OXFORDSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

To: Members of the Cabinet

Notice of a Meeting of the Cabinet

Tuesday, 15 October 2024 at 2.00 pm

Room 2&3 - County Hall, New Road, Oxford OX1 1ND

If you wish to view proceedings online, please click on this Live Stream Link.

Martin Reeves
Chief Executive

October 2024

Committee Officer: ***Chris Reynolds***
Tel: 07542 029441; E-Mail: chris.reynolds@oxfordshire.gov.uk

Membership

Councillors

Liz Leffman	Leader of the Council
Dr Pete Sudbury	Deputy Leader of the Council with responsibility for Climate Change, Environment & Future Generations
Tim Bearder	Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care
Neil Fawcett	Cabinet Member for Community & Corporate Services
Andrew Gant	Cabinet Member for Transport Management
Kate Gregory	Cabinet Member for SEND Improvement
John Howson	Cabinet Member for Children, Education & Young People's Services
Dan Levy	Cabinet Member for Finance
Dr Nathan Ley	Cabinet Member for Public Health, Inequalities & Community Safety
Judy Roberts	Cabinet Member for Infrastructure & Development Strategy

The Agenda is attached. Decisions taken at the meeting will become effective at the end of the working day on 23 October 2024 unless called in by that date for review by the appropriate Scrutiny Committee.

Copies of this Notice, Agenda and supporting papers are circulated to all Members of the County Council.

Date of next meeting: 19 November 2024

AGENDA

1. Apologies for Absence

2. Declarations of Interest

- guidance note below

3. **Minutes** (Pages 1 - 10)

To approve the minutes of the meeting held on 17 September 2024 (**CA3**) and to receive information arising from them.

4. Questions from County Councillors

Any county councillor may, by giving notice to the Proper Officer by 9 am two working days before the meeting, ask a question on any matter in respect of the Cabinet's delegated powers.

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.

5. Petitions and Public Address

Members of the public who wish to speak at this meeting can attend the meeting in person or 'virtually' through an online connection.

To facilitate 'hybrid' meetings we are asking that requests to speak or present a petition are submitted by no later than 9am four working days before the meeting. Requests to speak should be sent to committeesdemocraticservices@oxfordshire.gov.uk

If you are speaking 'virtually', you may submit a written statement of your presentation to ensure that your views are taken into account. A written copy of your statement can be provided no later than 9am 2 working days before the meeting. Written submissions should be no longer than 1 A4 sheet.

6. Appointments

7. Reports from Scrutiny Committees (Pages 11 - 18)

Cabinet will receive the following Scrutiny report:-

Performance and Corporate Services Overview and Scrutiny Committee report on Community Wealth Building and Wider Social Value.

8. Oxfordshire Safeguarding Children's Board Annual Report 2023-24 (Pages 19 - 36)

Cabinet Member: Children, Education and Young People's Services
Forward Plan Ref: 2024/248
Contact: Laura Gajdus, Business Manager
laura.gadjus@oxfordshire.gov.uk

Report by Director of Children's Services **(CA8)**

Cabinet is RECOMMENDED to note the annual report of the Oxfordshire Safeguarding Children Board senior safeguarding partners and to consider the key messages.

9. Oxfordshire Safeguarding Adults Board Annual Report 2023-24 (Pages 37 - 90)

Cabinet Member: Adult Social Care
Forward Plan Ref: 2024/247
Contact: Steven Turner, OSAB Business Manager
steven.turner@oxfordshire.gov.uk

Report by Director of Adult Social Care

The Cabinet is RECOMMENDED to note the content of the annual report which appears at the annex to this report

10. Local Aggregate Assessment for 2023 (Pages 91 - 182)

Cabinet Member: Deputy Leader of the Council with Responsibility for Climate Change, Environment & Future Generations
Forward Plan Ref: 2024/279
Contact: Charlotte Simms, MWLP Principal Planner
charlotte.simms@oxfordshire.gov.uk

Report by Director of Economy and Place **(CA10)**

The Cabinet is RECOMMENDED to

a) **Approve the Local Aggregate Assessment presented in Annex 2.**

b) **Authorise the Director of Economy and Place in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Climate Change, Environment and Future Generations to make any revisions and publish the Oxfordshire Local Aggregate Assessment for the calendar year 2023 on the Council website.**

11. Budget and Business Planning Report (Pages 183 - 332)

Cabinet Member: Finance
Forward Plan Ref: 2024/218
Contact: Kathy Wilcox, Head of Financial Strategy
Kathy.wilcox@oxfordshire.gov.uk

Report by Executive Director of Resources and Section 151 Officer

The Cabinet is RECOMMENDED to:

a) **Endorse the report and note the assumptions that will form the starting point for the 2025/26 budget as well as updates since the Medium Term Financial Strategy was agreed in February 2024 that need to be considered;**
b) **Approve the budget and business planning process for 2025/26;**
c) **Approve a three-year period for the medium-term financial strategy to 2027/28 and ten-year period for the capital programme to 2034/35**
d) **Delegate to the Section 151 Officer in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Finance the decision on whether to continue to be a member of the North Oxfordshire Business Rates Pool and;**
e) **Note the requirement for the council to set a sustainable balanced budget which shows how income will equal spending plans**

12. Capital Programme and Monitoring Report (August Monitoring) (Pages 333 - 356)

Cabinet Member: Finance
Forward Plan Ref: 2024/222
Contact: Natalie Crawford, Capital Programme Manager
Natalie.crawford@oxfordshire.gov.uk

Report by Executive Director of Resources and Section 151 Officer

The Cabinet is RECOMMENDED to:

Capital Programme

1. **Note the capital monitoring position for 2024/25 set out in this report and summarised in Annex 1.**

2. **Approve the updated Capital Programme at Annex 2 incorporating the changes set out in this report.**

Budget Changes / Budget Release

3. **approve the submission of a bid for £2.800m to Sustrans T8 (pending potential funding from Active Travel England) for a number of schemes to improve the National Cycle Network and to note the total match funding of £0.355m required. Match funding will be met by a combination of Community Infrastructure Levy funds, S106 funding and corporate resources. (para 68)**

4. **a. approve the submission of a bid to the Public Sector Decarbonisation Scheme: Phase 4 (PSDS4) to support the programme to implement decarbonisation measures across the corporate estate.**

   b. delegate authority to the Executive Director of Resources and S151 Officer and Director of Property and Assets to approve the grant offer letter in the event of a successful award of funding for PSDS4 and

   c. note the required match funding for PSDS4 which is estimated to be between £6.00m and £9.00m, which will be addressed as part of the 2025/26 business planning process. (para 71)

5. **approve the carry forward of £1.651m from the current Early Years Programme and include new funding of £1.286m received from the Department for Education Childcare Expansion Capital Grant to support the extension of early years childcare and wraparound provision for children in working families. (para 73)**

13. Hyer Power project (TO FOLLOW)

Cabinet Member: Deputy Leader with Responsibility for Climate Change, Environment & Future Generations
Forward Plan Ref: 2024/315
Contact: Paul Gambrell,Team leader – Zero Emission Vehicles, Innovation Service paul.gambrell@oxfordshire.gov.uk

Report by Executive Director of Resources and Section 151 Officer

The Cabinet is RECOMMENDED to approve a key decision to permit the procurement of a hydrogen production and refuelling rig that will be fully funded by an external grant and will be installed on the Highways Depot at Drayton.

14. Delegated Powers Report for July to September 2024

Cabinet Member: Leader

Forward Plan Ref: 2024/246
Contact: Colm Ó Caomhánaigh, Democratic Services Manager
Colm.ocaomhanaugh@oxfordshire.gov.uk

Report by Director of Law and Governance.

There were no uses of delegated powers in the period July to September 2024 to report to Cabinet.

15. Forward Plan and Future Business (Pages 357 - 370)

Cabinet Member: All
Contact Officer: Chris Reynolds, Senior Democratic Services Officer,
chris.reynolds@oxfordshire.gov.uk

The Cabinet Procedure Rules provide that the business of each meeting at the Cabinet is to include "updating of the Forward Plan and proposals for business to be conducted at the following meeting". Items from the Forward Plan for the immediately forthcoming meetings of the Cabinet appear in the Schedule at **CA.** This includes any updated information relating to the business for those meetings that has already been identified for inclusion in the next Forward Plan update.

The Schedule is for noting, but Cabinet Members may also wish to take this opportunity to identify any further changes they would wish to be incorporated in the next Forward Plan update.

The Cabinet is RECOMMENDED to note the items currently identified for forthcoming meetings.

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) Any body 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) Any body (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.

This page is intentionally left blank

CABINET

MINUTES of the meeting held on Tuesday, 17 September 2024 commencing at 2.00 pm and finishing at 3.35pm

Present:

Voting Members:	Councillor Liz Leffman – in the Chair Councillor Dr Pete Sudbury (Deputy Chair) Councillor Tim Bearder Councillor Andrew Gant Councillor Kate Gregory Councillor John Howson Councillor Dan Levy Councillor Dr Nathan Ley Councillor Judy Roberts
Other Members in Attendance:	Councillor Donna Ford

Officers:

Whole of meeting	Martin Reeves (Chief Executive) Lorna Baxter (Executive Director of Resources & Section 151 Officer), Anita Bradley (Director of Law & Governance and Monitoring Officer), Stephen Chandler (Executive Director of People and Transformation), Chris Reynolds (Senior Democratic Services Officer)

The Cabinet considered the matters, reports and recommendations contained or referred to in the agenda for the meeting, together with a schedule of addenda tabled at the meeting, and decided as set out below. Except insofar as otherwise specified, the reasons for the decisions are contained in the agenda, reports and schedule, copies of which are attached to the signed Minutes.

107/24 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE
(Agenda Item. 1)

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Neil Fawcett.

108/24 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST
(Agenda Item. 2)

Councillor Bearder declared an interest in Item 13 – Business Management and Monitoring Report- in relation to the Homes for Ukraine grant funding and did not vote thereon.

109/24 MINUTES
(Agenda Item. 3)

The minutes of the meeting held on 16 July 2024 were approved as a correct record.

110/24 QUESTIONS FROM COUNTY COUNCILLORS
(Agenda Item. 4)

There were none received.

111/24 PETITIONS AND PUBLIC ADDRESS
(Agenda Item. 5)

15 Capital Programme Approvals

Gill Bindoff
Steve Bolingbroke

112/24 APPOINTMENTS
(Agenda Item. 6)

Cabinet noted that Cllr Sudbury had been appointed to the Cooperative Councils Innovation Network (CCIN).

This was designated as a Category A (Strategic) appointment.

113/24 REPORTS FROM SCRUTINY COMMITTEES
(Agenda Item. 7)

There had been no recent Scrutiny meetings and, therefore, no reports for consideration at this meeting.

114/24 SUSTAINABLE SCHOOL TRAVEL STRATEGY 2024-25
(Agenda Item. 8)

Cabinet had before it a report on the proposed Sustainable School Travel Strategy for 2024-25. The report set out Oxfordshire County Council's strategy for promoting sustainable travel to and from school and college across Oxfordshire.

Local authorities had a duty to promote the use of sustainable travel on journeys to and from places of education in their area. This duty applied to travel to and from: schools, further education institutions, and 16-19 academies. It was a further requirement for local authorities to prepare a document containing their strategy each academic year and to publish it by such a time as may be described.

Councillor Andrew Gant, Cabinet Member for Transport Management and Councillor Judy Roberts, Cabinet Member for Infrastructure and Development Strategy, presented the report. The strategy aimed to promote sustainable travel choices among school children, integrating detailed data on school travel choices and preferences. It included comprehensive data on current travel modes and preferences for alternative sustainable options, emphasising the ambition to align with people's preferences for sustainable travel. The report also identified barriers to sustainable travel and outlined solutions, including improving infrastructure and providing more options for walking, cycling, and public transport.

During discussion, the following points were made:-

- A member expressed concern about the lack of baseline data for assessing the impact of the strategy. He also suggested that the strategy might not be ambitious enough to achieve the target of reducing road trips by 25% by 2030 and highlighted the need for radical reforms in home-to-school transport, including potential digitalisation and better utilisation of resources.

- Another member emphasised the importance of maintaining primary schools within communities to facilitate active travel. He also expressed concern about the impact of tighter attendance regulations on bus services and the need for sufficient capacity on peak services.

- The importance of working with private schools and ensuring they are included in the strategy was highlighted

- It was suggested that the data by urban and rural areas should be broken down to better understand travel patterns and barriers.

- The importance of pedestrian crossings for safety and encouraging walking to school was emphasised

- A member highlighted the role of various stakeholders, including pupils, parents, headteachers, and bus companies, in promoting sustainable travel, and commended the efforts of bus companies like Stagecoach in supporting school travel during disruptions.

Councillor Gant addressed concerns about the strategy's ambition and baseline data. He emphasized the importance of integrating the strategy with other policies and ensuring that all schools, including private ones, were assessed for suitability for sustainable travel initiatives.

Councillor Roberts also addressed specific points raised during the discussion, including the need for better signage and enforcement around schools and the potential for 20 mph speed limits to facilitate safer crossings.

Councillor Roberts moved and Councillor Gant seconded the following amended recommendation, and it was approved.

RESOLVED, 8 voting in favour and 1 abstention, to approve the draft Sustainable School Travel Strategy for adoption and publication on the County Council’s website by 25 September 2024

115/24 COMMUNITY WEALTH BUILDING - ACTION PLAN AND NEXT STEPS
(Agenda Item. 9)

Cabinet had before it a report regarding policy approaches to tackling deprivation and financial inequality in Oxfordshire over the long term. Community Wealth Building (CWB) was an approach that sought to ‘build wealth’ in local communities by reimagining how place-based organisations could maximise the local benefit of their economic activities. The 2024/25 budget had allocated funding specifically for the development of a programme of CWB actions, and a CWB strategy. The report highlighted the progress of the programme, and the plans for how the budget would be spent.

Councillor Dr Nathan Ley, Cabinet Member for Public Health, Inequalities and Community Safety, presented the report. He emphasised that the focus of the Community Wealth Building Action Plan was on tackling economic inequality within the county by using resources strategically to maximise local benefits. The plan aimed to address deeper causes of deprivation through procurement, employment, and land use. Specific projects included developing the community wealth strategy, supporting business outreach in high deprivation areas, and exploring alternative models in social care delivery.

During discussion, the following points were made:-

- Members welcomed the plan which addressed inequality and its associated deprivation, highlighting the importance of community cohesion in facing economic challenges and emphasised that the plan was vital for building resilient societies.
- The need to balance monetary returns with social value in decision-making processes.
- A member expressed concern about the plan being urban-centric and highlighted the challenges faced by young people in rural areas, particularly in accessing employment and education. He suggested focusing on apprenticeships and employment opportunities in rural areas to address these challenges.

Councillor Ley responded to members’ comments and commented on the importance of aligning community wealth building principles with economic development, procurement, and employment strategies. He also highlighted the need for continuous engagement with local experts and stakeholders to shape and implement the approach effectively.

Councillor Ley moved and Councillor Sudbury seconded the recommendations, and they were approved.

RESOLVED to

a) **approve the project allocation of the existing budget for the Community Wealth Building Programme**
b) **agree the principles laid out in the first iteration of the social value definition statement (at Annex 2), for incorporation into operational policy and strategy**

116/24 ETHICAL PROCUREMENT POLICY

(Agenda Item. 10)

Cabinet had before it a report on a proposed Ethical Procurement Policy. The purpose of the policy was to outline the Council's position on various aspects of ethics in procurement as well as to provide appropriate detail on how the Council approached such matters and how it expected its suppliers and potential suppliers to approach such matters. The policy included a large section on modern slavery and other areas such as expectations for suppliers, responsibilities of staff, fair employment practices in the supply chain, as well as reporting and whistleblowing.

Councillor Dan Levy, Cabinet Member for Finance, presented the report emphasising its purpose to set out the Council's procurement principles in one place. He said that the policy aimed to ensure that suppliers and partners understood the Council's expectations regarding ethical practices, including the treatment of staff, environmental considerations, and social value. The policy consolidated existing practices and introduced new guidelines to enhance transparency and accountability in procurement processes.

During discission, a member highlighted the importance of the policy in promoting fairer and healthier working conditions. He emphasised that ethical treatment of staff contributed to their psychological and physical well-being, aligning with the Council's core objectives.

The Chair clarified that while the Council was not legally required to address modern slavery, it has chosen to do so voluntarily.

Councillor Levy moved and Councillor Sudbury seconded the recommendation, and it was approved.

RESOLVED to approve the Ethical Procurement Policy (attached at Annex 1 to the report).

117/24 HIS MAJESTY'S INSPECTORATE OF CONSTABULARY AND FIRE AND RESCUE SERVICES (HMICFRS) REPORT FOR OXFORDSHIRE FIRE AND RESCUE SERVICE

(Agenda Item. 11)

Cabinet considered a report which provided an update on the Oxfordshire Fire and Rescue HMI report, focusing on areas required for improvement and the approach developed to ensure robust governance and performance reporting against the agreed action plan. This included the development of the fire improvement pipeline and the Fire Improvement Board.

Councillor Dr Nathan Ley, Cabinet Member for Public Health, Inequalities and Community Safety, presented the report. The inspection of the Fire and Rescue Service had identified 26 areas for improvement and acknowledged 32 positive statements about the service's strengths. The service has already addressed 6 of the 26 recommendations, including improvements in fire survival guidance, risk information, and building inspections. 8 recommendations were currently being addressed through existing service delivery plans. The remaining areas for improvement had been integrated into the Fire Improvement Pipeline, a dynamic document prioritising work based on risk and capacity. The new Fire Improvement Board would scrutinise all work areas within the improvement pipeline, focusing on HMI recommendations. The board would report regularly to the Place Scrutiny Committee and provide annual progress updates.

Councillor Ley highlighted the importance of addressing the identified areas for improvement to maintain public trust and confidence in the Fire and Rescue Service.

Councillor Ley moved and Councillor Howson seconded the recommendations, and they were approved.

RESOLVED to note the report and approve the suggested approach of monitoring improvements.

118/24 WORKFORCE REPORT AND STAFFING DATA - QUARTER 1 - APRIL TO JUNE 2024

(Agenda Item. 12)

Cabinet had before it report which provided the workforce profile for April to June (Q1) 2024/25 including an overview of headcount, agency spend, sickness, turnover and other relevant management information and performance indicators (set out in Appendix A). This report also provided an update on the Our People & Culture strategy which aimed to address the trends identified in this report, but importantly help the Council's ambitions to become an Employer of Choice.

The Chair, on behalf of the Cabinet Member for Community and Corporate Services, presented the report. She referred, in particular, to the more detailed presentation of statistics on employed and agency staff. The report also highlighted an increase in the employment of non-white and disabled members of staff, reflecting the Council's commitment to diversity and inclusion.

During discussion, a member referred to the apprentices who had won awards and emphasised the importance of recognising their achievements. He also commented on the need to distinguish between agency staff engaged for specific projects and those who were covering established posts which were vacant.

Councillor Leffman moved, and Councillor Sudbury seconded the recommendation, and it was approved.

RESOLVED to note the report

119/24 BUSINESS MANAGEMENT AND MONITORING REPORT - JULY 2024

(Agenda Item. 13)

Cabinet considered a report presenting the July 2024 performance, risk, and finance position for the council. The business management reports were part of a suite of performance, risk and budget documents which set out the council's ambitions, priorities, and financial performance.

Councillor Dan Levy, Cabinet Member for Finance, presented the report. He referred, in particular, to the performance indicators requiring specific attention and the work taking place to ensure the Council achieved its financial targets set out in its budget.

Members referred, in particular, to the forecast deficit in the High Needs Block of the Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG). The timing of the general election had affected the announcement of the overall DSG, potentially impacting school budgeting cycles.

Councillor Levy moved and Councillor Sudbury seconded the recommendations, and they were approved.

RESOLVED to:-

a) note the report and annexes.
b) approve the virement requests in Annex B-2a and note the requests in Annex B-2b.
c) approve the use of Homes for Ukraine grant funding as set out in Annex C and authorise the Executive Director of Resources to update funding agreements with the City and District Councils accordingly

120/24 TREASURY MANAGEMENT QUARTER 1 REPORT 2024/25

(Agenda Item. 14)

The Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy's (CIPFA's) 'Code of Practice on Treasury Management 2021' required that the committee to which some treasury management responsibilities are delegated, would receive regular monitoring reports on treasury management activities and risks. Cabinet had before it a report which was the third for the 2024/25 financial year and set out the position at 30 June 2024.

Councillor Dan Levy, Cabinet Member for Finance, presented the report, The Council operated within its prudential indicators, with no new external debt taken or repaid during the quarter. The report indicated a strong financial performance in terms of investment returns, which helped offset some overspends in other areas.

Councillor Levy moved and Councillor Ley seconded the recommendation, and it was approved.

RESOLVED to note the council's treasury management activity at the end of the first quarter of 2024/25.

121/24 CAPITAL PROGRAMME APPROVALS - SEPTEMBER 2024

(Agenda Item. 15)

Cabinet had before it a report setting out change requests requiring approval that would be incorporated into the agreed Capital Programme and included in the next update to the programme for Cabinet in June 2024.

Councillor Dan Levy, Cabinet Member for Finance, presented the report. He explained the need for adjustments to the capital programme due to various factors, including the reallocation of funds from the Housing and Growth Deal.

Gill Bindoff and Steve Bolingbroke, representing Watlington Parish Council, addressed the Cabinet. They expressed concerns about the reallocation of funds from the Watlington Relief Road project. They emphasised the long-standing need for the road, the community's expectations, and the lack of communication regarding the funding changes.

Councillor Andrew Gant, Cabinet Member for Transport Management, gave assurances that the Watlington Relief Road remained a priority project for the Council. He explained the necessity of reallocating funds due to the inability to meet the March 2025 deadline set by Homes England. He said that the Council was committed to finding alternative funding sources and ensuring the project's continuation.

Councillor Levy moved and Councillor Sudbury seconded the recommendations, and they were approved.

RESOLVED to:-

a) **approve an increase in budget of £5.445m for the Tramway Accessibility Improvements scheme, to be funded from S106 developer contributions and reallocating funding from the Housing and Growth Deal.**

b) **approve an increase of £1.300m for Banbury Road Roundabout to be funded from the Housing and Growth Deal.**

c) **approve a request to forward fund £15.300m for third party delivered projects at Oxford Rewley Road Fire Station and Oxford Grandpont Depot site.**

d) **to note the latest estimated funding gap of £6.745m on the current balanced capital programme due which will be addressed through the annual business planning process and Capital Programme for Council approval in February 2025.**

122/24 FORWARD PLAN AND FUTURE BUSINESS

(Agenda Item. 16)

The Cabinet considered a list of items for the immediately forthcoming meetings of the Cabinet together with changes and additions set out in the schedule of addenda.

RESOLVED to note the items currently identified for forthcoming meetings.

123/24 FOR INFORMATION ONLY: CABINET RESPONSE TO SCRUTINY ITEMS

(Agenda Item. 17)

Cabinet noted he responses to the Scrutiny items on:-

ASC Assurance Update
Vision Zero Strategy and Action Plan

…………………………………………………in the Chair

Date of signing ……………………………………………..

This page is intentionally left blank

Divisions Affected – All

CABINET

15 October 2024

Community Wealth Building and Wider Social Value

Report of Performance and Corporate Services Overview & Scrutiny Committee

RECOMMENDATION

1. The Cabinet is **RECOMMENDED** to **—**

   a) Agree to respond to the recommendations contained in the body of this report, and

   b) Agree that relevant officers will continue to periodically update the Performance and Corporate Services Overview & Scrutiny Committee over the next 12 months on progress made against actions committed to in response to the recommendations, or when such actions are completed.

REQUIREMENT TO RESPOND

2. In accordance with section 9FE of the Local Government Act 2000, the Performance and Corporate Services Overview & Scrutiny Committee requires that, within two months of the consideration of this report, the Cabinet publish a response to this report and any recommendations.

INTRODUCTION AND OVERVIEW

3. The Performance and Corporate Services Overview and Scrutiny Committee considered a report on the Council's Community Wealth Building and Wider Social Value at its meeting on 19 July 2024, shortly prior to Council's own consideration of this item.

4. The Committee would like to thank Cllr Dr Nathan Ley, Cabinet Member for Public Health, Inequalities and Community Safety, Robin Rogers, who was then Programme Director (Partnerships and Delivery), and Emily Urquhart, Policy Officer, for preparing and introducing the report, and for attending to answer questions.

SUMMARY

5. The Cabinet Member for Public Health, Inequalities and Community Safety introduced the report, which had been requested by the Committee, and explained the concepts and principles of community wealth building. Fundamentally, this was intended to maximise the benefit of Oxfordshire's strong economy to the benefit of all residents, whilst addressing inequalities and environmental challenges. Some of the Council's recent achievements around community wealth building included the development of the Council's Social Value Policy, its support for small businesses and social enterprises, and a recent collaboration with the Centre for Local Economic Strategies (CLES). The collaboration with CLES resulted in the development of a set of recommendations by CLES aiming to leverage the Council's position as a major procurer of goods and services, optimising the use of its land and assets, and enhancing learning and skill development. These recommendations acted as a potential roadmap to continue realising the Council's community wealth building ambitions.

6. Topics explored by the Committee in response to the presentation included challenges over how the Council would ensure a cross-county focus, particularly how it would identify areas pockets of poverty in otherwise wealthier areas; its plans for partnership working with other anchor institutions across the county; the progress of delivery and spend, as well as the means by which the Council would be able to evaluate the success of its interventions; and the Community Asset Transfer Policy.

7. The Committee makes two recommendations, focusing on clarifying working with others to clarify the law on disposals of property below best value under s. 123 of the Local Government Act 1972, and requesting ongoing consultation with members about the development of a new Community Asset Transfer policy. Further to this, the Committee makes two observations to highlight the importance of integrating the work of community wealth building with the Local Enterprise Partnership, and the need to work with partners beyond Oxfordshire's boundaries if all areas are to benefit equally from community wealth building activities.

RECOMMENDATIONS AND OBSERVATIONS

8. Under s. 123 of the Local Government Act 1972, Councils 'may dispose of land held by them in any manner they wish' but, unless with the consent of the Secretary of State, must not do so 'for a consideration less than the best that can be reasonably obtained'. This requirement appears straightforward, but as the increasing frequency of judicial reviews to consider councils' application of s. 123 of the Local Government Act 1972 attests, it is not.

9. Significant case law exists trying to determine the contours of the requirement to achieve the 'best [consideration] that can be reasonably obtained'. Counter-intuitively, this does not necessarily mean the best price achieved by going to the open market,[1] nor does it require that the highest price is always accepted.[2]

10. Pertinent to the discussion explored at committee, the law is relatively clear that Councils are not permitted to include social value factors in their determination of best value unless those factors hold a commercial or monetary value capable of being assessed by valuers.[3] This, however, has been partially abrogated by statutory instrument to allow Councils to undervalue properties by up to £2m if it promotes economic, social or environmental wellbeing.[4] For a Council with ambitions to pursue social value and community wealth building, but whose financial strategy also involves the sale of unrequired or under-used property assets, this degree of uncertainty is not helpful and means the Council is liable to be more conservative in its approach as a consequence.

11. The Committee recognises that it is the Council's duty to follow the law rather than to make it. However, it is a stated objective of the Chief Executive that the Council begin to demonstrate its strength much more in influencing policy at a national level. Oxfordshire is far from the only Council which will be reviewing its assets in the coming years; many of those other councils will also be seeking to promote wider social wellbeing through their disposals. Greater clarity in relation to the interactions would reduce the legal risk faced by Councils seeking to meet these two objectives. It would also give them confidence to take decisions which might otherwise not have been taken owing to legal uncertainty. In view of the change of government potentially allowing changes to established policy, and the Council's launch of a Public Affairs section to enable the Council to influence national policy, the committee deems it timely that the Council work with the Local Government Association to open discussions with central government to clarify the workings of s. 123 of the Local Government Act 1972.

Recommendation 1: That the Council works with the Local Government Association to open discussion with central government to clarify s.123 of the Local Government Act 1972.

12. A good illustration of the tension which exists between the Council's ambitions around community wealth building and the strategy of asset disposals to support the budget position is the Community Asset Transfer (CAT) policy, an issue discussed by the Committee. The tension lies in whether the ancillary social value benefits of providing underused assets to the community on non-

[1] R (Salford Estates) v Salford CC [2011] EWHC 2135 (Admin)
[2] *R (Cilldara) v West Northamptonshire Council* [2023] EWHC 1675 (Admin)
[3] R v Pembrokeshire CC ex p Coker [1999] 4 All ER 1007; R v Hackney LBC ex p Lemon Land [2001] EWHC Admin 346 [2002] JPL 405
[4] Circular 06/03: Local Government Act 1972 general disposal consent (England) 2003

commercial terms outweigh the opportunity cost of selling such assets and using them to fund business as usual.

13. As part of its promotion of community wealth building, the Cabinet agreed in September that the Council would 'review the CAT policy to improve effectiveness for OCC and community groups, in order to understand which OCC assets might be available for CAT, to ensure linkage with business support services and require a business plan outlining how the lease will remain affordable, and to develop a method to measure the benefits of CATs for the community and the Council.'

14. As elected members representing different localities, Committee members engage far more readily on issues around property and property usage in their divisions than most officers will. The same is true for most if not all elected members; they are aware of the currents of community opinion, the opportunities and – at times – any perceived differential treatment of organisations compared to others. Given their rootedness within those communities that a renewed CAT policy aims to serve, much valuable knowledge would be lost if the new draft were not consulted upon. The Committee's suggestion is that this would be usefully done at Locality Groups, which largely function to look at how high-level policy translates into positive outcomes at community level.

Recommendation 2: That the Council consults on its draft update of the CAT policy with Locality Groups.

15. Technically, the following observation was made in relation to a second item considered by the Committee at its 19 July meeting – the integration of the Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP) into the County Council. However, the point being made is exactly in relation to the need for integration between the Council's community wealth building approach and its work through the newly-integrated LEP.

16. As a brief recap, having listened to the speakers present that item and explored it in detail, the Committee agrees with the Leader's comments that the integration of the LEP into the County Council presents clear opportunities to strengthen the partnership and collaboration between the County Council and local businesses, and to align economic and social objectives.

17. As part of its work, the Local Enterprise Partnership is currently reviewing its Strategic Economic Plan. The Committee's view is that there are clearly opportunities for aligning economic and social objectives, but realising those opportunities is not automatic. Given the clear overlaps, in particular around skills development, if the Council wishes to maximise the social impact of its policy of community wealth building, it must coordinate and integrate this work with the planned activity of the LEP. It is vital, therefore, that the Strategic Economic Plan is developed with officers responsible for community wealth building heavily involved.

Observation 1: That to realise fully the shared benefits of the LEP and the Council's community wealth building approach, officers responsible for the latter must be fully represented and involved in the development of the LEP's Strategic Economic Plan.

18. As referenced in the summary, one area of challenge arising from the Committee referenced a perception of Oxford-centricity. Not only was Oxford used in the visuals within the CLES report, but its commentary displayed a degree of specificity around particular wards in Oxford which was not mirrored elsewhere. It is recognised that the CLES report is an external report and that the commitments of the Cabinet member were clear that it was the Council's ambition and the very point of community wealth building to address inequalities across the county. Nonetheless, it is important to be cognisant of the potential that the report the Council has drawn from to inform its own plans might be unintentionally Oxford-centric.

19. One issue the Committee wishes to highlight in particular is that there are many areas along the county borders where Oxford is not the primary economic centre; Oxfordshire shares a border with Reading, and Swindon, Aylesbury, High Wycombe and Northampton are all major economic areas close to parts of the county. If the pull of economic gravity is towards these external areas, the impact of any Oxfordshire-focused community wealth building activity is liable to be less. To equalise the impact it is necessary that the Council seek to involve key partners in non-Oxfordshire economic centres. The Committee notes that the CLES report's list of stakeholders includes few non-Oxfordshire stakeholders, and the majority of those are those who cover multiple geographic areas of which Oxfordshire is one, such as Thames Water or the Buckinghamshire, Oxfordshire and Berkshire West Integrated Care Board.

Observation 2: That the economic gravitational pull for many areas on the border of Oxfordshire is likely to be outside the county; to foster an approach which benefits these areas as much as those in and around Oxford will require proactive collaboration with organisations beyond the county boundary.

FURTHER CONSIDERATION

20. The Committee has requested a further report focusing specifically on the CAT policy to come to its November meeting. This, alongside the update on the Commercial Strategy, is hoped to provide greater clarity on the interactions between the Council's commercial and social value ambitions.

LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

21. Under Part 6.2 (13) (a) of the Constitution Scrutiny has the following power: 'Once a Scrutiny Committee has completed its deliberations on any matter a formal report may be prepared on behalf of the Committee and when agreed

by them the Proper Officer will normally refer it to the Cabinet for consideration.

22. Under Part 4.2 of the Constitution, the Cabinet Procedure Rules, s 2 (3) iv) the Cabinet will consider any reports from Scrutiny Committees.

Anita Bradley
Director of Law and Governance

Annex:	Pro-forma Response Template
Background papers:	None
Other Documents:	None
Contact Officer:	Tom Hudson Scrutiny Manager tom.hudson@oxfordshire.gov.uk Tel: 07791 494285

October 2024

Annex 1

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 requested[1] 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: Community Wealth Building and Wider Social Value

Lead Cabinet Member(s): Cllr Nathan Ley, Cabinet Member for Public Health, Inequalities & Community Safety

Date response requested:[2] 15 October 2024

Response to report:

Enter text here.

Response to recommendations:

Recommendation	Accepted, rejected or partially accepted	Proposed action (if different to that recommended) and indicative timescale (unless rejected)
That the Council works with the Local Government Association to open discussion		

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

Overview & Scrutiny Recommendation Response Pro forma

with central government to clarify s.123 of the Local Government Act 1972.		
That the Council consults on its draft update of the CAT policy with Locality Groups.		

Divisions Affected - All

Cabinet – 15th October 2024

Oxfordshire Safeguarding Children Board (OSCB) Annual Report
Report by Director of Children's Services

RECOMMENDATION

1. **Cabinet is RECOMMENDED to** note the annual report of the Oxfordshire Safeguarding Children Board senior safeguarding partners and to consider the key messages.

Executive Summary

2. This paper highlights findings from the Board's annual report on the effectiveness of local arrangements to safeguard and promote the welfare of children in Oxfordshire.

Background

3. Local multi-agency safeguarding arrangements are the collective responsibility of chief officers in the county council, the Integrated Care Board and Thames Valley Police.

4. These three senior safeguarding partners agree ways to co-ordinate their safeguarding services for children; act as a strategic leadership group in supporting and engaging others; and implement local and national learning including from serious child safeguarding incidents. They work with relevant partners through the Oxfordshire Safeguarding Children Board, under the leadership of an Independent Chair. The arrangement is referred to as the "Oxfordshire Safeguarding Children Board (OSCB)".

5. The report can be accessed in full on the OSCB website.

Key Issues

6. The OSCB Annual Report sets out the safeguarding challenges in Oxfordshire. The report shows the need to improve practice with respect to the themes of: (1) Neglect (2) Child exploitation and (3) Keeping children safe in education.

7. There are key messages for system leaders to bring a collective focus to:

Tackling Neglect of children in the family home by supporting those families who are not yet meeting all the needs of their children.

Minimising risks to children outside the home to ensure we have a system wide approach to keeping children safe from exploitation

Ensure that we keep children safe in schools and settings by making sure local arrangements are properly understood and better used to keep children in full time education

8. In the last year there were no Child Safeguarding Practice Reviews commissioned and one Rapid Review was completed. A thematic review on intrafamilial sexual abuse was published. Practical learning from these reviews informed the OSCB training programme for local workers and volunteers. It also informed learning summaries, workshops and an OSCB Safeguarding conference.

9. The repeat safeguarding themes identified in reviews last year are still current and continue to be a priority for the partnership this year. These are:

- The impact of trauma and cumulative harm
- Family engagement and consistent support
- Information sharing across the partnership
- Children with complex mental health/ emotional needs
- Parental mental health and parenting capacity
- Children not in school

Corporate Policies and Priorities

10. The report outlines the Safeguarding Children Board's priorities, the learning from Child Safeguarding Practice Reviews, the outcomes of quality assurance work and the summarised findings with respect to the unexpected child deaths in Oxfordshire. The report supports the vision, values, objectives and strategic priorities in the County Council's Corporate Plan (see Corporate Plan).

Financial Implications

The Oxfordshire Safeguarding Children Board is funded by the local safeguarding partnership including the County Council, District Councils, the Integrated Care Boards, Thames Valley Police and the National Probation Service. The budget contributions and expenditure are outlined in full detail in appendix B of the report

Comments checked by:

Legal Implications

11. Working Together to Safeguard Children (2023) is a Department for Education (DfE) statutory guidance which requires safeguarding partners to publish an annual report. The intention is to 'bring transparency for children, families and all practitioners about the activity undertaken' by the safeguarding partners.

12. As the requirement to produce a report is based on statutory guidance, this is not a legal requirement and there are no legal implications within the report.

    Comments checked by: Naomi Bentley-Walls
    Head of Law & Legal Business Partner
    naomi.bentley-lawson@oxfordshire.gov.uk

Lisa Lyons
Director of Children's Services

Annexes:

Annex 1: OSCB Annual Report

Contact Officer: Laura Gajdus. Business Manager - OSCB

This page is intentionally left blank

Oxfordshire Safeguarding Children Board (OSCB)

Annual Report 2023/2024

Foreword by Strategic Safeguarding Partners

We are pleased to present the annual safeguarding report for the Oxfordshire Safeguarding Children Board for 2023-24. The report is published by the three statutory partners (Oxfordshire County Council, Thames Valley Police and Berkshire Oxfordshire Buckinghamshire Integrated Care Board) who have a shared an equal duty to make the arrangements work together to safeguard and promote the welfare of all children at risk of abuse in Oxfordshire. They are responsible for putting in place effective arrangements to support the co-ordination, quality assurance and continual improvement of activity to safeguard children and young people. At the heart of this report is a commitment to transparency, accountability and above all the protection of the most vulnerable children, young people and families in Oxfordshire.

Page 24

This annual report provides information and data on how our local safeguarding systems for safeguarding children is working. It provides an overview of learning from children's reviews and how we have embedded this learning into practice.

This report also sets out the achievements and the work that progressed despite unprecedented pressures on service and this progress is testament to the strength of relationships between practitioners and leaders. Building on this relationship will continue to be important and underpin the work we do. Ensuring the partnership work effectively, improving the way it shares information and the ongoing development of our government to maximise improvements across the system will be key in the future success of the partnership in safeguarding for 2024-2025.

Finally on behalf of the Oxfordshire Safeguarding Children Board, we would like to thank the partnership workforce for their dedication in safeguarding and for the positive difference they make to the lives of children, families and communities.

This annual report was approved by MASA on 17th September 2024. In line with statutory requirements and best practice, this annual report will be shared with:

- Child Safeguarding Practice Review Panel
- The What Works Centre for Children's Social Care
- The Police and Crime Commissioner
- The Health and Wellbeing Board
- Oxfordshire Safeguarding Adult's board

Martin Reeves,
Chief Executive of
Oxfordshire County Council

Dr Nick Broughton,
Interim Chief Executive,
Integrated Care Board
Buckingham, Oxfordshire
and Berkshire West

Jason Hogg,
Chief Constable,
Thames Valley Police

Independent commentary by the OSCB Independent Chair/Scrutineer

This annual report has been informed by the safeguarding partners and scrutinised by me as Independent Chair. I was appointed as the new Independent Scrutineer/Chair for the Safeguarding Board in February 2024. I have held several senior leadership roles in the UK, including Director of Children Services and Executive Director of Social Work for a health and social care trust in Northern Ireland.
The aim of my work this year will be supporting the partnership with reviewing the effectiveness of the arrangements. Whilst I have started this post as Chair, I will be moving into the scrutineer function as set out in statutory guidance of Working Together to Safeguard Children 2023.

The role of the Independent Scrutineer is to carry out the independent scrutiny functions as set out in Working Together to Safeguard Children 2023. I will provide the critical challenge and appraisal of the multi-agency safeguarding partnership arrangements and will consider how effectively the arrangements are working for children and families, as well as for practitioners.

I am currently developing a system of scrutiny to provide assurance, monitoring and challenge to the quality of work, to judge the effectiveness of the multi-agency arrangements to safeguard and promote the welfare of all children in Oxfordshire. My role will act as a constructive critical friend and be a key driver to promoting reflection for continuous improvement across the partnership. As the independent scrutineer I will consider how effective the arrangements are working for children and families as well as practitioners, and how well the safeguarding partners are providing leadership and will:

- Provide assurance in judging the effectiveness of services to protect children
- Assist when there is a disagreement between agencies
- Support the OSCB to be a learning organisation

Independent Scrutiny will be provided by a single individual, with a view to generating usable learning for system improvements and is independent from the statutory partners.

The Independent Scrutineer's role includes:

- Attending the MASA Executive Group, as well as other subgroups
- Reviewing and contributing to the Partnership's annual report
- Reviewing audits and performance data, including self-assessment audits
- Ensuring regular thematic peer reviews
- Determine the effectiveness of arrangements to identify and review serious child safeguarding cases
- Involvement in the escalation and conflict resolution process
- Have a direct line of sight to frontline practice including conversations/feedback with frontline practitioners
- Ensuring the voice of the child and service users is at the heart of all aspects of scrutiny, by talking with and receiving direct feedback from children, young people and families, to test the interconnectedness between performance, practice and the voice of the child, young person and family
- Embed scrutiny as a positive process with learning as its outcome

I will share my finding of this work in the next annual report in 2024/25.

Ian Sutherland

Contents

Page 25

APPENDICES

1. Introduction

The guidance, ‘Working Together to Safeguard Children 2023’ requires safeguarding partners to publish an annual report. The intention is to ‘bring transparency for children, families and all practitioners about the activity undertaken’ by the safeguarding partners.

We want to provide Oxfordshire’s safeguarding partnership with.

1. Leadership and Governance
2. Direction on improving practice
3. Scrutineer and quality assurance

Our vision

We want to keep children in Oxfordshire as safe as possible by making sure everyone understands their roles and responsibilities regarding safeguarding through training, learning and local resources.

2. Providing leadership for effective safeguarding practice

The Executive Group set out in page 2 is responsible for overseeing Oxfordshire’s safeguarding arrangements. The Lead Safeguarding Partners (LSP) as set out in Working Together named above will delegate the leadership for the partnership to the delegated safeguarding partners (DSP). We experienced changes in the Executive during this year, as we had new appointments with the Local Authority, Health and Police. The workstreams have remained stable during this year, with consistent sub-Chairs and members who have worked effectively together. The partnership continues to function using predominantly online meetings. However, there was a drive from the partnership to hold meetings in person during this year, as partners felt it lends itself more to partnership working. The structure of the partnership has not changed for several years now and is currently being reviewed as part of the compliance work for Working Together to Safeguard Children 2023.

The Oxfordshire Safeguarding Children Board brings together local organisations, which deliver services that affect families’ and children’s lives.

The board includes independent community members and voluntary sector members also.

Safeguarding work is driven by multi-agency subgroups. You can find information on the subgroups, membership on the OSCB website.

The partnership is accountable for delivering child protection services and we keep children as safe as possible because we.

> **Provide oversight**
> **Identify and escalate emerging issues**
> **Seek assurance**
> **Challenge and hold each other to account**

UPDATES ON THE LAST 12 MONTHS

- Review and updates of the operating principles for the Child Safeguard Practice Review subgroup have been made. The intention is to ensure a shared understanding of the threshold for serious incident notification and improve the discussion of learning across the safeguarding partners.
- A deep dive of children with complex needs with delayed discharge has been completed.
- Education Safeguarding Advisory Team – provided a comprehensive and rich report on S175/157 self-assessment returns from schools and colleges with 96% sign up. There has been a significant increase on the use of neglect self-assessment in schools compared to last year, which has meant that children and their families receiving more targeted support for neglect
- The Seven Golden Rules to Information Sharing - was updated and circulated in the partnership, it can be found here.
- Commendation letters were written to 25 multi-agency practitioners, to recognise a piece of work that supported improvement in the safeguarding system.

EFFECTIVENESS OF LEADERSHIP IN SUMMARY:

- Strategic ownership of safeguarding by health, local authority and police
- Thames Valley Police during this year, have further strengthened their oversight and delivery of their own safeguarding functions to support partnership working
- Strategic partners have recognised that the voice of children and their families will be an area of focus to strengthen within the partnership going forward
- Review of the structure of the partnership is planned, to show evidence of impact and outcomes for children

3. Children in Oxfordshire

The Safeguarding Board regularly reviews data and performance figures. The partnership's ambition is to continually improve the join up of separate data sources, to provide data that can identify vulnerable cohorts and direct resources to support them. This is a national challenge that it is hoped will be helped by the formation of a central government data strategy due to be published, in response to the 'Stable Homes, Built on Love' Government consultation Response.

Unless otherwise specified, data relates to the figures as at year end 31/3/2024

The child population of Oxfordshire stands at approximately 152,205. Whilst Oxfordshire has many strengths, it is important to acknowledge that 10 out of 83 neighbourhoods in the county fall within the 20% most deprived areas in England. After housing costs, approximately 1/ 4 children in Oxfordshire live below the poverty line.

What we know about different levels of support for children and families

Early help In Oxfordshire

There were 4,409 strength and needs forms (EHAs) completed in the first 9 months of the year. Whilst this is below the target level of 7500 for the year, it is higher than the number of social care assessments – This means that children are now more likely to be supported by an early help response. (Latest national figures show you are still 2.3 times more likely to be met with a social care, than an early help response). This was an area of focus identified by the partnership during the previous year and demonstrates successful partnership working through a strengthened Early Help service.

Request for support through the Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH)

In 23/24 the number of enquiries into MASH was 2% fewer than the previous 12 months. The MASH triages all contacts to Children's Social Care and Targeted Family Support at an early help level. There is assurance that children are receiving the right help at the right time and that the application for threshold is applied by the partnership. Thames Valley Police have increased their staffing within the MASH teams, and this has improved management and functions in this area of work.

Support through a Child Protection plan

As of 31st March 2024, there were 528 children made subject of a Child Protection plan.

Children We Care For

There were 676 Children We Care For, which is 127 less than 12 months ago and now in line with similar authorities.

There are 98 unaccompanied asylum-seeking children living in Oxfordshire.

Children's Health

- The number of A&E attendances and hospital admissions for self- harm continues to reduce. A&E attendances are 14% lower than 12 months ago (650 for 10–19-year-olds) and hospital admissions (15-19) are 36% lower (125).
- There were 172 hospital attendances for children aged 10 - 14 yrs. This is 5% lower than the 182 in the previous 12 months. For 15–19-year-olds there were 478 attendances, 15% lower than the 562 in the previous 12 months.
- The number of hospital admissions, 125, for self-harm (15-19) is 36% lower than the 194 in the previous 12 months. GPs receive summaries form Emergency Department in all cases. Self-harm data and themes are shared at the self-harm forum which is multi-agency in its representatives.
- The Oxford University Hospital information is shared by the safeguarding liaison service with school health nurses and children social care for children on a child protection plan or open to Children We Care For.

The partnership has been focused on the timeliness of children being offered an initial health assessment. This has improved this year and increased to 71% in 23/24 (to January) and 100% for the last 3 months. This follows increased medical capacity and a focus on timely flow of information. Children placed outside of Oxfordshire continue to face long delays for both the initial health assessment and the review health assessment due to limited capacity in the receiving health team. Both issues have been escalated to the Corporate Parenting Panel, the Designated Nurse and through the ICB to NHS England.

Impact of structural changes within Thames Valley Police

During this reporting timeframe, Thames Valley Police introduced a new Public Protection and Safeguarding Command under the direction of an experienced Detective Chief Superintendent, with force-wide responsibility for safeguarding functions such as domestic abuse and child protection. They have recruited several additional senior detectives to improve oversight of this work and in addition invested in more specialist child protection detectives. They all work alongside local police teams, and this has led to more offenders being brought to justice, in particular sexual crimes against children. We have speeded up our assessment and response to missing children in the county and are working closely with our partners to adopt nationally recognised missing people protocols.

4. Focused area for the partnership

Our partnership has 3 safeguarding issues where practice improvement is essential

neglect of children in the family home

we need to support those families, who are not yet meeting all the needs of their children

minimising risks to children outside the home

we need a system-wide approach to keeping children safe from harm outside their home & from child exploitation

keeping children safe in schools and settings

local arrangements need to be properly understood and better used to keep children in full time education

TACKLING NEGLECT

What went well	Even better if
• There is evidence that the application of Early Help (TAF Team Around the Family) and the first signs of emerging neglect and proactive stance have increased within the partnership • There is evidence of increase of tool usage to support families – Thrive, Home Conditions and participation in GCP2 for children in TAF, CIN (Child in Need) and CP (Child Protection) plans. • Collection of evidence base for impact of Neglect Strategy and evidence within actions plans • Achieving improved attendance across key cohorts (transfer from primary to secondary) and muti-agency understanding of reintegration timetables • Home Conditions Tool and other tools approved – currently in development a SEN my lived experience tool within a special school. Home condition use evidence in some contacts to MASH • GCP2 initiative with health visitors (funding by Public Health Grant) – currently in training phase • Piloting the use of GCP2 within Education in Oxfordshire	• Neglect continues to be identified earlier before families reach a crisis point and need statutory help • Continued increase for partners in support families with tools where neglect is a feature • Practitioners and managers routinely used the tools and resources available • Changes in practice are embedded across the whole system • Increase use of home condition tools from the partnership • Roll out of the GCP2 to all health visitors • Once piloting phase has been completed then delivery of the GCP2 in all schools across Oxfordshire

KEEPING CHILDREN SAFE IN SCHOOLS AND SETTINGS

What went well	Even better if
• Exclusions continue to reduce from pre-covid levels (31 children last year) however, two thirds of exclusions are for children with special education needs • Progress update on Operation Encompass reporting to schools. The group were pleased to note that progress to address these issues has been made. TVP have ensured that all school contact details are correct and are in the process of training response officers. • Guidance has been written for schools on how to manage incidents of Child-on-Child harmful sexual behaviour. • This has been developed over a period of 12 months and has involved a multi-agency working group consisting of colleagues from TVP, education, social care and the school nurse team. The impact is that schools and settings now have clear processes to support their decision making.	A strategic education board has now been set up and work is being undertaken to address attendance in the partnership. Review of the Operation Encompass to ensure changes that have been made have had the right outcomes for children affected by domestic abuse. Review of this guidance to ensure we can see impact and experiences for children.

Child Exploitation work	
What went well	**Even better if**
• Children at risk in Oxfordshire (victim, suspect of offender) has increased overall by 3.18%. Reductions have been seen in Oxford City – 11.2% and South and Vale- 7.78 but Cherwell and West Oxfordshire have seen increase of 31.25% (672 to 882) and 5.66% (389 to 411) respectively. • There is now a multi-agency training package in place for exploitation in the partnership • More dates have been set for Trauma Awareness Training run through the Violence Reduction Unit • Effective multi-agency working has been highlighted I the partnership following the response of an increase in violence between two groups of children in an area of Oxford city. A group formed and key leads across the partnership were identified to lead. • Prevention and engagement worked followed which resulted in a comprehensive partnership plan for every child with a support from their parents. This holistic piece of work has had a positive impact on the children, their families and the communities. The learning from this work will be shared and formal recommendation for recognition was sent from the board to the front-line practitioners leading this work • Thames Valley Police participate at the regular Contextual Safeguarding Meeting (CSM) and the Multi-Agency Child Exploitation panel with managers from Children Social Care to consider emerging concerns about children at risk of harm and exploitation locally. We are supporting ongoing improvements to the MACE process including the production of joint datasets to better understand the exploitation landscape locally. This work is also to include an audit process to identify good practice and learning. MACE has identified themes such as transitional arrangements which have been reported on to the strategic MACE group and which will influence future service provision.	• Further work on how we use data in the Chil Protection Prevalence report to inform and shape other subgroups and the wider partnership • Disruption of criminals to be targeted and effective • All practitioners feel confident and have the skills to tackle and support child protection • Increase in partnership workforce to work in a trauma informed way to support victims • The partnership has worked together to speed up the assessments and response to missing children in the county and are working closely with our partners to adopt nationally recognised missing people protocols. As an outcome this has ensured we can protect children quickly where we identify risks from online harm.

Page 30

5. Findings from Child Safeguarding Practice Reviews

In 2023/2024, there were no CSPR's published during this period. A thematic summary was published by the partnership and can be found here. This thematic review looked at intra-familiar sexual abuse, including siblings abuse, and highlights key practical issues found in Oxfordshire learning reviews. It links with national research and other learning reviews.

There were 6 key findings in this review which were.

1. Professional curiosity and unconscious or conscious bias "It was not seen"
2. Information sharing and working together to gain a full picture/history
3. The need for practitioners to be trauma aware when understanding Inter-generational patterns of abuse
4. Understanding individual children's worlds in their families and hearing their voice
5. Working with families to understand barriers and enablers
6. Impact of the covid-19 pandemic

We are planning to hold a conference in 2024, to ensure the learning from this thematic review and Child Sexual Abuse is shared wider across the partnership.

We had one serious incident notification in this period. The key findings learning from this review were raising awareness of risk factors for suicide, in particular, children affected by parental suicide. The multi-agency partners to ensure anniversaries of important dates for families are considered in any intervention or assessments completed. The child's voice was not always recorded in assessments and direct work. Notification to school health nurse for children that are electively home educated. Police intervention and national guidance – Thames Valley Police agreed to review the system when Education refer matters to them, so timely advice is sought. Finally, the multi-agency response to a change for a child to become electively educated. The learning will be overseen by the multi-agency Child Safeguarding Practice Review Group in the following 6 months period.

EFFECTIVENESS OF DRIVING FORWARD PRACTICE IN SUMMARY:

- Leaders will drive forward the cultural change for the safeguarding partnership to be more effective
- The partnership will strengthen the voice of children and front-line practitioners.

What we know

The repeat safeguarding themes identified in reviews last year are still current and continue to be a priority for the partnership this year

- **The impact of trauma and cumulative harm**
- **Family engagement and consistent support**
- **Information sharing across the partnership**
- **Children with complex mental health/ emotional needs**
- **Parental mental health and parenting capacity**
- **Children not in school**

Page 31

EFFECTIVENESS OF LEARNING FROM PRACTICE REVIEWS

The partnerships ambition is to improve collaboration of learning from Domestic Homicide and Adult Safeguarding Reviews into the children partnership. The aim is that the learning is shared across the system so that change can be embedded into front line practice.

Findings from Child Death Overview Panel 2023-24

Who Are We?

The CDOP panel are a multi-agency subgroup of the OSCB, who meet 5 times a year to review child deaths.

What We Do

In accordance with statutory guidance, review the deaths of all children resident in Oxfordshire

Aim

To take forward recommendations to influence strategic changes and practice and ultimately reduce the incidence of child deaths

Deaths in children are always very distressing for parents, carers and clinical staff. Reviewing the confirmed causes of childhood death can lead to effective action in preventing future deaths, which is at the core of the process. The full report can be found here.

Summary

In 2023/24, the Oxfordshire CDOP system received 32 notifications. The Designated Doctor for Child Death chaired 13 Joint Agency Response meetings (JAR's) for children in Oxfordshire in 2023/24. These are held in situations when a child died suddenly and unexpectedly, defined as a death or circumstances leading to death that were not predicted 24 hours previously. In all cases, proactive support plans and a key worker were identified for families, with feedback being reported through late case discussion meetings and multi-agency clinical Child Death Review Meetings (CDRMs).

The Oxfordshire CDOP panel met on five separate occasions in 2023/24 to review the deaths of 38 children, whose usual residence was in Oxfordshire. These reviews included deaths that occurred in previous years, but had been carried over due to additional investigations or reviews which prevented completion of the CDOP process earlier

Learning and actions from the reviews completed in 2023-2024:

- Interagency communication remains the most frequent theme arising from reviews. The value of early, proactive planning, involving acute, community and palliative care teams has been clearly demonstrated during the year, with examples presented of excellent coordinated care.
- Bereavement support has been an area which families have fed back as being variable. This has been particularly challenging in situations where children have died out of area and initial follow up plans have been led by the out of area team. During the year, work was undertaken to review and update details of the bereavement resources available to families. In the acute bereavement phase within Oxfordshire's main hospital and hospice sites, leaflets are provided to families. Ensuring that these are shared with families whose bereavement began away from their home, consistently requires improvement and will be an area of focus for 2024-2025.
- The role of the Keyworker in these situations has been identified as valuable. However, the depth of bereavement support skills and knowledge in non-health Keyworkers has been identified as undeveloped. Action is being taken by CDOP and its members to update Keyworker guidance and plan some more training in the coming year.
- Another key area of work, that is required in 2024-2025, in which the Keyworker plays a vital role, is in ensuring the family experience and voice is heard within the review. Nationally, this has been acknowledged as challenging. In response, a toolkit has been created to help involve bereaved parents in the review of their child's death. The toolkit provides a structured format for parents to ask questions, feedback to professionals, and learn the outcomes of Child Death Review Meetings. The toolkit was developed jointly by bereaved parents and professionals during the research project 'Involving Parents and Staff in Learning from Child Deaths', funded by the National Institute of Health Research. It is recommended that the Oxfordshire area encourage the use of this tool in 2024-2025.
- The cultural support offer to families in the immediate bereavement phase has been identified by panel as limited for non-Christian faiths in the review year. The accessibility, for professionals, of specialist faith leaders has been restricted by limited key communication links being available. All services have agreed to review their local offer, to ensure it is equitable and meets the family needs. The CDOP Panel has agreed to keep cultural needs as an area of focus for reviews in the coming year.

6. Embedding learning and improvement

The OSCB aims to improve practice through learning from reviews. We keep in touch with practitioners and share learning summaries, so that these can be taken related upon and considered for ongoing learning.

Learning has led to improved ways for us to work together:

- Revisions continue to be made to the **'Resolving Professional Concerns and Disagreements'** Policy, to ensure that it is easily accessible and for all partners.
- Updates are being made to the **'pre-birth guidance'** and **'self-harm and suicide guidance'** following reviews, to ensure guidance was up to date. Further work is underway to review **'Children and families Moving cross Local Authority Boundaries/Management of transfer in case conferences**.

Summary

346	6,172	11,338
training events in total have been delivered	practitioners attended face to face training	completed e-Learning virtual and face to face training

Practitioners have told us about OSCB training...

Domestic Abuse: basic awareness - I thought this was an excellent training. It packed a lot into a tiny amount of time. The trainer was good: approachable, listened carefully, knowledgeable. The pace of the training was good, and the diagrams/models helpful and clear. I will be looking up some of the writers the trainer mentioned, and I will look up the 'power wheel' she has devised with input from users of services. I hope this feedback goes back to the trainer!

OSCB trainers are volunteers who deliver the partnerships training programme.

86 volunteer safeguarding trainers currently in core course training pool

30 trainers attended the trainer celebration event which was a face-to-face event. The guest speaker, Adrian Bethune, was an inspirational educator and spoke about looking after yourself whilst safeguarding others

The trainers are an invaluable line of communication into the safeguarding network. They meet Oxfordshire workforce over 100 times each year and feedback their views directly to us.

Thames Valley Police have undergone training in tactical options to tackle exploitation, vulnerability and risk, especially among young people and have participated in the multi-agency training offered but the partnership.

OSCB trainers have told us...

'Working together as part of a multi-agency team to deliver the training was brilliant- it allowed us to pull together our knowledge and offer a holistic approach to safeguarding children, where the concerns are exploitation'.

6. Evidence and Assurance

The OSCB looks at the children's safeguarding system in different ways to check how well it is working.

Assessments – Organisations check how well they comply with safeguarding standards and look at pressures on their services. We reviewed 17 large services which support children, through a self-assessment and a peer review.

Audits – We reviewed how well organisations work with others to support children. We carried out a multi-agency audit into neglect and completed a deep dive for children with delayed discharge from hospital.

Views – From practitioners, families and children: an important part of the jigsaw, these are included where possible. Over 687 practitioners completed an online safeguarding questionnaire for the OSCB.

Data - We review data on all safeguarding pressure points at all levels of the partnership on a bi-monthly basis.

Main areas of safeguarding focus over the last 12 months are:

- A growing level of suspensions at secondary schools
- Over 22,000 pupils (20% persistently absent for more than 10% last year)
- 1500 pupils missed more than 50% of schooling including 1:24 secondary pupils
- 88 children missing education currently
- 26 children subject to social care plan, who are electively home educated

The Partnership, in response to the concerns, has completed work to look at an attendance strategy to prevent further increases in the number of children absent from Education. Mental health continues to be a significant reason for low attendance across schools and work is being undertaken to look at a common approach to this and further resources to support schools in addressing this. Transport issues for children in special schools, mean that some children's school attendance Is impacted. It was noted that not all schools use data effectively to track attendance and therefore, further work has been identified to address this. The Safeguarding in Education subgroup are linked to the work of the strategic attendance review meetings which are in place and will take forward most of this work. The subgroup and partnership will review and support this work going forward.

Annual Report 2023/2024 - Conclusions

This year's report for 23/24 covers the activities undertaken by OSCB, including multi-agency reviews for children in the Oxfordshire area. The report demonstrates a high volume of work covered over the period, with areas of strengths and features of effective partnership working.

Going forward into 2024/25, the areas of focus will be on the compliance set out in the statutory guidance Working Together to Safeguard Children 2023. There will be a programme of activity carried out in the next financial year, to ensure we review and make changes to the effectiveness of the arrangements in Oxfordshire. The priorities for the next year will remain unchanged from what was agreed in the previous year's (22/23) report. This will allow time for change and improvements to be embedded and to take effect and enable meaningful impact for children in Oxfordshire.

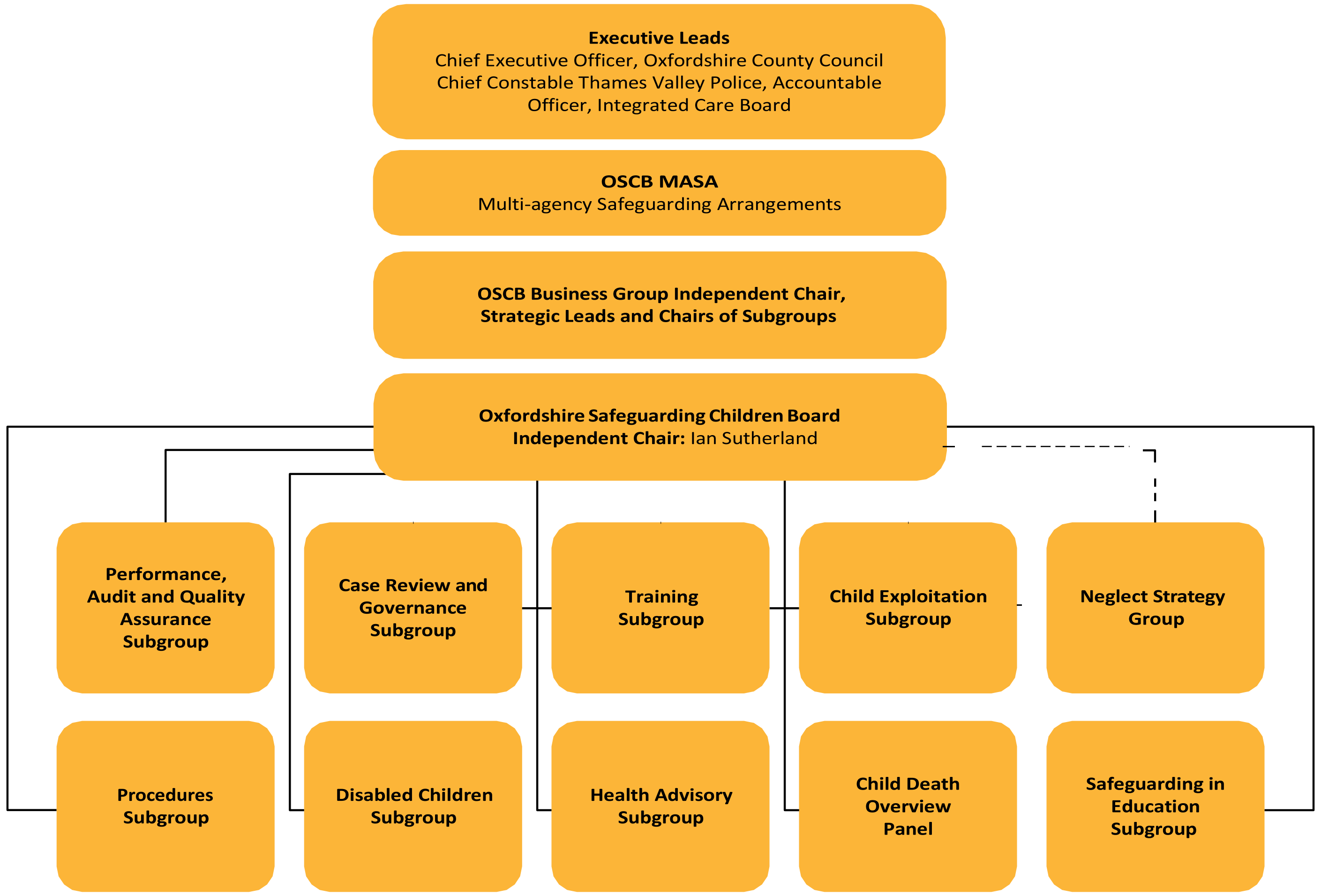
Senior leads in the partnership have agreed for a dedicated post in the business unit to lead on engagement of young people and their families. This post is actively being recruited to and we can report in the next year's report how this area of work has progressed. In addition, significant work is being undertaken on the OSCB website to ensure that documents, policies and guidance for the partnership is accessible for the partnership and reviewed at regular cycles.

Appendix A: OSCB Budget

	End of year figures 2023/24
Funding streams	
Public Health	-£30,000.00
Income	
Foster carer training	-£2,500
Non-attending delegates	-£9,500
Department of Education (Implementation of working together 2023)	-£47,300
Contributions	
OCC Children, Education & Families	-£208,000
OCC Dedicated schools grant	-£64,000
BOB ICB*	-£60,000
Thames Valley Police	-£21,000
National Probation Service*	-£1,410
ORC*	-£2,500
Oxford City Council	-£10,000
Cherwell DC	-£5,000
South Oxfordshire DC	-£5,000
West Oxfordshire DC	-£5,000
Vale of White Horse DC	-£5,000
TOTAL INCOME	**-£476,210.00**
Expenditure	
Independent Chair	£16,000
Business unit	£314, 107
L & I work	£5,546
Training & learning	£50,000
All case reviews	£26,160
TOTAL	**£411,813.00**
Available reserves*	£124,453
Drawdown	£64,397

* NHS Oxfordshire BOB ICB also funds the Child Death Overview Process at a cost of £76,774 per annum

Appendix B: OSCB subgroup structure 2023/24



Safeguarding work is driven by multi-agency subgroups. Each subgroup has a workplan which is reviewed every time it meets. Information on them, our membership, funding, and links to other partnerships are in links at the end of this report.

OSCB
Oxfordshire
Safeguarding
Children Board

oscb@oxfordshire.gov.uk
www.oscb.org.uk

This page is intentionally left blank

Divisions Affected - All

Cabinet

15 October 2024

OSAB Annual Report

Report by Director of Adult Social Care

RECOMMENDATION

1. **The Cabinet is RECOMMENDED to**

Note the content of the annual report which appears at the annex to this report

Executive Summary

2. The report summarises the work of the Oxfordshire Safeguarding Adults Board (OSAB) and its partners over the course of the year 2023-24. It is a requirement set out in the Care Act 2014 and the related statutory guidance that the Local Authority receive a copy of the annual report and that they "will fully consider the contents of the report and how they can improve their contributions to both safeguarding throughout their own organisation and to the joint work of the Board" (Chapter 14, para 161).

Body of the Report

3. Safeguarding Boards are made up of a wide range of organisations, including senior representatives from Oxfordshire County Council, Thames Valley Police, Buckinghamshire, Oxfordshire and west Berkshire (BOB) Integrated Care Board, Oxford University Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust, Oxford Health NHS Foundation Trust and the City and District Councils, amongst others. Safeguarding Boards are required to share their annual reports with all statutory partners and those partners are expected to consider the report and its contents to decide how they can improve their contribution to both safeguarding throughout their own organisation and to the joint work of the Board *(S14.161, Care and Support Statutory Guidance).*

4. This report and the work of the Board will take on additional significance in light of the new Care Quality Commission Inspection regime, which will see the Local Authority inspected for the first time since Safeguarding Boards became a statutory requirement. Based on feedback received from the inspection pilot

areas, the Board will be asked for its view on the Local Authority and how they discharge their safeguarding function under The Care Act 2014.

Key Findings

Board work during 2023-24

5. The local safeguarding partnership has continued to maintain a high standard of safeguarding.

6. There has been a slight decrease in safeguarding concerns across all types of abuse and neglect, which is in line with the yearly fluctuations in the number of concerns. Comparative data is published later in 2024-25 so until that point we cannot know whether this pattern is replicated in other Authorities.

7. Despite challenging financial and workforce pressures, the partnership has continued to undertake a large amount of work against the four key strategic priorities of the Board and the details of this work is detailed within the report itself.

8. The proportion of concerns that led to enquiries decreased from 28.8% in 22/23 to 22.25% in 23/24, with care providers (including care homes) remaining the highest source of referrals in 23/24 accounting for 29% of all referrals. To understand this further audit work has been commenced to review decision making at the triage stage of concern. 10% of care home concerns were audited for Q3 and found that decision making by the safeguarding team was correct and in line with statutory guidance. This is indicative that further training and support with care providers would be beneficial in reducing the number of inappropriate referrals.

9. The number of completed safeguarding enquiries also decreased by 22% in 23/24. A number of factors have contributed to this figure. It is noted that where detailed information is gathered when a concern is received this is not being recorded as an enquiry. To address this, the pathways in the Liquid Logic Care records system have been redesigned to ensure that work undertaken by the team is rightly captured as enquiry activity and thus we would expect to see an increase in the number of completed enquiries in 24/25 once this is live in Q3.

10. Throughout the last 12 months, there has been a robust focus on improving safeguarding performance. This included the closure of inappropriate or historic cases throughout 22/23 still open. This has been a significant achievement for the team illustrated by the fact that in July 2023 there were 527 open enquiries with 268 of these open over 12 weeks. As of July 2024, there are 183 open enquires with only 13 over 12 weeks. Historically there have been waits for an allocated officer to complete an enquiry. To overcome this, allocations were made across adult social care teams where the person was already known to a social worker which provided rapid resolution of longstanding cases and positively ensured continuity of worker. This not only improved the experience for the person but ensured that safeguarding is everybody’s business and that

all teams participate in the safeguarding duty. This targeted work also identified, that enquiries would often remain open beyond the remit of the safeguarding intervention where a complex case management approach would be more appropriate from one of the locality teams. Therefore, closure to more appropriate intervention has also contributed to the overall reduction in enquiry numbers. This will need careful consideration throughout the coming year, in view of the data indicating 1107 people who have had a concern raised in both years. Audit focus on decision making will focus specifically on whether the person has had a previous concern and whether safeguarding duty can and should add a more robust approach to the persons situation as opposed to a case management approach.

11. To ensure robust decision making further detailed audits are also planned to review reductions in the number of concerns that do not progress to enquiries specifically in the areas of referrals from Police, Ambulance and those raised by friends or family. This will be an area for Performance Information and Quality Assurance subgroup to scrutinise over the coming year.

12. A number of workshops have been completed in relation to Making Safeguarding Personal (MSP) across the service. Whilst MSP scores remain strong at the closure of an enquiry, the team identified that outcomes were not always robustly sought at the very beginning of the enquiry process. Regular "dip audits" now show that the introduction of the enquiry pod and the focus on MSP means that people's views are now being sought at the very beginning of the safeguarding episode.

13. Overall, the County Council Safeguarding Team's performance has improved significantly but will require close monitoring to ensure that enquiry rates remain proportionate to individual circumstances and that data continues to inform areas requiring qualitative exploration.

14. The Board's annual frontline practitioner survey has indicated that there is still work to do to improve practitioner confidence with escalating concerns when there is a difference of opinion. This is backed up by findings with case review and multi-agency work undertaken by the Board.

15. The Board's annual safeguarding self-assessment indicates that organisations continue to experience issues around recruitment, retention and workforce resilience, which have been consistently included in the assessment since it was introduced. The budgetary constraints on services are outside the scope of the Board but have been discussed at national networks where they impact on safeguarding work, such as the availability of mental health beds.

16. As in previous years, Organisations also reported an increase in demand on their services. More people are presenting with multiple needs requiring the coordinated input of several organisations, which can be challenging for services.

17. There has been significant progress in the work of the Multi-Agency Risk Management (MARM) process, managed by the OSAB, since a dedicated

Officer has been taken on to chair the meetings. Feedback from adults who are being discussed at the meeting has been positive, with some very positive examples of adults changing the direction of their lives thanks to the hard work of those involved in the process.

Board priorities for 2023-24 from the annual report

18. A significant amount of local and national work in regard to adult safeguarding has been undertaken. In acknowledgement of the demands on services to act on learning, the Board is reviewing its strategy and workplan to have a greater focus on acting on learning and measuring impact of learning activity. Sources of learning include:
    (a) Local Safeguarding Adults Reviews and Homeless Mortality Reviews due to be completed and published in 2024-25
    (b) The findings from the 2nd SAR national analysis, reviewing 652 Safeguarding Adult Reviews (there is a dedicated briefing on this for Elected Members produced by the Local Government Association: Briefing for elected members: Second national analysis of Safeguarding Adult Reviews)
    (c) The safeguarding dataset used by the Board

19. Linked to this, the Board will reconsider its strategy overall, ensuring the priorities are informed by the learning mentioned above and framing the priorities against the impact they are expected to have on the people of Oxfordshire.

Financial Implications

20. N/A – The Local Authority is not being asked to commit any further financial resources towards the Board beyond what is currently committed.

    Comments checked by:

    Stephen Rowles, Strategic Finance Business Partner,
    Stephen.rowles@oxfordshire.gov.uk

Legal Implications

21. The requirements of the Care Act 2014 are that the Safeguarding Adults Board must produce an annual report setting out:
    - what it has done during that year to achieve its objective,
    - what it has done during that year to implement its strategy,
    - what each member has done during that year to implement the strategy,
    - the findings of the safeguarding adults reviews (SARs) arranged by it which have concluded in that year, details of any SARs which are ongoing

at the end of that year, what it has done during that year to implement the findings of its SARs, and, where it decides not to implement a finding of its SARs, the reasons for its decision.

The Care Act also requires that a copy of the annual report is to be sent to each of the statutory partners. This has already taken place.

Comments checked by: Janice White

Head of Law and Legal Business Partner, ASC and Litigation
Janice.White@oxfordshire.gov.uk

Staff Implications

22. N/A – There are no additional staff resources being requested by way of this report for the work outlined in the Annual Report.

Equality & Inclusion Implications

23. N/A – there are no additional equality & inclusion implications.

Sustainability Implications

24. The Board have moved the majority of its work to a virtual environment, reducing travel congestion, and no longer prints any materials for Board meetings or training sessions, instead making these available electronically. It has also reduced printing & design costs by making more things, such as this annual report, plain text on the OSAB website.

Risk Management

25. The Board is made up of the partners who attend the meetings, supported by a small team in the Board Business Unit. If organisations do not continue to provide the level of engagement with the work of the Board it is likely it would fail to meet its duties laid out in statute and its accompanying guidance. As the Local Authority is the organisation charged under The Care Act 2014 to ensure the Board is established and running well, this would represent a reputational risk. It is also likely any such failings would be highlighted under the new CQC inspection framework and in their resulting published report.

