accurate record of the proceedings.

10/26 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

(Agenda Item 2)

Apologies were received from Councillors Creed, Edwards and Heritage.

11/26 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST - SEE GUIDANCE NOTE

(Agenda Item 3)

There were no declarations of interest.

12/26 OFFICIAL COMMUNICATIONS

(Agenda Item 4)

The Chair noted that on 11 March, Oxfordshire County Council recognised outstanding members of the Oxfordshire Fire and Rescue Service through the annual Fire and Community Safety Service Awards. He extended congratulations to all those awarded medals for their service.

The Chair was honoured to attend annual community Ramadan Iftar events at Mansfield College, Blenheim Palace, and the Oxford Academy. At the Oxford Academy, he spoke to a diverse audience on their chosen theme, 'Building Community Trust'. He thanked the Dialogue Society for hosting these events.

The Chair reminded Members of The Chair's Birthday Charity Quiz, to be held on Friday, 17 April at OXSRAD Sports Centre, Court Place Farm, Oxford OX3 0NQ, raising funds for the Chair's chosen charities, OXSRAD, Abingdon RDA, and Oxford United in the Community. Tickets are priced at £20 per person – which includes a welcome drink, cheese and biscuits platter.

The Chair also congratulated and expressed sincere thanks to County Hall Facilities Manager Tim Stimpson MBE on his 32 years of service to the Council including his valuable support for Chairs' fundraising events down the years. The Chair wished Tim Stimpson well for his retirement.

13/26 APPOINTMENTS

(Agenda Item 5)

RESOLVED:

That on Oxfordshire County Council Joint Consultative Committee for Uniformed Members of the Fire Service - Councillor Fawcett replaces Councillor Hannaby.

14/26 PETITIONS AND PUBLIC ADDRESS

(Agenda Item 6)

Thame and Haddenham Greenway

Sarah Green presented a petition calling for a greenway to link the communities of Thame and Haddenham. Currently the only safe option was for people to use their cars. The petition gained nearly 4000 signatures, with around 1000 from Oxfordshire alone. The route crosses local authorities and there were colleagues campaigning on the same issue with Buckinghamshire Council.

Councillor Gant, Cabinet Member for Transport Management, responded that the Council was continuing to work in partnership with Buckinghamshire Council to investigate an active travel link connecting Haddenham and Thame. Both authorities have committed funding and resources towards the development of the scheme and are working towards conducting public engagement in 2026. The petition will be referred to the Director of Economy and Place for follow up.

Broughton Road, Banbury

Wendy Wilkinson presented a petition requesting speed restrictions and a safe pedestrian crossing on the north end of Broughton Road. Council was informed that Wendy Wilkinson had been hit by a car and sustained a broken neck and ankle. The petition was signed by 70 residents of Broughton Road. It was felt that residents in the estates off that road would support the request.

Councillor Gant, Cabinet Member for Transport Management, responded that whilst funding was available through the Vision Zero road safety programme, the financial allocation for the forthcoming financial year 2026-27 had already been allocated to other projects. However, Councillor Gant advised, that the Council will consider measures for Broughton Road, including a pedestrian crossing, for inclusion in a future programme and also as part of the planned monitoring of the 20 mile an hour programme. The petition will be referred to the Director of Environment and Highways for follow-up.

Roundham Crossing, Kidlington

Lisa Smith presented a petition to save Roundham Crossing in Kidlington from the closure requested in the developer's agreement for the PR8 site at Begbrook Science Park. It was stated that the crossing provides a vital link for residents in Kidlington, with access to green space and connection to important local routes, including the Oxford Canal towpath, the Begbrook Bridleway, and the new footpath and cycleway. The petition, with 638 signatures, called on Oxfordshire County Council, as a statutory consultee on transport, to oppose the closure of the crossing.

Councillor Roberts, Cabinet Member for Place, Environment and Climate Action, confirmed that East-West connectivity in the Kidlington area was a key consideration in the County Council's place planning. At the same time, safety concerns were likely to lead to the crossing itself being closed to achieve the objective of more frequent train services across the Oxfordshire network. Councillor Roberts added that Oxfordshire County Council will look

at what is feasible to mitigate a closure and work with local Councillors, the community, Network Rail and other stakeholders in an attempt to identify a solution. This petition will be referred to the Director of Economy and Place for follow-up.

Travel pass limit

Nathan Stanton presented a petition requesting the removal of the 9am limit on free travel for pass holders with learning and other disabilities. Nathan Stanton advised that people should not have to rearrange key job or health appointments or travel to their day centres to avoid travelling before 9am. The government's own inclusive transport strategy states that disabled people should have the same access to opportunities as everyone else. Oxfordshire should be leading the way in making that a reality. The petition had 200 signatures, with around 100 from Oxfordshire postcodes.

Councillor Gant, Cabinet Member for Transport Management, responded that the County Council currently spends £10.5 million supporting the concessionary travel scheme per year. An extension to the time period of concessionary travel would result in an increase in the level of reimbursement paid to bus operators. This would lead to costs in excess of the current budget for the scheme. The matter will be referred to the Director of Environment and Highways to consider the potential policy and budgetary impact of such a change should such funding become available from central government or another suitable source.

15/26 QUESTIONS WITH NOTICE FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC

(Agenda Item 7)

Ten questions were submitted. The questions, responses and supplementary questions are recorded in an Annex below.

16/26 QUESTIONS WITH NOTICE FROM MEMBERS OF THE COUNCIL

(Agenda Item 8)

Sixty seven questions were asked. The questions, responses and supplementary questions are recorded in an Annex below.

17/26 REPORT OF THE CABINET

(Agenda Item 9)

Council received the Cabinet report covering the 9 December 2025, 16 December 2025, 27 January 2026 and 24 February 2026 Cabinet meetings.

On item 1 (Devolution), Councillor Baines asked what steps the Council was taking with authorities across the proposed geography to ensure the earliest possible development of a spatial development strategy and the establishment of a foundation strategic authority. Councillor Leffman responded that there was a consultation underway on the development of a spatial development strategy and that a letter of interest had been sent to government on a proposed foundation strategic authority last week.

Councillor Epps asked why the government decided to include Swindon in the proposed area for a foundation strategic authority. Councillor Leffman stated that discussions had taken place across the proposed area and highlighted that it was for the government to finalise geographical arrangements. Councillor Epps also highlighted that Swindon was in different policing and health authorities.

Councillor Smith asked for reassurance that engagement with parishes and neighbourhood meetings would continue during devolution for Oxfordshire. Councillor Leffman gave that reassurance and noted the engagement with Oxfordshire Association of Local Councils through local government reorganisation.

Councillor Gordon asked about the recent government announcement for a Greater Oxford Development Corporation (GODC) and how that would fit in with ongoing devolution in Oxfordshire, which would highlight that the One Oxfordshire proposal would be the best way forward. Councillor Leffman concurred with those points and stated that the proposed GODC should incorporate a wider area to include some of Oxfordshire's science and business parks.

Councillor Middleton asked if Councillor Leffman agreed with the need for clarity from government regarding the recent announcement on a GODC. Councillor Leffman agreed that clarity would be welcomed and that the government's approach to the GODC needed to include the whole of Oxfordshire and not just Greater Oxford.

Councillor Barlow asked why the Council did not use devolution to reframe the relationship between climate change and economic growth. Councillor Leffman stated that it was clear that growth needed to be sustainable, with efficient transport networks to link up the Thames Valley whilst being mindful of climate change.

