

**Divisions- N/A**

## **COUNTY COUNCIL – 24 March 2026**

### **REPORT OF THE CABINET**

#### ***Cabinet Member: Leader***

#### **1. Devolution for Oxfordshire**

*(Cabinet, 9 December 2025)*

Cabinet had before it a report which outlined Oxfordshire County Council's proposal to submit an Expression of Interest (EOI) for devolution, aiming to establish a Mayoral Strategic Authority (MSA) to drive regional economic growth and collaboration.

Cabinet noted that the proposal had already been discussed at length in the previous Council meeting, where it received clear cross-party support, and that the Cabinet's role was to build on this consensus.

Cabinet resolved to endorse the benefits of regional devolution and maintain collaborative efforts among local councils. They approved the submission of an Expression of Interest (EOI) to Government, positioning the region for early consideration in future devolution programmes. The EOI was an initial step to facilitate dialogue with Government, not a commitment to establishing a Mayoral Strategic Authority. The Cabinet agreed that any final decision regarding the authority would follow further reporting and discussion. Oversight of the process would be managed by an informal Devolution Board, ensuring strong governance and ongoing engagement with elected members.

#### ***Cabinet Member: Resources and Deputy Leader***

#### **2. HR & Cultural Change - Quarterly Employee Data Report- Quarter 3 2025-26**

*(Cabinet, 24 February 2026)*

Cabinet noted a report which provided an overview of the progress towards delivering the Our People and Culture Strategy (as measured by the achievement of its key performance indicators). The report summarised the main employee-related trends for Q3 2025/26 and reviewed trends over the last four quarters.

The report referred, in particular, to improvements in recruitment processes. There had been a slight increase in agency spend because of ongoing challenges in recruiting to hard-to-fill roles including legal staff and educational psychologists. The

Council continued to maintain a high percentage of apprenticeship levy spending, particularly in adult and children's social care.

### ***Cabinet Member: Adults***

#### **3. Oxfordshire Learning Disability Plan 2025 – 2035**

*(Cabinet, 27 January 2026)*

Cabinet reviewed and approved the Oxfordshire Learning Disability Plan 2025–2035, a ten-year strategy for adults, including those transitioning into adulthood. The plan was co-produced through extensive engagement involving people with learning disabilities, carers, staff, and professionals, and focused on four core themes: having a good life, health and wellbeing, having a place to live, and homes not hospitals. It also addressed cross-cutting areas such as transitions, employment, technology-enabled care, and inclusion, with regular reviews and dynamic action plans monitored by a co-chaired improvement board. The Cabinet formally acknowledged the development of the plan and the progress made so far.

#### **4. My Life My Choice Councillor Deal**

*(Cabinet, 27 January 2026)*

The Cabinet received a report titled “County Councillor Deal”, developed by learning-disabled campaign champions from My Life My Choice. The report highlighted three key pledges focusing on social care workforce and support, education and employment, and good places to live. My Life My Choice requested the Leader of the Council’s endorsement of these pledges to better support individuals with learning disabilities. Representatives presented their priorities centred on empowerment, inclusion, and co-production.

Cabinet formally acknowledged and endorsed the compact, confirming a commitment to work collaboratively with campaign champions on these pledges, provided they aligned with the council’s remit and the Oxfordshire Learning Disability Plan 2025–2035.

### ***Cabinet Member: Place, Environment and Climate Action***

#### **5. Infrastructure Funding Statement 2024/25 and Section 106 Improvement Programme Update**

*(Cabinet, 16 December 2025)*

Cabinet reviewed the Infrastructure Funding Statement for the period from 1 April 2024 to 31 March 2025, which detailed developer contributions received (£37.8 million) and spent (£30.3 million). Members noted improvements in managing Section 106 funds, including streamlined processes and faster project delivery, despite ongoing legal complexities. Members recognised past challenges in accessing Section 106 information and welcomed enhanced transparency and

spending, particularly for schools and infrastructure, while noting some funds needed to be retained until projects were ready.

Cabinet approved the publication of the Infrastructure Funding Statement, delegated authority for minor amendments, and noted updates and recommendations from the S106 improvement programme and the Place Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

## **6. Updates to “Implementing Decide & Provide”**

*(Cabinet, 16 December 2025)*

Cabinet considered and approved updates to the ‘Implementing Decide & Provide’ document, which directed transport assessments for new developments in Oxfordshire. The revisions ensured alignment with recent national policies and enhanced practical use informed by user feedback. Key discussion points included the need for early community involvement, collaboration with partners such as the NHS and universities, sufficient resources, and clear communication.

## **7. Movement and Place Plans - Science Vale**

*(Cabinet, 27 January 2026)*

The Cabinet considered and approved the Science Vale Movement and Place (MAP) Plan, which will replace the previous Area Strategies adopted in 2016 under Local Transport Plan 4. The new plan emphasised integrating transport with place-making, enhancing connections between employment and housing, and repurposing infrastructure for community benefit. Cabinet formally adopted the overarching Introduction Chapter and the Science Vale MAP Plan, along with its supporting documents, reaffirming a commitment to ongoing community engagement in the process.

## **8. LTCP Monitoring Report 2024-2025**

*(Cabinet, 27 January 2026)*

Cabinet reviewed a report detailing the delivery and performance of the Council’s Local Transport and Connectivity Plan (LTCP) for 2024-2025. The report highlighted mixed progress against targets, with improvements in emissions reduction and digital connectivity, but challenges in rural cycling infrastructure and interpreting post-pandemic trends. The monitoring report was revised for clarity, and tracked key indicators such as car trips, vehicle miles, and headline targets. Concerns about rural cycling were raised, and forthcoming national guidance was noted.