NAME	Karen Fuller, Director of Adult Social Care
Annex:	Annual report

Background papers:	Nil
[Other Documents:]	N/A
Contact Officer:	Steven Turner, Strategic Partnerships Manager, 01865 328993

[September 2024]

Oxfordshire Safeguarding Adults Board

Annual Report 2023-24

Report on a Page

During 2023-24, there has been a significant amount of work completed across the partnership (p9-32) contributing to making the people of Oxfordshire safer.

There was a small decrease in the number of safeguarding concerns received by the Local Authority (p33) which is in line with previous yearly fluctuations we see in the numbers of concern.

Self-neglect and neglect remain the main cause for concern about someone, which is in line with previous years locally and nationally.

There was a bigger decrease in the number of safeguarding enquiries conducted by the Local Authority (p36). This means the number of concerns received that were felt to meet the statutory criteria for a safeguarding enquiry under The Care Act 2014 were fewer. Auditing to understand this appears to offer two contributory factors:

1. *Of 10% of cases audited, the decision-making to not escalate the concern into an enquiry was agreed with in nearly all cases. This may indicate a need for some organisations to improve their training offer to staff to help them better understand what is a safeguarding concern. The Board is highlighting this to relevant organisations and commissioners of services.*
2. *Further auditing also points towards the safeguarding social workers are doing work that would usually constitute a safeguarding enquiry at the safeguarding concerns stage. The Local Authority is doing internal work with the team on this matter.*

The County Council Safeguarding Team's performance has improved significantly but will require close monitoring to ensure that enquiry rates remain proportionate to individual circumstances and that data continues to inform areas requiring qualitative exploration.

Future Plans for the Board Partnership

1. *Learning and development are to have a higher focus in 2024-25 as there are a number of workstreams identifying learning. Therefore there will be a greater focus on embedding the learning and measuring its impact.*
2. *Linked to this, the Board will reconsider its strategy overall, ensuring the priorities are informed by the learning mentioned above and framing the priorities against the impact they are expected to have on the people of Oxfordshire.*

Content

Chair’s Foreword

Welcome to Oxfordshire Safeguarding Boards’ 2023/2024 Annual Report. Since I joined the Board in 2021 I have seen a number of positive changes in Oxfordshire and I have remained impressed at the dedication organisations have shown to improving care for adults with care and support needs under ongoing challenging circumstances including staffing and funding. Oxfordshire still has many areas to improve but I think it is a real demonstration of the maturity of the Board that members have been open and honest about their services and the improvement journey they are on, both individually and as a system.

During this last year Board and its subgroups met to address safeguarding matters and implement the learning from the different reviews we commission and those that are published nationally. We continue to seek assurance that the adult safeguarding duties within the Care Act 2014 are at the heart of the work of the statutory, voluntary and community services that work together to prevent and/or protect individuals from abuse and neglect in Oxfordshire.

A key part of our role is to scrutinise our data regarding adult safeguarding concerns to examine trends and seek assurance alongside commissioning reviews to learn from where care has not gone as well as it could. This past year we have commissioned seven Safeguarding Adults Reviews and will be publishing further reviews completed this year, the learning points of which can be found on this report. A key focus must be learning from reviews and ensuring we have evidence that recommendations are put into practice and practice is improving across all our frontline services.

This year we have reviewed the team supporting the Board and have amended our structures to maximise the support we can give to the work of the Board and partners. I welcome the appointment of an Independent Scrutineer, Dr Dawne Garrett to support the ongoing work.

Dr Jayne Chidgey-Clark

Why the Safeguarding Board exists

- The main objective of a SAB is to assure itself that local safeguarding arrangements and partners act to help and protect adults in its area.
- The SAB has a strategic role that is greater than the sum of the operational duties of the core partners. It oversees and leads adult safeguarding across the locality and will be interested in a range of matters that contribute to the prevention of abuse and neglect.
- These will include the safety of patients in its local health services, quality of local care and support services, effectiveness of prisons and approved premises in safeguarding offenders and awareness and responsiveness of further education services.
- It is important that the SAB has effective links with other key partnerships in the locality and share relevant information and work plans. They should consciously cooperate to reduce any duplication and maximise any efficiency, particularly as objectives and membership is likely to overlap.

How the Board operates

Oxfordshire Safeguarding Adults Board – Full Board					
Learning, Development & Training Subgroup	Safeguarding Adults Review Subgroup	Performance, Information & Quality Assurance Subgroup	Engagement Subgroup	Policy, Procedures & Practice Subgroup	Board Chairs Meeting
Joint with the Children's Partnership Oversees the training offered by OSAB Oversees the multi-agency training strategy	Oversees the case review functions • Safeguarding Adults Reviews • Homeless Mortality Reviews Oversees implementation of learning from actions from these reviews	Scrutinises the dataset of safeguarding activity Oversees multi-agency audit work Oversees the annual safeguarding self-assessment (joint with Children's Board)	Brings together organisations to agree how to cascade messages from the Board to the frontline and the general public as well as how to escalate messages to Board from the frontline	Oversees the multi-agency policies and procedures of the Board Discusses practice changes (locally or nationally dictated) for impact on the safeguarding system	Brings together the subgroup chairs with the Board Chair to discuss cross-subgroup issues, share learning between groups, agree ownership of work raised at the Full Board and share other national news relevant to safeguarding.

Where the Board fits in the partnership geography

Safer Oxfordshire Partnership (SOP)

The Partnership is a thematic group that brings together community safety partners to work together to deliver on joint priorities and emerging themes. The partnership is part of a strategic framework that community safety partners are expected to put in place to improve outcomes for local people. Includes regular reporting on DHR's, Modern Slavery, Prevent & Violent Crime

Safeguarding Adults Board (OSAB)

Its main duty defined in statutory guidance is to assure itself that local arrangements and partners act to help and protect adults with care and support needs in its area. This includes conducting Safeguarding Adult Reviews (SARs)

Safeguarding Childrens Board (OSCB)

The OSCB is there to oversee how organisations work together to safeguarding and promote the welfare of children, known as the Multi-Agency Safeguarding Arrangements (MASA) under Working Together 2023

Health & Wellbeing Board (HWBB)

HWBBs are charged with promoting greater integration and partnership between the NHS, public health and the Council. They must produce a Joint Strategic Needs Assessment and a joint Health and Wellbeing Strategy for their local population.

Integrated Care Board (ICB)

The ICB's role is to join up health and care services, improve people's health and wellbeing, and to make sure everyone has the same access to services and gets the same outcomes from treatment. They also make sure health services work well and are of high quality.

What our priorities were for 2023-24

The Safeguarding Board agreed a five-year plan covering four themes

Working in Partnership

Preventing Harm Occurring

Responding Swiftly When Harm Occurs and

Engaging Effectively with People at Risk.

*"it must publish an annual report detailing what the SAB has done during the year to achieve its main objective and implement its strategic plan, and **what each member has done to implement the strategy**" Care Act Guidance*

What the Board did to towards the priorities

Working in Partnership

- The Chair of the Safeguarding Adults Board has a monthly meeting with the Chair of the Safeguarding Children's Board to ensure that safeguarding matters are being appropriately addressed. A schedule of meetings is being set up to include the Chair of the Safer Oxfordshire Partnership (that brings together the Community Safety Partnerships). This will strengthen the relationships between the partnerships as well as improving strategic oversight of the issues that are impacting on the safety of the residents of Oxfordshire.

- The Subgroups of the Board have been reviewed to ensure they include a wider membership of organisations. Of particular success in this matter has been the Engagement Subgroup, which is now mainly made up of organisations not represented at the full board and how have extensive experience of listening to the people they are working with.

What the Board Partners did to towards the priorities

Working in Partnership

Oxfordshire County Council

In the last year OCC has forged closer relationships with SCAS, Childrens services and TVP amongst others. We have set up regular meetings with each agency to understand the pressures, priorities and perspectives that each agency has and how the safeguarding can respond.

The Safeguarding Service Manager recently met with Benedict Clarke TVP to talk about some of the challenges we have with our timescales. As a way forward we agreed that TVP sharing named Safer Neighbourhood contact details would support OCC to make timelier decisions.

BOB ICB

BOB ICB has introduced a BOB ICS All Age Safeguarding committee; established during 2023, this continues to evolve to facilitate system wide safeguarding oversight, assurance and drive system improvements.

BOB ICB has connected with the Board in terms of assurance in several areas: Working Together 2023 - changes around reporting deaths in the adult care leaver population, Patient Safety Incident Response Framework (PSIRF), migrant populations, modern slavery, Martha's Rule and the Thirlwall Enquiry.

Thames Valley Police

TVP has begun to implement Right Care, Right Person principles in terms of responding to adult safeguarding needs in Oxfordshire. This currently relates to concerns for welfare calls, walk-outs from hospital settings and those reported absent without leave from psychiatric care units. Taking learning from the initial announcement, a multi-agency operational group has been set up to monitor impact and issues.

The TVP custody 2025 project is ongoing with 2024 being the second phase of the project which seeks to reduce reoffending by working with partners and 3rd sector agencies through early intervention in the custody environment. The project is working with NHS and external organisations to signpost referrals for specific at-risk groups including ex-service personnel, women offenders and substance misusers.

Thames Valley Together is an innovative data sharing approach across the region, but including partners in Oxfordshire, where partnership information will be shared across agencies in order to allow data to be used more effectively to understand safeguarding risks and allow for mitigation. The project is ongoing, with the initial strategic-level product being rolled out imminently.

What the Board Partners did to towards the priorities

Working in Partnership

Oxford Health NHS Foundation Trust

We have a dedicated mental health social worker to work collaboratively with homeless services to support people with mental illness out of homeless services. We also work closely with our MH housing pathway and general needs housing partners so that we can respond quickly to concerns, to assess, investigate and implement protection plans. The mental health social care service manager works in partnership with the operations manager of the local authority safeguarding adults' team as well as the local authority principle social worker to identify themes, trends and concerns and to share learning.

The mental health social care service manager has set up a monthly meeting with the Trust safeguarding adults' team to share data on safeguarding adult concerns/enquires and OHFT MCA lead is meeting weekly with Oxfordshire DOLS team to review requests and make sure resources are prioritised effectively.

Co-chair multi-agency Right Care Right Person local implementation meeting and have recently joined a MH and Substance Misuse sub-group of the Combatting Drugs Partnership. OHFT are currently working in partnership with OMHP and wider system partners to review all elements of the current MH contract in Oxon as part of the new contract which will come into place in Apr 2025.

AgeUK

Chairing the Board's Engagement Subgroup and proactively strengthening partnership by widening the membership to include new VCS agencies including advocacy.

What the Board Partners did to towards the priorities

Working in Partnership

Cherwell District Council

As a Board Partnership member, we have an understanding of our accountability as the appropriate representative for Cherwell in each forum.

Good practice is evidenced through the joint district safeguarding partnership group, whereby Cherwell district council works with the other districts on responses changing themes and concerns.

Some themes have relevance across a number of partnerships and in these cases the Boards/Partnerships will work together and take a pragmatic approach to achieve the best outcomes for people and ensure that there is no duplication of effort.

In practice this means that each Board/Partnership has the opportunity to input into an area of work where it carries a responsibility and/or has relevant knowledge, expertise and experience.

Oxford City Council

From April 2023-March 2024, 12 ASMART and 85 ASMARAC meetings have been held under Oxfordshire's Adult Exploitation pathway with 41 different partners involved. As a result of these multi-agency meetings, more victims were supported out of exploitation and disruption plans put in place to tackle the exploiters, which also included 15 multi-agency visits. The partnership approach ensures that the victim is safeguarded and supported in all areas of need for them to exit exploitation and prevent re-victimisation through referrals to relevant agencies or supporting those workers already involved with the individual.

The Safeguarding Coordinator has requested to attend Board subgroup meetings in addition to one district representative, in order to strengthen and maintain partnership working

Contact with statutory agencies has enabled effective internal learning reviews

West Oxfordshire District Council

WODC staff have a key role in attendance at joint agency meetings including, but not exclusively: OSCB; OSAB; Oxfordshire Domestic Abuse Partnership; Prevent Implementation Group; Safer Oxfordshire Partnership Group; Police and Crime Panel; JTAC; PAQA; PIQA; Neglect Strategy Group and Community Safety Partnership.

A Joint Safeguarding Partnership Group has been formed with representatives from each of Oxfordshire’s Local Authorities, funded for a countywide Representative to attend Neglect; PIQA; PAQA meetings and others where relevant. To lead, chair and take minutes at this Sub-Group. The Group has introduced a ‘Purpose and Aims’ document along with ‘Commitment Statements. The Partnership Group enables common themes and policies to be reviewed and implemented, best practice to be undertaken, a common themed dashboard for reporting of issues of concern has been implemented and Districts have a shared Neglect Strategy and Action Plan.

What the Board Partners did to towards the priorities

Working in Partnership

Probation Service

Oxfordshire Probation Delivery Unit (PDU) has had a Partnership Manager in role for a year, working to improve relationships and partnership working between Probation and other organisations.

We rolled out a commissioned Autism Service for People on Probation. Oxfordshire teams make the most referrals the region and client satisfaction with the service is high.

Through Multi Agency Public Protection Arrangements, Oxfordshire Probation and Adult Social Care have better links at senior management level leading to better partnership working.

Oxfordshire PDU has been focusing work on the most complex and vulnerable service users, who also pose significant harm to communities. Staff working with this cohort have been given additional training and resources and work these cases in partnership with Police to best effect.

Oxfordshire PDU has a close working relationship with Turning Point, delivering services, co-locating workers, and co-producing training.
In April MIND gave a presentation to all Probation Staff to increase understanding of their services,

The Head of Oxfordshire PDU chairs the Combatting Drugs Partnership Criminal Justice subgroup.

Fire & Rescue Service

OFRS collaborate with other agencies to better protect vulnerable individuals. This includes working closely with health and social care partners, local authorities. By leveraging the expertise and experience of fire and rescue services, health and social care providers can enhance their prevention efforts and adapt engagement strategies for those most at risk.

What the Board Partners did to towards the priorities

Working in Partnership

Domestic Abuse Strategic Board

The Oxfordshire Domestic Abuse Strategic Board is a statutory partnership board which continues to deliver on the Oxfordshire Domestic Abuse Strategy. It has a strong focus on safe accommodation for victim survivors of domestic abuse. The board has multi agency partnership engagement. It brings together system wide leaders to deliver the strategic action plan, focusing on four key areas; Prevention, Provision, Pursuing and Partnership.

Multi-Agency Group Suicide Prevention

Public Health chair the Oxfordshire Suicide Prevention Multi-Agency group which brings together key partners across the system to promote mental wellbeing and reduce suicide and self-harm in children, young people and adults. There are over 20 organisations who are members of the group.

The local action plan focuses on building resilient communities to make suicide prevention everyone's business

Combatting Drugs Partnership

In line with the 10 year national drug strategy From Harm to Hope, Public Health lead the Oxfordshire Combatting Drugs Partnership. This multi agency group brings together key partners across the system to address the harms from drug and alcohol use. This results in safeguarding people not only against health harms but also criminal activity related to drug use.

Over the last year this has become an established group. The group are now in delivery phase of a targeted strategic action plan to deliver on the aims set out in the national strategy at a local level.

What the Board Partners did to towards the priorities

Working in Partnership

Sexual Health Action Partnership (SHAP)

The Health and Social Care Act 2012 gave health protection duties to Oxfordshire County Council as well as a general function to maintain the public's health.

The SHAP helps raise awareness about issues that help or hinder achieving better sexual health for Oxfordshire. Its main purpose is to build relationships with key partners in order to provide a safe and supportive environment to share good practice and discuss barriers to achieve good sexual health. E.g sharing good practice on prevention of unwanted pregnancies, safeguarding children from sexual exploitation, preventing sexually transmitted diseases and promoting better sexual health, etc.

South & Vale District Councils

South Oxfordshire and Vale of White Horse District Councils work closely with partners and agencies to support vulnerable individuals. Through our monthly Community Safety Joint Tasking meetings and case conferences we help provide solutions for vulnerable people who may not meet the threshold of need or refuse engagement with services.

We work with our district and city colleagues to share good practice and address emerging themes through our joint district safeguarding partnership group.

We have supported the Anti-Slavery Multi Response Conferences and Teams, where victims of modern slavery and Exploitation have been identified to help develop and coordinate disruption plans.

Oxford University Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust

OUH attend OSAB board and sub group meetings to actively support partnership working. Attendance at multiagency case review meetings, SAR's, DHRs, HMRs, MARAC, MARAC and strategy meetings as requested.

There is a health wide BOB ICS meeting to provide assurance and identify area for escalation, areas of good practice and quality improvements.

What the Board did to towards the priorities

Preventing Harm Occurring

- The **Multi-Agency Risk Management (MARM)** process brings together organisations working with a person who is showing an increased level of risk but who does not current fit within the criteria of a statutory safeguarding duty under Section 42 of The Care Act 2014. There are several very positive examples of multi-agency working that has been undertaken via the MARM process and the Safeguarding Board has received a presentation from a support worker involved in the MARM process to share the positive impact the process has had on the person they were working with.

- A **7-minute briefing** has been produced on the MARM and its use to help inform frontline workers of when it is best to call a meeting under the MARM process or when there are other alternative pathways that can be utilised.

- The Board has also offered specialised training in relation to trauma; **trauma, stigma & belonging**, **trauma and language**, and **trauma-informed coproduction**.

What the Board Partners did to towards the priorities

Preventing Harm Occurring

BOB ICB

BOB ICB work in partnership with primary care (GP, Pharmacy, Optometry & Dentistry) and other key health partners to ensure learning from statutory reviews is identified and embed within frontline practice.

We have committed to and delivered several recent training sessions to Primary care staff; closer connections for primary care & maternity services, understanding the health needs of the homeless population and, carer suicide & homicide. In addition, we have provided additional domestic abuse training to primary care to support disclosures.

Oxfordshire County Council

In the last year we have prevented harm occurring in care settings by working closely with our quality improvement team and care homes to prevent harm to individuals and the wider care community experiencing the risk of harm by having frequent, meetings, discussions and developing action plans. We are completing a care home specific audit to ensure that when cases are closed that wider considerations have been made not only for the individual but to other residents.

Thames Valley Police

TVP has received an uplift in funding for neighbourhood policing roles and this includes Oxfordshire, where neighbourhood teams will be brought up to strength and there will be an increase in dedicated neighbourhood officers. One of their core functions will the identification and mitigation of risks around safeguarding, taking preventative activity where needed – including early referrals.

Oxfordshire LCU will be rolling out a monthly partnership tasking meeting process – which has been trialled to good effect in Oxford City LPA – allowing police and partners to ensure that effective activity is joined up across the community safety agencies. Early assessment of data from RCRP indicates that the implementation has, thus far, not had a significant effect on the numbers of adults being identified at risk of abuse or neglect. Demand has historically been seasonal, and this demand trend has continued without much change following implementation.

What the Board Partners did to towards the priorities

Preventing Harm Occurring

OUH

The OUH works in partnership to identify harm and ensure care and support needs are met.

Safeguarding incidents are reported and reviewed by the safeguarding team to identify learning. This informs the Harm Free assurance process in place that identifies any areas for improvement and an open learning culture is in place and in line with our Patient Safety Incident Response Framework PSIRF framework.

Mental Capacity Act training is supported across the Trust to ensure the safety of our patients. Safeguarding training compliance monitored closely and meeting the levels required.

AgeUK

Worked to increase public awareness through our Marketing and Comms team actively participating in Safeguarding Adults Awareness Week.

Oxford Health

The s.75 establishment have a 6 weekly meeting called the Safeguarding Prevention Meeting which is a multi-agency meeting to ensure that people in the mental health housing pathway are protected from abuse and neglect. We use the 6 principles of safeguarding to ensure that we take a rights-based approach.

All mental health social workers use leadership skills to ensure that discussion about abuse and neglect is at the centre of MDT working.

OHFT have worked closely with police supporting Drive meetings.

Employed an MCA lead to support staff and improve practice.

We use the MCA as a key concept of safeguarding and intervene to make decisions on people's behalf when they are unable to protect themselves due to lack of decision-making capacity.

Refresh of the DOLS recording in community hospitals with a focus on making sure any restrictions are proportionate and to prevent risk of harm.

What the Board Partners did to towards the priorities

Preventing Harm Occurring

Cherwell District Council

Recruited new domestic coordinator to post supporting victims of domestic abuse alongside our housing team. Increased number of staff training offered on domestic abuse pathways and referrals.

Identifying trends across Cherwell locally or nationally ,reviewing and updating training when needed. Bespoke training form external parties when needed. Districts meeting reviewing themes that can be highlighting concerns across the county or rural locations.

Awareness campaign and signposting to service are best practice through Cherwell's services, internal and external media platforms used to communicate to staff and community.

Oxford City Council

Oxford City's commitment to DAHA accreditation is improving responses to domestic abuse, by equipping staff with the skills, knowledge, and the tools that serve to build their confidence to work more effectively with their most vulnerable tenants. As a housing provider we are best placed to identify and respond to domestic abuse early.

Promotion of Early Help and MARM process to identify and respond to concerns before harm occurs

Training levels have increased over the last year, particularly the last six months

Recorded safeguarding concerns have increased within the last year, demonstrating awareness and effective training

West Oxfordshire District Council

All staff must complete a Mandatory Level 2 Adults Safeguarding online course provided through the council's training provider iHASCO. Level 2 Childrens Safeguarding module is being rolled out to all.

Due to concerns around the rising trend in instacnes of threat to self-harm from residents in our community a Suicide Prevention Guidance document has been implemented and is available for all staff with links to NHS training. Safe Talk Suicide Prevention face to face training is being undertaken by front line teams.

What the Board Partners did to towards the priorities

Preventing Harm Occurring

Probation Service

Within our collaboration with Turning Point we have ensured all staff are trained in administering naloxone and this is available in all our sites. Turning Point work from our buildings and offer brief interventions to lower-level drug and alcohol users to prevent further harm occurring.

We have facilitated Hepatitis C and Liver Scanning in our buildings.

We have rolled out Mental Health Treatment Requirements and ensured high levels of Drug and Alcohol Rehabilitation Requirements as robust alternatives to custody.

Our commissioned services include a specialist women's services, as well as personal well-being services specialising in issues affecting men.

All staff have been required to attend Preventing Suicide Training. Training completion (child safeguarding, adult safeguarding and prevent) is linked to our annual salary increase. This has led to nearly 100% of required training being completed.

We are engaged with all the MARACs across the county and in May 24 we rolled out domestic abuse tags for perpetrators coming out of custody on licence to strengthen our risk management and oversight of these cases.

In 23/24 we doubled the numbers of home visits from the previous year, which means more oversight of home circumstances and any risk or vulnerabilities.

Domestic Abuse Strategic Board

The domestic abuse board owns a strategic action plan, around four priorities – prevention , provision, pursing and partnership. The prevention work has included co-producing strategic devlivery with victim-survivors of domestic abuse, communications campaigns to raise awareness of domestic abuse and how to seek help, and developing an updated domestic abuse policy for employees of OCC.

South & Vale District Councils

South Oxfordshire and Vale of White Horse District Councils have appointed a Domestic Abuse Support Officer who works closely with our housing needs officers to support the completion of Domestic Abuse Stalking Harassment and Honor Based Violence (DASH) risk assessments, agree a level of priority for housing needs and signpost victims to relevant support organisations.

We have promoted two domestic abuse campaigns across the districts to raise awareness of how to spot the signs and support available.

Domestic abuse training has been delivered to councillors and staff.

We have promoted OSCB/AB pathways and tools kits to staff to prevent harm from occurring.

What the Board Partners did to towards the priorities

Preventing Harm Occurring

Combatting Drugs Partnership

Partners are working together to reduce harm caused by drug and alcohol use. This has included a focus on increasing Naloxone distribution (a drug which blocks the life-threatening effects of opiate overdose)

Multi-Agency Group Suicide Prevention

Oxfordshire has a number of initiatives focusing on promoting wellbeing and this is led by the Mental Health Prevention Concordat Partnership. We have also recently launched mental wellbeing and suicide awareness training for local communities and are providing grants to community initiatives for key groups at risk of poorer wellbeing.

Sexual Health Action Partnership (SHAP)

Our sexual health providers work with children and young people in various schools and collages in order to improve their knowledge, attitude and behaviour /skills on sexual health and healthy relationships. Topics include: Consent, preventing sexually transmitted infections, healthy relationships, HIV awareness, contraception, intimate photo sharing, media and porn literacy etc

Fire & Rescue Service

In 2024, we will be implementing Risk Profiling across Oxfordshire. This approach enables operational crews to take charge of the appropriate prevention activities, knowing that the safety messages will make a difference in improving people's safety and to deliver reliable and relevant safety messaging to our communities.

What the Board did to towards the priorities

Responding Swiftly When Harm Occurs

- This priority has been the one that has had the least work done at present as the work within it is mainly reliant on work from other priorities being completed first.

- The Performance, Information & Quality Assurance (PIQA) subgroup of the Board have reviewed and updated the dataset that they scrutinise. There is still work to do on making this scrutiny as effective as it can be so that patterns are identified earlier so they can be acted upon before they develop into a significant issue.

What the Board Partners did to towards the priorities

Responding Swiftly When Harm Occurs

Oxfordshire County Council

In the last year we have worked hard to reduce the response times when the team receives safeguarding concerns. We are doing this working towards adhering to the local authorities' timescales increasing the number of concerns answered between 1-2 days. Since the end of January 2024 we have introduced a weekly meaningful measures meeting to review the timeliness of all cases across the service

BOB ICB

BOB ICB works alongside health provider organisations to manage cases which require escalation to NHSE to engage regional support and guidance.

BOB ICB supports health providers identified under section 42 of the Care Act, together with cases that reach both the adult social care strategy stage and the Multi-Agency Risk Management (MARM) process.

Thames Valley Police

Robotic process automation is now used in the triage of all adult protection (AP) and domestic abuse (DA) incidents involving adults in order to allow for swift assessment of threat, harm and risk. Secondary research also takes place to determine whether there are linked persons to the subject who may be at risk – including children and other potentially vulnerable adults. A multi-agency working group to monitor progress and implementation is in place.

A new AP governance board has been instigated to ensure that any risks and themes are identified early – this board is internal but is chaired by a local policing lead and feeds into the TVP vulnerabilities strategic group. Similarly, the DA and RASSO governance boards also identify similar risks and feed into the same strategic group to ensure join-up. TVP MASH have received an uplift in funding to allow recruitment of 10.5 additional staff at various bands. Op Yearn, which began in August 2023 has also allowed for the temporary flex of officers into the MASH to reduce AP and DA queues – reducing outstanding numbers from around 1700 each to 200. The triage process (see above) now means high and medium risk AP/DA incidents are triaged and shared with partners within 24 hours of identification.

What the Board Partners did to towards the priorities

Responding Swiftly When Harm Occurs

Oxford Health

All s.42 safeguarding concerns are triaged daily by a senior social worker and actioned within 48 hours. The s.75 establishment continue to achieve 100% in managing safeguarding enquiries within 12 weeks (as set by the local authority).

Engagement in Homeless mortality review process.

Introduction of Patient Safety Incident Response Framework (PSIRF) which include learning huddles to identify learning quickly.

OUH

The OUH identifies cases of harm on a day to day basis through staff, incident reporting and referrals directly to the team. This ensures a timely referrals and escalations to partner agencies as required.

Response is timely for section 42 enquiries, and request for information request. Any learning from reviews are disseminated across the Trust.

Cherwell District Council

Internal safeguarding reports are monitored, reviewed and patterns or themes are identified and discussed with relevant services, OSCB/OSCB/ DSL/ DA partnership/ Neglect Panel.

Any concerns are discussed in the contract monitoring meetings, we also ensured that the provider was involved in the Cherwell Operations Group meetings.

Where they are connected to the multi-agency discussions about concerns and could report into this forum, their interactions with the clients they meet during the outreach .

All front-line staff have completed compulsory safeguarding training and additional bespoke training such as handling suicidal calls.

AgeUK

Redesigned our staff and volunteer training programme to improve recognition of harm and quality of response.

What the Board Partners did to towards the priorities

Responding Swiftly When Harm Occurs

Oxford City Council

Increased referrals to ambulance service for mental health assessments following Right Care, Right Person policy

Exceptional Circumstances Panel utilised in cases of high risk DA. One such case resulted in a two bedroom property away from the City was offered within days and target hardening was arranged at the new property.

Internal learning reviews conducted to explore potential learning opportunities

Whole-council approach to ensure all concerns are identified and responded to, using appropriate information sharing

South & Vale District Councils

South Oxfordshire and Vale of White Horse District Councils provide support for vulnerable people for example, rough sleepers and victims of ASB through our Joint Tasking Meetings, exceptional case conferences.

We respond promptly to any concerns raised, managing processes such as Domestic Homicide Reviews and engaging in Child Safeguarding Practice Reviews.

Learning is shared internally to support staff and prevent harm reoccurring.

All safeguarding concerns are reviewed, monitored and escalated as appropriate. Where these do not meet the threshold of matrix the cases are managed through internal processes to ensure the individual is kept safe and supported.

West Oxfordshire District Council

An online system for raising issues of concern has been implemented that immediately sends alerts to the safeguarding team there is an issue to triage and support appropriately. There has been an active ongoing case of concern relating Modern Slavery with a Care Service provider which involved immediate attention from the Council's HMO Licensing Team.

There have been instances where an escalation of a concern has been required resulting in a MARM with active engagement across our service teams. The safeguarding team conducts monthly supervision on cases and follow up on outcomes where possible to ensure cases are escalated and progress through the correct channels.

What the Board Partners did to towards the priorities

Responding Swiftly When Harm Occurs

Probation Service

Probation Staff use recall back to prison, variation of licence conditions, GPS tagging, Polygraph, Probation hostels and a range of other measures to manage emerging or escalating risk.

We have made links with links with Oxford University Hospitals to rapidly share information on individuals who may pose a risk of harm in emergency departments or other medical settings.

We commission Serious Further Offence enquiries in the event that someone under our supervision commits a serious offence and we share learning across our staffing group.

We respond promptly and engage with other enquiries, such as the SAR process for homeless deaths and share learning across our staffing group.

Combatting Drugs Partnership

Public health lead on the Local Drug Intelligence System which provides rapid alerts to contaminated batches of drugs, reducing the potential harm by reducing the use of these drugs.

Fire & Rescue Service

OFRS plays a crucial role in making our communities safer. Whether it’s preventing and protecting people from fire and other risks or responding swiftly and effectively when incidents occur, the work is vital for public safety. Fire crews are also well trained to identify concerns and manage safeguarding referrals.

Multi-agency Group Suicide Prevention

Oxfordshire has a real time surveillance system to ensure that bereaved families and friends are provided with immediate supportive signposting and support. We are also able to monitor emerging methods, clusters and high-risk groups to provide support. As a partnership we have worked in local communities to provide targeted support when required. This has included working with district councils, parish councils, workplaces. We also work closely with the coroners to ensure there is sensitive media reporting on suicides to minimise the impact on communities.

What the Board did to towards the priorities

Engaging Effectively with People at Risk

- The Engagement Subgroup has grown and now welcomes a wide range of organisations. The majority of those who are in attendance are not represented at the Board but work extensively with adults with care and support needs in Oxfordshire. The advocacy organisation in Oxfordshire (VoiceAbility) are also a member, replacing the former advocacy organisation.

- There is still more work to be done against this priority, particularly ensuring that this work is done in a way that is respectful of the experience of people at risk.

- The presentations of cases at the Full Board (mentioned earlier in this report) is another step towards ensuring that the voice of people at risk is heard at this senior level.

What the Board Partners did to towards the priorities

Engaging Effectively with People at Risk

Oxfordshire County Council

An audit in summer 2023 indicted that Making Safeguarding Personal outcomes whilst well reported at the end of an enquiry were not always sought at the initial information gathering stage. In the last year we have undertaken MSP audits and established a duty enquiries pod. A recent sample audit of closed cases indicates significant improvement in duty enquiries where the persons views and wishes are recorded or an identified plan as to which appropriate partner will make contact with the person is in place.

BOB ICB

BOB ICB commissions All Age Continuing Health care services and supports risk assessing placements and flexing if the needs of the client are not met. BOB ICB works in collaboration with all health systems, police and social care partners as part of both statutory and non-statutory review work, by triangulating information, including urgent escalations and embedding system learning.

TVP

TVP Oxfordshire will be moving to a new policing model in 2024, whereby the existing 3 local policing areas (LPAs) will merge to create one county-wide local command unit (LCU). This unit will, as part of its remit, focus on those individuals (children and adult) most at risk of harm and allow effective engagement with them and partners to reduce identified risks. This structure will allow consistency and clarity around engagement. Additionally, neighbourhoods teams will also feed into the adult safeguarding processes, ensuring ongoing engagement to mitigate against longer term problems/issues.

Officers and staff across Oxfordshire have had refreshed inputs around ensuring capturing concerns correctly, with a view to improving the quality of information provided by officers attending incidents into the MASH process. Within the custody environment as part of the Custody 2025 project, TVP has changed its approach to information sharing – moving to a presumption of data-sharing to proactively offer support to those at risk. TVP is the first force to collaborate with charities to proactively offer details of those at risk rather than seek permission. Pilots have taken place across the force, but in Oxfordshire this is running in Abingdon custody in partnership with the Maslow Foundation, to ensure a proactive offer of support is made to every female detainee. Work is ongoing to expand this process with other agencies to allow focus onto other risk groups.

What the Board Partners did to towards the priorities

Engaging Effectively with People at Risk

Oxford Health

The s.75 establishment use Making Safeguarding Personal and the six principles of safeguarding to ensure that people at risk of abuse and neglect are at the centre of safeguarding meetings and plans. Our safeguarding investigations and plans attest to this.

Working as part of a Thames Valley Crisis Project to implement Mental Health Response Vehicles (MHRVs) across the Thames Valley – and will be a mobile health-based blue light response to MH crisis.

Working with system partners to continue to build and adapt the out-of-hospital care team model (homelessness from inpatient care) which has been receiving national recognition and being held up as exemplar service.

Introduction of Keystone Mental Health and Well-being Hubs which are a one stop shop to support mental health and wellbeing and include Primary Care Mental Health Team.

OUH

The OUH works in collaboration with partner agencies to ensure identification and effective risk management of any concerns raised.

Weekly triangulation of incidents, complaints, claims, safeguarding and inquests takes place to provide assurance and follow up as required.

AgeUK

Supported the refresh of the Board's Engagement Subgroup and the development of the action plan to improve engagement.

What the Board Partners did to towards the priorities

Engaging Effectively with People at Risk

Cherwell District Council

Cherwell district council frontline service have safeguarding champions who can triage concerns at point of contact. Informed experienced designated safeguarding leads in place, with continued improvement and training plans implemented across the teams.

People of risk often present in various ways however, the majority of these can by phone call to housing & customer service. There is a percentage of these who will present as homeless, all staff are trained on dealing with making referrals and signposting to services for people at risk or in crisis.

Food poverty has been recognised as a risk in Cherwell and there are various programs and mechanisms to support those most in need.

Oxford City Council

The ASBIT case manager does not have a live ASB case but remains in weekly contact with a tenant who has enduring mental ill health. The tenant is under the care of the Warneford Hospital. They call the ASBIT case manager every week. The phone call is for someone to talk to but also to provide reassurance that they will not lose their social tenancy with Oxford City Council.

The ASBIT case manager speaks to a male tenant every week to support him with his engagement with Turning Point and Hospital. He is constantly causing anti-social behaviour which has led to him receiving a Notice of Seeking Possession (NOSP). The ASBIT case manager does not want him to lose his tenancy so actively engages with him every week to encourage and support him to get the right support to change his behaviour which will enable him to remain housed.

A female tenant spoke to the ASBIT Case Manager and learned she had cut her wrist. The case manager was able to find her CPN on the Aspen Team. The case manager explained the situation so the CPN could get the female urgent support. The Police had raised also raised an adult protection. The female told the case manager she was in crisis and the Aspen Team are working with her for a meds review. The female did received the appropriate response and support. The case manager then made a referral to the Tenancy Sustainment Team so the female could have additional support to maintain her tenancy. Project developed to identify and respond to vulnerable females at risk, part of this project focuses on engagement with the females

What the Board Partners did to towards the priorities

Engaging Effectively with People at Risk

South & Vale District Councils

South Oxfordshire and Vale of White Horse District Councils' Wellbeing and Housing Teams support 'Homes for Ukraine', Afghan families and residents struggling with the cost of living or struggling with day-to-day life to access local services and appropriate support.

Our Community Safety Team resolve issues of ASB, providing mediation and coordinating action to prevent issues from escalating.

Our Senior Management Team are committed to staff wellbeing to ensure any concerns raised in either their work or personal life is managed, and they receive the support they need.

West Oxfordshire District Council

The Community Wellbeing and International Migration Teams are engaged in many activities within the local community and share knowledge and experience with other service areas such as Housing, Disabled Facilities Grants and Client Support to help residents to receive access to appropriate support agencies and professionals.

The Safeguarding Team and Service Managers ensure that risks to staff are mitigated and that their wellbeing is supported when they are involved with an issue of concern or personally.

Fire & Rescue Service

As a service we treat every visit/call as individual and tailor our response accordingly. Examples of this are our Threat of Arson visits, Fire Setter Interventions, Joint agency visits with health and social care.

Our roll out of the Risk Profiling will further develop our engagement with those most at risk in our community.

What the Board Partners did to towards the priorities

Engaging Effectively with People at Risk

Sexual Health Action Partnership (SHAP)

In addition to working with children and young people as mentioned above, our sexual health providers directly engage with various at-risk- groups providing outreach services in order to promote good health and prevent harm . e.g of population covered: MSM, commercial sex workers, BAME communities, asylum seekers in temporary accommodations, homeless population, substance users etc.

Multi-agency Group Suicide Prevention

Samaritans have worked closely with the rail network locally to train staff to talk with passengers they are concerned about. The Men's Health Partnership are providing health and wellbeing events across the county. There are also organisations in place that provide 1:1 support for people at risk such as The Cornermen Project and Safe Haven.

Probation Service

Our Probation Victim Liaison Unit work closely with victims ensuring they are aware of developments and can have a voice in plans to keep them safe.

We are represented at all MARAC meetings across Oxfordshire.

We routinely refer people on probation who themselves may be at risk from others to MARMM, MARAC, ASC,

We work closely with the Anti-Slavery Coordinator with respect to specific cases presenting vulnerabilities to exploitation.

We have a specific women's team with women only reporting times, specific training to ensure effective engagement and management of this vulnerable group.

We have a designated manager who liaises with youth justice teams to ensure smooth transition to adult probation services

We have developed better collaboration with Adult Social Care at MAPPA meetings at all levels to better understand issues and find solutions to the most complex and urgent cases in the community.

Data Headlines

The key figures of the number of safeguarding concerns and safeguarding enquiries carried out in Oxfordshire during 2023-24

MEASURE	2024	2023
Safeguarding Concerns	6581	6770
Section 42 Safeguarding Enquiries	1484	1921
Conversion Rate Number of Section 42 Enquiries / Number of Concerns	23%	28%
Average enquiries per individual Number of Section 42 Enquiries / Total number of individuals involved in Section 42 Enquiries or Other Enquiries	1.14	1.11

Data Headlines

Detail of the changes we have seen in safeguarding concerns and enquiries – Top and Bottom five

Service	Concern change	Service	S42 Enquiry Change
Police	-69 (drop of 11.9%)	Ambulance	-105 (drop of 46.5%)
Ambulance	-60 (drop of 6.6%)	Family	-52 (drop of 28.2%)
Housing	-60 (drop of 18.9%)	Care Home	-42 (drop of 44.2%)
Other Local Authority	-60 (drop of 45.8%)	Police	-33 (drop of 24.6%)
Family	-46 (drop of 10.2%)	Friend/Neighbour	-28 (drop of 58.3%)
Children’s Social Care	+10 (increase of 142.9%)	Informal Carer	-3 (drop of 42.9%)
Health – Hospital	+23 (increase of 7.3%)	Children’s Services – Education	-1 (drop of 33.3%)
Health – Other	+31 (increase of 8%)	Children’s Services – Other	+1 (increase of 200%)
Adult Social Care	+47 (increase of 22.2%)	Children’s Services – OCC	+1 (increase of 100%)
Provider Agency	+204 (increase of 18.8%)	Adult Social Care	+10 (increase of 10%)

“analysis of safeguarding data to better understand the reasons that lie behind local data returns and use the information to improve the strategic plan and operational arrangements” Care Act Guidance

Data Headlines

- The location of risk has seen no significant change
- There has been no significant change in the demographics of those with an enquiry.
- The risk outcomes have shifted from risk reduced to risk removed (risk removed now 30% from 24%). The percentage of enquiries where risk remained increased slightly from 5% to 6%.
- The percentage of people who lacked capacity and were supported by an advocate fell from 80% to 74%
- The source of risk 'unknown to individual' increased from 19% to 31%, with a reduction in both service provider and known to individual.

What the data is telling us

The total number of safeguarding concerns received in **23/24 was 6581**, a slight decrease from **6670 in 22/23**. These concerns involved **4700 people**, of whom **1107 had concerns raised in both years**.

The proportion of concerns that led to enquiries decreased from **28.8% in 22/23 to 22.25% in 23/24**, with care providers (including care homes) remaining the highest source of referrals in 23/24 accounting for 29% of all referrals. To understand this further audit work has been commenced to review decision making at the triage stage of concern. **10% of care home concerns were audited for Q3** and found that decision making by the safeguarding team was correct and in line with statutory guidance. This is indicative that further training and support with care providers would be beneficial in reducing the number of inappropriate referrals.

The number of **completed enquiries also decreased by 22% in 23/24**. A number of factors have contributed to this figure. It is noted that where **detailed information is gathered when a concern is received** this is not being recorded as an enquiry. To address this, **the pathways in the Liquid Logic Care records system have been redesigned** to ensure that work undertaken by the team is rightly captured as enquiry activity and thus we would expect to see an increase in the number of completed enquiries in 24/25 once this is live in Q3.

What the data is telling us

Throughout the last 12 months, there has been a robust focus on improving safeguarding performance. This included the closure of inappropriate or historic cases throughout 22/23 still open. This has been a significant achievement for the team illustrated by the fact that in **July 2023 there were 527 open enquiries with 268 of these open over 12 weeks**. As of **July 2024, there are 183 open enquires with only 13 over 12 weeks**. Historically there have been waits for an allocated officer to complete an enquiry. To overcome this, allocations were made across adult social care teams where the person was already known to a social worker which provided rapid resolution of longstanding cases and positively ensured continuity of worker. This not only improved the experience for the person but ensured that safeguarding is everybody's business and that all teams participate in the safeguarding duty. This targeted work also identified, that enquiries would often remain open beyond the remit of the safeguarding intervention where a **complex case management approach** would be more appropriate from one of the locality teams. Therefore, closure to more appropriate intervention has also contributed to the overall reduction in enquiry numbers. This will need careful consideration throughout the coming year, in view of the data indicating 1107 people who have had a concern raised in both years. **Audit focus on decision making** will focus specifically on whether the person has had a previous concern and whether safeguarding duty can and should add a more robust approach to the persons situation as opposed to a case management approach.

What the data is telling us

To ensure robust decision making **further detailed audits** are also planned to review reductions in the number of concerns that do not progress to enquiries specifically in the areas of referrals from Police, Ambulance and those raised by friends or family, This will be an area for Performance Information and Quality Assurance subgroup to scrutinise over the coming year.

A number of workshops have been completed in relation to **Making Safeguarding Personal (MSP)** across the service. Whilst MSP scores remain strong at the closure of an enquiry, the team identified that outcomes were not always robustly sought at the very beginning of the enquiry process. Regular “dip audits” now show that the introduction of the enquiry pod and the focus on MSP means that people’s views are now being sought at the very beginning of the safeguarding episode.

Overall, the County Council Safeguarding Team’s performance has improved significantly but will require close monitoring to ensure that enquiry rates remain proportionate to individual circumstances and that data continues to inform areas requiring qualitative exploration.

What case reviews are telling us

During 2023-24, the Safeguarding Adults Board did not sign off any **Safeguarding Adult Reviews**. However, this does not mean the Board has not been completing reviews or learning from serious incidents.

There were **7 referrals** for cases to consider during the year, of which **2** have gone on to be Safeguarding Adult Reviews.

Additionally, there were **3 reviews** already open.

Finally, 9 deaths were reviewed under the **Homeless Mortality Review** process. These are reviews conducted under the discretionary Safeguarding Adults Review framework where the person was experiencing homelessness at the time of their death and where the circumstances do not meet the mandatory Safeguarding Adults Review criteria.

The following pages contain the learning from these currently unpublished reviews.

What case reviews are telling us

Adult L: this discretionary Safeguarding Adults Review (SAR) was initiated following a referral from Adult Social Care. Adult L and Adult M were a private couple who sought to live out their days without the intervention or interference of services, which was clearly documented across agency records. Friends and neighbours were raising concerns about the couple and this continued when Adult L was living alone. There were a number of agencies actively working with Adult L around the time of his death and his needs appear to be well documented. In his last two weeks, Adult L did finally accept that he was not managing well and accepted the offer to find him a care placement, which was being arranged at the time of his death.

Learning Points:

1. There appeared to be a reliance on informal sharing when formal sharing (e.g. a Safeguarding Concern) may have been more appropriate.
2. In adopting a strengths-based approach, it may be that Adult L's limitations to care for himself were not fully appreciated.
3. There appeared to be a lot of activity by professionals but the evidence of this having a positive impact is limited. It may be that a coordinated multi-agency response, bringing together the professionals involved could have offered some alternative options for working with Adult L.
4. Capacity assessments are not clearly documented when references were made to Adult L lacking capacity.

One Reflective Thought for Workers: Impact and Consequence – what is the likely impact of my decision/action? Is this likely to affect anyone else in the family/household? What can I or other agencies, singularly or together, do to mitigate any negative impact?

One Key Lesson for Organisations: Supporting the Frontline - How are we supporting frontline workers who are working with complexity? Are we offering enough time to reflect on practice and enough constructive challenge to ensure we are doing all we can within our resources and have considered the possibilities of multi-agency options?

What case reviews are telling us

Adult K: this discretionary Safeguarding Adults Review (SAR) was initiated following a referral from the Church of England following a review into the death of Adult K. Adult K took his own life on the day he was due to appear in court in regard to historic child abuse allegations made against him. The question was asked in the report of whether Adult K's death should've been referred for a SAR at the time it happened.

On the basis of the information shared for purposes of this SAR, it does not appear that there are significant concerns about how organisations worked together to safeguard Adult K and there are no systemic issues that can be identified from the information provided. There is ample evidence that the agencies interacting with Adult K were working in line with expected practice of the time. There are many examples of good practice in regard to timely referrals between agencies. The regular engagement and thorough work done by the GP Practice is of particular note. Some agencies were unable to provide a complete account of their work due to recording issues and the accessibility of historic information. However, when the information provided from all agencies is reviewed as a whole, there are no indicators that the content that was unavailable is of significance to this review.

One Reflective Thought for Workers: Risk Management - does this information/observation/interaction indicate the person is at an increased risk of harm? If so, how am I mitigating the risk? Who else am I sharing this information with to help mitigate the risk?

One Key Lesson for Organisations: scanning and uploading documents to electronic recording systems is only helpful if the documents are legible afterwards so a check should be done to ensure this is the case before destroying the original document.

What case reviews are telling us

Adult M: this discretionary Safeguarding Adults Review (SAR) was initiated following a referral from Adult Social Care. It concerns a historic death (occurred in 2017) that was revisited after a recent court case concerning neglect by the carers of Adult M leading to his death.

Given the amount of time that had passed since Adult M’s death, the Author was asked to review the information assembled for the court case, pull out any learning points based on the practice in the information and then use these to lead a practitioner workshop to assess how a similar case would be approached today, highlighting any areas that still required development.

Findings:

1. The Board should assure itself that how Professional Curiosity and Self-neglect are explained in guidance (internal and multi-agency) and how organisations ensure this is embedded in practice is clear
2. Organisations should consider ways of gathering information about the person’s history beyond the presenting issue to help frontline workers identify changes over time that might require further exploration, e.g. by developing a pen portrait of the person.
3. Those involved in this process fed back that it felt valuable and constructive and would recommend further reviews producing shorter reports that were more accessible.

One Reflective Thought for Workers: Risk Management - does this information/observation/interaction indicate the person is at an increased risk of harm? If so, how am I mitigating the risk? Who else am I sharing this information with to help mitigate the risk?

One Key Lesson for Organisations: scanning and uploading documents to electronic recording systems is only helpful if the documents are legible afterwards so a check should be done to ensure this is the case before destroying the original document.

What case reviews are telling us

Steffeny: this homeless mortality review (a discretionary safeguarding adults review) was initiated following her death in 2022. She had a degree in psychology and worked for a time in Childrens Services. She struggled with her mental wellbeing from a young age, attempting to take her own life twice (once at 17 and again in her 20s). On the first occasion she was hospitalised briefly. The second attempt occurred while under a Section, where she attempted to hang herself. The time without Oxygen caused a trauma to her brain, leaving her needing to re-learn how to walk, talk, write & remember. She moved to Oxford to marry her partner around 2016. In 2022 she was sectioned again following a domestic abuse incident. She was discharged from hospital a month later and placed into temporary accommodation. In early December 2022, her husband advised her that he was proceeding with a divorce. Steffeny didn't share this information but continued to engage with support, including spending time in mid-December making Christmas decorations with staff and other residents. She had plans to meet with the Adult Mental Health Team and with the Housing Team at Oxford City Council the following week. Before this happened, Steffeny took her own life by hanging.

Findings:

- The agency supporting Steffeny in this accommodation were not aware of any previous attempts of suicide. This information was not provided on the referral form or on any additional documentation.
- Organisations supporting people in shared, temporary accommodation, with a 'No Visitor' policy should ensure a robust, person-centred plan is in place, to look at how to combat loneliness for residents.

If you do one thing: 'Think about Risk' Assess incoming referrals thoroughly and confirm with referring organisations, that they have shared all risk information with you. This is not to avoid working with people who present with risks, but to understand the best way to support and work with them. Be open with the individual about concerns and involve them in the risk/safety planning. Collaborate with the other relevant agencies who are involved with the person, to ensure you all have a full understanding of the plan.

What case reviews are telling us

"Adam": this homeless mortality review (a discretionary safeguarding adults review) was initiated following his death in 2023. He was well known amongst the community and remembered as a very happy-go-lucky person, even when drinking and never aggressive towards staff. Adam had a history with criminal justice services, being first convicted in 1996, last convicted in 2016. Between 2005 and 2016 he was in and out of prison for domestic violence offences. His health needs were significant and complex. He lost the use of his right hand after an accident that caused damage to his shoulder. He struggled to access health support around this & was at risk of losing his hand. He was alcohol dependent and had korsakoff syndrome. He also had a diagnosis of spinal haematoma. He also had a historic diagnosis of schizophrenia and experienced low mood, depression and anxiety. It was noted that Adam focused on access to pain relief medication, rather than attending follow-up appointments to address the underlying issues (such as medical appointments and physiotherapy).

Findings:

- Outreach work with rough sleepers – some areas make the outreach worker's role more challenging. While it was noted that the anti-social behaviour team at Oxford City Council do an excellent job to support them, there are only two Officers.
- Professional Curiosity & Trauma Informed Approaches – There was potential for better outcomes in some instances if staff were a little more curious and followed through with calls to agencies to better understand the person, their background and needs.
- Involving Family - Adam's mother said that during the times Adam would return home, she felt very alone and unsure how best to help and support him. She realised he would be ill if he did not drink, but it felt wrong to be handing him a bottle of alcohol. She did not fully understand his needs or what the signs of danger were for him if the drinking continued.

If you do one thing: 'Think Multi-agency working' When there is more than one agency working with a person, then all the agencies will benefit from a clear understanding of each other's roles and a joint plan, on how best to support the person with whom they are working. This would avoid duplication of work and support a joined-up approach, with the sharing of risk and help avoid confusion of roles for the service user.

What case reviews are telling us

“Ben”: this homeless mortality review (a discretionary safeguarding adults review) was initiated following his death in 2023. Ben trained in Italy to be a Chef and upon returning to the UK worked in bars and restaurants as a Chef. It was at this point he started using drugs. Following the death of a friend, he entered rehab and moved away from the area to Oxford, where he worked in an Oxford College as a Chef. Ben developed mobility issues and required aids to mobilise himself. He was admitted to hospital after a fall. It became apparent he was being financially exploited by his Landlord and was living in a poor condition. He was accepted as homeless after this and moved to homeless support accommodation outside the city. He was found dead in his accommodation and the cause of death noted as multi-drug toxicity.

Findings:

- It appears that some organisations were unclear of each other’s roles and more precisely what they were not able to do or provide.
- It was noted that the embedded housing workers (from oxford city and from the out of hospital care team) perform a vital role and work hard, but they have a limited capacity.
- It was stated that getting medication for people when they are in temporary accommodation is difficult. Trying to get ‘Ben’s prescriptions to a local pharmacy, considering his location and his need to change GP practice etc, caused extra work for the substance misuse service.

If you do one thing: ‘Think planning’ When planning to place people into any accommodation, especially temporary accommodation (that does not have cooking facilities), agencies must fully understand, what it will be like for every individual. Consideration should be given to its location and their support needs, abilities, mobility, access to funds, medication and transport.

What case reviews are telling us

“Carol”: this Homeless Mortality Review (a discretionary Safeguarding Adults Review) was initiated following her death in mid-2023. Carol had a number of health issues and a history of alcohol dependency. She had also experienced a lot of trauma, including domestic abuse and multiple miscarriages. The miscarriages, which were contributed to by liver cirrhosis, Diabetes and a congenital kidney disease, were often a trigger for returning to drink dependency. Due to Carol being a very private person, not all organisations were aware of who else was supporting her, which also meant that relevant information/knowledge was not shared across these services.

Findings:

- Communication – find out the best way to communicate with the individual you are working with (according to their likes, needs and ability).
- Health needs – what are they? How can you support them? Are there signs and symptoms you should be aware of? Do you have consent to discuss with medical personnel, should the person want that?
- Understanding trauma - use the information you have and consider the triggers people experience that can lead them into negative coping strategies (such as alcohol use).

If you do one thing: ‘ask more questions’ - in order to help you to understand how you can work with people, to suit their needs, remember your ‘6 best friends’…who, what, where, when, how & why? Maximise your time with them and get their consent to work with the other agencies who they are linked to, as a team.

Other Work Partners are Bringing to the Board

Modern Slavery case presentation

South Central Ambulance Service

LGA Peer Review & outcome

Oxfordshire County Council

Homelessness Strategy & Action Plan Update

Prevention of Homelessness Director's Group

Page 89

Patient Safety in the NHS (PSIRF Framework)

BOB Integrated Care Board

Right Care, Right Person

Thames Valley Police

Carer's Strategy

Oxfordshire County Council

Safeguarding Adults Collection (SAC) national data return

Oxfordshire County Council

An overview of Public Health: what we do and how we do it

Public Health

The Future of Learning Disability Death (LeDeR) Reviews

BOB Integrated Care Board

PRIORITIES FOR 2024-25

1. *Learning and development to have a higher focus in 2024-25 as there are a number of workstreams identifying learning so more focus on embedding the learning and measuring its impact. Sources of learning include:*
    1. ***The number of our own reviews being published***
    2. ***The findings from the 2nd SAR national analysis***
    3. ***The dataset from PIQA, which gives clear indications of what areas are either being under-reported or are poorly understood***
2. *The Board reconsiders the strategy overall, framing the priorities against the impact they are expected to have on the people of Oxfordshire*
    1. ***For example, theme two might become "The Prevention of Abuse and Neglect" with a desired outcome of "Adults at risk are identified early and have their needs met promptly and effectively."***

Divisions Affected – All

CABINET

15th October 2024

LOCAL AGGREGATES ASSESSMENT

Report by Director of Economy and Place

RECOMMENDATION

1. **The Cabinet is RECOMMENDED to**

    a. Approve the Local Aggregate Assessment presented in Annex 2.

    b. Authorise the Director of Economy and Place in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Climate Change, Environment and Future Generations to make any revisions and publish the Oxfordshire Local Aggregate Assessment for the calendar year 2023 on the Council website.

Executive Summary

2. Under the National Planning Policy Framework, December 2023 (NPPF), Mineral Planning Authorities should prepare an annual Local Aggregate Assessment (LAA). The NPPF states that the LAA should 'forecast future demand, based on a rolling average of 10 years' sales data and other relevant information, and an assessment of all supply options.'

3. The annual Local Aggregates Assessment (LAA) sets the level of mineral provision for the County Council as the Mineral Planning Authority, to ensure an appropriate supply for Sand and Gravel and Crushed Rock. This provision level, known as the Aggregates Provision Rate (APR) is based on an assessment between the supply and demand of aggregates in Oxfordshire and forecast demand.

4. The data is gathered through annual Aggregates Surveys of mineral operators within Oxfordshire. This survey was undertaken jointly by Oxfordshire County Council and the British Geological Survey (BGS) on behalf of the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG).

5. The LAA provides the most up to date information and evidence to inform mineral planning within Oxfordshire. The latest LAA (Annex 2) covers the calendar year 2023.

6. By supporting the recommendation to adopt the latest LAA, the County Council is endorsing the provision levels set out in paragraph 39 of this report for use as evidence for the provision for mineral working in the Oxfordshire Minerals and Waste Local Plan, and for calculating the Oxfordshire landbank as at the end of 2023.

Summary of Main Findings

7. Table 1 provides a summary of the main findings in relation to sales, reserves and landbank of Primary Won Aggregates, i.e minerals quarried as set out in the latest LAA. The arrows indicate an increase or decrease from the previous year's LAA findings. For a full summary of Key Data including average 10-year sales and 3-year sales, please see Annex 1 or for full historic records see the Appendix of the LAA (Annex 2)

	LAA (for calendar year 2023) Mt = million tonnes	
Sharp Sand and Gravel Sales	0.877mt	↓
Sharp Sand and Gravel Reserve	7.693mt	↓
Sharp Sand and Gravel Landbank[1] (7 years or more)	7.8years	✓
Soft Sand Sales	0.203mt	↓
Soft Sand Reserve	3.288 mt	↓
Soft Sand Landbank (7 years or more)	14 years	✓
Crushed Rock Sales	1.002mt	↓
Crushed Rock Reserve	4.744mt	↓
Crushed Rock Landbank (10 years or more)	4.9 years	✗

Table 1: Summary of mineral findings 2023

8. Detailed assessments of supply and demand were carried out. These assessments also included evidence of sales figures, economic forecasts, infrastructure requirements and population and housing. Also considered were Covid and inflation alongside the details of the mineral imports and exports figures from MHCLG in 2019. The more recent details of imports and exports being produced by BGS for 2023 data, as part of the MHCLG survey, have not been released at this time. They will be discussed in the future LAAs.

9. Following these considerations, it is proposed that the Aggregates Provision Rate (APR) is kept the same as last year's rate for Sharp Sand and Gravel of 0.986 million tonnes per annum (mtpa), however it is intended to reduce the Soft Sand APR from 0.243 to 0.235mpta. It is also intended to increase the

[1] The landbank is calculated through taking the mineral reserve and dividing by the LAA provision rate.

Crushed Rock APR from 0.914 to 0.964mtpa. Both these APRs are based on the 10 year average, alongside consideration of all other relevant local information and supply options. Therefore, the APRs for this year's LAA are:

- **Sharp Sand and Gravel – 0.986mtpa**
- **Soft Sand – 0.235mtpa**
- **Crushed Rock – 0.964mtpa**
- **Recycled and Secondary Aggregates - 0.926mtpa**

10. The Core Strategy, Policy M2, sets out the amount of minerals to be provided over the Plan period. This was based on the LAA2014 Aggregates Provision Rates. Table 2 sets out the remaining mineral requirements to meet the Core Strategy Requirements.

	Core Strategy Requirements identified through LAA
Sharp Sand and Gravel	2.650mt
Soft Sand	0
Crushed Rock	0

Table 2: Core Strategy Mineral Requirements as at the end 2023 (mt- Million tonnes)

11. As the Minerals and Waste Planning Authority, the County Council has a duty under the NPPF to "plan for and maintain a steady and adequate supply of minerals". This is measured through the LAAs and our landbank provision.

12. Our current landbanks for Soft Sand and Sharp Sand and Gravel are above the 7-year requirement in the NPPF, however upon completion of the latest LAA, the Crushed Rock landbank remains below the 10 years required. This is the fifth consecutive year it has fallen below the required level. A trigger was reached for a policy review of the Oxfordshire Minerals and Waste Core Strategy (2017) in 2019, particularly Policy M2 for Crushed Rock, and this will be addressed through the new Minerals and Waste Local Plan.

Local Aggregate Assessment

Sales

Primary won aggregate

13. Annex 1 sets out the sales figures for Sharp Sand and Gravel, Soft Sand and Crushed Rock, alongside the 10-year and 3-year sales averages for each mineral type for 2023.

14. In 2023, all three land won minerals saw a decrease in their sales compared with 2022. For Sharp Sand and Gravel it was a 9.8% decrease, Soft Sand 11% and for Crushed Rock 12.6%.

15. However, the 10 year sales averages increased for all mineral types and the 3-year sales averages increased for Sharp Sand and Gravel and Crushed Rock. However, for Soft Sand the 3 year sales average decreased.

Recycled and Secondary Aggregates

16. In 2022 recorded sales in Recycled and Secondary Aggregate were 0.443mt. Survey response was poor therefore this was calculated from data within the Environment Agencies Waste Data Interrogators.

Rail Depots

17. In 2023, there were no survey returns from operators on sales from Rail Depots. However, due to increased rail depot capacity, it suggests that sales from these depots have significantly increased.

Supply

18. Oxfordshire is a mineral rich county which currently has 20 quarries with 11 Sharp Sand and Gravel permissions, 8 Soft Sand permissions and 12 Crushed Rock permissions. Some sites produce a variety of mineral types within them. We are one of the major mineral producers in the Region, even Nationally, and we have more Crushed Rock producing sites than the rest of the South East combined.

Sand and Gravel

19. At the end of 2023, Oxfordshire had 11 Sand and Gravel quarries, two currently inactive and one in suspension. One planning permission was granted in 2023 for 128,000 tonnes of Sharp Sand and Gravel at Oday Hill, Sutton Wick and there were four Sharp Sand and Gravel planning applications outstanding.

20. Total permitted reserves of Sharp Sand and Gravel in Oxfordshire at the end of 2023 were 7.693mt.

Soft Sand

21. In Oxfordshire, at the end of 2023, there were eight sites with planning permission for Soft Sand extraction, with two currently inactive. No planning permissions for Soft Sand were permitted in 2023.

22. Total permitted reserves for Soft Sand in Oxfordshire at the end of 2023 were 3.288mt.

Crushed Rock

23. At the end of 2023, there were twelve sites with planning permission for Crushed Rock extraction. There were no planning permissions for Crushed Rock permitted in 2023. There were four planning applications for Crushed Rock outstanding at the end of 2023.

24. Total permitted reserves for Crushed Rock in Oxfordshire at the end of 2023 were 4.744mt.

Recycled and secondary material sites

25. At the end of 2023, permitted capacity taken from planning decisions, application statements and previous survey finding was 1.523 million tonnes.

Rail Depots

26. Oxfordshire has four permitted rail depots, three of which are operational. Due to a number of recent planning decisions, Oxfordshire has increased its rail depot capacity to over 3.5 million tonnes.

Imports and Exports

27. Every county in the UK has to import aggregates because none possess the geology necessary to produce all the types of aggregate required. All sales which reflect supply and demand are tracked in the four (six) yearly national aggregate surveys.

28. The most recently available, the 2019 Aggregates Minerals Survey for England and Wales (AM2019), was undertaken by the BGS under a contract with the MHCLG. The AM2019 set out aggregate movements at a sub-regional level. This was discussed within the LAA2020 and it highlighted that Oxfordshire is a net exporter of all Land Won Sand and Gravel and Crushed Rock. Once we receive the AM2023 report from the BGS, Oxfordshire's imports and exports will be reviewed. This will be undertaken in the next LAA.

Demand

29. The NPPF requires that the level of future provision within the LAA should be based, in part, on the rolling average of 10 years' sales figures. it also requires "other relevant local information" to be taken into account.

30. Therefore, detailed assessments of supply and demand were carried out. These assessments included evidence of sales figures, economic forecasts, infrastructure requirements (such as HS2), and population and housing. Also considered were the impacts of Covid, and inflation and the election and formation of a new Government alongside the details of the mineral imports and exports figures from MHCLG in 2019.

31. The evidence available suggests that economic forecasts, major infrastructure projects/key development and population growth and housing are all expecting growth over the plan period and that demand would continue for the foreseeable future. The impact of inflation and the new political agenda, along with infrastructure projects will continue to be explored in future LAAs.

Aggregate Provision Rates

32. Following all of these considerations, it is proposed that the Aggregates Provision Rates (APR) is kept the same as last year's LAA for Sharp Sand and Gravel, and Recycled and Secondary Aggregate. However, it is intended to decrease the Soft Sand APR and increase the Crushed Rock APR to the 10-year averages. Therefore, the APRs for this year's LAA are:

- **Sharp Sand and Gravel – 0.986mtpa**
- **Soft Sand – 0.235mtpa**
- **Crushed Rock – 0.964mtpa**
- **Recycled and Secondary Aggregates - 0.926mtpa**

Landbank

33. Using the Aggregates Provision Rate above and the reserves available, the landbanks as at the end of 2023 are:

- **Sharp Sand and Gravel – 7.8 years**
- **Soft Sand – 14 years**
- **Crushed Rock – 4.9 years**

Mineral Requirements

Core Strategy

34. The Core Strategy sets out requirements for Sharp Sand and Gravel, Soft Sand and Crushed Rock for the Plan Period based upon the LAA2014 provision rates.

35. Taking into account the sales since 2014 and the minerals available to be worked over the Plan Period, the remaining required minerals to meet the Core Strategy requirements are set out below:

	Core Strategy Requirements (2014-2031) (Mt – Million tonnes)	**Remaining Core Strategy Requirements identified through LAA**
Sharp Sand and Gravel	18.27mt	2.649mt
Soft Sand	3.40mt	0
Crushed Rock	10.51mt	0

Table 4: Core Strategy Requirements

New Minerals and Waste Local Plan

36. However, identifying the 2.649 million tonnes of Sharp Sand and Gravel, will not address the issue of the Crushed Rock landbank being below at least 10 years, as required by the NPPF. Therefore, to address this along with other policy changes required, in December 2022 it was agreed to commence with a new Minerals and Waste Plan for Oxfordshire. This new Plan will consider mineral requirements for all aggregates over the new Plan period during its preparation.

37. Mineral requirements within the adopted Core Strategy will be replaced with the mineral requirements as set out within the new Minerals and Waste Plan upon adoption. The new Minerals and Waste Plan has been delayed because of the uncertainty over the future plan making process following the Government consultation on the subject.

Conclusion

38. The purpose of an annual LAA is to review the latest information available, in order to forecast future demand as well as analysing all aggregate supply options and assessing the balance between supply and demand.

39. To ensure that supply continues to meet demand, the Aggregates Provision Rate (APR) included within the LAA are**:**

- **Sand and Gravel – 0.986 mtpa**
- **Soft Sand – 0.235mtpa**
- **Crushed Rock – 0.964mtpa**
- **Recycled and Secondary Aggregates- 0.926mtpa**

40. Using these APRs and the Oxfordshire reserves at the end of 2023, the landbanks can be calculated as:

- **Sand and Gravel – 7.8 years**
- **Soft Sand – 14 years**
- **Crushed Rock – 4.9 years**

41. To meet the Core Strategy requirements, we will need to identify Sharp Sand and Gravel sites to meet the following mineral requirements over the Plan Period. There would be no further need to identify any further Soft Sand and Crushed Rock sites.
    - **Sand and Gravel- 2.649 million tonnes.**

42. The new Minerals and Waste Local Plan will review all mineral requirements over the new Plan period (at least a 15-year period), and identify the amount of mineral required and the ways in which this will be met.

Corporate Policies and Priorities

43. The LAA contributes to the corporate policy on climate change, the vision for thriving communities and thriving economy. It sets out the requirements for the raw materials required for growth following a full review of various factors. By recording and reviewing the supply and demand for minerals, it ensures we plan for future development well related to its need and based on the principles of sustainable development.

Financial Implications

44. The Minerals and Waste Plan is included within the Economy and Place Directorate and is in part being progressed within the existing base budget for the council's minerals and waste policy function. The LAA forms part of this work-stream and it does not raise any additional financial or staff implications.

Comments checked by:

Rob Finlayson, Strategic Finance Business Partner (Environment & Highways and Economy & Place), rob.finlayson@oxfordshire.gov.uk

Legal Implications

45. Under the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 (as amended) and the NPPF, the council is required to prepare, monitor and, as necessary, review a minerals and waste local plan. An annual LAA, as required by the NPPF, is an essential part of the evidence base for a "sound" minerals and waste local plan and is also needed to enable the plan to be monitored. Under the Localism Act 2011, the Council is required to meet the duty to cooperate in the preparation of local plans and related activities in relation to strategic matters.

Comments checked by:

Jennifer Crouch, Principal Solicitor (Environment Team)
jennifer.crouch@oxfordshire.gov.uk

Staff Implications

46. The Minerals & Waste Local Plan is included within the work of the Economy and Place Directorate.

Equality & Inclusion Implications

47. None have been specifically identified.

Sustainability Implications

48. The LAA sets out findings and conclusions on aggregates in Oxfordshire as at the end of 2023, based upon significant facts and figures. This is in accordance with the NPPF. It is acknowledged that a higher Aggregates Provision Rate will require more mineral to be delivered over the Plan period compared with the current Core Strategy and previous LAA rates.

49. However, the LAA does not set out where mineral sites will be and the sustainability implications for these. The Minerals and Waste Local Plan will address the mineral requirements and this will be subject to an Equality and Climate Change Assessment, as well as a Sustainability Appraisal and Strategic Environmental Assessment or Environmental Outcomes Report. In addition, any future Planning applications will also consider sustainability implications.

Risk Management

50. Having an up to date and robust LAA in place is necessary for the effective monitoring of the adopted Core Strategy and the preparation of the new Minerals and Waste Local Plan. It will also be an important factor in the determination of planning applications for mineral working where the size of the landbank is a material consideration.

Consultations

51. The NPPF requires the Council to consult and take into account the advice of the South East England Aggregate Working Party (SEEAWP); the draft Oxfordshire LAA for the year 2023 (Appendix 1) will be considered by SEEAWP in December 2024. Comments received at the December meeting will be fed back to the Cabinet Member for Climate Change, Environment and Future Generations and the Director for Economy and Place, and any amendments made.

52. There is no requirement for wider consultation on LAAs. This is a technical document that will form part of the evidence base of future Plan preparation and as such will be published alongside the Core Strategy Review and Site Allocations Plan.

Robin Rogers
Director for Economy and Place

Annex:	Annex 1: Summary of Key Data 2023 Annex 2: Oxfordshire Local Aggregate Assessment for 2023 data
Background papers:	Collation of the results of the 2019 Aggregates Minerals Survey for England and Wales
Contact Officer:	Charlotte Simms, Minerals and Waste Local Plan Principal Officer,

Email: charlotte.simms@oxfordshire.gov.uk

August 2024

This page is intentionally left blank

Annex 1: Summary of Key Data 2023

Summary – Oxfordshire County Council 2023 (million tonnes)									
Quarry Sales	**2023 Sales (Mt) & Trend**	**Average (10-yr) Sales & Trend**	**Average (3-yr) Sales & Trend**	**Annual Provision Rate (APR) (Mt[2])**	**Reserve (Mt)**	**Landbank (years)**	**Allocations (years)**	**Capacity (Mtpa)**	**Comments**
Soft Sand	⇩ 0.203	⇧ 0.235	⇩ 0.232	0.235	⇩ 3.288mt	14.0	N/A	0.309	LAA rate decreased to 0.235mtpa (10 year average) Landbank above 7-year requirement
Sharp Sand & Gravel	⇩ 0.877	⇧ 0.839	⇧ 1.002	0.986	⇩ 7.693	7.8	N/A	1.409	LAA rate remains at 0.986mtpa Landbank above 7-year requirement
Crushed Rock	⇩ 1.002	⇧ 0.964	⇩ 1.134	0.964	⇩ 4.744	4.9	N/A	1.689	LAA rate changed to 0.964mtpa (10 year average). Landbank remains below 10-year requirement
Recycled / Secondary Aggregates	0.443	0.422	0.469	0.926	N/A	N/A	N/A	1.523	2022 data and 8-year average, not 10-year Calculated using WDI and the Guidance on Assessing levels of Recycled Aggregate
Rail Depot Sales (Sand & Gravel	c	c	c	c	c	c	c	C	Due to commercial confidentiality, we are unable to share these figures

Rail Depot Sales (Crushed Rock)	c	c	c	c	c	c	c	c	Due to confidentiality, we are unable to share these figures

General Comments

The reduction in sales Oxfordshire saw in 2022 continued in 2023, across all three primary aggregate types.

The LAA Aggregate Provision Rate for Sharp Sand and Gravel remains at 0.986mtpa following a review of demand, consumption, imports and exports and other local factors such as economic growth, population and housing.

The 2023 LAA Aggregate Provision Rate for Soft Sand has been changed to the 10-year average, following a review of demand, consumption, imports and exports and other local factors such as economic growth, population and housing.

The 2023 LAA Aggregate Provision Rate for Crushed Rock has been changed to the 10-year average of 0.964mtpa following a review of demand, consumption, imports and exports and other local factors such as economic growth, population and housing.

Using the Crushed Rock LAA Rate, we are still below the required 10-year landbank for the six consecutive year. This issue will be considered within the preparation of the new Minerals and Waste Local Plan.

OXFORDSHIRE LOCAL AGGREGATE ASSESSMENT

(Calendar year 2023)

October 2024

Prepared by Oxfordshire County Council
August (including information provided in 2014 by LUC and Cuesta Consulting Limited)

Contents

1.Oxfordshire Summary of Key Data 2023

Summary – Oxfordshire County Council 2023 (million tonnes)									
Quarry Sales	**2023 Sales (Mt) & Trend**	**Average (8-yr) Sales & Trend**	**Average (3-yr) Sales & Trend**	**Annual Provision Rate (APR) (Mt2)**	**Reserve (Mt)**	**Landbank (years)**	**Allocations (years)**	**Production Capacity (Mtpa)**	**Comments**
Soft Sand	⇩ 0.203	⇧ 0.235	⇩ 0.232	0.235	⇩ 3.288mt	14.0	N/A	0.309	LAA rate changed to 10 year average of 0.235mtpa Landbank above 7-year requirement
Sharp Sand & Gravel	⇩ 0.877	⇧ 0.839	⇧ 1.002	0.986	⇩ 7.693	7.8	N/A	1.409	LAA rate remains at 0.986 Landbank above 7-year requirement
Crushed Rock	⇩ 1.002	⇧ 0.964	⇩⇩ 1.134	0.964	4.744	4.9	N/A	1.689	LAA rate changed to 10 year average of 0.964 Landbank remains below 10-year requirement
Recycled / Secondary Aggregates	0.443	0.422	0.469	0.926	N/A	N/A	N/A	1.523	These are for 2022. 14% of operators surveyed responded to the 2023 RSA survey. Average sales is 8 years not 10

Rail Depot Sales (Sand & Gravel	c	c	c	c	c	c	c	c	Due to commercial confidentiality we are unable to share these figures
Rail Depot Sales (Crushed Rock)	c	c	c	c	c	c	c	c	Due to confidentiality, we are unable to share these figures

General Comments

The reduction in sales Oxfordshire saw in 2022 continued in 2023, across all three primary aggregate types.

