



**To: Members of the Cabinet**

## ***Notice of a Meeting of the Cabinet***

**Tuesday, 21 January 2025 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

January 2025

**Committee Officer: Chris Reynolds**

*Tel: 07542 029441; E-Mail: [chris.reynolds@oxfordshire.gov.uk](mailto: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 29 January 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: 28 January 2025*



## **AGENDA**

### **1. Apologies for Absence**

### **2. Declarations of Interest**

- guidance note below

### **3. Minutes (Pages 1 - 8)**

To approve the minutes of the meeting held on 17 December 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](mailto: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 9 - 46)**

Cabinet will receive the following Scrutiny reports:-

Oxfordshire Joint Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee report on Healthy Weight

Education and Young People Overview and Scrutiny Committee report on Education other than at Home Strategy (EOTAS)

Place Overview and Scrutiny Committee report on Local Nature Recovery Strategy

## **8. Response to Motion by Councillor Reeves on Winter Fuel Payments (Pages 47 - 54)**

*Cabinet Member:* Finance

*Forward Plan Ref:* 2024/356

*Contact:* Paul Wilding, Cost of Living Programme Manager  
([Paul.Wilding@oxfordshire.gov.uk](mailto:Paul.Wilding@oxfordshire.gov.uk))

Report by Executive Director of Resources and Section 151 Officer (CA8).

**The Cabinet is RECOMMENDED to note that the actions set out in this report respond to the motion relating to Winter Fuel Payments approved by Council in November 2024, the wording of which is set out in Annex One**

## **9. Citizens' Assembly Update (Pages 55 - 60)**

*Cabinet Member:* Leader

*Forward Plan Ref:* 2024/364

*Contact:* Susannah Wintersgill, Director of Public Affairs, Policy and Partnerships

Report by Director of Public Affairs, Policy and Partnerships (CA9).

**The Cabinet is RECOMMENDED to**

- a) Note progress being made on the citizens' assembly, which is being held in February and March 2025;**
- b) Note that the actions set out in this report respond to the motion agreed by Council on 10 December 2024.**

## **10. Cabinet response to motion changes to inheritance tax and other farming matters (Pages 61 - 68)**

*Cabinet Member:* Leader

*Forward Plan Ref:* 2024/372



Contact: Robin Rogers, Director of Economy and Place  
[Robin.rogers@oxfordshire.gov.uk](mailto:Robin.rogers@oxfordshire.gov.uk)

Report by Director of Economy and Place (CA10).

**The CABINET is RECOMMENDED to**

- a) **Note the council's current and planned policy and programme activity in support of the rural economy;**
- b) **Note the requests from Council to Cabinet made through the motion on Farming passed by Council on 10 December 2024 and how the council's approach will address these issues.**

**11. Warm Homes: Local Grant Capital Retrofit Programme (Pages 69 - 74)**

*Cabinet Member:* Deputy Leader of the Council with Responsibility for Climate Change, Environment and Future Generations

*Forward Plan Ref:* 2024/329

*Contact:* Sarah Gilbert, Head of Climate Action ([Sarah.Gilbert@oxfordshire.gov.uk](mailto:Sarah.Gilbert@oxfordshire.gov.uk))

Report by Director of Economy and Place (CA11).

**Cabinet is RECOMMENDED to:-**

- a) **Note the submission of a funding request to Department for Energy Security and Net Zero to support retrofit of low-income households in, or at risk of, fuel poverty.**
- b) **Delegate authority to the Director of Economy & Place in consultation with the Executive Director of Resources and Section 151 Officer, to consider and conclude any agreements upon notification of a successful application for the Warm Homes: Local Grant (WH:LG).**
- c) **Delegate authority to the Director of Economy & Place in consultation with the Executive Director of Resources to issue an extension to the existing agreement for the Provision of Capital Retrofit Grant Distribution and Delivery Management Services (Home Upgrade Grant, Phase 2) for up to 24 months.**

**12. Funding contribution towards a jointly commissioned Mental Health Contract 2025-2035 (Pages 75 - 86)**

*Cabinet Member:* Adult Social Care

*Forward Plan Ref:* 2024/334

*Contact:* Samia Shibli, Commissioning Manager -Live Well  
[Samia.shibli@oxfordshire.gov.uk](mailto:Samia.shibli@oxfordshire.gov.uk)

Report by Director of Adult Social Care (CA12)

**Cabinet is RECOMMENDED to:**

- a) **Approve the direct award of a new mental health contract between Buckinghamshire, Oxfordshire, Berkshire West Integrated Care Board (“BOB ICB”) and Oxford Health (NHS) Foundation Trust funded under the pooled fund arrangements of the S 75 Agreement (as defined at paragraph 30 below).**
- b) **Agree the Council’s funding contribution under the S 75 Agreement to BOB ICB for mental health services under the new mental health contract to be entered by BOB ICB for the lifetime of the contract.**
- c) **Delegate responsibility to the Director of Adult Social Services (DASS) in consultation with the Executive Member for Adult Social Care for oversight of the approval process as it progresses towards final sign off (by the contracting authority).**

### **13. Local Flood Risk Management Strategy Update (Pages 87 - 162)**

*Cabinet Member:* Deputy Leader of the Council with Responsibility for Climate Change, Environment and Future Generations

*Forward Plan Ref:* 2024/229

*Contact:* Clare Mills, Operations Manager – Flood Risk ([Clare.Mills@oxfordshire.gov.uk](mailto:Clare.Mills@oxfordshire.gov.uk))

Report by Director of Environment and Highways (**CA13**).

**The Cabinet is RECOMMENDED to approve the Local Flood Risk Management Strategy contained in Annex 2**

### **14. Civil Enforcement Procurement (Pages 163 - 170)**

*Cabinet Member:* Transport Management

*Forward Plan Ref:* 2024/369

*Contact:* Keith Stenning, Head of Service – Network Management

[Keith.stenning@oxfordshire.gov.uk](mailto:Keith.stenning@oxfordshire.gov.uk)

Report by Director of Environment and Highways (**CA14**).

**The Cabinet is RECOMMENDED to**

- a) **Approve the commencement of work to explore and consider options for Civil Enforcement provision for the county council due to contracts coming to an end March 2026.**
- b) **Endorse the proposed approach and key stages as set out in this paper.**

## **15. Affiliation between Oxfordshire and HMS Diamond (Pages 171 - 176)**

*Cabinet Member:* Leader

*Forward Plan Ref:* 2024/371

*Contact:* Tannah Collier, Policy Officer,  
Tannah.collier@oxfordshire.gov.uk

Report by Chief Executive **(CA15)**

**The Cabinet is RECOMMENDED to agree to forming an affiliation between Oxfordshire and His Majesty's Ship (HMS) 'Diamond'**

## **16. Business Management and Monitoring Report - November 2024 (Pages 177 - 254)**

*Cabinet Member:* Finance

*Forward Plan Ref:* 2024/212

*Contact:* Kathy Wilcox, Head of Financial Strategy  
Kathy.wilcox@oxfordshire.gov.uk

Report by Executive Director of Resources and Section 151 Officer **(CA16)**

**The Cabinet is RECOMMENDED 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 creation of a new reserve to support costs associated with Local Government Devolution and Reorganisation and the transfer of £5.0m to the reserve.**
- d) Approve the transfer of £3.0m from Adult Services to the Budget Priorities reserve.**