Councillor Walker noted that devolution has been discussed at previous Council meetings and asked why local government reorganisation proposals were not afforded the same opportunity. Councillor Leffman stated that there had been plenty of opportunities to discuss LGR through All-Member Briefings and at Place Overview and Scrutiny meetings, noting there were different views across the chamber but that ultimately the final decision was for the government.

On item 2 (HR & Cultural Change – Quarterly Employee Data Report – Quarter 3 2025/26), Councillor Phillips noted the shortfall in expected savings from organisational redesign and asked for information to be included in future reports. The Deputy Leader was happy to look at where that would be possible and highlighted that organisational staff changes needed to be managed carefully.

On item 3 (Oxfordshire Learning Disability Plan 2025-2035), Councillor Edosomwan asked what measures would be taken within the plan to ensure

that communication was accessible for people with learning disabilities. Councillor Bearder agreed this was important, and referenced steps taken to deliver accessible communication such as making communications available in both printed and digital form.

Councillor Hanna asked whether the Cabinet Member agreed that this plan (Item 3, Oxfordshire Learning Disability Plan 2025-2035) needed to be a living document and that it should return to the Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee for progress updates in 2027. Councillor Bearder agreed and noted that adult social care would welcome working with scrutiny and other partners to ensure it remained a living document.

On item 4 (My Life My Choice Councillor Deal), Councillor Edosomwan noted the pledge referencing councillors signing the deal to show support and asked why this had not happened to date. Councillor Bearder explained that this might have been an oversight and encouraged all members to read the document.

Councillor Hanna asked if NHS commitment and integration were necessary to ensure success locally in tackling inequalities faced by people with learning disabilities and whether the Cabinet Member shared concerns about the lack of transparency regarding cuts within the Integrated Care Board. Councillor Bearder noted that Oxfordshire had one of the largest pooled budgets with the NHS across the country and confirmed that he'd like to see the My Life My Choice commitment made across the NHS.

Councillor Jones asked about the challenges faced in co-production of this work, given the importance of supporting people with learning disabilities. Councillor Bearder confirmed that the My Life My Choice deal and Learning Disability Plan were aligned.

On item 5 (Infrastructure Funding Statement 2024/25 and Section 106 Improvement Programme Update), Councillor Fry asked for an indication of how the recent government announcement of releasing funds to fix Kennington Rail Bridge, could lead to section 106 funding becoming available for other projects in the area. Councillor Roberts responded that it wasn't clear if the money would go into the section 106 pot directly and highlighted that the overall project overall could take 5 years.

Councillor Pressel asked what the Council was going to do to address the build-up of section 106 funds it held as the spending backlog was increasing. Councillor Roberts highlighted that spending had increased in the last reporting period in comparison with the previous reporting period, as well as the acceleration programme and funding put in place to quicken section 106 spending.

Councillor Baines asked for an updated timeline on when section 106 contributions would be spent over the medium term, what new receipt of monies were expected and if there would be a net reduction in the balance of money held. Councillor Roberts stated that whilst the information could be

found in the reports produced annually officers would be requested to provide some information in response to this question.

Councillor Worgan asked whether future funding would be made available for the Didcot Northern Perimeter Road phase 3 (NPR3) scheme, as housing growth made this a critical piece of infrastructure that was needed. Councillor Roberts agreed that it was not an ideal situation and that the Council had committed to building its section, with negotiations continuing with the developers about other parts of the scheme.

Councillor Epps asked the Cabinet Member to thank officers for using the accelerator programme scheme to progress the Heyford Park mitigation measures. Councillor Roberts undertook to pass on thanks to officers.

Councillor Snowdon asked how a significant slow-down in housing would impact the delivery of the Didcot NPR3 scheme. Councillor Roberts noted that the sticking point was the precise number of homes being built and whether 500 was the correct number.

On item 6 (Updates to 'Implementing Decide & Provide'), Councillor Baines asked about the anticipated cumulative impact on these updates to the Local Transport and Connectivity Plan (LTCP) targets for net reductions in car journeys, and how the views expressed by the highways authority are considered in the implementation of this framework at district-level planning authorities. Councillor Roberts stated that more information was available on the website relating to the government's 'Decide & Provide' policy and that clarification would be provided in a written response.

Councillor Kerr asked how the Council's road-building initiatives, such as HIF1 and Watlington Relief Road adhere to the 'Decide & Provide' framework and asked if the models for traffic impacts were the same as in the LTCP framework. Councillor Roberts believed that the documents were available through HIF1 Planning Inspectorate's reports and that it would have been in the documentation considered by the Secretary of State when deciding to approve the application.

On item 7 (Movement and Place Plans – Science Vale), Councillor Fry noted that the Movement and Place Plans passed by Cabinet, referred to 2011 Census data, rather than 2021 data, and asked whether the reduction in car use had been achieved over that decade. Councillor Roberts noted that the problem with the 2021 Census was that it took place during the COVID-19 pandemic making it difficult to use. The consensus moving forward was that other sources should be used alongside census data.

Councillor Kerr noted that the majority of schemes within the plan were road-widening and asked how that adhered to the 'Decide & Provide' framework discussed previously, and asked what funding was in place for solely cycling and walking schemes. Councillor Roberts noted that the accelerator section 106 programme allocated funding for cycling and walking schemes. Councillor Roberts referenced the council's Local Cycling and Walking

Infrastructure Plans (LCWIPs) programme, which identified identifying suitable schemes so that when funds became available, plans were already in place.

Councillor Jones asked for the felling of trees on the HIF1 route be stopped until the impacts of losing trees was assessed, given that the move to environmental impact standards will require the Council to do so in the future regardless. Councillor Roberts committed to provide a written response.

On item 8 (LTCP Monitoring Report 2024-2025), Councillor Fry asked if the ambitious targets within the LTCP would be revised in light of experience. Councillor Roberts stated that the overall project, in terms of how data was presented and handled, would be revised as there were new government standards that the Council needed to take into consideration, as well the need to adjust the population figures.

Councillor Pressel asked how the Council was going to speed up the move to active travel as it was currently failing to achieve a meaningful modal shift. Councillor Roberts confirmed that active travel was towards the top of the Council's agenda, citing the recent upgrade in the Council's active travel ranking, notwithstanding funding constraints.

Councillor Baines asked if there were targets for residents to be within walking distances of bus routes and if the LTCP had modal shift targets for increased bus use. Councillor Roberts stated that 2 buses per hour would be built into parking standards and that the Council was assessing walking distances to various facilities.

Councillor Middleton asked about the east-west cycle path on Bicester Road outlined in the Kidlington LCWIP and whether funding would become available for an important piece of active travel infrastructure. Councillor Roberts noted the importance of LCWIPs in providing plans for areas but stated that the proposal was unfunded and therefore reliant on other sources of funding becoming available before the scheme could be delivered.

Councillor Kerr asked for an update on the progress towards parking targets within the LTCP since 2019. Councillor Roberts undertook to take that forward in the redesign of the report.

On item 10 (Capital Programme Update and Monitoring Report), Councillor Coles welcomed the long overdue enhancements in Witney through Shores Green and Witney Library but asked about the delays to the Witney High Street enhancement schemes. Councillor Levy noted the delays and confirmed that it was scheduled for decision later on in the week, which, if approved, would deliver improvements to the High Street.

Councillor Baines asked what steps were being taken to strengthen financial and project management of key schemes to avoid financial and reputational risks to the Council. Councillor Levy stated the Council had improved the

management of big projects and noted that a period of high inflation meant it was imperative for the Council to undertake work as quickly as possible.

Councillor Hanna asked how section 106 funds were being used to drive forward the Council's capital programme. Councillor Levy noted that section 106 agreements were almost always tied to specific projects but noted the Council was improving its flexibility to be able to spend money more quickly and using various sources of money to fund projects, such as the Milton Heights Bridge scheme approved by Cabinet last week.

