

Divisions Affected - ALL

**PERFORMANCE & CORPORATE SERVICES
OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE
05 DECEMBER 2025**

**Report by Martin Reeves, Chief Executive,
Oxfordshire County Council**

Recommendation

1. **The Committee is RECOMMENDED to**
 - i) NOTE the draft Cabinet report, and
 - ii) AGREE any recommendations it wishes to make to Cabinet

Executive Summary

2. This report seeks the Scrutiny Committee's views on whether Cabinet should approve the decision that Oxfordshire submit an **Expression of Interest (EOI)** to Government for a Mayoral Strategic Authority (MSA), attached as Annex B. This item is scheduled to be reviewed at Full Council and Cabinet on 09 December 2025.
3. The EOI is an early-stage invitation to Government to engage in discussions. It is different to our Local Government Reorganisation proposal which is a final proposal. The EOI will initiate discussion which will lead to Government to decide, firstly, whether it will accept us onto the devolution priority programme and if so initiate work to define the proposal which will lead to engagement and decisions by this Council at a later stage. At this stage, no final decisions are being made; instead, the Council is seeking to understand Government's requirements and expectations, with a commitment to make informed decisions once these are clarified through ongoing dialogue.

Key Points for Cabinet Decision

4. The Cabinet report attached as Annex A identifies that Cabinet are asked to:
 - **Confirm commitment to devolution** as a strategic approach for Oxfordshire.
 - **Agree that a Mayoral Strategic Authority (MSA) offers potential benefits** for the region, including stronger regional collaboration and access to additional powers and funding.

- **Support further engagement with Government** to explore what an MCA could achieve for Oxfordshire and the wider region.
5. The EOI represents a **joint proposal agreed by leaders across Oxfordshire and the wider region**. It reflects a shared ambition for greater local control and improved outcomes for residents.
 6. Devolution could bring **enhanced powers and resources** for local leaders around transport, housing, skills, and economic development. An MSA would provide a **formal governance structure** to deliver these benefits collaboratively.

Next Steps

7. If Government accepts the EOI, detailed negotiations will follow. This will include opportunities for **further scrutiny and engagement** to shape the final deal.

Corporate Policies and Priorities

8. The County Council’s Corporate Plan sets out a vision for a “greener, fairer, healthier Oxfordshire,” with strategic priorities around climate action, reducing inequality, improving health and wellbeing, and supporting inclusive economic growth.
9. Table 1 below sets out potential contributions and outcomes that could be delivered through the formation of an MSA.

Table 1	
Strategic Priority	MSA Contribution & Outcomes
Greener Oxfordshire	Regional climate action, integrated transport, green infrastructure, improved air quality.
Fairer Oxfordshire	Inclusive growth, more affordable housing, better skills and employment support, reduced inequality.
Healthier Oxfordshire	Joined-up health and care, reduced health inequalities, improved wellbeing.

Financial Implications

10. All financial implications are included within Annex A (the Cabinet report).

Comments checked by:

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Legal Implications

11. All legal implications are included within Annex A (the Cabinet report).

Comments checked by:

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Martin Reeves, Chief Executive Officer

Annex A: Report to Cabinet
Annex B: TV Devolution EOI Letter