## **17. Capital Approvals Report - January 2025 (Pages 255 - 258)**

*Cabinet Member:* Finance

*Forward Plan Ref:* 2024/225

*Contact:* Natalie Crawford, Capital Programme Manager  
Natalie.crawford@oxfordshire.gov.uk

Report by Executive Director of Resources and Section 151 Officer **(CA17)**

**The Cabinet is RECOMMENDED to:**

- a) approve the inclusion of 'The Greenwood Centre', an 11-bed accommodation block for 16–17-year-olds in need of supported accommodation, into the Capital Programme at an indicative cost of £1.932m, to be funded from £6.000m agreed by Council in February 2024 for additional Children's Homes.**

- b) approve a budget increase of £6.39m for ‘Great Western Park Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND) School’, to be funded from the High Needs Grant.
- c) approve a budget increase of £1.500m to the Energy Saving Measures Programme, to be addressed through the annual Budget and Business Planning process and approval by Council in February 2025.
- d) approve a budget increase of £11.516m to the Didcot to Culham River Crossing, part of the Housing Infrastructure 1 (HIF1) programme, to be funded through additional funds granted by Homes England and agreed by Cabinet in July 2024.
- e) approve a budget increase of £12.537m to Didcot Science Bridge, part of the Housing Infrastructure 1 (HIF1) programme to be funded through additional funds granted by Homes England and agreed by Cabinet in July 2024.
- f) approve a budget increase of £11.916m to the Clifton Hampden Bypass project, part of the Housing Infrastructure 1 (HIF1) programme to be funded through additional funds granted by Homes England and agreed by Cabinet in July 2024.

## **18. Delegated Powers Report for October to December 2024 (Pages 259 - 262)**

*Cabinet Member:* Leader

*Forward Plan Ref:* 2025/010

*Contact:* Colm Ó Caomhánaigh, Democratic Services Manager  
[colm.oacaomhanaigh@oxfordshire.gov.uk](mailto:colm.oacaomhanaigh@oxfordshire.gov.uk)

Report by Director of Law and Governance

**Cabinet is RECOMMENDED to note the executive decisions taken under delegated powers, set out in paragraph 4.**

## **19. Forward Plan and Future Business (Pages 263 - 268)**

*Cabinet Member:* All

*Contact Officer:* Chris Reynolds, Senior Democratic Services Officer,  
[chris.reynolds@oxfordshire.gov.uk](mailto: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



# Agenda Item 3

## CABINET

**MINUTES** of the meeting held on Tuesday, 17 December 2024 commencing at 2.00 pm and finishing at 3.05pm

### **Present:**

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

### **Other Members in**

**Attendance:** Councillors David Bartholomew, Duncan Enright and 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), Lisa Lyons (Director of Children's Services), 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.*

### **159/24 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

(Agenda Item. 1)

There were none received.

### **160/24 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

(Agenda Item. 2)

There were none.

### **161/24 MINUTES**

(Agenda Item. 3)

The minutes of the meeting held on 19 November 2024 were approved as a correct record.

## **162/24 QUESTIONS FROM COUNTY COUNCILLORS**

(Agenda Item. 4)

See annex.

## **163/24 PETITIONS AND PUBLIC ADDRESS**

(Agenda Item. 5)

### 8 Henley Short Stay Hub Beds

Councillor Stefan Gawrysiak

### 9 Beyond Net Zero – Growing the Market for Carbon Dioxide Removals

Professor Steve Smith

## **164/24 APPOINTMENTS**

(Agenda Item. 6)

There were none to report.

## **165/24 REPORTS FROM SCRUTINY COMMITTEES**

(Agenda Item. 7)

Councillor Eddie Reeves, Chair of the Performance and Corporate Services Overview and Scrutiny Committee presented the reports on Community Asset Transfer Policy and Commercial Strategy.

Cabinet received the reports and will respond in due course.

## **166/24 HENLEY SHORT STAY HUB BEDS**

(Agenda Item. 8)

Cabinet had before it a report which outlined a response to the Motion on Henley Short Stay Hub Beds agreed by the Council on 5 November 2024 and the questions subsequently raised by Councillor Gawrysiak addressed to Cabinet set out in Annexes 1 and 2 to the report. It set out the background to the decisions made in 2023 and the actions taken subsequently to address the concerns raised in the Motion.

Councillor Stefan Gawrysiak addressed the Cabinet, expressing gratitude for the work by officers in preparing the report. He emphasised the importance of geographically spread beds for those who were not able go home after hospital discharge and disagreed with the officers' recommendation not to reinstate the beds. Councillor Gawrysiak expressed concern about the lack of public engagement and consultation with patient groups and GPs on this matter. He presented responses to Freedom of Information (FOI) requests

indicating that the beds were NHS funded, contradicting the report's claim that they were not. He urged for a review of the contracts to consider a geographical spread of beds and hoped for the reinstatement of beds in Henley.

Councillor Tim Bearder, Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care, presented the report. He acknowledged the serious concerns that had been raised by and Councillor Gawrysiak and clarified that the beds were funded by both the County Council and the NHS. He confirmed that the Secretary of State did not require a consultation on the matter.

Councillor Bearder emphasised the financial and health benefits of the discharge to assess model detailed in the report, which allowed patients to recover better at home.

During discussion, members noted the history of step-down bed provision in Oxfordshire and endorsed the home first discharge to assess model.

**RESOLVED to:-**

- a) Note the history of step-down bed provision in Oxfordshire and to endorse the Home First Discharge to Assess model of care that has been implemented countywide since January 2024**
- b) Note the impact of Home First Discharge to Assess for users, hospital flow and on business efficiency across the County and in the South Oxfordshire area**
- c) Agree that the former Chiltern Court beds are not reinstated for the reasons set out in the paper**
- d) Note the decision of the Secretary of State for Heath not to “call in” the decision to close the Chiltern Court beds**
- e) Note the engagement that has taken place with the public and stakeholders during 2024**
- (f) Endorse ongoing engagement with Oxfordshire residents around out of hospital care**

**167/24 BEYOND NET ZERO - GROWING THE MARKET FOR CARBON DIOXIDE REMOVALS**

(Agenda Item. 9)

Professor Steve Smith from the University of Oxford addressed the Cabinet, emphasising the importance of carbon dioxide removal methods as part of the council's climate ambitions. He highlighted the need to scale up these

technologies rapidly and said that Oxfordshire had the skills and vision to support these efforts. Professor Smith explained that carbon dioxide removal technologies were effective and currently removed approximately 1 million tonnes of CO<sub>2</sub> from the atmosphere annually. He stressed that while these technologies were at an early stage, they were necessary for achieving net zero and potentially becoming net negative. He also mentioned specific projects in Oxfordshire, such as woodland restoration and biochar, and highlighted the involvement of companies like Veolia in trialling agricultural fields for carbon removal.

Councillor Pete Sudbury, Deputy Leader with Responsibility for Climate Change, Environment and Future Generations presented the report. He outlined the background to the report and recommendations which underscored the Council's commitment to leadership on climate change policies and the potential for Oxfordshire to play a significant role in advancing carbon removal technologies.