Councillor Pressel asked about the delay in relation to the progress of the Oxford Flood Alleviation Scheme and stated that the Council needed to impress a sense of urgency as it was vital for residents of Oxford. Councillor Levy stated that officers were working on this project and that the Council did have a sense of urgency. Councillor Levy undertook to provide a written response outlining the current position.

18/26 OFFICER CODE OF CONDUCT (CONSTITUTIONAL AMENDMENT)
(Agenda Item 11)

The Chair took Item 11 ahead of Item 10.

Council considered the report which summarised the comprehensive review of the Code that was undertaken by the Director of Law & Governance and Monitoring Officer, taking into consideration best practice, and benchmarking against other authorities. Council was asked to approve the revised code.

The recommendation was moved by Councillor Smith, Chair of the Audit & Governance Committee and seconded by Councillor Shiri, Deputy Chair. Following discussion, the recommendation was approved unanimously with 62 votes in favour, none against and no abstentions.

RESOLVED:

that the Constitution be amended at Part 9.6 Officers' Code of Conduct with the text in the Annex.

19/26 ANNUAL REPORT OF THE DIRECTOR OF PUBLIC HEALTH
(Agenda Item 10)

The Chair accepted two requests to speak on this item before Members considered it.

Laura Price, Chief Executive of Oxfordshire Community & Voluntary Action (OCVA), addressed Council on the importance of the Director of Public Health Annual Report and the progress made since the 2019/20 "Some Are More Equal Than Others" report. Laura Price reflected on how COVID-19 exposed deep inequalities in Oxfordshire but also demonstrated the strength of community action when statutory partners and the voluntary sector work flexibly, share power and build trust.

The success of initiatives such as the Connected Communities Fund, Community Capacity Grants and Well Together, were highlighted, which have enabled grassroots groups not only to deliver services but to shape local solutions based on lived experience. Council was warned that the voluntary and community sector faced increasing financial pressure, rising demand and limited resilience, coinciding with the uncertainties of local government reorganisation.

Professor Sir Michael Marmot addressed Council via a recorded contribution, expressing strong support for Oxfordshire's work on health equity. Oxfordshire's unique position among Marmot Communities was highlighted, given it combined areas of significant affluence and academic excellence with deep pockets of rural poverty. The County's progress since the earlier public health report was praised, which had identified these inequalities and stated that this progress contributed to his "evidence-based hope."

Sir Michael stressed that significant challenges remained, particularly around rural deprivation, but noted that Oxfordshire's work had national and international relevance. Sir Michael felt the County's Marmot advisory board meetings was exceptionally strong while also firmly rooted in action. Sir Michael concluded by reaffirming his commitment to supporting Oxfordshire as a Marmot County and emphasised that the work being undertaken locally had the potential to improve outcomes for Oxfordshire residents while serving as a guiding example to other regions.

Council had before it the Director of Public Health Annual Report 2025/26 which offered a comprehensive and accessible review of Oxfordshire's progress in addressing health inequalities since the 2019/20 report, *Some Are More Equal Than Others*.

The report was presented by Councillor Gregory, Cabinet Member for Public Health and Inequalities, who also moved the recommendations. Councillor Leffman, Leader of the Council, seconded the recommendations.

Following discussion, the recommendations were approved with 58 votes in favour, no votes against and seven abstentions.

RESOLVED:

- a) **That the 2025/26 Director of Public Health Annual Report be noted and specifically the progress made to address health inequalities in Oxfordshire following the publication of the Director of Public Health Annual Report in 2019/2020, which marked a pivotal moment in Oxfordshire.**
- b) **That the interactive format of the Director of Public Health Annual Report 2025/26 be supported and the insights that can be used for informing future service delivery plans, be noted.**

20/26 MOTION FROM COUNCILLOR TOM GREENAWAY

(Agenda Item 12)

The motion was proposed by Councillor Greenaway and seconded by Councillor Epps.

“Pride in the appearance of the public realm is important to our residents. Clean and well-maintained pavements make people feel good about their neighbourhood, reduce accidents, and prevent more costly problems later. Neglect leads to uneven footways, hazards for those with mobility difficulties, and higher long-term repair bills.

Routine weed clearance on county pavements was part of highways maintenance until 2007/08, when budget cuts removed the programme. Some parishes now commission their own weed spraying and may be using glyphosate, increasingly opposed by residents because of its risks to health, pets, rivers, and biodiversity. Other parishes are now beginning to trial alternative approaches.

Council resolves to:

1. Note the historic withdrawal of routine weed clearance and the resulting concerns about accessibility, safety, and neighbourhood appearance.
2. Recognise the Council’s statutory duty to keep pavements free of hazards, and that neglect increases both risks and costs.
3. Request Cabinet to seek an officer report with options for re-establishing pavement weed clearance and scheduled maintenance, including alternatives to glyphosate, and how the Council can support towns and parishes to reduce reliance on chemical spraying.
4. Request that the Cabinet Member for Finance, Property and Transformation give due consideration to the findings of this report as part of the next round of budget setting.”

Following discussion, an electronic vote was taken. The motion was carried with 64 votes in favour, no abstentions and none against.

21/26 MOTION FROM COUNCILLOR GLYNIS PHILLIPS

(Agenda Item 13)

The motion was proposed by Councillor Phillips and seconded by Councillor Barlow.

“Oxfordshire is an expensive place to live and work. Oxfordshire County Council (OCC) staff need and deserve the Oxford Living Wage (OLW).

Paying the OLW helps tackle in-work poverty, improves staff wellbeing and retention, and supports local economic resilience. Extending to all suppliers, service-providers and contractors, via inclusion in all contracts, will multiply the impact.

From April 2026, the Oxford Living Wage, a voluntary rate set at 95% of the London Living Wage, will be £14.06 an hour. It recognises the high cost of living in Oxford, costs that OCC workers must meet.

This Council aims for a healthier, fairer and greener county, one that delivers real social value: Paying all staff a living wage is fundamental.

In 2025-6 OCC's lowest paid staff earned £980 less than if an Oxford Living Wage was in place.

OCC could also implement an Oxfordshire Living Wage, reflecting the real cost of living in Oxfordshire.

This Council therefore commits to an Oxfordshire Living Wage and asks Cabinet to

- Include sufficient capacity in the 2027/2028 budget to meet the cost of implementing the Oxford Living Wage for all staff
- Ensure all new contracts negotiated after such decision has been made require contractors, suppliers and service providers to pay the Oxford Living Wage and existing providers as contracts get renewed
- Seek to work with Oxford City Council and Oxfordshire District Councils to explore expanding the Oxford Living Wage to be an Oxfordshire Living Wage
- Publicly promote OCC's commitment to the Oxfordshire Living Wage"

Following discussion, Councillor Evans proposed that the question be now put and this was seconded by Councillor Walker. The Chair agreed that the item had been sufficiently discussed and put the proposal to move to the vote meaning there would be no further debate.

The vote was lost with 20 votes in favour, 24 votes against and 5 abstentions.

Following further discussion, the question was put. Councillor Worgan stood to request a roll call vote and at least seven other Members stood to support the request.

The motion was carried.

The result of the roll call vote was as follows:

Councillors voting in favour (47): Baines, Barlow, Batstone, Bearder, Brant, Brighthouse, Cherry, Coles, Cotter, Crichton, Edosomwan, Epps, Fawcett, Filipova-Rivers, Fletcher, Fry, Gant, Garnett, Gaul, Graham, Greenaway,

Gregory, Hanna, Hannaby, Higgins, Hingley, Hope-Smith, Jones, Leffman, Levy, Lugova, Lygo, Markham, McLauchlan, McLean, Middleton, Overton, Phillips, Pressel, Rawlins, Roberts, Saul, Smith, Stevens, Thomas, Webb, Worgan.

