



Delegated Decisions by Cabinet Member for Children and Young People

Tuesday, 15 September 2026 at 3.00 pm or on the rise of Cabinet whichever is later

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

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

Items for Decision

The items for decision under individual Cabinet Members' delegated powers are listed overleaf, with indicative timings, and the related reports are attached. Key Decisions taken will become effective at the end of the working day on 8 September 2026 unless called in by that date for review by the appropriate Scrutiny Committee.

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

These proceedings are open to the public

Dr Martin Reeves OBE
Chief Executive

September 2026

Committee Officer:

Email:

committeesdemocraticservices@oxfordshire.gov.uk

Note: *Date of next meeting: 20 October 2026*

If you have any special requirements (such as a large print version of these papers or special access facilities) please contact the officer named on the front page, but please give as much notice as possible before the meeting.

Items for Decision

1. Declarations of Interest

See guidance below.

2. Questions from County Councillors

Any county councillor may, by giving notice to the Proper Officer by 9 am three working days before the meeting, ask a question on an item on the agenda.

The number of questions which may be asked by any councillor at any one meeting is limited to two (or one question with notice and a supplementary question at the meeting) and the time for questions will be limited to 30 minutes in total. As with questions at Council, any questions which remain unanswered at the end of this item will receive a written response.

Questions submitted prior to the agenda being despatched are shown below and will be the subject of a response from the appropriate Cabinet Member or such other councillor or officer as is determined by the Cabinet Member and shall not be the subject of further debate at this meeting. Questions received after the despatch of the agenda, but before the deadline, will be shown on the Schedule of Addenda circulated at the meeting, together with any written response which is available at that time.

3. Petitions and Public Address

Members of the public who wish to speak on an item on the agenda at this meeting, or present a petition, can attend the meeting in person or 'virtually' through an online connection.

Requests to present a petition must be submitted no later than 9am ten working days before the meeting.

Requests to speak must be submitted no later than 9am three working days before the meeting.

Requests should be submitted to committeesdemocraticservices@oxfordshire.gov.uk

If you are speaking 'virtually', you may submit a written statement of your presentation to ensure that if the technology fails, then your views can still be taken into account. A written copy of your statement can be provided no later than 9am on the day of the meeting. Written submissions should be no longer than 1 A4 sheet.

4. Minutes of the Previous Meeting (Pages 7 - 8)

To confirm the minutes of the meeting held on **14 July 2026** to be signed by the Chair as a correct record.

5. HAF (Holiday, Activities & Food) (Pages 9 - 14)

Cabinet Member: Children and Young People

Forward Plan Ref: 26/155

Key Decision

Contact: Alison Walker, Commissioning Officer Promote and Prevent alison.walker@oxfordshire.gov.uk

Report by Director of Children's Services

To seek approval to maintain a compliant, flexible and grant-funded commissioning route for the Holiday Activities and Food programme.

The Cabinet Member is RECOMMENDED to:

- a. Extend the Holiday Activities and Food Open Framework Agreement to 31 December 2029, using the existing extension option to extend the framework to 31 December 2028 and a variation to add a further 12 months.**
- b. Update the specification and call-off process to reflect the Department for Education grant criteria changes from September 2026.**

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) Anybody 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) Anybody (i) exercising functions of a public nature (ii) directed to charitable purposes or (iii) one of whose principal purposes includes the influence of public opinion or policy (including any political party or trade union) of which you are a member or in a position of general control or management.

Members Code – Non-registrable interests

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

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

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

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

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

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

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DELEGATED DECISIONS BY CABINET MEMBER FOR CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE

MINUTES of the meeting held on Tuesday, 14 July 2026 commencing at 3.00 pm and finishing at 3:06pm

Present:

Voting Members: Cllr Sean Gaul – in the Chair

Officers: Delia Mann (Deputy Director Childrens Social Care)
Jack Ahier (Senior Democratic Services Officer)

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

1 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST
(Agenda No. 1)

2 MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING
(Agenda No. 2)

The Cabinet Member approved the minutes of the meeting held on 17 March 2026, as an accurate record of the proceedings

3 QUESTIONS FROM COUNTY COUNCILLORS
(Agenda No. 3)

There were none received.

4 PETITIONS AND PUBLIC ADDRESS
(Agenda No. 4)

There were no requests.

5 FAMILIES FIRST - CHILDREN'S SOCIAL CARE REFORMS
(Agenda No. 5)

The Cabinet Member considered a report which indicated that the “Families First” programme was a national reform programme focused on delivering earlier, more joined-up support to children and families.

The programme was supported by ring-fenced grant funding of £6.4m (26-28), reducing to £5.5m for 28-29. Grant conditions of use were set by the Department for Education.

The next phase was to move from pilot delivery to full implementation of the Families First reforms across Children's Social Care. This would bring together early support and statutory intervention into a single, coherent offer for families, deliver family-led planning, and establish strengthened multi-agency arrangements for child protection.