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

**RESOLVED to**

- a) Note the underdevelopment of the market for Carbon Dioxide Removal (CDR) technologies, and the risk this creates for meeting net zero.**
- b) Support the recommendations to scale the market for CDRs through the council's policy making and partnership activity, growing both the supply and demand side of the market, subject to funding.**
- c) Subject to funding, commit to go 'Beyond Net Zero' - extending the council's current carbon neutral target for the council's own estate emissions to be 'beyond zero', with a target figure to be agreed at a later date.**

**168/24 INFRASTRUCTURE FUNDING STATEMENT**

(Agenda Item. 10)

Cabinet had before it a report on the Infrastructure Funding Statement. This was a statutory statement of fact to be reported annually, by 31 December 2024 on developer contributions secured, spent or received during the previous financial year, 1 April 2023 – 31 March 2024.

Councillor Judy Roberts, Cabinet Member for Infrastructure and Development Strategy, presented the report. She referred, in particular to the range of schemes delivered during the year including new primary schools, improvements to libraries and traffic calming measures.

Councillor Roberts moved and Councillor Leffman seconded the recommendations, and they were approved.

**RESOLVED to:-**

- a) **note the content of the Infrastructure Funding Statement 2023/24**
- b) **approve the publication of the report onto the Oxfordshire County Council website**
- c) **delegate authority to make any minor amendments to the report prior to its publication to the Director of Economy & Place in consultation with the Chief Executive**

**169/24 RESPONSE TO GOVERNMENT CONSULTATION ON REMOTE ATTENDANCE AND PROXY VOTING AT COUNCIL MEETINGS**

(Agenda Item. 11)

Cabinet considered a report proposing a response to the Government's consultation on enabling remote attendance, remote and hybrid meetings as well as proxy voting at Council meetings.

Councillor Liz Leffman, Leader of the Council, presented the report and said that there was support within the Council for flexibility to enable remote and hybrid meetings.

During discussion, members concurred with the proposed response to the consultation.

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

**RESOLVED to agree to the proposed consultation response outlined in Appendix 1.**

**170/24 WORKFORCE REPORT AND STAFFING DATA - QUARTER 2 - JULY TO SEPTEMBER 2024**

(Agenda Item. 12)

Cabinet had before it a report which provided an overview of the progress towards delivering the Our People and Culture Strategy and also reviewed the workforce profile for July - September 2024 (Q2 2024/2025) including the key workforce trends and other relevant management information and performance indicators which were set out in the annexes.

Councillor Neil Fawcett, Cabinet Member for Community and Corporate Services, presented the report. He expressed thanks to the Council's employees for their hard work and delivery of services during the calendar year. The report indicated that a number of the trends were moving in a

positive direction. There was a need to address the issues concerning stress and anxiety which had contributed to sickness absence. There had been a reduction in turnover and agency spend.

Councillor Fawcett referred to the increased allocation of resources which had led to success of the Council's apprenticeship scheme.

During discussion, members welcomed the positive direction of travel in terms of the performance indicators detailed in the report.

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

**RESOLVED to note the report.**

## **171/24 CAPITAL PROGRAMME AND MONITORING REPORT - OCTOBER 2024**

(Agenda Item. 13)

Cabinet had before it the third capital programme update and monitoring report for 2024/25 which set out the monitoring position based on activity to the end of October 2024. The report also updated the Capital Programme approved by Cabinet on 15 October 2024 taking into account additional funding and new schemes. The updated programme also incorporated changes agreed through the Capital Programme Approval Reports to Cabinet during the year as well as new funding.

Councillor Dan Levy, Cabinet Member for Finance, presented the report.

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

**RESOLVED to:-**

### **Capital Programme**

- a. Note the capital monitoring position for 2024/25 set out in this report and summarised in Annex 1.**
- b. Approve the updated Capital Programme at Annex 2 incorporating the changes set out in this report.**

### **Budget Changes / Budget Release**

- c. Note the reduction of £0.5m budget provision from the Defect Liability Programme funded**

from corporate resources, thereby returning £0.5m to the capital programme which will contribute towards funding for the 2025/26 the capital budget setting process (para 68).

### **Additions to the Capital Programme**

- d. Approve the inclusion of the William Fletcher CE Primary School (Expansion) scheme in the Capital Programme with an indicative budget of £3.9m to be funded from S106 developer contributions and basic need funding (para 65).
  
- e. Approve the inclusion of a programme of work which will create breathing apparatus and cleaning / decontamination areas across Oxfordshire's fire stations, with an indicative budget of £1.8m, to be funded from earmarked reserves, agreed by Council in February 2024 (para 66).

### **172/24 FORWARD PLAN AND FUTURE BUSINESS**

(Agenda Item. 14)

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.

### **173/24 FOR INFORMATION ONLY: CABINET RESPONSE TO SCRUTINY ITEM**

(Agenda Item. 15)

Cabinet noted the response on Community Wealth Building.

.....in the Chair

Date of signing .....





## Divisions Affected – All

### **CABINET** **21 January 2025**

### **Oxfordshire Healthy Weight** **Report of the Oxfordshire Joint Health Overview and Scrutiny** **Committee**

## **RECOMMENDATION**

1. The Cabinet is **RECOMMENDED** to —
  - a) Agree to respond to the recommendations contained within this report.
  - b) Agree to coordinate with relevant officers from the Buckinghamshire, Oxfordshire, and Berkshire West Integrated Care Board to provide a response on behalf of Oxfordshire County as well as its key NHS partners.

## **REQUIREMENT TO RESPOND**

2. The Local Authority (Public Health, Health and Wellbeing Boards and Health Scrutiny) Regulations 2013 provide that the Committee may require a response from the responsible person to whom it has made the report or recommendation and that person must **respond in writing within 28 days of the request**.

## **INTRODUCTION AND OVERVIEW**

3. At its meeting on 21 November 2024, the Oxfordshire Joint Health and Overview Scrutiny Committee (HOSC) received a report providing an update on Oxfordshire Healthy Weight. The report that was received included input from Oxfordshire County Council's Public Health Directorate, as well as from the Buckinghamshire, Oxfordshire, and Berkshire West Integrated Care Board (BOB ICB). The Committee initially held this item in its public meeting in September 2023, and the purpose of the item held in November was to receive a progress update on the work undertaken by the Council and its partners to promote healthy weight, as well as on the recommendations issued by the Committee last year.
4. This item was scrutinised by HOSC given that it has a constitutional remit over all aspects of health as a whole; and this includes initiatives by the Council and its key NHS partners to tackle excess weight amongst residents and to cultivate

a healthy living environment that promotes healthier living habits. Upon commissioning this item, some of the points the Committee sought to investigate involved the following:

- How the work to promote Healthy Weight continues to sit and operate in the broader context of a preventative public health agenda, including in relation to Oxfordshire's Health and Wellbeing Strategy.
  - Details of any new data relating to excess weight in Oxfordshire, and if there are any new identifiable patterns of excess weight and life expectancy that are Oxfordshire specific.
  - Details of any ongoing co-production that has been adopted as part of the work to tackle excess weight.
  - An update on the relationship between deprivation and excess weight, and how this relationship can be more thoroughly understood so as to create measures to address this.
  - Details of any ongoing potential challenges to tackling excess weight, including the degree to which residents are being receptive to the promotion of healthy living habits.
  - The degree to which there is sufficient resource (including funding and workforce) to continue the work on healthy weight.
  - Details of any support being provided to the parents, carers, or families of those living with excess weight, and how they are being helped with being given the tools to help manage children's weight.
  - An update on the licensing around the presence of fast-food outlets in certain areas around the County and advertising of HFSS (High in Fat, Salt and Sugar) products.
5. Below is a summary of the 21 November scrutiny session. This report also contains key observations and considerations that the Committee urges the Cabinet and senior officers (including from the Integrated Care Board) to give consideration to in respect of the work being undertaken to improve healthy weight and healthier living habits amongst Oxfordshire residents.