Councillors voting against (0)

Councillors abstaining (13): Ashby, Du, Evans, Fenton, Field-Johnson, Henwood, Malik, Mallon, Plumb, Robertshaw, Sargent, Snowdon, Walker.

22/26 MOTION FROM COUNCILLOR LEE EVANS

(Agenda Item 14)

The motion was proposed by Councillor Evans and seconded by Councillor Walker.

“For eleven consecutive years, under varying political leaderships, Oxfordshire County Council was named the top performing county council waste disposal authority.

- The 2025 Satisfaction Ratings of Services survey showed 72% of residents were satisfied with the way Household Waste Recycling Centres operated, with only 16% dissatisfied.
- The hard-work of employees who operate our centres, alongside the conscientiousness of Oxfordshire residents, made the operation of centres a success story in our county.

In spite of this positive record, this Council administration has implemented a series of changes, including a mandatory booking system and the need to bring proof of address with you when using a centre.

This Council acknowledges that:

- The new rules for using waste and recycling centres place additional bureaucratic burdens on residents, making it harder for them to use local centres.
- The implementation of these rules, we believe, has reduced the number of visits to the centres, with more waste likely to be redirected into District & City Council waste collections or, in some cases, fly-tipped.
- These rules are, therefore, a threat to the high rates of recycling previously seen in our County and risk undermining public satisfaction with waste and recycling services.

Therefore, this Council resolves to request the Cabinet to reconsider the issue of rules for using the household waste and recycling centres; revoke these new and unnecessary burdens on local residents; and return to the popular and successful model previously operated.”

The Chair advised that he would hear one speaker from each party on this motion.

Following discussion, an electronic vote was taken and the motion was lost with 23 votes in favour, 33 against and 4 abstentions.

23/26 MOTION FROM COUNCILLOR JAMES BARLOW
(Agenda Item 15)

The time being 3.50 pm, the motion was not considered in accordance with Council Procedure Rule 5.2.

..... in the Chair

Date of signing

Council

12 May 2025

Annual Report of the Audit & Governance Committee 2025/26

**Report by Deputy Chief Executive & S151 Officer /
Director of Law & Governance & Monitoring Officer**

RECOMMENDATION

1. The Council is **RECOMMENDED** to

To note the contents of the Annual Report of the Audit & Governance Committee 2025/26.

Executive Summary

2. The Audit & Governance Committee Annual Report 2025/26 is attached at Appendix 1. The Annual Report contains information relating to the work of Audit & Governance Committee during 2025/26. It is presented to Council, by the Chair of the Audit & Governance Committee.

Annual Report

3. Within recommended practice for Audit Committees (CIPFA, Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy – Audit Committees Practical Guidance 2022), the committee should report on an annual basis to Council on how the committee has discharged its responsibilities.
4. The Annual Report 2025/26 was approved at the March Audit & Governance Committee.

Financial Implications

5. There are no financial implications arising from this report.

Comments checked by: Lorna Baxter, Deputy Chief Executive & S151 Officer,
lorna.baxter@oxfordshire.gov.uk

Legal Implications

6. There are no direct legal implications arising from this report.

Comments checked by: Anita Bradley, Director of Law & Governance & Monitoring Officer, anita.bradley@oxfordshire.gov.uk

Staff Implications

7. There are no staffing implications arising from this report.

Equality & Inclusion Implications

8. There are no equality and inclusion implications arising from this report.

Sustainability Implications

9. There are no sustainability implications arising from this report.

Risk Management

10. There are no risk management implications arising from this report.

Lorna Baxter, Deputy Chief Executive & S151 Officer
Anita Bradley, Director of Law & Governance & Monitoring Officer

Annex: Annual Report of the Audit and Governance Committee
2025/26.

Background papers: None.

Contact Officer: Sarah Cox, Chief Internal Auditor,
sarah.cox@oxfordshire.gov.uk

May 2026.

ANNEX 1

Audit & Governance Committee Annual Report

Report of the work of the Audit & Governance Committee during 2025-26

Contents

Section	Page
Chair's Introduction	3
Role of the Audit and Governance Committee	4
Key Activities	5

Chair's Introduction

As Chair, I am very pleased to present this annual report which sets out the role of the Audit & Governance Committee and summarises the work we have undertaken both as a committee, and through the support of the Audit Working Group during the financial year 2025/26.

The Committee operates in accordance with the good practice guidance produced by the Chartered Institute of Public Finance Accountancy (CIPFA), revised 2022. I am satisfied that we are functioning effectively and in accordance with these standards, providing an independent, high-level source of assurance that supports strong governance and sound public financial management.

This year we were delighted to welcome two new Independent Members, who joined the Committee in the summer of 2025.

Members continue to be well supported by officers across the Council, who provide high-quality reports and presentations to enable effective review. I would like to thank colleagues from Internal Audit, External Audit, Law & Governance, and Finance for their valuable contributions throughout the year.

Finally, I wish to express my sincere thanks to all officers, the Independent Members, the Deputy Chair, Councillor John Shiri, and my fellow Committee Members for their commitment and constructive support. Their collective efforts have significantly contributed to the Committee's work over the past year.

COUNCILLOR ROZ SMITH

Chair, Audit & Governance Committee

Role of the Audit & Governance Committee

The Audit and Governance Committee operates in accordance with the 'Audit Committees, Practical Guidance for Local Authorities' produced by the Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy (CIPFA) 2022. The Committee complies with the CIPFA's position statement. The Guidance defines the purpose of an Audit Committee as follows:

Audit committees are a key component of an authority's governance framework. Their purpose is to provide an independent and high-level focus on the adequacy of governance, risk and control arrangements. The committee's role in ensuring that there is sufficient assurance over governance risk and control gives greater confidence to all those charged with governance that those arrangements are effective.

The committee has oversight of both internal and external audit together with the financial and governance reports, helping to ensure that there are adequate arrangements in place for both internal challenge and public accountability.

The key functions of the Audit and Governance Committee are defined within the Council's Constitution. In discharging these functions, the Committee is supported by the Audit Working Group.

How the Committee has discharged its responsibilities during 2025/26

Key A&G Committee Activities	June 25	July 25	Sept 25	Nov 25	Jan 26	March 26
Financial Reporting						
Statement of accounts 2024/25						
Local Audit Reform: Audit Consultation Outcome						
Review of Treasury Management Annual Performance Report 2024/25						
Treasury Management Performance Report						
Treasury Management Annual Investment Strategy 2026/27						
Treasury Management mid-term review 2025/26						
Assessment of the Council's Financial Management, Controls & Governance						
Financial Management Code						
Financial Regulations Update						
Accounting Polices						
Internal Audit						
Annual Report of the Chief Internal Auditor 2024/25						
Internal Audit Strategy and Plan 2025/26						
Internal Audit Charter and Quality Assurance Programme 2025/26						
Reports from Audit Working Group						
Review of Internal Audit Reports and monitor of in-year progress						
External Audit						
External audit updates						
Governance & Risk Management						
Annual Governance Statement (AGS) for 2024/25						
Review of AGS action plan						
Risk Management update						
Local Government Reorganisation Update						
Oxfordshire Fire & Rescue Statement of Assurance						
Oxford Fire & Rescue Annual Report						