Resolved to:

- a) Approve the use of the Families First grant in Oxfordshire to support the delivery of Children's Social Care reform, in line with the grant conditions set by the Department for Education; and
- b) Delegate authority to the Director for Children's Services to undertake all necessary activity to utilise the grant funding in accordance with those conditions.

..... in the Chair

Date of signing 200

DELEGATED DECISION BY THE CABINET MEMBER FOR CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE

15 September 2026

Holiday Activities and Food Programme (HAF) Extension of Open Framework Agreement

Report by Director of Children's Services

RECOMMENDATION

The Cabinet Member is **RECOMMENDED** to:

- a. **Extend the Holiday Activities and Food Open Framework Agreement to 31 December 2029, using the existing extension option to extend the framework to 31 December 2028 and a variation to add a further 12 months;**
- b. **Update the specification and call-off process to reflect the Department for Education grant criteria changes from September 2026.**

Executive Summary

2. The purpose of this report is to seek approval for the Council to maintain a compliant, flexible and grant-funded commissioning route for the Holiday Activities and Food programme during the confirmed Department for Education funding period and through the local government reorganisation transition.

3. The report seeks approval for the Council to implement Option 3: to extend the existing framework to 31 December 2029, using the existing extension option to 31 December 2028 and varying the framework agreements to add a further 12 months. The extension will also allow the Council to update the specification and call-off process to reflect Department for Education grant criteria changes from September 2026.

4. Option 3 is recommended because it enables the Council to maintain continuity for children, families, carers and providers during the confirmed grant-funded period and provides flexibility through local government reorganisation. It preserves the existing provider market, commissioning process, booking and attendance data, quality assurance arrangements and a fair and transparent route for allocating funding through competitive call-off rounds.

5. The proposal is affordable within the confirmed Department for Education grant envelope to March 2029. No additional Council core revenue or capital funding is required. The Council controls financial exposure through call-off awards, enabling it to scale, pause or stop future activity if funding, demand, delivery requirements or provider capacity change.

6. The principal risks relate to future funding uncertainty, provider capacity, inclusion and service continuity during local government reorganisation. The Council considers these risks manageable because future commitments remain controlled through the existing call-off process.

Background

7. The Holiday Activities and Food programme supports eligible children and families during school holidays by funding safe, structured activities, nutritious food, enrichment and inclusive provision. The current Open Framework Agreement provides the Council with a compliant route to commission seasonal provision from a mixed provider market, including schools, voluntary and community organisations, leisure providers, cultural organisations, small enterprises and specialist providers.

8. A decision is required because the existing framework expires on 31 December 2026. Extending the arrangement would preserve continuity of delivery, retain provider capacity and allow the Council to implement required Department for Education grant criteria changes from September 2026 without undertaking a full re-procurement during the confirmed funding period.

Main Report

9. The Department for Education funds the Holiday Activities and Food programme, which is primarily intended for school-aged children from Reception to Year 11 who are eligible for benefits-related Free School Meals during school holidays. The Council has delivered the programme since 2020, and the current Open Framework Agreement has been in place since January 2023.

10. HAF provision is commissioned for the Easter, summer and winter school holidays. Delivery includes nutritious food, physical activity, enrichment, opportunities to build confidence and social connection, and safe, inclusive provision that meets relevant safeguarding and food standards.

11. The programme addresses a continuing need for safe, structured and supportive holiday provision for children and families affected by low income, food insecurity, social isolation and limited access to enrichment activities during school holidays. Demand has continued to increase, with the 2025/26 annual report recording 31,473 places booked and 24,388 places attended, compared with 30,447 places booked and 22,194 places attended in 2024/25.

Options considered

12. The Council has considered three options:

- 1) Option 1 is for the Council to allow the existing framework to expire on 31 December 2026 and take no further action. This is not recommended because

it would remove the Council's compliant route to market for HAF provision during the remainder of the confirmed grant-funded period and could disrupt provision for children, families and providers.

- 2) Option 2 is for the Council to extend the existing framework to 31 December 2028. This would maintain continuity through the main confirmed funding period and allow the Council to make required specification changes, but it would provide less flexibility for local government reorganisation and may require recommissioning decisions around vesting day.
- 3) Option 3 is for the Council to extend the framework to 31 December 2029, using the existing extension option to 31 December 2028 and varying the framework agreements to add a further 12 months, and to update the specification and call-off process to reflect the Department for Education grant criteria changes from September 2026.

Preferred option

13. Option 3 is the preferred option because it provides the most effective balance of service continuity, affordability, provider stability, value for money, procurement proportionality and flexibility for local government reorganisation.

Corporate Policies and Priorities

14. The proposal supports the Council's local and national priorities to reduce inequalities, improve children's health and wellbeing, and support families during school holidays. It contributes to Oxfordshire's prevention and early help objectives by enabling children from low-income households to access nutritious food, physical activity, enrichment and safe, inclusive provision at times when disadvantage can become more acute.