## **SUMMARY**

6. The Committee would like to express thanks to Derys Pragnell (Consultant in Public Health), Ansaf Azhar (OCC Director of Public Health), Claire Gray (Public Health Practitioner), Angela Jessop (Personalised Care Lead BOB ICB), and Alicia Siraj (Head of Health Promotion, Health Prevention, and Personalised Care BOB ICB) for attending the meeting on 21 November and answering questions from the Committee.

7. It was highlighted by the Director of Public Health that post-COVID-19, addressing excess weight was crucial owing to its links with long-term conditions such as type 2 diabetes. A whole system approach involving all organisations across the County Council was needed. Rising obesity rates both nationally and locally necessitated changes in the food environment and sedentary lifestyles. A four-pillar approach to tackling excess weight was introduced, emphasising that no single intervention would suffice. Local data showed robust information on children but less information on adults, highlighting higher weights among children in some areas compared to the national average.
8. Angela Jessop, the Tier 3 weight management lead at the ICB, explained the weight management tier system. Tier 2 services were for individuals with lower BMIs and included programs such as Slimming World and online support. Tier 3 services were for those who had not successfully lost weight in Tier 2 and targeted people with higher BMIs and those considering surgery. This tier adopted a multidisciplinary approach including dietetics, psychological support, and physical activity, with programs typically lasting around 12 months. Oxfordshire residents could access face-to-face services at Luton and Dunstable Hospital and a remote service available across the Buckinghamshire, Oxfordshire, and Berkshire West (BOB) geography, which supported non-English speakers and those with learning disabilities or low health literacy. Tier 4 services were for patients who may opt for surgery after Tier 3. At the time, Oxford University Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust (OUH) was not accepting new referrals, so patients were directed to Luton and Dunstable Hospital or the Royal Berkshire Hospital. In 2023-24, approximately 25 patients from Oxfordshire underwent Tier 4 surgery.
9. Members expressed concerns about the link between arthritis and obesity. They wanted to know what support was provided for individuals with both conditions. Officers explained that General Practitioners (GPs) were proactive in recognising the link between excess weight and arthritis. They often recommended lifestyle changes and referred patients to Tier 2 and Tier 3 weight management services to help manage weight and improve arthritis symptoms.
10. Concerns over the mental health and support for those suffering from and living with obesity were raised by Members who wanted to know about the pathways and services available to support individuals. It was responded that specific pathways were established to support individuals with mental health conditions who were also dealing with obesity. This included both serious mental health conditions and lower-level mental health issues.
11. Members noted the importance of self-worth and self-confidence, when dealing with obesity, and questioned the proportion of patients, for either physical obesity or mental health, who were socially prescribed physical activity. It was explained to the Committee that social prescribers in GP practices played a crucial role in discussing healthy lifestyle changes with patients, including those with obesity and mental health issues. They worked

alongside health coaches to support patients in adopting physical activity as part of their treatment plan.

12. Concerns were raised by the Committee about the support offered to women, following a pregnancy, in relation to obesity. Concerns were raised about potentially distressing health checks after pregnancy where BMI had been raised. Members questioned what support was being offered to promote health lifestyles and practices post pregnancy, especially in relation to breastfeeding. It was explained that breastfeeding was highlighted as a key component in promoting weight loss post-pregnancy. It was noted that the energy demands of breastfeeding were greater than those of gestation, making it an effective practice for weight management. There was a comprehensive breastfeeding support provision through the recently commissioned 0-19 service, which integrated with maternity services to support mothers, especially those struggling with breastfeeding.
13. There was an emphasis on co-production with women, partners, and the wider community to understand the reality of maintaining a healthy weight post-pregnancy. This included working with voluntary sector organisations like Homestart to provide support beyond clinical settings. Training for clinicians, such as the This Mums Moves training, also focused on delivering effective messages about physical activity and healthy weight management during and after pregnancy.
14. The issue of obesity within school settings was also discussed. The Committee highlighted the statistics of obesity in schools with one in three students leaving year 6 obese. Members questioned what was being done to support and encourage healthy eating and lifestyles in schools, as well as at home. It was responded that a new role had been created to focus on schools, particularly in areas of deprivation. This advisor works within school improvement to influence school policies and practices around healthy eating and physical activity. Efforts were being made to address the contents of children's lunch boxes, promoting healthier options. A school cooking project was also being developed to support children and young people in learning to cook from scratch.
15. The importance of involving parents and the wider community was highlighted. Initiatives like the Move Together program and partnerships with organisations like Homestart aimed to provide support beyond the school environment, ensuring that healthy practices were reinforced at home. Programs like the Daily Mile and walk-to-school projects were encouraged to increase physical activity among students. These initiatives had been designed to be fun and engaging, promoting a culture of regular physical activity. Specific projects and resources were being directed towards schools in areas of deprivation to address higher levels of excess weight. This included tailored interventions and support services to meet the unique needs of these communities.
16. Members raised concerns regarding the quality of support provided to community food banks and larders in their efforts to offer healthier food options. They also emphasised the importance of promoting healthy cooking

skills and habits among both younger and older residents. It was explained to the Committee that there was a focus on supporting families in using fresh fruits and vegetables, which were often available but not taken due to lack of knowledge or preference. Initiatives like the school cooking project aimed to extend into the community, helping both younger and older residents develop healthy cooking skills and habits. Good Food Oxfordshire was involved in projects like Oxfam to Fork, which looked at the food supply chain to ensure excess fruits and vegetables reached community food services. This initiative aimed to increase the availability of healthy food options in food banks and larders.

17. Members asked about the County, City, and District Councils' advertising policies for healthier food options and if they had strategies to promote such choices. It was explained that there were aims to implement high fat, salt, and sugar (HFSS) policies in council-owned advertising spaces by replacing ads for unhealthy foods with those for healthier options like fresh produce. Evidence showed this could positively influence buying behaviour without affecting council revenue.
18. Members questioned what restrictions on hot food takeaways had been considered, and whether it was necessary or possible for the Council to seek new powers to deal with the rise and influence of hot food takeaways. Officers referenced that the levers to restrict new hot food takeaways already existed. Many areas had successfully implemented policies to restrict the opening of new hot food takeaways, particularly around schools or in areas with high levels of excess weight. Examples included Newcastle, which had implemented such restrictions across the geography. The process involved incorporating restrictions into local plans or adding supplementary policies to existing plans.
19. There was a discussion about the possibility of seeking new powers from the government to make it easier for local authorities to implement these restrictions. This could involve additional support or changes to national planning frameworks to facilitate the process. The idea of requesting new powers was seen as a way to strengthen the ability of local authorities to manage the proliferation of hot food takeaways and create a healthier food environment. The public health team was actively working to support local authorities in implementing these restrictions and was advocating for stronger national policies. This included providing bespoke information for each district and city to help them understand and apply the available levers effectively.
20. Members questioned what progress had been made in relation to any Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) and what data was available to demonstrate how successful or unsuccessful initiatives had been. Additionally, Members were curious as to whether there were sufficient and sustainable funding avenues for the work to promote healthy weight across the tier system. Officers stated that many of the projects were new, and their outcomes were being evaluated rather than measured against specific KPIs. This was because the nature of the projects made it difficult to set traditional KPIs. For example, the food price marketing project aimed to change purchasing behaviour, which

would take time to measure. Some initiatives did have KPIs, such as breastfeeding rates, but overall, the focus was on evaluating the impact of the projects rather than setting rigid KPIs. The overarching KPI remained the reduction in overweight and obesity rates. It was explained to the Committee that the Health and Wellbeing Board provided overall governance for these initiatives, with specific updates and reports being presented to the Health Improvement Board.