Key A&G Committee Activities	June 25	July 25	Sept 25	Nov 25	Jan 26	March 26
Review of Appointment to Outside Bodies / Appointments to Outside Bodies						
Local Government Ombudsman annual report						
Monitoring Officer annual report 2024/25						
Annual Report of A&G committee 2025/26 – draft						
Whistleblowing annual report 2024/25						
Annual report of Health and Safety						
Audit Working Group Terms of Reference						
Constitution Working Group Member Champions						
Government Response to Strengthening the Standards Conduct Framework						
RIPA policy						
Officers Code of Conduct						
Electoral Fees and Charges						
Code of Corporate Governance						
Counter-Fraud						
Approval of Counter-Fraud Strategy and plan for 2025/26						
Anti-Fraud and Corruption Strategy						
Counter-Fraud Plan update						

The Committee is supported by the Audit Working Group (AWG):

Key Audit Working Group activities	Dec 25	March 26
Internal Audit of Strategic Contract Management 2024/25		
Internal Audit of Income Collection Street Works & Parking 2024/25		
Internal Audit of Safeguarding Transport 2025/26		
Internal Audit of School Attendance 2025/26		

2025/26 Key Achievements:

- The Committee and the Audit Working Group (AWG) have continued to review and monitor material weaknesses identified from the internal audit reports with Senior Managers attending to provide assurance on how the issues were being addressed. This has supported the implementation of the actions plans to deliver the required improvements in key areas for the Council.
- The Committee is pleased to note through review of the Internal Audit reports and monitoring by the Committee and AWG, of the agreed management actions that significant weaknesses in the system of internal control are being prioritised and addressed.
- The Committee has provided effective scrutiny of the treasury management strategy and policies. Receiving regular reports of activity, reviewing the treasury risk profile and adequacy of treasury risk management processes has contributed to good performance in this area.
- The Committee and AWG continue to consider key topics / areas of risk, seeking assurance from lead officers in the relevant areas that robust processes are in place. Areas considered during 2025/26 have included Whistleblowing, Health & Safety, Financial Management, Risk Management and follow up of audits including Strategic Contract Management, Income Collection Street Works & Parking, Safeguarding Transport and School Attendance.

Our work in 2025/26

The key activities of both the Committee and the Audit Working Group are captured in the tables above. In summary:

Financial Reporting

The Committee is responsible for the review and approval of the annual statement of accounts on behalf of the Council. The Committee has received regular updates on progress from the external auditors and officers.

The Committee receives and reviews the results of the Financial Management Code annual self-assessment. The Committee also considered a high-level assessment of the Council's financial management, controls and governance and associated risks, considering the context of councils that have sought Exceptional Financial support and/or issued S114 notices to date.

The Committee receives reports from the Treasury Management Team, exercising its stewardship role. The Committee reviewed the Treasury Management Outturn Report 2024/25, the Treasury Management Mid-term Performance Report 2025/26 and the Treasury Management Strategy Statement and Annual Investment Strategy 2026/27.

Internal Audit

The Committee approved the Internal Audit Strategy for 2025/26, including the annual audit plan. The Committee receives regular progress reports from the Chief Internal Auditor, including summaries of the outcomes from Internal Audit work. Through the Audit Working Group, the Committee monitors the progress with the implementation of management actions arising from audit reports.

Upon finalisation of an internal audit report, the executive summary is included in the quarterly update report to the Audit & Governance Committee. The Committee will request the Audit Working Group consider in more detail any internal audit reports which are graded Red and any Amber reports where the Committee wants further assurance on. Senior Managers are asked to attend the Audit Working Group and explain how the issues identified are being addressed and the progress with implementation of the agreed management actions.

In response to Internal Audit reports the Committee and the Audit Working Group, has looked in detail at the following areas: Strategic Contract Management (overall conclusion graded Amber), Income Collection Street Works and Parking (overall conclusion graded Amber), Safeguarding Transport (overall conclusion graded Red) and School Attendance (overall conclusion graded Red).

The Committee has continued to monitor the resourcing of Internal Audit. The Committee recognises the challenges in recruitment in this area and continue to be updated regarding the recruitment and retention strategies being adopted, which includes the recruitment of apprentice auditors within the team.

The completion of the Internal Audit Plan and the annual statement of the Chief Internal Auditor is produced for the Committee at the end of the financial year. Based on the evidence of the reports presented to the Audit Working Group and the Committee, the team continues to provide an effective challenge and therefore assurance on the key risk activities.

The Committee also met with the Chief Internal Auditor in a private session during November 2025 and is satisfied Internal Audit are free to carry out their duties without restrictions.

The Committee approves the Internal Audit Charter on an annual basis; this was approved at the June 2025 meeting.

As previously reported, the Monitoring Officer undertook a review of the effectiveness of Internal Audit in Autumn 2023, with the findings presented to the Committee in November 2023. The review concluded that there was a strong level of satisfaction with both the quality and effectiveness of the service. A further review is scheduled to take place in 2026. In addition, an external assessment of Internal Audit, which is completed once every five years, was reported to the Committee in January 2024. The assessment confirmed that the service is fully compliant with the Public Sector Internal Audit Standards. Internal Audit has also completed its annual self-assessment for 2025/26 against the new Global Internal Audit Standards for the UK public sector, which has again confirmed full conformance.

External Audit

The Council's external auditors, Ernst and Young, attended committee meetings, providing regular updates on their work plan and any matters arising.

The Committee met with the external auditors in a private session in November 2025. The Committee is satisfied that they are free to carry out their duties without restrictions. The Committee are also assured that if identified, External Audit would bring any material issues to the attention of the Committee.

The Council's audited Statement of Accounts for 2023/24 was published on 10 February 2025. A disclaimed audit opinion was issued as a result of the delays to the audit process and the wider requirements arising from the local audit reset. The Council's external auditors advised that they did not have sufficient resources available to undertake the detailed audit procedures required to obtain sufficient and appropriate audit evidence to support an unmodified audit opinion. Consequently, the Council received a disclaimed opinion on the 2023/24 financial statements.

Notwithstanding this, the external auditors informed the Committee that, in completing their work on the 2023/24 accounts, they undertook significant testing of the 2022/23 closing balances in order to build assurance over those balances. The 2024/25 Statement of Accounts was published on 30 June 2025, and the external audit opinion was issued in February 2026. As a result of the significant audit testing undertaken and the rebuilding of assurance over the brought-forward balances from 2022/23, the Council received a qualified audit opinion on the 2024/25 financial statements. Oxfordshire County Council is among the authorities to have secured an improved audit opinion as a result of the local audit reset.

Governance & Risk Management

The Committee approved the Annual Governance Statement (AGS) for 2024/25. This included improvement actions for 2025/26, within the following areas: Directorate Schemes of Delegation, Review of Members and Officers fiduciary responsibilities, Contract Management, Executive Officer Decisions, Code of Practice on Good Governance for Local Authority Statutory Officers, Appointment of Independent Members of the Audit & Governance Committee, Independent Remuneration Panel, and Inspections Review: Readiness and Sharing Learning.

The Committee and AWG receives and considers updates from officers on key topics/areas of risk such as seeking assurance that robust risk management, governance and internal control processes are in place. Regular risk management updates are provided to the Committee.

The Committee also considered the annual report of the Monitoring Officer; the annual report of the Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman; the annual report of Health & Safety; and the Fire and Rescue Service Annual Statement of Assurance, the RIPA policy, and the annual report of Whistleblowing. There were no material issues or concerns arising.

The Committee approved for the Constitution Working Group to be reconvened, tasked with reviewing the Council's Constitution and making recommendations for improvement where necessary, with progress amendments being made to the Audit & Governance Committee in the first instance, ahead of presentation to Council for approval.

