

Oxfordshire County Council

Budget and Business Planning 2025/26

Overarching climate impact review of Labour and Co-operative Group 2025/26 budget amendments

Context & Background

1. This document provides an overview of the potential climate action impact of the Labour and Co-operative group's proposed budget amendments.
2. As many schemes are in early development, further climate assessment will be undertaken as more detailed business cases are developed through the revenue and capital governance process.

Revenue Proposals Climate Impact Review

3. A number of proposals are included in the budget that impact the delivery of the council's Climate Action commitments including:
 - 3.1 Heavy Goods Vehicle Strategy:** this proposal (2026L&CO13) entails the funding of a one-off piece of work for completing remaining areas of Oxfordshire without a heavy goods vehicle strategy. If the strategy led to a delivery programme, this proposal has the potential for contributing to the decarbonisation of heavy goods vehicles and contributing to OCC's Local Transport and Connectivity Plan target to achieve a net zero transport network by 2040.
 - 3.2 Publicise the findings of the Citizens Assembly:** [the Citizens Assembly](#) has been proposed as a deliberative participatory project that brings together 40 members of the public to discuss how the vision and targets set out in the local transport and connectivity plan (LTCP) can be achieved in ways that best meet the needs and preferences of the people of Oxfordshire and other stakeholders. This proposal (2026L&CO16) entails the dissemination of findings of the citizens assembly and undertake a follow-up public engagement exercise. The proposal would potentially contribute to the target of achieving a net zero transport network by 2040 as established in the LTCP.
 - 3.3 Full business case development for Greenways cross-country cycle routes connecting rural villages and market towns to/from Oxford:** this proposal (2026L&CO10) entails an investment for the development of a full business case for cycle routes connecting rural villages and market towns to/from Oxford. These cycle routes proposals have the potential of reducing

congestion, improving air quality and resident's health along with reducing carbon emissions from cars contributing to OCC's target for a net zero transport network by 2040. The Labour and Co-operative group is proposing to fund the capital component of this scheme by defunding active travel schemes that increase connectivity between Oxfordshire's rural and market towns (see point 4.1 Local in capital proposals). Whilst both proposals contribute to reducing carbon emissions reductions and local air pollution, defunding the LCWIP limits the geographical scope of active travel schemes to the central Oxfordshire area at the expense of market towns and rural areas.

Capital Proposals

4. Proposals have been made within the programme that have potential to impact the council's commitment to **achieve a net zero county by 2050 and particularly OCC Local Transport and Connectivity plan target to achieve a net zero transport network by 2040:**

4.1 Reduce capital investment in Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plans (LCWIPs) to fund Greenways cross-country cycle routes: this proposal (2026L&CO20) entails reducing the administrations' proposal for additional funding of LCWIPs (CORP113), which focuses on Oxfordshire's rural and market towns to fund instead cycle routes to access Oxford (see point 3.2 in revenue proposals above). This proposal diverts the focus on enhancing connectivity and accessibility across Oxfordshire rural and market towns towards developing cycles routes for accessing Oxford. Whilst both proposals promote reducing carbon emissions and local air pollution, defunding the LCWIP would limit the impact and reduce it only to central Oxfordshire area at the expense of market towns and rural areas.

4.2 Expanding School Streets programme: this proposal (2026L&CO12) entails the expansion of the School Streets program to add five more schools. The School Streets program is an active travel measure to encourage walking, wheeling, cycling and scooting to schools with the objective of creating a safer and healthier car free environment outside schools. The scheme has the potential of reducing local air pollution, carbon emissions and congestion whilst improving the health of school children. This initiative directly contributes to the Local Transport and Connectivity Plan.

4.3 Phase 2 for "Mini Holland" cycling schemes in East Oxford: this proposal (2026L&CO13) entails funding for the development of Phase 2 of cycling schemes that give priority to cyclists and pedestrians priority over motorists whilst improving green spaces, i.e. emulating the active travel preferences in The Netherlands. In addition, the Labour and Co-operative group is proposing to allocate funding for repairs to pavements and cycleways. These proposals would make direct contribution OCC's Local Transport and Connectivity Plan.

4.4 Expansion of Witney High Street public realms improvements: this proposal entails the expansion of public realm improvements to support better walking and cycling environment. This proposal will contribute to reduce carbon emissions and improve local air quality, improving as a result residents' health and wellbeing.