21. There was an acknowledgement that there was a need for more funding and resources to expand the initiatives and support the work across the system. The current funding was not sufficient to cover all the needs, and there was a continuous effort to secure additional resources. The funding issue was particularly critical for new initiatives and expanding existing programs to reach more people and have a broader impact.
22. The discussion also highlighted the importance of sustainable funding avenues to ensure the long-term success of the initiatives. This included exploring various funding sources and advocating for more support at both the local and national levels.
23. Members concluded by debating the benefits and risks of obesity medication. The Committee questioned whether there had been clear communication with residents regarding the benefits and risks of such medication. Furthermore, Members thought it was important to ascertain whether the ICBs were each developing their own pathways for supporting healthy weight or if there was a standardised national pathway in place.
24. It was responded that clear communication regarding the benefits and risks of obesity medications was paramount. It was mentioned that the new digital provider would be able to provide medication as part of the Tier 3 service, but it was crucial to ensure that this was not seen as a direct pathway for medication. Instead, it should be considered a treatment option within a broader weight management strategy. The focus was on making sure that the right people received medication and that it was used as a tool rather than a standalone solution. This approach aimed to avoid widening inequalities and ensure that those who could not access medication in other ways were supported.
25. Officers clarified that each ICB was developing its own pathways for healthy weight support. There was no national pathway in place, which meant that each ICB was responsible for creating and implementing its own strategy based on local needs and resources. This allowed for tailored solutions that addressed the specific challenges and opportunities within each ICB's area. However, it also meant that there was a need for coordination and sharing of best practice to ensure consistency and effectiveness across different regions.

## KEY POINTS OF OBSERVATION:

26. Below are some key points/themes of observation that the Committee has in relation to Healthy Weight and associated services. These points of observation relate to some of the themes of discussion during the meeting on 21 November, and have also been used to shape the recommendations being made by the Committee to Cabinet.

***Supporting local business to provide healthier options:*** The modern takeaway market is an integral part of urban life, offering convenience and a variety of food choices to consumers and residents. However, the proliferation of unhealthy food options has raised significant concerns regarding public health. There is a pressing need for local takeaway businesses to provide healthier food options that not only meet consumer health needs but also ensure the sustainability and profitability of the businesses.

The Committee understands the increasing prevalence of diet-related health issues such as obesity, diabetes, and cardiovascular diseases, and how this has put a spotlight on the role of diet in public health. Takeaway foods, often high in fats, sugars, and salts, contribute significantly to these health problems. By providing healthier food options, local takeaway businesses can play a pivotal role in improving public health outcomes.

Nonetheless, there are a number of challenges that local takeaway business could face in switching to healthier food options including:

- **Cost Implications:** Healthier ingredients can be more expensive, impacting the cost structure and pricing strategies of takeaway businesses.
- **Consumer Preferences:** There is a perception that healthier food options may not be as appealing to consumers who are accustomed to traditional takeaway offerings.
- **Operational Adjustments:** Preparing healthier meals may require changes in kitchen operations, staff training, and supply chain management.
- **Marketing and Communication:** Effectively communicating the benefits of healthier options to consumers and convincing them to make the switch can be challenging.

The Committee is therefore strongly supportive of the approach to promote healthier food options being sold amongst local takeaway businesses. However, it is recommending that consideration is given to adopting measures to address the potential concerns of local takeaway businesses about losing business in the event of switching to healthier food products. The Committee recognises that local authorities may be limited in the powers that they have to influence local businesses and the general takeaway market. However, the system should ideally work together to develop potential solutions to achieve the balance of healthy

food products and local business needs/concerns; including through potential liaison with national players. The Committee is also willing to provide support around such initiatives.

**Recommendation 1:** *To explore support to local businesses supplying food in the takeaway market to provide healthier offers that meets both business and health needs. It is recommended that effective measures are adopted to address the concerns of local takeaway businesses about losing business in the event of switching to healthier food products.*

**Supporting foodbanks in providing healthier food options:** The provision of healthier food options in food banks is a crucial initiative that can significantly impact the well-being of the community. Food banks play a vital role in supporting individuals and families facing food insecurity. However, the nutritional quality of the food provided can have a long-term impact on the health outcomes of the beneficiaries. Access to healthier food options can help prevent chronic diseases such as obesity, diabetes, and heart disease, thereby improving overall public health.

In a 2020 study published in the *European Journal of Nutrition*, it was found that food banks in European societies tend to provide food products that not only have little benefit for recipient's health, but that may also be bad for recipient's health<sup>1</sup>. Indeed, healthier food options, such as fresh fruits and vegetables, whole grains, and lean proteins, provide essential nutrients that are necessary for maintaining good health. These foods can help improve immune function, support growth and development, and reduce the risk of various chronic illnesses. Ensuring that food banks offer a balanced variety of nutritious foods can prevent malnutrition, which can have severe consequences, particularly for children and the elderly. A diverse diet that includes all food groups is necessary for physical and cognitive development.

Given that the County Councils' Public Health Team has a pivotal role in promoting public health and preventing disease within the community, Public Health expertise and resources can potentially be invaluable in supporting food banks to provide healthier food options. For instance, the Council could consider meeting with food banks to fully appreciate their challenges as well as offering education and training to food bank staff and volunteers on the importance of nutrition and how to incorporate healthier food options into their offerings. This could include workshops on meal planning, food preparation, and understanding nutritional labels that could support the work of food banks that are in a position to work collaboratively on this. Food Banks and larders would likely need support with funding and health regulations or finding partners that can help overcome these and other barriers.

---

<sup>1</sup> [Improving the dietary quality of food parcels leads to improved dietary intake in Dutch food bank recipients—effects of a randomized controlled trial | European Journal of Nutrition](#)



Effective cooperation and liaison between the County Council's Public Health Team and food larders and banks could be essential for the successful implementation of healthier food initiatives. This could be through establishing regular meetings and open lines of communication, which can facilitate the exchange of ideas, address any challenges, and ensure that all partners/local actors are aligned in their goals. This collaboration can lead to more coordinated efforts and better outcomes for disadvantaged communities who rely on foodbanks/larders. In addition, developing joint programs and initiatives that focus on improving the nutritional quality of food provided by food banks can create a more systematic approach to addressing food insecurity. These programs could include community gardens, cooking classes, and nutrition education campaigns.