Counter-Fraud

The Audit & Governance Committee receives annually the Counter Fraud Strategy and work plan. The Committee is regularly updated on progress on delivery of the work plan for counter fraud.

The Chief Internal Auditor provided regular updates to the Committee on any reported matters of suspected fraud, including investigations. Outcomes of investigations are reported to and monitored by the Committee. The Committee plays a key role in monitoring the effectiveness of the Council's counter fraud arrangements.

The Committee received a report on Whistleblowing from the Monitoring Officer, that highlighted there have been few cases and where these have arisen, they have been investigated appropriately.

Audit & Governance Committee self-assessment

At the end of 2022, CIPFA (the Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy) issued updated guidance and a revised Position Statement for local authority audit committees. The guidance recommends that committees undertake a regular self-assessment against the standards set out in the 2022 framework.

In February 2023, the Audit & Governance Committee completed this self-assessment, which included a review of core knowledge and skills. As previously reported, the exercise concluded that at the time the Committee demonstrated a strong level of performance against good practice principles. It confirmed that the Committee was well-constituted, has an appropriate skills and knowledge base, and was operating in full compliance with the CIPFA 2022 Position Statement. The assessment also confirmed that the Committee effectively fulfils its terms of reference and appropriately escalates key issues during the year.

A key recommendation within the CIPFA 2022 guidance is that local authority audit committees include two Independent Members. The Committee was pleased to welcome two new Independent Members in the summer of 2025, ensuring continued alignment with best practice.

The next self-assessment is scheduled to take place in June 2026.

Divisions affected – All

COUNCIL

12 MAY 2026

COMMITTEES AND REVIEW OF POLITICAL BALANCE

Report of the Director of Law & Governance and Monitoring Officer

RECOMMENDATION

1. Council is RECOMMENDED
 - a) To decommission the Horton Joint Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee (Horton HOSC);
 - b) To appoint the committees and committee positions listed in Schedule 1 in Annex 1 continuing with the existing terms of reference;
 - c) To appoint members to the committees of the Council as listed at Schedule 1 in Annex 2.

or

 - d) To appoint the committees and committee positions, including Horton HOSC, listed in Schedule 2 in Annex 1 continuing with the existing terms of reference; and
 - e) To appoint members to the committees of the Council as listed at Schedule 2 in Annex 2.
 - f) To note the review of political balance of committees to reflect the current formation of the political groups.

Decommission the Horton Joint Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee

2. A report on Political Balance considered by Council on 12 December 2023 proposed to remove Horton HOSC from the list of committees appointed by Council. This committee was set up to support a funding bid to the Government for a new hospital. The bid was unsuccessful and scrutiny

activities relating to Horton Hospital will be taken forward by the Oxfordshire Joint Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

3. Council did not agree to remove the Horton HOSC at that time. Since then, the position with regard to the scrutiny committee has not changed and Horton HOSC has not met since 27 November 2020. The Director of Law and Governance and Monitoring Officer advises that, as the Council approaches a decision on Local Government Reorganisation, all aspects of the Council's governance should accurately reflect current circumstances.
4. Horton HOSC included one member from Warwickshire County Council and one member from West Northamptonshire Council. Warwickshire County Council has not appointed a member of the committee since May 2024. West Northamptonshire Council has not appointed a member since May 2023. Both councils now list the committee as dormant.

Appointment of Committees

5. It is proposed to re-appoint the committees listed in Schedule 1 in Annex 1, without Horton HOSC, or the committees listed in Schedule 2 in Annex 1, with Horton HOSC.
6. Whilst the Buckinghamshire Oxfordshire Berkshire West Joint Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee (BOBHOSC) has unanimously agreed not to meet any further, it is proposed to retain this committee and appoint Members to it until such time as a Thames Valley Joint Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee is established.
7. The geographical footprint of the corresponding Integrated Care Board is changing which will require a new overview and scrutiny committee to be formed. A Thames Valley Joint HOSC will be constituted in due course by means of a report to each constituent council.

Review of political balance

8. Seats are allocated to political groups in accordance with the groups' proportionate strength on the Council as a whole. Any seats left over are distributed to any non-grouped members.
9. The following rules, in priority order, apply for political proportionality:

- (i) Where a group has an overall majority on the Council, that group is entitled to a majority of the seats on each committee and sub-committee.
 - (ii) Each political group is entitled to its proportion of the total number of seats on all the committees added together, according to the ratio of the number of members of the group to the number of members of the Council.
 - (iii) Subject to (i) and (ii) above, each group is entitled to its proportion of the number of seats on each individual committee.
 - (iv) For sub-committees and some other bodies, a group is entitled to its proportion of the number of seats regardless of the total number of seats involved (but still subject to the majority rule in (i) above).
10. Four political groups were formed on the Council following the election on 1 May 2025. There has been one change to the political groups since then, Councillor Higgins left the Liberal Democrat Group and is now an independent Member, non-aligned. The political balance calculation is based on the following political group sizes:

35	Liberal Democrat Group
12	Labour & Cooperative Group
12	Oxfordshire Alliance Group
7	Green Group

There are three Members not aligned to any political group.

11. The political proportionality calculations following the proposed decommissioning of Horton HOSC are shown in Annex 3 and are summarised as follows:
- There are 69 councillors and 89 seats on committees to allocate proportionally.
 - Due to rule (i) above, the Liberal Democrat Group must have a majority on each committee. This results in a total of 51 seats – above their proportion of 45.14.
 - The Labour & Cooperative Group and the Oxfordshire Alliance Group would be entitled to 15.48 seats each under strict proportionality. Because they have the same number of seats, they have the same proportion calculation on each committee. It was identified that there

were six committees on which one group should have two seats and the other group should have one seat. The two group leaders agreed how those seats will be shared between the groups in a way which maintains the overall balance. The result is that both groups have 15 seats.

- The Green Group would be entitled to 9.03 seats under strict proportionality. However, there are only 8 seats remaining to allocate. The Group has been allocated one seat on each of the eight committees on which it has the highest proportion.

12. The political proportionality calculations without the proposed decommissioning of Horton HOSC are shown in Annex 4 and are summarised as follows:

- There are 69 councillors and 97 seats on committees to allocate proportionally.
- Due to rule (i) above, the Liberal Democrat Group must have a majority on each committee. This results in a total of 56 seats – above their proportion of 49.20.
- The Labour & Cooperative Group and the Oxfordshire Alliance Group would be entitled to 16.87 seats each under strict proportionality. Because they have the same number of seats, they have the same proportion calculation on each committee. It was identified that there were six committees on which one group should have two seats and the other group should have one seat. The two group leaders agreed how those seats will be shared between the groups in a way which maintains the overall balance. The result is that both groups have 16 seats.
- The Green Group would be entitled to 9.84 seats under strict proportionality. However, there are only 9 seats remaining to allocate. The Group has been allocated one seat on each of the eight committees on which it has the highest proportion.

Appointments

13. The leaders of the political groups have been requested to submit their nominees for their committee places in time to be included in the Schedule of Business to be published as Annex 2 to this report the day before the Council meeting.

Legal implications

14. Political groups are constituted and notified to the Proper Officer in accordance with the provisions of the Local Government (Committees and Political Groups) Regulations 1990/1553.
15. Council is responsible for appointing to Committees under s102 of the Local Government Act 1972. Under section 15 Local Government and Housing Act 1989 the Council has a duty to allocate committee seats to achieve political proportionality. This applies to all committees of the Council where at least three seats have to be filled by the members of the Council.