The LAA Aggregate Provision Rate for Sharp Sand and Gravel remains at 0.986mtpa following a review of demand, consumption, imports and exports and other local factors such as economic growth, population and housing.

The 2023 LAA Aggregate Provision Rate for Soft Sand has been changed to the 10 year average, following a review of demand, consumption, imports and exports and other local factors such as economic growth, population and housing.

The 2023 LAA Aggregate Provision Rate for Crushed Rock has been changed to the 10 year average of 0.964mtpa following a review of demand, consumption, imports and exports and other local factors such as economic growth, population and housing.

Using the Crushed Rock LAA Rate, we are still below the required 10-year landbank for the sixth consecutive year. This issue will be considered within the preparation of the Minerals and Waste Local Plan

The Recycled and Secondary Aggregate figures are for 2022, and have been calculated using the Waste Data Interrogator and estimates from previous returns as 14% of operators responded to 2023 survey.

2.Executive Summary

2.1 The National Planning Policy Framework, December 2023 (NPPF) states that mineral planning authorities should prepare an annual Local Aggregate Assessment (LAA).

2.2 The LAA is required to:

- Forecast the demand for aggregates based on average 10 years' sales data and other relevant local information;
- analyse all aggregate supply options and;
- assess the balance between demand and supply.

2.3 This is the twelth LAA for Oxfordshire and includes the 2023 aggregate sales and reserves data for the County. The 10-year period covered by this LAA is 2014 up to 2023 and the three-year period is 2021 – 2023.

2.4 The primary aggregate figures within this LAA are taken from the 2023 Aggregates Minerals (AM2023) undertaken primarily by the British Geological Survey under a contract with the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG) and supported by Oxfordshire Council Council, on behalf of South East England Aggregate Working Party.

Demand

Sharp Sand and Gravel

2.5 Sales of Sharp Sand and Gravel decreased in 2023 to 0.877mt. This is a 9.8% decrease on 2022 sales, and 11% below the Aggregate Provision Rate for 2022 of 0.986mt.

2.6 There was an 6% increase in the 10-year sales average (0.839mt from 0.791mt), which is 14.9% below the current Aggregate Provision Rate. The 3-year sales average of Sharp Sand and Gravel increased by 1.5% to 1.002mt, which remains higher than the 10-year average and 1.6% higher than the Aggregate Provision Rate for 2022.

2.7 Having considered the sales trends and other relevant information contained within this report, it is considered not necessary to change the Aggregate Provision Rate for Sharp Sand and Gravel and it will remain at 0.986mt per annum.

Soft Sand

2.8 Sales of Soft Sand in 2023 decreased to 0.203mt, a decrease of 11% on 2022 sales and 16% below the Aggregate Provision Rate for 2022 of 0.243mt.

2.9 The 10-year sales average increased 1.6% to 0.235mt from 2022, which is 3.2% below the Aggregate Provision Rate for 2022 of 0.243mtpa. The 3-year sales average decreased 1% on the previous year to 0.232mt which is 4.5% lower than the current 0.243mpta.

2.10 Having considered the sales trends and other relevant information contained within this report, it is considered necessary to change soft sand Aggrergate Provision Rate to the 10 year sales average of0.235mtpa.

Crushed Rock

2.11 Sales of Crushed Rock in 2023 decreased to 1.002mt, a decrease of 12.6% on 2022, though 9.6 % above the Aggregate Provision Rate of 2022 of 0.914mt.

2.12 The 10-year sales average increased 5.4% to 0.964mtpa compared with 2022, which is 5.5% above the Aggregate Provision Rate for 2022. The 3-year sales average decreased 2.4% to 1.134mt on the previous 3-year period, this is 24% higher than the Aggregate Provision Rate for 2022.

2.13 Having considered the sales trends and other relevant information contained within this report, it is therefore considered necessary to change the Aggretate Provision Rate for Crushed Rock to the 10 year average of 0.964mtpa.

Rail Depots

2.14 In 2023, there were no returns from operators on sales from Rail Depots. However, due to a number of planning decisions in 2021, Oxfordshire has increased its rail depot capacity to over 3.5million. It is known that the increased capacity at Hennef Way Banbury is temporary to provide material for HS2, and Appleford Sidings has added two more rail sidings. This site now has a planning condition limiting it to 1.5million tonnes per annum.

Recycled and Secondary Aggregates

2.15 To ensure a consistent picture of the avaliablity of secondary and recycled aggregates over time which could result in sales, this LAA uses an approach from the published Guidance on Assessing Levels of Recycled Aggregates[1].

2.16 Due to the Environment Agency's data on CDE in the Waste Data Interrogator for 2023 not being released at the time of report writing, we are unable to estimate the Recycled Waste findings for 2023. This will be published in future LAA's. Using 2022 data, estimated Recycled and Secondary aggregates was estimated to be 0.443 millon tonnes.

2.17 The LAA APR figure for recycled and secondary aggregate should be maintained as the provision figure set in the Oxfordshire Minerals and Waste Local Plan: Part 1 – Core Strategy 2017, Policy M3 which is 0.926mtpa.

Supply

Sand and gravel

2.18 In Oxfordshire at the end of 2023, there were 11 sharp sand and gravel quarries within Oxfordshire, two currently inactive. The permission at Stonehenge Farm quarry expired at the end of 2023 and therefore the permitted 1.5 million tonnes (mt) has now been removed from the landbank. One permission was granted in 2023 for Sand and Gravel, for an extension at Sutton Wick for 128,000 tonnes. There were four Sharp Sand and Gravel planning applications outstanding at the end of 2023.

2.19 Total permitted reserves of Sharp Sand and Gravel in Oxfordshire at the end of 2023 were 7.693mt. Using the latest Aggregates Provision Rate figures of 0.986 mpta, this gives a landbank of 7.8years. This is in accordance with the

[1] Recycled Aggregates Data: Guidance on Assessing Levels of Recycled Aggregates April 2022

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) requirements of a landbank of at least 7 years.

Soft Sand

2.20 In Oxfordshire, at the end of 2023, there were 8 sites with planning permission for Soft Sand extraction, with 2 currently inactive. No planning applications for Soft Sand were granted in 2023.

2.21 Total permitted reserves for Soft Sand in Oxfordshire at the end of 2023 were 3.288mt. Using the proposed Aggregates Provision Rate figure of 0.235 mpta, this gives a landbank of 14.0 years. This is in accordance with the NPPF requirements of a landbank of at least 7 years.

Crushed Rock

2.22 At the end of 2023, there were 12 active sites with planning permission for Crushed Rock extraction. No permissions for Crushed Rock were granted in 2023. There were four planning applications for Crushed Rock outstanding at the end of 2023.

2.23 Total permitted reserves for Crushed Rock in Oxfordshire at the end of 2023 were 4.744mt. Using the proposed LAA Aggregates Provision Rate of 0.964. mtpa this gives a landbank of years 4.9 years which is below the requirements of the NPPF of at least a 10 year landbank.

Recycled and secondary material sites

2.24 Due to the Environment Agency's data on CDE in the Waste Data Interrogator for 2023 not being released at the time of report writing, we are unable to estimate the Recycled and Secondary aggregate figures for sales in Oxfordshire for 2023. This will be published in future Local Aggregate Assessments.

2.25 At the end of 2022, Oxfordshire's estimated recycled and secondary aggregate available to be sold was recorded as approximately 0.443mt. However, permitted capacity taken from planning decisions, application statements and previous survey findings at the end of 2023 was 1.523mt .

Rail Depots

2.26 Oxfordshire has four permitted rail depots, three of which are operational. No returns for the sales from the Depots were returned in 2023.

Relationships with other MPA's

2.27 Every county in the UK has to import aggregates because none possess the geology necessary to produce all the types of aggregate required. All sales between Authority areas which reflect supply and demand are tracked in the approximately four year national aggregate surveys.

2.28 The most recent is the 2023 Aggregates Minerals Survey for England and Wales (AM2023),undertaken by British Geological Survey (BGS) under a contract with the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG). The AM2023 will set out aggregate movements at a sub-regional level. The BGS have not released the Report and complete data on imports and exports is not yet available for the 2023 survey, therefore this will be reported in the LAA for 2024 data. The most recent data available, was from the AM2019 survey which was discussed within the LAA2020. This survey highlighted that Oxfordshire is a net exporter of all Land Won Sand and Gravel and Crushed Rock.

Factors affecting supply and demand

2.29 2023 has seen a continued decrease in sales of all primary aggregates compared to 2022.

2.30 2020 saw a global pandemic (Covid). The very high sales in 2021, could have been a result of businesses and development commencing again after lockdowns, and a surge in building and construction to move planned projects forward as quickly as possible after Covid.

2.31 There are major infrastructure projects as well as local housing and transport projects continuing to take place during the Plan period.

Executive Summary Conclusion

2.32 The purpose of an annual Local Aggregates Assessment is to review the latest information available, in order to forecast future demand as well as analysing all aggregate supply options and assessing the balance between supply and demand.

2.33 To ensure that supply continues to meet demand, the **Aggregates Provision Rate (APR)** will be as follows for 2023 onwards:

- **Sand and Gravel – 0.986mtpa – No change from 2022**
- **Soft Sand – 0.235mtpa – Decrease from 2022**
- **Crushed Rock – 0.964 mtpa – Increase from 2022**
- **Recycled and Secondary Aggregates- 0.926mtpa – No change from 2022**

2.34 Using these APRs and the Oxfordshire reserves at the end of 2023, the Landbank can be calculated as:

- **Sand and Gravel – 7.8 years**
- **Soft Sand – 14 years**
- **Crushed Rock – 4.9 years**

2.35 To meet the current Minerals and Waste Local Plan Part 1: Core Strategy (2017) requirements, we will need to identify Sharp Sand and Gravel sites to meet the following mineral requirements over the Plan Period. There would be no further need to identify any further Soft Sand and Crushed Rock.

- **Sand and Gravel – 2.649million tonnes**.
- **Soft Sand – 0 million tonnes**
- **Crushed Rock – 0 million tonnes**

2.36 However this will not address the issue of the Crushed Rock landbank being below the at least 10 years required by the NPPF. Therefore in December

2022, it was agreed to commence with a new Minerals and Waste Plan for Oxfordshire. This new Plan will consider mineral requirements for all aggregates over the new Plan period during its preparation. There has been a delay in the production of the new Minerals and Waste Local Plan, due to Central Governments proposed significant changes to the plan making process.

2.37 Mineral requirements within the Core Strategy will be replaced with the mineral requirements as set out in the new Minerals and Waste Plan upon adoption.

3. Demand

Land Won Aggregate

Sharp Sand and Gravel Past Sales

3.1 Sales of Sharp Sand and Gravel from quarries in Oxfordshire for the period 2014 – 2023 are shown in Table 3.1. These figures are taken from two sources: The annual Aggregates Minerals Survey for England and Wales undertaken by Oxfordshire County Council on behalf of SEEAWP (South East Aggregates Working Party) and the historic four/five yearly British Geological Survey (BGS) under a contract with the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG).

2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	10-year average	Last 3-year average
0.639	0.768	0.651	0.703	0.796	0.994	0.830	1.157	0.972	**0.877**	**0.839**	**1.002**

Table 3.1: Sales of Sharp Sand and Gravel 2014 – 2023 (million tonnes) (Sources: SEEAWP Aggregates Monitoring Surveys)

3.2 Sales of Sharp Sand and Gravel decreased 9.8% in 2023 compared with 2022.

3.3 Sales in 2014 were just still showing the effects of the economic recession and the weaker economic period of 2012. The closure of Caversham Quarry during 2013 also accounted for a reduced working of sand and gravel during this period. This closure was due to exhaustion of reserves in 2012, pending grant of permission for an extension which was approved in August 2014 but not commenced until 2017. The recession and the quarry closure are likely to have affected the total sales around 2014.

3.4 There was also a 15% fall in sales of Sharp Sand and Gravel from quarries in Oxfordshire from 2015 to 2016. Most of this decrease was accounted for by sales at one quarry - Bridge Farm, Sutton Courtenay. The fall in sales at this quarry in 2016 was caused primarily by a break in production whilst the determination and issue of the planning permission to work the full depth of gravel in Phase 4b at Bridge Farm was awaited; the permission was issued on 17 May 2016.

3.5 The shortfall in supply from Bridge Farm during this time was made up by imports of marine dredged material, delivered by rail from East London into Appleford Sidings, Sutton Courtenay Depot. Crushed Rock (limestone) was also imported by rail into this depot, from Somerset, and used to substitute sand and gravel.

3.6 In 2017 sales of sand and gravel extracted from Bridge Farm, Sutton Courtenay Quarry returned to the 2015 level; and overall sales of Sharp Sand and Gravel in Oxfordshire increased again.

3.7 In 2020, the Global pandemic Covid resulted in multiple lockdowns and industry closed or slowed down for periods, which caused a fall in sales. In addition Hatford was awaiting a determination for their western extension, which was submitted in 2019.

3.8 In 2021, developments and strategic projects both in Oxfordshire and neighbouring Authorities commenced again following the lockdowns of 2020. Also, production at New Barn Farm, following the 2018 permission became established and there was permission for an extension at Hatford that enabled production on the site to continue in 2021.

3.9 In 2022, there was a slight decrease in sales compared with 2021, but this was considered to be settling after the unusual years in 2020 and 2021. 2022 also saw rises in inflation and the energy crisis, along with an increase in the cost of materials. This could have potentially impacted on sales.

3.10 Sales in 2023, have once again dropped, by 9.8%.

3.11 All these factors have had implications for the 10-year average and 3 year average.

3.12 The 10 year average is currently 0.839tpa, which includes the time period following the recession (2014-2017) and the other associated factors for the reduced sand and gravel sales over this time.

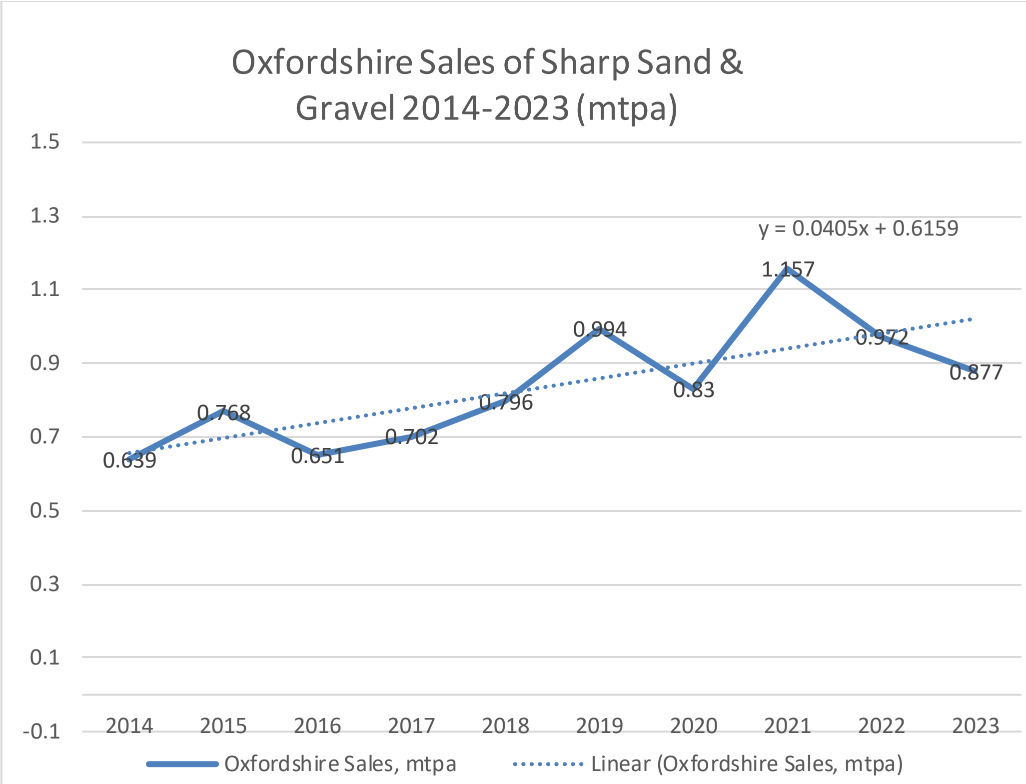
3.13 The 3 year average is 0.986tpa, but it should be noted that the 3 years contain the highly unusual years of 2020 and 2021.

3.14 Based on linear trend analysis shown in Figure 3.1, the average rate of increase over the period 2014 to 2023 in Oxfordshire was 0.0405mtpa, giving a total increase of 0.405mtpa over the 10-year period with four intervals of decline.

3.15 There has been a 6% increase in the 10-year period and a 1.6% increase in the 3-year period[2]. The 3-year sales average of Sharp Sand and Gravel is 19.4% higher than the 10-year average.

Figure 3.1 Linear trend analysis - Sharp Sand and Gravel sales (mtpa) 2014-2023

[2] Oxfordshire County Council LAA2023



Soft Sand Past Sales

3.16 Sales of Soft Sand from quarries in Oxfordshire 2014–2023 are shown in Table 3.2. These figures are taken from two sources: The annual Aggregates Minerals Survey for England and Wales undertaken by Oxfordshire County Council on behalf of SEEAWP and the historic four/five yearly British Geological Survey (BGS) under a contract with the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG).

2014	**2015**	**2016**	**2017**	**2018**	**2019**	**2020**	**2021**	**2022**	**2023**	**10 year average**	**3 year average**
0.230	0.233	0.227	0.251	0.252	0.254	0.210	0.26 4	**0.229**	**0.203**	**0.235**	**0.232**

Table 3.2: Sales of Soft Sand 2014 – 2023 (million tonnes) (Sources: SEEAWP Aggregates Monitoring Surveys)

3.17 Unlike Sharp Sand and Gravel, sales in 2014 no longer showed signs of the effects of the economic recession and the weaker economic period of pre 2012. Sales had picked up and were steadily increasing up until Covid in 2020.

3.18 Hatford quarry gained permission in early 2021 which enabled production to continue on site. Planning permission for Shellingford was issued at the end of 2020 and production resumed on site in 2021. Along with the post COVID surge in developments, this caused a sharp increase in the sales in 2021.

3.19 Sales decreased in 2022 and decreased again, by 11.4%, in 2023. 2023 sales are the lowest sales since 2013. This could be due to less demand, or it could be due to the geology of the sites. Soft Sand is often located with Crushed rock reserves, and if more Crushed Rock has been extracted from this site over 2022 and 2023 due to geology, this may have an impact on our Soft Sand sales for that year.

3.20 Sales saw a 3.35% increase in the 10-year period, but a 3.6% decrease over the 3-year period. However, the 3-year average is 1.2% higher than the 10-year baseline period[3].

3.21 Linear trend analysis (Figure 3.2) over the period 2014 to 2023 now reveals an average rate of decrease of 0.0012mtpa for Oxfordshire (with four periods of decline) over the baseline period.

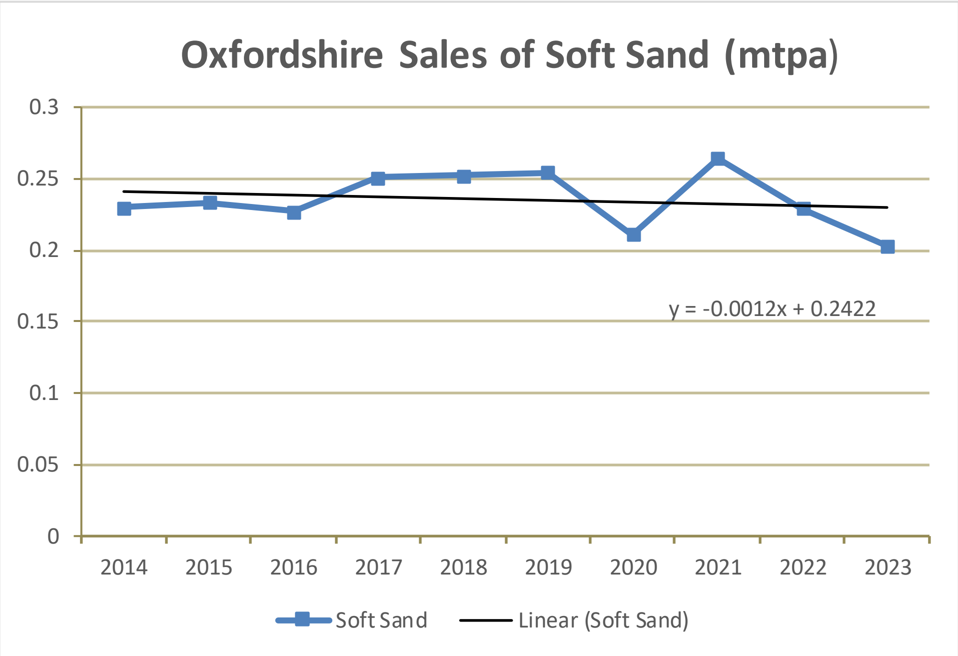


Figure 3.2 Linear trend analysis – Soft Sand sales 2014-2023

Overall sand and gravel sales

3.22 Oxfordshire saw a 9.8% decrease in Sharp Sand and Gravel and a 11.4% decrease in Soft Sand giving an overall decrease of 10.6% in all Sand and Gravel, which is higher than the Mineral Products Associations (MPA[4]) report which anticipated a 4.7% decline in construction in 2023.

[3] Appendix 1
[4] Regional_overview_of_construction_and_mineral_products_markets_in_GB_Spring_2023.pdf (mineralproducts.org)

Crushed Rock Past Sales

3.23 Sales of Crushed Rock from quarries in Oxfordshire for the period 2014– 2023 are shown in Table 3.3. These figures are taken from the Aggregates Monitoring Survey by SEEAWP and the BGS Survey.

2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	**2023**	**10 year average**	**3 year average**
1.061	0.914	0.715	0.867	0.751	0.843	1.087	1.254	1.146	**1.002**	**0.964**	**1.134**

Table 3.3: Sales of Sharp Crushed Rock 2014- 2023 (million tonnes) (Sources: SEEAWP Aggregates Monitoring Surveys)

3.24 The sales for 2023 decreased 12.6% compared with 2022.

3.25 The Minerals Products Association[5] records that across the UK crushed rock sales fell by between 5.8% in the UK over the first 3 Quarters of 2023.

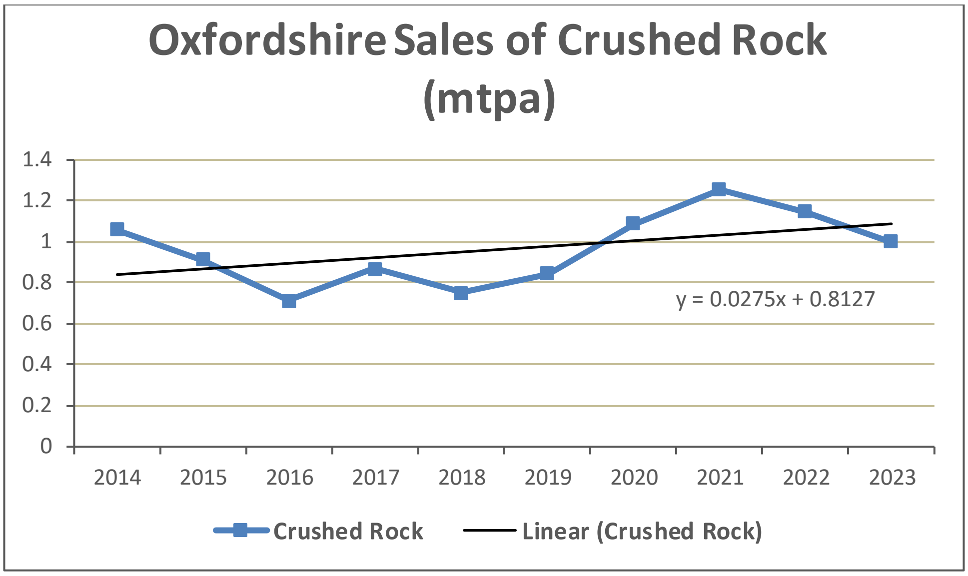
3.26 It is believed HS2 is still demanding significant mineral, as shown by the demand for increased capacity at Banbury Rail depot to bring in more material to meet this projects requirement in 2021 for five years. There was an application for 2.7 million tonnes of material at Finmere which is specifically for HS2 however, this has now been withdrawn and construction of HS2 continues, the materials for which could be being met from our Crushed Rock quarries, impacting significantly on our sales.

3.27 In 2023 there was a 5.5% increase on the previous 10-year average period. However the three-year average decreased by 2.4% on the previous 3-year period.

3.28 Linear trend analysis of Crushed Rock sales (Figure 3.3) over the period 2014 to 2023 reveals an average rate of increase of 0.0502mtpa for Oxfordshire. The resulting overall increase over that period is 0.028mt (5 periods of decline).

Figure 3.3 Linear trend analysis – Crushed Rock sales

[5] Deepening challenges for construction revealed by latest MPA survey (mineralproducts.org)



Secondary and Recycled Aggregate

3.29 Whilst reasonable data on recycling capacity is available for Oxfordshire through Decision Notices and Planning Statements, robust data on arisings and sales of construction, demolition and excavation waste (CD&E) is difficult to obtain and a standard methodology has not been adopted nationally.

3.30 Past aggregates monitoring surveys, for example, have not produced a full response from secondary and recycled aggregates site operators and returns are getting less each year as Operators also have to supply the information to the Environment Agency. 2023 saw a 14% response rate. This is a recognised issue across Minerals and Waste Planning Authorities

3.31 In 2021, due to poor returns the approach was taken to use survey returns where these were received, and where not, then a 50% average of material received into a CDE recycling site was taken from the WDI received figures for that site, as this was the recommended approach by our regional group SEWPAG at this time.

3.32 In 2022, the National Waste Technical Advisory Board and Aggregate Working Party Chairs produced a Guidance note [6]. This details the various options available for the collation of data to estimate arisings and sales of Recycled Aggregate.

3.33 Therefore in light of the publication of this guidance and the continued reduction in operator responses, a methodology has been applied. This methodololy uses the WDI for “Waste received” data into CDE sites (using CDE waste codes as set in the guidance) for recycling, recovery and transfer. Material used in landfill and on/in land is not considered.

[6] Recycled Aggregates Data: Guidance on Assessing Levels of Recycled Aggregates April 2022

3.34 Then using the WDI for "Waste removed", (with the same CDE codes) any waste removed from the sites that received waste is identified and removed from the "waste received" data for each site.

3.35 This provides an estimate of material that was received into Oxfordshire sites, which was not removed as waste. Therefore, considered material that potentially could be sold.

3.36 It is recognised that there may be a number of limitations with this methodology such as an element of overestimating/double counting associated with the use of data from the WDI, where waste is handled at more than one facility. In addition, waste recorded as being received by mobile plant in the WDI has been excluded because this data is not available for most years and also as mobile plant are only listed in the WDI based on the registered address of the company, which is not necessarily where the mobile plant is actually used. Lastly, it is also recognised that there may be an element of overestimating/double counting associated with the use of data from the WDI, where waste is handled at more than one facility.

3.37 However due to the consistent poor Recycled and Secondary Aggregate Returns, a lack of national methodology and any further detailed evidence, this approach will provide a consistent approach to be able to collate, review and monitor estimated potential recycled aggregate for sale from sites within Oxfordshire over a period. Within this LAA this methodology has also been applied retrospectively to previous years (Table 3.4 below) to be able to view these estimates over time. This will be explored in further detail as we prepare our New Minerals and Waste Local Plan.

3.38 As the WDI for 2023 had not been released at the time this report was written, this LAA is unable to calculate the Recycled Aggregate for 2023.

3.39 For Secondary Aggregate sites, an estimate is made using averages from previous returns.

3.40 Using the Recycled Aggregate methodology with the secondary estimate for 2022 the Recycled and Secondary Aggregate figure for sales is estimated to be 0.443mt.

3.41 It is likely that these estimated 2022 figures are significantly less than the total actual production.

2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	8 year average	3 year average
0.389	0.439	0.395	0.316	0.435	0.444	0.516	0.443	**0.423**	**0.469**

Table 3.4: Sales of Secondary and Recycled Aggregate 2015-2022 (Sources: SEEAWP Aggregates Monitoring Surveys)

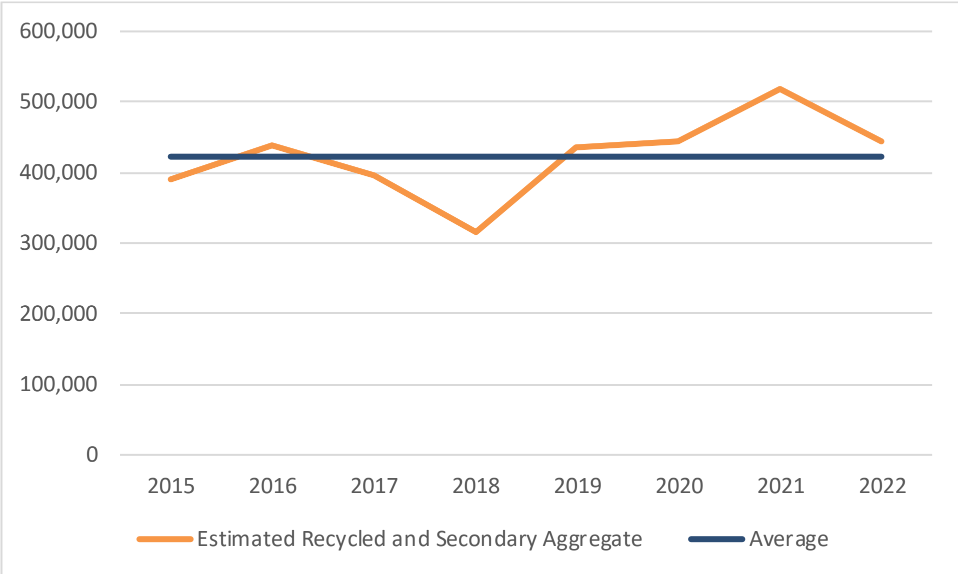


Figure 3.4 Recycled and Secondary Aggregate Sales against 8 year average of 0.423

3.42 Within the Mineral Products Association report "The Contribution of Recycled and Secondary Materials to Total Aggregates Supply in Great Britain - Estimates for 2021" it is reported in 2021, total recycled and secondary aggregates are estimated to have accounted for 28% of total aggregates supply in Great Britain.

3.43 If this percentage was rolled over to Oxfordshire's total Aggregate sales for 2023, it could be estimated that 0.583million tonnes of recycled and secondary aggregate were sold in 2023.

Imports of Secondary Aggregates

3.44 No known secondary aggregates are currently transported into Oxfordshire. This is largely due to the costs of transporting the material, and because the exemptions from the aggregates levy, that gave secondary aggregates a cost advantage over primary aggregates were withdrawn in April 2014.

Rail Depots

3.45 There are three railhead depots in Oxfordshire used for importing aggregates, namely at Banbury, Kidlington and Sutton Courtenay, and these are safeguarded in the Oxfordshire Minerals and Waste Local Plan: Part 1 Core Strategy. These depots import Crushed Rock aggregates from the South West (Somerset) and the East Midlands (Leicestershire). There is planning permission for a further railhead aggregate depot at Shipton on Cherwell, but this has not yet been developed. There is also a depot at Hinksey Sidings, Oxford but this is used solely by the rail industry to bring in rail ballast for internal use on the rail network; it is currently operational but its use for the transhipment of rail ballast has been intermittent in the past.

3.46 Figures for imports of Crushed Rock by rail collected by Oxfordshire County Council are only available from 2007 onwards. Prior to that year, only the regional totals were available.

3.47 In 2023, there were no returns from operators on sales from Rail Depots. Therefore, we are unable to report on sales for 2023.

3.48 However, due to a number of planning decisions in 2021, Oxfordshire's rail depot capacity increased to over 3.5million tonnes.

3.49 It is known that the increased capacity at Hennef Way Banbury is temporary for 5 years to provide material for HS2, and Appleford Sidings has added two more rail sidings. This site now has a condition limiting it to 1.5million tonnes per annum.

3.50 Due to this demand for additional capacity, it can be considered that sales remain significant through Rail Depots in Oxfordshire.

Historic Rail Depot Sales

3.51 The rail depot figures are confidential because they were derived from returns for only two companies. The figures for 2020 incorporated imports by rail from Somerset, Leicestershire and elsewhere, but also included significant quantities (from South Wales, South Gloucestershire and Kent) that were delivered to the rail depots by road; this distorted the true picture for rail transportation. It at least provides quantification of those road imports. The figures do not include imports of Crushed Rock to Hinksey Sidings, Oxford, which were brought in by rail and despatched by rail for use as rail ballast on the rail network (over a wider area than just Oxfordshire).

3.52 Although the raw data is confidential, in 2020 it was possible to report the variations over time (from 2007 onwards) in overall sales from the rail depots from the two reporting companies. Table 3.5 below, expresses the annual sales from rail depots for 2007 to 2020 as proportions of the sales figure for 2007.

2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
1.0	1.1	0.7	0.9	1.2	1.0	1.0	2.4	2.2	2.4	2.5	2.5	No return	2

Table 3.5: Pattern of sales from Oxfordshire rail depots 2007-2020 (Source: Oxfordshire County Council Aggregates Monitoring Survey)

3.53 Table 3.5 shows that the figures vary from one year to another but that up to 2013 the fluctuation was less marked than those for sales of sand & gravel. Since 2013, the situation has changed, with annual rail imports for 2014 to 2018 being consistently around two and a half times that imported in 2007. However, this dropped to around 2 times in 2020. This could be due to Covid and lockdown

3.54 The combined sales from the three railhead depots that were operational in 2020 represented 74% of the total throughput permitted capacity of these three depots at this time, indicating that there was currently little headroom for further increase in imports of Crushed Rock by rail.

3.55 There is now significantly more capacity at two of the sites within Oxfordshire therefore it could be considered that sales will have also significantly increased.

Consumption

3.56 In 2023 the British Geological Survey (BGS) undertook the Aggregates Survey alongside Oxfordshire County Council, and this survey included asking operators for imports and exports of minerals between Mineral Planning Authorities, alongside asking for reserve and sales data. Unfortunately at the time of writing, the Import and Export data collation from BGS has not been released and so this LAA is unable to report on this.

3.57 Until it is published the most recent data on imports and exports is the 2019 BGS Aggregates Survey. This set out how much mineral Oxfordshire imports and how much is exported.[7]

3.58 The final report also sets out how much Oxfordshire Land Won Aggregate Oxfordshire consumed in 2019, which is an indicator of the quantity of each mineral type Oxfordshire requires. Sharp Sand and Gravel and Soft Sand are combined within the BGS Survey.

3.59 The full summary is shown in Appendix 2. The consumption figures have been summarised in Table 3.6. This also includes the information for the comparative years of 2009 and 2014.

[7] Aggregate Minerals Survey for England and Wales, 2019 (publishing.service.gov.uk)

	Sand and Gravel 2009	Crushed Rock 2009	All Oxfordshire Aggregate 2009	Sand and Gravel 2014	Crushed Rock 2009	All Oxfordshire Aggregate 2014	Sand and Gravel 2019	Crushed Rock 2019	All Oxfordshire Aggregate 2019
Total Consumed within Oxfordshire (Mt)	0.757	0.625	1.383	0.765	1.501	2.266	**0.900**	**0.617**	**1.517**

Table 3.6: Mineral consumed within Oxfordshire, 2009, 2014 and 2019 (BGS Surveys)

3.60 The table shows that in 2019, Oxfordshire consumed 0.900mt of sand and gravel, an increase of 17.5% from 2014, and an increase of 18.9% on 2009.

3.61 For crushed rock, Oxfordshire consumed 0.617mt in 2019. This is a decrease of 58.5% from 2014, and a decrease of 1.3% on 2009.

3.62 It should be noted that for some minerals within the survey it is not clear where they were consumed. These minerals are identified as sold within the South East or Unallocated. The consumption rates within Oxfordshire do not include any of the quantities from these two categories.

4.Factors affecting demand

4.1 Although the NPPF requires that the level of future provision within the LAA should be based, in part, on the rolling average of 10 years' sales figures. it also requires "other relevant local information" to be taken into account.

4.2 We need to consider whether or not the historical 10-year average for land-won primary aggregate production can be relied upon as a guide to future levels of provision, or whether this needs to be changed in order to reflect other factors which may influence either the supply (availability) and/or the demand for aggregates produced within Oxfordshire, in future years.

The Economy and Growth

4.3 In considering economic growth on the supply and demand of aggregates, several national forecasts have been considered. To consider economic forecasts this section considers Gross Domestic Product (GDP) along with construction rates.

4.4 The Gross Domestic Product (GDP) is only available at UK level, but it does provide a background indicator as to the relative changes in economic activity likely to be experienced in Oxfordshire over time. Table 4.1[8] below shows the annual GDP year on year growth for the UK as a whole for the 10-year baseline period. The average rate of growth in the UK over the period 2014 to 2023 remains at 1.6%. 2023 saw the lowest GDP since 2009 (excluding Covid year of 2020)

2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
3.2%	2.2%	1.9%	2.7%	1.4%	1.6%	-10.4%	8.7%	4.3%	0.1%

Table 4.1: Changes in UK Real GDP over the baseline period (ONS)[9]

4.5 The growth forecasts are set out in Table 4.2 below from the Office for Budget Responsibility as of March 2024[9]. The 2024-2028 average has dropped to 1.8% compared with last years 2.8% average for 2021-2027.

[8] Gross Domestic Product: Year on Year growth: CVM SA % - Office for National Statistics (ons.gov.uk)
[9] Economic and fiscal outlook - March 2023 (obr.uk)

	2022	2023	2024	2025	2026	2027	2028	2029 – 2032	2022-2028 average
UK	4.3%	0.3%	0.8%	1.9%	2.0%	1.8%	1.7%	Not yet forecast	**1.8%**

Table 4.2: Growth Forecasts

4.6 There are also more recent assumptions for GDP Growth[10] which are taken from a range of independent predictions. 2024 as 1.1% and 2025 as 1.3% compared with the prediction of 0.8% for 2024 and 1.9% set out in the table above, so over 2024 and 2025 slightly less growth (0.3%) is anticipated.

4.7 In addition, inflation could be considered, as this impacts on costs for raw materials, energy and labour, including the minerals sector. The UK inflation rate, as measured by the Consumer Prices Index, rose almost continuously from under 1% in early 2021 to 9.2% in November 2022. The inflation rate has then declined, dropping to 4.2% in November 2023. The inflation rate at July 2024 was 3.1%[11] (the most recent figure available at the time of publication).

4.8 The Construction Products Association forecasts that construction output is due to fall by 2.9% decline in construction in 2024 with a 2% growth in 2025. Further growth of 3.6% is anticipated in 2026, but clearly, there is greater uncertainty around activity in 2026 given the impacts of a new government.

4.9 According to the Mineral Products Association Regional overview of construction and mineral products markets in Great Britain report, private housing, which is a key driver of mineral products demand, was expected to see back-to-back falls of 11% in 2023 and 1% in 2024.[12]

4.10 The Report also states that the construction outlook in the South East will rise around 3.6% per annum in 2023-2027, due to private housing growth, however this includes large developments in Sussex and work in Ebbsfleet Garden City. The report does not go down to Authority level.

4.11 It would be beneficial if consideration could be given to any indicators of more local economic growth. Unfortunately, no quantitative information is available on this, though Oxfordshire does have a growth agenda, as set out in the 2016 Oxfordshire Strategic Economic Plan and in the Oxfordshire Growth Board's Oxfordshire Infrastructure Strategy (OXIS)[13].

[10] Forecasts_for_the_UK_economy_August_2024.pdf (publishing.service.gov.uk)
[11] CPIH ANNUAL RATE 00: ALL ITEMS 2015=100 - Office for National Statistics (ons.gov.uk)
[12] Construction Industry Forecasts - Summer 2024 (constructionproducts.org.uk)
[12] Regional_overview_of_construction_and_mineral_products_markets_in_GB_Spring_2023.pdf (mineralproducts.org)
[13] Local Growth Fund Projects | OxLEP (oxfordshirelep.com)

Economic Forecast Conclusion

4.12 At this stage it could be considered that there is slight uncertainty in regards the economy, however it is anticipated there will be growth.

4.13 Future levels of economic growth could be less than anticipated and this could consequently result in reduced demand for construction aggregate in the future. This will be kept under close review in future LAA's.

Major Infrastructure Projects/Key Development

4.14 Major infrastructure projects, including those at the national scale, and key developments throughout Oxfordshire, should be considered alongside housing and associated infrastructure development in terms of their likely influence on the future demand for construction aggregates.

4.15 Oxfordshire's Local Industrial Strategy[14] 2020 highlights that the Infrastructure projects within Oxfordshire that are critical to the Investment Plan total £1,117.5million.

4.16 Across Oxfordshire developments, including infrastructure, includes:

- Allocated sites for development in the current District Local Plans.
- Housing Infrastructure Funded projects – HIF1 in Didcot and HIF2 on the A40.
- HS2
- Various highways improvements throughout Oxfordshire.
- The National Infrastructure Delivery Plan
- East West Rail
- Oxfordshire Housing and Growth Deal[1]: Provides £60m for affordable housing and £150m for infrastructure improvements, including road and rail. Supports the ambition of building 100,000 new homes across Oxfordshire between 2011 and 2031 to address the county's severe housing shortage and expected economic growth.
-).
- Oxfordshire Rail Corridor Study – including proposed new and improved railway stations and passenger services on the Cowley Branch Line.

[14] The Oxfordshire Investment Plan - August 2020.pdf (oxfordshirelep.com)
[1] https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/oxfordshire-housing-deal

- Oxfordshire Knowledge Spine, which includes Science Vale, Oxford and Bicester[3][15].
- Science Vale area: It is the largest concentration of research and development in Europe: 20,000 new jobs and around 20,000 new homes.

4.17 It is difficult to assess the overall impact of these infrastructure and major development proposals, in terms of their demand for construction aggregates. Some projects that were previously mentioned such as the Harwell Satellite Test Centre have now been built, whilst others such as HS2, East West Rail and growth within Bicester and the south of the county are currently underway, with a few yet to commence.

4.18 In 2024, the Labour Government were elected and have made a commitment to deliver 1.5 million homes over this parliament. If this is realised this could impact on demand for aggregate over the next few years.

Major Infrastructure Projects/Key Development Conclusion

4.19 Whilst it is difficult to quantify, evidence suggests that planned infrastructure and major development both within and outside the county will continue. Demand on minerals is therefore expected to be maintained whilst these continue.

Population and Housing Growth

4.20 In considering the future projections we also need to consider population growth and local authority housing forecasts.

4.21 OXIS[16] (2017) forecast that in the period 2016-2040, 123,500 additional homes will be built in Oxfordshire, the equivalent of 5,100 homes being built per year; and that population will increase by 39% from 688,000 to approximately 956,000.

4.22 Adopted District Local Plans in Oxfordshire indicate the major sites for new homes

- Cherwell – concentrated around Bicester, Banbury and the former RAF site at Upper Heyford, plus growth around Begbroke, Kidlington and Yarnton to meet Oxford's unmet need.
- Oxford City – concentrated at Barton Park, Northern Gateway and Oxpens.

[15] [Our Strategic Economic Plan (SEP) | OxLEP (oxfordshirelep.com)]
[16] [Infrastructure Strategy (OxIS) | OxLEP (oxfordshirelep.com)]

- South Oxfordshire – concentrated around Chalgrove Airfield and the Didcot Garden Town in conjunction with Vale of White Horse, with further strategic land at the edge of Oxford
- Vale of White Horse – concentrated around the Didcot Garden Town, Wantage and Abingdon (the Science Vale)[17]
- West Oxfordshire - concentrated at Cotswold Garden Village Eynsham, Witney and Chipping Norton.

4.23 Population figures are published by the Office of National Statistics[18](ONS). There has been a steady population increase between 2011 and 2023.

4.24 In the 2021 Census, the population of England and Wales grew by more than 3.5 million (6.3%) since 2011[19].

4.25 Unlike aggregate sales there was not a dip in population at the start of the baseline period, at least not at a county level, or on the scale associated with year-on-year variations. It is hard to draw a correlation between population figures and aggregate demand.

4.26 Over the 10-year period to 2023 there was an overall growth in the population of Oxfordshire of 73,609 people (an average of 1.15% per year).

4.27 Looking to the future, Oxfordshire County Council population forecasts (2023) predict a total population in Oxfordshire of 806,876 by 2031[20]. Whereas the ONS have population forecast of 727,396 by 2031. (Appendix 4).

4.28 Whilst there is no statistical justification for assuming that rates of population growth will correlate with changes in demand for aggregates, they do at least provide a mechanism for looking further ahead than the current economic forecasts. They suggest that there will be continued pressure for new housing and associated infrastructure development which is likely to be reflected in an increase in the demand for construction aggregates.

4.29 This is echoed in the Oxfordshire Strategic Economic Plan which states that "Our vision is Oxfordshire as a vibrant, sustainable, inclusive, world leading economy, driven by innovation, enterprise and research excellence"; and also, that "Both activity and employment rates are higher than the regional average – and substantially higher than the national average".

4.30 This can be examined further by considering data on rates of house completion (Appendix 4).

4.31 Using the District Authority Monitoring Reports for housing completions, for the 10-year baseline period (2013/14-2022/23) the average housing

[17] http://www.sciencevale.com/
[18] www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/populationandmigration/populationestimates/
[19] Population and household estimates, England and Wales - Office for National Statistics (ons.gov.uk)
[20] insight.oxfordshire.gov.uk/cms/future-population

completion rate in Oxfordshire was 4,453 homes, which was up 9.6% from 40,62 homes per year (2012-2022)[21]

4.32 However, if we took the last 3 years average from the same data, as a baseline period (2022/23-2020/21), the average housing completion rate in Oxfordshire is 5,065,a 4% decrease on the previous 3-year baseline of 5,272 homes (2021/22-2019/20). With Covid in 2020 and the associated lockdowns this slight decrease could be expected as completions were held up in 2020.

4.33 Looking forward, the District Authority projections for housing growth for 2023 onwards can be seen in Appendix 4. Compared with previous years the projected housing growth to 2031 has decreased.

4.34 In 2022, it was projected that 51,461 homes would be built between 2023/24 and 2030/31, however in 2023, it was projected that 33,761 homes will now be built over the same period, a reduction of 34%. The Districts have provided reasons such as slow down in the housing market and infrastructure delays, and there was a national policy change through the December 2023 National Planning Policy Framework update, that Plans no longer needed to keep a 5% buffer of planned housing. In addition it is understood that many of the development sites are not commencing until 2031.

4.35 However, in 2024, the Labour Government were elected and have made a commitment to deliver 1.5 million homes over this parliament and are currently consuting on a methodolology for calculating housing need. This could impact on future housing projections and completions over the next few years and will need to be monitored inf future LAA's.

Population and Housing Growth Conclusion

4.36 It is clear that we need to continue consider the implications of population and housing growth on the minerals provision over the plan period.

Conclusion

4.37 The evidence available suggests that Economic Growth, Major Infrastructure Projects/Key Development and Population Growth and Housing within Oxfordshire will continue, if at a reduced pace, in the foreseeable future. The impact of a new Government, particularly on housing growth will be explored in future LAA's.

[21] District Authority Monitoring Reports.

5. Aggregate Provision Rates

5.1 The NPPF[22] states that Minerals Planning Authorities should plan for a steady and adequate supply of aggregates. One of the ways to do this is to prepare an annual Local Aggregate Assessment to forecast future demand, based upon a rolling average of 10 years sales data and any other relevant local information. To forecast and ensure that supply continues to meet demand, the Aggregates Provision Rate (APR) for each aggregate is set within the annual Local Aggregate Assessment.

Sharp Sand and Gravel Aggregate Provision Rate

5.2 The LAA APR for 2022 was changed to 0.986 mtpa, from the previous 1.015mpta which was originally established in the 2014 LAA and included within the adopted Core Strategy (2017). Earlier Local Aggregate Assessments saw no justification to change this figure, as growth in Oxfordshire saw demand continue to rise and looked likely to continue.

5.3 Sales in 2023 of sharp sand and gravel have decreased 9.8% in 2023 compared with 2022 (from 0.972mtpa to 0.877mtpa).

5.4 2023 saw a continued reduction in demand. The construction industry is anticipating a further small decline in 2024, with demand expected to rise again from 2025.

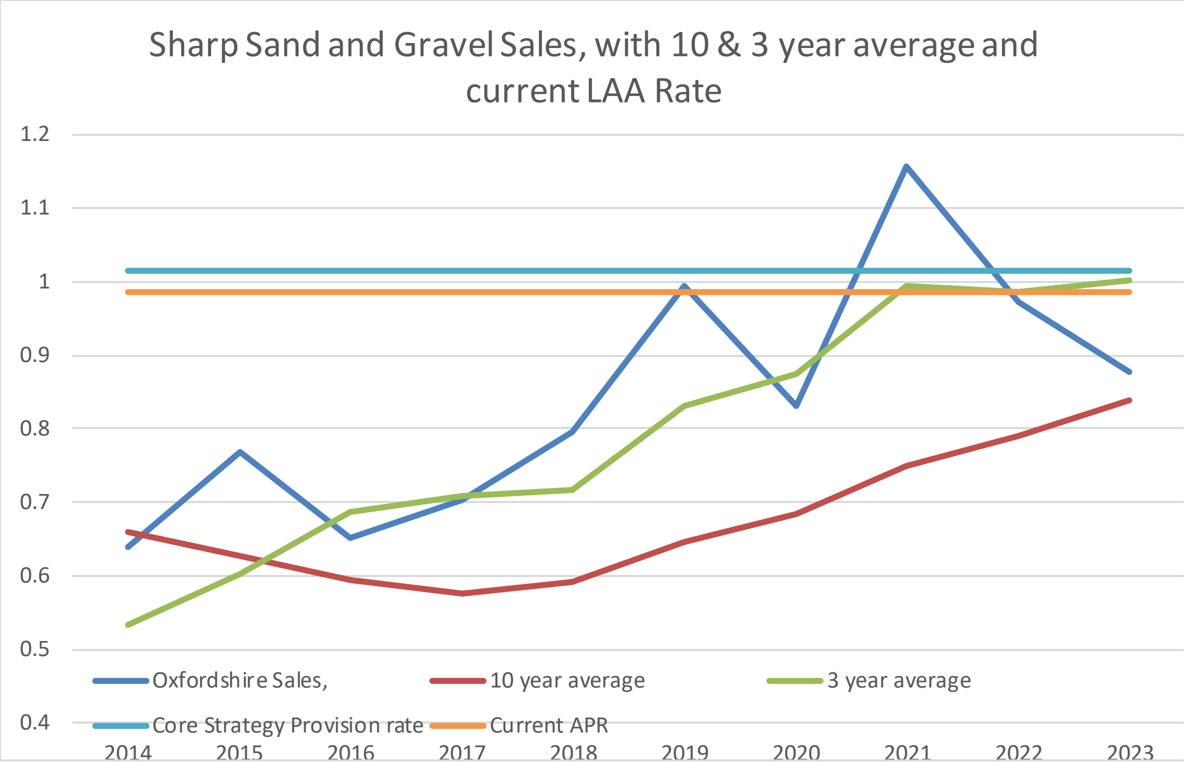
5.5 The 10 year sales average increased 6% (from 0.791 mtpa to 0.839mtpa) and the 3-year sales average (1.002mtpa) increased by 1.6% compared to the previous 3-year sales average of 0.986mtpa. The 3-year sales average is almost 20% higher than the 10-year average. In addition, sales are still the 4th highest in the last 10 years.

5.6 Our 10 year rolling average for sales data is 0.839mtpa, however as set out within Section 3 Demand, the start of the 10 year baseline period for sand and gravel included the end of the recession, followed by a number of sand and gravel sites waiting for permission.

5.7 Figure 5.1 shows actual Sharp Sand and Gravel sales compared with the average sales (mtpa), the 3 year Average/ Proposed Aggregates Provision Rate and the Core Strategy Provision rate.

Figure 5.1 Comparison of actual sharp sand and gravel sales compared with the average sales and the current LAA Aggregates Provision Rate (APR) and Core Strategy Provision levels (mtpa).

[22] National Planning Policy Framework (publishing.service.gov.uk)



5.8 Taking into account sales and Oxfordshire's consumption and exports alongside all the evidence, at this time there is no justification for a change in the Aggregates Provision Rate for Sharp Sand and Gravel from the current level of 0.986mtpa.

Soft Sand

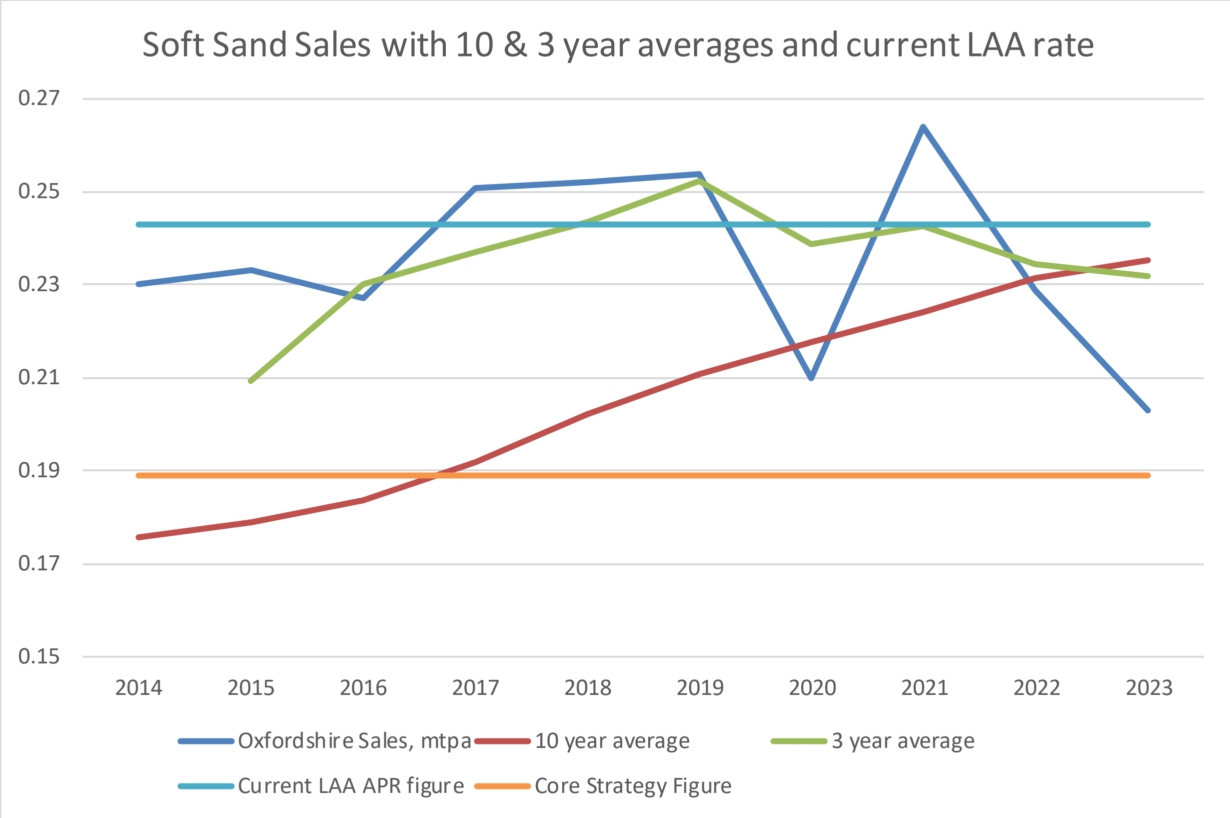
5.9 For soft sand, the Core Strategy included a provision figure of 0.189mtpa, which was set in the LAA 2014 on the basis of the 10-year sales average at that time.

5.10 This figure was updated in the LAA2019 to 0.243mtpa to reflect the consistently higher level of demand and following review of other evidence.

5.11 Sales in 2023 decreased again from 0.229mt in 2022 to 0.203mt, an 11% decrease and the lowest in the last 10 years. The 3-year sales average (0.232mtpa) saw a 1% decrease compared with the previous 3-year sales average (0.234mtpa), though there was a 1.6% increase in the 10-year sales average (from 0.232mtpa to 0.235mtpa).

5.12 The current 10 year average is 3.2% lower than the current APR of 0.243, and the 3 year average is 4.5% lower.

Figure 5.2 Comparison of actual Soft Sand sales compared with the average sales and the current LAA APR and Core Strategy Provision levels (mtpa).



5.13 In light of all the factors considered, including current sales, Oxfordshire's imports and exports, and all other evidence, it is considered that at this time, there is justification for a change in the Aggregates Provision Rate to the 10-year sales average of 0.235 mtpa to enable us to provide a steady and adequate supply of soft sand.

Crushed Rock

5.14 For crushed rock, the Core Strategy provision level figure of 0.584mtpa was set in the LAA 2014 on the basis of an upward adjustment of the 10-year sales average at that time.

5.15 This figure was updated in the LAA2019 to 0.778mtpa, in the LAA for 2021 to 0.824mtpa and then again in the LAA for 2022 to 0.914mtpa. These reflected the consistently higher level of demand and the review of other evidence.

5.16 Sales in 2023 saw a 12.6% decrease from 1.146 to 1.002mt, however sales are still over 1 million tonnes a year for the fourth consecutive year.

5.17 The 3-year sales average (1.134mtpa) was 2.4% lower than the previous 3-year sales average (1.162mtpa) however the 10 year average continued to increase with a 5.5% increase in 2023 (from 0.914mtpa to 0.964mpta). The 3-year and 10-year sales average remain higher than the current LAA 2022 APR of 0.914mtpa.

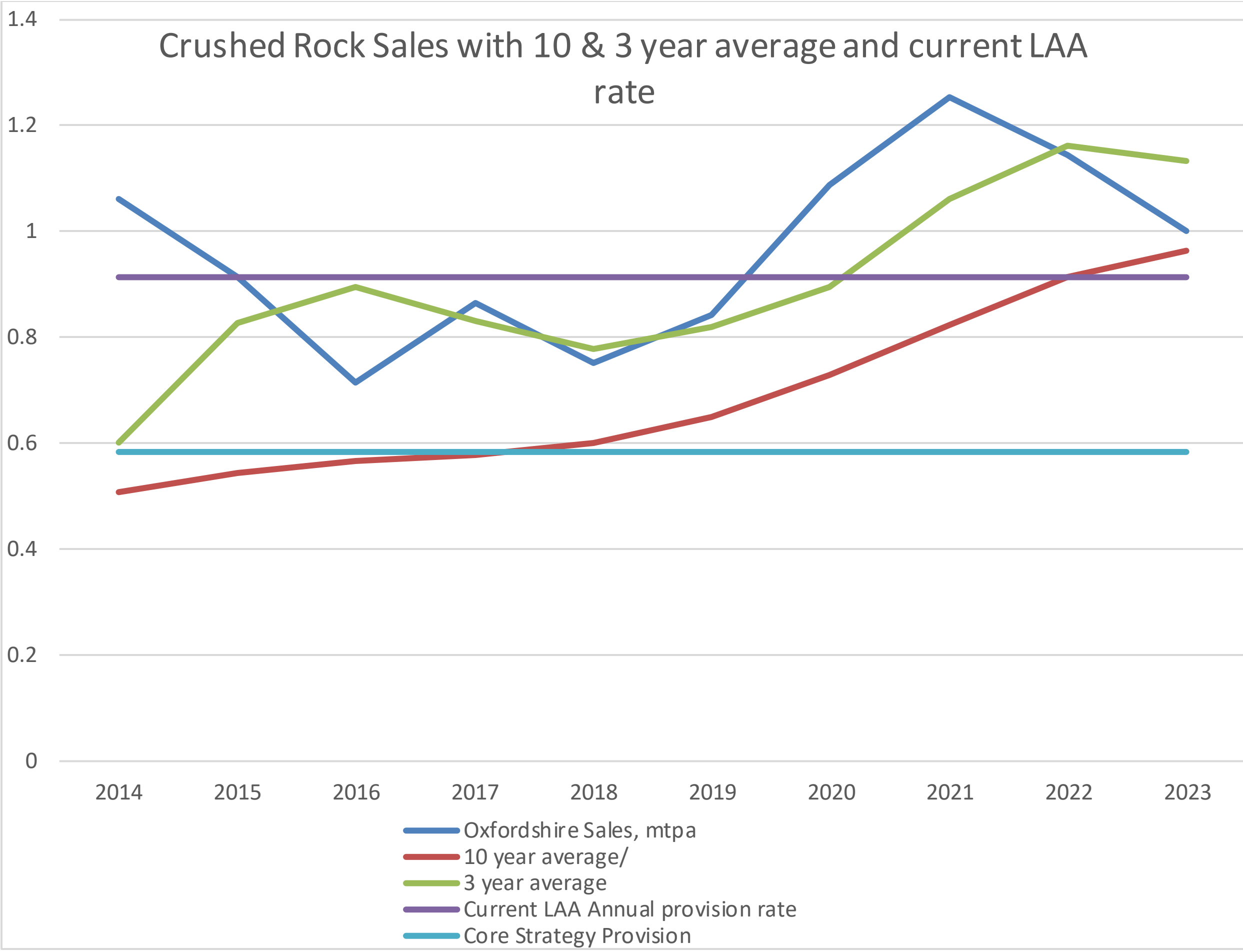


Figure 5.3 Comparison of actual Crushed Rock sales compared with the Aggregates Provision Rate/10 year average, 3 year average and Core Strategy Provision levels (mtpa).

5.18 Available evidence, especially in terms of large infrastructure project demand, indicates that demand for crushed rock is likely to continue.

5.19 Therefore, alongside this evidence, taking into account sales, Oxfordshire's consumption, imports andexports, it is considered that at this time, there is justification for a change in the Aggregates Provision Rate to the 10-year sales average of 0.964mtpa to enable us to provide a steady and adequate supply of crushed rock.

5.20 The Aggregates Provision Rate will therefore be increased to the 10-year average of 0.964mtpa.

Recycled and Secondary Aggregate & Rail Depots

5.21 In addition to setting provision level figures for local land-won aggregates, the LAA should also include provision levels for other relevant sources of aggregates supply to ensure that future demands are met. In the case of Oxfordshire these are recycled and secondary aggregates and aggregate rail depots.

5.22 In the case of recycled and secondary aggregates, the appropriate figure to maintain in this LAA is the provision rate set in the Oxfordshire Minerals & Waste Local Plan: Part 1 – Core Strategy (2017) policy M3. This is 0.926mtpa.

5.23 In the case of aggregate rail depots, due to confidentiality, we are unable to provide a LAA provision figure at this stage.

Conclusion for LAA provision figures

Sharp Sand and Gravel	**0.986mtpa**	**Unchanged from 2022**
Soft Sand	**0.235mtpa**	**Decreased from 2022 (0.243mtpa)**
Crushed Rock	**0.964mtpa**	**Increased from 2022 (0.914mtpa)**
Recycled and Secondary Aggregate	**0.926mtpa**	**Unchanged from 2022**

6. Supply

Oxfordshire Supply

6.1 Oxfordshire is rich in mineral resources. Those which are used for primary aggregate production comprise: extensive alluvial sand and gravel resources along the River Thames and its tributaries; smaller deposits of glacio-fluvial sand and gravels in the north east of the county; deposits of Soft Sand mainly in the south west; and extensive areas of limestone in the north west and of ironstone in the north.

6.2 Oxfordshire also produces some secondary aggregates and a wide range of recycled aggregate materials. Further detailed information of the geological resources of Oxfordshire can be found in the LAA2014 (LUC and Cuesta Consulting Limited).

Recycled and Secondary Aggregate

6.3 As discussed within the Demand section of this LAA, estimations of recycled and secondary aggregate have been made.

6.4 As the WDI for 2023 has not been released yet, this LAA is unable to calculate the Recycled and Secondary Aggregate figures for 2023, and latest figures are based upon 2022.

6.5 Using the Recycled Aggregate methodology with the secondary estimate for 2022, the Recycled and Secondary Aggregate figure for sales is estimated to be 0.443mt.

6.6 It is likely that these estimated 2022 figures are significantly less than the total actual production.

6.7 The actual capacity figures were likely to be significantly higher than the recorded figures.

6.8 Table 6.1 below presents a fuller picture, showing the estimated[23] capacity for the production of recycled and secondary aggregates at each site at the end of 2023, sub-divided between operational and non-operational sites.

6.9 Of a total capacity of approximately 1.523.mtpa: 1.488mtpa is at operational facilities and 0.035mtpa is currently non-operational. Of the operational capacity, that which is at sites with planning permission to the end of the plan period (2031) or beyond is 1.031mtpa, whereas the capacity of sites with permissions that expire before the end of 2031 is 0.270mpta.

6.10 In 2023 Dix Pit (MW.0059/19) was granted permission for an additional 0.020tpa until 2028. At the end of 2023, there was an outstanding application

[23] Taken from Survey responses, Planning Decisions and Planning Application Statements.

at Old Coal Yard (MW.0088/23) for a recycling facility, up to 30,000tpa, which would accept CD&E arisings.

Facility Name	Operator	Planning Life	Production Capacity (tpa)
Operational Recycled Aggregate Production Facilities with Permanent consent or Time Limited Consent to end of Plan Period (2031)			
Drayton	Oxfordshire Highways	Permanent	75000
Ferris Hill Farm	Banbury Plant and Skip Hire (incorporating NL Matthews)	Permanent	24999
Grove Industrial Park	Aasvogel	Permanent	40000
Hundridge Farm	G.D. Parker Instant Skip Hire	Permanent	5000
Lakeside Industrial Park	Micks Skips and Recycling Ltd.	Permanent	2000
New Barn Farm	Grundon	2037	10000
New Wintles Farm	O Malley Haulage	Permanent	170000
Newlands Farm	Smiths of Bloxham	Permanent	32000
Playhatch Quarry	Grabloader Ltd.	Permanent	70000
Rear of Cemex Batching Plant (Hardwick)	Fergal Contracting	Permanent	20000
Rumbolds Pit	Richard Hazel (Hazel & Jefferies)	Permanent	20000
Sandfields Farm	K J Millard Ltd.	Permanent	12000
Shipton Hill	Hickman Bros	Permanent	12600
Stonepitt Barn	SCB Oxford Ltd	Permanent	75000
Worton Farm (Cresswell Field)	M&M Skip Hire	Permanent	60000
Swannybrook	NAP Grabhire	Permanent	80280
Chilton Waste Transfer Site/Prospect Farm	Raymond Brown Minerals and Recycling Ltd.	2032	75000
Gill Mill	Smith and Sons (Bletchington) Ltd.	2040	175000
Ewelme No. 2	Grundon Waste Management	2032	12000
Shellingford Quarry	Earthline Ltd.	2044	60000

Total Operational Production Capacity at Recycled Aggregate Production Facilities available through the Plan Period.	**1,030,879**

Operational Recycled Aggregate Facilities with Time-Limited Consent ending before end of Plan Period (2031)			
Dix Pit Complex	Sheehan's	2028	175000
Shipton Quarry	Earthline Ltd.	2025	75000
Dix Pit	D&M Plant Hire	2028	20000
Total Operation Production Capacity at Recycled Aggregate Facilities with Time limited consent ending before end of Plan Period (2031)			**270,000**

Facility Name	Operator	Planning Life	Production Capacity (tpa)
Operational Secondary Aggregate Facilities with Permanent or Time-Limited Consent to end of Plan Period (2031)			
Ardley ERF (IBAA) Facility	Fortis	2049	75000
Operational Secondary Aggregate Facilities with Time Limited Consent ending before end of Plan Period (2031)			
Sutton Courtenay Block Recycling	Hanson (reject building blocks & Concrete used in block making)	2030	62500
Sutton Courtenay Asphalt Recycling Plant	Hanson	2030	50000
Total Operational Secondary Aggregate Capacity			**187,500**

Overall Total Operational Capacity at 'Permanent' Facilities (facilities available throughout the Plan Period)	**1,105,879**

Overall Total Operational Capacity at Time Limited Facilities (facilities with consent ending before end of 2031)	**382,500**
Overall Total Operational Capacity	**1,488,379**

Non Operational Facilities

Facility Name	Operator	Planning Life	Production Capacity (tpa)
Upwood Quarry	Hills Quarry Products Ltd.	2029	15000
NW Corner of TW Depot	Clancy Docwra	Permanent	20000
Total Non Operational Capacity			**35000**

Operational and Non-Operational Facilities

Total Operational and Non-Operational Capacity 2021 (tpa)	1,523,379

Table 6.1 Recycled and Secondary Aggregates Permissions at end of 2023

Imports and Exports

6.11 Every county in the UK has to import aggregates from elsewhere because the geology means that no single county area produces exactly the profile of different types of aggregate in the exact amounts or proportions consumed therein. As part of the Local Aggregate Assessment, we should consider demand and supply factors from other MPAs.

6.12 All sales of aggregate are the result of commercial decisions by both buyers and sellers and the resulting movements reflect the relative locations of supply and demand. Where these movements cross a county boundary, they are tracked in the four (or five) yearly national aggregates monitoring surveys (AM Survey), these have been 2005, 2009, 2014, 2019 and 2023 (we are still awaiting the results of the 2023 survey to be published). Until this point the most recent details on imports and exports is from the 2019 survey. This survey is known as AM2019.

6.13 The 2019 Aggregates Minerals Survey for England and Wales was published in August 2021. The figures within this Imports and Exports section of the LAA 2020 were taken from the AM2019 which shows movement of minerals at a sub-regional and Minerals Planning Authority level. These are set out in detail in Appendix 2.

6.14 AM2019 stated that overall Sand and Gravel sales in England have decreased by 4% between 2014 and 2019, whilst Crushed Rock sales increased 18% between 2014 and 2019.

6.15 Oxfordshire however, has increased in Land won Sand and Gravel sales by 44% since 2014, though sales in Crushed Rock have decreased by 20%.

6.16 Total primary aggregate sales within Oxfordshire have increased by 8% since 2014, however the South East as a whole has seen an overall decrease of 7% in total primary aggregate sales.

6.17 Some neighbouring MPAs have limited resources of their own. These authorities therefore rely on Oxfordshire to supply some of their needs. Other MPAs have traditionally supplied aggregates into Oxfordshire; Somerset, South Gloucestershire and Leicestershire have previously provided Crushed Rock to supplement the county’s own production and to cater for higher specification requirements from harder rock resources.

6.18 The AM2019 sets out the sales of primary aggregates by MPA and principal destination sub region in 2019. These findings are shown in Table 6.2. As the table shows Oxfordshire was responsible for 20% of the South East Regions Land Won Sand and Gravel Sales and 42% of the Crushed Rock sales in 2019. This does not include that mineral that was unallocated or went elsewhere. They are also set out in Appendix 2.

(thousand tonnes)

Destination	Land won sand and gravel	MPA%	AWP%	Crushed Rock	MPA	AWP%
Oxfordshire	772	62%		260	31%	
South East	369	30%[24]		404	48%	
Elsewhere	43	3%		178	21%	
Unallocated	64	5%				
	1,248	100%	20%	843	100%	42%

Table 6.2 Sales of primary aggregates and principal sub regions 2019 (Exports)

6.19 The AM2019 also sets out Oxfordshire's imports in 2019. A summary of the import findings is shown in Table 6.3. The table also shows as a percentage, of the South East total, Oxfordshire's imports.

(thousand tonnes)

Total Imports	Land won Sand and Gravel	Marine Sand and Gravel	Total Sand and Gravel	Crushed Rock	Total Primary Aggregate
Oxfordshire	128	7	136	356	491[25]
South East Total	2,268(6%)	1,962(0.3%)	3,950(3%)	5,8084 (0.6%)	9,754(5%)

Table 6.3 Imports of primary aggregates and its relationship with the South East Imports Total

6.20 The AM Survey 2019 (Tables 6.2, 6.3 and Appendix 2) shows that Oxfordshire is now a net exporter of both Land won Sand and Gravel and Crushed Rock.

Sharp Sand and Gravel

6.21 The AM2019 does not differentiate between Soft Sand and Sharp Sand and Gravel. They are combined into Land won Sand and Gravel.

6.22 Comparison of the AM2009, AM2014 and AM2019 results show that Oxfordshire continues to be a net exporter of sand and gravel since 2014.

Exports

6.23 Exports have significantly increased since 2009. From 140,000 in 2009, doubling to 221,000 tonnes in 2014, and in 2019 doubling again to 476,000 tonnes.

6.24 Oxfordshire consumed 62% of the sand and gravel produced in the county. Exports make up approximately 38%[26] of Oxfordshire's total sand and gravel

[24] There appears to be a print error in the AM2019 survey as has this figure as 60% but doesn't reflect 369,000 tonnes as a total 1,248,000 tonnes. Recalculated for this LAA as 30%
[25] This should be 492 as 136 add 356 is not 491
[26] The figures include the 5% that was unallocated and some of these sales may have stayed within Oxfordshire.

sales. The majority of exports were within the South East (30%) whilst 3% went elsewhere and 5% was unallocated on the Survey returns. There is the potential for some of this to have been used in Oxfordshire.

6.25 As set out in Appendix 2 the figures from the AM2019 show that Hampshire and the Isle of Wight were one of the main authorities that Oxfordshire exported Sand and Gravel to, along with, Buckinghamshire & Milton Keynes. Hampshire and Isle of Wight's imports from Oxfordshire made up between 10 and 20% of their own total sand and gravel consumption.

Imports

6.26 Whilst we exported 476,000 tonnes of Land won Sand and Gravel, Oxfordshire imported 128,000 tonnes, up slightly from 117,000 tonnes in 2014. This was mainly from Cambridgeshire, Lincolnshire, Staffordshire and Wiltshire as Oxfordshire imported between 1% and 10% of the total consumed from each of these Authorities.

6.27 In total Oxfordshire made up 6.3% of the Sand and Gravel imports into the South East Region.

Crushed Rock

Exports

6.28 Appendix 2 shows that Oxfordshire changed from a net importer of Crushed Rock in 2014 to a net exporter in 2019. Oxfordshire exported 0.582mt of its total 0.843mt of Crushed Rock in 2019, compared with importing 0.356mt from outside the County. This is a change from 2014 where OCC was a net importer as 0.787mt was imported, compared 0. 347mt exported.

6.29 Table 6.3 shows that exports make up approximately 69% of Oxfordshire's total sales. The majority of exports were to destinations within the South East (48%) whilst 21% went elsewhere.

6.30 As set out in Appendix 2 the figures from the AM2019 show that Northamptonshire was one of the main Authorities that Oxfordshire exported Crushed Rock to, along with, Buckinghamshire & Milton Keynes, Warwickshire and Berkshire. Imports of Crushed Rock from Oxfordshire made up between 1 and 20% of their own total Crushed Rock consumption.

6.31 Imports and in particular exports, in light of the quantity of minerals exported in 2019 will therefore need to be given great consideration in planning for future provision.

6.32 These shall be monitored under Duty to Cooperate and, if necessary, Statements of Common Ground between Authorities will be entered into.

7.Quarries

Sharp sand and gravel

7.1 In Oxfordshire, at the end of 2023, there were 11 sites with planning permission for Sharp Sand and Gravel extraction. Eight of which are active, two are inactive, one in suspension. One site has ceased extraction and is in restoration.

7.2 One planning permission was granted in 2023 for 128,000 tonnes of Sharp Sand and Gravel at Oday Hill, Sutton Wick (MW.0104/20) .