Cabinet formally approved the publication of the LTCP Monitoring Report 2024-2025 and acknowledged progress made to date.

## **9. Climate Action Framework 2026-2030**

*(Cabinet, 24 February 2026)*

Cabinet considered and approved the Oxfordshire Climate Action Framework (CAF) 2026-2030 which outlined the council's vision for achieving a greener, fairer, and healthier county. The framework built on previous work and aimed for carbon neutrality in council operations by 2030 and net zero emissions countywide by the 2040s, integrating emissions reduction, resilience, nature recovery, and waste reduction with a collaborative approach. The framework emphasised collaboration with businesses, anchor institutions, community groups, and the Zero Carbon Oxfordshire Partnership, aiming for a holistic programme benefiting residents and supporting sustainable growth.

Cabinet members referred to the challenges in meeting climate targets, particularly in transport and housing, the need for more robust action and influence over external stakeholders, and the importance of continued lobbying for national funding.

### ***Cabinet Member: Finance, Property and Transformation***

## **10. Capital Programme Update and Monitoring Report**

*(Cabinet, 16 December 2025)*

Cabinet reviewed the third capital programme update and monitoring report for 2025/26, which outlined progress up to October 2025. The 10-year capital plan amounted to £1.43 billion, with £103 million spent by October and £186 million forecast for the year, although some delays occurred due to design and contractor issues. Key achievements included advances in active travel projects, the Witney access scheme, reopening Witney Library, and substantial investment in new school places and SEND provision. Members discussed funding sources such as Section 106 and government grants, highlighting concerns about central government funding pressures affecting future services. The Cabinet approved the recommendations to note the monitoring position and update the capital programme as detailed in the report.

## **11. Budget and Business Planning 2026/27 to 2030/31**

*(Cabinet, 27 January 2026)*

Cabinet reviewed and approved the Budget and Business Planning report for 2026/27 to 2030/31, which outlined the revenue budget, medium-term financial strategy, capital programme through to 2035/36, and related policies.

Key resolutions included approval of the 2026/27 charges, financial strategy, reserves policy (with the establishment and renaming of specific reserves), use of retained business rates, and management of late funding changes. Delegated authority was granted for necessary budget adjustments.

The Council was also recommended to adopt the medium-term strategy, set the council tax precept and approve the capital and investment strategy, prudential indicators, and treasury management plans for 2026/27. Additional authority related to capital programme changes and investment instruments were also delegated as recommended.

## **12. Revenue Update and Monitoring Report (November 2025)**

*(Cabinet, 27 January 2026)*

Cabinet had before it a report setting out the current revenue forecast as at end of November 2025 and expected outlook for the financial year and included updates on:

- financial risks which are being managed in 2025/26;
- savings and investment position; and
- funding notified since the budget was agreed in February 2025.

The revenue update referred to ongoing pressures in adult social care, children's placements, and fire and rescue, offset by underspends and higher interest income. The Dedicated Schools Grant High Needs Deficit remained a concern.

Cabinet agreed the recommendations to transfer £1.2 million for Rail and Flood planning to the Budget Priorities reserve for 2026/27, noted expected supplementary requests for Bicester Motion and Woodeaton School deficit, approved the write-off of £0.477 million in adult social care debts, and established a new Budget Reserve with £5.5 million in forecast additional interest. Updates on local government re-organisation and devolution were also noted.

## **13. Capital Programme Approvals - January 2026**

*(Cabinet, 27 January 2026)*

Cabinet reviewed and approved the inclusion of £5 million for the Dukes Cut Wolvercote Bridge Works in the 2025/26 Capital Programme. This funding was deemed essential for A40 improvements and future transport initiatives in the county.

## **14. Social Value - New in-house approach**

*(Cabinet, 24 February 2026)*

Cabinet had before it a report recommending approval of a new Oxfordshire County Council Social Value Policy and transfer of the council's social value work in-house, ending reliance on external platforms. This shift aimed to streamline processes, reduce costs, and better align social value activity with the council's Strategic Plan 2025–2028.

The policy defined five priorities: early careers opportunities, supported employment, local area regeneration, youth engagement, and healthy lives, with procurement tenders above £100,000 required to address at least two priorities.

Cabinet approved the new Social Value Policy and agreed to move the council's social value approach in-house.

## **15. Scrutiny Reports**

*(Cabinet, 9 & 16 December 2025, 27 January 2026 and 24 February 2026)*

Cabinet received the following Scrutiny reports: -

Education and Young People Overview and Scrutiny Committee presented the following reports: -

- a) The Virtual School
- b) Attainment
- c) Fostering

Performance and Corporate Services Overview and Scrutiny Committee report on

- d) Devolution for Oxfordshire
- e) Budget and Business Planning
- f) Fix my street
- g) Business Management and Monitoring Report (Public Health Focus)
- h) Parking Permits
- i) Social Value Policy

People Overview and Scrutiny Committee report on Oxfordshire Unpaid Carers Strategy.

Place Overview and Scrutiny Committee reports on: -

- j) Infrastructure Funding Statement 2024/25 and s.106 Programme Update
- k) Movement and Place Plans
- l) Local Government Reorganisation - One Oxfordshire Proposal

**LIZ LEFFMAN**  
Leader of the Council

March 2026