

CABINET
16 JUNE 2026

BUSINESS MANAGEMENT AND MONITORING REPORT
PERFORMANCE & RISK Quarter 4 2025/26 AND
PROVISIONAL REVENUE OUTTURN 2025/26

Report by the Deputy Chief Executive (Section 151 Officer)

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Cabinet is RECOMMENDED to:

- a) Note the report and annexes;
Annex A Performance – Quarter 4 2025-26
Annex B Exceptions – Quarter 4 2025-26
Annex C – Complaints and FOI's
Annex D – Provisional financial year end position 2025/26
Annex E – Annual report

- b) Note the summary of the provisional year - end financial position for 2025/26 along with the year-end position on general balances and earmarked reserves as explained in Annex D.

- c) Reserves:
 - i. Approve an £8.0m additional contribution to High Needs DSG risk reserve in 2025/26 (ahead of submission of the SEND Reform Plan to the Department for Education). The balance held in the reserve will be considered as part of the budget process for 2027/28 (Annex D Para 116 -118).

 - ii. Approve that the £2.7m 2025/26 On-Street Parking Account surplus, that has not yet been applied to fund eligible expenditure in accordance with Section 55(4) of the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984, is held in reserves and carried forward for use in future years as set out in Annex D Appendix 4c (Annex D Para 116, 119).

 - iii. Approve the creation of a Congestion Charge Reserve, and contribution of £1.4m, to hold and support funding for the ongoing operation of the scheme as well as investments set out in the report to Cabinet in May 2026 (Annex D Para 116, 120).

 - iv. Approve a £0.8m contribution to the Budget Priorities reserve to support Education SEND (Annex D Para 121 - 122).

2. The business management and monitoring reports are part of a suite of performance, strategic risk and finance documents which set out the council's ambitions, priorities, and financial performance.

Strategic Risk - Summary Position

3. The risk section of this report is focussed on the Oxfordshire County Council strategic risk register. There are currently eight strategic risks.

SR01 Financial Resilience	SR10 Climate Impact
SR03 Housing Infrastructure (HIF1)	SR12 Local Government Reform
SR05 Special Educational needs and disabilities (SEND)	SR13 SEND Sufficiency
SR09 Delivering the future together (DTFT)	SR19 Cybersecurity

Table 1: Strategic risks included in the strategic risk register as at 31 March 2026

Strategic risk heatmap, as at 31 March 2026

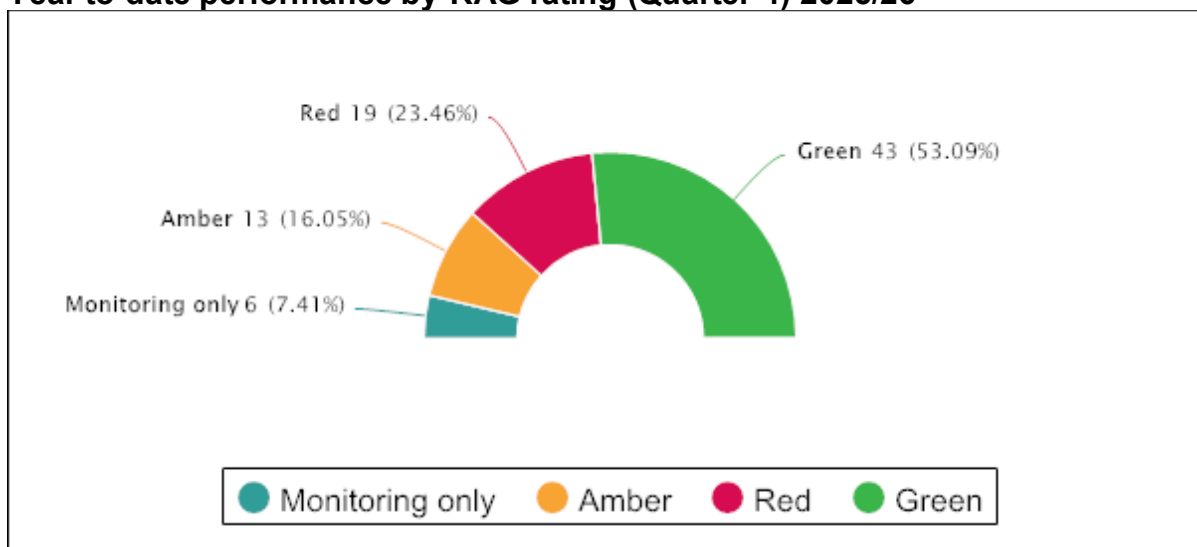


Image 1: Shows the rating of our seven strategic risks as at 31 March 2026.