The Committee would also like to emphasise the role and importance of volunteers as well as wider voluntary sector organisations on the tremendous roles they play in contributing to food banks and food larders. Volunteer work forms the backbone of many of the charitable initiatives to provide food for vulnerable or disadvantaged groups. Volunteering is not merely about giving time and effort; it is a profound expression of a strong community spirit and compassion. Volunteers work tirelessly behind the scenes, including with food banks and larders, to ensure that people in their communities do not remain without essential food. Volunteers and voluntary sector organisations fulfil this vital role through sorting donations, distributing food, or even offering a listening ear. It is for this reason that the Committee is recommending that there is further celebration of the role of volunteers and voluntary sector organisations in this regard.

**Recommendation 2:** *To support food banks and larders in providing healthier food options; and for there to be further liaison and cooperation between the County Councils' Public Health Team and food larders and banks. It is recommended that there is further celebration of the role of volunteers and voluntary sector organisations in this regard.*

**Development of Key Performance Indicators:** Promoting healthy weight should indeed constitute a critical public health objective, particularly given the rising prevalence of obesity and related health issues globally. The Committee is therefore very supportive of the initiatives and activities of the Public Health Team in working toward this. However, to ensure that initiatives aimed at promoting healthy weight are effective, it is essential for system partners to develop clear and measurable Key Performance Indicators (KPIs). These KPIs will help in evaluating the impacts and progress of the initiatives, ensuring that they are meeting their goals and making necessary adjustments for continuous improvement. The KPIs that are developed should clearly define what is to be measured specifically. The Committee therefore urges that KPIs are developed which also adhere to the SMART (Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant, Timebound) criteria.

One particular KPI that could be adopted could potentially assess the proportion of takeaway businesses actually switching to healthier food options, and the number of local food stores also doing this. This would essentially allow the Council (as well as its partners) to track the progress of initiatives aimed at creating a healthier environment which can contribute to tackling excess weight. Another KPI could be on the number of Oxfordshire organisations engaging with and adopting any actions to support the strategy. The use of qualitative measures would therefore be helpful in understanding key themes that drive or hinder organisational engagement and action to support the strategy.

Furthermore, the establishment of KPIs as well as having transparency around these can help to reassure the wider public and increase their confidence in the measures adopted by their Council and partners to tackle excess weight.

**Recommendation 3:** *For the development of clear and measurable KPIs so as to evaluate the impacts and progress of the work to promote healthy weight.*

**Communicating benefits & risks of obesity medications:** The Committee understands that one of the strategies employed to combat obesity is the use of obesity medications. While these medications can offer significant benefits, they also come with potential risks. It is essential to have clear and transparent communications with residents regarding these medications to ensure they are well-informed and can make educated decisions about their health. According to a 2014 study published in the *Journal of Obesity*, communication with patients as to the potential risks of obesity medications is crucial as patients may use these medications in pursuit of what may appear to be a healthy objective of losing weight, and may at times not be sufficiently aware of their risks<sup>2</sup>. There have also been disturbing inquests into the deaths of young women who have accessed online medications for weight loss privately with no appreciation of the dangers of these drugs<sup>3</sup>.

The Committee recognises that when utilised as part of a comprehensive weight management plan, obesity medications can provide several benefits including:

- For individuals who have struggled to lose weight through diet and exercise alone, these medications can provide the necessary support to achieve their weight loss goals.
- These medications can lead to improved health outcomes, including reduced risk of chronic diseases such as type 2 diabetes,

---

<sup>2</sup> [Time series analyses of the effect of FDA communications on use of prescription weight loss medications - Block - 2014 - Obesity - Wiley Online Library](#)

<sup>3</sup> <https://www.forbes.com/sites/katherinehignett/2024/11/09/woman-dies-after-using-weight-loss-drug-in-uks-first-case/>; <https://www.itv.com/news/2024-12-10/grieving-family-fears-illegal-weight-loss-drops-led-to-young-mums-death>

hypertension, cardiovascular disease, and certain cancers. Additionally, weight loss can alleviate the symptoms of conditions like osteoarthritis.

- These medications can have an indirect positive impact on an individual's quality of life; as through creating weight loss they can improve mobility, increase energy levels, and boost self-esteem and mental well-being. These positive changes can contribute to a more active and fulfilling lifestyle also.

However, it is important that patients are clearly communicated with, and that there is adequate transparency around, not only the benefits of but also the risks associated with these medications. This can help to avert the prospect of patients feeling strongly inclined to take these medications due to their knowledge of the aforementioned benefits without having a balanced understanding of the potential side effects and risks. It would also help avert people who are not patients but who are accessing weight loss medications online who are of a healthy weight and who are unknowingly seeking medication that is unsafe for them.

**Recommendation 4:** *For there to be clear communications as soon as possible with residents as to the benefits and risks associated with obesity medications, especially for anyone who has not been encouraged to lose weight by their GP and is considering buying weight loss drugs privately or online without medical supervision.*

**Identifying and engaging residents with comorbidities:** The prevalence of comorbidities amongst Oxfordshire's residents poses significant challenges. Comorbidities, where individuals suffer from multiple health conditions simultaneously, complicate treatment plans and necessitate a comprehensive approach to healthcare. In a 2015 study in the *Journal of Diabetics, Obesity and Metabolism*, it was found that identifying individuals with comorbidities was crucial so as to determine treatments and overall policies to improve healthier weight<sup>4</sup>. The Committee believes that one of the fundamental steps in addressing the needs of these individuals is clear mapping and identification. This process is crucial not only for effective treatment but also for the coproduction of healthy weight services, ensuring that input from those with comorbidities and vulnerable population groups is incorporated into how healthy weight services are designed as well as delivered.

In one 2021 review published in the *Future Healthcare Journal*, Comorbidities are defined as often interrelated conditions that affect an individual's overall health and quality of life<sup>5</sup>. Examples include diabetes and cardiovascular disease, obesity and hypertension, or mental health disorders and substance abuse. These conditions can exacerbate one another, making management more complex and necessitating a multifaceted approach to one's overall care and health.

---

<sup>4</sup> [Current and emerging medications for overweight or obesity in people with comorbidities - Fujioka - 2015 - Diabetes, Obesity and Metabolism - Wiley Online Library](#)

<sup>5</sup> [Clustering of comorbidities - ScienceDirect](#)

The presence of comorbidities often complicates diagnosis and treatment for patients. System partners must consider the interplay between different conditions and how treatments for one condition might affect another. For instance, medication for one illness might worsen another condition or interact adversely with medication prescribed for a different health issue. This complexity underscores the need for precise mapping and identification of individuals with comorbidities to tailor treatment plans effectively, including plans for patients/residents with excess weight.

The Committee urges that coproduction of healthy weight services should involve collaborative efforts between healthcare providers, patients, and communities to design and implement programs that promote healthy weight management. Incorporating input from individuals with comorbidities and vulnerable population groups is essential for the efficacy of these services and is important for three key reasons:

- **Inclusivity:** Involving individuals with comorbidities in designing healthy weight services ensures that these programs address the unique challenges faced by such residents. For instance, weight management programs must consider the limitations and needs of individuals with mobility issues or chronic pain.
- **Engaging and empowering:** Engaging individuals with comorbidities in the coproduction process empowers them to take an active role in their health management. This collaborative approach fosters a sense of ownership and commitment to the program, leading to higher participation rates and better outcomes.
- **Cultural Relevance:** Vulnerable population groups often have distinct cultural and social factors that influence their health behaviours. Including these groups in the coproduction of healthy weight services ensures that programs are culturally relevant and accessible. This can further promote inclusivity in initiatives and policies that promote healthier weight.