7.3 There were four outstanding decisions at the end of 2023, White Cross Farm in Wallingford for 550,000 tonnes (MW.0115/21), Oxfordshire Flood Alleviation scheme (MW.0027/22) for 12,300 tonnes (incidental and not to be sold off site), Finmere Quarry extension (MW.0069/20) for 370,000 tonnes and Land at Thrupp Lane, Radley (MW.0041/23), which is for a reactivation of dormant planning permission for 1 million tonnes.

7.4 The permission for Stonehenge Farm, for 1.5 million tonnes expired at the end of 2023, and any working of this site will now require permission, therefore the 1.5 million tonnes at this site is removed from the sand and gravel reserve.

7.5 In addition, Wroxton Quarry, a crushed rock site, has had soft sand and sharp sand and gravel sales in 2023 and identified reserve.

7.6 Information on permitted sites is summarised in Table 7.1, including the operator and a summary of the current status of each site.

Quarry Site	**Operator**	**Current Status at December 2023**
Cassington	Hanson Aggregates	Extraction ceased at end of 2022. In restoration.
Caversham	Lafarge Tarmac	Active: extension of 1.86 million tonnes permitted August 2014; commenced August 2017.
Finmere	AT Contracting	Inactive: Intermittent small scale past working; reserve remaining.
Gill Mill, Ducklington	Smiths of Bletchington	Active: biggest quarry in county.
Hatford	Earthline	Active: Permitted for SSG, SS and CR in 2021. 225,000tonnes of S&G
Sutton Courtenay (Bridge Farm)	Hanson Aggregates	Inactive: Extension of 0.5 million tonnes permitted June 2018.

Quarry Site	Operator	Current Status at December 2023
Sutton Wick	H Tuckwell & Sons	Active: Permission granted for an additional 128,000 tonnes in 2023
Thrupp Lane, Radley	H Tuckwell & Sons	Inactive: Estimated 1 million tonnes confirmed as a permitted reserve but under ROMP procedure has gone into suspension and cannot be worked until new conditions have been approved; therefore not currently included as part of permitted reserve or landbank. A ROMP application was received in 2023 and is awaiting determination.
Wroxton Quarry	Earthline	Active: Previously a crushed rock site, but recently has sharp sand and gravel and soft sand sales and identified reserve.
Faringdon Quarry	Grundon Sand & Gravel	Active: new quarry permitted June 2013 (formerly regarded as extension to Wicklesham Quarry). Extension to 2035 granted in 2022.
New Barn Farm, Cholsey	Grundon	Active: Permitted for 2,500,000tonnes in November 2018. Extraction commenced in 2020
Shellingford	Multi Agg Ltd	Active. Also has SS and CR deposits on site.

Table 7.1 Active and Permitted Sharp Sand and Gravel Extraction Sites in Oxfordshire, including Operators and Current Status (Source: OCC)

7.7 Total permitted reserves of Sharp Sand and Gravel in Oxfordshire at the end of 2023 were 7.693mt, as shown in Table 7.2 below. This is taken from the AM2023 survey calculated using annual operator returns. The actual operator returns for individual quarries cannot be presented due to confidentiality.

7.8 Production capacity is also relevant, as a large amount of reserve in a quarry with only a low production rate will make a smaller contribution to annual supply than equivalent reserves in a high producing quarry. The 2023 Annual Monitoring Survey did not request production capacity, therefore production capacity has been established through responses to previous surveys, planning permissions and submitted planning statements.

7.9 At the end of 2023 total permitted production capacity at the end of 2023 for sharp sand and gravel was 1.409mtpa.

Sharp Sand and Gravel Permitted Reserves at 31/12/22
7.693mt

Table 7.2: Sharp Sand and Gravel Permitted Reserves at 31/12/23 (million tonnes)

Soft Sand

7.10 In Oxfordshire, at the end of 2023, there were eight sites with planning permission for Soft Sand extraction, with one currently inactive. The operator and current status of each site is provided in Table 7.4.

7.11 No planning permissions were granted for soft sand sites in 2023.

Quarry Site	Operator	Current Status at December 2023
Bowling Green / Chinham Farm	Hills Quarry Products	Active: sand & limestone; extension of 1.6 million tonnes sand permitted June 2017; large remaining reserve.
Duns Tew	Smiths Bletchington	Active: extension of 0.415 million tonnes permitted June 2017.
Hatford	Earthline Ltd	Active: sand & limestone. Permission granted in 2021 for Limestone 0.520mt, Sharp Sand 0.225mt tonnes, Soft Sand 0.130mt
Shellingford	Earthline Ltd	Active: sand & limestone; permissions granted April 2011 for deepening and eastern extension, total 1.05 million tonnes sand, requires extraction to end by 31.12.20 in eastern extension and 31.12.28 in existing quarry. Application granted at end of 2019 for 1.8mt of Soft Sand and 1mt of crushed rock.
Upwood	Hills Quarry Products	Active: sand & limestone; large remaining reserve.
Finmere	AT Contracting	Inactive: Intermittent small scale past working; reserve remaining. Application outstanding
Gill Mill	Smiths Bletchingdon	Active: A sharp sand and gravel site, with incidental soft sand
Wroxton	Earthline Ltd	Active: A crushed rock site with some sand deposits

Table 7.3 Active and Permitted Soft Sand Extraction Sites in Oxfordshire, including Operators and Current Status

7.12 Total permitted reserves of Soft Sand in Oxfordshire at the end of 2023 were 3.288mt, as shown in Table 7.4 below. This is taken from AM2023 survey, calculated using annual operator returns. The actual operator returns for individual quarries cannot be presented due to confidentiality.

7.13 However, total production capacity is also relevant, as a large amount of reserve in a quarry with only a low production rate will make smaller contribution to annual supply than equivalent reserves in a high producing quarry. The current reserves are spread across a number of operators rather than one main one and production capacity at the end of 2023 is 0.309mtpa.

Soft Sand Permitted Reserves at 31/12/23
3.288 mt

Table 7.4: Soft Sand Permitted Reserves at 31/12/23 (million tonnes)[27]

Crushed Rock

7.14 In Oxfordshire at the end of 2023, there are 12 sites with planning permission for Crushed Rock extraction. The operator and current status of each site is provided in Table 7.5.

7.15 There were no new permissions for crushed rock sites granted in 2023.

7.16 There are four applications for Crushed Rock outstanding at the end of 2023. Whitehill Quarry (MW.0157/22) for 3 million tonnes, Dewars Farm (MW.0049/23) for 3.6 million tonnes, Mullin Borrow Pit (MW.0070/23) for 370,800 tonnes and a retrospective application for 500,000 tonnes at Shipton on Cherwell.

Quarry Site	**Operator**	**Current Status at December 2023**
Dewars Farm	Smiths Bletchington	Active; limestone
Burford	Smiths Bletchington	Active; limestone
Chinham Farm (Bowling Green)	Hills Quarry Products	Active; sand and limestone
Land at Quarry Farm North, Enstone	Great Tew Farms Partnership	Active; limestone
Duns Tew	Smiths Bletchington	Active; sand with small amounts of limestone
Faringdon Quarry	Grundon Sand and Gravel	Active; sand & gravel with small amounts of limestone
Hatford	Hatford Quarry Ltd (Earthline)	Active; soft sand, sand & gravel and limestone.

[27] SEEAWP Aggregates Monitoring Survey 2023

Quarry Site	Operator	Current Status at December 2023
Rollright Quarry Phase 1	Oxfordshire Quarries Group	Active; limestone. Limited production capacity by lorry movements
Rollright Quarry Phase 2	Smiths Bletchington	Restoration in progress
Shellingford	Multi-Agg Ltd (Earthline)	Active; sand and limestone; Application granted in 2020 (MW.0104/18) for 1.8mt of Soft Sand and 1mt of crushed rock.
Shipton on Cherwell	Earthline	Planning permission expired 30th September 2019. Appeal outstanding for extension to site MW.0046/18
Upwood	Hills Quarry Products	Active; sand and limestone
Whitehill	Smiths Bletchington	Active; limestone
Wroxton	Earthline	Active; ironstone

Table 7.5 Active and Permitted Crushed Rock Extraction Sites in Oxfordshire, including Operators and Current Status

7.17 Total permitted reserves of Crushed Rock in Oxfordshire at the end of 2023 were 4.744 mt, as shown in Table 7.6 below. This is taken from the AM2023 Survey, calculated using annual operator returns. The actual operator returns for individual quarries cannot be presented due to confidentiality.

7.18 However, total production capacity is also relevant, as a large amount of reserve in a quarry with only a low production rate will make smaller contribution to annual supply than equivalent reserves in a high producing quarry. Total permitted production capacity for crushed rock at the end of 2023 was 1.689mtpa.

7.19 Permitted reserves of Crushed Rock in Oxfordshire, as reported in the SEEAWP Aggregates Monitoring Survey 2023, are shown in Table 7.6 below.

Crushed Rock Permitted Reserves at 31/12/22
4.744mt

Table 7.6: Crushed Rock Permitted Reserves at 31/12/23 (million tonnes)[28]

Rail Depots

7.20 In 2023, there were no returns from operators on sales from Rail Depots.

7.21 However, due to a number of planning decisions in 2021, Oxfordshire has increased Oxfordshire's rail depot capacity to over 3.5million. It is known that the increased capacity at Hennef Way Banbury is temporary to provide material for HS2, and Appleford Sidings has added two more rail sidings. This site now has a condition limiting it to 1.5million tonnes per annum.

Landbanks

7.22 Based on the Aggregates Provision Rates set out in Section 5 that have been determined for this LAA and the permitted reserves as at 31 December 2023, as set out above, the landbanks at the end of 2023 can be seen below in Table 7.7.

Permitted Reserves at 31.12.2023 by mineral type	Landbank (LAA Aggregates Provision Rate)
Soft Sand 3.288m. tonnes	14 years at 0.235mtpa
Sharp Sand & Gravel 7.693m. tonnes	7.8 years at 0.986mtpa
Crushed Rock 4.744m. tonnes	4.9years at 0.964mtpa

Table 7.7 Oxfordshire Landbank at 31/12/2023

7.16 As can be seen the Landbanks for Sharp Sand and Gravel and Soft Sand have the 7 years required however the Crushed Rock landbank falls below the 10-year requirement for the sixth consecutive year.

28 AM2023 Survey

8. Core Strategy Mineral Requirements

8.1 The Minerals and Waste Local Plan Part 1: Core Strategy (Policy M2) sets out the total provision requirement of minerals for the Plan Period 2014-2031. These are:

- 18.27 million tonnes of Sharp Sand and Gravel
- 3.402 million tonnes of Soft Sand; and
- 10.512 million tonnes for Crushed Rock

Sharp Sand and Gravel

8.2 Taking into account sales in 2014 – 2023 (8.387 total million tonnes), and reserves that are expected to be worked during the plan period (7.234 million tonnes), the remaining Core Strategy Requirement over the Plan Period is 2.649 million tonnes. See Appendix 3 for calculations.

Soft Sand

8.3 Taking into account sales of Soft Sand in 2014 – 2023 (total 2.353 million tonnes), and reserves that are expected to be worked during the plan period 1.100 million tonnes), there are no more requirements for additional Soft Sand to meet Core Strategy Requirements over the Plan Period. See Appendix 3 for calculations.

Crushed Rock

8.4 Taking into account sales in 2014 – 2023 (total 8.638 million tonnes), and reserves that are expected to be worked during the plan period (5.275 million tonnes), are no more requirements for additional Crushed Rock to meet Core Strategy Requirements over the Plan Period.

8.5 Therefore, to meet the Core Strategy Requirements, we will need to identify sites to meet the following:

- **Sand and Gravel – 2.649 million tonnes**
- **Soft Sand - 0 million tonnes**
- **Crushed Rock - 0 million tonnes**

9. Conclusion

8.1 In concluding this years Oxfordshire's LAA, based upon consideration of all the available evidence, the Aggregates Provision Rates are:

- **Sand and Gravel – 0.986 mtpa**
- **Soft Sand – 0.235mtpa**
- **Crushed Rock – 0.964mtpa**
- **Recycled and Secondary Aggregates- 0.926mtpa**

8.2 To meet the Core Strategy Requirements as set out in Policy M2, we will need to identify sites to meet the following need:

- **Sand and Gravel – 2.649 million tonnes**
- **Soft Sand - 0 million tonnes**
- **Crushed Rock - 0 million tonnes**

8.3 To ensure we maintain a steady and adequate supply over the Plan Period, we need to consider these LAA Provision Rates with the permitted reserves as of 31 December 2023[29] and the implications for the Authorities landbank.

8.4 Our landbank for Soft Sand and Sharp Sand and Gravel are both above the 7-year requirement. However, for Crushed Rock the landbank is at 4.9 years, below the NPPFs 10-year requirement.

8.5 To address this issue, in December 2022, it was agreed to commence with a New Minerals and Waste Plan for Oxfordshire.

8.6 This new Plan will consider mineral requirements for all aggregates over the new Plan period during its preparation.

8.7 Mineral requirements within the adopted Core Strategy will be replaced with the mineral requirements set out within the new Minerals and Waste Plan upon adoption.

.

[29] Appendix 2

9. List of Definitions and Acronyms

The Local Aggregate Assessment uses the following terminology throughout this report:

- **Alternative aggregates** - A general term which can be used to refer to anything other than primary, land-won aggregates. It can include secondary, recycled and sometimes marine aggregates.
- **Landbank** - Landbank is a measure of the stock of permitted reserves expressed in terms of the number of years that these would allow production for at a given average rate of extraction. It is a theoretical measure of the life of the reserves if these were to be worked at a consistent annual rate.
- **Land-won aggregates** - Primary aggregates extracted from land.
- **Marine aggregates** - Primary aggregates dredged from the sea, almost exclusively sand and gravel.
- **Primary aggregates** - These are aggregates produced from naturally occurring mineral deposits, extracted specifically for use as aggregate and used for the first time. They are produced either from rock formations that are crushed to produce 'crushed rock' aggregates, from naturally occurring sand and gravel deposits, or solid formations to produce soft sand.
- **Aggregate Provision Rate (APR)** - the quantity of aggregate for which provision needs to made in plans within each Mineral Planning Authority in order both to satisfy local needs and to contribute fairly towards National expectations of future demand
- **Recycled aggregates** - Aggregate materials recovered from construction and demolition processes and from excavation waste on construction sites.
- **Secondary aggregates** - Aggregates derived as a by-product of other quarrying and mining operations or industrial processes, including colliery spoil, china clay waste, slate waste; power station ashes, incinerator bottom ashes and similar products.
- **Sharp Sand and Gravel -** Sharp sand tends to be relatively coarse and the component grains are more angular than soft sand (see below). Such sands are typically deposited within river channels, rather than in oceans, and are generally found, as part of a sequence of mixed sand & gravel, within river floodplains, river terraces, and (in areas which have been glaciated) within other types of deposit. As the name implies they have a sharper texture than soft sands and, although they can be used as building sand, they are generally not preferred for that purpose because they produce less 'workable' mortars, unless special additives are included in the mix, adding to the cost. They are better suited to use within concrete products, not least because they usually occur in conjunction with gravels which provide the coarse aggregate component of the concrete mix.
- **Soft Sand** - Soft Sand is generally fine-grained sand in which the individual grains are well-rounded, imparting a relatively soft texture and free-flowing nature to the sand. Such sands are commonly deposited in marine environments, where constant movement by the sea results in the rounding,

polishing and sorting of the grains. The characteristics of such sands lend themselves especially to products which are required to ‘flow’ or be easily ‘workable’ by hand when they are being used - particularly mortars, but also plaster, in the case of very fine grained sand. These are collectively known as ‘building sand’. Soft Sand may also be used in asphalt products where it is used to stiffen the bitumen binder, and in concrete products - although sharp sand is more commonly used for that purpose.

The Local Aggregates Assessment uses the following acronyms throughout this report:

- **AMRI** – Annual Minerals Raised Inquiry Surveys
- **APR** – Aggregate Provision Rate
- **AWP** – Aggregate Working Party
- **BGS** – British Geological Survey
- **CLG –** Communities and Local Government (See MHCLG below)
- **DLUHC** – Department of Levelling Up, Housing and Communities
- **GDP –** Gross Domestic Product
- **LAA** – Local Aggregates Assessment
- **MASS** – Managed Aggregates Supply System
- **MPAs** – Mineral Planning Authorities
- **Mt** – Million tonnes
- **mtpa** – Million tonnes per annum
- **MHCLG –** Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government
- **MWLP** – Minerals and Waste Local Plan
- **NPPF** – National Planning Policy Framework
- **OCC** – Oxfordshire County Council
- **PPG** – Planning Practice Guidance
- **RAWP** – Regional Aggregate Working Parties
- **ROMP** – Review of Old Mineral Permissions
- **SEEAWP** – South East of England Aggregate Working Party
- **SHMA –** Strategic Housing Market Assessment

Appendix 1

Total Oxfordshire Sand and Gravel Sales (including Soft Sand)

(Source: AM Surveys and SEEAWP Surveys)

The AM2019 did not include a separate England total for Soft Sand for 2019, therefore for comparative purposes we have combined the historical records for Sharp Sand and Gravel and Soft Sand to be able to compare the 2019 figure with previous years.

	Oxfordshire Sharp Sand & Gravel Sales (million tonnes)[30]	**Oxfordshire Soft Sand Sales (million tonnes)[31]**	**Total Oxfordshire Land won Sand and Gravel (million tonnes)**	**England Total Land Won Sand and Gravel (million tonnes)**	**Oxfordshire's sales as a percentage of England's sales [32]**
2003	1.372	0.234	1.479	59.974	2.47%
2004	1.184	0.295	1.289	62.735	2.05%
2005	1.090	0.199	1.166	58.926	1.98%
2006	0.983	0.183	1.059	56.148	1.89%
2007	0.893	0.166	0.78	54.512	1.43%
2008	0.629	0.151	0.627	50.134	1.25%
2009	0.462	0.165	0.597	37.81	1.58%
2010	0.455	0.142	0.69	36.723	1.88%
2011	0.489	0.201	0.714	36.589	1.95%
2012	0.559	0.155	0.566	33.229	1.79%
2013	0.401	0.165	0.869	35.855	2.42%
2014	0.639	0.230	1.001	38.785	2.58%
2015	0.768	0.233	0.878	2015 figures not available	n/a

[30] Source: SEEAWP Aggregates Monitoring Surveys
[31] SEEAWP Aggregates Monitoring Surveys
[32] Figures include data for marine dredged material. This data is allocated to the county in which the port of landing is situation.

	Oxfordshire Sharp Sand & Gravel Sales (million tonnes)[30]	Oxfordshire Soft Sand Sales (million tonnes)[31]	Total Oxfordshire Land won Sand and Gravel (million tonnes)	England Total Land Won Sand and Gravel (million tonnes)	Oxfordshire's sales as a percentage of England's sales [32]
2016	0.651	0.227	0.954	2016 figures not available	n/a
2017	0.703	0.251	1.048	2017 figures not available	n/a
2018	0.796	0.252	1.133	2018 figures not available	n/a
2019	0.994	0.254	1.248	39.708	3.14%
2020	0.830	0.210	1.040	2020 figures not available	n/a
2021	1.157	.264	1.421	2021 figures not available	n/a
2022	0.972	0.229	1.201	2022 Figures not available	n/a
2023	**0.877**	**0.203**	**1.008**	**2023 Figures not available**	**n/a**
Rolling 10 year annual average, 2003 - 2012	0.812	0.182	0.891	40.433	2.01%
Rolling 10 year annual average, 2004 - 2013	0.715	0.176	0.839	38.629	1.85%
Rolling 10 year annual average, 2005 - 2014	0.660	0.179	0.812	36.853	1.79%

	Oxfordshire Sharp Sand & Gravel Sales (million tonnes)[30]	Oxfordshire Soft Sand Sales (million tonnes)[31]	Total Oxfordshire Land won Sand and Gravel (million tonnes)	England Total Land Won Sand and Gravel (million tonnes)	Oxfordshire's sales as a percentage of England's sales [32]
Rolling 10 year annual average, 2006 – 2015	0.628	0.184	0.787	n/a	n/a
Rolling 10 year annual average, 2007 – 2016	0.595	0.192	0.778	n/a	n/a
Rolling 10 year annual average, 2008 – 2017*	0.576	0.202	0.822	n/a	n/a
Rolling 10 year average 2009 – 2018	0.592	0.230	0.923	n/a	n/a
Rolling 10 year average 2010 – 2019	0.646	0.211	0.857	n/a	n/a
Rolling 10 year average 2011 – 2020	0.683	0.218	0.901	n/a	n/a
Rolling 10 year average 2012 – 2021	0.750	0.224	1.016	n/a	n/a
Rolling 10 year average 2013 – 2022	0.791	0.232	1.023	n/a	n/a
Rolling 10 year average 2014 – 2023	0.839	0.235	1.074	n/a	n/a
Average of last 3 years 2014 – 2016	0.686	0.230	0.95	n/a	n/a

	Oxfordshire Sharp Sand & Gravel Sales (million tonnes)[30]	Oxfordshire Soft Sand Sales (million tonnes)[31]	Total Oxfordshire Land won Sand and Gravel (million tonnes)	England Total Land Won Sand and Gravel (million tonnes)	Oxfordshire's sales as a percentage of England's sales [32]
Average of last 3 years 2015 – 2017	0.707	0.237	0.717	n/a	n/a
Average of last 3 years 2016 - 2018	0.717	.243	0.96	n/a	n/a
Average of last 3 years 2017- 2019	0.831	.252	1.083	n/a	n/a
Average of last 3 years 2018- 2020	0.873	.239	1.112	n/a	n/a
Average of last 3 years 2019- 2021	.994	0.243	1.237	n/a	n/a
Average of last 3 years 2020- 2022	.986	0.234	1.221	n/a	n/a
Average of last 3 years 2021- 2023	1.002	0.232	1.234	n/a	n/a

Oxfordshire's Historical Mineral Sales

Historical Sharp Sand and Gravel 2003-2023 (million tonnes) with England Sand and Gravel sales

(Sources: SEEAWP Aggregates Monitoring Surveys, and AMRI Surveys)

	Oxfordshire Sharp Sand & Gravel Sales (million tonnes)[33]	**England Sharp Sand & Gravel Sales (million tonnes)**[34]	**Oxfordshire's sales as a percentage of England's sales** [35]
2003	1.372	48.674	2.82%
2004	1.184	51.591	2.29%
2005	1.090	48.109	2.27%
2006	0.983	46.316	2.12%
2007	0.893	44.52	2.01%
2008	0.629	41.527	1.51%
2009	0.462	31.705	1.46%
2010	0.455	31.794	1.43%
2011	0.489	31.392	1.56%
2012	0.559	28.702	1.95%
2013	0.401	30.634	1.31%
2014	0.639	33.831	1.89%
Rolling 10 year annual average, 2003 - 2012	0.812	40.433	2.01%
Rolling 10 year annual average, 2004 - 2013	0.715	38.629	1.85%
Rolling 10 year annual average, 2005 - 2014	0.660	36.853	1.79%

33 Source: SEEAWP Aggregates Monitoring Surveys
34 Source: Mineral Extraction in Great Britain survey, Table 2 "Sand and Gravel for Construction". Please note that 2014 is the most recent published report.
35 Figures include data for marine dredged material. This data is allocated to the county in which the port of landing is situation.

Historical Sales of Soft Sand 2003–2014(million tonnes) with England Sand and Gravel sales
(Sources: SEEAWP Aggregates Monitoring Surveys, and AMRI Surveys)

	Oxfordshire Soft Sand Sales (million tonnes)[36]	**England Soft Sand Sales (million tonnes)[37]**	**Oxfordshire's sales as a percentage of England's sales.**
2003	0.234	11.300	2.07%
2004	0.295	11.144	2.65%
2005	0.199	10.817	1.84%
2006	0.183	9.832	1.86%
2007	0.166	9.992	1.66%
2008	0.151	8.607	1.75%
2009	0.165	6.105	2.70%
2010	0.142	4.929	2.88%
2011	0.201	5.197	3.87%
2012	0.155	4.527	3.42%
2013	0.165	5.221	3.16%
2014	0.230	4.954	4.64%
Rolling 10 year annual average (2003 – 2012)	0.189	8.246	2.34%
Rolling 10 year annual average (2004 – 2013)	0.182	7.637	2.38%
Rolling 10 year annual average (2005 – 2014)	0.176	7.018	2.51%

[36] SEEAWP Aggregates Monitoring Surveys
[37] Source: Mineral Extraction in Great Britain survey, Table 2 "Sand and Gravel for Construction". Please note that 2014 is the most recent published report.

Sales of Crushed Rock 2003 – 2023 (million tonnes)

(Sources: SEEAWP Aggregates Monitoring Surveys, and AMRI Surveys)

	Oxfordshire Crushed Rock Sales (million tonnes)[38]	**England Crushed Rock Sales (million tonnes)**[39]	**Oxfordshire's sales as a percentage of England's sales.**
2003	0.629	83.957	0.75%
2004	0.557	85.653	0.65%
2005	0.564	80.593	0.70%
2006	0.495	83.722	0.59%
2007	0.717	82.922	0.86%
2008	0.543	75.179	0.72%
2009	0.363	59.666	0.61%
2010	0.272	50.115	0.54%
2011	0.322	57.744	0.56%
2012	0.242	52.980	0.46%
2013	0.502	53.417	0.94%
2014	1.061	63.835	1.66%
2015	0.914	*2015 figures not available*	n/a
2016	0.715	*2016 figures not available*	n/a
2017	0.867	*2017 figures not available*	n/a
2018	0.751	*2018 figures not available*	n/a
2019	0.843	83.015	1.02%
2020	1.087	2020 figures not available	n/a

38 SEEAWP Aggregates Monitoring Surveys
39 Source: BGS 2014 and 2019 survey

	Oxfordshire Crushed Rock Sales (million tonnes)[38]	England Crushed Rock Sales (million tonnes)[39]	Oxfordshire's sales as a percentage of England's sales.
2021	1.254	2021 figures not available	n/a
2022	1.146	2021 figures not available	n/a
2023	**1.002**	**2021 figures not available**	n/a
Rolling 10 year annual average 2003 - 2012	**0.470**	**71.253**	**0.66%**
Rolling 10 year annual average 2004 - 2013	0.458	68.199	0.67%
Rolling 10 year annual average 2005 - 2014	0.508	66.017	0.77%
Rolling 10 year annual average 2006 - 2015	0.543	n/a	n/a
Rolling 10 year annual average 2007 - 2016	0.565	n/a	n/a
Rolling 10 year annual average 2008 – 2017	0.580	n/a	n/a
Rolling 10 year annual average 2009 – 2018	0.601	n/a	n/a
Rolling 10 year annual average 2010 – 2019	0.649	n/a	n/a
Rolling 10 year annual average 2011 – 2020	0.730	n/a	n/a
Rolling 10 year annual average 2012 – 2021	0.824	n/a	n/a

	Oxfordshire Crushed Rock Sales (million tonnes)[38]	England Crushed Rock Sales (million tonnes)[39]	Oxfordshire's sales as a percentage of England's sales.
Rolling 10 year annual average 2013 – 2022	0.914	n/a	n/a
Rolling 10 year annual average 2014 – 2023	0.964	n/a	n/a
Average of last 3 years 2014 – 2016	0.897	n/a	n/a
Average of last 3 years 2015 – 2017	0.832	n/a	n/a
Average of last 3 years 2016 – 2018	0.778	n/a	n/a
Average of last 3 years 2017 – 2019	0.820	n/a	n/a
Average of last 3 years 2018 – 2020	0.894	n/a	n/a
Average of last 3 years 2019 – 2021	1.061	n/a	n/a
Average of last 3 years 2020-2022	1.162	n/a	n/a
Average of last 3 years 2021-2023	**1.134**	**n/a**	**n/a**

Appendix 2

Imports and Exports

Imports, Exports and Consumption of Primary Aggregates in Oxfordshire

2009, 2014, 2020 (millions of tonnes) (Source: Collation of the Results of the 2019 Aggregates Minerals Survey for England and Wales, MHCLG, August 2021 and Collation of the Results of the 2014 Aggregates Minerals Survey for England and Wales, DCLG, October 2016, Collation of the Results of the 2019 Aggregates Minerals Survey for England and Wales, DCLG, October 2011)

	Sand and Gravel 2009	Crushed Rock 2009	All Primary Aggregates 2009	Sand and Gravel 2014	Crushed Rock 2014	All Primary Aggregates 2014	Sand and Gravel 2019	Crushed Rock 2019	All Primary Aggregates 2019
A. Production / Sales in Oxfordshire	0.628	0.363	0.991	0.869	1.061	1.93	1.248	0.843	2.091
B. Exported out of Oxfordshire	0.140	0.179	0.319	0.221	0.347	0.568	0.476	0.582	1.058[40]
C. Produced and consumed in Oxfordshire (A – B)	0.487	0.184	0.672	0.648	0.714	1.362	0.772	0.261	1.033
D. Imported into Oxfordshire	0.270	0.441	0.711	0.117	0.787	0.904	0.128	0.356	0.484

[40] This included the unallocated. It should be noted that some of this may have been consumed in Oxfordshire.

	Sand and Gravel 2009	Crushed Rock 2009	All Primary Aggregates 2009	Sand and Gravel 2014	Crushed Rock 2014	All Primary Aggregates 2014	Sand and Gravel 2019	Crushed Rock 2019	All Primary Aggregates 2019
E. Total Consumption in Oxfordshire (C + D)	0.757	0.625	1.383	0.765	1.501	2.266	0.900	0.617	1.517

The equivalent figures for 2005 are not available because Oxfordshire was grouped with Buckinghamshire and Berkshire in the AM2005 Report.

No equivalent information can be derived from the earlier AM2001 Survey report, because all results are presented on a regional basis and there are no local figures.

Destinations

Destinations of Sand & Gravel Produced in Oxfordshire 2009 and 2014
(Source: Oxfordshire County Council Aggregates Monitoring Survey 2009 and 2014)

Destination	**2009 Sand and Gravel (including soft sand)** Tonnes	**2009 Sand and Gravel (including soft sand)** %	**2014 Sand and Gravel (including soft sand)** Tonnes	**2014 Sand and Gravel (including soft sand)** %
Oxfordshire	487,260	77.6	648,282	74.60
Berkshire	20,785	3.3	99,259	11.42
Buckinghamshire & Milton Keynes	13,663	2.2	9,712	1.11
Rest of South East & London	15,565	2.5	4,642	0.81
Wiltshire, Swindon & Gloucestershire	68,203	10.9	95,089	10.94
Northamptonshire & Warwickshire	4,993	0.8	9,674	1.11
TOTAL	627,783	100	866,658	100

Destinations of Crushed Rock Produced in Oxfordshire 2009 and 2014
(Source: Oxfordshire County Council Aggregates Monitoring Survey 2009 and 2014)

Destination	**2009 Crushed Rock Tonnes**	**2009 Crushed Rock %**	**2014 Crushed Rock Tonnes**	**2014 Crushed Rock %**
Oxfordshire	180,867	49.8	663,463	62.56
Berkshire & Buckinghamshire & Milton Keynes	23,081	6.4	254,223	23.97
Rest of South East & London	0	0	5,755	0.55

Destination	2009 Crushed Rock Tonnes	2009 Crushed Rock %	2014 Crushed Rock Tonnes	2014 Crushed Rock %
Wiltshire, Swindon & Gloucestershire	29,694	8.2	14,308	1.35
Northamptonshire & Warwickshire	118,788	32.7	121,258	11.43
TOTAL	362,839	100	1,060,573	99.86

The AM2005 survey report combined figures for the destinations of aggregates sold in Oxfordshire with the destinations of sales in Berkshire and Buckinghamshire. It is therefore not possible to derive equivalent figures for 2005.

Destinations of Sand & Gravel Produced in Oxfordshire 2019

(Source: BGS/MHCLG AM2019 Survey)

For 2019, we do not currently have the exact amounts of mineral produced in Oxfordshire that were consumed by other areas.

The AM2019 set out the % of the amount of sand and gravel consumed in each destination that was produced from Oxfordshire in relation to the Authorities own total demand of sand and gravel. The table then indicates the lowest and maximum amount of sand and gravel produced from Oxfordshire based on these percentages.

Destination of Oxfordshire's produced Land won Sand and Gravel (Including soft sand) in 2019 (1.248mt)

Destination	Proportion	Range* of tonnages produced in Oxfordshire (millions of tonnes)
Oxfordshire	62% of total sand and gravel consumed in Oxfordshire	0.772mt**
Hampshire and Isle of Wight	Between 10% and 20% of total sand and gravel consumed in Hampshire and Isle of Wight	Between 0.095mt and 0.189mt came from Oxfordshire
Buckinghamshire and Milton Keynes	Between 1% and 10% of total sand and gravel consumed in Berkshire	Between 0.014mt and 0.138mt came from Oxfordshire

Destination	Proportion	Range* of tonnages produced in Oxfordshire (millions of tonnes)
Berkshire	Between 1% and 10% of total sand and gravel consumed in Berkshire	Between 0.007mt and 0.074mt came from Oxfordshire
Wiltshire and Swindon	Between 1% and 10% of total sand and gravel consumed in Wiltshire and Swindon	Between 0.005mt and 0.052mt came from Oxfordshire
West of England (Avon)	Between 10% and 20% of total sand and gravel consumed in West of England	Between 0.002mt and 0.006mt came from Oxfordshire
Surrey, Dorset, Gloucestershire, Northamptonshire, Somerset and Exmoor National Park, Warwickshire, Worcestershire, Scotland and West London	Less than 1% of each MPAs total sand and gravel was sourced from Oxfordshire	Max .043mt came from Oxfordshire
Unknown in the South East	Between 40 and 50% sand and gravel consumed in the South East	Between 0.172mt and 0.216mt came from Oxfordshire
Unknown Destination	Between 1%-10% of the total sand and gravel consumed that went to unknown destinations.	Between 0.014mt and 0.142mt came from Oxfordshire

*****This is the highest and lowest percentage of sand and gravel from Oxfordshire taken from the importing Authorities total Sand and Gravel consumed. (Other than Oxfordshire)

** Known figure from AM2019

Destinations of Crushed Produced in Oxfordshire 2019

(Source: BGS/MHCLG AM2019 Survey)

The AM2019 set out the % of the amount of Crushed Rock consumed in each destination that was produced from Oxfordshire, in relation to the Authorities own total demand of sand and gravel. The table then indicates the lowest and maximum amount of sand and gravel produced from Oxfordshire based on these percentages.

Total Crushed Rock exported destinations in 2019 (0.582mt)

Source	Proportion	Range* (millions of tonnes)
Oxfordshire	31% of total Consumed Crushed Rock in Oxfordshire	0.261mt*
Northamptonshire	Between 1% and 10% of total Crushed Rock consumed in Northamptonshire	Between 0.017mt and 0.165mt came from Oxfordshire
Buckinghamshire and Milton Keynes	Between 10%and 20% of total Crushed Rock consumed in Buckinghamshire and Milton Keynes	Between 0.070 and 0.141mt came from Oxfordshire
Warwickshire	Between 1% and 10% of total Crushed Rock consumed in Warwickshire	Between 0.011mt and 0.107mt came from Oxfordshire
Berkshire	Between 1% and 10% of total Crushed Rock consumed in Berkshire	Between 0.009mt and 0.089mt came from Oxfordshire
Unknown somewhere in the South East	Between 50% and 60% of total Crushed Rock destination in the South East unknown	0.256mt and 0.307mt came from Oxfordshire
Bedfordshire, Gloucestershire, Hampshire and Isle of Wight, Hertfordshire, Surrey	Less than 1% of each MPAs total Crushed Rock was sourced from Oxfordshire	Max 0.043mt came from Oxfordshire

***This is the highest and lowest percentage of sand and gravel from Oxfordshire taken from the importing Authorities total Crushed Rock consumed. (Other than Oxfordshire)

** Known figure from AM2019

Destinations of Sand and Gravel Produced in Oxfordshire 2005, 2009 and 2014 (Source: AM2005, and AM2009, 2014)

Destination (Source MPA – Oxfordshire)	Sand and gravel (millions of tonnes) 2005	Sand and gravel (millions of tonnes) 2009	Sand and gravel (millions of tonnes) 2014
Berkshire, Oxfordshire and Buckinghamshire	0.304	0.520 of which 0.487 in Oxfordshire	0.757 of which 0.648 in Oxfordshire
Elsewhere in South East	0.418	0.015	0.012
Elsewhere	0.550	0.090	0.100
Unallocated	0.017	0	0
Total	1.289*	0.627*	0.869*

*Totals may not match sub totals due to varying categories

Destinations of Crushed Rock Produced in Oxfordshire 2005 and 2009

Destination (Source MPA – Oxfordshire)	Crushed Rock (millions of tonnes) 2005	Crushed Rock (millions of tonnes) 2009	Crushed Rock (millions of tonnes) 2014
Berkshire, Oxfordshire and Buckinghamshire	0.277	0.184 all in Oxfordshire	0.919
Elsewhere in South East	0.134	0.025 incl. Berkshire & Buckinghamshire	0.010
Elsewhere	0.152	0.154	0.130
Total	0.564*	0.363	1.061

*May not match sub totals due to varying categories.

This data comparison is not currently available for AM2019.

Sources

Sources of Sand and Gravel consumed in Oxfordshire 2009

(Source: BGS)

Source	**Proportion**	**Tonnage where known (millions of tonnes)**
Oxfordshire	64%	0.474
Gloucestershire	25%-20%	0.145- 0.185
Warwickshire, Bristol (marine), Hampshire, Berkshire and Leicestershire (in descending order)	Between 5% and 1% from each area	n/a
Milton Keynes, Central Bedfordshire (includes Bedford Borough), Kent, Cambridgeshire, Staffordshire, Buckinghamshire, Dorset, Wiltshire, Solihull (includes Walsall) and Hertfordshire (in descending order)	Less than 1% from each area	n/a

Sources of Crushed Rock consumed in Oxfordshire 2009

(Source: BGS)

Source	**Proportion**	**Tonnage where known (millions of tonnes)**
Oxfordshire	29%	0.181
South Gloucestershire	30%-25%	0.187- 0.156
Somerset	25% - 20%	0.156- 0.125
Leicestershire	15%-10%	0.093- 0.063
Rhondda, Cynon, Taf (Taff), Gloucestershire and Powys (in descending order)	Between 5% and 1% from each area	n/a
Shropshire, North Somerset and Caerphilly/Merthyr Tydfil (merged for confidentiality) and Derbyshire (in descending order)	Less than 1% from each area	n/a

Sources of Sand and Gravel consumed in Oxfordshire 2014
(Source: BGS)

Source	**Proportion**	**Tonnage where known (millions of tonnes)**
Oxfordshire	80-90%	0.612 - 0.6885
Wiltshire, Windsor & Maidenhead, Cambridgeshire, Leicestershire	1-10%	0.00765 – 0.0765
Devon, Gloucestershire, Hampshire, West Berkshire, Central Bedfordshire, Essex, Hertfordshire, Northamptonshire, Staffordshire, Worcestershire.	<1%	<0.00765

Sources of Crushed Rock consumed in Oxfordshire 2014
(Source: BGS)

Source	**Proportion**	**Tonnage where known (millions of tonnes)**
Oxfordshire	40-50%	0.6 – 0.75
Somerset	30-40%	0.45 – 0.6
Leicestershire	10-20%	0.15 – 0.3
Gloucestershire	1-10%	0.015 – 0.15
North Somerset, South Gloucestershire, Cambridgeshire, Shropshire, Powys	<1%	<0.015

Sources of Sand and Gravel consumed in Oxfordshire 2019
(Source: BGS)

Total Land won Sand and Gravel (Including soft sand) consumed in Oxfordshire in 2019 (0.900mt)

Source	**Proportion**	**Tonnage where known (millions of tonnes)**
Oxfordshire	80-90%	0.772mt*
Cambridgeshire, Lincolnshire, Staffordshire and Wiltshire	Between 1% and 10% from each area	Between 0.036mt and 0.363mt**

Source	Proportion	Tonnage where known (millions of tonnes)
	of total consumed within Oxfordshire	
Leicestershire, Buckinghamshire Bristol City, Central Bedfordshire, Gloucestershire, Hampshire, Hertfordshire and Portsmouth	Less than 1% from each area	Max .081mt***

* Exact figure taken from AM Survey 2019

** The lower number represents 1% of total consumed and the higher represents 10% of total consumed.

*** A maximum of 1% was taken for each Authority that exported Minerals to Oxfordshire

Sources of Crushed Rock Gravel consumed in Oxfordshire 2019

(Source: BGS)

Total Crushed Rock consumed in Oxfordshire in 2019 (0.617mt)

Source	Proportion	Tonnage Estimates (millions of tonnes)
Oxfordshire	40-50%	0.261mt*
Gloucestershire, Leicestershire, Somerset	10-20%	Between 0.185 and 0.370**
North Somerset, Powys, Rhondda Cynon Taf (Taff), Shropshire, South Gloucestershire	Between 1% and 10% from each area of total consumed within Oxfordshire	Between 0.031mt and 0.308mt***
Cambridgeshire, Derbyshire, Warwickshire	Less than 1% from each area	Max .024mt****

* Exact figure taken from AM Survey 2019

** The lower number represents 10% of total consumed and the higher represents 20% of total consumed.

*** The lower number represents 10% of total consumed and the higher represents 20% of total consumed.

**** A maximum of 1% was taken for each Authority that exported Minerals to Oxfordshire

Appendix 3

Oxfordshire Minerals and Waste Local Plan Part 1: Core Strategy Mineral provision requirements over the Plan period.

This section sets out the requirements to meet the Core Strategy Provision requirements as set out in Policy M2

Sand and Gravel Provision required over plan period 2014 – 2031

(As at Dec 2023)

	Sharp Sand & Gravel (million tonnes)
A. Annual Provision (from policy M2 / LAA)	1.015
B. Requirement 2014 – 2031 (policy M2) (A x 18 years)	18.270
C. Sales in 2014 – 2023	8.387
D. Remaining requirement (B – C)	9.883
E. Permitted Reserves at end 2023	7.693
F. Estimated permitted reserves available to be worked during remainder of plan period (from beginning 2024 to end 2031)	7.234
G. Remaining requirement to be provided for in Plan (D – F)	**2.649**

Notes:

1. Permitted Reserves at end 2023 (Row E) do not include approximately 1.0 million tonnes of Sharp Sand and Gravel at Thrupp Farm Quarry, Radley (South), which were previously included. Under 'ROMP' procedure the planning permission for this

site has gone into suspension, and is currently dormant, and the site cannot be worked until there has been a review of the planning conditions attached to the planning permission. An application (MW.0041/23) has been submitted. Consequently, in accordance with national Planning Practice Guidance, the 'reserves' at this site should not currently be included as permitted reserves and they do not form part of the landbank.

2. Stonehenge Farm has not extracted any sand and gravel during 2023 and permission for this site has now expired.. This reserve has now been removed from the landbank and this has impacted on total mineral available to be worked over the Plan period.

3. A number of sites have limited production capacity and at these current rates, will not be able to extract all the mineral required by the end of the planning permission.

Soft Sand provision required over the Plan period 2014-2031

(As at Dec 2023)

	Soft Sand Core Strategy Requirement (Million Tonnes)
A Annual Provision	0.189 (Policy M2)
B. Requirement 2014 – 2031	3.402
C. Sales in 2014 – 2023	2.353
D. Remaining requirement (B – C)	1.049
E. Permitted Reserves at end 2023	3.288
F. Estimated permitted reserves available to be worked during remainder of plan period (from beginning 2024 to end 2031)	1.1
G. Remaining requirement to be provided for in Plan	**0**

Notes:

1. The planning application for an extension to Bowling Green Farm Quarry submitted in 2016 and permitted in June 2017 is for the working of a total of 1.6 million tonnes of soft sand. Information in the application indicates this will be worked over 19 years from 2018 to 2036 at an average rate of working of approximately 0.08 million tonnes per annum. Mineral working at Bowling Green Farm Quarry is therefore expected to extend beyond the end of the plan period (2031).
2. The planning application for an extension to Duns Tew Quarry submitted in 2014 and permitted in May 2017 is for the working of a total of 0.415 million tonnes of soft sand. Information in the application indicates this will be worked over 16/17 years from 2017 to 2033/34 at an average rate of working of approximately 0.025 million tonnes per annum. Mineral working at Duns Tew Quarry is therefore expected to extend beyond the end of the plan period (2031).
3. The planning application at Shellingford for 1.8mt of Soft Sand was permitted at the end of 2020 along with 1mt of Crushed Rock and the site is expected to extend beyond the end of the Plan Period (2031).

Crushed Rock provision required over the Plan period 2014-2031

(As at December 2023)

		Core Strategy Requirement
A.	**Annual Provision** **(from policy M2 / LAA)**	0.584
B.	**Requirement 2014 – 2031 (policy M2)** **(A x 18 years)**	10.512
C.	**Sales in 2014 – 2023**	9.640
D.	**Remaining requirement** **(B – C)**	0.872
E.	**Permitted Reserves at end 2023**	4.744
F.	**Estimated permitted reserves available to be worked during remainder of plan period (from beginning 2024 to end 2031)**	4.189
G.	**Remaining requirement to be provided for in Plan**	**0**

Appendix 4

Population

The table below presents the population figures for Oxfordshire for the 10-year period (2013 to 2023)

Table 1: Oxfordshire population figures for the 10-year period (2013 to 2023 [41])

Year	Population
2013	669,390
2014	676,621
2015	682,571
2016	690,541
2017	696,188
2018	702, 259
2019	708,513
2020	714,766
2021	726,727
2022	737,795
2023	750,230

Population forecasts for Oxfordshire up to 2031

Year	Population Forecast[42] (ONS)	Population Forecast [43] (OCC)
2024	709,180	753074
2025	712023	759,881
2026	714,785	767,016
2027	717,536	774,220

41 www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/populationandmigration/populationestimates/
42 www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/populationandmigration/populationprojections
43 insight.oxfordshire.gov.uk/cms/future-population

Year	Population Forecast[42] (ONS)	Population Forecast [43] (OCC)
2028	720,204	780,720
2029	722,729	788,451
2030	725,092	797,018
2031	727,403	806,876

Housing Completion Figures (taken District Authority Monitoring Reports (AMRs)

New Build Housing completions by year in Oxfordshire[44]

Year	Oxfordshire Total Completions from AMRs
2011/12	1,797
2012/13	1,576
2013/14	1,881
2014/15	3,012
2015/16	3,858
2016/17	4,370
2017/18	4,818
2018/19	5,287
2019/20	6,114
2020/21	4,746
2021/22	4,956
2022/23	5,492

44 District Authority Monitoring Reports (Combined by the M&W Policy Team)

Planned housebuilding[45]

Year	Planned housebuilding
2023/24	3,516
2024/25	3,362
2025/26	3,736
2026/27	4,148
2027/28	4,007
2028/29	4,557
2029/30	4,935
2030/31	5,500

45 District local plans, District Planning Officers, Oxfordshire County Council Data Team

This page is intentionally left blank

Division(s): N/A

CABINET – 15 October 2024

Budget & Business Planning Report 2025/26 – 2027/28

Report by the Executive Director of Resources and Section 151 Officer

RECOMMENDATION

1. **The Cabinet is RECOMMENDED to:**

   a) **Endorse the report and note the assumptions that will form the starting point for the 2025/26 budget as well as updates since the Medium Term Financial Strategy was agreed in February 2024 that need to be considered;**
   b) **Approve the budget and business planning process for 2025/26;**
   c) **Approve a three-year period for the medium-term financial strategy to 2027/28 and ten-year period for the capital programme to 2034/35**
   d) **Delegate to the Section 151 Officer in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Finance the decision on whether to continue to be a member of the North Oxfordshire Business Rates Pool and;**
   e) **Note the requirement for the council to set a sustainable balanced budget which shows how income will equal spending plans.**

Executive summary

2. Oxfordshire County Council provides 80 per cent of local government services in Oxfordshire based on expenditure, including adult and children's social care, some education services, fire and rescue, libraries and museums, public health, roads, trading standards, waste disposal and recycling.

3. The budget and medium term financial strategy (MTFS) support the council's Greener, Fairer, Healthier vision and the council's aim of being an Employer, Partner and Place Shaper of choice. Plans are reviewed and updated each year through the budget & business planning process. Information about the services the council provides and the planned budgets with which they deliver these, are provided in Annex 1a.

4. Progress on achieving priorities and investments and savings built into the budget is tracked through the council's outcomes framework with updates shared the Business Management and Monitoring reports to Cabinet. The framework will be reviewed and updated for 2025/26 as part of the Business and Budget Planning process.

5. Feedback on budget priorities in the context of the funding available to the council has been sought as part of number of engagement opportunities including a representative residents' survey and the use of an online budget simulator during early summer 2024. This will be followed by formal consultation on the substance of the 2025/26 budget during the winter. Performance and Corporate Services Overview and Scrutiny Committee will consider the Administration's proposed budget in December 2024 and January 2025.

6. The Budget & Business Planning process will continue through the autumn and winter. Based on the timetable proposed in this report, Council will set a budget for 2025/26, a medium-term financial strategy to 2027/28 and capital programme to 2034/35 in February 2025. Performance progress against the budget for 2025/26 will then be monitored through the Business Management & Monitoring reports to Cabinet.

7. This report provides context and background information as well as updates about the wider economic environment since the 2024/25 budget and Medium Term Financial Strategy was agreed in February 2024.

Introduction

8. The council's vision and priorities are supported by the budget and Medium Term Financial Strategy MTFS). This report is the starting point for the budget and business planning process for 2025/26. It explains the process for developing and agreeing business plans and the budget for 2025/26 as well as the assumptions on which the current MTFS agreed in February 2024 is based. It then updates information arising from government and other announcements plus the on-going impact of challenges apparent in 2024/25 and new or emerging financial issues for 2025/26 and beyond which will be incorporated into the new MTFS.

9. Annexes are attached as follows:

   - Annex 1a Services and planned budgets for 2025/26
   - Annex 1b General balances and earmarked reserves - 2024/25 forecast position.
   - Annex 1c Planned changes to budgets in 2025/26 – 2026/27 agreed in February 2024.
   - Annex 1d Funding scenarios and updates and MTFS assumptions
   - Annex 2 Executive summary of 2024 residents' survey and 2025-26 Budget engagement findings.
   - Annex 3 Business & Budget Planning timetable for 2025/26.

10. It is proposed that the MTFS should be extended by one year to 2027/28. The capital programme will be extended by one year to cover the 10 - year period to 2034/35.

National & Local Context

11. Expectations about future funding remains unclear and the financial position of the Council over the medium term is challenging. The direct and indirect impacts of the following are significant issues:

    - Uncertainty about the new Government's future decisions about local government financing.
    - Reductions in general funding for local government over the last 14 years, and the increase in the proportion of the council's spend on social care needs.
    - Demand for social care and the sufficiency of market provision, particularly for Children's Social Care.
    - On-going uncertainty about the future arrangements for the management of past and future overspends against funding for High Needs Dedicated Schools Grant where the deficit built up to date is expected to be £77.1m by the end of 2024/25.

12. The Government has announced that there will be an Autumn Statement 30 October 2024 so it is possible that information on the approach to council tax referendum limits for 2025/26, updates on the approach to other funding and the increase to the National Living Wage from April 2025 may be announced then. However, detailed information about the council's funding for 2025/26 will not be received until the Provisional Local Government Settlement which is expected in mid/late December 2024.

13. A spending review for 2025/26 is expected to be announced along with the Autumn Statement. Beyond that spending reviews will occur every two years with a 3-year forecasting horizon so there will be a further spending review covering 2026/27 and 2027/28 announced in March 2025.

14. Information on council tax collection fund surpluses or deficits needs to be shared by the district councils by mid-January 2025. Information about business rates income and collection fund surpluses or deficits needs to be shared by the districts by the end of January 2025. Where information is not received in time to be incorporated into the budget estimates will be included with an update provided to Cabinet in May 2025.

Current medium-term financial strategy

Background

15. The Financial Strategy sets out the approach the council will take to ensure it is financially sustainable over the medium and long term and supports the delivery of the council's Greener, Fairer, Healthier vision.

16. Financial resilience is the ability, from a financial perspective, to respond to changes in delivery or demand without placing the organisation at risk of financial failure. The budget is underpinned by a financial strategy which aims to ensure the financial sustainability of the Council, deliver essential services to residents and achieve the council's vision to lead positive change by working in partnership to make Oxfordshire a greener, fairer and healthier county.

17. Financial sustainability and resilience require successful and sustained focus on delivery of four critical elements and financial planning principles for the revenue budget and medium term financial strategy:

    - Transforming the council to become employer, partner and place shaper of choice.
    - Managing the impact of rising need through demand management.
    - Delivering agreed savings and planned outcomes from investments.
    - Ensuring the level of earmarked reserves and general balances is adequate based on the level of risk and financial uncertainty and only using one-off resources for temporary purposes.

18. The key components of the Financial Strategy are the:

    - MTFS showing how annual revenue funding and expenditure will be balanced over the medium term
    - Capital & Investment Strategy
    - Earmarked Reserves and General Balance Policy Statement
    - Treasury Management & Investment Strategy

Revenue Plan: Service Budgets

19. The council's revenue budget supports a range of service provision which contributes to the council's vision and priorities. Most of these services continue from one year to the next.

20. Due to the continuity of service provision the first step in building the budget for 2025/26 will be to roll forward 2024/25 budgets. This starting point will then be adjusted for changes planned for 2025/26 built into the MTFS agreed in February 2024.

21. Annex 1a provides more information about the services contributing to the council's priorities along with the planned budget for 2025/26 and indicative budgets for the medium term based on current plans.

22. The net council funded budget for each service and changes that are already planned to create the budget for 2025/26 based in on the current MTFS agreed in February 2024 are summarised in the table below.

23. Any new changes agreed as part of the 2025/26 Budget & Business Planning Process will be added to this starting point.

Service	2024/25 Budget (*) £m	Add Planned Changes in current MTFS £m	Indicative Budget 2025/26 £m	Change in Budget %
Adult Services	250.2	10.9	261.1	4.4%
Children's Services	197.3	3.3	200.6	1.7%
Environment & Highways	69.7	1.7	71.4	2.5%
Economy & Place	1.8	-0.1	1.7	-4.0%
Public Health & Communities	12.6	0.2	12.8	1.6%
Oxfordshire Fire & Rescue Service and Community Safety	28.7	1.0	29.7	3.6%
Resources and Law & Governance	57.8	1.6	59.4	2.8%
Transformation, Digital & Customer Experience	3.3	-0.9	2.4	-27.3%
Service Total	**621.2**	**17.9**	**639.1**	**2.9%**

(*) Budgeted pay inflation for 2024/25 has been allocated to services in these totals on an indicative basis. This will be confirmed once the pay award is agreed nationally.

24. After taking account of planned budget increases and changes to savings, the current MTFS includes net new funding for services totalling £17.9m in 2025/26. This includes £15.7m for demographic growth for adult and children's social care and increases in waste tonnages, reflecting anticipated population and housing changes. A further £15.9m will be added for inflation and £3.0m for demand and other pressures. £5.7m funding for one – off investments agreed in February 2024 will be removed along with £1.4m funding from the COVID-19 reserve. In addition to this there are changes to savings which combine to create a reduction of £9.6m.

25. Further changes which combine to create an increase of £15.1m are planned to be added to service budgets in 2026/27. Detailed changes for both 2025/26 and 2026/27 are shown in Annex 1c.

Planned Expenditure & Funding in 2025/26 and 2026/27

26. The revenue element of the MTFS agreed in February 2024 is summarised in the table on the next page. Based on assumptions in February 2024 there was a shortfall of £13.9m in 2025/26.

	2024/25 Agreed Budget £m	2025/26 Indicative Budget £m	2026/27 Indicative Budget £m
Funding:			
Council Tax Requirement	498.6	517.4	537.0
Council Tax Collection Fund Surplus	11.7	8.0	8.0
Business Rates	99.5	101.2	102.9
Revenue Support Grant	1.4	1.4	1.4
Total Funding	**611.2**	**628.0**	**649.3**

Net operating budget (previous year)	**573.9**	**611.2**	**641.9**
Add Service Changes			
Demographic Growth	16.3	15.7	8.5
Pressures and Investments	57.1	11.7	11.2
Savings	-19.5	-9.5	-4.5
Subtotal Service Changes	**53.9**	**17.9**	**15.1**
Add changes to budgets & grant funding held centrally	-16.6	12.8	6.3
Net Operating Budget	**611.2**	**641.9**	**663.3**
Deficit Compared to Funding	**0.0**	**+13.9**	**+14.0**
Council Tax increase	**4.99%**	**1.99%**	**1.99%**

Financial planning assumptions

Council Tax and Adult Social Care Precept

27. The last Local Government Settlement confirmed that the council tax referendum limit would be increased to 3% in 2024/25. Local authorities were also able to meet pressures in adult social care by raising council tax by up to an additional 2% through an additional precept in 2024/25.

28. Confirmation on the arrangements for referendum limits from 2025/26 has not yet been made. Therefore, the existing plan assumes that the maximum increase falls back to 2% from 2025/26.

	2024/25	2025/26	2026/27
Core Council Tax Increase	1.99%	1.99%	1.99%
Additional Core Council Tax Increase	1.00%		
Adult Social Care Precept - Spending Review 2021	1.00%		
Adult Social Care Precept - Spending Review 2022	1.00%		
Total Council Tax Increase	**4.99%**	**1.99%**	**1.99%**

29. Each 1% increase in council tax will generate around £5.0m on-going funding for the council's services.

30. The council tax base is the number of Band D equivalent dwellings in a local authority area. Growth in the tax base of 1.75% per year is assumed in the MTFS reflecting anticipated increases in the number of households in Oxfordshire paying council tax. The following table shows how the income generated by the growth in the tax base compares to funding for demographic growth built into the current plan.

	2025/26
Budgeted Demographic Growth	£15.7m
Additional Council Tax funding from 1.75% growth in tax base	£8.9m

31. As well as updating the council tax base each district will also make assumptions about the anticipated level of council tax to be collected in any given year. Where actual income varies from those assumptions it will create a one – off surplus or deficit that is then shared with the county council as a precepting authority.

32. The county council's share of surpluses on council tax collection is estimated to be £8.0m in 2025/26 and 2026/27. The actual surplus for 2024/25 notified by the district councils was £11.7m.

33. The budgeted level of surplus for 2025/26 and future years and the management of volatility year to year will need to be considered as part of the Budget & Business Planning Process. As set out in the Reserves and Balances Policy Statement for 2024/25 £4.0m funding held in the Collection Fund Reserve will be used to manage any reductions to the assumed level of funding.

General funding & local government funding reforms

34. The Council receives a Settlement Funding Assessment (SFA) from Government which is the share of the local government spending based on the 'need' of a local authority. It comprises Business Rate Top Up Grant, together with the Government's assessment of the level of Business Rates income to be retained by the Council. The SFA for 2024/25 is £78.4m. The

2025/26 SFA will be announced as part of the Provisional Local Government Settlement expected in mid/late December 2024.

35. In addition, local authorities have been able to retain the growth in business rates from the baseline established in 2013/14 up to the Business Rate Growth Reset originally planned for April 2021.

36. Given the timescale to implement any changes it is not expected, although not impossible, that any significant changes to the distribution of business rates via the SFA will be implemented from 2025/26. However, there is significant uncertainty about 2026/27 onwards as the Government have indicated that the collection and distribution business rates is likely to change.

37. Business Rates funding was notified by the district councils and the then Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities after the budget was agreed in February 2024 and an update was included in the Financial Monitoring Report to Cabinet in May 2024.

Section 31 Business Rates Reliefs

38. Section 31 grant funding for Business Rates reliefs for 2024/25 includes £3.6m for local business rates income that has not been collected as a result of Business Rates reliefs for Leisure & Hospitality businesses following COVID-19 which were extended into 2024/25 in the Autumn Statement 2023. It is currently difficult to predict what the impact on the collection fund and local growth will be after these reliefs end in March 2025 or whether they will be extended again.

39. The indexation element of the Section 31 grant was also increased from £12.9m to £15.3m in the final settlement for 2024/25. This is also now more difficult to predict this as it is moving independently of the SFA.

40. The table on the next page summarises the confirmed funding for 2024/25 and the funding for 2025/26 and 2026/27 assumed in the MTFS agreed in February 2024.

	2024/25 Notified Funding £m	2025/26 MTFS £m	2026/27 MTFS £m
Settlement Funding Assessment	**78.4**	**80.0**	**81.6**
Local Growth	1.3	4.9	5.0
Section 31 Grant for Business Rates Reliefs – Retail & Hospitality reliefs	3.6	0.0	0.0
Section 31 Grant – Indexation Element	15.8	14.5	14.5
Section 31 Grant for Business Rates Reliefs – on-going reliefs	1.8	1.8	1.8
Total Section 31 Grant for Business Rates Reliefs and Indexation	**21.2**	**16.3**	**16.3**
Pooling Gain	0.7	0.0	0.0
Collection Fund Surplus/Deficit	0.0	0.0	0.0
Total	**101.6**	**101.2**	**102.9**

41. Authorities can also choose to pool business rates through the rates retention scheme which provides the opportunity to pool business rates and build growth across a wider area. Pooling can help local authorities manage volatility in business rates income, sharing fluctuations across the pool. The effects will be different in each case depending on the members of the pool and their individual circumstances. The council is a member of the North Oxfordshire Business Rates Pool with Cherwell District Council and West Oxfordshire District Council and has received around £0.7m share of the pooling gain in the last two financial years. Work is continuing to assess the on-going benefits and the members of the pool need to notify the Ministry for Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG) that they want to be a member of the pool in 2025/26 by 29 October 2024. It is recommended that the decision on whether to remain part of the pool is delegated to the Section 151 Officer in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Finance.

Inflation, Demand & Contingency

<u>Inflation</u>

42. Based on the latest forecast by the Office for Budget Responsibility (OBR) the Consumer Price Index is expected to rise by 2.45% in 2024 and 1.43% in 2025. An updated forecast from the OBR is expected to be shared at the same time as the Autumn Statement.

43. The latest estimate from the Office for National Statistics indicates that CPI inflation was 2.3% for the 12 months up to August 2024. This was unchanged from the increase in the 12 months up to July 2024. The Retail Price Index (RPI) increased by 3.5% in the 12 months up to August 2024, compared to an increase of 3.6% in the year to July 2024.

National Living Wage

44. The National Living Wage reached the Government's target of two thirds of median earnings in April 2024. Analysis shared by the Low Pay Commission in March 2024 suggested that to maintain this from 1 April 2025 an increase from £11.44 to a range of between £11.61 and £12.18 with a central estimate of £11.89 (a 3.9% increase) would be needed.

45. On 30 July 2024 the Government issued a new remit for the Low Pay Commission, which will apply to the rates that take effect from April 2025. This remit sets out that the increase should take account of the cost of living and expected inflation up to March 2026 and not fall below two-thirds of median hourly earnings.

46. On 5 September 2024 the Low Pay Commission published a statement in response to that remit that notes that "earnings growth in 2024 so far has been stronger than forecast". Consequently, the range has been increased to £11.82 to £12.39 with a higher central estimate of £12.10.

47. £12.10 represents an increase of 5.77% compared to the current National Living Wage. The higher figure of £12.39 would be an increase of 8.30%. The statement also adds "our central estimate (and the ranges around it) may continue to rise over the rest of the year because earnings growth in 2024 so far has been stronger than forecast."

48. The actual increase is likely to be announced in the Autumn Statement on 30 October 2024 along with any insight into whether there are any extra resources to help meet the additional cost.

49. The impact of the final agreed increase on the rates the council pays for services will need to be considered as part of the budget process along with other inflationary pressures for both pay and non – pay expenditure.

Green Book Pay

50. The 2024/25 budget includes funding for an estimated pay award equivalent to 5.0% for all green book staff and provision for a further 0.5% is included in the contingency budget. Each 1% increase is estimated to cost around £3.0m. Any increase above the budgeted amount would need to be met from contingency.

51. The claim lodged by UNISON, GMB and Unite on 29 February 2024 included a request to increase pay by at least £3,000 or 10% (whichever is greater) on all spinal pay points. On 16 May 2024, national employers responded with the following offer:

- With effect from 1 April 2024, an increase of £1,290 (pro rata for part-time employees) to be paid as a consolidated, permanent addition on all NJC pay points 2 to 43 inclusive.
- With effect from 1 April 2024, an increase of 2.50 per cent on all pay

points above the maximum of the pay spine but graded below deputy chief officer.

52. Following the government's announcement that they will accept the 5.5% rise for teachers, local government employers have confirmed that the offer of £1,290 on all pay points up to SCP 43 and 2.50% for all other pay points made in May 2024 was the final offer.

53. While GMB members voted to accept the offer, the other two unions rejected it and are balloting on whether to take strike action. The ballot began on 4 September 2024 and closes on Wednesday 16 October 2024. Since it remains unclear when there will be any agreement it is not currently possible to assess the on-going impact on the 2025/26 budget.

54. Because inflation was forecast to fall back during 2024/25 the MTFS assumes pay inflation increases of 2.5% in both 2025/26 and 2026/27. The increase in the National Living Wage may impact on whether this is sufficient to meet the potential increase in 2025/26.

Contract Inflation

55. Funding for contract inflation has been built into service budgets for 2025/26 based on the contractually specified and timing of uplifts for different contracts. Funding for 2025/26 was added to the plan on an indicative basis and will need to be reviewed and updated as part of the process.

56. The ability to meet the additional cost of both contract and pay inflation within the available funding will need to be considered as part of the Budget & Business Planning process for 2025/26.

Social Care Pressures

57. Pressures in Children's Services over the last two years have been driven by a combination of care placements costs, staffing (particularly the reliance on agency staff to cover vacancies) and Home to School Transport. Children's Services have implemented a number of organisational, governance and business process controls as well as market management actions to address the underlying pressures and the overspend reduced to £7.7m by the end of 2023/24.

58. While action is continuing to be taken to manage them, these demand and inflationary pressures remain a significant challenge and risk in year and beyond.

Contingency

59. To help manage the impact of financial risk, a corporate contingency budget is held to cover:

- the risk that demographic pressures are higher than forecast;
- any unfunded new burdens or unfunded elements of government grant;
- any potential pay awards beyond budgeted assumptions plus other inflationary risk; and

- the risk that proposed savings are not achieved in full, based on the performance targets set out in the Financial Strategy.

60. £7.3m contingency budget is available in 2024/25. The level of on-going contingency budget that will be held for 2025/26 will be considered as part of the Budget & Business Planning process.

Un-ringfenced grant funding changes built into the plan for 2025/26

Services Grant

61. Services Grant reduced from £2.9m in 2023/24 to £0.4m in 2024/25. No further funding is expected in 2025/26.

Social Care Grant

62. The Social Care Grant was increased from £32.7m in 2023/24 to £42.5m in 2024/25. £4.8m of the increase was announced in the Final Local Government Settlement for 2024/25 in February 2024. Since it was unclear whether this additional funding was one – off or on-going this was used to support one – off investments in Adult's and Children's Social Care in 2024/25. The existing plan assumes £4.8m grant funding falls out and there is no further increase in 2025/26.

New Homes Bonus

63. £1.7m un-ringfenced funding from the New Homes Bonus, which was extended by a further year into 2024/25, is expected to fall out in 2025/26.

64. An update on each of these grants, and changes to any other grants where those may be consolidated or reallocated, is expected to be received as part of the Local Government Settlement for 2025/26.

Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) and High Needs Deficit

65. The Department for Education (DfE) usually provide information in mid / late July each year on indicative funding levels and funding formula changes for the DSG Schools Block, High Needs Block and Central School Services Block for the following financial year. The funding information for the Early Years Block DSG is usually received in November / December each year from the DfE. The date of the provision of the 2025/26 DSG funding information is currently uncertain due to the General Election on the 4 July 2024.

66. Demand continues to outstrip the growth in the grant funding for High Needs DSG and as set out in the Business Management & Monitoring Report to Cabinet in September 2024 the forecast deficit compared to Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) funding for High Needs is £21.3m in 2024/25. Continued increases in demand mean that annual deficits against the grant funding are expected to grow in future years.

67. In line with a change to the CIPFA code of practice on DSG High Needs deficits an unusable reserve to hold negative High Needs DSG balances was created in 2020/21. The forecast deficit of £21.3m in 2024/25 will increase the total accumulated negative balance for High Needs held in this reserve to £77.1m at 31 March 2025.

68. The regulations which require the negative balance to be held in an unusable reserve were due to come to an end on 1 April 2023. In December 2022 the government agreed to the extension of the DSG statutory override for a one-off period of three years (up to March 2026). An announcement about the arrangements from 1 April 2026 onwards is awaited.

69. DSG deficits cannot currently be met from general council funding without permission from the Secretary of State. However, this deficit, both accumulated to date, and on-going, is a significant financial risk irrespective of the future arrangements for the statutory override. This will need to be taken into account in the Section 25 Statement and the overall financial position for the council and the assessment of the adequacy of reserves and balances for 2025/26.

70. Updates on the forecast High Needs budget and deficit for 2025/26 will be considered as part of the Business & Budget Planning process.

General balances and earmarked reserves

71. A local authority is not permitted to allow its spending to exceed its available resources so that overall it would be in deficit. Section 25 of the Local Government Finance Act 2003 requires that when a local authority is agreeing its annual budget and council tax precept, the Chief Finance Officer must report to it on the following matters:

- The robustness of the estimates made for the purposes of the (council tax requirement) calculations
- The adequacy of the proposed financial reserves

72. The council maintains general balances to provide a contingency against unplanned or unexpected events. As set out in the Earmarked Reserves and General Balances Policy Statement agreed in February 2024, and explained further in Annex 1b, the risk assessed level for 2024/25 is £30.2m. This is equivalent to 5% of the net operating budget of £611.2m agreed by council in February 2024 and equates to around three weeks net expenditure. A review will be undertaken as part of the budget and business planning process to determine the appropriate level of balances for 2025/26.

73. Most of the funding held in reserves is expected to be used for specific agreed purposes to support revenue expenditure or to fund the capital programme. Further detail, including a breakdown of reserves into grant funding that hasn't yet been spent, funding for corporate priorities and risks, and funding for the capital programme, is provided in Annex 1b.

Government Announcements

Adult Social Care Reform

74. As part of the Autumn Statement 2022 the previous government confirmed that the national rollout of social care financing reforms would be delayed from October 2023 to October 2025. Funding for implementation would be maintained within local government to enable local authorities to address adult social care pressures and was allocated through the Social Care Grant.

75. As part of the Chancellor's Budget Statement in July 2024 the Government announced that the reforms would be cancelled. Increased funding from these reforms has been rolled into previous Settlements and has, in effect, been baselined into local authority budgets.

Waste Packaging (Extended Producer Responsibilities)

76. In July 2023 Defra announced that Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR) for packaging fees would be delayed. This means that payments to local authorities, which were due to start in October 2024, are now expected to start in October 2025 but further information is awaited.

77. Due to the lack of detail and information currently available it is difficult to predict the long term impact. However, since EPR was expected to help meet the cost to the council of managing packaging waste those costs will continue to need to be met by the council until this is implemented.

Planning

78. The Government released a consultation on the updated National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) on 30 July 2024. This includes mandatory housing targets, changes to green belt rules, and a strategic planning approach which could impact on future growth in the council tax base.

79. The consultation which runs until 24 September 2024 seeks views on the Government's proposed approach to revising the National Planning Policy Framework in order to achieve sustainable growth in the planning system. The government are also seeking views on a series of wider policy proposals in relation to increasing planning fees, local plan intervention criteria and appropriate thresholds for certain Nationally Significant Infrastructure Projects.

Approach for 2025/26

80. The updates set out in this report could have a range of potential impacts and ahead of Government announcements later in the year funding remains really uncertain. Annex 1d summarises possible changes to funding and sets out optimistic, pessimistic and most likely scenarios for each funding source. It also shows the possible change in funding compared to the assumptions in

the current MTFS. The final funding is expected to be a mix of these so scenario planning will be developed to look at different funding combinations.

81. As explained in paragraph 26 planned expenditure budgets are £13.9m higher than anticipated funding in 2025/26 assuming a council tax increase of 1.99%.

82. New budget proposals and updates on funding known at that point will be published on 28 November 2024 as part of the agenda for Performance & Corporate Services Overview & Scrutiny Committee on 6 December 2024.

Capital & Investment Strategy

83. Capital expenditure obtains or improves buildings, vehicles, equipment or other assets owned by the council. The capital programme shows how the Council will use capital expenditure to support the delivery of its priorities. It is split into a firm programme of schemes which have been agreed to progress and a pipeline of future schemes. The firm programme needs to align to the funding available and the agreed level of prudential borrowing.

84. The programme is updated quarterly and fully refreshed as part of the Budget and Business Planning Process to ensure that it remains aligned to the latest priorities, reflects the latest cost projections and timescale for delivery, and incorporates the current funding position.

85. Full Council is required to approve the capital and investment strategy annually to demonstrate that capital expenditure and investment decisions are in line with service objectives and properly take account of stewardship, value for money, prudence, sustainability and affordability. The capital and investment strategy incorporates the treasury management strategy and the investment strategy and is supplemented by the property strategy and highways asset management plan.

86. The capital pipeline agreed in February 2024 provides funding for schemes which were agreed to support the council's priorities, have an agreed need, a confirmed alignment with the prioritisation framework and a basic mandate. These schemes are subject to further development ahead of being added to the firm capital programme. There is a further pre-pipeline of schemes with no current funding identified. These schemes are at a very the early stage and it is not yet clear if they meet a predicted need and/or align to the prioritisation framework. Updates to the pipeline and pre-pipeline will be considered as part of the business and budget planning process for 2025/26.

87. Proposed changes impacting on 2025/26 and future years will be published on 28 November 2024 as part of the agenda for Performance & Corporate Services Overview & Scrutiny Committee on 6 December 2024.

Budget Engagement

88. The council's approach to consultation and engagement is explained further in the consultation and engagement Strategy 2022/25. This puts residents at the heart of decision-making and aims to engage with and listen to residents and other partners in a more active and inclusive way.

89. The council's approach to budget engagement for 2025/26 aims to:

- Involve, inform and engage residents, businesses, staff and partners about the financial pressures facing the council and underline our ongoing commitment to delivering against our strategic priorities.
- Enable the council to develop a clear understanding of what is important to local people, their priorities and the challenges facing their communities and to feed that insight into the budget and business planning process.
- Increase understanding of how the council works, the range of services it delivers and what council tax is spent on.

90. A three-phase approach to consultation and engagement to support 2025/26 business and business planning is organised into three distinct phases:

  - **Phase 1:** Representative residents' survey
  - **Phase 2:** Participatory engagement: Budget simulator, focus groups and sounding boards for children and young people
  - **Phase 3:** Public consultation on the substance of the 2025/26 budget

Phase 1: Representative residents' survey

91. The representative residents' survey ran between 28 May to 12 July 2024. It used a blended approach of postal surveys with an option to respond online, sent to 6,000 randomly selected households across the county, with one reminder mailing to non-responders on 21 June and 18 shifts of on-street interviews, targeting adults aged 18 - 44 years. The randomly selected sample of 6,000 is an increase from last year's 5,100.

92. Some of the key findings from the budget setting, service satisfaction and priorities sections of the 2024 residents' survey are set out in the bullets below, with the full executive summary included as Annex 2 to this report and in the you said, we did section of the county council's Let's talk Oxfordshire website.

- 43 per cent of respondents were satisfied with the services provided by Oxfordshire County Council, 28 per cent were neutral and 28 per cent of respondents were dissatisfied.
- Across the 20 different council services included in the survey, the degree of residents' satisfaction varied widely, as did the proportion of respondents able to rate each service. Following the removal of "don't know" responses, libraries achieved the highest service satisfaction score of all the 20 services (68 per cent satisfied and net satisfaction of +62 per cent) and the maintenance of roads received the lowest (14 per cent satisfied and -62 per cent net satisfaction).

