

Overview & Scrutiny Recommendation Response Pro forma

Under section 9FE of the Local Government Act 2000, Overview and Scrutiny Committees must require the Cabinet or local authority to respond to a report or recommendations made thereto by an Overview and Scrutiny Committee. Such a response must be provided within two months from the date on which it is requested¹ and, if the report or recommendations in questions were published, the response also must be so.

This template provides a structure which respondents are encouraged to use. However, respondents are welcome to depart from the suggested structure provided the same information is included in a response. The usual way to publish a response is to include it in the agenda of a meeting of the body to which the report or recommendations were addressed.

Issue: OxRail 2040: Plan for Rail

Lead Cabinet Member(s): Cllr Judy Roberts, Cabinet member for Place, Environment and Climate Action

Date response requested:² 18 November 2025

Response to recommendations:

Recommendation	Accepted, rejected or partially accepted	Proposed action (if different to that recommended) and indicative timescale (unless rejected)
1. <i>That the Council should undertake sufficient work to identify its preferred options and feasibility for mass rapid transit solutions for West Oxfordshire in time to allow that information to be used meaningfully and to be incorporated into</i>	Accepted	The Council is now initiating work on an Options Appraisal for a West Oxfordshire Mass Rapid Transit (MRT) system broadly along the alignment of the A40 corridor deliverable up to 2043 with options considered for earlier delivery if feasible. The final preferred solution is expected to take time to develop in detail, but the work will identify options to inform the emerging local plan,

¹ Date of the meeting at which report/recommendations were received

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<p><i>the West Oxfordshire District Council Local Plan 2043.</i></p>		<p>thereby supporting and feeding into West Oxfordshire's local plan transport evidence. Additional wording in the Rail Plan is proposed to be added in line with the presentation and suggestions from Charlie Maynard MP and similar comments received from WODC.</p>
<p>2. <i>That the Council should identify the areas of opportunity for development of housing near railway lines and the steps it intends to take to enable delivery as part of the Plan.</i></p>	<p>Accepted</p>	<p>The Plan already includes a map showing the location of housing planned and proposed across the County. Allocating strategic development will continue to be done through the Local Plan development for each district, supported by the County Council as appropriate.</p> <p>Additional text is planned to be added to the Plan to specifically note development and regeneration opportunities around existing stations, particularly Oxford, Banbury and Didcot Parkway including where appropriate working with Platform 4 (the new rail industry development company) and the Oxford Growth Commission.</p>
<p>3. <i>That the Council should include maps within the OxRail 2040 Plan to illustrate the potential of an integrated transport network by overlaying major bus routes onto projected rail maps.</i></p>	<p>Partially accepted</p>	<p>The Council will be drawing up these maps in line with developing the Oxfordshire Metro Concept but is not able to produce these in time for publication of the OxRAIL 2040: Plan for Rail.</p>
<p>4. <i>That the Council works with the local City and District Councils to identify suitable locations for land to be allocated to the infrastructure required to support greater modal shift towards railway freight.</i></p>	<p>Accepted</p>	<p>The Council will continue to work with the districts on development of proposals contained within the OxRAIL 2040: Plan for Rail. As set out in the Plan, the County Minerals and Waste plan will also be important to consider the need and forecast future demand for rail aggregate depots.</p> <p>It is noted that certain strategic freight development proposals, in particular Strategic Rail Freight Interchanges, follow a Nationally Significant Infrastructure Project planning process, and are mostly</p>

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		<p>promoted by third party promoters. We will continue to work with partners, including promoters and district councils, on understanding the implications of such proposals and feed into these planning processes as needed.</p> <p>It also noted that there are expected to be new opportunities to review strategic freight matters as devolution and rail industry reform comes forward in the next few years.</p>
<p>5. <i>That the Council should clarify within the Plan where primary responsibility for the key deliverables sits, what the Council's involvement is, the dependencies on which they rest, and an assessment of likely timescales.</i></p>	<p>Partially accepted</p>	<p>The Plan already includes a section 7 on 'Delivering the Vision' and a section 8 on 'Monitoring and evaluation.' The expected timescales for delivery are set out in our 'Plan on a Page' on page 84 and already reflect extensive engagement with partners in the rail industry and beyond. Our plans for monitoring and evaluation linked to our Local Transport Plan evaluation framework are given on page 88.</p> <p>Once adopted, the Council will work with partners through a new Oxfordshire Enhanced Rail Partnership to ensure there is one shared programme of priority rail deliverables across Oxfordshire. Importantly, this will recognise both devolution opportunities and changes to the rail industry, ensuring that responsibilities for delivery of different elements of the plan are clear going forward.</p>