Financial Implications

15. The key financial consideration is that no additional Council core revenue or capital funding is required. The preferred option is affordable because HAF is funded through a ring-fenced Department for Education grant, with confirmed funding from April 2026 to March 2029. The grant allocation will meet programme costs, including delivery, administration, quality assurance and staffing.

16. The annual HAF grant awarded to the Council was £1,513,333 per year for 2023–2026 and £1,528,800 per year for 2026–2029. For 2026/27, the amount available for provider awards is estimated at £1,385,497 after deductions for staffing and IT of £143,303. The Council controls financial exposure through seasonal call-off awards, enabling future activity to be scaled, paused or stopped if funding, demand, delivery requirements or provider capacity change.

Comments checked by: **Jane Billington, Strategic Finance Business Partner**
Finance sign-off date: 13 August 2026

Legal Implications

17. The Council has duties and powers under sections 6 and 8 of the Childcare Act 2006 to secure sufficient childcare provision, as far as reasonably practicable, and to

make arrangements for childcare delivery. The proposed HAF framework extension falls within those duties and powers.

18. The original invitation to tender allowed for a framework term of up to six years from January 2023. The proposed extension to 31 December 2029 would exceed the term set out in the original invitation to tender and therefore requires the Council to make a formal contract modification. The Council must document the modification rationale and confirm that any September 2026 changes to the specification and call-off process are within the lawful scope of the framework or are varied appropriately.

Comments checked by: **Jonathan Pool, Solicitor** (Contracts)
Legal sign-off date: 13 August 2026

Staff Implications

19. TUPE may potentially apply to a re-procurement, although this is unlikely. As the services are delivered during three short periods each year, it is unlikely that any individual employee or contractor staff member would be dedicated to delivering the contracted services.

Equality and Inclusion Implications

20. The proposal extends the current commissioning arrangement and does not change the programme's policy intent, delivery model or HAF eligibility criteria. The programme supports children and families who may experience disadvantage during school holidays, including low-income households and children with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities, through specialist provision and inclusive mainstream settings.

Local Government Reorganisation Implications

21. Extending the framework to 31 December 2029 would provide flexibility through local government reorganisation. Because the Council is not obliged to run competitions or award contracts under the framework, successor authorities would be able to determine whether to use the framework after vesting day, the date on which successor authorities assume responsibility. The Council could also novate the arrangement to one authority as a hosted contract or disaggregate it so each authority controls its local area of provision and associated funding. This would give successor authorities approximately 20 months after vesting day to determine future arrangements.

Sustainability Implications

22. The extension does not itself change the environmental impact of HAF delivery. The Council can continue to encourage proportionate environmental improvements through commissioning, provider guidance and contract-management discussions, including reducing avoidable travel where local provision is available, encouraging efficient venue use, supporting food and activity waste reduction, and encouraging lower-waste or reusable resources where practical.

Risk Management

23. The Council has identified the main risks as future funding, provider capacity, demand management, inclusion and service continuity during local government

reorganisation. The Council can manage these risks proportionately while maintaining a stable commissioning route.

24. The Council will control funding risk through the ring-fenced Department for Education grant and the existing call-off process. The Council will commit funding only through discrete awards and retain the ability to scale, pause or cease future activity if funding is reduced, withdrawn or subject to revised grant conditions.

25. The Council will manage provider capacity and market risks through continued engagement with the existing provider base, competitive call-off rounds, seasonal capacity monitoring and the ability to encourage new providers to join the open framework where appropriate. The Council will focus particularly on geographic coverage, venue availability, workforce capacity, food costs and specialist SEND provision.

26. To address demand management and value for money risks, including non-attendance for booked places, the Council will use booking and attendance data, provider returns, quality assurance activity and seasonal review. The Council will use this evidence to target the allocation of places, monitor uptake more closely and maximise the effective use of the available grant.

27. The Council will mitigate local government reorganisation risk by using the extension as a transitional arrangement. The framework does not require the Council or any successor authority to make future awards, preserving flexibility to novate, host or disaggregate arrangements once successor authority structures, funding routes and commissioning priorities are clearer.

Consultations

28. The Council has not undertaken formal public consultation for this extension proposal, as it concerns continuation of an existing grant-funded commissioning route rather than a change to the programme's policy intent or eligibility criteria. The proposal is informed by programme delivery evidence, provider engagement, seasonal reporting and operational learning from previous HAF delivery cycles. The Council will continue existing provider engagement and contract-management arrangements to support implementation of specification and call-off changes.

Lisa Lyons
Director of Children's Services

Contact Officer: Rebecca Lanchbury, Strategic Commissioner for Start Well
27 August 2026 (Rebecca.Lanchbury@Oxfordshire.gov.uk)

September 15

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