- Around a quarter of respondents (26 per cent) spontaneously suggested road surfaces in poor repair/dangerous/too many potholes as the most important issue that residents in their local area faced.
- In terms of residents' views on the council's nine priority themes, after reading summary notes those most likely to be prioritised by respondents when asked to select the two most important priorities for the council to concentrate on were 'prioritising the health and wellbeing of residents' (48 per cent), followed by 'creating opportunities for children and young people to reach their full potential' (29 per cent), 'investing in an inclusive, integrated and sustainable transport network' (28 per cent), and 'supporting carers and the social care system' (24 per cent).
- When respondents were given a brief explanation of the financial challenges that the council faces and asked for their views on ten possible approaches to make savings / generate income, the highest agreement was for the council to 'Reduce costs by operating from fewer buildings and using those we keep to their full capacity' (85 per cent). This was followed by 'reduce costs by using digital technology where it improves how we work and helps us be more efficient' (79 per cent), 'reduce staffing costs by redesigning services, using fewer agency staff and/or holding vacancies' (69 per cent), 'reduce the costs of the contracts we use to provide services' (68 per cent) and 'reduce costs by collaborating more with partners in voluntary & community sector so we're no longer the main funder & provider for every service' (63 per cent).
- By far the least popular ideas were generating additional income by increasing council tax (58 per cent disagreed) and reducing spending on frontline services (60 per cent disagreed).
- With regards to council tax increases, respondents were again given contextual information and asked whether they agreed or disagreed that the council should consider varying levels of council tax increases to help fund adult social care and other key services. Overall, 42 per cent of respondents supported a 2.99 per cent increase in council tax, 23 per cent supported a 3.99 per cent increase and 19 per cent supported a 4.99 per cent increase.

<u>Phase 2: Participatory engagement: Budget simulator, focus groups and sounding boards for children and young people</u>

93. The council's online budget simulator is a participatory engagement tool and aims to help people to:

- learn more about the services we provide and the financial challenges we face; and
- have their say on where we should focus savings and spending, by adjusting core service budgets and council tax income to set their own, ideally balanced budget for the council.

94. The budget simulator is organised into core council services under 10 service groups and gives people 20 service items (sliders), on which to make choices and a further slider to consider an increase in council tax. A range of contextual information is built into the simulator and the financial figures are based on the forecast budget for 2025/2026 at the time of its launch, taking account of pressures and proposed savings.

95. The budget simulator was open for engagement between Wednesday 19 June 2024 and Sunday 21 July 2024 and in all 1,060 adults submitted a budget. It was also piloted with young people in focus groups, where 30 young people completed it.

96. Set out below are high level findings from **adult** budget simulator exercise. The full report from both the adults budget simulator, which includes analysis of the accompanying qualitative comments are included in Annex 2 to this report. It is also in you said, we did section of the county council's Let's talk Oxfordshire website alongside a reports of the young people's budget simulator, the young people's focus groups and the young people's budget sounding boards.

Slider movements (organised by service group)

Service	**% of people who move the slider to decrease budget (-5% or -10%)**	**% of people who made no change (selected 0%)**	**% of people who moved the slider to increase budget (+5%)**
Adult social work	34%	53%	13%
Age well - care and support for older people	25%	59%	16%
Live well - care and support for vulnerable adults	29%	62%	9%
Children's social care	15%	68%	17%
Family help	26%	57%	18%
Education and schools	10%	57%	34%
Special educational needs and disabilities (SEND)	13%	57%	30%
Home to school transport	30%	59%	11%
Highways maintenance	12%	47%	41%
Street lighting	52%	40%	8%
Place transport and infrastructure	37%	42%	21%

Service	% of people who move the slider to decrease budget (-5% or -10%)	% of people who made no change (selected 0%)	% of people who moved the slider to increase budget (+5%)
Strategic planning	47%	43%	11%
Environment and climate action	45%	33%	21%
Waste disposal	18%	66%	16%
Public health	25%	53%	23%
Fire and rescue	9%	77%	13%
Trading standards	39%	52%	9%
Libraries	35%	51%	15%
Museums and history services	46%	43%	10%
Running the council	67%	29%	3%

97. When considering and weighing-up choices, the service area items which respondents most frequently selected for an increase in budget were:

- Highways maintenance (41%) * (to maintain service not to improve it)
- Education and schools (34%)
- SEND (30%)
- Public health (23%)
- Place, transport and infrastructure (21%)
- Environment and climate action (21%)
- These were all selected by 20 per cent or more of respondents.

98. Conversely, the service items which respondents most frequently selected for a decrease in budget (selected by at least 40 per cent of respondents) were:

- Running the council (67%)
- Street lighting (52%)
- Strategic planning (47%)
- Museums and history services (46%)
- Environment and climate action (45%)

99. The table below shows the impact of people's choices on service item budgets, by presenting the average budget percentage change. This ranges from 1.27% to -4.47%.

Average budget percentage change (in rank order)

Service item	Average budget change as %
Highways maintenance	1.27%
Education and schools	1.05%
Special educational needs and disabilities (SEND)	0.63%
Fire and rescue	0.07%
Children's social care	-0.11%
Waste disposal	-0.27%
Public health	-0.43%
Age well – care and support for older people	-0.68%
Family help	-0.69%
Live well – care and support for vulnerable adults	-1.29%
Place, transport and infrastructure	-1.33%
Adult social work	-1.40%
Home to school transport	-1.49%
Libraries	-1.53%
Trading standards	-1.95%
Environment and climate action	-2.36%
Museums and history services	-2.58%
Strategic planning	-2.59%
Street lighting	-2.92%
Running the council	-4.47%

100. Overall, 659 people chose to increase council tax on top of the 1.99% already proposed in the simulator to 'balance' their budget. On average, the budget simulator shows that people were willing to increase by 1.28 per cent.

101. In addition to adults completing the budget simulator, 30 young people also submitted a budget using an identical, but separate children and young people's budget simulator. All but one of these completing it during a focus groups setting.

- When considering and weighing-up choices across the 20 service area slider options presented in the budget simulator, young people were most likely to select the following service areas for an increase in budget: 'environment and climate change' (21 young people), education and schools' (20 young people), 'public health' (19 young people) and special educational needs and disabilities' (15 young people).

- Conversely, the service items which young people most frequently selected for a decrease in budget (selected by at least half of all respondents) were: 'libraries' (17 young people), 'museums and history services' (16 young people) and 'street lighting' (16 young people).

- Focusing now on the impact of slider choices on service item budgets, the average budget percentage change ranged from 3 per cent to -2.83 per cent.

- Overall, 23 young people chose to increase council tax on top of the 1.99% already proposed. On average, they were willing to increase it by 1.33 per cent.

- At both of the two sounding boards events and at one of the budget simulator focus groups, young people were asked to consider the council's nine strategic priorities. Specifically, they were asked to deliberate in group format on which two priorities were most important to them as young people and which two were the least important to them.

- 'Creating opportunities for children and young people to reach our full potential' and 'prioritise the health and wellbeing of residents' were more likely to be selected than any others in the young people's top two strategic priorities selected by six out of eleven groups. These were selected by participants at both the sounding boards and budget simulator focus group, however the second ranking strategic priority at the focus group was 'put action to address the climate emergency at the heart of our work' selected by two of the three groups.

- For 'create opportunities for children and young people to reach our full potential', most of the comments were about needing a good education so young people have better life chances and to fulfil their potential; *"if we don't build their future, who will lead the world?"*

- For 'prioritise the health and wellbeing of residents', a majority of comments focused on everyone had the right to feel healthy, in mind and physically. Many comments said that the negative impact of this has a greater 'knock on effect' from pressure on the NHS, contributing to society and potential for death. *"Health and wellbeing is most important because without it people are unable to have good futures or contribute to the community".*

- The strategic priority most likely to be chosen as the least important by the young people when combining the views expressed in the sounding boards and the focus group was: 'play our part in a vibrant and participatory local democracy' chosen by over half of the groups (seven out of the eleven groups). There were a fair number of comments about young people not being able to vote, so felt they were not able to be part of the participatory democracy. There were also comments, stating there were systems in place for a participatory democracy already *"In my opinion we already have a good system set up for voting and democracy, so everyone has a say"*.

- This was followed by 'invest in an inclusive, integrated and sustainable transport network' (five out of the eleven groups – with all five chosen from the eight groups at the sounding boards, making it their 'top' least important strategic priority out of the nine). Most comments shared the idea that there were more important issues, and that people could walk if they needed to get somewhere. It was felt that there were already some good aspects to transport that already existed, such as public transport, it was well organised and it aided people too. However, a few comments did state cost, access in rural areas and getting to school did need to be improved, as well as its sustainability credentials.

- *It should be noted that 'invest in an inclusive, integrated and sustainable transport network'* was not selected by any of the three tables in the budget simulator focus groups. These groups were more diverged in their opinions, with three of the nine strategic priorities each receiving one vote.

Budget and Business Planning Timetable

102. Revenue and capital budget proposals will be published on 28 November 2024, ahead of being considered by the Performance & Corporate Services Overview & Scrutiny Committee on 6 December 2024. This committee will have a further opportunity to comment on the updated proposals in light of any updates to funding received in late December or early January, on 17 January 2025.

103. The district councils are required to provide council tax bases, council tax collection surpluses/deficits and business rate forecasts by 31 January 2025. Provisional figures are expected in mid-December 2024. These will be used to inform the budget proposed by Cabinet in January 2025.

104. The provisional local government finance settlement, which provides information about the general funding available to the council and any changes to the level of council tax that can been agreed is expected to be announced in late December. The final settlement is likely to be announced in late January/early February 2025. This will confirm the general funding available to the Council for 2025/26.

105. Cabinet will take into consideration the comments from the Performance and Corporate Services Overview and Scrutiny Committee in December 2024 and January 2025, as well as feedback from the public engagement and consultation, alongside the funding available announced as part of the provisional local government settlement, in setting out its proposed budget on 28 January 2025. The capital and investment strategy, including the treasury management strategy, and review of charges will be included as part of the proposed budget.

106. The Council meeting to agree the 2025/26 revenue budget, medium term financial plan and capital programme will take place on 11 February 2025. The council is legally required to share the county council precept with the district councils by 1 March 2025.

107. A timetable for the budget and business planning process is attached at Annex 3.

Staff implications

108. There are no staffing implications arising directly from this report. Further information will be shared through the budget and business planning process.

Climate implications

109. Climate Action is a policy priority for Oxfordshire County Council. The council will publish commentary on the potential climate implications of changes to service and capital delivery arising through the budget planning process.

Equality and inclusion implications

110. There are no equality and inclusion implications arising directly from this report. A high level assessment of the broad impact of the revenue budget proposals will be included as part of the published information in December 2024. More detailed impact assessments, which will take account of feedback from the public consultation and from scrutiny, will accompany the Cabinet's proposed budget in January 2025.

Risk management

111. Risks and opportunities to the council and levels of reserves and balances will be considered as part of the budget and business planning process.

Financial implications

112. The Council is required by law to set a balanced budget for 2025/26 before 1 March 2025. Alongside this, there is a requirement under Section 25 of the Local Government Finance Act 2003 for the Chief Finance Officer to prepare a statement on the robustness of the budget estimates and the adequacy of reserves. This report is the first stage in the process to achieve these objectives.

Comments checked by:

Ian Dyson,
Director of Financial & Commercial Services

Legal implications

113. The Council is required under the Localism Act 2011 to set a council tax requirement for the authority. This report provides information which, when taken together with the future reports up to January 2025, will lead to the council tax requirement being agreed in February 2025, together with a budget for 2025/26, two-year medium term financial strategy and ten - year capital programme.

114. The Council has a fiduciary duty to Council Tax payers, which means it must consider the prudent use of resources, including control of expenditure, financial prudence in the short and long term, the need to strike a fair balance between the interests of the Council Tax payers and ratepayers and the community's interest in adequate and efficient services and the need to act in good faith in relation to compliance with statutory duties and exercising statutory powers.

Comments checked by:

Anita Bradley
Director of Law and Governance and Monitoring Officer

LORNA BAXTER
Deputy Chief Executive and Executive Director of Resources (Section 151 Officer)

Contact Officers:
Kathy Wilcox: Head of Corporate Finance
Kathy.Wilcox@oxfordshire.gov.uk

Kerry Middleton: Head of Communications, Marketing and Engagement
Kerry.Middleton@oxfordshire.gov.uk

October 2024

Council Services & Indicative Budgets (MTFS agreed February 2024)

Adult Services

1. Adult Services service delivers adult social care across services for older people, those with mental health needs (including management of a s75 agreement for under 65s) and learning disabilities. In addition, the service delivers community support for the sector and manages the financial functions associated with adult social care.

2. The service is also responsible for strategic commissioning, quality and improvement, and brokerage functions for a wide range of Health, Education and Social Care services.

3. The Oxfordshire Way underpins everything the service does and illustrates the council's commitment to prevention, innovation, and work in partnership with the voluntary sector and other partners. Prevention is at the heart of the council's approach through a range of strategies and the Oxfordshire Way supports residents to live well in their community, remaining fit and healthy for as long as possible.

Adult Services	2025/26 £m	2026/27 £m
Budget rolled forward from previous year (*)	**250.2**	**261.1**
Budget increases agreed in previous budgets	12.6	14.8
Budget decreases agreed in previous budgets	-1.4	0.0
One-off funding from COVID-19 Reserve falls out	-0.3	0.0
Planned Budget	**261.1**	**275.9**
Increase to budget compared to previous year	**4.4%**	

(*) including estimated funding for 2024/25 pay inflation

Children's Services

4. The core purpose of Children's Services is to ensure that all children in Oxfordshire have the best possible start in life and maintain positive outcomes and wellbeing. The service is responsible for:

- Securing the provision of services which address the needs of all children and young people, including the most disadvantaged and vulnerable, and their families and carers.
- Working closely with the local area partners to improve the outcomes and well-being of children and young people.
- The performance of local authority functions relating to the education and social care of children and young people.

In performing this function, the service has regard to the General Principles of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) and ensures that children and young people are involved in the development and delivery of local services.

Children's Services currently comprises social care, education and schools, business support, provider services and safeguarding as its main functions. Approximately 100 individual and distinct services are delivered under the umbrella of the service with an excess of 300 primary statutory duties. The rest falls under guidance and direction

5. The Music Service engages young people in learning and participating in music through schools and music groups.

Children's Services	2025/26 £m	2026/27 £m
Budget rolled forward from previous year (*)	**197.3**	**200.6**
Budget increases agreed in previous budgets	12.2	3.4
Budget decreases agreed in previous budgets	-8.9	-5.6
One-off funding from COVID-19 Reserve falls out	0.0	0.0
Planned Budget	**200.6**	**198.4**
Increase to budget compared to previous year	**1.7%**	

(*) including estimated funding for 2024/25 pay inflation

Public Health & Communities

Public Health

6. The majority of public health services are funded by ringfenced grant funding **(£34.4m in 2024/25)**. The conditions attached to this funding set out that this must be used to meet certain responsibilities and prescribed functions:

- the improvement of the health and wellbeing of local populations and communities, including the provision of functions such as sexual health services, NHS health checks, and health visiting
- carry out health protection functions delegated from the Secretary of State
- reduce health inequalities across the life course, including within underserved populations and communities
- Have regard to need to need to improve take up of, and outcomes from, drug and alcohol misuse treatment services

The public health grant can also be used for a range of non – prescribed functions, for example tobacco control and obesity services, public mental health, and dental public health.

7. The Public health grant conditions allow for underspends against the grant funding to be carried over into the next financial year as part of a public health reserve. The use of this reserve must comply with grant conditions and the Department of Health and Social Care reserve the right to consider reducing future grant allocations in the case of significant and repeated underspends.

Communities

Communities provides public library services across 44 sites in the county, as well as the Oxfordshire Museum, History and Archive and Victoria County

History services which have responsibility for the collection, conservation and public access to portable history, local studies, corporate and social history of the county.

Public Health & Communities	2025/26 £m	2026/27 £m
Budget rolled forward from previous year (*)	**12.6**	**12.8**
Budget increases agreed in previous budgets	0.0	0.0
Budget decreases agreed in previous budgets	0.2	0.0
One-off funding from COVID-19 Reserve falls out	0.0	0.0
Planned Budget	**12.8**	**12.8**
Increase to budget compared to previous year	**1.6%**	

(*) including estimated funding for 2024/25 pay inflation

Environment & Highways

8. Environment and Highways comprises three main areas of activity:

Highways and Transport
Plan, develop, manage, and maintain the highway and transport network to ensure it is safe, integrated and accessible by all - working closely with transport providers and users of the network. Ensuring public rights of way are open and usable for both leisure and everyday travel. Creating and developing clear transport policies and associated action plans set out through the Local Transport and Connectivity Plan and associate Area and Corridor Travel Plans, including developing a clear forward capital programme. Securing funding and delivering agreed major transport infrastructure improvements.

Countryside
Protect and enhance Oxfordshire's countryside for all to enjoy. Improve the natural environment through positive enhancement and management of trees and green spaces to increase biodiversity and ensure opportunities for the county councils' green assets are maximised.

Waste and Recycling
Work with partners to ensure that the county's municipal waste is managed sustainably and efficiently, including the operation and performance management of Household Waste Recycling Centres

Environment & Highways	2025/26 £m	2026/27 £m
Budget rolled forward from previous year (*)	**69.7**	**71.4**
Budget increases agreed in previous budgets	2.5	0.1
Budget decreases agreed in previous budgets	-0.8	1.0
One-off funding from COVID-19 Reserve falls out	0.0	0.0
Planned Budget	**71.4**	**72.5**
Increase to budget compared to previous year	**2.5%**	

(*) including estimated funding for 2024/25 pay inflation

Economy & Place

9. Economy and Place focuses on the creative use of the council's powers and influence to promote the general health and well-being of Oxfordshire's citizens and communities.

10. The service does this through supporting businesses, communities, residents and public services to make the most of the opportunities of development and change, embedding healthy place shaping in everything we do, designing-in innovation to our approach and through prioritising climate action and environmental enhancement.

11. Services include Place Shaping, Regulatory Planning, Future Economy, Climate Action and the Innovation Service. Economy and Place also lead on the relationship with the council owned Local Enterprise Partnership and the Future Oxfordshire Partnership.

Economy & Place	2025/26 £m	2026/27 £m
Budget rolled forward from previous year (*)	**1.8**	**1.7**
Budget increases agreed in previous budgets	0.4	0.4
Budget decreases agreed in previous budgets	-0.5	0.0
One-off funding from COVID-19 Reserve falls out	0.0	0.0
Planned Budget	**1.7**	**2.1**
Increase to budget compared to previous year	**-4.0%**	

(*) including estimated funding for 2024/25 pay inflation

Oxfordshire Fire & Rescue Service and Community Safety

12. Oxfordshire Fire & Rescue Service provides a Fire and Rescue service as set out in the Fire and Rescue Services Act and National framework document, to meet the requirements of the Oxfordshire County Council Fire Authority's Community Risk Management Plan (CRMP). Services are delivered through a combined approach of Protection, Prevention and Response.

13. Community Safety is comprised of Oxfordshire Fire and Rescue Service, Emergency Planning, Gypsy & Traveller Services and Trading Standards.

14. Emergency Planning ensures that the requirements of the Civil Contingency Act and other supplementary legislation are met. The team leads on ensuring plans for organisational resilience and business continuity are in place across the council and provides business continuity advice to local businesses.

15. Gypsy & Traveller Services deals with unauthorised encampments and manages six county council owned permanent sites.

16. The Trading Standards team discharges the council's statutory obligations to ensure compliance with certain consumer and environmental legislation, including in relation to weights and measures, product safety, trade representations and trademarks, unfair contract terms and unfair trading practices, animal health and welfare, price marking and price comparisons,

supply of age restricted products, illegal tobacco, licensing and inspection of explosives and petroleum storage facilities and safety certification of sports grounds. Non-statutory work includes consumer advice and support, scam reduction, and road weight restriction enforcement.

Oxfordshire Fire & Rescue Service & Community Safety	2025/26 £m	2026/27 £m
Budget rolled forward from previous year (*)	**28.7**	**29.7**
Budget increases agreed in previous budgets	1.0	0.6
Budget decreases agreed in previous budgets	0.0	0.0
Planned Budget	**29.7**	**30.4**
Increase to budget compared to previous year	**3.6%**	

(*) including estimated funding for 2024/25 pay inflation

Resources and Law and Governance

17. The focus of the services that combine within Resources and Law and Governance is to:

- work with the council's Cabinet to set and communicate the direction of the Council and support the organisation through periods of significant change.
- Deliver services for both internal customers, through the provision of enabling services such as Communications, Strategy & Insight and Finance and customers through the provision of key frontline and universal services such as the Customer Service Centre, libraries and the Registration Service.

18. The Property & Assets Team spearheads the council's property strategy with an emphasis on investment and facility management and oversees the property aspect of the capital programme, including Local Authority maintained schools.

19. The Public Affairs, Policy and Partnerships team acts as the corporate voice of the council - advocating for its interests, promoting its services, shaping its strategy, and developing its partnerships. Key responsibilities include developing and promoting Oxfordshire as a place, protecting and enhancing the reputation of the council at a local, regional and national level, informing and engaging our partners, stakeholders and residents to help the council become a partner and place shaper of choice and ensuring the council's political priorities are turned into effective outcomes.

20. The Financial & Commercial Services team provides strategic financial planning, accounting and advice and leads on processes supporting financial management and the agreement of the budget, medium term financial strategy and capital programme. Monitoring reports are shared internally and with Cabinet throughout the year as well as reports setting out the outturn position and statutory accounts and reporting. This service area also includes Internal Audit and Insurance. The service also leads on the delivery of the council's Commercial Strategy and supports strategic procurement processes and contract management as well as market intelligence and spend data.

21. Human Resources and Cultural Change lead on the organisation's ambition of being an Employer, Partner and Place Shaper of choice. They also provide advice and support to the organisation in terms of employee relations and engagement, learning and development, workforce planning, recruitment, retention and all associated activities.

22. The IT team maintain the Council's technology and digital infrastructure, access to business systems, improvement approaches and facilities required by internal customers to deliver the council's services.

23. Law and Governance provides legal advice and support to services across all of the county council's functions. Functions include:

- Democratic Services running the council's formal meetings including overview and scrutiny, supporting members and the Lord Lieutenancy. • Governance including advice and support to the Monitoring Officer with Code of Conduct matters.
- Elections.
- An appeals service for schools and home to school transport.
- Information Governance including data protection responsibilities for the council.
- Registration service including ceremonies.
- Coroner's Service and mortuary provision.

Resources and Law & Governance	2025/26 £m	2026/27 £m
Budget rolled forward from previous year (*)	**57.8**	**59.4**
Budget increases agreed in previous budgets	1.7	1.0
Budget decreases agreed in previous budgets	0.1	0.1
One-off funding from COVID-19 Reserve falls out	-0.2	-0.5
Planned Budget	**59.4**	**59.9**
Increase to budget compared to previous year	**2.8%**	

(*) including estimated funding for 2023/24 pay inflation

Transformation, Digital & Customer Experience

24. The Transformation, Digital & Customer Experience service leads, governs and drives transformational activities across the organisation with oversight of all the transformation programmes, improving customer experience, embedding digital alternative ways of working and enabling improved visibility of the financial impact in driving transformational activities.

Transformation, Digital & Customer Experience	2025/26 £m	2026/27 £m
Budget rolled forward from previous year (*)	**3.3**	**2.4**
Budget increases agreed in previous budgets	0.1	0.1
Budget decreases agreed in previous budgets that will be allocated to directorates	-1.0	0.0
One-off funding from COVID-19 Reserve falls out	0.0	-0.2
Planned Budget	**2.4**	**2.3**
Increase to budget compared to previous year	**-27.3%**	

(*) including estimated funding for 2024/25 pay inflation

This page is intentionally left blank

General Balances and Earmarked Reserves

1. The risk assessment for the level of balances for 2024/25 was included as part of the Earmarked Reserves and General Balances Policy Statement 2024/25 and includes an assessment of the risk of emergencies, directorate overspends, the non – achievement of planned savings, possible liabilities for which no provision has been made and risks related to major contracts and third party spend.

Area of risk	2024/25 £m	Explanation of risk/justification of balances	2023/24 £m
Emergencies	6.1	An allowance of 1.0% of annual net operating budget for the cost of responding to emergencies that falls outside of eligibility for the Bellwin Scheme	5.4
Directorate overspends	15.8	Risk that directorates will overspend due to unforeseen pressures, demography or demand and no mitigations are available - assumes 2.5% overspend	13.2
Contingent liabilities & insurance risk	3.1	Possible liabilities for which no provision has been made or funding set aside in an earmarked reserve (0.25% of net expenditure or minimum to meet quantified contingent liabilities)	4.6
Major contracts & 3rd party spend	5.2	Risk of contractors failing, mis-specification, or non-delivery plus contract costs increase by more than allowed for in the budget - calculated as 0.75% of estimated spend with suppliers (reduced from 1.0% in 2023/24)	7.0
Total	**30.2**		**30.2**
Contingency (on-going funding)	**7.3**		**8.3**
Total Balances and Contingency	**37.5**		**38.5**

Risk assessed level of Balances as % of net operating budget	4.9%
Net operating budget - spend per week	11.8
Weeks of spend	2.6

2. The current MTFS assumed general balances would be at least £3.7m higher than the risk assessed level at the start of 2024/25 as a result of additional interest received on cash balances during 2023/24. The actual position at the end of 2023/24, after taking account of the underspend of £12.3m, was £42.0m, £11.8m above the 2024/25 risk assessed level. As agreed as part of the 2024/25 budget £3.7m of this one – off funding has been used to fund contributions to reserves in 2024/25. As set out in the Provisional Outturn Report for 2023/24 a further £5.8m was agreed to be used to be used to make a further £2.8m contribution to the IFRS9 reserve, to provide £2.0m funding for the council's Commercial Strategy and to make a £1.0m contribution to the Budget Priorities Reserve. The remaining £2.3m was agreed to be held in balances pending a decision about future use.

3. After taking account of the forecast underspend of £0.4m and the £2.3m, the Business Management & Monitoring report to Cabinet in September 2024 forecasts that general balances will be £33.0m at the end of 2024/25. This is £2.8m higher than the risk assessed level of £30.2m. The level of balances for 2025/26 will be considered through the Budget and Business Planning process.

4. When the budget and MTFS was agreed in February 2024, earmarked reserves were expected to be £165.2m at the end of 2023/24 before taking account of the negative balance held in the DSG unusable reserve. The actual position at 31 March 2024 was £210.1m. The latest forecast indicates that earmarked reserves are expected to be £172.5m at the end of the 2024/25 but this will continue to be updated as the year progresses.

Reserves	Balance at 31 March 2024 £m	Budgeted Contributions to/from Reserves £m	Other Changes to Reserves £m	Balance at 31 March 2025 £m
Revenue Grants Unapplied				
Grants and Contributions Reserve	33.7	0.0	-13.3	20.4
COVID-19 Reserve	7.9	-3.8	0.0	4.1
Government Initiatives Reserve	3.2	0.0	-0.5	2.7
Subtotal	**44.7**	**-3.8**	**-13.8**	**27.2**
Corporate Priorities				
Budget Priorities Reserve	10.7	-1.4	-7.5	1.9
Transformation Reserve	1.8	-1.5	4.7	5.0
Zero Emissions Zone	1.2	0.0	0.0	1.2
Commercial Pump Priming Reserve	0.0	0.0	2.0	2.0
Subtotal	**13.8**	**-2.9**	**-0.8**	**10.1**
Funding for Risk				
Insurance Reserve	10.3	0.0	0.0	10.3
Demographic Risk Reserve	17.0	4.0	0.0	21.0
Council Elections	0.6	0.0	0.2	0.8
Redundancy Reserve	2.4	0.0	1.3	3.7
Trading Accounts	0.1	0.0	-0.1	0.0
Council Tax Collection Fund Reserve	3.0	0.0	-3.0	0.0

Reserves	Balance at 31 March 2024 £m	Budgeted Contributions to/from Reserves £m	Other Changes to Reserves £m	Balance at 31 March 2025 £m
Business Rates Reserve	11.7	0.0	-11.7	0.0
Collection Fund Reserve	0.0	0.0	8.4	8.4
IFRS9 Changes in the Value of Pooled Funds	0.0	0.0	5.0	5.0
Subtotal	**45.0**	**4.0**	**0.1**	**49.1**
Capital & Equipment				
Capital & Prudential Borrowing Reserves	80.8	10.2	-26.4	64.7
Vehicle and Equipment Reserve	4.1	0.0	-1.7	2.4
Investment Pump Priming Reserve	0.1	2.2	-2.2	0.1
Subtotal	**85.1**	**12.4**	**-30.3**	**67.2**
Other Reserves				
Partnership Reserves	2.1	0.0	-0.3	1.7
On-Street Car Parking Reserve	6.5	0.0	-2.2	4.3
Budget Equalisation Reserve	0.0	1.2	-1.2	0.0
Subtotal	**8.6**	**1.2**	**-3.7**	**6.0**
Unusable Reserves				
Schools' Reserves[1]	13.0	0.0	0.0	13.0
Total	**210.1**	**10.9**	**-48.5**	**172.5**
DSG High Needs deficit within Unusable Reserve	-55.8		-21.3	-77.1
Total Reserves	**154.3**	**10.9**	**-69.7**	**95.5**

<u>High Needs Dedicated Schools Grant Unusable Reserve</u>

5. The School and Early Years Finance (England) Regulations 2020 stipulate that a deficit on the Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) must be carried forward to be funded from future DSG income unless permission is sought from the Secretary of State for Education to fund the deficit from general resources.

6. Further clarification of the accounting treatment for deficit DSG balances was provided by the Local Authorities (Capital Finance and Accounting) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2020 which came into force on 29 November 2020. These stipulated that where a local authority has a deficit in respect of its school budget for a financial year beginning on 1st April 2020, 2021 or 2022, the authority—

    (a) must not charge to a revenue account an amount in respect of that deficit; and

    (b) must charge the amount of the deficit to an account established, charged and used solely for the purpose of recognising deficits in respect of its school budget

[1] This is made up of surpluses of £14.1m and deficits of £1.1m.

7. As a result of this, an unusable reserve was created on the balance sheet to hold the negative balance.

8. The regulations which require the negative balance to be held in an unusable reserve were due to come to an end on 1 April 2023. In December 2022 the government agreed to the extension of the DSG statutory override for a one-off period of three years (up to March 2026).

9. As at 31 March 2024, the DSG Unusable Reserve had a negative balance of £45.6m of which a negative balance of £55.8m related to High Needs DSG. This reserve will continue to increase in deficit over the MTFS period and the high needs element is forecast to be in deficit by £77.1m at 31 March 2025.

10. Beyond the period of the statutory override, the expectation is that the balance on the DSG Unusable Reserve will transfer back to the Council's total Earmarked Reserves. If this happens, it would materially impact on the overall level of reserves and the financial sustainability of the council.

COVID-19 Reserve

11. As set out in the Provisional Outturn Report for 2023/24 £1.4m funding not required to be used to fund pressures in Children's Social Care in 2023/24 based on the position at year end is available to support future pressures or initiatives. All of the other funding held in the reserve is built into the Medium Term Financial Strategy.

Transformation Reserve

12. £7.7m funding was agreed to be added to the Transformation Reserve as part of the budget agreed in February 2024 is being used to enable the next phase of transformation to be delivered and to create a sustainable council for the future.

Grants & Contributions Reserve

13. This reserve holds underspends on ringfenced grant funding which need to be used in accordance with the grant conditions in future years.

14. £11.7m of the £33.7m balance at 31 March 2024 related to grant funding for the Homes for Ukraine scheme. This will be used to support the on-going cost of the scheme in Oxfordshire.

15. Public Health grant funding held in the reserve totalled £4.5m at 31 March 2024. The planned use of the reserve primarily reflects projects and activities to promote prevention and reduce demand across the council.

Collection Fund Reserve

16. This reserve is held to manage fluctuations in Business Rates and Council Tax income that the Council receives, and the intention set out in the Reserves and Balances Policy Statement for 2024/25 was to hold a balance of £4.0m.

17. After taking account of additional business rates funding in 2023/24 and 2024/25 the total in the reserve is currently expected to be £8.4m at the end of 2024/25. The use of this funding will be considered through the Budget & Business Planning Process for 2025/26.

Previously Agreed Budget Changes

Directorate	2025/26 £000	2026/27 £000	Total £000
Previously Agreed Budget Increases			
Adult Services	12,566	14,788	27,354
Children's Services	12,168	4,608	16,776
Environment & Highways	2,491	73	2,564
Economy & Place	436	371	807
Public Health & Communities	0	0	0
Oxfordshire Fire & Rescue Service and Community Safety	1,043	639	1,682
Resources and Law & Governance	1,701	961	2,662
Transformation, Digital & Customer Experience	112	98	210
Total Previously Agreed Budget Increases	**30,517**	**21,538**	**52,055**
Previously Agreed Budget Reductions			
Adult Services	-1,358	0	-1,358
Children's Services	-8,877	-5,620	-14,497
Environment & Highways	-751	991	240
Economy and Place	-509	0	-509
Public Health & Communities	200	0	200
Oxfordshire Fire & Rescue Service and Community Safety	0	0	0
Resources and Law & Governance	75	75	150
Transformation, Digital & Customer Experience	-1,000	0	-1,000
Total Previously Agreed Budget Reductions	**-12,220**	**-4,554**	**-16,774**
Previously Agreed Changes to COVID-19 Funded Pressures			
Adult Services	-261	0	-261
Children's Services	0	-1,200	-1,200
Resources and Law & Governance	-160	-500	-660
Transformation, Digital & Customer Experience	0	-175	-175
Total Previously Agreed Changes to COVID-19 Funding	**-421**	**-1,875**	**-2,296**
Combined Previously Agreed Pressures and Savings			
Adult Services	10,947	14,788	25,735
Children's Services	3,291	-2,212	1,079
Environment & Highways	1,740	1,064	2,804
Economy and Place	-73	371	298
Public Health & Communities	200	0	200
Oxfordshire Fire & Rescue Service and Community Safety	1,043	639	1,682
Resources and Law & Governance	1,616	536	2,152
Transformation, Digital & Customer Experience	-888	-77	-965
Total Existing Planned Changes	**17,876**	**15,109**	**32,985**

Adult Services

Ref	Description	2025/26 £000	2026/27 £000	Total £000
	Previously Agreed Budget Increases			
	Demographic Growth			
	Funding for demographic growth (increases related to population changes)	8,500		8,500
2025ASC590	Demand increases resulting from population growth	0	8,500	8,500
	Subtotal Demographic Growth	**8,500**	**8,500**	**17,000**
	Inflation			
	Pay Inflation (2.5%)	826		826
	Indicative pay inflation	84	788	872
	Contract Inflation	920		920
	Income Inflation (2.0%)	-796		-796
2025ASC601	Increases to the cost of care packages funded by the council.	0	5,500	5,500
24AD1	Changes to the cost of care packages funded by the council	2,470		2,470
2025ASC597	Changes to the cost of care packages funded by the council	1,937		1,937
	Subtotal Inflation	**5,441**	**6,288**	**11,729**
	Investments			
2025ASTBC1	**Digital acceleration - removal of Social Care Grant from 2024/25** Digital innovation to assist customer pathways and user experience in information finding and advice, pathways to services and contact points, with additional ability for practitioner to make better use of data and agile working.	-500		-500
2025ASTBC2	**Oxfordshire Way - removal of Social Care Grant from 2024/25**	-175		-175
2025ASTBC3	**Adults Transport - Additional budget - removal of Social Care Grant from 2024/25** Improve data and systems to drive efficiencies in systems and manage service assessment, officer time and services levels.	-100		-100
2025ASTBC4	**Adult Services Transport - Investment - removal of Social Care Grant**	-100		-100
2025ASTBC5	**Shared Lives - removal of Social Care Grant from 2024/25**	-500		-500
	Subtotal Investments	**-1,375**	**0**	**-1,375**
	Total Previously Agreed Budget Increases	**12,566**	**14,788**	**27,354**

Adult Services

Ref	Description	2025/26 £000	2026/27 £000	Total £000
	Previously Agreed Budget Savings			
24AD4	The council is committed to supporting people to live independent healthy lives in their own homes. The council's programme of reviewing care packages will ensure that residents are supported to maximise all the opportunities that are available to them in the community to achieve better outcomes.	-385		-385
24AD12	Continue to work with residents, the voluntary sector, health partners, and community groups to deliver The Oxfordshire Way. This means that people will be enabled to live healthy lives in their own homes for as long as possible. We will ensure that people do not enter into residential care when there is a better outcome that they could achieve by accessing equipment, technology, or Extra Care Housing.	-175		-175
2025L&CO23	Refocus activity on action to reduce outstanding unsecured debt, increasing the target reduction from 10% to 12% by the end of 2024/25. New saving in 2024/25	104		104
24AD7	Shared Lives - increase the number of people who can find a home through the shared lives scheme. Build further on the success of the service to provide options for respite for a wider range of individuals.	-74		-74
24AD15	Reduction in the cost of social care assessments contribution due to public health (drug and alcohol provider) providing a more efficient, integrated, and holistic assessment falls out in 2025/26.	72		72
2025ASC682	Reviews of care packages for service users with mental health needs linked to health funding.	-900		-900
	Total Previously Agreed Budget Savings	**-1,358**	**0**	**-1,358**
	Previously Agreed Changes to Pressures funded by the COVID-19 Reserve on a one - off basis			
24COVID5	Previously agreed funding of £325k for additional commissioning and contract activity for social care arising as a result of the on-going impact of COVID-19 falls out in 2025/26.	-261		-261
	Total Previously Agreed Changes to Pressures funded by the COVID-19 Reserve	**-261**	**0**	**-261**
	Total Adult Services	**10,947**	**14,788**	**25,735**

Children's Services

Ref	Description	2025/26 £000	2026/27 £000	Total £000
	Previously Agreed Budget Increases			
	Demographic Growth			
	Demographic Growth	5,494		5,494
23CS5	Children's Placement Demography and Price Inflation - increase to existing planned demography of £4.0m. COVID-19 has had an impact in this area due to more children being in placements than expected, for longer periods of time, along with an unusually large increase in the unit price for a placement. The demographic increases link to delays in courts and changes in individual circumstances resulting in children spending longer in care than they may have done.	100		100
24CS32	Home to School Transport: There is a significant increase in the number of students needing an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP). 33% of students with an EHCP require transport and the student increases are estimated at 11% in 2024/25 and 9% in 2025/26.	1,200		1,200
	Subtotal Demographic Growth	**6,794**	**0**	**6,794**
	Inflation			
	Pay Inflation (2.5%)	1,463		1,463
	Indicative pay inflation	460	4,317	4,777
	Contract Inflation	255		255
24CS6	Inflation: funding for estimated inflationary increases to the cost of care.	1,600		1,600
CEF1	**Education & Learning**			
24CS30	On-going impact of increases in the cost of mainstream bus tenders over the medium term as cohorts of contracts are tendered.	213		213
24CS31	Inflation: funding for estimated inflationary increases to the cost of transport for children with SEND.	305		305
2025CS-HN713	**Home to School Transport** Future increases in the number of EHCPs and Post 16 travel and price increase impacting on demand and cost of transport.	400	2,500	2,900
	Subtotal Inflation	**4,696**	**6,817**	**11,513**
	Demand and Other Pressures			
CEF1	**Education & Learning**			
23CS1	Special Educational Needs (SEN) Casework Team - an increase in demand for Eduction Health & Care Plans (EHCPs) and the number of approved EHCPs which require an annual review has created a pressure across the SEN service including case workers, educational psychologists, quality and advocacy support. Additional capacity is needed to ensure quality and timeliness are in line with expected standards.	281		281
CEF2	**Early Help, Front Door and Social Care**			
24CS1	Continuation of £0.970m funding for adult facing services within family safeguarding (family solutions plus), relating to contracts supporting domestic abuse, adult mental health & substance misuse. The increases are after taking account of the Supporting Families grant of £0.485m in 2024/25 plus funding from the Public Health reserve of £0.200m in 2024/25.	685		685
CEF5	**Children's Services Central Costs**			
2025CS787	**Social Care** Demand and inflation pressures continuing from 2023/24 (full year effect)	2,274	-4,237	-1,963
	Subtotal Demand and Other Pressures	**3,240**	**-4,237**	**-997**

Children's Services

Ref	Description	2025/26 £000	2026/27 £000	Total £000
	Investments			
2025CS790/1/3	**New Service Investments** (supporting the Financial Strategy) Recruitment & Retention Strategy	832	708	1,540
2025CSTBC1	**Digital acceleration - removal of Social Care Grant from 2024/25** Digital innovation to assist customer pathways and user experience in information finding and advice, pathways to services and contact points, with additional ability for practitioner to make better use of data and agile working.	-500		-500
2025CSTBC2	**Oxfordshire Way - removal of Social Care Grant from 2024/25** Develop the Oxfordshire Way approach further for all ages to develop community resilience and at-home services and to reduce inequalities in accessing care and support	-699		-699
2025CSTBC3	**Home to School Transport - Additional budget - removal of Social Care Grant from 2024/25** Improve data and systems to drive efficiencies in systems and manage service assessment, officer time and services levels.	-400		-400
2025CSTBC4	**Home to School Transport - Investment - removal of Social Care Grant from 2024/25** Independent living skills and enablement via travel training and accessibility, working with bus operators and other key stakeholders	-400		-400
2025CSTBC5	**Family Safeguarding - removal of Social Care Grant from 2024/25** Extend the family safeguarding model to work more closely with schools to build additional resilience into the model in order to reduce demand and resolve family issues at the earliest possible opportunity. This will include working with schools to build capability as well as with families and other stakeholders.	-900		-900
2025CSTBC6	**Foster Care - removal of Social Care Grant from 2024/25** Investment into retention and support of foster carers via a no detriment policy/ skills and fees levels review and strategy to support kinship carers as per new DfE guidance in December 2023.	-500		-500
2025L&CO4	**Social Care** Invest in Family Help Team to reduce the future demand and cost of care. Assumes team would be in place from July 2024 onwards.	125		125
2025L&CO5	Revenue borrowing costs associated with adding three new children's homes from 2026/27 (including one focused on older children) to the capital programme.		120	120
	Education			
2025L&CO3	Revenue costs involved with increasing early intervention work in Early Years and primary school settings to respond to SEND needs and proactively support the transition into mainstream education. £0.5m investment in 2024/25, partly falling out in 2025/26	-120		-120
	Subtotal Investments	**-2,562**	**828**	**-1,734**
	Extend COVID-19 Funding that falls out in 2026/27			
2026COVID	The modelling approach to COVID-19 within Oxfordshire across all services has been to compare expected, annual growth patterns to growth seen through the pandemic. The excess growth is deemed to be as a result of the pandemic. Using this method there were an extra 74 plans issued, and applying costs based on the normal pattern of provisions, this results in an additional cost to High Needs. Funding removed from 2026/27		1,200	1,200
	Total Previously Agreed Budget Increases	**12,168**	**4,608**	**16,776**

Children's Services

Ref	Description	2025/26 £000	2026/27 £000	Total £000
	Previously Agreed Budget Reductions			
CEF1	**Education and Learning**			
2025CS-HN707	**Education** Adjust growth funding already in budget	-281	0	-281
CEF2	**Early Help, Front Door and Social Care**			
24CS20	The Supporting Families grant will continue for a further two years. Total budgeted grant expected to fall out in 2025/26	110		110
2025CS721	**Social Care** Agency Staff In Social Care - replacement with permanent Staff	-1,600	-1,200	-2,800
2025CS723	**Social Care** Manage Demand for Children We Care For (CWCF) - Maintain CWCF at the current number	-3,400	-700	-4,100
2025CS724	**Social Care** Bring Children We Care For (CWCF) currently placed out of the county back into Oxfordshire	-1,300	-300	-1,600
2025CS725	**Social Care** High Cost Placements - Obtain better value care for children living in high-cost residential placements	-600	0	-600
2025CS726	**Social Care** Exits from Care - Ensuring children cease to be Children We Care For (CWCF) in line with their plan in a timely way	-2,500	-2,800	-5,300
2025CS1063	**Social Care** Offset savings with re-instatement of previous savings or replace COVID-19 funding that drops out of Medium Term Financial Strategy with base budget.	944		944
2025L&CO24	**Social Care** Invest to save' returns resulting from reducing numbers of private placements for children we care for through increase in internal care provision (see 2025L&CO5)		-120	-120
2025L&CO25	**Social Care** Investment in Family Help Team (see 2025L&CO3) reduces future demand for and cost of care.	-250	-500	-750
	Total Previously Agreed Budget Savings	**-8,877**	**-5,620**	**-14,497**
	Previously Agreed Changes to Pressures funded by the COVID-19 Reserve on a one - off basis			
	<u>COVID-19 - Additional Demand Pressures</u>			
COVID11	The modelling approach to COVID-19 within Oxfordshire across all services has been to compare expected, annual growth patterns to growth seen through the pandemic. The excess growth is deemed to be as a result of the pandemic. Using this method there were an extra 74 plans issued, and applying costs based on the normal pattern of provisions, this results in an additional cost to High Needs. Funding removed from 2026/27		-1,200	-1,200
	Total Previously Agreed Changes to Pressures funded by the COVID-19 Reserve (replaced by additional funding in row 2025CS1063)	**0**	**-1,200**	**-1,200**
	Total Children's Services	**3,291**	**-2,212**	**1,079**

Environment & Highways

Ref	Description	2025/26 £000	2026/27 £000	Total £000
	Previously Agreed Budget Increases			
	Demographic Growth			
	Demographic Growth (growth in waste tonnages)	430		430
2025EPDG	Add new year of demographic growth for Waste Management		400	400
	Subtotal Demographic Growth	**430**	**400**	**830**
	Inflation			
	Pay Inflation (2.5%)	281		281
	Indicative pay inflation	63	594	657
	Contract Inflation	2,353		2,353
	Income Inflation (2.0%)	-112		-112
	Business Rates Inflation	16		16
24EP4	Home to School transport - increase in the cost of school transport (directly provided and contracted) due to increases in fuel and other costs.	350		350
	Subtotal Inflation	**2,951**	**594**	**3,545**
	Demand and Other Pressures			
EH3	**Transport Policy**			
2025EP654	Create Sustainable Travel to School strategy.	-200		-200
2025EP744	Pressures associated with policy development for area travel plans, HGV studies and Multi Modal transport model (offset by saving EP745)	405	-568	-163
EH2	**Environment**			
23EP5	Increased contribution to the Regional Flood Co-ordination Committee Levy	22		22
24EP8	Household Waste Recycling Centres - anticipated increase in the cost of new contracts from 2025/26.	625		625
24EP10	Impact of implementation of Controlled Waste Regulation	100		100
2025EP645	Take action in 2024/25 to reduce the future cost of closed landfill site monitoring	-20		-20
2025EP647	Resource to write circular economy strategy. One off funding falls out in 2025/26.	-30		-30
2025EP692	Various pressures associated with service areas within Environment & Circular Economy 2024/25 (offset by saving EP693). Funding partly falls out in 2025/26 and 2026/27.	-115	-123	-238
2025EP694	Household Waste Recycling Centres (HWRC): unsorted waste and essential site repair pressures 2024/25 (offset by saving EP695). Funding partly falls out in 2025/26.	-114		-114
EH4	**Highways & Maintenance**			
24EP3	Additional temporary resources and expertise to support the exploration and delivery of a new highways maintenance contract from the end of March 2025. Funding expected to fall out in 2025/26 after the contract is agreed.	-250		-250
2025EP622	Increased highway maintenance activity (additional funding for potholes)	100	50	150
2025EP588	Increased Parking Service operational and maintenance costs	380	200	580
2025EP598	Increased drawdown from Parking Reserve to support increased maintenance and operational costs	-380	-200	-580
2025EP583	Home to School Transport Digital Contract Management System - Previously Agreed Savings Not Achievable	150		150
	Subotal Demand and Other Pressures	**673**	**-641**	**32**

Environment & Highways

Ref	Description	2025/26 £000	2026/27 £000	Total £000
	Investments			
EH3	**Transport Policy**			
2025L&CO13	Phase four of the school streets scheme.	77	-30	47
2025L&CO14	Funding for a feasibility study into the introduction of new Demand Responsive Transport (DRT) bus services in urban/suburban and rural settings 2024/25. The study will also look into the application of DRT services to support Home to School transport. One off funding falls out in 2025/26.	-70		-70
2025L&CO10	Feasibility study and implementation strategy for bus franchising. One off funding falls out in 2025/26.	-150		-150
2025L&CO15	Seed funding for supporting pilot Demand Responsive Transport (DRT) bus services, building on business case developed through 2025L&CO14.	250	-250	0
EH5	**Network Management**			
2025L&CO8	Introduce four new Controlled Parking Zones (see 2025L&CO27). One off funding falls out in 2025/26.	-200		-200
2025L&CO11	Revenue costs for additional investments in Automatic Number Plate Recognition (ANPR) enforcement of moving traffic offences of existing Traffic Regulation Order restrictions (see 2025L&CO29). One off funding falls out in 2025/26.	-180		-180
2025L&CO12	Feasibility Study into practicalities and opportunity in emissions and vehicle category based charging. Early investigatory work to identify potential policy and income benefits. One off funding falls out in 2025/26.	-30		-30
	New Investments (Budget Priority Reserve one - off funding)			
EH4	**Highways & Maintenance**			
2025EPTBC2	Gully and ditch clearing and repairs in areas recently flooded. One off funding falls out in 2025/26.	-300		-300
2025EPTBC3	Boost capacity to work with landowners and Parishes for them to clear ditches and implement Sustainable Drainage Schemes. One off funding falls out in 2025/26.	-300		-300
2025EPTBC4	A second cut of urban verges around footways and cycleways. One off funding falls out in 2025/26.	-150		-150
2025EPTBC5	Reclaim footpaths and cycleways – vegetation clearance and siding-out. One off funding falls out in 2025/26.	-510		-510
	Total Investrments	**-1,563**	**-280**	**-1,843**
	Total Previously Agreed Budget Increases	**2,491**	**73**	**2,564**

Environment & Highways

Ref	Description	2025/26 £000	2026/27 £000	Total £000
	Previously Agreed Budget Reductions			
EH3	**Transport Policy**			
2025EP658	One - off capitalisation of staff time through recharging costs associated with School Streets project. One off saving in 2024/25 reinstated in 2025/26.	25	0	25
2025EP774	Utilise Bus Service Operators Grant (BSOG) to support spend in 2024/25 and 2025/26		400	400
2025EP745	Manage various pressures associated with policy development under existing budget allocation (offsets pressure EP744)	-405	568	163
2025EP772	Release uncommitted element of on-going investment 24EP27 Countywide Community Transport Initiatives agreed in February 2023 on one - off basis in 2024/25. One off release from 2024/25 reinstated in 2025/26.	260		260
EH2	**Environment**			
2025EP638	Reinstate reduction in bespoke Lead Local Flood Authority planning consultations 2024/25 (2025EP638). One off funding falls out in 2025/26.	-40		-40
2025EP693	Various pressures associated with service areas within Environment & Circular Economy - to be managed within the existing budget allocation 2024/25 (offsets pressure EP692)	115	123	238
2025EP695	Manage Household Waste Recycling Centre pressure through reduction in waste costs 2024/25 (offsets pressure EP694)	114	0	114
EH4	**Highways & Maintenance**			
2025EP620	Increase the use of commuted sums held in reserves to maintain new infrastructure as a result of new developments and changes to the highway	-100	-100	-200
24EP15	Anticipated increases in on street parking income.	-150		-150
2025L&CO27	Income from new Controlled Parking Zones (see 2025L&CO8).	-150		-150
2025L&CO29	Automatic Number Plate Recognition (ANPR) income (see 2025L&CO11).	-270		-270
22EP11	Home to School contract management - Use of technology and improvements and automation of processes to reduce costs and effort required.	-150		-150
	Total Previously Agreed Budget Reductions	**-751**	**991**	**240**
	Total Environment & Highways	**1,740**	**1,064**	**2,804**

Economy and Place

Ref	Description	2025/26 £000	2026/27 £000	Total £000
	Previously Agreed Budget Increases			
	Inflation			
	Pay Inflation (2.5%)	265		265
	Indicative pay inflation	27	251	278
	Income Inflation (2.0%)	-28		-28
	Subtotal Inflation	**264**	**251**	**515**
	Demand and Other Pressures			
EP4	**Climate Action**			
23EP11	£0.066m funding to increase capacity to develop pipeline and contract delivery of projects to support the Zero Carbon Infrastructure was added to the budget in 2022/23. This reduced to £0.064m in 2023/24 and falls out in 2025/26.	-64		-64
23EP14	Funding for short term capacity to ensure Oxfordshire is "Grid ready", developing Energy System planning and flexibility trails falls out by 2025/26.	-64		-64
	Subotal Demand and Other Pressures	**-128**	**0**	**-128**
	Investments			
EP5	**Place Making**			
2025L&CO16	Revenue borrowing costs for pipeline of capital projects to tackle congestion in built up areas (£3m capital spend in 2024/25 and 2025/26).	180		180
2025L&CO17	Revenue borrowing costs for pipeline delivery of capital projects identified as part of the East Oxford Mini-Holland Project (£2m capital spend each year of MTFS).	120	120	240
	Total Investments	**300**	**120**	**420**
	Total Previously Agreed Budget Increases	**436**	**371**	**807**
	Previously Agreed Budget Reductions			
EP5	**Place Making**			
2025EP659	Consolidated savings for: - Introduction of standing advice for Transport Development Management - Combining Highways agreement and Engineering and assurance teams - Increase income from Planning Performance Agreement charges - Optimising the commissioning of modelling - Use of Section 106 funding held to develop schemes or the interest pot	-180	0	-180
EP4	**Climate Action**			
2025EP634	Climate Action: one - off income relating to greenhouse gas reporting. One off income falls out in 2025/26.	12	0	12
EP8	**Business Performance & Services Improvement**			
2025EP633	Increased recharging of staff time for projects	-20	0	-20
EP6	**Innovation**			
2025ITI&D TBC	Innovation Service (iHub): use contribution from reserve in 2024/25 and move	-321	0	-321
	Total Previously Agreed Budget Reductions	**-509**	**0**	**-509**
	Total Economy and Place	**-73**	**371**	**298**

Public Health & Communities

Ref	Description	2025/26 £000	2026/27 £000	Total £000
	Previously Agreed Budget Reductions			
PH2	**Public Health (Domestic Abuse)**			
2025PH555	Utilisation of government grant to fund domestic abuse services means £0.200m of council funding can be released on a one - off basis in 2024/25. Funding reinstated in 2025/26.	200		200
	Total Public Health & Communities	**200**	**0**	**200**

Oxfordshire Fire & Rescue Service and Community Safety

Ref	Description	2025/26 £000	2026/27 £000	Total £000
	Previously Agreed Budget Increases			
	Inflation			
CDA3	**Community Safety**			
	Pay Inflation (2.5%)	466		466
	Indicative pay inflation	55	519	574
	Subtotal Inflation	**521**	**519**	**1,040**
CDA3	**Community Safety**			
2025CSafety670	Vehicle Renewals - increase revenue contribution for replacement of Fire Vehicles	572	120	692
2025CSafety754	Cultural Development Work. One off funding falls out in 2025/26.	-50	0	-50
	Subotal Demand and Other Pressures	**522**	**120**	**642**
	Total Previously Agreed Budget Increases	**1,043**	**639**	**1,682**
	Previously Agreed Budget Reductions			
	Total Previously Agreed Budget Reductions	**0**	**0**	**0**
	Total Oxfordshire Fire & Rescue Service and Community Safety	**1,043**	**639**	**1,682**

Resources and Law & Governance

Ref	Description	2025/26 £000	2026/27 £000	Total £000
	Previously Agreed Budget Increases			
	Inflation			
	Pay Inflation (2.5%)	1,117		1,117
	Indicative pay inflation	100	933	1,033
	Contract Inflation (RPIX - 4.2%; RPI - 4.1%; CPI - 2.5%)	139		139
	Income Inflation (2.0%)	-47		-47
	Business Rates Inflation	53		53
PADIR	**Property & Assets**			
24CCCS1	Increases in utility costs for the council's buildings	55		55
24CCCS31	Property Facilities Management - additional contract inflation based on the OBR inflation forecast set out in the Autumn Statement 2022.	50		50
24CCCS33	Property Catering - additional food and utilities inflation resulting in an increase cost for school meal which can't be recovered due to restriction on price increase on school meal. This follows the increased inflation forecast set out by the OBR in the Autumn Statement 2022.	50		50
24CCCS34	Landlord & Tenant - additional contract inflation of 10% in 2024/25 and 2025/25 based on the OBR inflation projection in the Autumn Statement 2022.	370		370
	Subtotal Inflation	**1,887**	**933**	**2,820**
	Demand and Other Pressures			
CORPDIR	**Corporate Services**			
2025Corp973	Revised structure and pay scales for the council's Strategic Leadership Team (pending approval by Council on 7 November 2023). Additional contributions will be sought from existing council budgets so that the pressure is reduced as far as possible.	28	28	56
LGCRDIR	**Law & Governance**			
2025C&CE529	Appointment of an Area Coroner in accordance with a recommendation from the UK Chief Coroner	96	0	96
PADIR	**Property & Assets**			
24CCCS5	Staff shortages mean there is increased dependency on agency staff which has increased costs of cleaning the council's buildings. Action is being taken to reduce these costs in 2024/25 and 2025/26.	-100		-100
2025PI&FMTBC	Continued one off contribution to Children's Centre rents. One off funding falls out in 2025/26.	-113		-113
2025PI&FMTBC	Fund one-off Children's Centre rents from the Budgets Priorities reserve. One off funding falls out in 2025/26.	113		113
	Subotal Demand and Other Pressures	**24**	**28**	**52**
	Investments			
PAPPDIR	**Public Affairs, Policy & Partnership**			
2025L&CO22	Citizens Assembly on transport in Central Oxfordshire. One off funding falls out	-150		-150
2025L&CO21	Resource to support the development and inital delivery of a Social Value and Community Wealth Building Strategy, including relevant training and external expertise, focusing on all relevant aspects of social value generation and community wealth building. One off funding falls out in 2025/26.	-60		-60
	Subtotal Investments	**-210**	**0**	**-210**
	Total Previously Agreed Budget Increases	**1,701**	**961**	**2,662**

Resources and Law & Governance

Ref	Description	2025/26 £000	2026/27 £000	Total £000
	Previously Agreed Budget Reductions			
PADIR	**Property & Assets**			
2025PI&FM691	Delay in the occupation of a new library facility in the Banbury to 2025/26. £150k saving from 2024/25 falls out in 2025/26 and 2026/27.	75	75	150
	Total Previously Agreed Budget Reductions	**75**	**75**	**150**
	Previously Agreed changes to Pressures funded by the COVID-19 Reserve on a one - off basis			
LGCRDIR	**Law & Governance**			
24COVID3	Coroners - funding for additional activity in 2023/24 and 2024/25 falls out in 2025/26	-96		-96
PAPPDIR	**Public Affairs, Policy & Partnership**			
COVID18	Local Council Tax Support Scheme: anticipation of future emergency welfare demand in 2022/23 falls out in 2025/26		-500	-500
FCSDIR	**Financial & Commercial Services**			
24COVID5	Previously agreed funding of £325k for additional commissioning and contract activity for social care arising as a result of the on-going impact of COVID-19 falls out in 2025/26.	-64		-64
	Total Previously Agreed Changes to Pressures funded by the COVID-19 Reserve	**-160**	**-500**	**-660**
	Total Resources and Law & Governance	**1,616**	**536**	**2,152**

Transformation, Digital & Customer Experience

Ref	Description	2025/26 £000	2026/27 £000	Total £000
	Previously Agreed Budget Increases			
	Inflation			
TDCE2	Pay Inflation (2.5%)	83		83
	Indicative pay inflation	10	98	108
	Subtotal Inflation	**93**	**98**	**191**
TDCE5	**Transformation, Digital & Customer Experience**			
23CODR9	Increase to the cost of maintaining Performance Management Business Systems	19		19
	Subtotal Inflation	**19**	**0**	**19**
	Total Previously Agreed Budget Increases	**112**	**98**	**210**
	Previously Agreed Budget Reductions			
2024DTFT	Delivering the Future Together staffing saving - reduce and delayer staffing structures and costs	-1,000		-1,000
	Total Previously Agreed Budget Reductions	**-1,000**	**0**	**-1,000**
	Total Previously Agreed Budget Changes	**-888**	**98**	**-790**
	Previously Agreed changes to Pressures funded by the COVID-19 Reserve on a one - off basis			
TDCE2	**Customer Experience**			
24COVID4	Additional resource for the Social & Health Care Team in the council's Customer Service Centre from 2023/24 to 2025/26		-175	-175
	Total Previously Agreed Changes to Pressures funded by the COVID-19 Reserve	**0**	**-175**	**-175**
	Total Transformation, Digital & Customer Experience	**-888**	**-77**	**-965**

This page is intentionally left blank

MTFS Assumptions and Possible Funding Scenarios

Council Tax	MTFS	Best Case	Most Likely	Worst Case
Council Tax Collection Fund Surplus/Deficit (one – off)	£8m surplus	£11m surplus (a repeat of the 2023/24 surplus notified by District Councils in January 2024) **+£3m**	£8m surplus **+£0m**	£6m surplus **-£2m**
Increase in taxbase **Each 0.25% increase or decrease = £1.2m council tax funding**	1.75%	>2.00% **>+£1.2m**	2.00% **+£1.2m**	1.50% **-£1.2m**
Core Council Tax Referendum Principle **Each 1% increase = £5.0m council tax funding**	2% in 2025/26	3% in 2025/26 **+£5.0m from 2025/26**	? **?**	? **?**
Council Tax: Adult Social Care Precept **Each 1% increase = £5.0m council tax funding**	No precept from 2025/26	1% from 2025/26 **+£5.0m from 2025/26**	? **?**	No further precept from 2025/26 **+£0.0m from 2025/26**

Business Rates	MTFS	Best Case	Most Likely	Worst Case
Business Rates: Settlement Funding Assessment £78.4m in 2024/25 1% change = £0.8m	2.0% increase each year	Increases by CPI **+£0.0m in 2025/26**	Stays flat or reduces from 2025/26 to offset other funding increases **>=-£1.6m in 2025/26**	Reduces by a larger amount from 2025/26 to offset other funding increases **>=-£1.6m in 2025/26**
Business Rates: Local growth and/or S31 grant funding for Leisure & Hospitality Reliefs	2.0% increase each year so total estimated growth = £0.1m in 2025/26	Local Growth + any grant funding for reliefs for Leisure & Hospitality Businesses grows by more than 2.0% **+£0.1m**	Local Growth + any grant funding for reliefs for Leisure & Hospitality Businesses = £4.9m in 2025/26 **£0.0m**	Local Growth + any grant funding for reliefs for Leisure & Hospitality Businesses reduce in 2025/26 **-£0.5m**
S31 Grant for Business Rates Reliefs: Indexation Element	£14.5m grant funding in 2025/26	Continue at 2025/26 level and increases by CPI **+£1.6m**	Continue at 2025/26 level **+£1.3m**	Continue at 2025/26 level **+£1.3m**
Business Rates Collection Fund Surplus/Deficit	No collection fund surplus or deficit assumed from 2025/26	>£2.0m surplus **>+£2.0m**	No surplus or deficit **+£0.0m**	Deficit of up to £2.0m **-£2.0m**
Share of Business Rates Pooling Income (based on agreement to continue North Oxfordshire Pool).	£0.8m Pooling income continues from 2025/26	>£0.8m surplus **>£0.8m**	£0.8m surplus **+£0.8m**	Pooling not agreed **£0.0m**

Un-Ringfenced Grant Funding	MTFS	Best Case	Most Likely	Worst Case
Social Care Grant	£4.8m additional grant funding announced in the Final Settlement for 2024/25 was one – off and falls out in 2025/26	£4.8m continues and the overall total (£42.5m) increases further beyond the 2024/25 level **+>£4.8m**	£4.8m existing grant continues but there is no further increase **+£4.8m**	£4.8m was one – off and the grant reduces back to £37.7m in 2025/26 **£0.0m**
Services Grant	Remaining £0.5m grant falls out in 2025/26 (no further funding received)	Current grant continues in 2025/26 **+£0.5m**	Grant falls out (no further funding received) **£0.0m**	Grant falls out (no further funding received) **£0.0m**
New Homes Bonus	£1.7m falls out in 2025/26 (no further funding received)	Further one – off funding of up to £1.7m in 2025/26 **+ up to £1.7m**	£1.7m falls out in 2025/26 (no further funding received) **£0.0m**	£1.7m falls out in 2025/26 (no further funding received) **0.0m**

This page is intentionally left blank

Part: 1

Oxfordshire residents' satisfaction survey 2024

Executive summary of survey results (including a budget focus)

August 2024

Prepared by: **Marketing Means (UK) Ltd**

For: OXFORDSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

MARKETING MEANS
THE RESEARCH PEOPLE

MRS Evidence Matters™ Company Partner

ISO 9001 Quality Assured Services Cert No. 0534 UKAS Management Systems 036

ISO 20252 Market Research Services Cert No. 0533 UKAS Product Certification 036

Executive Summary

Background and method

This report represents the findings of a residents' satisfaction survey which was conducted by Marketing Means on behalf of Oxfordshire County Council between 27 May and 17 July 2024. The survey was sent to a sample of households across the authority area to gauge satisfaction with the council's services and the area where they live, as well as asking about the council's priorities and budget decisions.

The survey was posted out to a random sample of 6,000 households in w/c 27 May 2024. One reminder mailing was issued to non-respondents in w/c 17 June 2024. All residents in the sample could take part in the survey online if they wished, using unique login details included in the covering letter with a link to the online questionnaire, hosted by Marketing Means. These mailings generated 978 responses, 211 of which were completed online.

To boost the number of responses from younger residents, the 2024 survey included a face-to-face in-street interviewing stage, conducted in various locations in Oxford, Abingdon, Banbury, Bicester, Didcot, Wantage and Witney. This provided a further 167 interviews with residents aged 18 to 44 and brought the total number of survey responses to 1,145 by the closing date of 17 July 2024.

At the data analysis stage, the final respondent profile was 'weighted' by local authority area, age and gender in order to reflect Oxfordshire's population aged 18+ from the 2021 Census profile. All charts and data in this report are based on 'weighted' data.

Overall views of Oxfordshire County Council

- Just under than half of those interviewed (47%) were satisfied with the way that the council runs things, with net satisfaction at +17%, both significant increases from the levels recorded in the 2023 survey.
- Nearly one in three respondents (32%) agreed that the council provides value for money, a significant increase from 25% as in 2023, though the proportion dissatisfied has decreased by only a small amount. These gave a significantly higher net satisfaction score of -4%, compared with -13% in 2023.
- A total of 43% were satisfied with the services provided by the council, a slight increase from the level of 39% in 2023, with a corresponding rise in net satisfaction from +9% to +15% in 2024.

Your local area

- Nearly three-quarters (72%) were satisfied with their local area as a place to live, similar to the 2023 result of 74%.
- Most respondents felt safe when outside in their local area, 90% feeling safe by day (similar to 2023) and 61% feeling safe after dark (significantly down from 2023's result of 71%).
- The issues most likely to be spontaneously named by respondents as the most important that residents in their local area faced were led by **road surfaces in poor repair/dangerous, too many potholes**, suggested by more than a quarter of respondents (26%). Several further themes related to roads and transport, such as poor pavements/pedestrian routes, public transport and traffic management, were mentioned by respondents, but each by less than 10%. The most likely other topics were **issues with new building/ development of new housing, lack**

of infrastructure/amenities (by 7%) and **the need for better health services/social care/mental health support** (by 7%).

- The factors most likely to be selected by respondents as important in making somewhere a good place to live were led by **health services** (60%, a significant increase from 2023's 51%) and **level of crime** (46%, up from 41% in 2023). Several other factors, though selected by a smaller proportion of the sample, had significantly increased in importance since 2023, including **clean streets, job prospects, level of pollution**, **cultural facilities,** and **facilities for young children**. None had significantly decreased in importance since 2023.
- The factors most likely to be selected by respondents as most in need of improvement in the local area were led by **road and pavement repairs** (by 56%, significantly lower than 2023's 61%), and **health services** (46%, not significantly different to the 2023 result). **Traffic congestion** was selected by only slightly fewer (36%), with no change since 2023 and the same applied to **affordable decent housing**. Only one other aspect was significantly less likely to be selected in 2024 than in 2023, **wage levels and the local cost of living** (18%, down from 23% in 2023).

Communications

- The proportion that felt fairly or very well informed on **benefits and services provided** by the council was 43%, similar to the 2023 result. Only slightly fewer (42%) felt well-informed about **what the council spends its money on**, again similar to 2023's result.
- A smaller proportion (30%) felt that the council **acts on the concerns of local residents** a great deal/ a fair amount. This was not significantly different to the 2023 results, and nor was the net satisfaction score of -27%.
- Just over a quarter (27%) were very or fairly satisfied with the **number of opportunities the council offers to local residents to have their say**, but 35% were dissatisfied, giving a net satisfaction score of -10%. These were not significantly different to the 2023 results.

Council services

- Across 20 different council services, the degree of residents' satisfaction varied widely, as did the proportion of respondents able to rate each service at all given the lack of experience of using or receiving each service. Taking out the "Don't know" responses to give the clearest view of the results for each service, ratings varied from 68% satisfied and net satisfaction of +62% for **libraries**, to only 14% satisfied and -62% net satisfaction for **maintenance of roads** (the latter was also the lowest-rated service in 2022 and 2023). The table below summarises the key figures for each service:

2024 Satisfaction Ratings of Services *(base totals shown after each service)*	**% dissatisfied**	**% satisfied**	***Net % Score***
Libraries (796)	6%	68%	*+61.5%*
Museums and history service (679)	4%	65%	*+60.7%*
Household waste and recycling centres (tips) (1,063)	15%	71%	*+56.1%*
Fire and rescue service - emergency response (719)	9%	63%	*+54.6%*
Fire and rescue service - public safety and road safety advice and support (698)	11%	56%	*+44.4%*
Primary education (5-11 years) (450)	11%	53%	*+42.1%*
Registration of births and deaths, and ceremonies including marriages and citizenship (520)	8%	48%	*+39.9%*
Early years education (birth to 4 years) (403)	14%	46%	*+32.8%*
Secondary education (over 11 years) (444)	15%	46%	*+30.9%*
Countryside services (e.g., rights of way) (904)	22%	50%	*+28.3%*
Children's social care (protecting and supporting vulnerable children and families) (432)	20%	38%	*+17.7%*
Trading standards (541)	16%	32%	*+16.7%*
Support/care for older people (aged over 65) (587)	26%	34%	*+7.7%*
Public health (helping people to stay healthy and protecting them from health risk) (769)	27%	34%	*+7.1%*
Support/care for vulnerable groups such as people with disabilities, and/or mental health problems, general frailty (558)	30%	31%	*+1.5%*
Parking (enforcement, controlled parking zones, on-street parking) (972)	40%	27%	*-12.3%*
Road and transport schemes (e.g., new or improved junctions, bus lanes, cycle lanes etc.) (1,000)	50%	27%	*-22.3%*
Managing the road network (e.g., traffic lights, speed limits, traffic and transport) (1,062)	56%	28%	*-28.7%*
Maintenance of pavements (1,088)	64%	20%	*-43.7%*
Maintenance of roads (1,099)	76%	14%	*-61.8%*

- 12 of the services showed significantly increased net satisfaction compared with 2023. The largest increases were for **children's social care** (16% increase), **early years education** (13% increase), **support/care for older people** and **support/care for vulnerable groups** (12% increase for both). Only **libraries** showed a significant decline in net satisfaction.

- The services felt to be most important for local people in the area were **maintenance of roads** (68%, similar to 2023), **maintenance of pavements** (33%, up from 22% in 2023) and **fire & rescue service – emergency response** (32%, down from 40% in 2023).

- When reviewing the same results but including only those with lived experience of each service, five of the services were by far the most likely to be selected, each by more than 40% of those with experience of them; **primary education**, **secondary education**, **support/care for older people**, **support/care for vulnerable people**, and **early years education**.

Special statistical analysis

- We have conducted two extra stages of Key Driver Analysis on the survey results to help identify opinions of which specific council services and activities seem to have the greatest impact in driving overall satisfaction, perceptions of value for money and how well residents are kept informed.
- The Correlation Analysis undertaken showed that overall perception of quality of services and value for money are the two key items most correlated with satisfaction with how the council runs things, though this is also moderately correlated with the extent to which the council keeps residents informed on benefits and services.
- Perceptions of value for money in turn are most strongly correlated by overall satisfaction with services, with how the council runs things, and the extent to which the council keeps residents informed on benefits and services.
- The Factor Analysis attempted to identify which specific services, or groups of services, have most impact in driving perceptions of those same four key measures: overall satisfaction with how the council runs things, value for money and the statements about keeping residents informed. The results highlighted, in particular, a group of services related to roads/transport, parking and pedestrian routes, alongside overall service satisfaction, acting on residents' concerns, and giving opportunities for residents to have their say, as a key driver of the four target questions, most notably overall satisfaction and value for money.
  - As in previous surveys and taken together with the results from elsewhere in this report, these findings demonstrate the key role that improvements to services related to roads, travel and transport may play – together with overall service satisfaction, acting on residents' concerns and giving them an opportunity to have their say – in improving overall perceptions of the council.

Council priorities

- After reading summary notes on the council's existing nine priority themes, and being asked to select two as most important for the council to concentrate on, no single theme was selected by a majority of respondents, but the most likely were **prioritising the health and wellbeing of residents**, (48%), well ahead of **creating opportunities for children and young people reach their full potential** (29%), **investing in an inclusive, integrated and sustainable network** (28%), and **supporting carers and the care system** (24%).
  - There were no statistically significant <u>increases</u> in the proportions choosing the priorities compared with the 2023 results.
  - The only priorities selected by significantly fewer in 2024 than 2023 were **put action to address the climate emergency at the heart of our work** (down to 18% from 22% last year), and **tackle inequalities in Oxfordshire** (down to 7% from 10% last year).
- When asked which two of the same nine themes would be <u>least</u> important for the council to concentrate on, the most likely choice was for the council to **play its part in a vibrant and participatory local democracy** (42%, similar to the 2023 results), followed by **tackling inequalities** (33%, the same as in 2023), and **put action to address the climate emergency at the heart of our work** (29%, also similar to the 2023 result).

Budget setting

- Respondents were given a brief explanation of the financial challenges that the council faces and asked how much they agreed or disagreed with each of a list of 10 possible approaches that the council could take to make savings / generate income. The table below summarises the proportions agreeing or disagreeing with each and shows that five drew strong net support of nearly +50% or higher. These were the same four most likely to draw agreement in 2023 plus the new approach added - **Reduce costs by collaborating more with partners in voluntary & community sector**. Highest agreement was for **generate additional income by maximising the use of buildings and land the council owns**, which more than eight out of 10 respondents (85%) agreed with as a course of action for the council.
- By far the least popular ideas were generating additional income by increasing council tax and reducing spending on frontline services, with net agreement of -41% and -34% respectively.