Comments checked by:

Jay Akbar, Head of Legal and Governance Services

Financial implications

16. There are no financial implications arising from the recommendations in this report.

Comments checked by:

Drew Hodgson, Strategic Finance Business Partner

Anita Bradley

Director of Law & Governance and Monitoring Officer

Annex 1 – Committees

Annex 2 – Committee membership

Annex 3 – Political proportionality calculations without Horton HOSC

Annex 4 – Political proportionality calculations with Horton HOSC

Contact officer:

Colm Ó Caomhánaigh, Democratic Services Manager,
colm.oacaomhanaigh@oxfordshire.gov.uk

May 2026

This page is intentionally left blank

COMMITTEES

Schedule 1

1. It is proposed to re-appoint the following committees with the number of places shown in brackets. These committees must be included in the review of political balance.
 - Audit & Governance Committee (9)
 - Buckinghamshire Oxfordshire Berkshire West Joint Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee (BOBHOSC) (7)
 - Charlotte Coxe Trust Committee (5)
 - Education & Young People Overview and Scrutiny Committee (9)
 - Oxfordshire Joint Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee (7)
 - Pension Fund Committee (7)
 - People Overview and Scrutiny Committee (9)
 - Performance & Corporate Services Overview and Scrutiny Committee (9)
 - Place Overview and Scrutiny Committee (9)
 - Planning & Regulation Committee (12)
 - Remuneration Committee (6)

2. It is proposed to re-appoint the following positions with the number of places shown in brackets. These committees are not included in the review of political balance but the practice is to appoint places proportionally as far as possible.
 - Corporate Parenting Panel (9)
 - Oxfordshire County Council & Employees Joint Consultative Committee (7)
 - Oxfordshire County Council & Teachers Joint Committee (5)
 - Oxfordshire County Council Joint Consultative Committee for Uniformed Members of the Fire Service (7)
 - Thames Valley Police & Crime Panel (1)

Schedule 2

3. It is proposed to re-appoint the following committees with the number of places shown in brackets. These committees must be included in the review of political balance.

- Audit & Governance Committee (9)
- Buckinghamshire Oxfordshire Berkshire West Joint Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee (BOBHOSC) (7)
- Charlotte Coxe Trust Committee (5)
- Education & Young People Overview and Scrutiny Committee (9)
- Horton Joint Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee (8)
- Oxfordshire Joint Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee (7)
- Pension Fund Committee (7)
- People Overview and Scrutiny Committee (9)
- Performance & Corporate Services Overview and Scrutiny Committee (9)
- Place Overview and Scrutiny Committee (9)
- Planning & Regulation Committee (12)
- Remuneration Committee (6)

4. It is proposed to re-appoint the following positions with the number of places shown in brackets. These committees are not included in the review of political balance but the practice is to appoint places proportionally as far as possible.

- Corporate Parenting Panel (9)
- Oxfordshire County Council & Employees Joint Consultative Committee (7)
- Oxfordshire County Council & Teachers Joint Committee (5)
- Oxfordshire County Council Joint Consultative Committee for Uniformed Members of the Fire Service (7)
- Thames Valley Police & Crime Panel (1)

Group	Seats	%
Liberal Democrat Group (LD)	35	50.72%
Labour and Cooperative Group (L&C)	12	17.39%
Oxfordshire Alliance (OA)	12	17.39%
Green Group (Grn)	7	10.14%
Total Grouped	66	95.65%
Non-aligned (NA)	3	4.35%
Total	69	100.00%

	LD	LD*	L&C	L&C	OA	OA	Grn	Grn	Totals	
	%	Alloc	%	Alloc	%	Alloc	%	Alloc		
Planning & Regulation Committee #	12	6.09	7	2.09	2	2.09	2	1.22	1	12
Audit & Governance Committee	9	4.57	5	1.57	2	1.57	1	0.91	1	9
Pension Fund Committee	7	3.55	4	1.22	1	1.22	2	0.71		7
Remuneration Committee	6	3.04	4	1.04	1	1.04	1	0.61		6
Charlotte Coxe Trust Committee	5	2.54	3	0.87	1	0.87	1	0.51		5
Overview & Scrutiny Committees:										
Performance & Corporate Services OSC	9	4.57	5	1.57	2	1.57	1	0.91	1	9
People OSC	9	4.57	5	1.57	1	1.57	2	0.91	1	9
Place OSC	9	4.57	5	1.57	1	1.57	2	0.91	1	9
Education and Young People OSC	9	4.57	5	1.57	2	1.57	1	0.91	1	9
Oxfordshire Joint HOSC	7	3.55	4	1.22	1	1.22	1	0.71	1	7
BOB HOSC	7	3.55	4	1.22	1	1.22	1	0.71	1	7
Overall com total	89	45.14	51	15.48	15	15.48	15	9.03	8	89

* Where a group has an overall majority on the Council, that group is entitled to a majority of the seats on each committee and sub-committee.

Councillor Gawrysiak, who is not a member of a political group on the Council, was appointed to a vacancy on the committee by Council on 4 November 2025.

The Leaders of the two groups agreed on an equal share out of seats on these committees to maintain the overall proportions.

This page is intentionally left blank

Group	Seats	%
Liberal Democrat Group (LD)	35	50.72%
Labour and Cooperative Group (L&C)	12	17.39%
Oxfordshire Alliance (OA)	12	17.39%
Green Group (Grn)	7	10.14%
Total Grouped	66	95.65%
Non-aligned (NA)	3	4.35%
Total	69	100.00%

	LD	LD*	L&C	L&C	OA	OA	Grn	Grn	Totals	
	%	Alloc	%	Alloc	%	Alloc	%	Alloc		
Planning & Regulation Committee #	12	6.09	7	2.09	2	2.09	2	1.22	1	12
Audit & Governance Committee	9	4.57	5	1.57	2	1.57	1	0.91	1	9
Pension Fund Committee	7	3.55	4	1.22	1	1.22	2	0.71		7
Remuneration Committee	6	3.04	4	1.04	1	1.04	1	0.61		6
Charlotte Coxe Trust Committee	5	2.54	3	0.87	1	0.87	1	0.51		5
Overview & Scrutiny Committees:										
Performance & Corporate Services OSC	9	4.57	5	1.57	2	1.57	1	0.91	1	9
People OSC	9	4.57	5	1.57	1	1.57	2	0.91	1	9
Place OSC	9	4.57	5	1.57	1	1.57	2	0.91	1	9
Education and Young People OSC	9	4.57	5	1.57	2	1.57	1	0.91	1	9
Horton HOSC	8	4.06	5	1.39	1	1.39	1	0.81	1	8
Oxfordshire Joint HOSC	7	3.55	4	1.22	1	1.22	1	0.71	1	7
BOB HOSC	7	3.55	4	1.22	1	1.22	1	0.71	1	7
Overall com total	97	49.20	56	16.87	16	16.87	16	9.84	9	97

* Where a group has an overall majority on the Council, that group is entitled to a majority of the seats on each committee and sub-committee.

Councillor Gawrysiak, who is not a member of a political group on the Council, was appointed to a vacancy on the committee by Council on 4 November 2025.

The Leaders of the two groups agreed on an equal share out of seats on these committees to maintain the overall proportions.

This page is intentionally left blank

Divisions affected – All

COUNCIL

12 MAY 2026

SCHEME OF DELEGATION TO OFFICERS

Report of the Director of Law & Governance and Monitoring Officer

RECOMMENDATION

1. Council is RECOMMENDED to note that the Scheme of Delegation to Officers is being considered by the Constitution Working Group and the Council meeting on 30 June 2026 will receive their report.