**Recommendation 5:** *For there to be clear mapping and identification of individuals with comorbidities. It is crucial that there is ongoing coproduction of healthy weight services that would include input from those with comorbidities or from vulnerable population groups.*

**Promoting and celebrating physical activity:** The Committee is pleased to hear that efforts are being made to promote greater physical activity amongst Oxfordshire's residents through various avenues. Indeed, in the pursuit of a healthier future for Oxfordshire's residents, it is imperative that system partners work collaboratively to promote greater physical activity amongst residents of all ages. This collective

effort can significantly contribute to the well-being of individuals and communities, fostering a culture that values health and wellbeing overall.

Physical activity is a cornerstone of a healthy lifestyle. In a 2010 study published in the *International Journal of Behavioural Nutrition and Physical Activity*, it was found that physical activity plays a crucial role in maintaining a healthy weight, enhancing mental well-being, and preventing chronic diseases such as diabetes, heart disease, and certain cancers<sup>6</sup>. For children and adolescents, regular physical activity can contribute to the development of strong bones and muscles, improves cardiovascular fitness, and supports cognitive functions. Among adults and the elderly, it helps maintain mobility, balance, and functional independence.

Achieving widespread physical activity within Oxfordshire would require a concerted and collective effort from various organisations and stakeholders, including schools, healthcare providers, local governments, community organisations, and businesses. Each of these entities can play a pivotal role in creating environments that encourage and facilitate active lifestyles as indicated below:

- **Schools:** Schools can inculcate the values of physical activity and healthy eating from a young age. By integrating physical education into the curriculum and promoting active play, schools can lay the foundation for lifelong healthy habits. Additionally, initiatives such as after-school sports activities and nutrition education can reinforce these values.
- **Healthcare Providers:** Healthcare providers can advocate for physical activity by educating patients about its benefits and providing personalised advice. Routine check-ups can include assessments of physical activity levels and discussions about incorporating more movement into daily routines.
- **Local Authorities and Community Organizations:** Local Authorities (including Oxfordshire County Council as well as the City/District Councils) and community organisations can support physical activity by developing and maintaining parks, recreational facilities, and walking and biking paths. Community-wide events such as fun runs, fitness classes, and sports tournaments can also encourage residents to engage in physical activity.

Furthermore, the Committee recognises and is pleased that physical activity is being encouraged within schools in Oxfordshire, and recommends that consideration is given to launching a public event to celebrate good practice in schools around promoting eating well and moving well. This could indeed also contribute toward raising awareness

---

<sup>6</sup> [Systematic review of the health benefits of physical activity and fitness in school-aged children and youth | International Journal of Behavioral Nutrition and Physical Activity](#)

of the importance of healthy eating and physical activity throughout the County.

**Recommendation 6:** *For system partners to work collaboratively to promote greater physical activity amongst residents of all ages. It is recommended that consideration is given to launching a public event to celebrate good practice in schools around promoting eating well and moving well. This could help to raise awareness of the importance of healthy eating and physical activity for all children.*

## LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

27. 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.
28. Under Part 4.2 of the Constitution, the Cabinet Procedure Rules, s 2 (3) iv) the Cabinet will consider any reports from Scrutiny Committees.
29. The Local Authority (Public Health, Health and Wellbeing Boards and Health Scrutiny) Regulations 2013 provide that the Committee may require a response from the responsible person to whom it has made the report or recommendation and that person must **respond in writing within 28 days of the request.**

Anita Bradley  
Director of Law and Governance and Monitoring Officer

Annex: 1 Scrutiny Response Pro Forma

Background papers: None

Other Documents: None

Contact Officer: Dr Omid Nouri  
Scrutiny Officer (Health)  
[omid.nouri@oxfordshire.gov.uk](mailto:omid.nouri@oxfordshire.gov.uk)  
Tel: 07729081160

January 2025

## Appendix 1: Health Overview & Scrutiny Recommendation Response Pro Forma

*Where a joint health overview and scrutiny committee makes a report or recommendation to a responsible person (a relevant NHS body or a relevant health service provider[this can include the County Council]), the Health and Social Care Act 2012 and the Local Authority (Public Health, Health and Wellbeing Boards and Health Scrutiny) Regulations 2013 provide that the committee may require a response from the responsible person to whom it has made the report or recommendation and that person must respond in writing within 28 days of the request.*

*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: Oxfordshire Healthy Weight

#### Lead Cabinet Member(s) or Responsible Person:

- Derys Pragnell (Consultant in Public Health)
- Ansaf Azhar (OCC Director of Public Health)
- Claire Gray (Public Health Practitioner)
- Angela Jessop (Personalised Care Lead BOB ICB)
- Alicia Siraj (Head of Health Promotion, Health Prevention, and Personalised Care BOB ICB)

It is requested that a response is provided to each of the recommendations outlined below:

**Deadline for response:** Monday 10<sup>th</sup> February 2025.

#### Response to report:

*Enter text here.*

# Appendix 1: Health Overview & Scrutiny Recommendation Response Pro Forma

## Response to recommendations:

Recommendation	Accepted, rejected or partially accepted	Proposed action (including if different to that recommended) and indicative timescale.
1. To explore support to local businesses supplying food in the takeaway market to provide healthier offers that meets both business and health needs. It is recommended that effective measures are adopted to address the concerns of local takeaway businesses about losing business in the event of switching to healthier food products.		
2. To support food banks and larders in providing healthier food options; and for there to be further liaison and cooperation between the County Councils' Public Health Team and food larders and banks. It is recommended that there is further celebration of the role of volunteers and voluntary sector organisations in this regard.		
3. For the development of clear and measurable KPIs so as to evaluate the impacts and progress of the work to promote healthy weight.		



## Appendix 1: Health Overview & Scrutiny Recommendation Response Pro Forma

<p>4. For there to be clear communications as soon as possible with residents as to the benefits and risks associated with obesity medications, especially for anyone who has not been encouraged to lose weight by their GP and is considering buying weight loss drugs privately or online without medical supervision.</p>		
<p>5. For there to be clear mapping and identification of individuals with comorbidities. It is crucial that there is ongoing coproduction of healthy weight services that would include input from those with comorbidities or from vulnerable population groups.</p>		
<p>6. For system partners to work collaboratively to promote greater physical activity amongst residents of all ages. It is recommended that consideration is given to launching a public event to celebrate good practice in schools around promoting eating well and moving well. This could help to raise awareness of the importance of healthy eating and physical activity for all children.</p>		

This page is intentionally left blank

## **Divisions Affected – All**

### **CABINET 21 January 2025**

#### **Draft EOTAS Policy (Education other than at School) Report of Education and Young People Overview & Scrutiny Committee**

### **RECOMMENDATION**

1. The Cabinet is **RECOMMENDED** to —
  - a) Note the recommendations contained in the body of this report and to consider and determine its response to the Education and Young People Overview and Scrutiny Committee, and
  - b) Agree that, once Cabinet has responded, relevant officers will continue to provide each meeting of the Education and Young People Overview & Scrutiny Committee with a brief written update on progress made against actions committed to in response to the recommendations for 12 months, or until they are completed (if earlier).