APPROACH *(base totals shown after each)*	% disagree	% agree	Net % agreement
Reduce costs by operating from fewer buildings and using those we keep to their full capacity (1,095)	3%	85%	+82%
Reduce costs by using digital technology where it improves how we work and helps us be more efficient (1,086)	7%	79%	+72% ↑
Reduce staffing costs by redesigning services, using fewer agency staff and/or holding vacancies (1,093)	12%	69%	+57% ↑
Reduce the costs of the contracts we use to provide services (1,084)	7%	68%	+61% ↑
Reduce costs by collaborating more with partners in voluntary & community sector so we're not main funder & provider for every service (1,084)	12%	63%	+51%
Reduce spending on services the council is not legally required to provide (1,075)	19%	46%	+28% ↑
Use the council's financial reserves (money set aside for unexpected events), to provide one-off funding (1,085)	23%	44%	+21%
Generate additional income from sales, fees, and charges (1,048)	23%	44%	+21% ↑
Generate additional income by increasing council tax (1,088)	58%	24%	-34% ↑
Reduce spending on frontline services (1,081)	60%	19%	-41% ↑

- Respondents were also asked whether they agreed or disagreed that the council should consider increases of 2.99, 3.99 or 4.99 per cent to help fund adult social care and other key services. These three levels drew general disagreement and net agreement scores of +4%, -33% and -45% respectively. 42% of respondents agreed with the notion of a 2.99 per cent increase, but only 19% supported an increase as high as 4.99 per cent.
- Although nearly half (48%) felt their situation was 'about the same' as a year ago, the proportion who felt better off (5%) was far smaller than the proportion who now felt worse off (46%). Although most people (56%) had never or rarely struggled in this regard in the last year, a quarter (25%) had done so sometimes, 15% most of the time, and 4% all of the time.

Climate change

- Just under a third of all respondents (30%) claimed to be <u>very</u> concerned about climate change and 76% overall were concerned. The proportion very concerned had fallen significantly from 37% in 2023.
- 80% felt that it is important for Oxfordshire as a place to adapt to the impacts of climate change.
- Although 75% agreed that it was important for the council to tackle climate change, this has declined from 78% in 2023 and 83% on 2022. The proportion considering it <u>very</u> important that the council acts has reduced significantly year-on-year from just over half (51%) in 2022 to 37% in 2023 to 31% in 2024.
- A clear majority of respondents would support each of a list of nine actions that the council could take to tackle climate change, especially **encouraging people to be more eco-friendly** (supported by 90%), **increasing biodiversity in the area** (93%), and **increasing the use of renewable energy and improving insulation in buildings in the area** (88%). All were supported by very similar proportions as had done so in 2023, small decrease in the proportion feeling that the council should **encourage people to be more eco-friendly**.
- Just under a third of respondents (32%) claimed that they had already made 'a lot' of changes to their lifestyle to help tackle climate change. This was not significantly different to the 2023 result (35%).
- In 2023, only 8% claimed that they had already visited climateactionoxfordshire.org.uk, but this increased to 16% in 2024.

Volunteering and digital skills

- 42% of respondents had provided unpaid help to a local community group, club or organisation in the previous 12 months, including 11% that did so at least once a week (the latter a slight decline from 15% in 2023).
- More than nine out of 10 respondents (93%) use the internet at work, home or elsewhere.

Part: 2

Budget simulator engagement 2025/26 Key findings

Report by: Consultation and engagement team
Date: September 2024

OXFORDSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

1. Introduction and methodology

1.1 Between Wednesday 19 June 2024 and Sunday 21 July 2024 we ran an interactive tool, encouraging residents and stakeholders to take on the role of councillors and create a balanced budget for 2025/26.

1.2 The budget simulator was specifically designed to give residents and stakeholders the opportunity to:

- learn more about the services we provide and the financial challenges we face
- have their say on where we should focus savings and spending, by adjusting core service budgets and council tax income, weighing up choices and making trade-offs

1.3 Using the simulator, residents and stakeholders were prompted to think about:

- What services matter to you most?
- Which services do you think we should protect?
- Which services do you think we could reduce?
- Would you raise council tax?

1.4 The budget simulator was advertised to a wide range of audiences using a range of channels. This included organic and paid for social media advertising, eNewsletters, internal communications for council staff and councillors and targeted stakeholder communications. It was also cross promoted to people who engaged with our young people's sounding boards.

1.5 Figures show that 1,060 visitors to the budget simulator site went on to submit a budget, this does not include those people who chose to look at the simulator but did not progress to submitting a budget. The simple, gamification approach certainly engaged a wide range of residents and for some it helped them to understand more about the council *"I really liked this simulator - it is not an easy task you have to balance the budget!"* and *"It's really hard to balance this, I'm glad I don't have to do it for real. It has taught me a lot about what the council does though"*

Respondent profile

1.6 In all 1,060 people submitted a budget using the simulator. Whilst a sizeable proportion of people chose not to provide their demographic details, for those we do have information for, overall:

- More men (56%) responded than women (36%), Oxfordshire's population is more evenly balanced.
- There was a good spread of ages, except for young people and young adults aged (aged 16-24 years).
- Budget simulator respondents were more likely to identify their ethnic group as 'white' (82%), a slight underrepresentation compared to Oxfordshire's population.

- One in five respondents (20%) stated that they had long-term illness or disability, which impacted them either a little or a lot, again a slight overrepresentation (14%) compared to Oxfordshire's population.
- 37 people (4%) said they worked for Oxfordshire County Council.
- People from across Oxfordshire responded to the simulator, with significant spikes in response in OX2 (47) in Oxford city, and OX11 (51) and OX12 (48) in South Oxfordshire.

1.7 The map below shows the distribution of responses geographically and the following table, the respondent profile, against Oxfordshire's population.

Map 1: Geographical distribution of responses

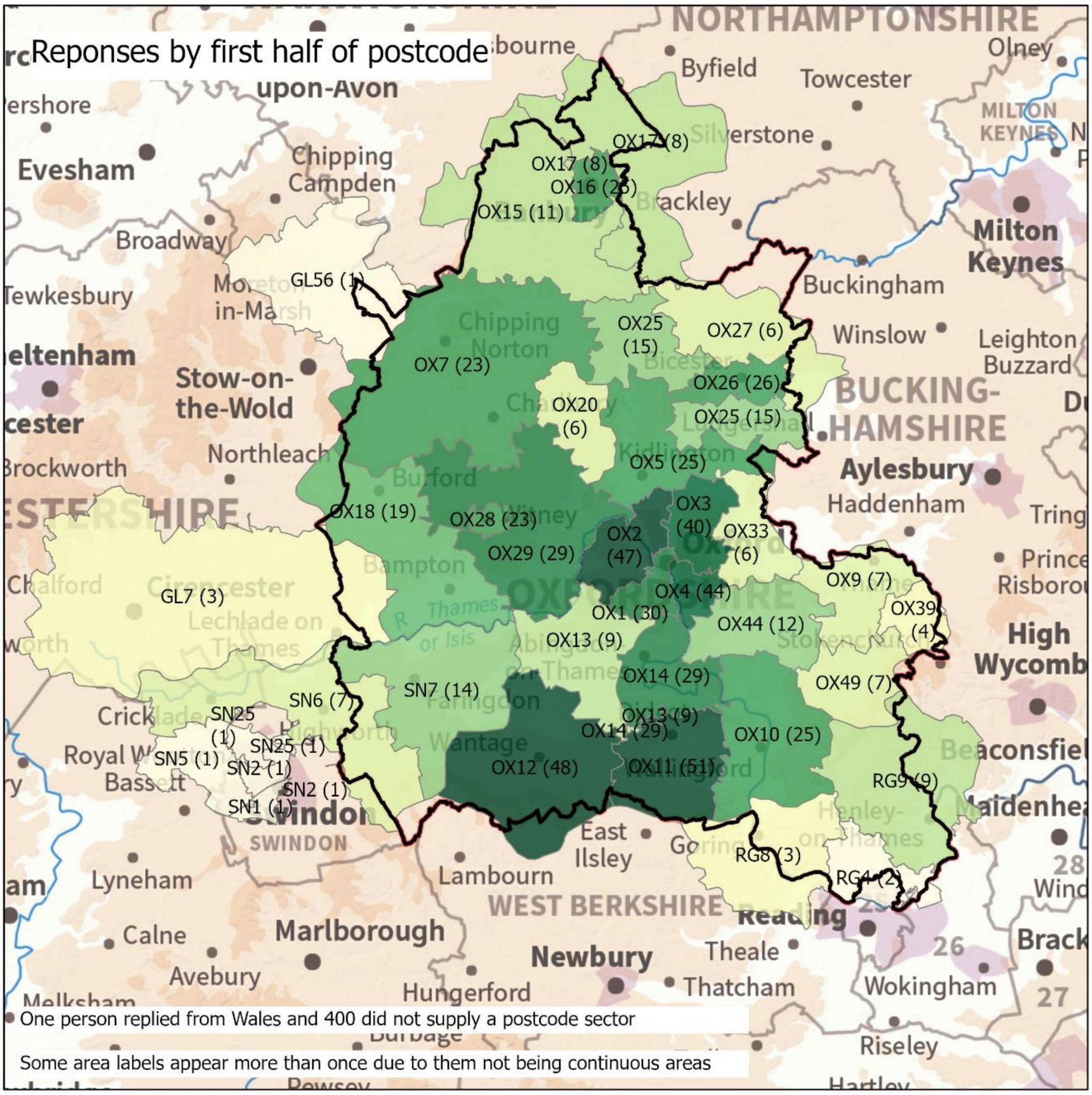


Table 1: Respondent profile

	Number of budget simulator respondents	% of response budget simulator respondents	Actual % in Oxfordshire's population
Age band			
16 - 24	65	8%	12%
25 - 34	116	14%	14%
35 - 44	161	19%	13%
45 - 54	141	16%	13%
55 - 64	169	20%	12%
65 - 74	111	13%	9%
75 - 84	58	7%	6%
85 or over	5	1%	3%
Prefer not to say	34		
Not answered	200		
Sex			
Female	305	36%	51%
Male	472	56%	49%
I use another term	6		
Prefer not to say	63		
Not answered	214		
Ethnic group			
Asian or Asian British	15	2%	5%
Black or Black British	7	1%	2%
Chinese	5	1%	1%
Mixed or multiple ethnic groups	23	3%	3%
White	680	82%	87%
Other ethnic group or background	11	1%	2%
Prefer not to say	86		
Not answered	233		
Long term illness or disability			
Yes - a lot	117	14%	5%
Yes - a little	53	6%	9%
No	608	73%	85%
Prefer not to say	56		
Not answered	226		

Main findings

1.8 The budget simulator organised core council services under 10 service groups and gave people 20 service items (sliders), on which to make choices and a further slider to consider an increase in council tax for 2025/2026.

1.9 Each of the service items sliders provided information and aimed to give people a broad understanding of what each service area does and the ‘consequences’ of reducing, maintaining or increasing spending. The sliders were not, however, designed to set out actual savings proposals or pressures.

1.10 The financial figures used in the simulator were based on the forecast budget for 2025/2026 at the time of its launch, taking account of pressures and proposed savings and were indicative figures only.

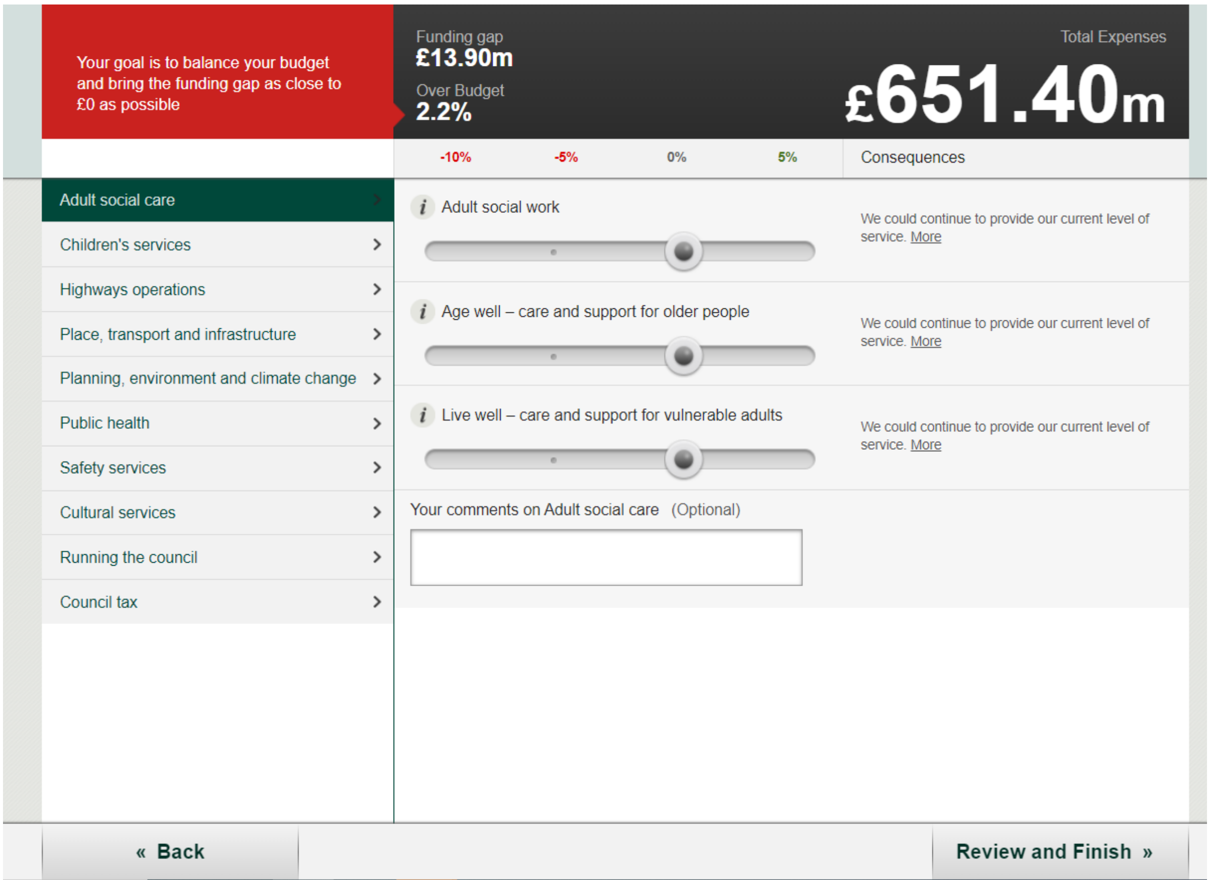
1.11 For each of the 20 service items (sliders) in the simulator four standard choices were given:

- increase the allocated service item budget by 5%
- maintain the allocated service item budget (0%)
- decrease the allocated service item budget by 5%
- decrease the allocated service item budget by 10%

1.12 It should be noted however, that moving the sliders had different consequences for each service item. For example, for most service areas, moving the slider positively would mean an increase in budget to improve or actively develop a service. However, for highways maintenance and home to school transport this would only maintain services at their current level. Specifically for home to school transport, the simulator stated that even with an increase in funding there would be remaining pressures.

1.13 The image below shows the budget simulator as it was presented on a laptop/desktop computer. The top right of the page shows the council’s total budget, the top left shows the funding gap to be closed and below this the current status of your choices, ie if you are over or under budget to the nearest million or if you have exactly balanced the budget.

Image of budget simulator



6

1.14 The following tables summarise how people made choices when submitting their own budget and the consequences of this in terms of overall percentage budget changes.

Table 1: slider choices

		Slider options			
Service group	**Service item**	**-10%**	**-5%**	**0%**	**5%**
Adult social care	Adult social work	74	287	560	139
	Age well - care and support for older people	54	208	627	171
	Live well - care and support for vulnerable adults	62	247	653	98
Children's services	Children's social care	46	112	721	181
	Family help	60	213	601	186
	Education and schools	32	71	600	357
	Special educational needs and disabilities (SEND)	39	102	605	314
	Home to school transport	108	215	621	116
Highways operations	Highways maintenance	31	101	496	432
	Street lighting	161	388	421	90
Place, transport and infrastructure	Place, transport and infrastructure	113	278	447	222
Planning, environment and climate change	Strategic planning	166	330	452	112
	Environment and climate action	249	230	354	227
	Waste disposal	29	165	701	165
Public health	Public health	74	186	557	243
Safety services	Fire and rescue	24	76	821	139
	Trading standards	102	308	552	98
Cultural services	Libraries	114	253	537	156
	Museums and history services	161	331	461	107
Running the council	Running the council	272	440	311	37

Table 2: slider movements

Service group	Service	% of people who move the slider to decrease budget (-5% or -10%)	% of people who made no change (selected 0%)	% of people who moved the slider to increase budget (+5%)
Adult social care	Adult social work	34%	53%	13%
	Age well - care and support for older people	25%	59%	16%
	Live well - care and support for vulnerable adults	29%	62%	9%
Children's services	Children's social care	15%	68%	17%
	Family help	26%	57%	18%
	Education and schools	10%	57%	34%
	Special educational needs and disabilities (SEND)	13%	57%	30%
	Home to school transport	30%	59%	11%
Highways operations	Highways maintenance	12%	47%	41%
	Street lighting	52%	40%	8%
Place, transport and infrastructure	Place, transport and infrastructure	37%	42%	21%
Planning, environment and climate change	Strategic planning	47%	43%	11%
	Environment and climate action	45%	33%	21%
	Waste disposal	18%	66%	16%
Public health	Public health	25%	53%	23%
Safety services	Fire and rescue	9%	77%	13%
	Trading standards	39%	52%	9%
Cultural services	Libraries	35%	51%	15%
	Museums and history services	46%	43%	10%
Running the council	Running the council	67%	29%	3%

1.15 When considering and weighing-up choices, the service area items which respondents most frequently selected for an increase in budget were:

- Highways maintenance (41%) * (to maintain service not to improve it)
- Education and schools (34%)
- SEND (30%)
- Public health (23%)
- Place, transport and infrastructure (21%)
- Environment and climate action (21%)

These were all selected by 20 per cent or more of respondents.

1.16 Conversely, the service items which respondents most frequently selected for a decrease in budget (selected by at least 40 per cent of respondents) were:

- Running the council (67%)
- Street lighting (52%)
- Strategic planning (47%)
- Museums and history services (46%)
- Environment and climate action (45%)

1.17 The budget simulator responses indicate that there are divergent views across Oxfordshire's communities on environment and climate action, with this service item appearing in both the list of those most frequently selected for an increase in funding and the list for those most frequently selected for a decease funding.

1.18 Some service items presented in the budget simulator, did not see any significant movement positively or negatively, with people choosing to maintain the current level of budget. Those service items most likely to be selected to remain at 0 were:

- Fire and rescue (77%)
- Children's social care (68%)
- Waste disposal (66%)
- Live well – care and support for vulnerable adults (62%)

For all these service areas, this equated to maintaining the service at their current level.

1.19 Focussing now on the impact of slider choices, table 3 shows the impact of people's choices on service item budgets, by presenting the average budget percentage change. This ranges from 1.27% to -4.47%.

Table 3: average budget percentage change

Service group	**Service item**	**Average budget change as%**
Highways operations	Highways maintenance	1.27%
Education and learning	Education and schools	1.05%
Education and learning	Special educational needs and disabilities (SEND)	0.63%
Safety services	Fire and rescue	0.07%
Children's services	Children's social care	-0.11%
Planning, environment and climate change	Waste disposal	-0.27%
Public health	Public health	-0.43%
Adult social care	Age well – care and support for older people	-0.68%
Children's services	Family help	-0.69%
Adult social care	Live well – care and support for vulnerable adults	-1.29%
Place, transport and infrastructure	Place, transport and infrastructure	-1.33%
Adult social care	Adult social work	-1.40%
Education and learning	Home to school transport	-1.49%
Cultural services	Libraries	-1.53%
Safety services	Trading standards	-1.95%
Planning, environment and climate change	Environment and climate action	-2.36%
Cultural services	Museums and history services	-2.58%
Planning, environment and climate change	Strategic planning	-2.59%
Highways operations	Street lighting	-2.92%
Running the council	Running the council	-4.47%

1.20 Four service items, (highlighted in red) have a positive average budget percentage change:

- Highways maintenance (1.27%)
- Education and schools (1.05%)
- Special education needs and disabilities (SEND) (0.63%)
- Fire and rescue (0.07%)

1.21 These were followed by a further five services items (highlighted in orange), with an average percentage change in budget between zero and minus one per cent:

- Children's social care (-0.11%)
- Waste disposal (-0.27%)
- Public health (-0.43%)
- Age well, care and support for older people (-0.68%)
- Family help (-0.69%)

1.22 The five service items (highlighted in green) with, on average, the greatest negative percentage changes of between -2.36% to -4.47% were:

- Back-office support services (Running the council) (-4.47%)
- Street lighting (-2.92%)
- Strategic planning (-2.59%)
- Museums and history services (-2.58%)
- Environment and climate action (-2.36%)

1.23 These were followed by a further six services items (highlighted in yellow), which had an average negative percentage changes of between -1.29% and -1.95%:

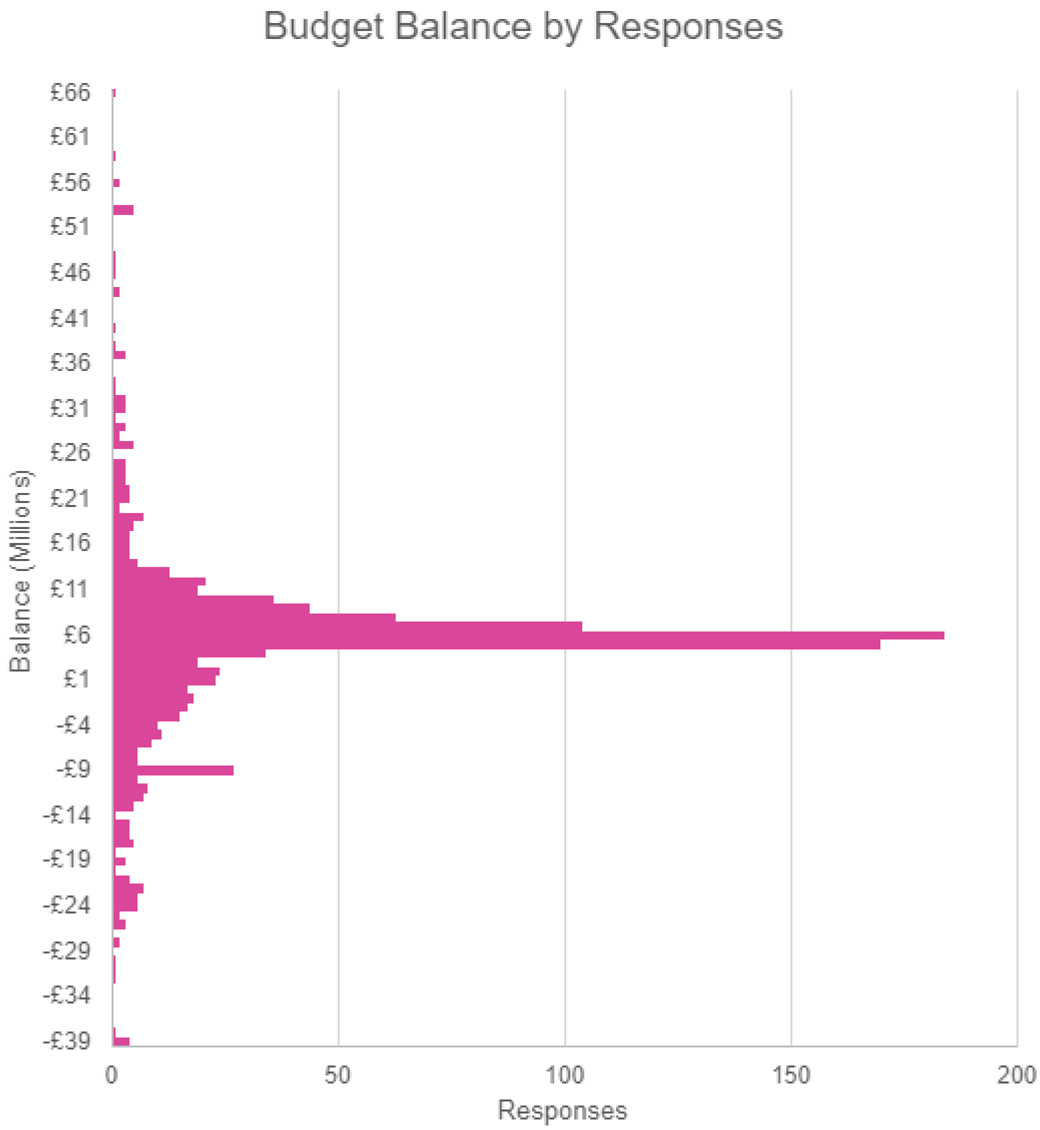
- Trading standards (-1.95%)
- Libraries (-1.53%)
- Home to school transport (-1.49%)
- Adult social work (-1.40)
- Place, transport and infrastructure (-1.33%)
- Live well – care and support for vulnerable adults (-1.29%)

Closing the funding gap

1.24 Our starting budget was £651.4 million with a funding gap of £13.9 million. The simulator was not designed to especially close the funding gap exactly, rather to explore how people make choices when faced with difficult decisions (as the councillors to need to). However, that said:

- 17 people (1.6%) managed to close the £13.9million funding gap exactly
- a further 841 people (79.3%) made budget reductions over and above the £13.9 million funding gap. This included people choosing to increase council tax to create additional expenditure budget.

The chart below shows the distribution in 'balance' of the budgets submitted, where £0 is an exact balance.



1.25 Before submitting their final budget, respondents were asked if they had any further comments to share with the council. 77 people gave written feedback, which included 105 different comments. Comments, were wide and diverging, however two equally significant areas of comment were:

- Review services for efficiencies / identify waste spending (11 mentions)
- A belief that the county council is responsible for decisions which actually lie with national government (11 mentions)

1.26 Other notable themes were:

- Various mixed comments about the budget simulator (10 mentions)
- A belief that the county council is responsible for services/decisions that lie with others (9 mentions)
- Acceptance of a rise in council tax given the need for additional funding (8 mentions)
- A need for increased funding from national government (6 mentions)
- Negative comments about traffic measures (6 mentions)

- General negative comments about the quality of services (6 mentions)
- Reduce services (6 mentions)

2. Detailed findings

2.1 The next section of the report sets out how budget simulator respondents chose to adjust each of the service item budgets, within service groups. The section is ordered, as per the simulator.

- Adult social care
- Children's services
- Highways operations
- Place, transport and infrastructure
- Planning, environment and climate change
- Public health
- Safety services
- Cultural services
- Running the council

2.2 The budget simulator descriptions and consequences for the slider choices were written with input from service areas and approved by service directors. It also includes an analysis of all the accompanying qualitative comments by service group, which bring to life how people made their decisions for the service item budgets when asked to weigh-up choices and make trade-offs. A coding framework was created to analyse this rich written feedback and all comments across the entire simulator were read and coded against this.

Adult social care

Budget simulator descriptions

2.3 <u>Adult social work</u>
We help people who are vulnerable or at risk of harm to live safely and independently. We work with people and organisations to protect their rights and prevent abuse and neglect. We also assess their needs and provide or arrange services to support them. This is our legal duty under the Health and Social Care Act 2018. In the last financial year (April 2023 - March 2024) we undertook 22,306 initial adult social care assessments.

<u>Age well – care and support for older people</u>

We help older people in Oxfordshire to live independently and stay safe and well. We also provide information and advice, support for unpaid carers and a range of services to meet people’s needs. This can include care services and specialist housing. This is our legal duty under the Health and Social Care Act 2018. Currently we care for and support 3,866 older people.

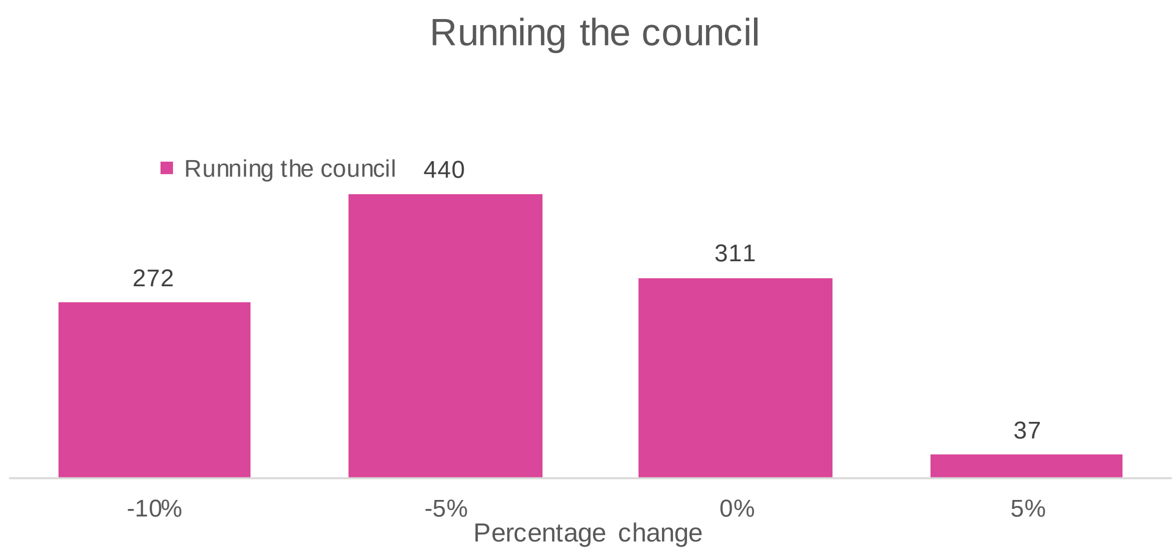
Live well - care and support for vulnerable adults

We help adults aged 18+ in Oxfordshire who have a disability or physical or mental illness to stay well and safe. We provide information and advice, assess their needs and provide or arrange a range of services to support them. This can include care services and specialist housing. This is our legal duty under the Health and Social Care Act 2018. Currently we care for and support 2,978 vulnerable adults.

The adult social care service group contained three sliders: adult social work, age well - care and support for older people and live well - care and support for vulnerable adults.

- Around two fifths of respondents (range 38% to 47%) chose to move one or more sliders in the adult social care group to either increase or decrease funding in this area.
- Around one in ten respondents chose to increase the budget (range 9% to 16%) to improve/develop services.
- 25% to 34% chose to decrease funding across all service areas
- In terms of the average percentage budget change, these were in the mid-range of all services presented on the simulator: age well (-0.68%), live well (-1.29%) and adult social work (-1.40%).
- The chart below shows how people responded for all three service items (sliders) presented in the simulator.

Budget simulator choices for adult social care grouping



Written feedback

2.4 In all, 101 people gave written feedback to support their choices on the ‘adult social care’ section of the simulator, which included 100 different comments. More detailed analysis has been undertaken for themes (codes) which received 10 per cent or more comments in section and these are as follows:

- Reduce spending (32 mentions)
- Importance of service (18 mentions)
- The council should not provide this service (16 mentions)
- Do not reduce spending (14 mentions)
- Increase income (11 mentions)

2.5 In relation to reducing spending the majority of comments expressed concerns about perceived inefficiency and high spending on social care, with suggestions to reduce budgets and increase self-reliance. *'Find more efficient and joined up ways of working to generate cost savings.'*

The importance of the service was highlighted, with many comments focussing on the need for good care and support for vulnerable and elderly adults and emphasising the importance of community access and independent living. *"So important to give vulnerable adults the care to allow them to gain access the community and to have independent living."*

Many respondents did not want to see a reduction in budget for this service, with comments reflecting frustration with the current social care system and a lack of support for those in need. *"A lot of older people are lonely and struggling with finding care services."*

Suggestions for maintaining the budget included integrating services, promoting early intervention to reduce future spend, and increasing income. *"You ought to be having more spending herein the light of a steady increase in average older rate payers.*"

A recurring theme (reflected in both comments about reducing spend and increasing income through higher fees) is the call for individuals and families to take more responsibility for their care, rather than relying on public resources. *"Far too much of council budget is spent on adult social care. People need to be more self-reliant and look after themselves and their families."*

2.6 Other themes for written feedback regarding adult social care related to:
- Service quality (7 mentions)
- Climate action (1 mention)
- Misunderstanding of the county council's power or responsibilities (1 mention)

Children's and family services

Budget simulator descriptions

2.7 <u>Children's social care</u>
We help children and young people in Oxfordshire who are vulnerable or at risk of harm to be safe and well. We work with families and other organisations to protect their rights and prevent abuse and neglect. We also

assess their needs and provide or arrange services to support them. This is our legal duty under the Children Act 1989, 2004 and 2017 and the Health and Social Care Act 2018.

We support children to stay safely with their families or family networks when they need help and protection. Working with parents and children we help make changes and improve outcomes by tackling the things that cause concerns and the family distress. Currently we support 1,738 individuals.

We provide services for 765 children and young people who can't live with their own families, finding them loving foster families and good homes and making sure that they are healthy and happy. When young people are leaving our care, we make sure they have a safe place to live and a plan for their goals for the future.

We provide social care services for 403 children and young people with very complex disabilities and health needs, who need high levels of practical physical care and support.

We welcome children and young people who come to our country alone as asylum seekers and need our help. We give them care, support, education and a chance for a better future

<u>Family help</u>

We help families, children and young people in Oxfordshire who are facing difficulties to overcome them and prevent future problems.

Children and family hubs are places where you can get advice and support on various topics, such as parenting, health, education and more. Currently there are 1,007 individuals being supported by this service.

The targeted youth support service helps young people who are at risk of getting into trouble or harm. It helps them deal with issues such as drugs, alcohol, crime, violence, mental health and more.

Our education, employment and training service supports young people who are not in school, work or training. It helps them find opportunities to learn new skills, get qualifications and find jobs.

We also work with local groups and organisations to provide activities and programmes for families, children and young people. Working with these groups also helps them to connect with other people in their area and access other services.

<u>Education and schools</u>

We provide access to education and training for Oxfordshire's children, including those who are excluded from school or in the criminal justice system. We also oversee the school admissions process, make sure there is enough early years' provision for children under five and provide specialist services to support schools to improve. We also support children and young people with their education and health and care plans, allowing them to get the support they need to thrive in our schools.

Special educational needs and disabilities (SEND)
We work with partners to meet the needs of children and young people aged 0 - 25 with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) and their families. We assess their needs and provide or arrange appropriate support according to their individual needs. Currently 6,639 children and young people in Oxfordshire have an education and healthcare plan.

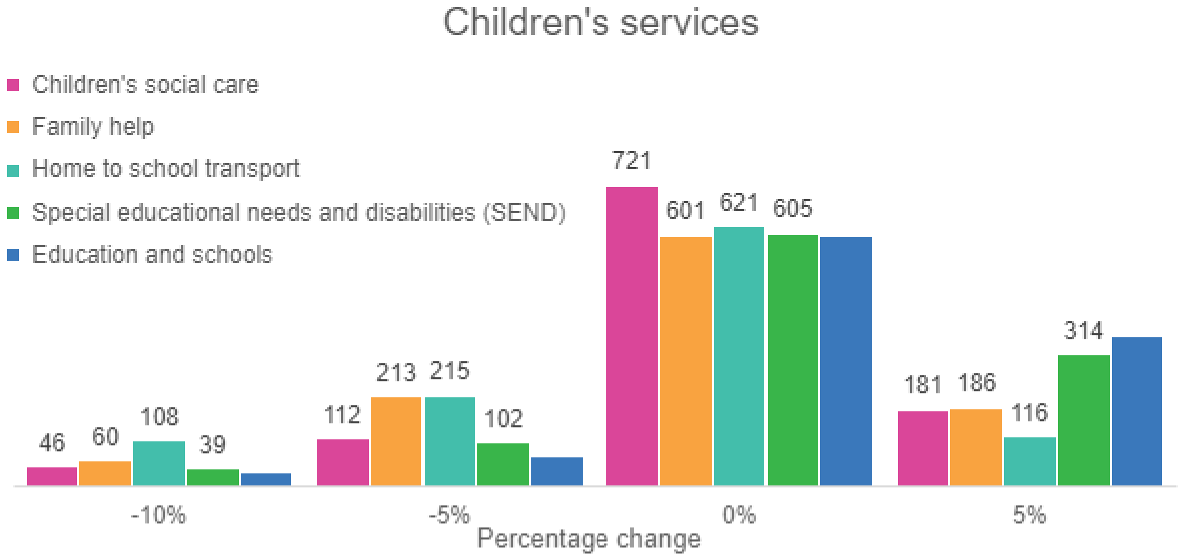
We also provide an impartial information and advice service, as well as support some SEND pupils in schools with educational psychologists, speech and language therapy and occupational therapists. This is our legal duty under the Code of Practice 2014.

Home to school transport
We help eligible children from reception to year 11 get to school by providing them with transportation assistance. Usually they get a free pass to use on public buses or trains but sometimes we arrange for them to travel on a special bus, coach, or minibus. There are just over 6,000 young people who are eligible to use mainstream school transport in Oxfordshire.
Some children with extra needs may travel by taxi to help them access school and education.

2.8 The children's and family service group contained five sliders: children's social care, family help, education and schools, special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) and home to school transport.

- Around four in ten respondents (range 32% to 43%) chose to move one or more sliders in the children's services group to either increase or decrease funding in this area.
- Between 11% (home to school transport) and 34% (education and schools) of respondents chose to increase the budget.
- Between 10% (education and schools) and 30% (home to school transport) chose to decrease funding across all service areas
- In terms of the average percentage budget change, these were very mixed. Education and schools (1.05%), and SEND (0.63%) services saw increases in investment, while others saw varied decreases: children's social care (-0.11%), family help (-0.69%) and home to school transport (-1.49%).
- the chart below shows how people responded for service items (sliders) presented in the simulator.

Budget simulator choices for children's services grouping



Written feedback

2.9 In all, 84 people gave written feedback on the 'children's and family services' section of the simulator, which included 98 different comments. More detailed analysis has been undertaken for themes (codes) which received 10 per cent or more comments in section and these are as follows:

- Reduce spending (28 mentions)
- Importance of service (19 mentions)
- Council should not provide this service (18 mentions)
- Do not reduce spending (13 mentions)

2.10 Comments showing a desire to reduce spending overwhelmingly related to home to school transport. Many comments emphasised that parents should be responsible for their children's transport and care, with mixed views on whether it should be provided at no cost to families, fully funded by parents, or only available for those on benefits or low incomes. *"It is the parents of the children who should take them to school, look after them etc. It's not my money which should be going to them."*

People also felt that a lack of local primary school places increased the need, and therefore cost, of home to school transport. *"Not enough primary school places and children can no longer go to school in their own village this needs to be the top priority. It's failing families."*

Many respondents highlighted the importance of services for children and indicate a belief in the long-term benefits of investing in children. There is a sentiment that money spent on children's services is generally saved in the future. The importance of children's mental health and the need for early family help to reduce the need for further services later on are also mentioned. *"I think investing more in young people is an efficient use of* *money, because problems that are not supported in childhood often have more expensive long term consequences."*

Some comments express concerns about the impact of reduce spending on these services, particularly on SEND services. The timeliness of assessments for ADHD/autism was a concern. *"SEND needs to expand to cope with need and demand."*

2.11 Other themes for written feedback regarding children's services related to:

- Increase income (6 mentions)
- Service quality (6 mentions)
- Roads and transport (4 mentions)
- Stop diversity work (2 mentions)
- Climate action (1 mention)
- Misunderstanding of the county council's power/responsibilities (1 mention)

Highways operations

Budget simulator descriptions

2.12 Highways maintenance
We have to keep the roads in Oxfordshire safe for everyone. We look after 3,000 miles of roads, as well as paths, bridges and trees. We fix potholes, resurface roads, make roads safer, clear snow and ice in the winter, unblock drains and cut grass on the sides of the roads.

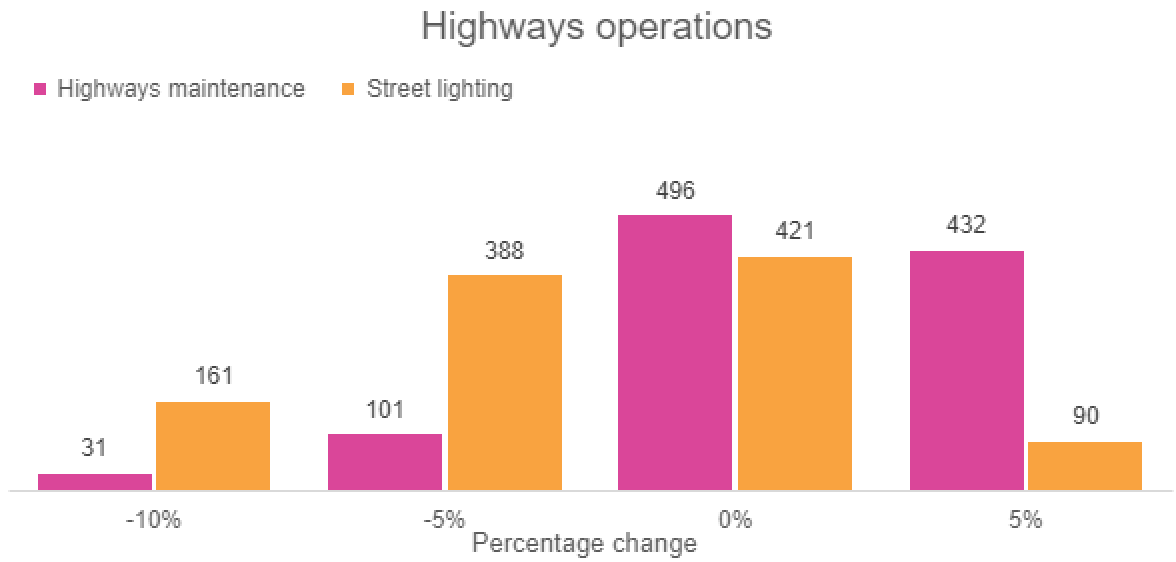
Street lighting
We maintain over 60,000 street lights, signs and bollards that light up the roads and paths in Oxfordshire. Most of them are LED lights, which use less energy and last longer. Our streetlights are managed (what times they are on and when they are brighter or dimmer) to save energy.

2.13 The highways operations grouping contained two sliders: highways maintenance and street lighting.

- Just over half the respondents (57%) chose to move one or more sliders in the highways operations group to either increase or decrease funding in this area.
- Just over half of respondents (52%) reduced funding for street lighting and 12% reduced it for highways maintenance.
- Approximately four in 10 respondents (41%) increased funding for highways maintenance, this was presented as maintaining the service at its current level not improving the services. Eight per cent of respondents chose to increase the funding for street lighting to improve the service.
- Highways maintenance saw the greatest positive average percentage budget change for all service items on the simulator (1.27%), in the red section of the previous table

- In contrast street lighting was ranked 19 out of 20, with an average change of -2.92%.
- The chart below shows how people responded for both items (sliders) presented in the simulator.

Budget simulator choices for highways operations



Written feedback

2.14 In all, 123 people gave written feedback on the ‘highways operations’ section of the simulator, which included 178 different comments. Comments in this section focussed on roads and transport (69 mentions) and reducing spending (66 mentions). Feedback was largely negative in tone, especially around perceived poorly maintained highways. *“The state of roads in Oxfordshire is appalling and needs improving.”*

2.15 Many comments emphasise the need for better road repair and maintenance, particularly fixing potholes and improving road conditions. *“Maintenance. This is poorly carried by those doing repairs and clearly done to the minimum standard and budget by outside companies.”*

Respondents expressed frustration with the council's handling of roadworks and maintenance, describing it as inefficient and wasteful. *“Pay once for quality work on the highways instead of paying the same people to patch it up constantly.” “Ensure work carried out on roads is actually done and to the correct standard before you pay the bill.”*

Several comments suggest reducing street lighting to save costs and reduce light pollution. Some comments also propose using solar lighting and LED bulbs. *“Switch the lights off after midnight, less light pollution, more environmentally friendly and a lower bill gif running them.”*

Many respondents are critical of traffic measures introduced in recent years, such as low traffic neighbourhoods, traffic filters and 20mph speed limits.

Comments recommend ceasing these projects and redirecting the funding into road maintenance. *“Reduce expenditure on LTNs and Filters to zero. Stop unnecessary and costly 20mph schemes. Spend that saved money in the BASICSs - pothole and road surface repair.”*

2.16 Other themes for written feedback regarding highways operations related to:
- Service quality (11 mentions)
- Increase income (4 mentions)
- Misunderstanding of OCC power/responsibilities (3 mentions)
- Do not reduce spending (2 mentions)
- Importance of service (2 mentions)
- Council should not provide this service (1 mention)

Place, transport and infrastructure

Budget simulator description

2.17 Place, transport and infrastructure

We support and encourage thriving communities in Oxfordshire, mainly by managing travel and connectivity so that people can easily get to important places (such as health services, education, shops and workplaces) and goods can be moved in Oxfordshire. We have a plan for the county that respects the individual needs of different areas in Oxfordshire, and more local travel area plans to help us understand what transport might be needed to support communities in the future.

We encourage people to travel by walking, cycling and using public transport. We work with other groups and organisations to provide services and make changes that improve travel and transport. We also build roads, bridges and other transport facilities that are funded by government, work with businesses who build new housing and business properties, and by working with others in partnership to deliver services.

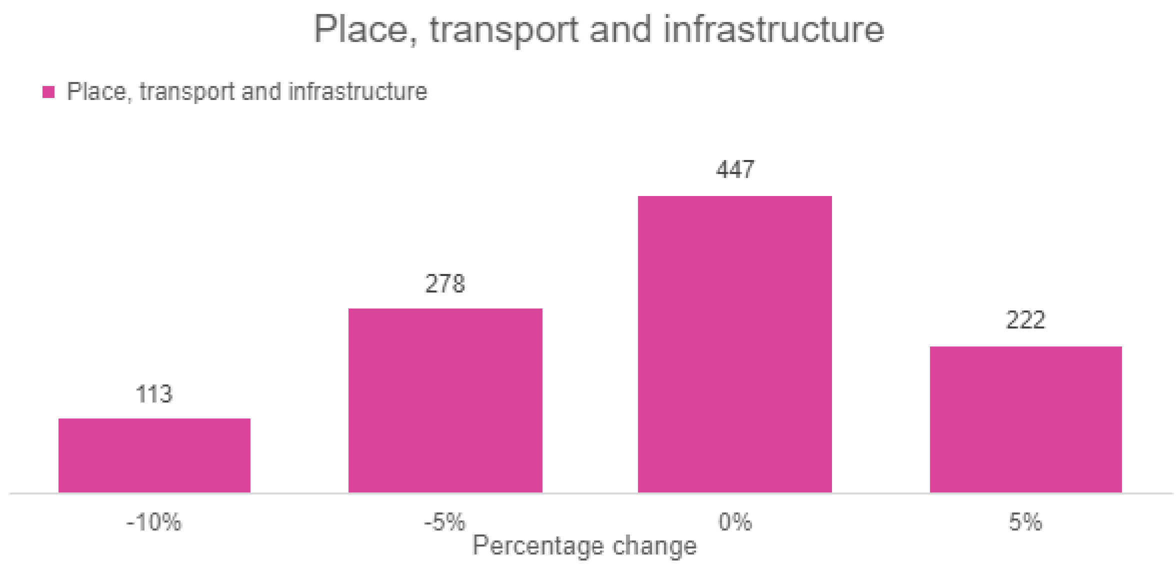
We want to make Oxfordshire a better place to live and work, where people can benefit from types of transport that help prevent climate change and improve air quality improving the health and wellbeing for residents.

We support bus services and provide free bus passes for older people and disabled people and their companions. We ensure that new housing and commercial developments and new cycleways, walking routes, bus lanes and roads meet our communities’ needs and the overall vision for Oxfordshire as a greener, fairer and healthier county.

2.18 The place, transport and infrastructure group had just one slider.
- Just over half of the respondents (58%) chose to move the slider to either increase or decrease funding in this area.

- Around one in three (37%) respondents reduced the budget for place, transport and infrastructure and around one in five (21%) increased it.
- This service options saw a negative average budget percentage change of -1.33%, ranked 11 of the 20 service items.
- The chart below shows how people responded for place, transport and infrastructure as presented in the simulator.

Budget simulator choices for place, transport and infrastructure



Written feedback

2.19 In all, 100 people gave written feedback on the 'place, transport and infrastructure' section of the simulator, which included 112 different comments. More detailed analysis has been undertaken for themes (codes) which received 10 per cent or more comments in section and these are as follows:

- Roads and transport (68 mentions)
- Reduce spending (13 mentions)

2.20 Respondents highlight a need for more buses and better coordination between bus companies, along with concerns about the cost of bus services and the need for subsidies. Suggestions include using smaller buses in less frequented areas and providing more frequent services in rural areas. Additionally, there are calls for investment in public transport to reduce traffic and carbon emissions. *"Less buses in large towns. Re- direct transport services to rural areas. It crazy you can get 10 different buses every 10 minutes out of oxford but only 1 and hour to semi rural areas."*

There is strong opposition to traffic filters, LTNs (Low Traffic Neighbourhoods), and 20mph speed limits, along with frustration with roadworks and traffic 'experiments'. Many believe that significant savings could be made by halting or reversing these measures. *"You're currently wasting money wrecking Oxford with wildly unpopular traffic filters and LTNs. Your transport projects actively make the city (and county) worse."*

Comments show strong but mixed feelings about cycle lanes; some see them as a waste of money, while others call for better maintenance and protection. Additionally, there are suggestions to reduce spending on cycle paths and focus on road maintenance. *"Stop sacrificing bus lanes to cycle lanes that no one uses!" "More cycle ways and EV charging".*

There is frustration with council spending and perceived inefficiencies. People suggest that there are opportunities to reduce costs, such as by employing offenders to do maintenance work and reducing unnecessary street signage. Additionally, there are calls for better planning and prioritisation of resources, along with suggestions to optimize resources and involve community groups and businesses in environmental efforts. *"Far too much spent on vanity projects that are unwanted and unnecessary."*

2.21 Here is a high-level thematic summary of the other comments made for 'place, transport and infrastructure':

- Misunderstanding of the county council's power/responsibilities (10 mentions)
- Do not reduce spending (9 mentions)
- Increase income (3 mentions)
- Service quality (3 mentions)
- Importance of service (3 mentions)
- Climate action (2 mentions)
- Feedback on the budget simulator (1 mention)

Planning, environment and climate change

Budget simulator description

2.22 <u>Strategic planning</u>

We are in charge of planning for minerals and waste in Oxfordshire. We also give advice on planning for infrastructure, such as roads, schools and health services. We do this by responding to consultations on planning applications and on local area plans.

Environment and climate action

Reducing our impact on the environment is important to us and is part of all the work that we do. This part of our budget is about the work of our environment and climate action teams, who play an important part in improving the natural environment and people's access to it, reducing pollution and making sure we are ready to deal with more severe weather.

We are responsible for fixing drainage and flooding issues on highways and roads across Oxfordshire, including blocked drains and gullies on the road. We are also responsible for co-ordinating the emergency response to flooding and managing the flood risk from surface water, groundwater and ordinary watercourses. We work with a range of organisations including the Environment Agency, Thames Water, the city and district councils, farmers and landowners to do this.

We also work with the city and district councils (and local communities) to protect and improve nature and access to green and open spaces. We work with the Local Nature Partnership to protect our heritage, wildlife and landscapes in Oxfordshire, as well as increasing the number of trees.

We help people enjoy the countryside by looking after and expanding the paths and trails that people can walk, cycle or ride horses on. We work to keep these paths clear, mapped and sign-posted, as required by law. We work with volunteers and community groups to make our environment better and safer for everyone.

We work to reduce pollution and make Oxfordshire more energy efficient by:

- Supporting people on very low incomes to make their homes more energy efficient. This helps to reduce their bills as well as keeping them warmer and healthier.
- Working with other organisations to make sure Oxfordshire's energy system can support communities and homes to have more chargers for electric cars and use more renewable energy.
- Reducing how much energy council buildings use, and switching to vans, cars other vehicles that create less pollution. We also support schools to make these changes.
- Working with companies that supply things to the council to help them reduce their environmental impact.
- Reducing traffic congestion and encouraging people to walk, cycle or use public transport (where possible) instead of driving.
- Supporting communities to do things that are good for their local area and the environment. For example, having repair cafes, planting community orchards and giving people advice on how to lower their energy bills.

Waste disposal

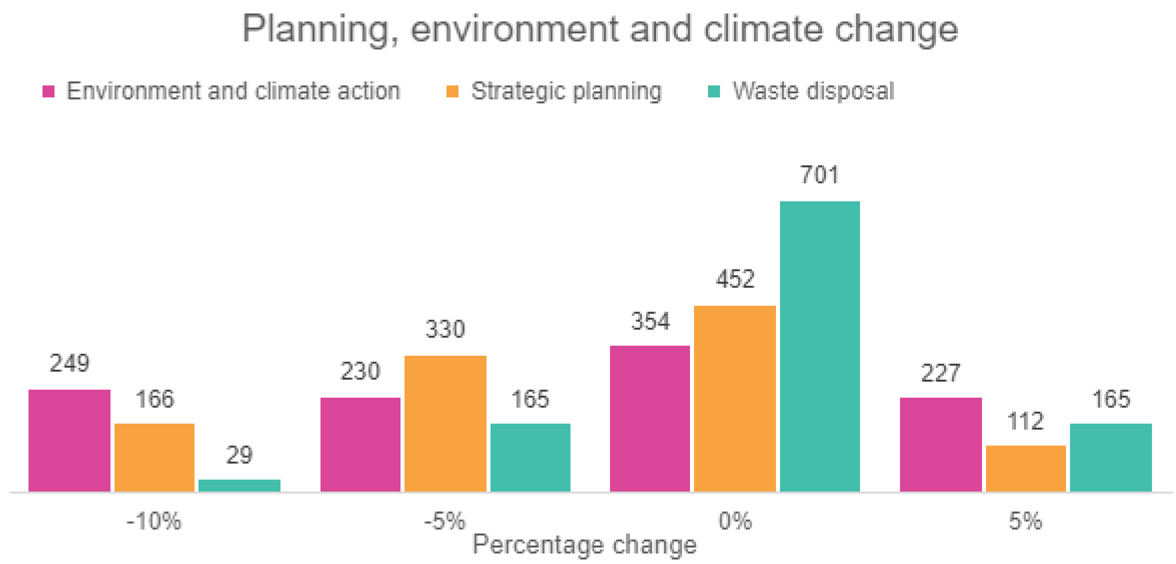
We are responsible for getting rid of household waste in Oxfordshire. This includes recycling, green waste and black bin waste. However, we don't do bin collections; they are arranged by your local district or city council.

We also have to provide places where people can take their household waste to be recycled. These are called household waste recycling centres. We have seven of these in Oxfordshire. They are visited by about one million people every year and they take in about 40,000 to 45,000 tonnes of waste every year.

2.23 The planning, transport and climate change grouping contained three sliders: strategic planning, environment and climate action and waste disposal.

- Just over half of the respondents (53%) chose to move one or more sliders in the planning, transport and climate change group to either increase or decrease funding in this area.
- Around one in five (21%) respondents increased the budget for environment and climate action compared to for waste disposal (16%) and strategic planning (11%).
- Sizeable numbers of respondents chose to decrease the budget for strategic planning (47%) and environment and climate action (45%) compared to waste disposal (18%).
- All three service options saw negative average budget percentage changes: waste disposal (-0.27%, ranked 6 out of 20), environment and climate action (-2.36%, ranked 16 out of 20) and strategic planning (-2.59%, ranked 18 out of 20).
- The chart below shows how people responded for all three service items (sliders) presented in the simulator.

Budget simulator choices for planning, environment and climate change



Written feedback

2.24 In all, 91 people gave written feedback on the 'Planning, environment and climate change' section of the simulator, which included 119 different comments. The key themes were:

- Climate action (26 mentions)
- Misunderstanding of OCC power/responsibilities (25 mentions)
- Reduce spending (21 mentions)
- Roads and transport (15 mentions

2.25 Several comments reflect scepticism about climate change initiatives, with some calling them a waste of money and others questioning their effectiveness. Others criticise the council for prioritising environmental issues over immediate needs. *"People today are more important than climate action which is not scientific."*

Other comments emphasise the importance of climate action, as well as maintaining green spaces and wildlife habitats. *"This is, for me the absolutely most important area to focus on. If we don't get this bit right, we may as well not bother with the rest."*

Concerns were raised about new housing developments and a perception that there is inadequate infrastructure to support them. *"You're creating - or wanting to create - thousands of new homes - yet the infrastructure to support is not available eg schools and health care especially GP practices. You can't simply keep increasing the housing available without sorting out infrastructure (which also includes public transport eg trams or more frequent bus services)."*

Many respondents express opposition to changes in road networks, such as low traffic neighbourhoods and traffic filters, and criticise the council's strategic planning. *"Your planning causes chaos on our roads, best not done."*

"LTNs and traffic filters in one city aren't going to solve climate change—they're going to increase congestion and make residents miserable."

2.26 Other themes for written feedback regarding environment and climate change related to:

- Waste (11 mentions)
- Increase income (9 mentions)
- Service quality (7 mentions)
- Do not reduce spending (3 mentions)
- Importance of service (2 mentions)

Public health

Budget simulator description

1.53 <u>Public health</u>

We provide services to improve people's health and help them to avoid getting sick. This includes work to tackle health inequalities (for example, where people in one area of Oxfordshire have worse health or don't live as long as people in another area) so that everybody can live longer, healthier lives.

We provide services that help to stop illnesses that can be passed from one person to another and we help local health services to meet the needs of people in Oxfordshire. This includes making sure that services are easy to access, effective and good value.

We work with other council services, communities and organisations to reduce the differences in health between different groups of people and to make places healthier.
Services that we pay for include:

- childhood health visitors and school nurses
- NHS health checks for adults over 40 years old
- reducing the harm caused by smoking, drugs, alcohol and obesity
- sexual health services.

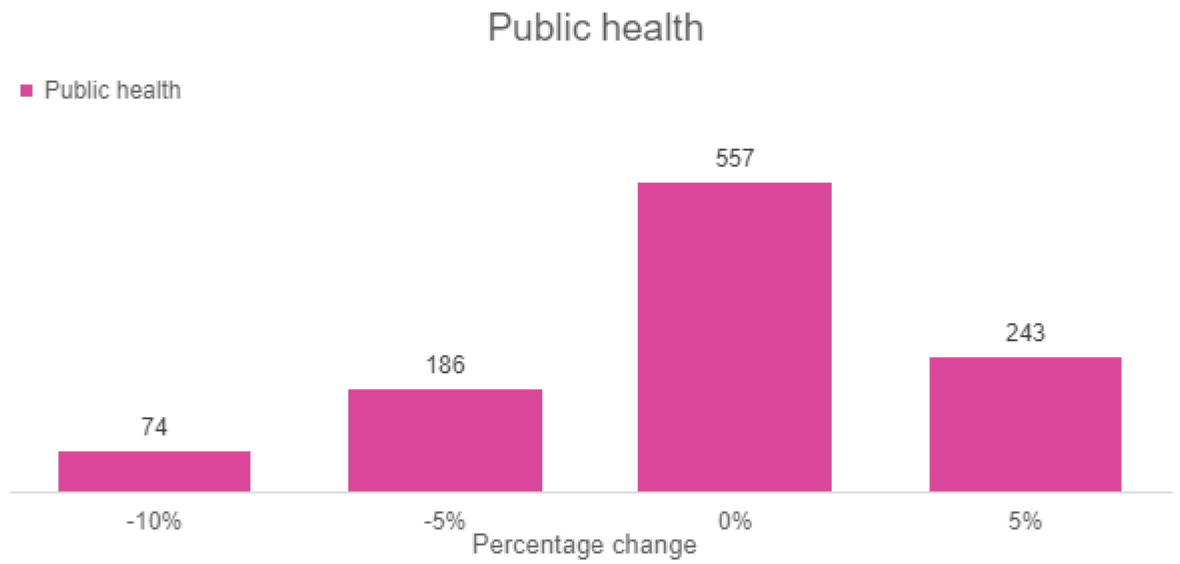
Most of the money for these services comes from a special grant that we can only use for public health. The simulator slider for public health represents what is paid for with the council's money and other grants, mainly services that reduce health inequalities and help people who are affected by domestic abuse or drug and alcohol problems.

1.54 The public health group had just one slider.

- Just under half (47%) chose to move the slider to either increase or decrease funding in this area.
- Near equal proportions (around one in five) of respondents increased the budget for public health (23%) and decreased it (25%).

- This service option saw a small negative average budget percentage change of -0.43%, ranked 7 of the 20 service items.
- The chart below shows how people responded for public health as presented in the simulator.

Budget simulator choices for public health



Written feedback

1.55 In all, 52 people gave written feedback on the Public Health section of the simulator, which included 55 different comments. Key themes were:

- Reduce spending (19)
- Misunderstanding of OCC power/responsibilities (10 mentions)
- Do not reduce spending (7)

1.56 Many comments focussed on reducing spending in this area. Some comments suggest that public health services should be more efficiently managed, with a focus on reducing bureaucracy and cutting costs. *"Efficiencies could produce better results."*

Some respondents recommended that services be reduced and emphasised the need for individuals to take responsibility for their own health. Others view public health initiatives as overreaching and unnecessary, suggesting that they can be cut back. *"People need to take responsibility for their own weight etc… this help me society is ridiculous".*

Several comments suggest that savings could be made if the service had alternative funding, and that public health should be funded and managed by central government rather than local councils. *"Public health material is more efficiently produced at a national level - councils should lobby for greater proportionate central spending so that they can reduce their own expenditure and prevent duplication."*

The importance of improved public health and preventative services was emphasised, with respondents fearing that a reduction in spending would increase the burden on the NHS, mental health, and social care services. *"I* *think prevention is key across the board and this has minimal impact on budget here but should positively impact other things like social care use."*

While not issues that can be determined by the council, a number of respondents wanted to see an increase in the availability of local NHS services and reduced waiting times. *"Really need more GP surgeries and a minor injury centre also more NHS dentists."*

1.57 Other themes for written feedback regarding public health to:

- Increase income (5 mentions)
- Service quality (5 mentions)
- Council should not provide this service (5 mentions)
- Feedback on the budget simulator (2 mentions)
- Stop diversity work (2 mentions)

Safety services

Budget simulator description

2.27 <u>Fire and rescue</u>

Oxfordshire Fire and Rescue Service is part of the county council and our firefighters operate from 25 fire stations across the county. We protect communities, reduce harm and save lives through education and advice about fire safety. We also respond to emergencies, such as fires, road accidents, chemical incidents, flooding and extreme weather. We work with partners to plan and prepare for major incidents.

We are the statutory fire authority for Oxfordshire. That means that it is our job to check buildings for fire safety, give advice to businesses on fire safety responsibilities and make sure they follow the rules. If they don't, we can take action to make sure everyone stays safe. This is our legal duty under the Fire and Rescue Services Act 2004 and the Civil Contingencies Act 2004.

<u>Trading standards</u>

Trading Standards works to protect residents and businesses and takes action, including enforcement, when needed.

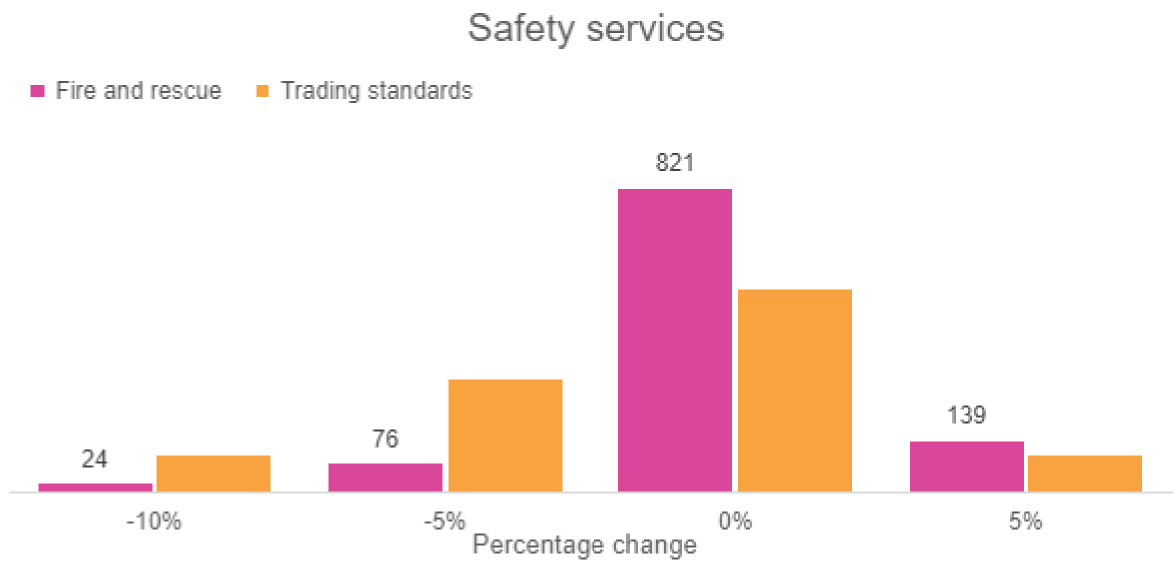
This covers things like weights and measures; product safety; food standards; unfair trading practices; animal health and disease control; environmental requirements; and price marking and comparison.

In addition, it covers rules around the sale of products that have age limits, such as tobacco and vapes; the licensing and inspection of sites storing explosives and petroleum; and the safety certification of sports stadiums. Trading Standards also works to protect people from financial abuse, like scams, and enforces weight restrictions on roads.

2.28 The safety services grouping contained two sliders: fire and rescue and trading standards.

- Just under half of the respondents (48%) chose to move the slider to either increase or decrease funding for trading standards, while just under a quarter of respondents moved the slider for fire and rescue (23%).
- Around one in ten (11%) respondents increased the budget for safety services.
- Sizeable numbers of respondents chose to decrease the budget for trading standards (39%) compared to fire and rescue (9%).
- Fire and rescue saw a small positive average budget change (0.07%, ranked 4 out of 20), while trading standards had a negative average budget percentage changes (-1.95%, ranked 15 out of 20).
- The chart below shows how people responded for the two service items (sliders) presented in the simulator.

Budget simulator choices for safety services



Written feedback

2.29 In all, 33 people gave written feedback on the 'safety services' section of the simulator, which included 55 different comments. Key themes were:

- Reduce spending (11 mentions)
- Do not reduce spending (10 mentions)
- Increase income (5 mentions)
- Misunderstanding of the county council's power/responsibilities (4 mentions)

2.30 Several comments express frustration with the council's handling of safety services and highlight the need for the council to become more efficient and stop wasting money. There are suggestions to reduce unnecessary expenditures and focus on practicalities. *"Become more efficient stop wasting money."*

While some comments suggest that fire and rescue services could be made more efficient and that there might be room for minimal cuts, many emphasise the importance of fire and rescue services, stating that they should not be cut back. Some suggest paying firemen more and improving fire standards in buildings to reduce fires. *"Whilst the fire and rescue service is a valuable resource and should be supported, there are many ways that improvements can be made to reduce running costs and wasted money within the service."*

Views on trading standards are varied, with some viewing the service as overreaching and suggest cutting unnecessary bureaucracy, while others emphasise the importance of protecting people from scams and suggest that trading standards should be prioritised. There are also suggestions to recoup costs through fines and insurance claims. *"Room for some savings on the trading standards, but saves so little it's not really worth it - seems to be a reasonable cost-efficient service."*

2.31 Other themes for written feedback regarding safety services related to:

- Climate action (1 mention)
- Importance of service (1 mention)

Cultural services

Budget simulator descriptions

2.32 Libraries

We have to provide a library service for everyone who lives, works and studies in Oxfordshire by law. Our 45 libraries are open to everyone and they offer many things such as books, information, free wi-fi and computers and social activities. We know that some people cannot come to the libraries so we also have an app, online resources and a home library service for people who need it.

Museums and history services

We run five places where you can learn about Oxfordshire's history and heritage:

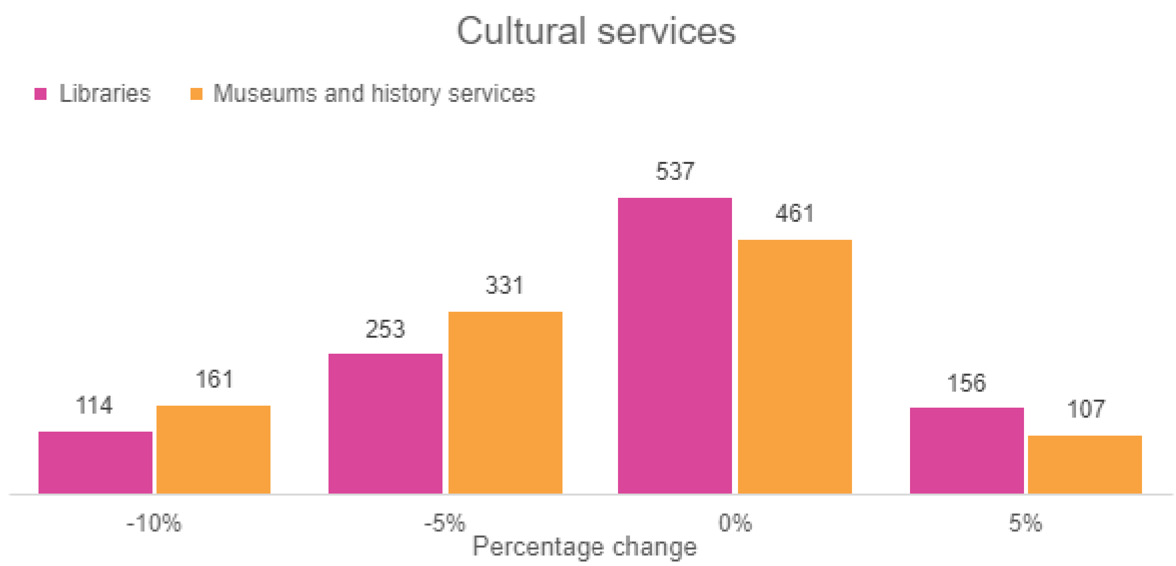
- The Oxfordshire Museum (Woodstock), where you can see our permanent collections, exhibitions and activities.
- The Museums Resource Centre (Standlake), where we keep our reserve collections, and where people can learn about Oxfordshire's history and see important historical information.
- Swalcliffe Barn (near Banbury) is a medieval barn where we display large vehicles used for farming and trade. The barn is a Graded 1 listed building, which means that we have to protect it and not change it.
- The remains of the Bishop's Palace (Witney), which was built more than 800 years ago.
- The Oxfordshire History Centre (Cowley), where we keep the county's public archives, records and core local history collection.

We offer these services to everyone in communities. We also have some legal responsibilities to look after these places and collections.
As well as running our own places, we also help other organisations that provide access to heritage across the county, including Oxford City Council (who run the Museum of Oxford) and the Victoria County History of Oxfordshire.

2.33 The cultural services grouping contained two sliders: libraries, and museums and history services.

- Approximately half of the respondents chose to move one or more sliders in the cultural services group to either increase or decrease funding in this area. 49% moved the slider for libraries and 57% moved the slider for museums and history services.
- Similar proportions of respondents (around one in ten) increased the budget for libraries (15%) as for museums and history services (10%).
- Sizeable numbers of respondents chose to decrease the budget service items in this grouping, with notably more for history services (46%) than for libraries (35%).
- Both service options saw sizeable negative average budget percentage changes: libraries (-1.53%, ranked 14 out of 20) and museums and history services (-2.58%, ranked 17 out of 20).
- The chart below shows how people responded for both items (sliders) presented in the simulator.

Budget simulator choices for cultural services



Written feedback

2.34 In all, 77 people gave written feedback on the ‘cultural services’ section of the simulator, which included 82 different comments. From reviewing the comments, the key themes emerging were:

- Do not reduce spending (26 mentions)
- Increase income (20 mentions)
- Importance of service (17 mentions)
- Reduce spending (9 mentions)

2.35 Many comments emphasise the importance of libraries, particularly for young people and those learning English. They highlight their role in education and community engagement. There are suggestions to keep libraries open, improve their services, and even extend their hours. *“These resources ought to be freely available and accessible to all as important places to learn and enjoy culture of various forms.”*

Several comments suggest introducing charges for museums and other cultural services to generate additional revenue. This includes charging tourists and implementing small fees for entry. *“I hate this but it seems like a necessity for now. I'd especially support any opportunities you have to increase fees in a vaguely means-tested way, so e.g. students, pensioners, and low incomes don't pay higher fees but most working-age adults do.”*

There are also some critical comments, suggesting that cultural services are outdated and not essential in the current climate. Some suggest closing libraries and museums, while others propose reducing their hours or focusing on more essential services. *“It's 2024... Close the libraries. Second hand books can be bought and sold on Amazon extremely cheaply.”*

Some comments propose making cultural services more efficient by using volunteers, implementing self-checking systems in libraries, and partnering with colleges for museum support. *“Use volunteers and those on community service to provide extra staff.”*

2.36 Other themes for written feedback regarding cultural services related to:

- Council should not provide this service (5 mentions)
- Roads and transport (2 mentions)
- Misunderstanding of the county council’s power/responsibilities (1 mention)
- Service quality (1 mention)

Running the council

Budget simulator description

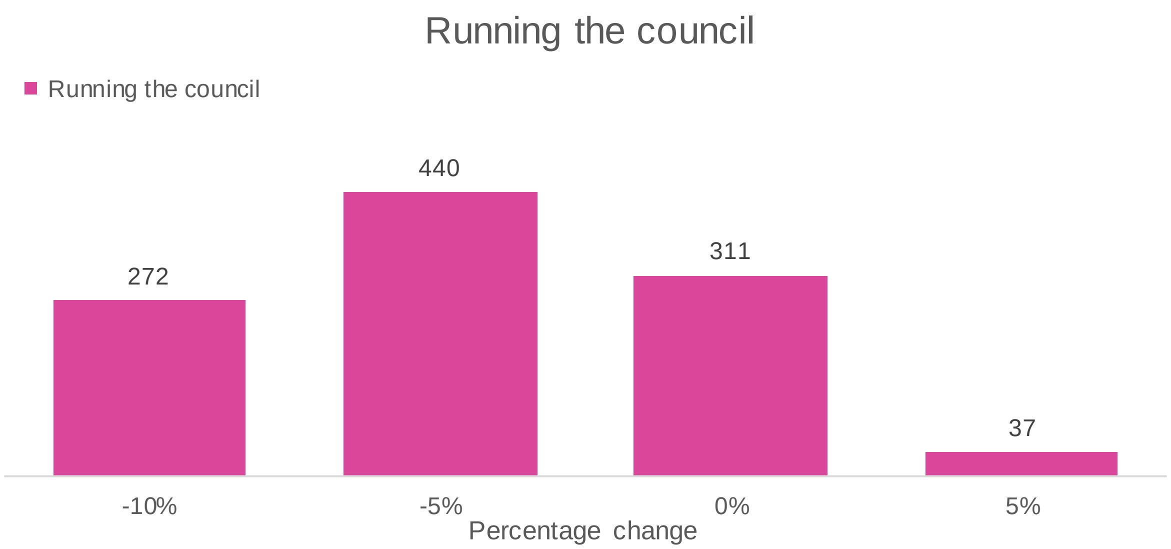
2.37 <u>Running the council</u>

The county council needs services that help us to do our work for Oxfordshire's residents and communities and meet our legal responsibilities. These services include finance, HR, IT support, law and governance, communications, customer services, policy and performance, procurement and property services.

2.38 The running the council group had just one slider.

- Over seven in ten respondents (71%) chose to move the slider to either increase or decrease funding in this area
- Over two thirds of all respondents chose to decrease the budget for running the business (67%) and only 3 per cent increased it.
- This service option saw the largest negative average budget percentage change of -4.47%, ranked bottom (20) of the 20 service items
- The chart below shows how people responded for running the business as presented in the simulator.

Budget simulator choices for running the council



Written feedback

2.39 119 people gave written feedback on the 'running the business' section of the simulator, which included 123 different comments. From reviewing the comments, the key themes emerging were:

- Reduce spending (99 mentions)

.