Background

2. The Scheme of Delegation to Officers is normally considered by Annual Council (CPR 1.1.2 (xi)).
3. The Scheme is currently being reviewed by the Constitution Working Group and it is due to report to the meeting of Council on 30 June 2026.
4. In the interim the scheme adopted at the 2025 Annual Council remains in force.

Legal implications

5. As Annual Council is required under the Constitution to consider the Scheme of Delegation to Officers as set out in the Council procedure rules (CPR 1.1.2 (xi)), this report is presented in order to inform Members as to the revised timing of when this will be presented to Council.

Comments checked by:

Jay Akbar, Head of Legal and Governance Services

Financial implications

6. There are no financial implications arising from the recommendations in this report.

Comments checked by:
Drew Hodgson, Strategic Finance Business Partner

Anita Bradley
Director of Law & Governance and Monitoring Officer

Contact officer: Colm Ó Caomhánaigh, Democratic Services Manager,
colm.ocaomhanaigh@oxfordshire.gov.uk

May 2026

Divisions affected – All

COUNCIL

12 MAY 2026

CALENDAR OF MEETINGS 2026/27

Report of the Director of Law & Governance and Monitoring Officer

RECOMMENDATION

Council is RECOMMENDED to

- a) approve moving the meeting of the Education and Young People Overview of Scrutiny Committee, originally scheduled for 30 June 2026, to Friday 26 June 2026 with a 10:30 am start; and
- b) note the Calendar of Meetings in Annex 1.

Background

1. The Calendar of Meetings for 2026/27 was approved by Council on 4 November 2025.
2. At the Council meeting on 9 December 2025, it was agreed to move the Council meeting originally scheduled for 7 July 2026 to 30 June 2026 in order to avoid a clash with the Local Government Association Annual Conference.
3. The Leader of the Council has agreed to hold an extra Cabinet meeting on Tuesday 28 July at 10am.
4. The Corporate Parenting Panel has agreed to alter two of its meeting dates as indicated in Annex 1.
5. It is proposed to move the meeting of the Education and Young People Overview of Scrutiny Committee, originally scheduled for 30 June 2026 to Friday 26 June 2026 with a 10:30 am start.

Legal implications

6. There are no legal implications arising from the recommendations in this report.

Comments checked by:

Jay Akbar, Head of Legal and Governance Services

Financial implications

7. There are no financial implications arising from the recommendations in this report.

Comments checked by:

Drew Hodgson, Strategic Finance Business Partner

Anita Bradley

Director of Law & Governance and Monitoring Officer

Annex: Annex 1: Calendar of Meetings

Contact officer: Colm Ó Caomhánaigh, Democratic Services Manager,
colm.oacaomhanaigh@oxfordshire.gov.uk

May 2026

Oxfordshire County Council Calendar of Meetings 2026/27

Council	Cabinet	Cabinet Member Decisions for Leader, Resources and Deputy Leader and Children & Young People	Cabinet Member Decisions for Adults	Cabinet Member Decisions for Community Wellbeing & Safety	Cabinet Member for Finance, Property and Transformation	Cabinet Member Decisions for Future Economy & Innovation	Cabinet Member Decisions for Place, Environment and Climate Action	Cabinet Member Decisions for Public Health and Inequalities	Cabinet Member Decisions for Transport Management
Tuesday 10.30am	Tuesday 2.00pm	Tuesday 3.00 pm or on the rise of Cabinet	Tuesday 9.00am	Thursday 9.30am	Friday 9.30am	Monday 10am	Thursday 2.00pm	Tuesday 1.00pm	Thursday 10.00am
2026 12 May – Annual Council 30 June 8 Sept 3 Nov 8 Dec 2027 9 Feb 23 Mar 18 May – Annual Council	2026 19 May 16 Jun 14 Jul 28 Jul, 10.00am 15 Sept 20 Oct 17 Nov 20 Oct 17 Nov 15 Dec 2027 17 Nov 15 Dec 2027 26 Jan 23 Feb 26 Jan 23 Feb 16 Mar 20 Apr 16 Mar 20 Apr	2026 19 May 16 Jun 14 Jul 15 Sept 20 Oct 17 Nov 15 Dec 2027 26 Jan 23 Feb 16 Mar 20 Apr	2026 19 May 16 Jun 14 Jul 15 Sept 20 Oct 17 Nov 15 Dec 2027 26 Jan 23 Feb 16 Mar 20 Apr	2025 7 May 4 Jun 9 Jul 3 Sept 1 Oct 5 Nov 10 Dec 2026 7 Jan 11 Feb 11 Mar 8 Apr 6 May	2026 8 May 5 June 3 July 4 Sept 9 Oct 6 Nov 4 Dec 2027 8 Jan 5 Feb 5 March 9 April	2025 11 May 8 June 6 July 7 Sept 5 Oct 9 Nov 7 Dec 2026 11 Jan 8 Feb 8 Mar 12 Apr 10 May	2026 21 May 18 Jun 16 Jul 3 Sept 8 Oct 19 Nov 17 Dec 2027 21 Jan 25 Feb 25 Mar 29 Apr	2026 5 May 9 Jun 14 Jul 1 Sept 6 Oct 10 Nov 1 Dec 2027 5 Jan 2 Feb 2 Mar 13 Apr 11 May	2026 21 May 18 Jun 16 Jul 3 Sept 8 Oct 19 Nov 17 Dec 2027 21 Jan 25 Feb 25 Mar 29 Apr

Oxfordshire County Council Calendar of Meetings 2026/27

Education & Young People Overview & Scrutiny Committee	Oxfordshire Joint Health Overview & Scrutiny Committee	People Overview & Scrutiny Committee	Performance & Corporate Services Overview & Scrutiny Committee	Place Overview & Scrutiny Committee
Tuesday 10.00am	Thursday 10.00am	Thursday 10.00am	Friday 10.00am	Wednesday 10.00am
2026 26 June (Fri, 10:30) 22 Sep 24 Nov 2027 19 Jan 27 Apr	2026 11 Jun 10 Sep 26 Nov 2027 4 Feb 15 Apr	2026 4 Jun 17 Sep 3 Dec 2027 11 Feb 22 Apr	2026 12 Jun 18 Sep 4 Dec 2027 15 Jan 16 Apr	2026 24 Jun 23 Sep 25 Nov 2027 3 Feb 21 Apr

Oxfordshire County Council Calendar of Meetings 2026/27

Audit & Governance Committee	Oxfordshire Health & Wellbeing Board	Pension Fund Committee	Planning & Regulation Committee	Employees Joint Consultative	Fire Service Joint Consultative	Teachers Joint Consultative	Local Pension Board	Corporate Parenting Panel
Wednesday 1.00pm	Thursday 1.00pm	Friday 10.00am	Monday 2.00pm	Thurs 2.00pm	Friday 10.00am	Thursday 2.00pm	Friday 10.30am	Wednesday 4.30pm
2026 20 May 15 Jul 16 Sept 18 Nov 2027 13 Jan 17 Mar	2026 14 May 9 Jul 24 Sep 10 Dec 2027 18 Mar	2026 5 Jun 4 Sep 11 Dec 2027 5 Mar	2026 1 Jun 20 Jul 7 Sept 19 Oct 30 Nov 2027 18 Jan 1 Mar 12 Apr	2026 23 April 16 July 15 Oct 2027 25 Feb 22 Apr	2026 26 Jun 25 Sep 18 Dec 2027 19 Mar	2026 2 Jul 12 Nov 18 Dec 2027 11 Mar	2026 3 Jul 16 Oct 2027 22 Jan 23 Apr	2026 8 Jul 21 Oct* 2027 10 Feb* 14 Apr * amended by the Panel

This page is intentionally left blank