4. For additional information regarding the performance and management of the strategic risk register, please refer to the Strategic Risk Management and Summary sections of this report.

Performance Overview

Year to date performance by RAG rating (Quarter 4) 2025/26



Graph 1: Year to date performance by RAG rating for Quarter 4 2025/26

5. The performance section of this report concentrates on performance measures reporting Red (off target), or Amber, (slightly off target) for the year-to-date position. The full performance report is included in Annex A.
6. Throughout the reporting year, there is a variety of reporting periods, including monthly, bi-monthly, quarterly, and annual. Therefore, the number of measures reported can vary across the year. As of the end of Quarter 4 of 2025/26, 69 measures (18 monthly measures, 19 quarterly measures, 1 half-yearly measure, 31 annual measures and 12 bi-monthly finance measures), were rated as follows:
 - 43 (53.09%) measures rated as Green (meeting or exceeding target).
 - 19 (23.46%) measures rated as Amber (narrowly missing target)
 - 13 (16.05%) measures rated as Red (significantly off target)
 - 6 (7.41%) measures rated as Monitoring only (Monitoring only with no target)

Complaints, FOI and EIR requests

Summary of Statutory and Corporate Complaints (Quarter 2025/26)

7. The customer service team have refined their data processes and are reporting a quarter in arrears. Therefore, the complaints and FOI/EIR performance data relates to Quarter 3 2025/26.
 - A total of 245 complaints were logged during Quarter 3 2025/26, comprising 187 (76.3%) stage 1 complaints, 55 (22.4%) stage 2 complaints and 3 (1.3%) stage 3 complaints. This represents a 35.4% (64 complaints) increase compared to the last quarter.
 - 245 cases were closed, 133 (54.3%) within timescale and 112 (45.7%) outside of timescale.
 - Children's services received the most cases, with 118 (48.2%) of the 245 total cases. Of the 118 cases received 70 (59.3%) were closed within timescale

and 48 (40.7%) outside of timescale.

1.2 Freedom of information requests (FOI) and environmental information regulation requests (EIR).

- A total of 474 requests were logged as FOI/EIR during Quarter 3 2025/26; this represents a 5% (25) increase compared to Quarter 2 2025/26.
- 472 (99.6%) requests have been closed during Quarter 3, 459 (96.8%) within the 20 working days of receiving the initial request and 13 (2.7%) requests were closed outside of timescale.
- 2 (0.4%) requests remain open outside of 20 working days of receiving the initial requests.

Please refer to Annex C for additional information relating to complaints, FOI and EIR.

Strategic Risk Management

8. A strategic risk is a risk to the council’s strategic priorities or long-term outcomes; or a risk with a significance that has an impact at the corporate level. The table below provides an overview of the current strategic risk position. Strategic risks are reviewed monthly as part of the business management and monitoring process. Risks can be added and escalated at any time during the year.

Status Indicator	Status Description
High	Residual risk rating is high (Score 16 and above)
Medium	Residual risk rating is medium (Score 10-15)
Low	Residual risk rating is low (Score 1-9)

Table 2: Strategic Risk Key for March 2026

Strategic Risk Overview

Risk Title	Inherent Risk Score	Inherent Risk Rating	Residual Risk Score	Residual Risk Rating	Effectiveness of Controls
SR10 Climate Impact	25	High	20	High	Partially Effective
SR19 Cyber Security	25	High	15	Medium	Partially Effective
SR09 Delivering the Future Together	25	High	16	High	Substantially Effective
SR01 Financial resilience	25	High	12	Medium	Substantially Effective
SR03 Housing Infrastructure (HIF1)	16	High	12	Medium	Substantially Effective
SR13 SEND Sufficiency	25	High	9	Low	Partially Effective
SR05 Special Educational Needs and Disability	25	High	16	High	Substantially Effective
SR12 Local Government Reform	20	High	20	High	Partially Effective

Table 3: Strategic Risk Overview March 2026

Strategic Risk Summary

9. There is one change to strategic risk scoring in the final quarter of 2025-26. SR05 has moved from a residual risk score of 20 to 16.

The Performance and Insight team continue to work with all risk and control owners to review their control measures and control effectiveness, facilitating an improvement to identifying mitigation and risk management of all strategic risks.

Performance Measures where the Year to Date (YTD) rating is Red or Amber

10. Table 5 shows all the measures that have a year to date (YTD) performance of Red or Amber. Annex B contains graphs and the accompanying commentary on each of these measures. There are 13 measures reporting as Amber and 13 measures reporting as Red for this Quarter.