2.40 Responses showed a desire for reducing spending in two key ways, by improving efficiency and reducing staff costs.

There are multiple mentions of the council being inefficient and having too much wastage, with suggestions to reduce bureaucracy and streamline processes. *“There is still a huge perceived waste of money at the council, from top down this needs reviewing and action taken.”*

Several respondents felt that top council staff are paid too much, with suggestions to cut salaries and bonuses to save costs. *“Maybe the council should look at there wages especially those at the top and reduce any bonus if you can manage you budget.”*

There are suggestions to adopt a work culture similar to the private sector, emphasising more efficient working by fewer staff. *“Working smarter with fewer people is the answer and is what you see in the private sector.”*

Some respondents express a desire for the council to focus on essential services and cease work on projects seen as non-essential. *“Perhaps the council could concentrate on the important things and not spend so much time trying to provide areas that are no go areas for car drivers.”*

2.41 Other themes for written feedback regarding running the business related to:

- Misunderstanding of the county council’s power/responsibilities (6 mentions)
- Stop diversity work (5 mentions)
- Service quality (5 mentions)
- Roads and transport (4 mentions)
- Increase income (2 mentions)
- Climate action (1 mention)
- Feeback on the budget simulator (1 mention)

Council Tax

2.42 Budget simulator users were informed that in Oxfordshire, council tax bills are made up of several different amounts of money that go to different organisations and that Oxfordshire County Council’s element of their council tax bill is made up of two parts:

- The ‘core’ or general council tax used for all county council services, including highway maintenance; children and adult social care; waste management and recycling; fire and rescue, and libraries.
- An adult social care ‘precept’, which is an additional charge on top of core council tax that can only be spent on adult social care services.

Budget simulator users were also informed that:

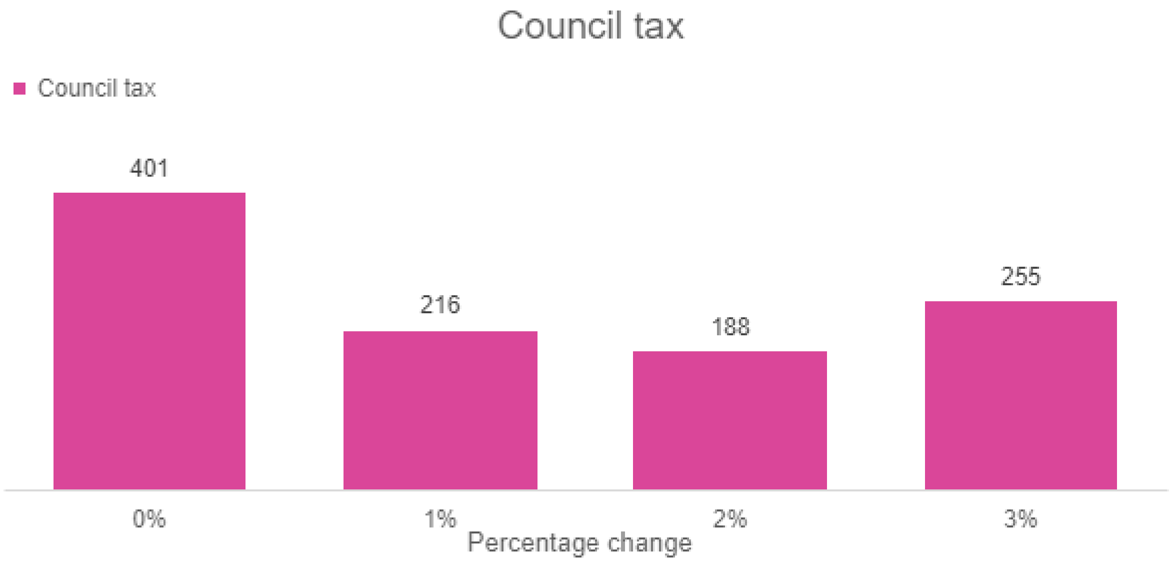
- Funding for the financial year 2025/26 is currently uncertain for all local authorities because of the general election. This includes money from government, grants and our ability to raise council tax.

- The government tells local authorities how much we can raise council tax by without needing a referendum; this is called the referendum limit. If we want to raise council tax higher than the limit, we would have to ask people in Oxfordshire to vote on it, and could only do it if they voted yes. We don't yet know what the referendum limit will be for the financial year 2025/26. The government will tell us later in the year.

2.43 The council tax slider had three options as follows:

- 0%: Our current medium term financial strategy includes a 1.99 per cent rise. This is shown as 0 per cent in the simulator.
- 1%: Increasing this by one per cent is equal to an overall 2.99 per cent council tax rise, would give an additional £5m for services.
- 2%: Increasing this by two per cent is equal to an overall 3.99 per cent council tax rise, would give an additional £10m for services.
- 3%: Increasing this by three per cent is equal to an overall 2.99 per cent council tax rise, would give an additional £15m for services.

Budget simulator choices for council tax



- Overall, 659 people chose to increase council tax on top of the 1.99% already proposed
- On average, the budget simulator shows that people were willing to increase by 1.28 per cent.
- 216 people (20 per cent of respondents) chose to increase council tax by an additional one per cent (to 2.99%)
- 188 people (18 per cent of respondents) chose to increase council tax by an additional two per cent (to 3.99%)
- 255 people (24 per cent of respondents) chose to increase council tax by and additional three per cent (to 4.99%)

Written feedback

2.45 138 people gave written feedback on the council tax section of the simulator, which included 152 different comments. The primary theme was around increasing income (123 mentions), including:

- Increase in council tax is acceptable (51)
- Increase in council tax is not acceptable (27)
- Reduce council tax (18)
- Review council tax banding so that higher value properties pay more (11)

2.46 Several comments indicate a willingness to support an increase in council tax, provided the additional revenue is used wisely and transparently. Some suggest that people would accept an increase if there were clear improvements in services. *"It's worth asking to put the council tax up - I know I would generally support it so long as it was communicated what the money would be spent on and that was well explained."*

Many comments express frustration with the current level of council tax, describing it as too high and not providing good value for money. Some suggest that council tax should be reduced, particularly for those on low incomes or living alone. *"Council tax should be reduced, it's my highest bill and provides the poorest service."*

Many comments suggest that council tax should be adjusted to reflect the current value of properties, with higher rates for second homes and high-value properties. Some also propose redistributing council tax to ensure fairness. *"Make the wealthier residents help fund things, especially people owning multiple properties, not the people who are struggling to pay rent."*

Some comments suggest alternative methods for raising revenue, such as setting up a local bank, charging for certain services, or increasing parking fees. *"I think there is a key issue in Oxford specifically - so many students using services that are not paying into the council. I think the universities should be required to give a percentage of student tuition to the councils on behalf of students."*

2.47 Here is a high-level thematic summary of the other comments made for council tax:

- Reduce spending (14 mentions)
- Misunderstanding of the county council's power or responsibilities (6 mentions)
- Feedback on the budget simulator (4 mentions)
- Roads and transport (3 mentions)
- Do not reduce spending (2 mentions)

Part 3:

Children and young people's budget engagement 2025/26
Key findings

Report by: Consultation and engagement team
Date: September 2024

Executive Summary

Introduction

This report summarises the findings from the council's three different participatory activities involving children and young people that were specifically designed to engage young people with the county council's 2025/26 business and budget planning. It is in three sections to reflect the different activities undertaken:

- Section 1: Findings from the budget simulator for children and young people.
- Section 2: Feedback from two focus groups designed to engage young people with the budget simulator and to seek feedback on the council's strategic priorities.
- Section 3: Feedback from the two sounding board events designed to engage young people in citizenship conversations, help them understand more about money management and to seek feedback on the council's strategic priorities.

Key findings

- In all, 30 young people submitted a budget using the simulator, with all but one of these completing it during a focus groups setting.

- All the young people who completed the simulator managed to close the £13.9 million funding gap through their slider choices, with many choosing to increase council tax.

- When considering and weighing-up choices across the 20 service area slider options presented in the budget simulator, young people were most likely to select the following service areas for an increase in budget: 'environment and climate change' (21 young people), education and schools' (20 young people), 'public health' (19 young people) and special educational needs and disabilities' (15 young people).

- Conversely, the service items which young people most frequently selected for a decrease in budget (selected by at least half of all respondents) were: 'libraries' (17 young people), 'museums and history services' (16 young people) and 'street lighting' (16 young people).

- The young people's budget simulator responses indicate that there are divergent views on 'place, transport and infrastructure' sliders, with approximately a third choosing to reduce, maintain and increase this service's budget.

- Some service items presented in the young people's budget simulator did not see any significant movement positively or negatively, with young people choosing to maintain the current level of budget to either keep service provision as it is, or to accept a decline in service provision (home to school transport only). Those service items most likely to be selected to remain at zero were: fire and rescue (18 young people), home to school transport (17 young people) and adult social work (16 young people).

- Focussing now on the impact of slider choices on service item budgets, the average budget percentage change ranged from 1.27 per cent to -4.47 per cent.

- Overall, 23 young people chose to increase council tax on top of the 1.99% already proposed. On average, they were willing to increase it by 1.33 per cent.

- At both of the two sounding boards events and at one of the budget simulator focus groups, young people were asked to consider the council's nine strategic priorities. Specifically, they were asked to deliberate in group format on which two priorities were most important to them as young people and which two were the least important to them.

- 'Creating opportunities for children and young people to reach our full potential' and 'prioritise the health and wellbeing of residents' were more likely to be selected than any others in the young people's top two strategic priorities selected by six out of eleven groups. These were selected by participants at both the sounding boards and budget simulator focus group, however the second ranking strategic priority at the focus group was 'put action to address the climate emergency at the heart of our work' selected by two of the three groups.

- For 'create opportunities for children and young people to reach our full potential', most of the comments were about needing a good education so young people have better life chances and to fulfil their potential; *"if we don't build their future, who will lead the world?"*

- For 'prioritise the health and wellbeing of residents', a majority of comments focused on everyone had the right to feel healthy, in mind and physically. Many comments said that the negative impact of this has a greater 'knock on effect' from pressure on the NHS, contributing to society and potential for death. *"Health and wellbeing is most important because without it people are unable to have good futures or contribute to the community".*

- The strategic priority most likely to be chosen as the least important by the young people when combining the views expressed in the sounding boards and the focus group was: 'play our part in a vibrant and participatory local democracy' chosen by over half of the groups (seven out of the eleven groups). There were a fair number of comments about young people not being able to vote, so felt they were not able to be part of the participatory democracy. There were also comments, stating there were systems in place for a participatory democracy already *"In my opinion we already have a good system set up for voting and democracy, so everyone has a say"*.

- This was followed by ‘invest in an inclusive, integrated and sustainable transport network’ (five out of the eleven groups – with all five chosen from the eight groups at the sounding boards, making it their ‘top’ least important strategic priority out of the nine).Most comments shared the idea that there were more important issues, and that people could walk if they needed to get somewhere. It was felt that there were already some good aspects to transport that already existed, such as public transport, it was well organised and it aided people too. However, a few comments did state cost, access in rural areas and getting to school did need to be improved, as well as its sustainability credentials.

- *It should be noted that ‘invest in an inclusive, integrated and sustainable transport network’* was not selected by any of the three tables in the budget simulator focus groups. These groups were more diverged in their opinions, with three of the nine strategic priorities each receiving one vote.

1. Budget simulator

Respondent profile

1.1 In all, 30 young people submitted a budget using the simulator, and all of these provided their demographic details.

- More young people responding identified as female (60 per cent) than male (37 per cent).
- Only three (ten per cent) of participants young people were aged 15-17. Eight 12 year olds and eight 14 year olds participated, and eleven respondents were 13 years old.
- Most Budget simulator respondents were more likely to identify their ethnic group as ‘white’ (87 per cent), with the remaining four participants identifying as Asian or Asian British.
- Approximately three quarters of the young people responding (77 per cent) stated that they did not have a long-term illness or disability, with a further six having a disability or illness which impacted them a lot, and one preferring not to say.

Key findings

1.2 The budget simulator organised core council services under 10 service groups and gave people 20 service items (sliders), on which to make choices and a further slider to consider an increase in council tax for 2025/2026.

1.3 Each of the service items sliders provided information and aimed to give people a broad understanding of what each service area does and the ‘consequences’ of reducing, maintaining or increasing spending. The sliders were not, however, designed to set out actual savings proposals or pressures.

1.4 The financial figures used in the simulator were based on the forecast budget for 2025/2026 at the time of its launch, taking account of pressures and proposed savings and were indicative figures only.

1.5 For each of the 20 service items (sliders) in the simulator four standard choices were given:

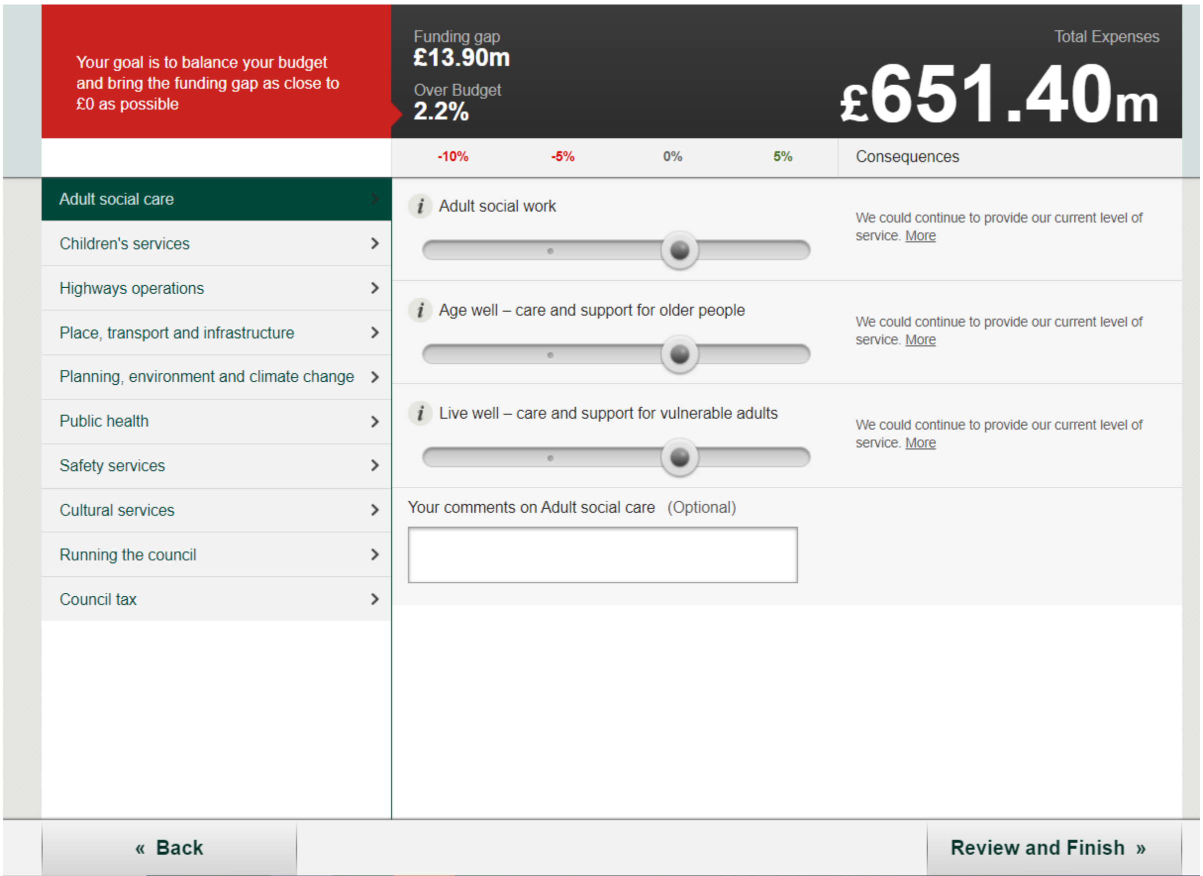
- increase the allocated service item budget by 5 per cent
- maintain the allocated service item budget (0 per cent)
- decrease the allocated service item budget by 5 per cent
- decrease the allocated service item budget by 10 per cent

1.6 It should be noted however, that moving the sliders had different consequences for each service item. For example, for most service areas, moving the slider positively would mean an increase in budget to improve or actively develop a service. However, for highways maintenance and home to school transport this would only maintain services at their current level.

Specifically for home to school transport, the simulator stated that even with an increase in funding there would be remaining pressures.

1.7 The image below shows the budget simulator as it was presented on a laptop/desktop computer. The top right of the page shows the council's total budget, the top left shows the funding gap to be closed and below this the current status of your choices, ie if you are over or under budget to the nearest million or if you have exactly balanced the budget.

Image of budget simulator



Key findings

1.8 The following tables summarise how young people made choices when submitting their own budget and the consequences of this in terms of overall percentage budget changes.

Table 1: Young people’s slider choices

The slider option choices are shown as the number of young people who selected them.		Slider options			
Service group	**Service item**	**-10%**	**-5%**	**0%**	**5%**
Adult social care	Adult social work	3	9	16	2
	Age well - care and support for older people	3	5	14	8
	Live well - care and support for vulnerable adults	2	10	14	4
Children's services	Children's social care	0	4	15	11
	Family help	0	3	14	13
	Education and schools	0	2	8	20
	Special educational needs and disabilities (SEND)	0	1	14	15
	Home to school transport	2	7	17	4
Highways operations	Highways maintenance	1	9	13	7
	Street lighting	3	13	10	4
Place, transport and infrastructure	Place, transport and infrastructure	0	11	9	10
Planning, environment and climate change	Strategic planning	3	10	13	4
	Environment and climate action	0	3	6	21
	Waste disposal	0	9	13	8
Public health	Public health	0	1	10	19
Safety services	Fire and rescue	0	7	18	5
	Trading standards	5	9	9	7
Cultural services	Libraries	3	14	9	4
	Museums and history services	6	10	9	5
Running the council	Running the council	6	7	13	4

Table 2: Young people's slider movements

Service group	Service	No. of people who move the slider to decrease budget (-5% or -10%)	No. of people who made no change (selected 0%)	No. of people who moved the slider to increase budget (+5%)
Adult social care	Adult social work	12	16	2
	Age well - care and support for older people	8	14	8
	Live well - care and support for vulnerable adults	12	14	4
Children's services	Children's social care	4	15	11
	Family help	3	14	13
	Education and schools	2	8	20
	Special educational needs and disabilities (SEND)	1	14	15
	Home to school transport	9	17	4
Highways operations	Highways maintenance	10	13	7
	Street lighting	16	10	4
Place, transport and infrastructure	Place, transport and infrastructure	11	9	10
Planning, environment and climate change	Strategic planning	13	13	4
	Environment and climate action	3	6	21
	Waste disposal	9	13	8
Public health	Public health	1	10	19
Safety services	Fire and rescue	7	18	5
	Trading standards	14	9	7
Cultural services	Libraries	17	9	4
	Museums and history services	16	9	5
Running the council	Running the council	13	13	4

1.9 When considering and weighing-up choices, the service area items which young people most frequently selected for an increase in budget were:

- Environment and climate change (21 young people)
- Education and schools (20 young people)
- Public health (19 young people)
- Special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) (15 young people)

These were all selected by 50 per cent or more of the young people responding.

1.10 Conversely, the service items which young people most frequently selected for a decrease in budget (selected by at least half of all respondents) were:

- Libraries (17 young people)
- Museums and history services (16 young people)
- Street lighting (16 young people)

1.11 The budget simulator responses indicate that there are divergent views across on 'place, transport and infrastructure', with approximately a third choosing to reduce, maintain and increase this service's budget.

1.12 Some service items presented in the budget simulator did not see any significant movement positively or negatively, with people choosing to maintain the current level of budget. Those service items most likely to be selected to remain at 0 were:

- Fire and rescue (18 young people)
- Home to school transport (17 young people)
- Adult social work (16 young people)

1.13 Focussing now on the impact of slider choices, table 3 shows the impact of young people's choices on service item budgets, by presenting the average budget percentage change. This ranges from 1.27 per cent to -4.47 per cent.

Table 3: Young people's average budget percentage change

Service group	Service item	Average budget change as%
Education and learning	Education and schools	3.00%
Public health	Public health	3.00%
Planning, environment and climate change	Environment and climate action	3.00%
Education and learning	Special educational needs and disabilities (SEND)	2.33%
Children's services	Family help	1.67%
Children's services	Children's social care	1.17%
Planning, environment and climate change	Waste disposal	-0.17%
Place, transport and infrastructure	Place, transport and infrastructure	-0.17%
Safety services	Fire and rescue	-0.33%
Adult social care	Age well – care and support for older people	-0.50%
Highways operations	Highways maintenance	-0.67%
Education and learning	Home to school transport	-1.17%
Adult social care	Live well – care and support for vulnerable adults	-1.67%
Safety services	Trading standards	-2.00%
Planning, environment and climate change	Strategic planning	-2.00%
Adult social care	Adult social work	-2.17%
Highways operations	Street lighting	-2.50%
Running the council	Running the council	-2.50%
Cultural services	Libraries	-2.67%
Cultural services	Museums and history services	-2.83%

1.14 Six service items, (highlighted in red) have a positive average budget percentage change:

- Education and schools (3 per cent)
- Public health (3 per cent)
- Environment and climate action (3 per cent)
- Special education needs and disabilities (SEND) (2.33 per cent)
- Family help (1.67 per cent)
- Children's social care (1.17 per cent)

1.15 These were followed by a further five services items (highlighted in orange), with an average percentage change in budget between zero and minus one per cent:

- Waste disposal (-0.17 per cent)

- Place, transport and infrastructure (-0.17 per cent)
- Fire and rescue (-0.33 per cent)
- Age well, care and support for older people (-0.50 per cent)
- Highways maintenance (-0.67 per cent)

1.16 The seven service items (highlighted in green) with, on average, the greatest negative percentage changes of between -2 per cent to -2.83 per cent were:

- Trading standards (-2.00 per cent)
- Strategic planning (-2.00 per cent)
- Adult social work (-2.17 per cent)
- Street lighting (-2.50 per cent)
- Back-office support services (Running the council) (-2.50 per cent)
- Libraries (-2.67 per cent)
- Museums and history services (-2.83 per cent)

1.17 These were followed by a further two services items (highlighted in yellow), which had an average negative percentage changes less than -2 per cent:

- Home to school transport (-1.17 per cent)
- Live well, care and support for vulnerable adults (-1.67 per cent)

Closing the funding gap

1.18 Our starting budget was £651.4 million with a funding gap of £13.9 million. The simulator was not designed to especially close the funding gap exactly, rather to explore how people make choices when faced with difficult decisions (as the councillors to need to). All the young people who completed the simulator managed to close the £13.9 million funding gap through their slider choices, with many choosing to increase council tax.

1.19 Before submitting their final budget, the young people were asked if they had any further comments to share with the council. 10 gave written feedback, which included 10 different comments. The most significant area of comment was feedback on the budget simulator (5 mentions), with participants feeling positive about the exercise but in some cases finding the amount of information overwhelming. *"Makes sense, helps me (as a kid) understand budgeting. Information bits are a bit wordy."*

1.20 The next section of the report sets out how budget simulator respondents chose to adjust each of the service item budgets, within service groups. The section is ordered, as per the simulator.

- Adult social care
- Children's services
- Highways operations
- Place, transport and infrastructure
- Planning, environment and climate change

- Public health
- Safety services
- Cultural services
- Running the council

1.21 It also includes an analysis of all the accompanying qualitative comments by service group, which bring to life how people made their decisions for the service item budgets when asked to weigh-up choices and make trade-offs. A coding framework was created to analyse the written feedback and all comments across the entire simulator were read and coded against this.

Adult social care

Budget simulator descriptions

1.22 Adult social work

We help people who are vulnerable or at risk of harm to live safely and independently. We work with people and organisations to protect their rights and prevent abuse and neglect. We also assess their needs and provide or arrange services to support them. This is our legal duty under the Health and Social Care Act 2018. In the last financial year (April 2023 - March 2024) we undertook 22,306 initial adult social care assessments.

Age well – care and support for older people

We help older people in Oxfordshire to live independently and stay safe and well. We also provide information and advice, support for unpaid carers and a range of services to meet people’s needs. This can include care services and specialist housing. This is our legal duty under the Health and Social Care Act 2018. Currently we care for and support 3,866 older people.

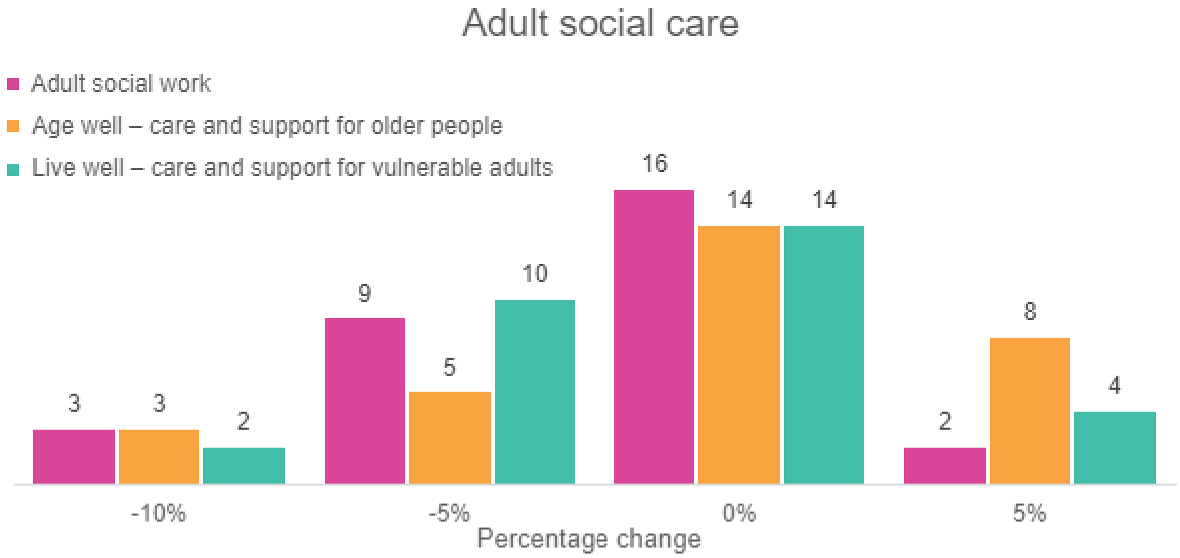
Live well - care and support for vulnerable adults

We help adults aged 18+ in Oxfordshire who have a disability or physical or mental illness to stay well and safe. We provide information and advice, assess their needs and provide or arrange a range of services to support them. This can include care services and specialist housing. This is our legal duty under the Health and Social Care Act 2018. Currently we care for and support 2,978 vulnerable adults.

The adult social care service group contained three sliders: adult social work, age well - care and support for older people and live well - care and support for vulnerable adults.

The chart below shows how people responded for all three service items (sliders) presented in the simulator.

Young people's budget simulator choices for adult social care grouping



Written feedback

1.23 In all, 18 young people gave written feedback to support their choices on the 'adult social care' section of the simulator, which included 20 different comments. More detailed analysis has been undertaken for themes (codes) which received 10 per cent or more comments in section and these are as follows:

- Importance of service (7 mentions)
- Reduce spending (6 mentions)
- The council should not provide this service (4 mentions)

1.24 Comments emphasised the importance of services for older people, with a feeling that they deserve support in their later years. *"I think older people should get more support if they need/want it so they can enjoy their life for as long as possible and don't have to spend it somewhere that they don't like."*

The importance of providing help for vulnerable adults was also highlighted, with a desire to see them supported in their daily activities and to be active members of their communities. *"Care for vulnerable adults is very important."*

Suggestions for reducing spending included prioritising services for younger children to prevent future problems and reliance on services as adults. *"If we priortise younger children, we could try and help them and provide support there, and there might be less problems as adults."*

Some comments suggest reducing spending on adult social care to encourage self-sufficiency. Additionally, some suggest that families should take on more responsibility for caring for relatives. *"I also think that some responsibilities fall on financially able families I think the same applies for elderly people I think sons or daughters could look after parents"*

1.25 Other themes for written feedback regarding adult social care related to:

- Do not reduce spending (2 mentions)
- Increase income (1 mention)

Children's and family services

Budget simulator descriptions

1.26 Children's social care

We help children and young people in Oxfordshire who are vulnerable or at risk of harm to be safe and well. We work with families and other organisations to protect their rights and prevent abuse and neglect. We also assess their needs and provide or arrange services to support them. This is our legal duty under the Children Act 1989, 2004 and 2017 and the Health and Social Care Act 2018.

We support children to stay safely with their families or family networks when they need help and protection. Working with parents and children we help make changes and improve outcomes by tackling the things that cause concerns and the family distress. Currently we support 1,738 individuals.

We provide services for 765 children and young people who can't live with their own families, finding them loving foster families and good homes and making sure that they are healthy and happy. When young people are leaving our care, we make sure they have a safe place to live and a plan for their goals for the future.

We provide social care services for 403 children and young people with very complex disabilities and health needs, who need high levels of practical physical care and support.

We welcome children and young people who come to our country alone as asylum seekers and need our help. We give them care, support, education and a chance for a better future

Family help

We help families, children and young people in Oxfordshire who are facing difficulties to overcome them and prevent future problems.

Children and family hubs are places where you can get advice and support on various topics, such as parenting, health, education and more. Currently there are 1,007 individuals being supported by this service.

The targeted youth support service helps young people who are at risk of getting into trouble or harm. It helps them deal with issues such as drugs, alcohol, crime, violence, mental health and more.

Our education, employment and training service supports young people who are not in school, work or training. It helps them find opportunities to learn new skills, get qualifications and find jobs.

We also work with local groups and organisations to provide activities and programmes for families, children and young people. Working with these groups also helps them to connect with other people in their area and access other services.

Education and schools

We provide access to education and training for Oxfordshire's children, including those who are excluded from school or in the criminal justice system. We also oversee the school admissions process, make sure there is enough early years' provision for children under five and provide specialist services to support schools to improve. We also support children and young people with their education and health and care plans, allowing them to get the support they need to thrive in our schools.

Special educational needs and disabilities (SEND)

We work with partners to meet the needs of children and young people aged 0 - 25 with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) and their families. We assess their needs and provide or arrange appropriate support according to their individual needs. Currently 6,639 children and young people in Oxfordshire have an education and healthcare plan.

We also provide an impartial information and advice service, as well as support some SEND pupils in schools with educational psychologists, speech and language therapy and occupational therapists. This is our legal duty under the Code of Practice 2014.

Home to school transport

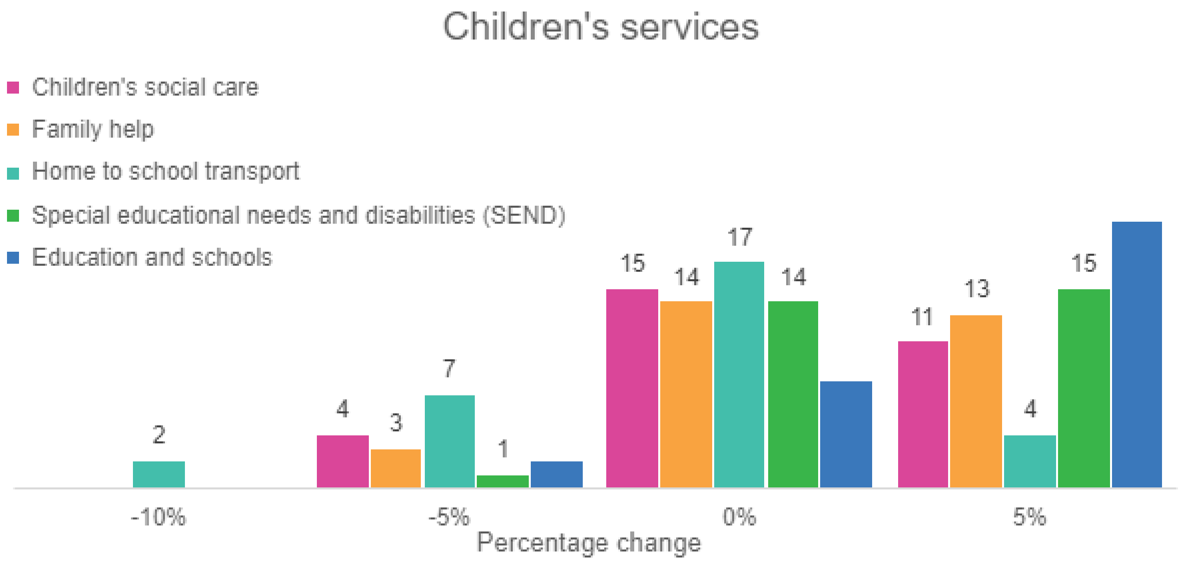
We help eligible children from reception to year 11 get to school by providing them with transportation assistance. Usually they get a free pass to use on public buses or trains but sometimes we arrange for them to travel on a special bus, coach, or minibus. There are just over 6,000 young people who are eligible to use mainstream school transport in Oxfordshire.

Some children with extra needs may travel by taxi to help them access school and education.

1.27 The children's and family service group contained five sliders: children's social care, family help, education and schools, special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) and home to school transport.

The chart below shows how people responded for service items (sliders) presented in the simulator.

Young people's budget simulator choices for children's services grouping



Written feedback

1.28 In all, 22 young people gave written feedback on the 'children's and family services' section of the simulator, which included 24 different comments. More detailed analysis has been undertaken for themes (codes) which received 10 per cent or more comments in section and these are as follows:

- Importance of service (9 mentions)
- Service quality (5 mentions)
- Reduce spending (4 mentions)
- Do not reduce spending (3 mentions)

1.29 Many comments emphasised the importance of supporting young children as they are seen as the future contributors to the economy. There is a strong sentiment that children deserve to be supported and provided with opportunities. *"Children's lives are very important because you need happy and smart children to build a good future."*

Comments also highlighted the importance of helping children with special educational needs and disabilities. There are concerns about the quality of SEND services, including a lack of places in SEND schools. *"SEN children are often ignored and if we help them as children there could be less strain on the adult services."*

Home to school transport received the majority of comments relating the reducing spending, with suggestions that public transport schemes and car sharing could be better for the environment as well as helping to reduce the cost of providing home to school transport. *"I decreased this because there* *are other transports that are public which is better for the environment."*

Comments against reducing spending on children's services emphasised the impact on, and importance of, children's mental health. There are concerns about children struggling with school and mental health problems, and the need for support services. *"children social care we do need… as most kids struggle with school and mental health problems"*

1.30 Other themes for written feedback regarding children's services related to:

- Misunderstanding of OCC power/responsibilities (2 mentions)
- The council should not provide this service (1 mention)

Highways operations

Budget simulator descriptions

1.31 Highways maintenance

We have to keep the roads in Oxfordshire safe for everyone. We look after 3,000 miles of roads, as well as paths, bridges and trees. We fix potholes, resurface roads, make roads safer, clear snow and ice in the winter, unblock drains and cut grass on the sides of the roads.

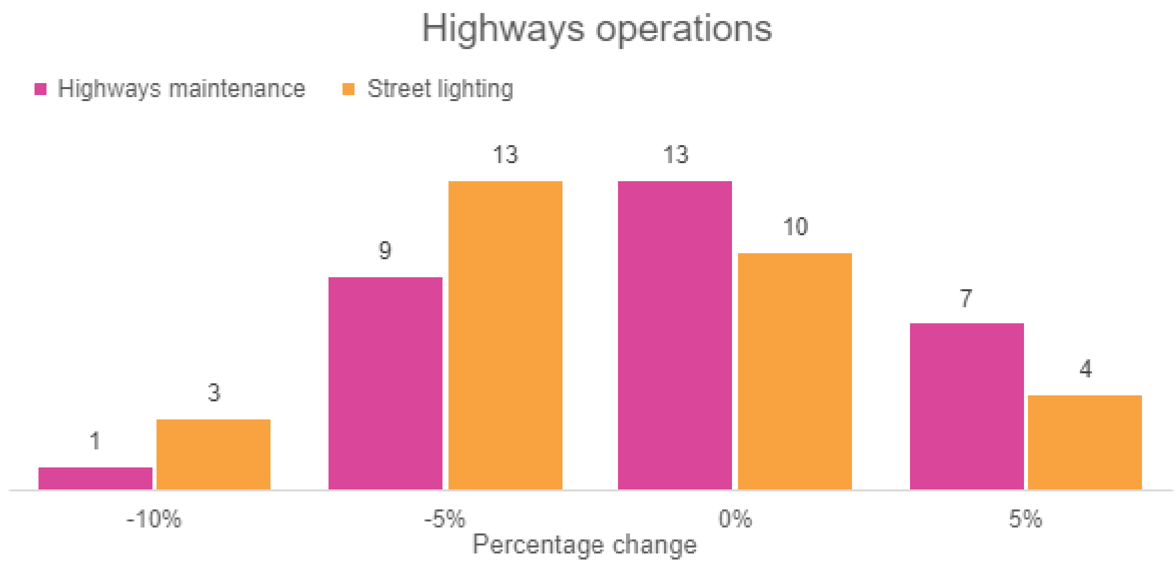
Street lighting

We maintain over 60,000 street lights, signs and bollards that light up the roads and paths in Oxfordshire. Most of them are LED lights, which use less energy and last longer. Our streetlights are managed (what times they are on and when they are brighter or dimmer) to save energy.

1.32 The highways operations grouping contained two sliders: highways maintenance and street lighting.

The chart below shows how people responded for both items (sliders) presented in the simulator.

Young people's budget simulator choices for highways operations



Written feedback

1.33 In all, 16 young people gave written feedback on the 'highways operations' section of the simulator, which included 23 different comments. More detailed analysis has been undertaken for themes (codes) which received 10 per cent or more comments in section and these are as follows:

- Reduce spending (6 mentions)
- Roads and transport (5 mentions)
- Do not reduce spending (5 mentions)
- Importance of service (4 mentions)

1.34 Several comments suggest reducing street lighting to save costs whilst reducing light pollution. There are suggestions to reduce cost and energy use by using solar lighting and LED bulbs. However, there are also comments emphasising the importance of street lighting for safety, especially in darker times of the year. *"Increasing street lights can increase the safety of areas because some people feel scared to enter areas which are dark."*

Many comments emphasise the need for road repair and maintenance, particularly fixing potholes and improving road conditions. Some feel that highway maintenance funding should not be reduced, and is especially important in rural areas of Oxfordshire. *"…other things are more important like highway maintenance which lower the accident rate on the highway."*

1.35 Other themes for written feedback regarding highways operations related to:

- Service quality (2 mentions)
- Increase income (1 mention)

Place, transport and infrastructure

Budget simulator description

1.36 Place, transport and infrastructure
We support and encourage thriving communities in Oxfordshire, mainly by managing travel and connectivity so that people can easily get to important places (such as health services, education, shops and workplaces) and goods can be moved in Oxfordshire. We have a plan for the county that respects the individual needs of different areas in Oxfordshire, and more local travel area plans to help us understand what transport might be needed to support communities in the future.

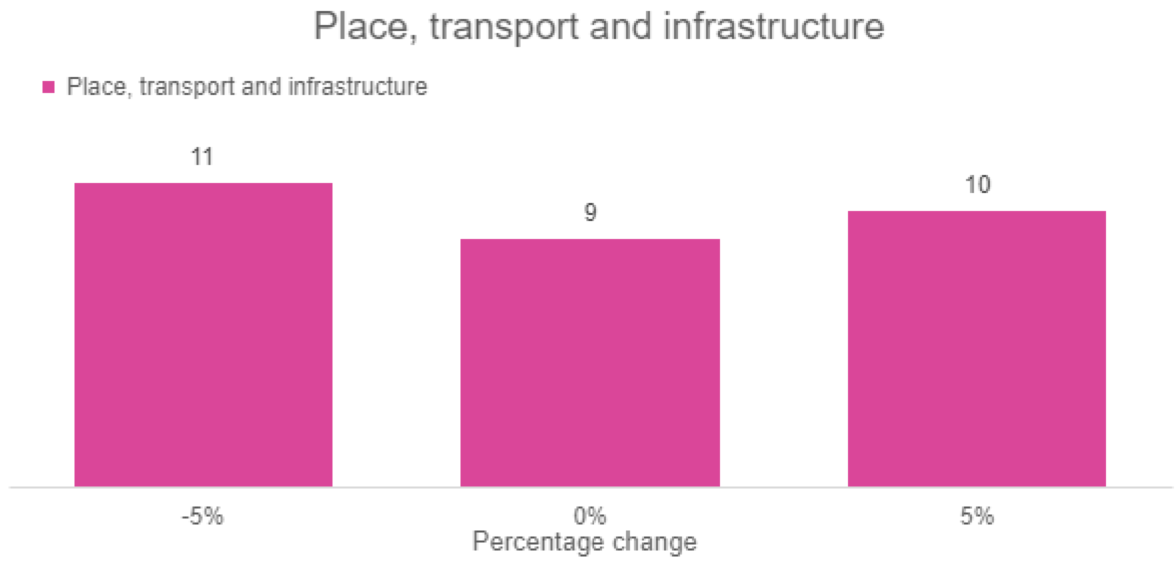
We encourage people to travel by walking, cycling and using public transport. We work with other groups and organisations to provide services and make changes that improve travel and transport. We also build roads, bridges and other transport facilities that are funded by government, work with businesses who build new housing and business properties, and by working with others in partnership to deliver services.

We want to make Oxfordshire a better place to live and work, where people can benefit from types of transport that help prevent climate change and improve air quality improving the health and wellbeing for residents.

We support bus services and provide free bus passes for older people and disabled people and their companions. We ensure that new housing and commercial developments and new cycleways, walking routes, bus lanes and roads meet our communities' needs and the overall vision for Oxfordshire as a greener, fairer and healthier county.

1.37 The place, transport and infrastructure group had just one slider.
The chart below shows how people responded for place, transport and infrastructure as presented in the simulator.

Young people's budget simulator choices for place, transport and infrastructure



Written feedback

1.38 In all, 15 young people gave written feedback on the 'place, transport and infrastructure' section of the simulator, which included 22 different comments. More detailed analysis has been undertaken for themes (codes) which received 10 per cent or more comments in section and these are as follows:

- Roads and transport (9 mentions)
- Importance of service (5 mentions)
- Do not reduce spending (4 mentions)

1.39 Comments were primarily focussed on public transport services, highlighting their use by young people and emphasising the need for continued investment public transport. It is suggested that if the council takes over transport costs and fares might go down, encouraging more people to use public transport. "Travel is important and should be cheaper."

1.40 Here is a high-level thematic summary of the other comments made for 'place, transport and infrastructure':

- Feedback on the budget simulator (2 mentions)
- Reduce spending (1 mention)
- Service quality (1 mention)

Planning, environment and climate change

Budget simulator description

1.41 Strategic planning

We are in charge of planning for minerals and waste in Oxfordshire. We also give advice on planning for infrastructure, such as roads, schools and health services. We do this by responding to consultations on planning applications and on local area plans.

Environment and climate action

Reducing our impact on the environment is important to us and is part of all the work that we do. This part of our budget is about the work of our environment and climate action teams, who play an important part in improving the natural environment and people's access to it, reducing pollution and making sure we are ready to deal with more severe weather.

We are responsible for fixing drainage and flooding issues on highways and roads across Oxfordshire, including blocked drains and gullies on the road. We are also responsible for co-ordinating the emergency response to flooding and managing the flood risk from surface water, groundwater and ordinary watercourses. We work with a range of organisations including the Environment Agency, Thames Water, the city and district councils, farmers and landowners to do this.

We also work with the city and district councils (and local communities) to protect and improve nature and access to green and open spaces. We work with the Local Nature Partnership to protect our heritage, wildlife and landscapes in Oxfordshire, as well as increasing the number of trees.

We help people enjoy the countryside by looking after and expanding the paths and trails that people can walk, cycle or ride horses on. We work to keep these paths clear, mapped and sign-posted, as required by law. We work with volunteers and community groups to make our environment better and safer for everyone.

We work to reduce pollution and make Oxfordshire more energy efficient by:

- Supporting people on very low incomes to make their homes more energy efficient. This helps to reduce their bills as well as keeping them warmer and healthier.
- Working with other organisations to make sure Oxfordshire's energy system can support communities and homes to have more chargers for electric cars and use more renewable energy.

- Reducing how much energy council buildings use, and switching to vans, cars other vehicles that create less pollution. We also support schools to make these changes.
- Working with companies that supply things to the council to help them reduce their environmental impact.
- Reducing traffic congestion and encouraging people to walk, cycle or use public transport (where possible) instead of driving.
- Supporting communities to do things that are good for their local area and the environment. For example, having repair cafes, planting community orchards and giving people advice on how to lower their energy bills.

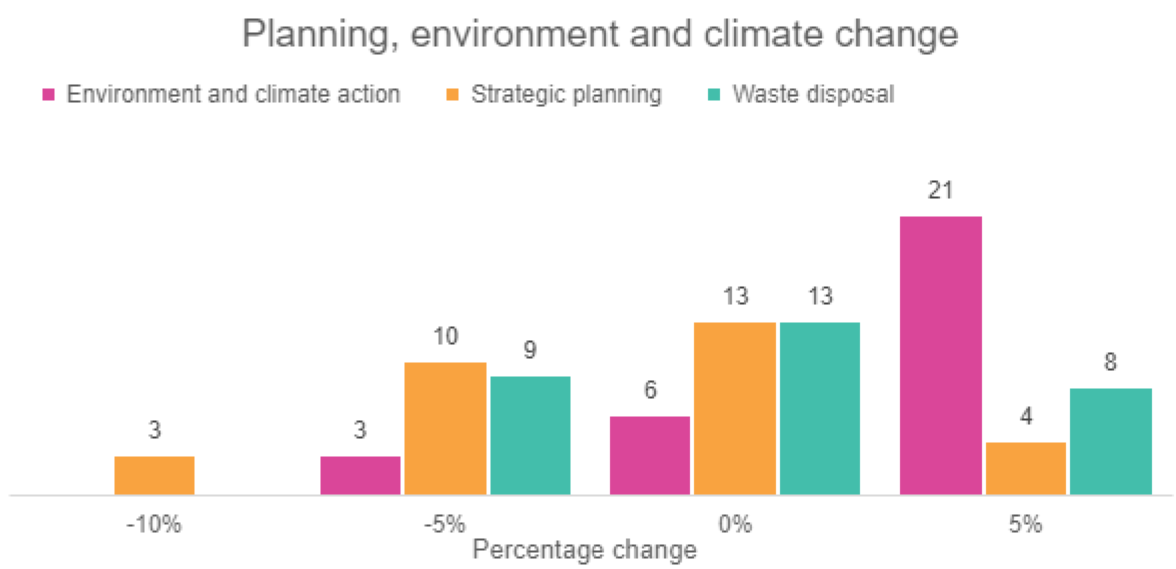
Waste disposal

We are responsible for getting rid of household waste in Oxfordshire. This includes recycling, green waste and black bin waste. However, we don't do bin collections; they are arranged by your local district or city council.

We also have to provide places where people can take their household waste to be recycled. These are called household waste recycling centres. We have seven of these in Oxfordshire. They are visited by about one million people every year and they take in about 40,000 to 45,000 tonnes of waste every year.

1.42 The planning, transport and climate change grouping contained three sliders: strategic planning, environment and climate action and waste disposal. The chart below shows how people responded for all three service items (sliders) presented in the simulator.

Young people's budget simulator choices for planning, environment and climate change



Written feedback

1.43 In all, 19 young people gave written feedback on the ‘Planning, environment and climate change’ section of the simulator, which included 27 different comments. The key themes were:

- Climate action (18 mentions)
- Reduce spending (4 mentions)

1.44 There is a strong sentiment that the environment is crucial for future generations and that immediate climate action is needed before it is too late. There is a belief that future spending can be reduced by addressing climate change now. “We really need to work on the environment and the climate as future generations will have to suffer from our actions.”

There is a sentiment that spending on other services, such as planning, can be reduced to prioritise the environment. “Planning is important but saving and preserving our environment is vital to survive.”

1.45 Other themes for written feedback regarding environment and climate change related to:

- Waste (2 mentions)
- Importance of service (2 mentions)
- Do not reduce spending (1 mention)

Public health

Budget simulator description

1.46 <u>Public health</u>
We provide services to improve people’s health and help them to avoid getting sick. This includes work to tackle health inequalities (for example, where people in one area of Oxfordshire have worse health or don’t live as long as people in another area) so that everybody can live longer, healthier lives.
We provide services that help to stop illnesses that can be passed from one person to another and we help local health services to meet the needs of people in Oxfordshire. This includes making sure that services are easy to access, effective and good value.

We work with other council services, communities and organisations to reduce the differences in health between different groups of people and to make places healthier.

Services that we pay for include:

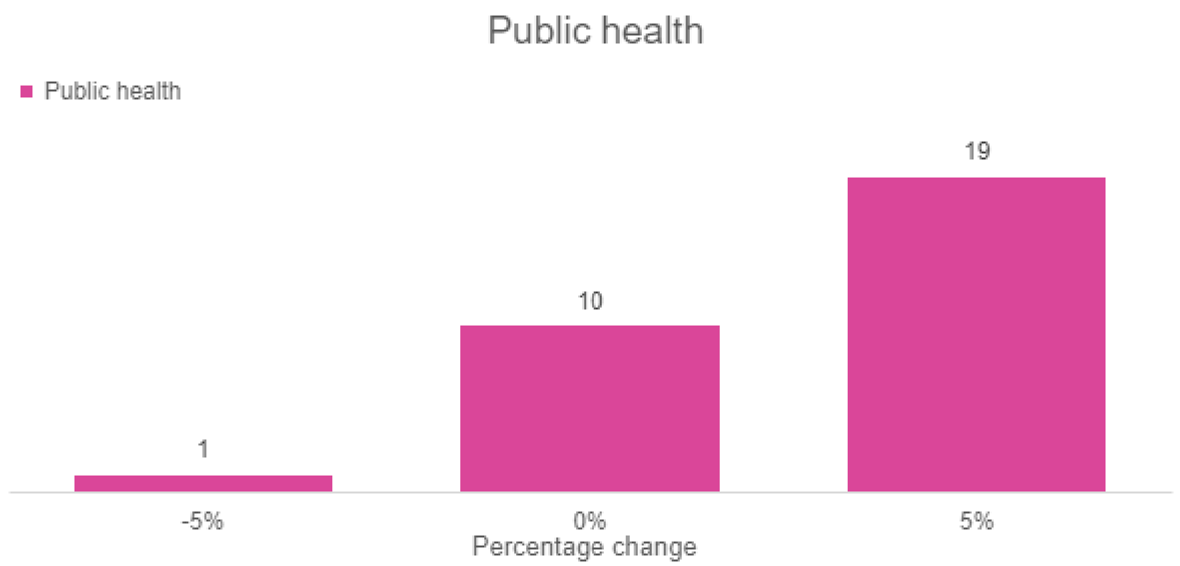
- childhood health visitors and school nurses
- NHS health checks for adults over 40 years old
- reducing the harm caused by smoking, drugs, alcohol and obesity
- sexual health services.

Most of the money for these services comes from a special grant that we can only use for public health. The simulator slider for public health represents what is paid for with the council's money and other grants, mainly services that reduce health inequalities and help people who are affected by domestic abuse or drug and alcohol problems.

1.47 The public health group had just one slider.

The chart below shows how people responded for public health as presented in the simulator.

Young people's budget simulator choices for public health



Written feedback

1.48 In all, 19 young people gave written feedback on the Public Health section of the simulator, which included 22 different comments. Key themes were:

- Importance of service (10)
- Misunderstanding of OCC power/responsibilities (4 mentions)

1.49 Comments emphasise the importance of public health, stating that it saves lives, helps people live longer, and is essential for a functioning council. There is a strong sentiment that health should always be a high priority, especially in light of recent contagious diseases like COVID-19. *"Health is the upmost priority as there is no point making a perfect future if there is no one to live in it."*

Some comments express frustration with long waiting times for doctors and the perceived unfairness that those who can afford private doctors receive quicker treatment. Recommendations for improving this include higher wages to increase staffing. *"lots of the times there is a big wait for the doctors and some people might not be able to wait that long."*

1.50 Other themes for written feedback regarding public health to:

- Increase income (2 mentions)
- Service quality (2 mentions)
- Reduce spending (1 mention)
- Do not reduce spending (1 mention)

Safety services

Budget simulator description

1.51 Fire and rescue

Oxfordshire Fire and Rescue Service is part of the county council and our firefighters operate from 25 fire stations across the county. We protect communities, reduce harm and save lives through education and advice about fire safety. We also respond to emergencies, such as fires, road accidents, chemical incidents, flooding and extreme weather. We work with partners to plan and prepare for major incidents.

We are the statutory fire authority for Oxfordshire. That means that it is our job to check buildings for fire safety, give advice to businesses on fire safety responsibilities and make sure they follow the rules. If they don't, we can take action to make sure everyone stays safe. This is our legal duty under the Fire and Rescue Services Act 2004 and the Civil Contingencies Act 2004.

Trading standards

Trading Standards works to protect residents and businesses and takes action, including enforcement, when needed.

This covers things like weights and measures; product safety; food standards; unfair trading practices; animal health and disease control; environmental requirements; and price marking and comparison.

In addition, it covers rules around the sale of products that have age limits, such as tobacco and vapes; the licensing and inspection of sites storing explosives and petroleum; and the safety certification of sports stadiums. Trading Standards also works to protect people from financial abuse, like scams, and enforces weight restrictions on roads.

1.52 The safety services grouping contained two sliders: fire and rescue and trading standards.

The chart below shows how people responded for all three service items (sliders) presented in the simulator.

Young people's budget simulator choices for safety services

Written feedback

1.53 In all, 16 young people gave written feedback on the 'Safety services' section of the simulator, which included 14 different comments. Key themes were:

- Importance of service (10 mentions)
- Reduce spending (2 mentions)

1.54 There is a sentiment that trading standards are important, particularly addressing issues such as vaping among young people. Underage sales are highlighted as a significant problem, with several comments mentioning issues at schools. *"Vaping has become a large issue for younger people and being able to control it would hopefully reduce the easiness of being able to get products like this."*

Comments also emphasise the importance of the fire and rescue service and how they are keeping people safe. *"Fire and rescue are very important to save peoples lives."*

Some respondents felt that spending could be reduced, with a suggestion that some responsibilities could be transferred to businesses. *"I think that personally we could spend a little less on safety services"*

1.55 Other themes for written feedback regarding cultural services related to:

- Climate action (1 mention)
- Importance of service (1 mention)

Cultural services

Budget simulator descriptions

1.56 Libraries

We have to provide a library service for everyone who lives, works and studies in Oxfordshire by law. Our 45 libraries are open to everyone and they offer many things such as books, information, free wi-fi and computers and social activities. We know that some people cannot come to the libraries so we also have an app, online resources and a home library service for people who need it.

Museums and history services

We run five places where you can learn about Oxfordshire's history and heritage:

- The Oxfordshire Museum (Woodstock), where you can see our permanent collections, exhibitions and activities.
- The Museums Resource Centre (Standlake), where we keep our reserve collections, and where people can learn about Oxfordshire's history and see important historical information.
- Swalcliffe Barn (near Banbury) is a medieval barn where we display large vehicles used for farming and trade. The barn is a Graded 1 listed building, which means that we have to protect it and not change it.
- The remains of the Bishop's Palace (Witney), which was built more than 800 years ago.
- The Oxfordshire History Centre (Cowley), where we keep the county's public archives, records and core local history collection.

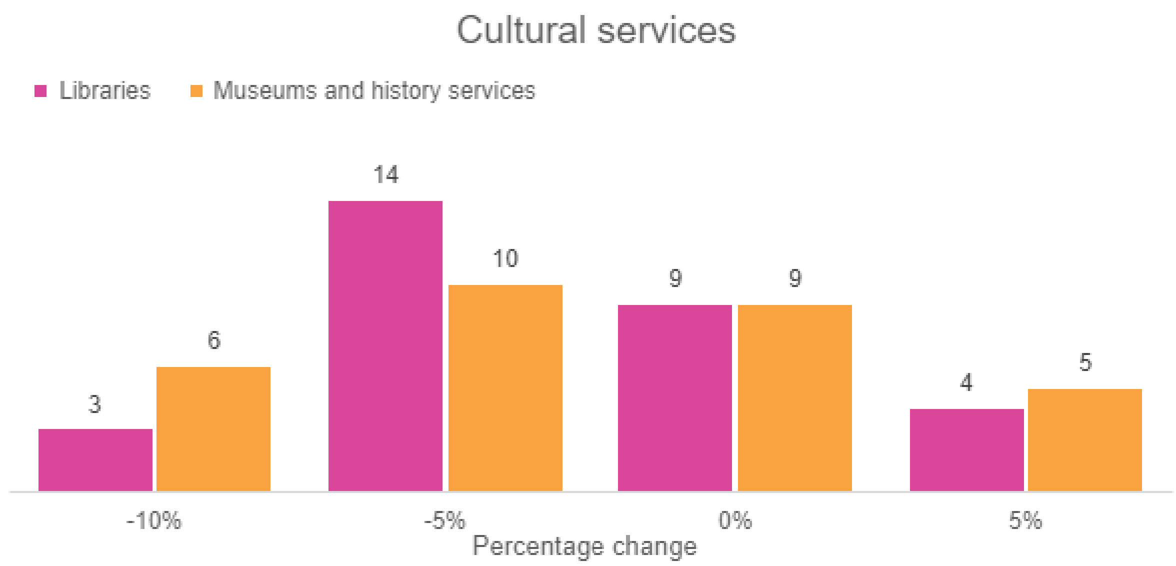
We offer these services to everyone in communities. We also have some legal responsibilities to look after these places and collections.

As well as running our own places, we also help other organisations that provide access to heritage across the county, including Oxford City Council (who run the Museum of Oxford) and the Victoria County History of Oxfordshire.

1.57 The cultural services grouping contained two sliders: libraries, and museums and history services.

The chart below shows how people responded for both items (sliders) presented in the simulator.

Young people's budget simulator choices for cultural services



Written feedback

1.58 In all, 22 young gave written feedback on the 'cultural services' section of the simulator, which included 29 different comments. From reviewing the comments, the key themes emerging were:
- Reduce spending (13 mentions)
- Importance of service (12 mentions)
- Do not reduce spending (3 mentions)

1.59 There are conflicting sentiments on the importance of cultural services. Some comments suggest that these services are not essential and that the budget could be better allocated to more important services like education, housing, and healthcare. "libraries aren't used much because schools have libraries and book are cheaply available at charity shops."

However other comments emphasise the importance of cultural services for education and community engagement, particularly for young people, and highlight the need to protect their funding. Libraries and museums are seen as valuable resources for learning and personal growth, providing safe and warm spaces for people. "The information helps teach us so much and will make us happier people. These places aren't just a source of education for all ages, they are a safe, warm place that people can somehow find support."

1.60 Other themes for written feedback regarding cultural services related to:
- Service quality (1 mention)

Running the council

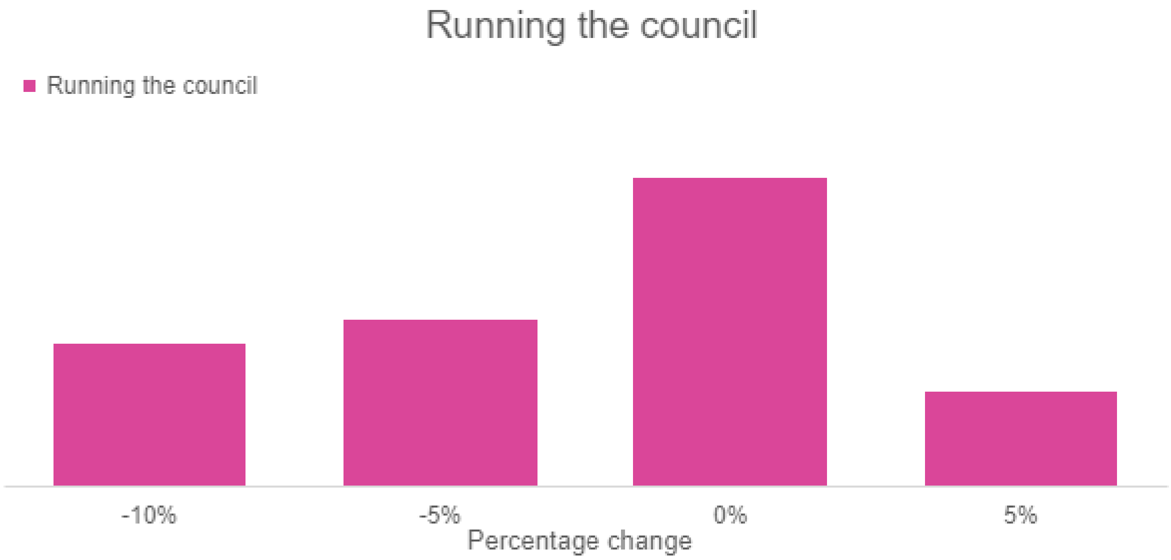
Budget simulator description

1.61 Running the council
The county council needs services that help us to do our work for Oxfordshire's residents and communities and meet our legal responsibilities. These services include finance, HR, IT support, law and governance, communications, customer services, policy and performance, procurement and property services.

1.62 The running the council group had just one slider.

The chart below shows how people responded for running the business as presented in the simulator.

Young people's budget simulator choices for running the council



Written feedback

1.63 15 young people gave written feedback on the 'running the council' section of the simulator, which included 13 different comments. From reviewing the comments, the key themes emerging were:

- Reduce spending (6 mentions)
- Service quality (4 mentions))
- Importance of service (2 mentions)

1.64 Many respondents expressed the belief that the council spends too much money on things that are not noticeable, while others mention that having good staff would mean that not so many staff are needed. Commenters suggest that a reduction in spending here could be used to fund front line services. *"I think their could be cuts made into running the council that would further benefit other services."*

A positive perception of the council is shown in some comments, with a sentiment that the council is run well and is in a stable condition. *"I think the council are doing a great job."*

Some commenters highlight the importance of this service in supporting council functions. *"Its very important otherwise everything else doesn't work."*

1.65 Other themes for written feedback regarding running the business related to:

- Do not reduce spending (1 mention)

Council Tax

1.66 The young people were informed that in Oxfordshire, council tax bills are made up of several different amounts of money that go to different organisations and that Oxfordshire County Council's element of their council tax bill is made up of two parts:

- The 'core' or general council tax used for all county council services, including highway maintenance; children and adult social care; waste management and recycling; fire and rescue, and libraries.
- An adult social care 'precept', which is an additional charge on top of core council tax that can only be spent on adult social care services.

Budget simulator users were also informed that:

- Funding for the financial year 2025/26 is currently uncertain for all local authorities because of the general election. This includes money from government, grants and our ability to raise council tax.

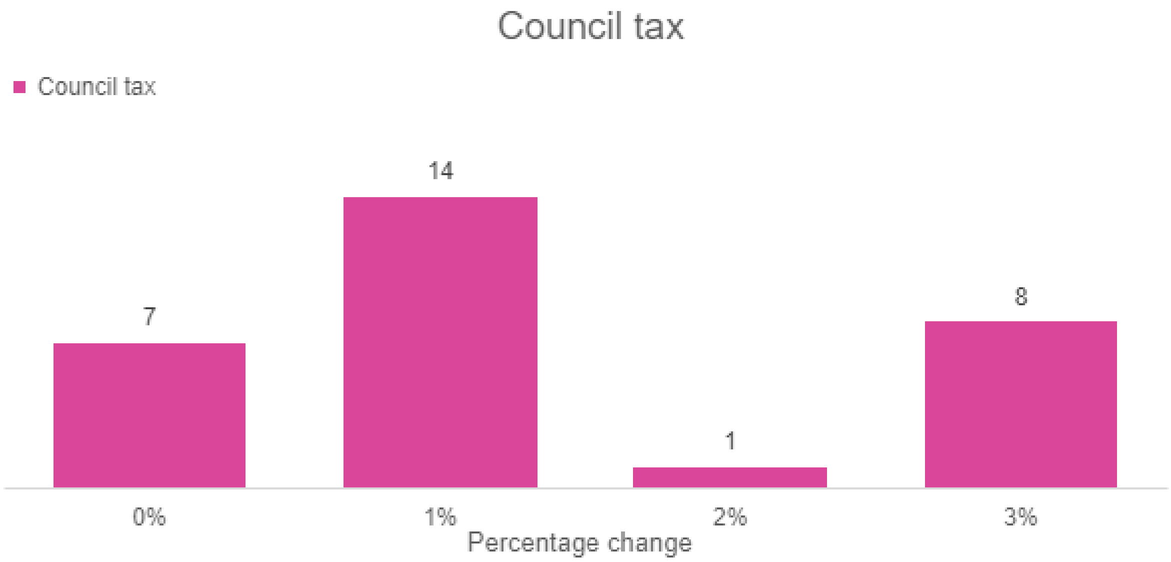
- The government tells local authorities how much we can raise council tax by without needing a referendum; this is called the referendum limit. If we want to raise council tax higher than the limit, we would have to ask people in Oxfordshire to vote on it, and could only do it if they voted yes. We don't yet know what the referendum limit will be for the financial year 2025/26. The government will tell us later in the year.

1.67 The council tax slider had three options as follows:

- 0%: Our current medium term financial strategy includes a 1.99 per cent rise. This is shown as 0 per cent in the simulator.
- 1%: Increasing this by one per cent is equal to an overall 2.99 per cent council tax rise, would give an additional £5m for services.

- 2%: Increasing this by two per cent is equal to an overall 3.99 per cent council tax rise, would give an additional £10m for services.
- 3%: Increasing this by three per cent is equal to an overall 2.99 per cent council tax rise, would give an additional £15m for services.

Young people's budget simulator choices for council tax



- Overall, 23 young people chose to increase council tax on top of the 1.99% already proposed
- On average, the budget simulator shows that people were willing to increase by 1.33 per cent.
- 14 young people (47 per cent of respondents) chose to increase council tax by an additional one per cent (to 2.99%)
- 1 young person (3 per cent of respondents) chose to increase council tax by an additional two per cent (to 3.99%)
- 8 young people (27 per cent of respondents) chose to increase council tax by and additional three per cent (to 4.99%)

Written feedback

1.68 22 young people gave written feedback on the council tax section of the simulator, which included 19 different comments. The primary theme was around increasing income (17 mentions), including:

- Increase in council tax is acceptable (14)
- Increase in council tax is not acceptable (1)
- Reduce in council tax (1)
- A need for increased funding from national government (1)

1.69 Many comments suggest that increasing council tax could help fund services that benefit everyone. There is a sentiment that those who can afford to pay more should do so to improve the quality of life for others. *"It would do well for* *everyone to help but it has to be from those who can afford it, otherwise it worsens the situation and not helps it."*

Several comments express concerns about the cost-of-living crisis and the impact of higher taxes on struggling families. *"Lots of people are already struggling, no one family should have to pay more than they have to. I think families with more children, poorer housing, disability or in foster care should be able to pay less."*

2. Budget simulator focus groups

Introduction

2.1 On Thursday 20 June and Friday 19 July 2024 we held two in-person focus groups for secondary school-aged young people, so they could try out our budget simulator and tell us their priorities.

2.2 Both focus groups were held between 5.30pm – 8.00pm at County Hall and were facilitated by members of the council's engagement and consultation team. Equipment was provided (laptops and/or iPads) for attendees to use. A set £20 thank you payment was offered, alongside reimbursement of travel expenses. Additionally, hot food, snacks and refreshments were provided and a certificate of participation for all attendees was awarded.

Approach

2.3 The aims of the focus groups were to:

- engage young people with the council's budget simulator
- explore what additional support or changes may be needed to the budget simulator to empower young people to use it
- seek feedback on young people's priorities for the council and its services

2.4 The first focus group was a tester session to enable young people to pilot, and feedback on, the budget simulator tool itself and as well to have a go at submitting a balanced budget. As this was a pilot, we deliberately did not provide much in the way of an introduction, as we wanted young people to test out using the simulator based on only the information provided on the simulator pages. Following the first group, some changes were made to the budget simulator to make it easier to use. We also recognised that it is still a complex tool and for young people it is best suited to being used in a supported environment such as in a group, classroom environment etc.

2.5 With this in mind, to give more young people the opportunity to take part in the budget simulator we organised a second focus group. This focused on giving more introductory information about the county council, the services we provide, and how decisions are made. We did not specifically seek feedback in this group on the young people's views on the budget simulator tool itself. Instead, we used it as an opportunity for young people to provide feedback on the council's nine strategic priorities to add to the views of other young people collated at the budget sounding boards.

Recruitment and attendees

2.6 To recruit participants for the first focus group, information was provided, along with a combined 'register your interest' and consent form on the county council's consultation platform, Let's talk Oxfordshire. Emails with a link to this page were sent to young people on the engagement and consultation team's mailing list (and/or their parents/carers) for which young people have previously signed up to stay in touch and learn about future opportunities to get involved and share their views.

2.7 For the second focus group, information about the opportunity was again provided, on the county council's consultation platform, Let's talk Oxfordshire. Again, emails were sent to the young people on the Engagement and Consultation Team's mailing list (and/or their parents/carers) and in addition, information was shared with residents across the county through the 'Your Oxfordshire' newsletter. This was with a focus on encouraging parents/carers to get their children to participate. Schools who'd registered their interest in the sounding boards but were unable to attend were also actively targeted with information about the opportunity for their pupils to get involved. Finally, councillors who expressed an interest were also given the information to promote where possible through their local secondary schools or local youth groups.

2.8 Overall, the two focus involved a total of 29 young people from across Oxfordshire (13 at the first focus group and 16 at the second focus group). They were all aged between 12 – 17 years old and their demographic profile reflects the details given in the budget simulator section of the report.

Key findings

Feedback on the council's strategic priorities

2.9 As specified above, this task was only completed by the 16 participants at the second focus group. The young people attending the focus group were divided into three groups and were asked to choose their two most important and two least important of the council's nine strategic priorities from a young person's perspective, and write individual post it notes for each saying why they made these choices. As the three groups each had two choices, this meant there were six 'votes' in total for both the most important and least important strategic priorities.

Table 4: Young people's choices for most important strategic priorities

2. Strategic priority	3. Number of tables where the priority was mentioned	4. Ranking 5.
6. 1. Put action to address the climate emergency at the heart of our work.	7. 2	8. 1
9. 3. Prioritise the health and wellbeing of residents.	10. 2	11. 1
12. 7. Create opportunities for children and young people to reach their full potential.	13. 1	14. 2
15. 9. Work with local businesses and partners for environmental, economic and social benefit.	16. 1	17. 2

The strategic priorities not chosen by any tables as the most important were:

- 2. Tackle inequalities in Oxfordshire
- 4. Support carers and the social care system
- 5. Invest in an inclusive, integrated and sustainable transport network
- 6. Preserve and improve access to nature and green spaces
- 8. Play our part in a vibrant and participatory local democracy

Table 5: Young people's choices for least important strategic priorities

18. Strategic priority	19. Number of tables where the priority was mentioned	20. Ranking 21.
22. 8. Play our part in a vibrant and participatory local democracy.	23. 3	24. 1
25. 6. Preserve and improve access to nature and green spaces.	26. 1	27. 2
28. 4. Support carers and the social care system.	29. 1	30. 2
31. 9. Work with local businesses and partners for environmental, economic and social benefit.	32. 1	33. 2

The strategic priorities not chosen by any tables as the most important were:

- 1. Put action to address the climate emergency at the heart of our work
- 2. Tackle inequalities in Oxfordshire
- 3. Priorities the health and wellbeing of residents
- 5. Invest in an inclusive, integrated and sustainable transport network
- 7. Create opportunities for children and young people to reach their full potential

Written feedback

Group 1

Group 1 consisted of five young people, who chose as their two most important strategic priorities:

- 1. Put action to address the climate emergency at the heart of our work.
- 7. Create opportunities for children and young people to reach their full potential.

The young people gave the following reasons for choosing these as their most important priorities:

1. Put action to address the climate emergency at the heart of our work.

- *“Number 1 is important because it covers a lot of the stuff that we need to change in our community.”*
- *“#1 linked in with a lot of other things like #5 and #6. It is important because if we don't go extinct, we can fix everything else.”*
- *“Number one is important because climate change kills animals and destroys homes.”*
- *“Number one is important because if the climate emergency is not addressed soon then the climate will continue to get hotter. If we fix it, 9, 5 and 6 will also be fixed.”*
- *“To tackle our climate emergency before we run out of time and it's too late.”*

7. Create opportunities for children and young people to reach their full potential.

- *“To help those who may need extra support or help.”*
- *“#7 also links to a lot of other things, like #2. There are a lot of mental health issues in young people and schools are horribly underfunded.”*
- *“Number 7 is important because children need to be well educated and so that when they are older they will be able to make important decisions.”*
- *“Number 7 is important because children are the world's future leaders.”*
- *“7 is important because many children's full potential is wasted by lack of teachers facilities and they won't be able to have a bright future.”*

Group 1 chose the following as their two least important strategic priorities:

- 6. Preserve and improve access to nature and green spaces.
- 8. Play our part in a vibrant and participatory local democracy.

The young people gave the following reasons for choosing these as their least important priorities:

6. Preserve and improve access to nature and green spaces.

- *"I don't think number #6 is as important because it closely links to #1 and we said #1 was very important."*
- *"I thought 6 was important but everyone else disagreed with me."*
- *"I think 6 is the least important because it is a less impactful version of 1."*
- *"It links in with number one but doesn't [?] have much support."*
- *"I think 6 is not important because it's like 1 just worse."*

8. Play our part in a vibrant and participatory local democracy.

- *"8 is not as important because locals are not as well-informed as experts."*
- *"I think that 8 isn't that important because I think that it is better to have people in charge who know what they are doing than to ask people who don't know much."*
- *"I don't think #8 is as important because it is, in my opinion, less of a priority."*
- *"Isn't that important or urgent [?]."*
- *"I think 8 is not as important as the others."*

<u>Group 2</u>

Group 2 consisted of five young people, who chose as their two most important strategic priorities:

- 9. Work with local businesses and partners for environmental, economic and social benefit.
- 3. Prioritise the health and wellbeing of residents.

The young people gave the following reasons for choosing these as their most important priorities:

9. Work with local businesses and partners for environmental, economic and social benefit.

- *"I think 9 and 3 are the most important… 9 can help local business which will help our community out."*
- *"Because it will help the economy, business owners, and establish closer bonds between businesses, taxpayers and the government."*

- *"This is good because it can help with global warming as businesses contribute to global warming."*
- *"Local businesses because they run the local economy."*

3. Prioritise the health and wellbeing of residents

- *"I think 9 and 3 are the most important… 3 because it will also contribute to the wellbeing of our communities and social manner."*
- *"Because everyone should have access to health and health affects everyone in some way."*
- *"Prioritising the health and well-being of residents can cause people to flourish not just physically but mentally. As well as this can make people feel better/confident in wherever they are [?]."*
- *"Health and well-being because I enjoy health and makes communities happier."*
- *"The most important - to prioritise health and well-being of residents because it is important [?] to have a healthy country and it also saves money in other sectors."*

Group 2 chose the following as their two least important strategic priorities:

- 8. Play our part in a vibrant and participatory local democracy.
- 4. Support carers and the social care system.

The young people gave the following reasons for choosing these as their least important priorities:

8. Play our part in a vibrant and participatory local democracy.

- *"Democracy does not always get what people want as well as if the majority choose a group and there is a downfall everyone has to suffer the consequences."*
- *"I think democracy because making it less of a forefront issue won't make it a communist country."*
- *"Democracy isn't fair, the voting system is often corrupt and easily manipulated or subject to change."*
- *"We chose democracy (and social care and carers) as our least important because we do not believe they need to be prioritised in a financial manner."*
- *"Democracy because is kind of unsafe [?] since some people overpower others."*

4. Support carers and the social care system.

- *Carers are important however if we improve general health services for everyone.*
- *We chose social care and carers (and democracy) as our least important because we do not believe they need to be prioritised in a financial manner.*

Group 3

Group 3 consisted of six young people, who chose as their two most important strategic priorities:

- Put action to address the climate emergency at the heart of our work.
- Prioritise the health and wellbeing of residents.

The young people gave the following reasons for choosing these as their most important priorities:

1. Put action to address the climate emergency at the heart of our work.

- *“Number 1 is important as it ensures the next generation can thrive.”*
- *“Climate change is underestimated threat we desperately need to address.”*
- *“If we don’t have good climate then we will have to possibly move houses away from the beaches and like sea levels might rise and kill people and in the less fortunate countries they might struggle.”*
- *“1 is important because climate change is very urgent and if we don’t quickly deal with it there will be severe consequences on a global and local scale.”*
- *“We need to preserve our future and without our planet, there is no life, no future.”*
- *“Because climate change is serious and we need to act now before it's too late”*

3. Prioritise the health and wellbeing of residents.

- *“There are not enough mental health services or health services in general.”*
- *“Number 3 is important because it means people are fit and healthy to be helpful and happy in society.”*
- *“Wellbeing (mental and physical) should be priority otherwise we’ll all really suffer.”*
- *“We all have a body and a life [?]. We all get unwell or need an extra bit of care. We all have a mind. We all want to be happy.”*
- *“If we don’t have good health of people then we will have a lower population which is bad and there will be lower life expectancy.”*

- *"Health and wellbeing is very important because people must be happy for a good community."*

Group 3 chose the following as their two least important strategic priorities:

- 8. Play our part in a vibrant and participatory local democracy.
- 9. Work with local businesses and partners for environmental, economic and social benefit.

The young people gave the following reasons for choosing these as their least important priorities:

8. Play our part in a vibrant and participatory local democracy.

- *"We already have a democracy so instead of spending on parties advertising, save money."*
- *"We already have a democracy so we don't need this as much."*
- *"We live in a country of democracy. We can scale back on everything to create a more gentle approach and not so full on."*
- *"We already live in democratic society."*
- *"We already live in a democracy country and they wasted a lot of money in the last vote that could have been put into something more important."*
- *"I think 8 is not so important because we live in a country where democracy is a valve [?] and people pick the government anyway."*

9. Work with local businesses and partners for environmental, economic and social benefit.

- *"Local businesses can support themselves they made need support but more important services first."*
- *"Local businesses already get a lot of support."*
- *"Local businesses can adequately [?] support themselves and independently be successful."*
- *"Businesses can support themselves and already are being friendly and eco."*
- *"I think 9 is not so important because people can still invest in businesses."*
- *"We do have lots of very important businesses that already deal with all of this."*

3. Budget Sounding Boards

Introduction

3.1 On Wednesday 3 July and Thursday 11 July 2024, we held two in-person sounding boards for secondary school aged children. The aim of the sounding boards was to gather insight from a student's perspective, of the council strategic priorities and spending. Young people were also invited to submit a response into the budget simulator after the event, should they wish to.

Attendees

3.2 The two events brought together 35 young people across the two days, aged between 11 to 15. The Oxford budget sounding board was held at County Hall and involved students from Greyfrairs Catholic School, the second event was held at Warriner School near Banbury and involved its students.

Methodology

3.3 Schools were invited to bring students to an event that would meet curriculum needs as well as meeting the council's engagement expectations for the budget. With a captive audience from schools, there was no requirement to pay or 'entice' an audience to the event. The aims of the sounding boards were to:

- engage young people in citizenship conversations and specifically how the council and local politics work, the role of the council, its services and priorities and how it is financed
- help young people to understand more about money management, using a simulated exercise
- seek feedback on their priorities for the council and its services

3.4 The sounding boards were hosted by one of the council's engagement and consultation specialists. The table discussions were facilitated by a mix of staff from the engagement and consultation team and youth workers. An agenda was created to ensure the council could not only gain insight, but so the day was engaging and informative for the students. It was important to set the scene and to ensure that all the young people equally understood what the council does and were ready for what was expected of them later in the day. Therefore, we delivered tasks 1, 2 and 3 to enable the young people to understand what the council does, how it spends its money, how budgeting works and how difficult it can be.

- Task 1: How decisions are made and what the council does
- Task 2: How Oxfordshire County Council manages the budget
- Task 3: Budgeting skills - activity: Solve Sam's budget

3.5 After lunch we focused on the final task which was delivered in 3 parts

Task 4: Council's strategic priorities: what are your most and least important

- Part 1: Discuss the service priorities and consider questions you have about them
- Part 2: Council's Strategic priorities; what are your two most and least important and why
- Part 3: Raise questions with the directors and other officers

3.6 Young people were asked to note down their questions, thoughts and reasons at each stage allowing us to gain insight into their decision making. The three directors and other senior staff who attended the two events listened, discussed and answered questions directly with the young people.

Key findings

3.7 The afternoon session was 'council's strategic priorities: what are your most and least important'. The session focused on what the young people thought of the strategic priorities. For this task the tables of young people had to decide which two of the council's nine strategic priorities were most important to them and which two were least important to them. With eight groups both having two choices, this meant that there were up to 16 'votes' for the strategic priorities. Whilst all the groups managed to choose their top two priorities, many found it difficult to identify their least important. Some individuals found it hard to agree on a group decision and were offered an opportunity to share a different priority, however individuals' choices are not reflected in the charts below.

Most important strategic priorities

Table 6: Young people's choices for most important strategic priorities

34. Strategic priority	35. Number of tables where the priority was mentioned	36. Ranking 37.
38. Create opportunities for children and young people to reach their full potential.	39. 5	40. 1
41. Prioritise the health and wellbeing of residents.	42. 4	43. 2
44. Tackle inequalities in Oxfordshire.	45. 3	46. 3
47. Support carers and the social care system.	48. 2	49. 4
50. Put action to address the climate emergency at the heart of our work.	51. 2	52. 4
53. Strategic priorities that were not chosen		

54. Invest in an inclusive, integrated and sustainable transport network.
55. Play our part in a vibrant and participatory local democracy.
56. Preserve and improve access to nature and green spaces.
57. Work with local businesses and partners for environmental, economic and social benefit.

3.8 Five groups out of the eight chose ‘Create opportunities for children and young people to reach our full potential’ as one of their top two priorities. Most of the comments were about needing a good education so young people have better life chances and to fulfil their potential; *“if we don't build their future, who will lead the world?”*

3.9 Some comments also cited having a good job was important for their future but also for society. Other comments stated there was a need for improvements regarding their educational experience, such as having a wider choice of topics and qualifications as well as better transport to school.

3.10 ‘Prioritise the health and wellbeing of residents’ was the second highest chosen priority and chosen by four out of 8 groups. Majority of comments said everyone had the right to feel healthy, in mind and physically. Many comments said that the negative impact of this has a greater ‘knock on effect’ from pressure on the NHS, contributing to society and potential for death. *“Health and wellbeing is most important because without it people are unable to have good futures or contribute to the community”.*

3.11 Young people felt it is important to address the priority ‘Tackle inequalities in Oxfordshire’ so that fairness could be provided for all which was chosen by 3 groups. Two groups felt very strongly about this, stating that racism and difference needed to be addressed and it is important so that everyone could feel safe and all cultures could be respected. Additional comments raised that whilst this was an important issue, other issues were even more important. Some young people felt this priority was addressed in school lessons.

3.12 Two groups chose ‘Support carers and the social care system’. Their comments were mostly around helping those who need it the most, they should have somewhere safe and supportive and that other people should understand why caring is important.

3.13 Two groups put ‘Action to address the climate emergency at the heart of our work’ amongst their most important issues. Although, not a priority to many young people, there was consistent mention that this issue was important although not as important as looking after people. Mostly citing the impact was going to affect people, animals and planet now, as well as future generations. One comment also mentioned the impact across the world. *“Climate change is the most important because it has the biggest impact on* *everyone and our future depends on it because if it keeps getting hotter thousands of lives will be destroyed."*

3.14 There was one person who felt very strongly and disagreed with their groups priority neither did it come up in any of the groups. This was 'Preserve and improve access to nature and green spaces'. Their comment was about wanting to be a farmer in the future and how wildflowers were important to soil and this having an impact potentially causing a food struggle.

Least important strategic priorities

Table 7: Young people's choices for least important strategic priorities

58. Strategic priority	59. Number of tables where the priority was mentioned	60. Ranking
61. Invest in an inclusive, integrated and sustainable transport network.	62. 5	63. 1
64. Play our part in a vibrant and participatory local democracy.	65. 4	66. 2
67. Preserve and improve access to nature and green spaces.	68. 2	69. 3
70. Put action to address the climate emergency at the heart of our work.	71. 2	72. 3
73. Work with local businesses and partners for environmental, economic and social benefit.	74. 2	75. 3
76. Tackle inequalities in Oxfordshire.	77. 1	78. 4
79. Strategic priorities which were not chosen		
80. Create opportunities for children and young people to reach their full potential.		
81. Prioritise the health and wellbeing of residents.		
82. Support carers and the social care system.		

3.15 Five out of eight groups chose 'Invest in an inclusive, integrated and sustainable transport network' as their least important issue. Therefore, making it the top least important strategic priority out of the nine**.** Most comments shared the idea that there were more important issues, and that people could walk if they needed to get somewhere. It was felt that there were already some good aspects to transport that already existed, such as public transport, it was well organised and it aided people too. However, a few comments did state cost, access in rural areas and getting to school did need to be improved, as well as its sustainability credentials.

3.16 Half of the eight groups chose the strategic priority, ‘Play our part in a vibrant and participatory local democracy’, making it the second top in the least important list. There were a number of comments about young people not being able to vote, so felt they were not able to be part of the participatory democracy. There were also comments stating there were systems in place for a participatory democracy already. *“In my opinion we already have a good system set up for voting and democracy so everyone has a say”*.

3.17 Whilst two groups chose ‘Put action to address the climate emergency at the heart of our work’, only one group’s comment was positive towards addressing this issue saying, during the pandemic they saw change was possible because of the lack of transport and that rivers were cleaner. The other group cited the financial cost of addressing climate change as well as electricity needing fuel, were their reasons for this priority to be in their least important list.

3.18 Two of the eight groups chose ‘Preserve and improve access to nature and green spaces’ as their least important issue. However, one of the groups could not decide on a second priority, so they chose this priority and consequently struggled with their reasons why it was their choice. Consequently they wrote many positive factors for their choice. For example *“[It’s] important to look after the green space because it can help the plants grow…”*. They also said the priority aligned with the climate change priority and should be within that. Their choice has still been recorded in the chart above. The other group’s only given reason for this priority was because green spaces should be built on for the need of housing homeless people.

3.19 Two groups chose ‘Work with local businesses and partners for environmental, economic and social benefit’ as their least important strategic priority. Just under half of the collated comments were from one group who felt distrust when using local businesses. The other comments were that this priority only benefits a small group of people.

3.20 One group out of the eight chose ‘Tackle inequalities in Oxfordshire’ as their one of their least important priorities saying that, inequality was ‘fading away’, it wasn’t something the council could help with, and schools are addressing it.

This page is intentionally left blank

Budget & Business Planning Timetable 2025/26

Annex 3

	Date	Who	Action/Event
October	07 October 2024	Committee Services	Publication of agenda for Cabinet including Budget & Business Planning Report 1
	14 October 2025	All Councillors	Briefing: overview of existing Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS), latest updates and current unknowns and the proposed budget & Business Planning process for 2025/26. Overview of capital programme and pipeline. Feedback from the budget/cost of living and strategic priorities section of the residents' survey, budget simulator and children and young people's engagement.
	15 October 2024	Cabinet	Consider Budget & Business Planning Report 1 providing an update on the latest information and proposing a process for 2025/26.
	30 October 2024	Government	Autumn Statement
December	28 November 2024	Committee Services	Publication of agenda for Performance & Corporate Services Overview & Scrutiny Committee including detailed revenue savings proposals and draft Review of Charges for 2025/26 plus proposed changes to the capital programme and pipeline.
	29 November 2024	All Councillors	Councillor briefing: update on Autumn Statement, revenue and capital proposals and draft Review of Charges for 2025/26
	06 December 2024	Performance & Corporate Services Overview & Scrutiny Committee	Consider and comment on revenue savings proposals and draft Review of Charges for 2025/26. Consider and comment on proposed changes to the capital programme and pipeline.
	Mid - late December 2024	District Councils	Notification of draft council taxbases and draft business rates forecasts (not final at this stage).
	Late December 2024	MHCLG	Publish Provisional Local Government Finance Settlement setting out the council's funding for 2025/26.

	Date	Who	Action/Event
January	09 January 2024	Committee Services	Publication of Performance and Corporate Services Overview & Scrutiny report summarising Cabinet's proposed updates to proposals and funding in light of updates to funding (as known at this stage) and feedback.
	13 January 2025	Committee Services	Publication of Budget & Business Planning Report 2 for Cabinet including Cabinet's proposed revenue budget for 2025/26, MTFS and capital programme for recommendation to Council in light of comments from PSCOSC and budget engagement feedback. Includes the final Review of Charges for 2025/26 for approval by Cabinet.
	15 January 2024	Audit & Governance Committee	Consider the draft Treasury Management Strategy Statement and Annual Investment Strategy for 2025/26
	Mid January 2025	District Councils	Deadline for notification of council tax surpluses or deficits
	16 January 2025	All Councillors	Councillor briefing on impact of Local Government Finance Settlement and other funding updates.
	17 January 2025	Performance & Corporate Services Overview & Scrutiny Committee	Consider and comment on changes made to Cabinet's proposed budget
	28 January 2025	Cabinet	Cabinet proposes 2025/26 revenue budget, MTFS to 2028/29 and capital programme for recommendation to Council in light of comments from the Performance & Corporate Services Overview & Scrutiny Committee and consultation feedback. Includes the Review of Charges for 2025/26.
	31 January 2025	District Councils	Deadline for notification of Council Taxbases, Business Rate Forecasts and Business Rate surpluses or deficits

	Date	Who	Action/Event
February	Early February 2025	MHCLG	Final Local Government Finance Settlement
	31 January 2025	Committee Services	Publication of Council agenda and Cabinet proposals including the Chief Finance Officer's Statutory Report.
	06 February 2025	Committee Services	Publication of amendments to Cabinet budget by Opposition and Chief Finance Officer's Statutory Report reflecting those amendments.
	11 February 2025	Council	Agree Revenue Budget 2025/26, Capital & Investment Strategy and MTFS to 2028/29.

This page is intentionally left blank

CABINET – 15 OCTOBER 2024

CAPITAL PROGRAMME UPDATE AND MONITORING REPORT

Report by the Executive Director of Resources and Section 151 Officer

Recommendations

1. The Cabinet is RECOMMENDED to:

Capital Programme

1. Note the capital monitoring position for 2024/25 set out in this report and summarised in Annex 1.

2. Approve the updated Capital Programme at Annex 2 incorporating the changes set out in this report.

Budget Changes / Budget Release

3. approve the submission of a bid for £2.800m to Sustrans T8 (pending potential funding from Active Travel England) for a number of schemes to improve the National Cycle Network and to note the total match funding of £0.355m required. Match funding will be met by a combination of Community Infrastructure Levy funds, S106 funding and corporate resources. (para 68)

4. a. approve the submission of a bid to the Public Sector Decarbonisation Scheme: Phase 4 (PSDS4) to support the programme to implement decarbonisation measures across the corporate estate.

   b. delegate authority to the Executive Director of Resources and S151 Officer and Director of Property and Assets to approve the grant offer letter in the event of a successful award of funding for PSDS4 and

   c. note the required match funding for PSDS4 which is estimated to be between £6.00m and £9.00m, which will be addressed as part of the 2025/26 business planning process. (para 71)

5. approve the carry forward of £1.651m from the current Early Years Programme and include new funding of £1.286m received from the Department for Education Childcare Expansion Capital Grant to support the extension of early years childcare and wraparound provision for children in working families. (para 73)

Executive Summary

2. The Strategic Plan sets out our vision to lead positive change by working in partnership to make Oxfordshire a greener, fairer, and healthier county.

3. The Capital and Investment Strategy agreed in February 2024 articulates how capital investment will help achieve this vision and the council's nine priorities. In addition, the capital programme also supports statutory functions such as school placements and urgent health and safety capital maintenance works.

4. The ten-year Capital Programme sets out how the council will use capital expenditure to deliver these council priorities. The Capital Programme is updated quarterly and fully refreshed annually as part of the Budget and Business Planning Process to ensure that it remains aligned to the latest priorities, reflects the latest cost projections and profile for delivery, and incorporates the current funding position.

5. This is the second capital programme update and monitoring report for 2024/25 and sets out the monitoring position based on activity to the end of August 2024.

6. The report also updates the Capital Programme approved by Cabinet on 16 July 2024 taking into account additional funding and new schemes. The updated programme also incorporates changes agreed through the Capital Programme Approval Reports to Cabinet during the year as well as new funding.

7. The forecast programme expenditure for 2024/25 is £285.2m (excluding earmarked reserves). This has decreased by £40.5m compared to the previous capital programme for 2024/25 approved by Cabinet in July 2024. The updated programme reflects the spend profile from the latest delivery timeframes and the inclusion of new grants received by the Council.

8. The total ten-year capital programme (2024/25 to 2033/34) is £1,247.1m. The updated capital programme summary is set out in Annex 2. The main changes since the report to Cabinet on 16 July 2024 are set out in this report.

Introduction

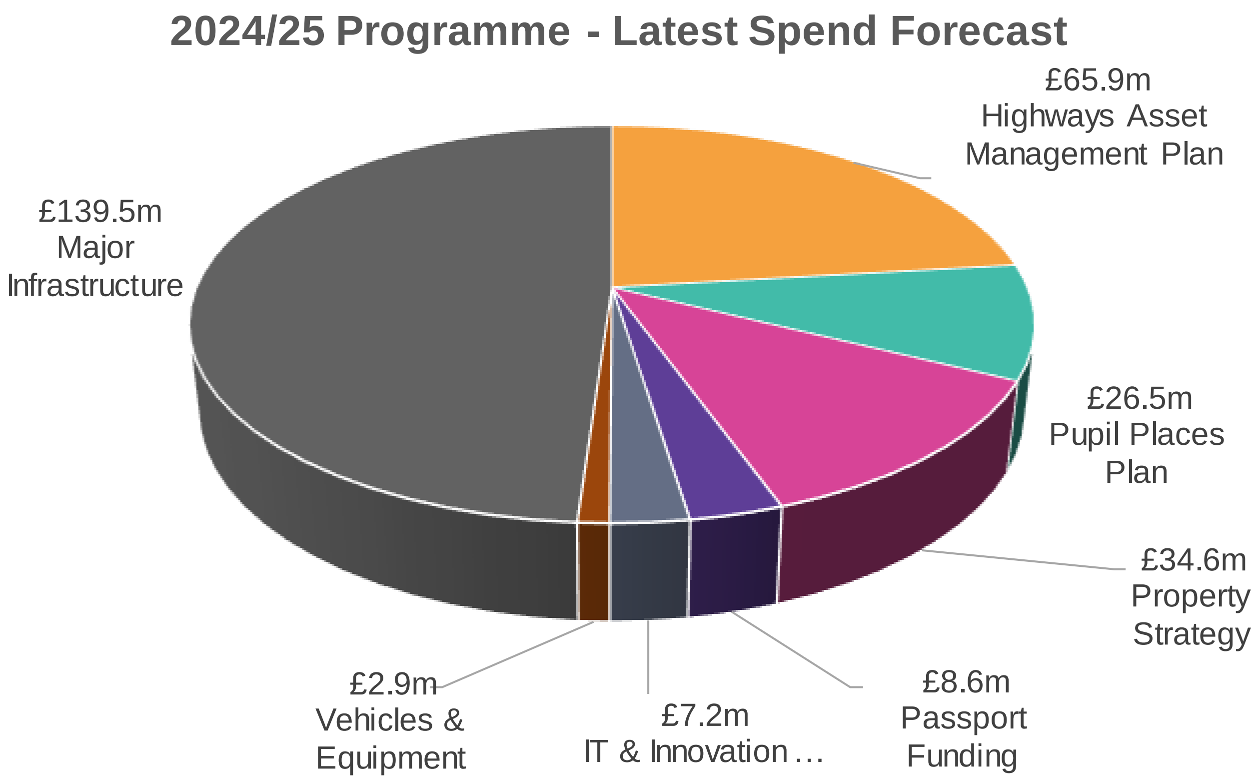
9. Capital expenditure is defined as spending that creates an asset for the council (e.g. buildings, vehicles, and equipment) as well as spending which meets the definition in regulations specified under the Local Government Act 2003. This includes spend on non-current assets that are not owned by the council such as academies and the award of capital grants and funding agreements.

10. The capital programme supports the delivery of the council's vision and priorities as set out in the Strategic Plan. The programme is updated quarterly and fully refreshed annually as part of the Budget and Business Planning Process to ensure that it remains aligned with the latest priorities, reflects the latest cost projections and profile for delivery, and incorporates the current funding position.

11. The programme comprises the following strategy areas:

- **Pupil Place Plan:** including basic need (new schools and expansion), maintenance, health and safety and improvements
- **Major Infrastructure:** including Growth Deal Infrastructure programme
- **Highways and structural maintenance:** including street lighting, and bridges
- **Property Strategy:** including health & safety, maintenance, improvements, the Investment Strategy and climate change measures,
- **IT, Digital & Innovation Strategy:** including broadband and equipment
- **Passported Funds:** including Disabled Facilities Grant and Devolved Schools Capital
- **Vehicles and Equipment:** including fire and rescue vehicles and equipment

12. The detailed investment profile for the 2024/25 Capital Programme is set out below:



13. This is the second capital programme update and monitoring report for the financial year and focuses on the delivery of the 2024/25 capital programme based on projections at the end of August 2024 and new inclusions within the overall ten-year capital programme.

14. The following annexes are attached:

Annex 1	Capital Programme Monitoring 2024/25 (Summary)
Annex 2	Updated Capital Programme 2024/25 – 2033/34 (Summary)

2024/25 Capital Monitoring

15. The capital monitoring position set out in Annex 1, shows forecast expenditure for 2024/25 of £285.2m excluding earmarked reserves). This has decreased by £40.5m compared to the latest capital programme approved by Cabinet in July 2024. The updated programme reflects the forecasted year end position for 2024/25 and the impact of re-profiling expenditure in 2024/25 where necessary to reflect the anticipated scheme delivery.

The table below summarises the changes since July 2024 by strategy area:

Strategy Area	Last Approved Programme 2024/25 * £m	Latest Forecast Expenditure 2024/25 £m	Variation £m
Pupil Places Plan	27.8	26.5	-1.3
Major Infrastructure	180.4	139.5	-40.9
Highways Asset Management Plan	66.0	65.9	-0.1
Property Strategy	33.7	34.6	+0.9
IT, Digital & Innovation Strategy	6.6	7.2	+0.6
Passported Funding	8.6	8.6	+0.0
Vehicles & Equipment	2.6	2.9	+0.3
Total Strategy Programmes	**325.7**	**285.2**	**-40.5**
Earmarked Reserves / Pipeline Schemes	4.7	4.6	-0.1
Total Capital Programme	**330.4**	**288.7**	**-40.6**

* Approved by Cabinet 16 July 2024

16. Actual capital expenditure at the end of August 2024 was £81.0m**.** The combined spend to date and current forecasted in-year commitments for the Capital Programme are £168.3m or 59% of the revised estimate for the year. The rate of expenditure is expected to increase in the remaining months of the year due to a number of schemes reaching the delivery stage.

Pupil Places Plan

17. The Pupil Place Programme has forecast spend of £26.5m compared to the latest forecast of £27.8m in 2024/25, a decrease of £1.3m. The Pupil Place Plan includes three main programmes:

- Basic Need - these are usually school expansion projects that are funded by central government grant and/or Section 106 developer funding / Community Infrastructure Levy funding to ensure there are enough school places for children within Oxfordshire.

- Growth Portfolio – these are usually new school projects within large housing sites allocated in local plans that are funded from contributions sought from developers via a Section 106 agreement towards the costs of providing community and social infrastructure.

- Schools Annual Programmes – this includes the School Structural Maintenance Programme funded from the School Condition

Allocation, which addresses the highest condition-based priorities within the school estate enhancing the school stock condition and reducing the backlog maintenance, and the School Access Programme which ensure that mainstream buildings are accessible for pupils with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities.

18. Projects in the basic need and growth portfolio programmes are either delivered directly by the Council, delivered by a housing developer or by a third party (usually an Academy Trust or Diocese) via a funding agreement. Regardless of how they are delivered, each project brings benefits to residents living in Oxfordshire by improving the quality and facilities at existing schools; providing additional pupil places allowing greater parental choice and ensuring that housing developments have the infrastructure necessary for them to become thriving communities.

<u>Basic Need Programme</u>

19. The Basic Needs Programme is forecasting spend of £10.1m in 2024/25 compared to the previous forecast of £9.7m, an increase of £0.4m to reflect the latest delivery timeframe. Currently, four projects are in construction and are due to be completed this financial year creating the following additional pupil places and improved facilities:

- Woodstock Primary School (105 additional pupil places) - complete
- Oxfordshire Hospital School (Remodelling of Cuddeston Corner to accommodate Family Solutions and Oxford Hospital School).
- St Frideswide SEND Resource Base (16 additional SEND pupil places).
- Aston & Cote CE Primary School (35 additional pupil places).
- Bloxham Primary School (New hall and reconfiguration of internal spaces to create new kitchen to support increased pupil numbers).

In addition, there are 9 projects in the pre-construction phase, some of which will commence on site this financial year:

- Oxford, Mabel Prichard Special School (23 additional SEND places).
- Woodstock, Marlborough CE School (150 additional pupil places)
- Witney, Woodgreen School (150 additional pupil places).
- North Hinksey CE Primary School (replacement of temporary accommodation)
- Faringdon Community College (replacement of temporary accommodation)
- Sonning Common, Bishopswood SEN (relocation of accommodation and expansion of secondary base within Chiltern Edge School),
- Grove CE Primary School (105 additional pupil places),
- Chinnor, Mill Lane Primary School (replacement of temporary accommodation),
- Heyford Park School (150 additional pupil places),

<u>Growth Portfolio Programme</u>

20. The Growth Portfolio programme is forecasting to spend £8.2m in 2024/25, a reduction of £1.7m compared to the previous forecast. Currently, one project has been completed since the beginning of the financial year:

- St Edburg's CE Primary School (210 additional pupil places)

In addition, there are 4 projects in the pre-construction phase, some of which will commence on site this financial year:

- Wallingford, St Nicholas CE Primary School (relocation) (70 additional pupil places),
- Didcot, Great Western Park SEND School (120 additional SEND pupil places) and
- Upper Heyford Primary School (315 place new primary + 65 place nursery),
- Didcot Valley Park Primary School (630 place new primary),

Three further schools are being delivered by the ESFA (Education Skills Funding Agency) and financial contributions towards the schools are included within the capital programme:

- Bloxham, Grove SEND Free School (118 additional SEND pupil places) – completed January 2024.
- SEND Free School, Faringdon (118 additional SEND pupil places).
- Grove Airfield – Secondary phase of a new all-through School (600 additional pupil places).

<u>Schools Annual Programmes</u>

21. The forecast for the School Access Initiative provision is £0.300m to ensure that mainstream school buildings are accessible for pupils with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities. Projects at primary and secondary schools will be carried out throughout this financial year.

22. The School Structural Maintenance Programme for 2024/25 has highlighted a total of 58 projects to be completed over a two-year programme. This includes 14 projects which began in 2023/24. Nine of these are Air Source Heat Pump projects which are substantially completed but are awaiting the distribution network operator upgrades to fully complete.

23. A further 44 projects are in various stages of progression for delivery by the end of March 2026. The latest spend forecast in 2024/25 is £7.5m in line with previous forecasts.

Major Infrastructure

24. The latest capital forecast for 2024/25 is £139.5m and has changed by £40.9m compared to the previous forecasted position. The programme is divided into sub-programme areas as shown in the table below

Major Infrastructure	Last Budget	Latest Forecast	Variation
	£'000	**£'000**	**£'000**
Housing Infrastructure Fund 1 (HIF1)	22,791	21,004	-1,787
Housing Infrastructure Fund 2 (HIF2) & A40	28,904	20,384	-8,520
A423 Improvement Programme	9,000	2,750	-6,250
Active Travel Phase 3 & Mobility Hubs	4,740	3,555	-1,185
Bicester & Banbury Locality	23,405	23,160	-245
Oxford Locality	17,045	14,348	-2,697
South & Vale Locality	33,869	24,418	-9,451
Major Infrastructure Delivery Sub-total	**139,754**	**109,619**	**-30,135**
Major Infrastructure Placemaking Sub-total	**12,156**	**2,127**	**-10,029**
Transport Policy Sub-total	**28,473**	**27,736**	**-737**
Major Infrastructure –Total	180,383	139,482	-40,901

Major Infrastructure- Delivery

25. Forecast capital spend of £109.6 is £30.1m less than the latest capital budget of £139.7m. The programme comprises of three main funding areas and the key in-year budget variations are reported below.

HIF1 Programme

26. The HIF1 programme remains in the pre-construction phase awaiting the outcome and decision on the public inquiry. Homes England, in the meantime, have approved the council's Material Change Request, which confirms an extended programme timeline and additional funding, pending the inquiry decision. The current forecast variance (-£1.8m) mainly reflects the impact on the delay caused by extended pre-contract negotiations on the Didcot Science Bridge project.

HIF2 & A40

27. The HIF2 Programme and in particular the Integrated Bus Lane scheme, are still awaiting the Homes England decision on the council's Material Change Request, which has been delayed. This and the delay in getting into contract on the Dukes Cut project have further delayed the in-year progress of the programme, resulting in a -£6.9m reprofiling.

28. The elements of the A40 Programme in construction are progressing well. However, planning delays in the Access to Witney scheme has increased further in the in-year variation by -£1.6m.

Growth Deal Programme and Other Funding

29. The programme is now forecasting spend of £68.2m, compared to the previous forecast of £88.1m, a decrease of £19.9m. However, plans are still on-going to spend all the available Growth Deal funding in 2024/25. The main projects contributing to the forecasted changes for the expenditure level in 2024/25 are as follows:

- A4095 Banbury Road Roundabout (+£1.4m) – post-design changes to construction
- Tramway (-£0.8m) due to delays in entering into contract
- Watlington Relief Road (-£3.3m) due to delays in the planning decision.
- A4130 Steventon Lights (-£6.4m) due to delays in contract negotiations, majority of which will be spent in Q1 of 25/26.
- Kennington improvement programme (-£6.2m) due to delays in planning and ongoing negotiations on construction price.
- Oxford Traffic Filters (-£1.8m) delays in the project resulting from the extended closure of the Botley Road.

30. The overall Growth Deal programme is currently over-profiled by £0.7m. This compares to the previous over-profiled position of £1.6m compared to the available capital grant funding of £142.727m.

31. Schemes substantially completed in the first half of 2024/25 are Wantage Eastern Link Road and Kidlington Roundabout. Ongoing schemes currently in construction are Banbury Road Roundabout, Bicester (anticipated completion February 2025) and Benson Relief Road (anticipated completion October 2024) with Woodstock Road Corridor and Padbury Roundabout recently having started on site.

32. Construction contracts have been agreed and entered into for Abingdon, Lodge Hill, (construction anticipated to start October 2024) and Steventon Lights (construction start due October 2024).

33. Further S106 funding has been identified for Access to Witney (£1.4m) and Steventon Lights (£2.8m), further derisking the scheme from the 31 March 2025 Growth Deal deadline and Growth Deal funding has been returned to the Growth Deal programme. As reported in the Capital Approvals report approved by Cabinet in September 2024, cost pressures were reported on the Banbury Road Roundabout and Tramway Road Schemes and additional Growth Deal funding has been allocated to alleviate this with other funding.

Major Infrastructure – Placemaking

34. The programme is forecasting a spend of £2.1m which is £10.0m less than the latest budget. The change is due to the reprofiling of the financial contribution towards the Oxford Station Development due to delays on the network rail project and the reprofiling of the Cherwell Street Corridor project.

Transport Policy

35. The programme is forecasting a spend of £27.7m, a decrease of £0.7m when compared with the previous forecast from budget provision identified towards the East West Rail Programme. The £27.2m spend forecast relates to the grant payments to the bus companies (contribution towards the purchase of electric buses under the Zero Emission Bus Regional Area

programme). It is forecasted that the delivery of the programme through the £38.8m overall funding provision will be completed during 2024/25.

Highways Asset Management Plan

36. The planned target total surfacing programme (excluding patching) for 2024/25, is calculated at 4.4% of the network. The expectation was that this would enable the council to maintain the 4,656km of network that it is responsible for in as close as possible to a 'steady state' within the funding available.

37. The total in-year forecast capital expenditure for 2024/25 is estimated to be £65.9m and has decreased by £0.1m compared to the previous forecast. The programme is divided into sub-programme areas as shown in the table below:

Highways Asset Management Plan	Latest Budget	Forecast	Variation
	£'000	**£'000**	**£'000**
Structural Maintenance Annual Programme	42,171	42,575	+404
Improvement Programme	2,100	2,000	-100
Major Schemes & Other Programmes	16,692	16,050	-642
Network Management Programme	3,774	3,973	+199
Other	1,300	1,300	+0
Highways Asset Management Plan – Total	**66,037**	**65,898**	**-139**

38. The main project variations relate to the LED investment scheme (£-1.2m) and a new spend forecast for the Thornhill Park & Ride Scheme (£1.0m) which was approved in April 2024 as part of the £2m identified towards Park & Ride facilities.

39. The planned activities for the main programmes are summarised below:

Project	Planned Schemes	Comments on actual compared to planned delivery
Surface Treatments (schemes)	120	Schemes to restore the condition or prolonging the life of existing carriageways.
Carriageways (schemes)	9	Surfacing/reconstruction/strengthening of roads.
Structural Highways Improvements (schemes)	56	Surface inlay and minor patching schemes across the county. There will also be minor works carried out in addition to this throughout the year.
Footways (schemes)	107	Repair/construction of footways and cycleways.
Drainage (schemes)	40	Repair/renewal of existing drainage infrastructure and provision of new infrastructure to resolve known drainage issues. There is also planned reactive work which will be carried out.

Project	Planned Schemes	Comments on actual compared to planned delivery
Bridges (schemes)	14	Strengthening/replacement/imposition of management measures on weak structures.
Public Rights of Way	5	Improved Pedestrian Access Points (delivered as planned-reactive – dependent upon need). In addition to this new/refurbished kit bridges (delivered as planned-reactive with in-house resource).
Electrical	2,822	LED Replacement units being installed this year.
20mph Speed limit (schemes)	16 90	Phase 2 – Remaining Schemes reprogrammed from last year. Phase 3 – potential schemes this year
Section 42 contributions (schemes)	40	Programme delivered by the City Council and covers all the unclassified roads and footways within the city. Over 20 schemes have been re-scheduled to the next year, due to funding.

40. The annual Improvement Programme is forecasting to spend £2.1m in 2024/25. This provides road safety and traffic improvements including road markings, cycle provision improvements, pedestrian crossings, footway improvements and speed limit alterations. The programme also includes enhancement to support journey time reliability, which also aid bus movements, and traffic signal improvement schemes.

41. Major Schemes & Other Programme is forecast to spend £16.7m in 2024/25, an increase of £2.1m compared to the programme agreed in February 2024. This is mainly due to additional grant funding of £1.3m (Capital Approvals – Cabinet April 2024) from the Department for Transport (DfT) Road Safety Fund. The forecast also includes the Vision Zero Programme which is forecast to spend £1.9m in 2024/25.

42. Following a fatal road traffic collision near to RAF Croughton in Northamptonshire, a road safety review identified a number of schemes in Oxfordshire that have been approved and funded for delivery by the Department for Transport. The Council has received £3.994m of funding (an additional £1.3m) to deliver the programme of improvements. Recognising the importance of these measures, additional resources have been mobilised to deliver the programme within the current financial year.

Property Strategy

43. The Property Strategy is forecasting expenditure of £34.6m in 2024/25, an increase of £0.9m compared to the previous forecast of £33.7m.

<u>Estate Decarbonisation Programme</u>

44. The council declared a climate emergency in 2019 with a target of 2030 to bring the council's operations and activities to net zero. Alongside this the

UK government target for net zero, which the council is party to, is for an area wide target of net zero by 2050.

45. The council's property accounts for approximately 33% of the emissions within this 2030 target (on 2022/23 data). It is clear there is a long-term plan for decarbonisation of the UK electricity grid, however this target is in line with the UK government commitment of net zero by 2050.

46. As such the strategic approach to reaching the decarbonisation targets is to stop fossil fuelled activities within the council's properties, which is predominantly heating, via the electrification of these components.

47. Although there will be a carbon component remaining by 2030 from the use of electricity, this will be much reduced, and the council will be on the pathway to fully net zero in line with the decarbonisation of the electricity grid. This should enable a reducing need for carbon offsetting by 2030 and beyond.

48. The transition to electric heating will predominantly be via heat pumps and infrared heating. Due to the lower operating temperatures of the heat pumps improvements are required in thermal building fabric (e.g. single glazing to double or triple glazing, insulation installations, etc.) to decrease the potential running costs. Nonetheless even with these improvements because of the, currently, low cost of gas compared to electricity the running costs would be increased. As part of the strategic approach the Council would seek to install renewable electricity measures (solar PV) and upgrade electrical components (particularly lighting to LED), in order to ensure the overall running costs do not increase.

49. A reactive only maintenance approach has left much of the council's estate in a very poor-quality condition, with many components past their expected working life. As a result, there is an anticipated need to replace components, such as boilers, which would represent a cost avoidance.

50. This programme supports both the key objectives within the Climate Action Framework and Carbon Management Plan, but also the property strategy.

51. The Decarbonisation works proposed for the 33 sites totals £9.7m and includes £3.1m of grant funding for decarbonisation (PSDS3c) which needs to be spent by 31 March 2025.

<u>Corporate Estate Development</u>

52. Projects in the construction phase:

- Deddington Highways Depot will be completed in time for use in Winter 2024.
- Speedwell House – strip-out works have commenced.

Several projects are in the pre-construction phase including:

- New Fire Station at Rewley Road
- Redbridge Household Waste Recycling Centre improvement works
- Union Street (Second Phase).

- Oxford Community Support Service.

Office Rationalisation & Co-location

53. The office rationalisation & co-location programme continues. The Council has vacated Abbey House in Abingdon with staff relocated to new locations.

54. Phase 2 of the Knights Court move will happen this year with further works to Union Street and Oxford Community Support Service (OCSS).

55. Supported Transport will move to Water Eaton later in 2024/25 at an estimated cost of £0.6m.

Resonance Supported Homes Fund

56. A further £1m has been paid under the Resonance Supported Homes Fund, total investment to date is £4.0m of the £5.0m provision. As detailed in the 2023/24 capital outturn report, five properties have been purchased, four are in development and one is now occupied. The fund will result in a total of 22 new shared living options. It is forecasted that the remaining sites will be occupied by the end of the calendar year.

Electric Vehicle Charging

57. The project to make EV charging gullies available for Oxfordshire residents has been affected by some technical challenges but the business plan was expected to be signed off in September 2024 with applications opening as soon as possible after that. Due to the later start the amount budgeted for this year is forecasted at £0.2m. The delivery timeframe for the roll out of the public charging across Oxfordshire Local EV infrastructure grant funded programme is forecasted later in the year with the possibility of a contract start before the end of the financial year.

Children's Homes Programme

58. The council is currently forecasting £6.6m spend in 2024/25 from the £10.450m programme towards the delivering of four new Children's Homes. Four sites have been acquired; refurbishment has started at two sites with the remaining two expecting to commence this financial year. The programme will create 12 additional beds.

Green Home's Upgrade (HUG2)

59. This is the second year of a two-year programme, which runs until the end of March 2025, to deliver energy-saving retrofit measures to owner occupied and privately rented properties in Oxfordshire. The programme is fully funded from the Green Homes Grant managed by Department for Energy Security and Net Zero (DESNZ).

60. Due to on-going market conditions owing to the availability of accredited installers, the national approval process for installers and the sign up from owners, it is currently forecasted that between 90 to 150 properties will be delivered in 2024/25 with a forecasted spend of £2.7m in 2024/25.

IT, Innovation & Digital Strategy

61. The total forecast expenditure for 2024/25 is £7.2m, an increase of £0.6m compared to the previous forecast. This is due to the inclusion of the budget provision towards the Public Services Telephone Network Withdrawal programme released from earmarked reserves.

Digital Infrastructure

62. IT are working on a number of projects to implement new applications during 2024/25. Projects expected to be completed include:

- Vehicle Management Service – enabling the vehicle asset management system to move towards carbon reduction in vehicle use.
- Applicant Tracking System - recruitment system – improved offer for managers and potential employees to attract talent and meet our Employer of Choice as part of the council's vision.
- Power BI and Social Care Dashboards – to meet the provision of data driven decisions for social care and education services.

Projects starting in 2024/25 include:

- Public Services Telephone Network Withdrawal – working with suppliers to reduce risks and impacts of the withdrawal of the copper telephony network.

Broadband

63. Forecast expenditure for the Rural Gigabit Hub Sites programme is £1m in 2024/25. The programme is funded from grant and income from the Broadband Gainshare.

64. The 5GIR programme commenced in 2023/24 after being awarded £3.8m of grant funding by the Department for Science, Innovation and Technology to increase adoption of 5G connectivity. The programme is a regional partnership, known as England's Connected Heartland (ECH) which comprises local bodies from Berkshire, Buckinghamshire, Bedfordshire and Cambridgeshire with Oxfordshire as the lead authority. ECH will deploy resources from each of the participating authorities to develop joint opportunities with the wireless telecoms supply chain and to create an Advanced Wireless ecosystem. The project plans to deploy two physical 5G infrastructure builds; the Science & Innovation Campus Project at Harwell and the East West Railway Project to utilise trackside fibre between Bicester and Bletchley. Depending on the delivery timeframe and commencement following the contractor appointment, it is forecasted £2.9m could be spent this financial year.

Passported Funding

65. Expenditure for 2024/25 is forecasted to be £8.6m, no change from the previous reported position.

66. The Disabled Facilities Grant for 2024/25 announced in May 2024 notified funding of £7.262m. This funding, which is part of the Better Care Fund, is issued to the County Council but must be passed directly on to the City and District Councils in accordance with the grant determination.

Vehicles and Equipment

67. Expenditure for 2024/25 is forecasted to be £6.0m, an increase of £0.4m from the previous reported position due to the inclusion of Library refurbishment works at Goring and Henley Libraries funded through Community Infrastructure Levy.

CAPITAL GOVERNANCE APPROVALS

Major Infrastructure

Sustrans T8

68. A bid totalling £2.800m is to be submitted to Sustrans, pending potential funding from Active Travel England, for a number of schemes to improve the National Cycle Network. The total bid comprises a combination of feasibility/design schemes as well as schemes that could enter construction.

69. The feasibility / design schemes proposed are as follows and require match funding of £0.185m to be met by Community Infrastructure Funding, S106 funding and corporate resources:

- Eastern Corridor (Banbury)
- Banbury Canal Towpath
- Banbury Railway Station to Bodicote
- NCN442 East End to Fawler (West Oxon)
- NC575 Minster Lovell to Witney via B4074
- Barracks Lane / Bartlemas Close to Horsparth Road
- NCN5 Jericho
- NCN51 North Oxford cycle Route
- Parallel / Toucan Crossing across Port Way A4074 (Crowmarsh Gifford)
- Toucan Crossing at Brightwell-cum-Sotwell
- A417 crossing link to NCN544 (Hungerford Road)

70. The construction schemes proposed are as follows. Match funding of £0.150m is required specifically for Abbey Meadows / Barton Fields Bridge and will be met by South and Vale District Council through their Community Infrastructure Levy Funds:

- Abbey Meadows / Barton Fields Bridge Replacement
- Horspath NCN57
- North Quay Barrier Removal (Abingdon)
- Modification of barriers on B4016 (Didcot North)

Property

Public Sector Decarbonisation Scheme: Phase 4 (PSDS4)

71. A new bid to the Public Sector Decarbonisation Scheme: Phase 4 (PSDS4) is to be submitted. As with previous grant awards, the Council was required to provide corporate resources to fulfil the grant conditions. The funding conditions of the latest grant bid is currently unknown.

72. The total proposed programme is forecasted to spend between £7.0-£13.0m. Depending on the grant criteria, a grant bid of between £1.00m & £4.0m is expected to be submitted, leaving a funding gap of between £6.0m to £9.0m if the grant bid is successful. The overall budget requirement to deliver the next phase of the decarbonisation programme will be included as part of the 2025/26 business planning process and capital programme for Council approval in February 2025.

Childcare Expansion Capital Programme

73. The Council previously allocated £1.500m of additional funding in February 2019 to add to existing funds to support the Council's statutory obligations around sufficiency of early years and childcare places. £1.600m of these funds remains unallocated. In February 2024 the Government awarded £1.286m to the Council to support their new proposal to extend early years childcare and wraparound provision for children in working families.

74. Approval is required to combine these funds into a new programme of work and to release £2.927m to support work / grants to increase / secure provision in areas which have been identified as requiring additional capacity.

Ten Year Capital Programme Update

75. The total ten-year capital programme (2024/25 to 2034/35) is now £1,247.1m (excluding earmarked reserves) an increase of £13.3m when compared to the latest capital programme approved by Cabinet in July 2024. This is due to additional S106 funding coming into the capital programme (£6.6m), the additional £4.0m SEN High Needs Capital Grant and schemes being released from earmarked reserves to be included within the capital programme (£2.8m), and other minor changes. A summary of the updated capital programme is set out in Annex 2.

Strategy Area	Last Approved Total Programme (2024/25 to 2033/34) * £m	Latest Updated Total Programme (2024/25 to 2033/34) £m	Variation £m
Pupil Places Plan	224.3	227.4	+3.1
Major Infrastructure	647.9	655.0	+7.1
Highways Asset Management Plan	219.4	219.4	+0.0
Property Strategy	90.0	90.7	+0.7
IT, Digital & Innovation Strategy	11.8	13.8	+2.0
Passported Funding	14.3	14.3	+0.0
Vehicles & Equipment	26.1	26.5	+0.4
Total Strategy Programmes	**1,233.8**	**1,247.1**	**+13.3**
Earmarked Reserves	110.7	106.3	-4.6
Total Capital Programme	**1,344.5**	**1,353.4**	**+8.8**

* Approved by Cabinet 16 July 2024.

Capital Funding Update

Prudential Borrowing

76. The ten-year Capital Programme includes a requirement to fund £212.4m through prudential borrowing. The latest borrowing expected to be taken in 2024/25 is £64.1m. The majority of this relates to schemes that have already been delivered but have, until now, been funded temporarily by borrowing from other funding sources within the Capital Programme to delay the need to apply the prudential borrowing. The borrowing in 2024/25 is expected to include a further £14.0m from the £120.0m agreed in 2018 (£105.0m in total), and £17.0m from the £88.4m agreed in 2022. A further £15.7m for the £41.7m borrowing supporting the OxLEP City Deals programme, and £16.6m drawdown of the £40.8m supporting the Street Lighting LED replacement programme is also expected to be taken in 2024/25.

77. The use of prudential borrowing will increase the Council's Capital Financing Requirement. The Council is required under statute to set aside a Minimum Revenue Provision to pay down the Capital Financing Requirement. Prudential borrowing is generally paid over 25 years. The Medium-Term Financial Strategy takes account of this cost. As the Capital programme includes the OxLEP City Deal Programme, the borrowing costs relating to this scheme (for which the Council is the Accountable body) will be fully funded through Enterprise Zone 1 retained business rates.

Earmarked Reserves

78. The level of earmarked reserves has decreased by £4.5m from the previous reported position (Council 20 February 2024) to £106.3m due to £1.0m towards the Green Financing Reserve, and £2.8m from pipeline provisions being released for inclusion into the capital programme. The reserves includes £54.9m of budget provisions approved through the capital budget & business planning process in February 2024 and previous years. The

reserves also includes the capital programme contingency for the delivery of the current ten-year capital programme plus other identified provisions.

Capital Reserves

79. The current level of capital reserves (including capital receipts and capital grants reserves) is approximately £197m. This is expected to reduce to approximately £45m at the end of 2026/27. The reduction is mainly due to the delivery of the Growth Deal Programme and the commencement of the A423 Improvement Programme. Reserves can be used to temporarily fund schemes to delay the need for prudential borrowing or to help manage timing difference between the delivery of schemes and the receipt of Section 106 funding. The level of reserves impacts on the cashflow of the capital programme and the overall Council Balances and is already factored into the funding of the overall capital programme.

Risk Management

80. As reported previously, there are a mix of factors continuing to impact on the deliverability and cost of capital schemes. Where those schemes are grant funded there is a risk that slippage could impact on the availability of grant funding as it is not possible to complete the scheme by the funding deadline. Inflationary pressures may also mean that costs increase further by the point the scheme reaches the construction phase eroding the value of the grant funding so that is insufficient to meet the revised scheme costs.

81. These risks are being managed through the council's capital governance process at both project and programme level and through the Strategic Capital Board. Where necessary action is being taken to adjust scheme deliverables and to use value engineering to maintain spend within the available funding.

82. The deadline for claiming the remaining £30m Housing & Growth Deal grant funding is 31 March 2025. Schemes in the programme, and planning decisions impacting on the achievability by that deadline, are being closely monitored during 2024/25 and action will be taken to maximise the use of the grant funding while minimising the risk to the council.

83. There are ongoing negotiations with Homes England in relation to the HIF2 scheme funding and timeline which presents a potential risk if a successful resolution is not reached.

84. The council is assessing and tracking seven strategic risks in 2024/25. One of these risks is that if either HIF1 or HIF2 programmes become undeliverable and/or the potential financial risk to the council. Updates on this risk are being reported through the Business Management & Monitoring Reports to Cabinet.

Financial Implications

85. The report sets out the planned investment and available funding for the ten-year Capital programme including the risks associated with the delivery of the programme.

86. The following risks are inherent within the funding of the capital programme:

- Certainty over the timing and value of future capital receipts and Section 106 Contributions

- Certainty over the receipt and security of future grant funding

87. If capital receipts or section 106 contributions are not received within the planned timeframe it may be necessary for the Council to temporarily fund capital expenditure through prudential borrowing. The council has a prudential borrowing reserve to help manage the revenue impact of additional prudential borrowing.

88. Where additional funding is required to fund schemes on a permanent basis this will need to be addressed by reducing investment elsewhere within the programme (reprioritisation) or by permanently funding through prudential borrowing. This would require the identification of long-term revenue funding as the Prudential Borrowing is usually repaid over 25 years through the Minimum Revenue Provision.

Comments checked by:

Kathy Wilcox
Head of Corporate Finance & Deputy S151 Officer

Staff Implications

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

Equality & Inclusion Implications

90. There are no equality and inclusion implications arising directly from this report.

Legal Implications

91. In year changes to the capital programme must be approved by Cabinet in accordance with the Council's Financial Regulations. In particular paragraph 5.1.1(IV) sets out that where the total estimated resource allocation is above £1m then Cabinet can agree its inclusion into the Capital Programme, via the periodic Capital Report to Cabinet, based on the recommendations by Strategic Capital Board and the Section 151 Officer.

Comments checked by: Anita Bradley, Director of Law & Governance & Monitoring Officer

LORNA BAXTER
Executive Director of Resources and Section 151 Officer

Background papers:

Contact Officers: Kathy Wilcox, Head of Corporate Finance & Deputy S151 Officer
Natalie Crawford, Capital Programme Manager

September 2024

Annex 1

Capital Programme Monitoring 2024/25

Strategy / Programme	Capital Programme (Council July 2024)			Latest Forecast			Variation			Current Year Expenditure Monitoring (2024/25)				Performance Compared to Original Programme (Council February 2024)		
	Current Year 2024/25	Future Years	Total	Current Year 2024/25	Future Years	Total	Current Year	Future Years	Total	Actual expenditure to date	Commit-ments	Expenditure Realisation Rate	Actuals & Commitments	Current Year	Variation	Use of Resources Variation
	£'000s	£'000s	£'000s	£'000s	£'000s	£'000s	£'000s	£'000s	£'000s	£'000s	£'000s	%	%	£'000s	£'000s	%
Pupil Places Plan	27,805	196,526	224,331	26,533	200,894	227,427	-1,272	4,368	3,096	6,846	15,382	26%	84%	26,405	128	0%
Major Infrastructure	180,383	467,514	647,897	139,482	515,454	654,936	-40,901	47,940	7,039	37,125	28,469	27%	47%	176,443	-36,961	-21%
Highways Asset Management Plan	66,037	153,363	219,400	65,898	153,506	219,404	-139	143	4	19,372	36,164	29%	84%	64,167	1,731	3%
Property Strategy	33,701	56,291	89,992	34,574	56,165	90,739	873	-126	747	8,445	6,070	24%	42%	29,900	4,674	16%
IT, Digital & Innovation Strategy	6,600	5,248	11,848	7,216	6,632	13,848	616	1,384	2,000	1,818	1,013	25%	39%	6,600	616	9%
Passport Funding	8,612	5,653	14,265	8,612	5,653	14,265	0	0	0	7,263	95	84%	85%	8,008	604	8%
Vehicles & Equipment	2,557	23,544	26,101	2,941	23,556	26,497	384	12	396	175	112	6%	10%	2,500	441	18%
Total Capital Programme Expenditure	**325,695**	**908,139**	**1,233,834**	**285,256**	**961,860**	**1,247,116**	**-40,439**	**53,721**	**13,282**	**81,044**	**87,305**	**28%**	**59%**	**314,023**	**-28,767**	**-9%**
Pipeline Schemes (Indicative funding subject to initial business case)	2,465	55,065	57,530	3,600	51,367	54,967	1,135	-3,698	-2,563					5,950	-2,350	0%
Earmarked Reserves	2,225	50,994	53,219	1,000	50,326	51,326	-1,225	-668	-1,893					0	1,000	0%
OVERALL TOTAL	**330,385**	**1,014,198**	**1,344,583**	**289,856**	**1,063,553**	**1,353,409**	**-40,529**	**49,355**	**8,826**	**81,044**	**87,305**	**28%**	**58%**	**319,973**	**-30,117**	**-9%**

Annex 2

Updated Capital Programme 2024/25 to 2033/34

Strategy/Programme		Capital Investment Programme (latest forecast) Current Year 2024 / 25 £'000s	Firm Programme 2025 / 26 £'000s	2026 / 27 £'000s	Provisional Programme 2027 / 28 £'000s	2028 / 29 £'000s	up to 2033 / 34 £'000s	CAPITAL INVESTMENT TOTAL £'000s
Pupil Places Plan		26,533	67,420	30,818	16,294	10,672	75,690	227,427
Major Infrastructure		139,482	208,722	174,637	99,890	24,944	7,261	654,936
Highways Asset Management Plan		65,898	29,426	17,947	15,958	13,785	76,390	219,404
Property Strategy		34,574	39,156	15,269	934	200	606	90,739
IT, Digital & Innovation Strategy		7,216	4,428	1,355	843	0	6	13,848
Passport Funding		8,612	1,466	1,000	1,000	603	1,584	14,265
Vehicles & Equipment		2,941	6,877	5,950	5,926	800	4,003	26,497
TOTAL ESTIMATED CAPITAL PROGRAMME EXPENDITURE		285,256	357,495	246,976	140,845	51,004	165,540	1,247,116
Pipeline Schemes (Indicative funding subject to initial business case)		3,600	15,775	16,000	12,000	5,337	2,255	54,967
Earmarked Reserves		1,000	1,225	4,000	6,500	8,663	29,938	51,326
TOTAL ESTIMATED CAPITAL PROGRAMME		289,856	374,495	266,976	159,345	65,004	197,733	1,353,409
TOTAL ESTIMATED PROGRAMME IN-YEAR RESOURCES		260,564	293,358	225,729	154,216	56,245	166,607	1,156,719
In-Year Shortfall (-) /Surplus (+)		-29,292	-81,137	-41,247	-5,129	-8,759	-31,126	-196,690
Cumulative Shortfall (-) / Surplus (+)	196,690	167,398	86,261	45,014	39,885	31,126	0	0

SOURCES OF FUNDING		2024 / 25 £'000s	2025 / 26 £'000s	2026 / 27 £'000s	2027 / 28 £'000s	2028 / 29 £'000s	up to 2033 / 34 £'000s	CAPITAL RESOURCES TOTAL £'000s
SCE(C) Formulaic Capital Allocations - Un-ringfenced Grant		98,686	111,723	23,800	23,500	23,500	93,300	374,509
Devolved Formula Capital- Grant		1,000	650	650	650	253	0	3,203
Prudential Borrowing		64,141	80,640	32,340	14,660	20,125	542	212,448
Grants		81,221	91,122	121,593	72,707	4,364	927	371,934
Developer Contributions		29,939	84,418	29,590	7,125	3,363	39,747	194,182
Other External Funding Contributions		20	1,070	0	0	0	0	1,090
Revenue Contributions		14,821	4,018	2,436	4,372	800	4,000	30,447
Schools Contributions		28	0	0	0	0	0	28
Use of Capital Receipts		0	854	55,253	31,202	3,840	28,091	119,240
Use of Capital Reserves		0	0	1,314	5,129	8,759	31,126	46,328
TOTAL ESTIMATED PROGRAMME RESOURCES UTILISED		289,856	374,495	266,976	159,345	65,004	197,733	1,353,409
TOTAL ESTIMATED IN YEAR RESOURCES AVAILABLE		260,564	293,358	225,729	154,216	56,245	166,607	1,156,719
Capital Grants Reserve C/Fwd	116,668	81,723	0	0	0	0	0	0
Usable Capital Receipts C/Fwd	33,075	39,347	39,933	0	0	0	0	0
Capital Reserve C/Fwd	47,404	46,328	46,328	45,014	39,885	31,126	0	0

Division(s): N/A

CABINET – 15 OCTOBER 2024

FORWARD PLAN AND FUTURE BUSINESS

Items identified from the Forward Plan for Forthcoming Decision

Topic/Decision **Portfolio/Ref**

Cabinet, 19 November 2024

▪ **LTCP Monitoring Report** To provide cabinet with an update on progress made to deliver the LTCP and agree minor updates to the document. The LTCP was adopted in July 2022 and included the commitment to publish annual monitoring reports. The first annual monitoring attended cabinet in October 2023 and it is proposed the next annual monitoring report attends cabinet in October 2024. The report will provide cabinet with an update on progress made to deliver the LTCP and performance against the KPIs and headline targets. There are also minor wording amendments suggested for agreement.	Cabinet, 2024/231 - Cabinet Member for Infrastructure and Development Strategy, Cabinet Member for Transport Management
▪ **Including Everyone 2025-2029** To adopt the latest iteration of Including Everyone (our Equalities, Diversity and Inclusion framework), and to approve the accompanying action plan	Cabinet, 2024/263 - Leader
▪ **Capital Programme Approvals - November 2024** Report on variation to the capital programme for approval (as required).	Cabinet, 2022/223 - Cabinet Member for Finance
▪ **Treasury Management Mid Term Review 2024/25** To provide a mid-term review of Treasury Management Activity in 2024/25 in accordance with the CIPFA code of practice.	Cabinet, 2024/164 - Cabinet Member for Finance
▪ **Climate Action Programme Update** Climate Action Programme Update which is provided 6-monthly.	Cabinet, 2024/230 - Deputy Leader of the Council with Responsibility for Climate Change, Environment & Future Generations

▪ **Business Management and Monitoring Report - September 2024** The business management reports are part of a suite of performance, risk and budget documents which set out our ambitions, priorities, and financial performance.	Cabinet, 2024/211 - Cabinet Member for Finance
▪ **Cost of Living Programme for Autumn/Winter 2024/25** To agree an expenditure programme in anticipation of a government announcement in September to extend the Household Support Fund.	Cabinet, 2024/291 - Cabinet Member for Public Health, Inequalities & Community Safety
▪ **Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP) Integration - Phase 2** To note the progress made as part of phase two of LEP integration and agree the approach for delivering the LEP functions.	Cabinet, 2024/278 - Leader, Cabinet Member for Infrastructure and Development Strategy
▪ **Educational Psychology Services** Approval to access/use the Management Consultancy & Professional Services Framework for provision of Educational Psychology Services	Cabinet, 2024/312 - Cabinet Member for Children, Education & Young People's Services, Cabinet Member for SEND Improvement

Delegated Decisions by Deputy Leader of the Council with Responsibility for Climate Change, Environment & Future Generations, 14 November 2024

▪ **Household Waste Recycling Centres (HWRC) - New CCTV provision with ANPR cameras** To approve installation of new enhanced CCTV system across all HWRC's. including new ANPR (Automated Number Plate Recgnotion)	Delegated Decisions by Deputy Leader of the Council with Responsibility for Climate Change, Environment & Future Generations, 2024/056 - Deputy Leader of the Council with

	Responsibility for Climate Change, Environment & Future Generations
▪ **Household Waste Recycling Centre Network: Introduction of Booking System** To seek approval for a booking system to be implemented aross the Household Waste Recycling Centre network, requiring residents to prebook before visiting these facilities.	Delegated Decisions by Deputy Leader of the Council with Responsibility for Climate Change, Environment & Future Generations, 2024/269 - Deputy Leader of the Council with Responsibility for Climate Change, Environment & Future Generations
▪ **Street Lighting - Part Night Lighting Proposals** Approval to proceed with proposed operational specification of Part Night Lighting initiative and implementation plan.	Delegated Decisions by Deputy Leader of the Council with Responsibility for Climate Change, Environment & Future Generations, 2024/299 - Deputy Leader of the Council with Responsibility for Climate Change, Environment & Future Generations

Delegated Decisions by Cabinet Member for Children, Education & Young People's Services, 6 November 2024

▪ **Age Range Extension of Grandpoint Maintained Nursery School** Whether to approve a proposal to extend the age range of Grandpont Maintained Nursery School down from 3-5 to 2-5,	Delegated Decisions by Cabinet Member for Children,

from 1 January 2025.	Education & Young People's Services, 2024/301 - Cabinet Member for Children, Education & Young People's Services
▪ **Children's Services Residential Capital Programme for 6 Great Mead, East Hagbourne, Didcot** To approve entering into a contact for construction services on the refurbishment of 6 Great Mead, East Hagbourne, Didcot	Delegated Decisions by Cabinet Member for Children, Education & Young People's Services, 2024/314 - Cabinet Member for Children, Education & Young People's Services

Delegated Decisions by Cabinet Member for Transport Management, 14 November 2024

▪ **Hampton Gale & Poyle: Proposed 20mph Speed Limits** Part of Phase 3 Countywide 20mph Speed Limit Project.	Delegated Decisions by Cabinet Member for Transport Management, 2024/154 - Cabinet Member for Transport Management
▪ **Woodstock Parking Review 2024** To seek approval for minor amendments to the existing parking scheme implemented for Woodstock in 2023.	Delegated Decisions by Cabinet Member for Transport Management, 2024/270 - Cabinet Member for Transport Management
▪ **Proposed Permit Bays - Bath Street, Abingdon** Under a previously approved scheme for the introduction of cycle lanes and removal of parking on Bath Street, Abingdon - a commitment was given as part of the decision to review the provision of parking for residents who had raised concerns. The	Delegated Decisions by Cabinet Member for Transport Management,

proposals will allow permit holders to park in existing 2 hour bays without time limit.	2024/264 - Cabinet Member for Transport Management
▪ **Great Western: B4493 Didcot Road - Proposed 20mph Speed Limit Extension** Part of Phase 3 Countywide 20mph Speed Limit Project	Delegated Decisions by Cabinet Member for Transport Management, 2024/195 - Cabinet Member for Transport Management
▪ **Forest Hill, Shotover, Old Road: 20mph Speed Limit Extension** Part of Phase 3 of Countywide 20mph Speed Limit Project.	Delegated Decisions by Cabinet Member for Transport Management, 2024/194 - Cabinet Member for Transport Management
▪ **Nuffield: Proposed 20mph Speed Limits** Part of Phase 3 of Countywide 20mph Speed Limit Project	Delegated Decisions by Cabinet Member for Transport Management, 2024/193 - Cabinet Member for Transport Management
▪ **Didcot: Proposed 20mph Speed Limits** Part of Phase 3 of Countywide 20mph Speed Limit Project.	Delegated Decisions by Cabinet Member for Transport Management, 2024/192 - Cabinet Member for Transport Management
▪ **Permitting Cycling in Queen St and Cornmarket St** To seek approval to proceed with an ETRO (Experimental Traffic Regulation Order) to lift the ban on cycling which is currently in operation between 10 AM and 6 PM. The Team also seeks approval to reconfigure elements of public furniture to make the streets more legible, promoting a more peaceful interaction between transport modes.	Delegated Decisions by Cabinet Member for Transport Management, 2024/219 - Cabinet Member for Transport Management

▪ **Proposed Controlled Parking Zone (CPZ) - Littlemore North, Oxford** Under the County Council's policy to rollout new CPZs across Oxfordshire, a new scheme is being promoted to reduce opportunities for commuter parking and to reduce car use within the city.	Delegated Decisions by Cabinet Member for Transport Management, 2024/276 - Cabinet Member for Transport Management
▪ **Proposed Controlled Parking Zone (CPZ) - Rose Hill, Oxford** Under the County Council's policy to rollout new CPZs across Oxfordshire, a new scheme is being promoted to reduce opportunities for commuter parking and to reduce car use within the city.	Delegated Decisions by Cabinet Member for Transport Management, 2024/274 - Cabinet Member for Transport Management
▪ **Shirburn - Proposed Traffic Calming Chicane and Extension of Existing 30mph Speed Limit** To seek approval for the introduction of Traffic Calming and speed limit changes in Shirburn	Delegated Decisions by Cabinet Member for Transport Management, 2024/273 - Cabinet Member for Transport Management
▪ **Proposed Prohibition of Motor Vehicles - Cornhill Lane BOAT, East Challow** The purpose of this order is to prohibit all vehicles over 1.5m [4'11''] in width all year round from using Cornhill Lane BOAT which is an unsurfaced Public Right of Way and highly vulnerable to damage. The route is situated in East Challow parish.	Delegated Decisions by Cabinet Member for Transport Management, 2024/281 - Cabinet Member for Transport Management
▪ **Highway Improvement Works - A417 Faringdon Road, Stanford in the Vale** Under a section 278 agreement for the River Meadow Development, a number of changes are required to the public highway to Improve permeability by increasing footway to shared cycleway and safety by addition of signalised crossing and extension of 30mp zone – all agreed under Planning, S106 and S278 with Oxfordshire Highways.	Delegated Decisions by Cabinet Member for Transport Management, 2024/279 - Cabinet Member for Transport Management
▪ **Proposed Two-Way Cycling - Sheep Street, Bicester (Experimental Order) 2024** Decision on whether to proceed with the ETRO to trial two-way	Delegated Decisions by Cabinet Member

cycling in Sheep Street, Bicester.	for Transport Management, 2024/286 - Cabinet Member for Transport Management
▪ **Burford-Asthall - A40 & B4047 50mph and 40mph Limits** To seek a decision on a proposed 40mph limit approaching and including the roundabout with the A40 / B4047and 50mph limit on the A40.	Delegated Decisions by Cabinet Member for Transport Management, 2024/285 - Cabinet Member for Transport Management
▪ **Proposed 40mph Speed Limit - Wantage Eastern Link Road, Kingsgrove** To seek a decision on the proposed 40mph speed limit for Wantage Eastern Link Road.	Delegated Decisions by Cabinet Member for Transport Management, 2024/293 - Cabinet Member for Transport Management
▪ **Clifton Hampden: Proposed 20mph Speed Limits** Part of Phase 3 Countywide 20mph Speed Limit Project	Delegated Decisions by Cabinet Member for Transport Management, 2024/190 - Cabinet Member for Transport Management
▪ **Besselsleigh: Proposed 20mph Speed Limits** Part of Phase 3 Countywide 20mph Speed Limit Projects.	Delegated Decisions by Cabinet Member for Transport Management, 2024/185 - Cabinet Member for Transport Management
▪ **Burford: Shilton Road - Proposed 20mph Speed Limit** Part of Phase 3 Countywide 20mph Speed Limit Project.	Delegated Decisions by Cabinet Member for Transport Management, 2024/182 - Cabinet Member

	for Transport Management
▪ **Glympton: Proposed 20mph Speed Limits** Part of Phase 3 Countywide 20mph Speed Limit Project	Delegated Decisions by Cabinet Member for Transport Management, 2024/181 - Cabinet Member for Transport Management
▪ **Claydon: Proposed 20mph Speed Limits** Part of Phase 3 Countywide 20mph Speed Limit Project.	Delegated Decisions by Cabinet Member for Transport Management, 2024/179 - Cabinet Member for Transport Management
▪ **Radley: Proposed 20mph Speed Limits** Part of Phase 3 Countywide 20mph Speed Limit Project.	Delegated Decisions by Cabinet Member for Transport Management, 2024/171 - Cabinet Member for Transport Management
▪ **Street Lighting - Part Night Lighting Proposals** Approval to proceed with proposed operational specification of Part Night Lighting initiative and implementation plan.	Delegated Decisions by Cabinet Member for Transport Management, 2024/300 - Cabinet Member for Transport Management
▪ **Asthall Leigh & Field Assarts: Proposed 20mph Speed Limits** To seek approval for the introduction of 20mph speed limits in Asthall Leigh & Field Assarts.	Delegated Decisions by Cabinet Member for Transport Management, 2024/310 - Cabinet Member for Transport Management

▪ **A4144 Woodstock Road, Oxford - Proposed Conversion of a Zebra Crossing to Parallel Crossing** To seek approval for the conversion of a Zebra crossing to a parallel crossing.	Delegated Decisions by Cabinet Member for Transport Management, 2024/304 - Cabinet Member for Transport Management
▪ **Westwell: Proposed 20mph Speed Limits** To seek approval for the introduction of a 20mmph speed limit in Westwell.	Delegated Decisions by Cabinet Member for Transport Management, 2024/311 - Cabinet Member for Transport Management
▪ **Little Tew: Proposed 20mph Speed Limit** To seek approval for the introduction of 20mph speed limits in Little Tew.	Delegated Decisions by Cabinet Member for Transport Management, 2024/309 - Cabinet Member for Transport Management
▪ **Grafton - Proposed 20mph Speed Limits** To seek approval for the introduction of a 20mph speed limit In Grafton.	Delegated Decisions by Cabinet Member for Transport Management, 2024/308 - Cabinet Member for Transport Management
▪ **Hailey - Proposed 20mph Speed Limits** To seek approval for the introduction of 20mph speed limits in Hailey.	Delegated Decisions by Cabinet Member for Transport Management, 2024/307 - Cabinet Member for Transport Management
▪ **Mapledurham: Proposed 20mph Speed Limits** To seek approval for the introduction of a 20mph speed limit in Mapledurham.	Delegated Decisions by Cabinet Member for Transport

	Management, 2024/306 - Cabinet Member for Transport Management
▪ **Sandford on Thames - Proposed 20mph Speed Limits** To seek approval for the introduction of 20mph speed limit in Sandford on Thames.	Delegated Decisions by Cabinet Member for Transport Management, 2024/305 - Cabinet Member for Transport Management
▪ **Didcot Road, Harwell Link Road Roundabout, Didcot - Proposed Pegasus Crossings** To seek approval for the introduction of new Pegasus crossings associated with Valley Park development.	Delegated Decisions by Cabinet Member for Transport Management, 2024/303 - Cabinet Member for Transport Management
▪ **Proposed New Controlled Parking Zone - Iffley, Oxford** It is the county council's policy to promote new CPZs for Oxford which are linked to wider strategies for active travel and reducing car use within the city. The Iffley scheme has been agreed with local county councillors and is being funded through capital improvement budgets.	Delegated Decisions by Cabinet Member for Transport Management, 2024/256 - Cabinet Member for Transport Management
▪ **Highmoor: Proposed 20mph Speed Limits** Part of Phase 3 Countywide 20mph Speed Limit Project	Delegated Decisions by Cabinet Member for Transport Management, 2024/187 - Cabinet Member for Transport Management
▪ **Henley: Proposed 20mph Speed Limits** Part of Phase 3 Countywide 20mph Speed Limit Project.	Delegated Decisions by Cabinet Member for Transport Management, 2024/186 - Cabinet Member for Transport

	Management
▪ **Stoke Row: Proposed 20mph Speed Limits** Part of Phase 3 Countywide 20mph Speed Limit Project	Delegated Decisions by Cabinet Member for Transport Management, 2024/176 - Cabinet Member for Transport Management
▪ **Stanford-in-the-Vale: Proposed 20mph Speed Limits** Part of Phase 3 of Countywide 20mph Speed Limit Project.	Delegated Decisions by Cabinet Member for Transport Management, 2024/170 - Cabinet Member for Transport Management
▪ **Letcombe Regis: Proposed 20mph Speed Limits** Part of Phase 3 Countywide 20mph Speed Limit Project.	Delegated Decisions by Cabinet Member for Transport Management, 2024/151 - Cabinet Member for Transport Management
▪ **Hook Norton: Proposed 20mph Speed Limits** Part of Phase 3 of County-wide 20mph Speed Limit Project.	Delegated Decisions by Cabinet Member for Transport Management, 2024/143 - Cabinet Member for Transport Management
▪ **Denchworth: Proposed 20mph Speed Limits** Part of Phase 3 of County-wide 20mph Speed Limit Project.	Delegated Decisions by Cabinet Member for Transport Management, 2024/124 - Cabinet Member for Transport Management

▪ **Stadhampton: Proposed 20mph Speed Limits** Part of Phase 3 County-wide Speed Limits Project.	Delegated Decisions by Cabinet Member for Transport Management, 2024/123 - Cabinet Member for Transport Management
▪ **Horspath: Proposed 20mph Speed Limits** Part of Phase 3 County-wide 20mph Speed Limit Project	Delegated Decisions by Cabinet Member for Transport Management, 2024/122 - Cabinet Member for Transport Management
▪ **Hornton: Proposed 20mph Speed Limits** Part of Phase 3 County-wide 20mph Speed Limit Project	Delegated Decisions by Cabinet Member for Transport Management, 2024/120 - Cabinet Member for Transport Management

Delegated Decisions by Cabinet Member for Infrastructure & Development Strategy, 14 November 2024

▪ **A4095 Realignment - Procurement of Detailed Design** The main objectives are to create highway capacity to support the development of 7000 houses and employment at NW Bicester, including facilitating the spine road of the development. A procurement exercise will commence in order to commission detailed design	Delegated Decisions by Cabinet Member for Infrastructure & Development Strategy, 2024/131 - Cabinet Member for Infrastructure and Development Strategy

Delegated Decisions by Cabinet Member for Finance, 8 November 2024

▪ **Decision on Options for Site South of Oxford City Centre** Review options and officers recommendations with a view to deciding how to proceed with the sale of the site in question. Delegate the final decision on successful party to the Executive Director of Resources in consultation with the Director of Property.	Delegated Decisions by Cabinet Member for Finance, 2024/283 - Cabinet Member for Finance

Delegated Decisions by Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care, 19 November 2024

▪ **Short Stay Hub Beds** Procurement of new hospital bed-based step down model from April 2025.	Delegated Decisions by Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care, 2024/289 - Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care
▪ **Technology Enabled Care** Procurement of new TEC service from April 2025.	Delegated Decisions by Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care, 2024/288 - Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care

This page is intentionally left blank