KPI Name	Period RAG rating	YTD RAG rating
OCC01.01 Reduction in corporate emissions within our "Carbon Neutral by 2030" target	Red	Red
OCC01.03 Total % of household waste which is reused, recycled or composted	Red	Red
OCC01.04 Oxfordshire greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions as published annually by DESNZ with a 2-year lag	Red	Red
OCC02.02 Number of times refuge bedspaces have been occupied	Amber	Amber
OCC02.04 Female Inequality in life expectancy at Birth	Amber	Amber
OCC03.06 % of births that have received a face-to-face New Birth Visit, by the age of 12 months old	Amber	Amber
OCC03.11 Numbers in substance misuse treatment: Children and young people during the financial year	Red	Red
OCC04.01 % of people who received short-term services during 25/26 with no further support request	Red	Red
OCC04.04 Adults aged 65+ (per 100,000) admitted to residential and care homes	Red	Red
OCC05.01 Number of bus passenger journeys	Red	Red
OCC05.03 KM of footway / cycleway maintenance undertaken	Red	Amber
OCC05.04 % of Annual change in average nitrogen dioxide concentrations in AQMAs	Red	Red
OCC05.07 Percentage of gullies cleaned against the annual cyclical gully programme	Amber	Amber
OCC05.08 Highways - Number of non-chargeable defects (NCD) identified (works not completed as instructed or failed due to workmanship)	Amber	Amber

KPI Name	Period RAG rating	YTD RAG rating
OCC05.09 Length of roads identified as in need of repair, restored to a good condition	Green	Amber
OCC05.10 Number of locations where positive interventions to improve road safety have been carried out, in accordance with the council's vision zero commitments	Red	Red
OCC05.11 % of the projected 1,400 tonnes of carbon savings achieved in the delivery of the highways service through the use of low-carbon techniques and materials	Amber	Amber
OCC06.01 No of trees planted & established on land OCC own & manage	Red	Red
OCC06.06 Management of Local Wildlife sites	Amber	Amber
OCC07.01 % of Education Health & Care Plans completed within 20 weeks (excluding exceptions)	Amber	Amber
OCC07.03 Percentage of children we care for living in county/within 20 miles	Amber	Amber
OCC07.05 Percentage of referrals to children's social care which are within 12 months of a previous referral	Red	Red
OCC07.07 Percentage of children we care for living with foster carers, friends or family	Amber	Amber
OCC07.11 Percentage of young people aged 16-18 who are in education, employment or training	Green	Amber
OCC10.07 Children's Social care complaints completed outside of timeframe	Red	Red
OCC10.08 Corporate complaints completed outside of timeframe	Red	Red
OCC11.01 Overall forecast revenue variance across the Council	Red	Red
OCC11.02 Achievement of planned savings	Red	Red
OCC11.04 Directorates deliver services and achieve planned performance within agreed budget	Red	Red
OCC11.05 Total Outturn variation for DSG funded services (schools/early years)	Red	Red
OCC11.06 Total Outturn variation for DSG funded services (high needs)	Red	Red
OCC11.12 Invoice Collection Rate - Adult Social Care contribution debtors	Red	Red

Table 5: Performance measures by period and YTD RAG rating of Red or Amber as at Quarter 4.

Revenue Outturn Summary for 2025/26

11. Annex D sets out the council's revenue outturn financial position for 2025/26. Further information is included as follows:

Appendix 1A	Revenue Outturn Summary for 2025/26
Appendix 1B	Savings & Investments Outturn Position
Appendix 2	Service Area budgets 2025/26: Movement from the Budget Book to Outturn
Appendix 3	Confirmed Government Grants and Business Rates funding updates.
Appendix 4A	Earmarked Reserves
Appendix 4B	Parking Account
Appendix 4C	Maintained School Reserves
Appendix 4D	General Balances

Overall Financial Position

12. Services overspent by £9.7m in 2025/26. There were overspends in Adult Services, Environment & Highways and Economy & Place as well as unachieved cross cutting savings. Part of the overspend has been managed using the contingency budget of £7.2m that was built into the budget for demand and other risks. The rest has been offset by pay inflation that was not needed in 2025/26.
13. Due to interest rates and cash balances during the year being higher than modelled in February 2025, interest on cash balances was £9.5m above the budgeted level.
14. In January 2026 Cabinet agreed that £5.5m would be transferred to the Budget Reserve and it is proposed to add £8.0m to the High Needs DSG risk reserve (ahead of the approval of the SEND Reform Plan). After these transfers there is a council overspend of £0.1m against a budget of £648.4m.

Savings and Investment Delivery

15. £21.8m (76%) of the revised savings target of £28.7m was delivered, with £6.9m unachieved. £10.7m (74%) investments were delivered, with the remaining £3.7m used to support in-year service pressures, helping to maintain financial stability.

Reserves and Balances

16. As at 31 March 2026 general balances were £34.3m, £1.6m above the risk-assessed level for 2026/27. Earmarked reserves increased to £289.0m, reflecting planned contributions and the use of reserves to manage in-year pressures.

Dedicated Schools Grant High Needs Deficit

17. The 2025/26 deficit compared to Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) funding for High Needs was £56.8m. This compares to an overspend of £36.5m in 2024/25.
18. The CIPFA code of practice requires negative High Needs DSG balances to be held in an unusable reserve. The deficit has increased the cumulative negative High Needs DSG balance held in this reserve from £92.5m as at 31 March 2025 to £149.3m at 31 March 2026.
19. The Government has confirmed its intention to fund 90% of historic DSG High Needs deficits to March 2026, subject to approval of a local SEND reform plan. Further information is included in a report elsewhere on the agenda.

Next Report

20. The Business Management & Monitoring Report to Cabinet in July 2026 will set out changes to the budget since February 2026 and an overview of the forecast revenue financial position for 2026/27 as at the end of May 2026.
21. The Business Management & Monitoring Report to Cabinet in October 2026 will set out the organisation's performance & risk as at the end of June 2026 and overview of the provisional revenue financial position at the end of August 2026.

Equality & Inclusion Implications

22. The Equality Act 2010 imposes a duty on local authorities that, when making decisions of a strategic nature, decision makers must exercise 'due regard to the need to eliminate unlawful discrimination... advance equality of opportunity... and foster good relations.'
23. There are no equality and inclusion implications arising directly from this report.

Sustainability Implications

24. The Climate Action Framework sets the council's commitment to tackling the climate emergency which is underpinned by the Council's priority to put action to address the climate emergency at the heart of our work.
25. There are no equality and inclusion implications arising directly from the report. Where relevant updates on performance measures related to sustainability are included by exception.

Staffing Implications

26. There are no staffing implications arising directly from the report.

Financial Implications

27. The report provides an overview of the council's service performance and strategic risks which contribute to council's financial position and resilience. The council continues to demonstrate financial resilience and has been able to manage service pressures in 2025/26 through the use of one – off funding, contingency and additional interest on balances.

28. While it was possible to manage the service overspend with contingency measures in 2025/26, there is less flexibility in 2026/27. The contingency budget was reduced to £6.2m as one of the changes to balance the budget agreed in February 2026. Based on the Green Book offer of 3.30%, pay inflation not used in 2025/26 will be needed to fund pay awards in 2026/27. In addition, interest on cash balances is less likely to be much higher than budgeted because of the increasing impact of the High Needs DSG deficit and higher interest rates already assumed when the budget was set.
29. When setting its budget for 2026/27 the council made clear that it would need to make savings in future years in excess of £20m as a result of changes made by government to formulas that dictate how much individual local authorities will receive in grant money. Pressures on budgets due to inflation and demands – including in SEND and social care – mean the council is likely to need to save significantly more than this in practice. The council is planning its budget much earlier than normal and looking at all possibilities for savings including staffing levels across the authority. As yet there is no further detail but the council will seek to protect frontline services as much as possible.
30. While the announcement about the treatment of the existing High Needs DSG deficit means there is more clarity about the impact on the council, there is now a requirement to fund the residual element. As at 31 March 2026 funding of £33m held in the High Needs DSG Risk Reserve is available for this purpose. Around £15m of that would be required to fund 10% of the cumulative deficit at 31 March 2026. There are currently no further details provided on deficits which accumulate in 2026/27 and 2027/28, other than to say that the Government will confirm the detail on further support before the end of the statutory override in March 2028.

Comments checked by:

Kathy Wilcox, Head of Corporate Finance

Legal Implications

31. The Council's constitution at Part 3.2 (Budget and Policy Framework) sets out the obligations and responsibilities of both the Cabinet and the Council in approving, adopting, and implementing the council's budget and policy framework.
32. The Council has a fiduciary duty to council taxpayers, which means it must consider the prudent use of resources, including control of expenditure, financial prudence in the short and long term and the need to act in good faith in relation to compliance with statutory duties and exercising statutory powers. The report sets out the risk, performance and finance position for the Council as at 31 March 2026 as part of its fiduciary duty to implement budgetary controls and monitoring.

Comments checked by: Jay Akbar, Head of Legal and Governance Services.

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June 2026