### **REQUIREMENT TO RESPOND**

2. In accordance with section 9FE of the Local Government Act 2000, the Education and Young People 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 Education and Young People Overview and Scrutiny Committee considered a report on the draft EOTAS (Education other than at school) Policy at its meeting on 22 November 2024. The report set out that feedback was sought on the policy with the intention being to then present it to Cabinet in January 2025.
4. The Committee would like to thank Cllr John Howson, Cabinet Member for Children, Education and Young People's Services, Cllr Kate Gregory, Cabinet Member for SEND Improvement, Stephen Chandler, Executive Director of

People and Deputy Chief Executive, Kate Reynolds, Deputy Director for Education, Joanna Goodey, Education Inclusion Manager, and Alex Potts, Lead Officer: Tribunals, Resolutions, and Compliance, for attending to present the report and to answer the Committee's questions.

5. The Committee would also like to record its thanks to Jules Francis-Sinclair, Co-Chair of the Oxfordshire Parent Carer Forum (OxPCF), who accepted the Committee's invitation to attend to address it and to answer its questions.

## **SUMMARY**

6. The Cabinet member for SEND Improvement began by acknowledging the need to engage more with parents and carers before the policy was submitted to Cabinet and the Deputy Director apologised for the length of time it had taken to develop the policy and the distress it had caused. The Deputy Director confirmed that the intention was to work with the co-production team to look again at the draft policy as well as the accompanying guidance before it moved on.
7. The Committee was assured that there was a strong commitment on the Council's part to develop a policy that families currently receiving EOTAS were content with but one that was sustainable and appropriate for the future too. Discussion focused on co-production and consultation.
8. The Committee makes two recommendations to Cabinet both of which are inter-related: firstly, that the EOTAS policy should be swiftly redeveloped using co-production and external experts in addition to Council offers and that, secondly, a new Alternative Provision policy should also be written and that should be done in conjunction with the revision of the EOTAS policy.

## **RECOMMENDATIONS**

9. The Committee is clear in its understanding EOTAS is not the same as Elective Home Education. EOTAS is also not Alternative Provision which is education arranged by the Local Authority for those who remain on the roll of a school but are unable to attend. EOTAS is the mechanism for providing education to those whose Education Health and Care Plan sets out that it would be inappropriate for the child or young person to receive some or all of their education at school or post-16 setting. The Council has not previously had a formal policy and it is seeking to adopt one.
10. The numbers of families receiving EOTAS packages are not high but are increasing and the Committee was told that numbers had risen from 42 to 52 in November 2024. The Committee was also told that £2.1million was being spent on EOTAS. The Committee agrees with the intention of having a policy setting out the Council's responsibilities and what is or is not possible as part of that policy.
11. As stated in paragraph 10, there are currently 52 families receiving EOTAS. The Committee received a letter signed by approximately 50% of them and

was addressed by several at the meeting itself. It was clear to the Committee, and to all present, that there were strong concerns on the part of some of those families about some aspects of the draft policy. Some members shared some of those concerns.

12. The fundamental concern of the Committee with the draft policy, though, was that it had taken so long to produce and that it had not been produced with sufficient engagement with relevant stakeholders, including families and their representatives.
13. The Committee was pleased to hear the directorate's apology at the outset of the item's consideration both for the time it had taken and for the distress it had caused. The Committee noted that the Deputy Director was happy to work with the co-production team to look again at the policy and the guidance. The Committee was pleased, too, that the Cabinet Member for SEND Improvement recognised the need to engage more with parents and carers before the policy was submitted to Cabinet for approval.
14. It is worth noting that, after publication of the Committee's agenda, the Committee was asked by the Cabinet member to consider deferring consideration of the draft policy once the level of disquiet had been registered. The Committee declined to do so on the basis that the agenda had been published, families were concerned, and it was considered preferable for the Committee to engage at this stage – even though it was clear that revision would be forthcoming.
15. The Committee clearly recognises that the Council faces significant financial challenges and that the delivery of EOTAS is expensive. It recognises, too, that the Council is bound by legal requirements and that there can be very good reasons for implementing policies which might not be to everyone's satisfaction. However, clarity and communication so that all stakeholders understand the constraints the Council is operating under is key. The Priority Action Plan is peppered with references to the importance of co-production and co-production is frequently referenced. The Committee would like to be assured that work surrounding this policy will, going forward, be co-produced and that stakeholders will be engaged with properly.
16. The Committee was, to an extent, assured by the Cabinet Member for SEND Improvement that she was committed to co-production. The Committee welcomed her offer of a meeting with officers, parents, and the Oxfordshire Parent Carer Forum as well as the SEND Youth Forum to consider the current draft in detail and to understand their concerns and to engage with them. The Committee fully recognises the point made by officers that there are limits to what can be co-produced and that legal duties are simply legal duties and must be followed and that legal restrictions are in place where things cannot be considered. However, a policy can be co-produced that takes account of such limits.
17. The Committee also recognises that the draft policy was amended in the light of advice from some stakeholders and that it was, of course, not intended to

cause distress. However, the Committee is strongly of the view that the policy and the accompanying guidance should be produced together with key stakeholders. The Council should ensure that there is strong and valuable co-production and avoid the temptation of mere consultation.

**Recommendation 1: That the Council should re-write the draft EOTAS policy by no later than the end of February 2025 and that it, as well as the accompanying guidance, should be co-produced and that external experts should be invited to participate in that process.**

18. The Committee heard that the Council had begun discussions with OxPCF about organising a listening event on alternative provision in early 2025. The Committee recognises that alternative provision is related to EOTAS, insofar as some alternative provision providers provide EOTAS packages, but distinct from it. It was reported that there has been some work undertaken by the Department for Education around alternative provision which also included consideration of EOTAS. Given the interplay would suggest there was merit in the Council involving alternative provision providers in the development of the policy. The Committee also recommends that the Council consider if it would be appropriate to develop a formal policy at this stage.

**Recommendation 2: That the Council, in tandem with re-writing its draft EOTAS policy, should also write a co-produced Alternative Provision policy**

## **FURTHER CONSIDERATION**

19. The Committee intends to consider the EOTAS policy again during this municipal year once it is revised.

## **LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

20. 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.'
21. 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 and Monitoring Officer

Annex: Pro-forma Response Template

Background papers: None

Other Documents: None

Contact Officer: Richard Doney  
Scrutiny Officer  
[richard.doney@oxfordshire.gov.uk](mailto:richard.doney@oxfordshire.gov.uk)

January 2025

This page is intentionally left blank



## 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<sup>1</sup> 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: Draft EOTAS Policy (Education Other Than At School)

**Lead Cabinet Member(s):** Cllr Kate Gregory, Cabinet member for SEND Improvement; Cllr John Howson, Cabinet member for Children, Education, and Young People's Services

**Date response requested:**<sup>2</sup> 21 January 2025

#### 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)
1. That the Council should re-write the draft EOTAS policy by no later than the end of February 2025 and that it, as well as the		

---

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

<sup>2</sup> Date of the meeting at which report/recommendations were received

## Overview & Scrutiny Recommendation Response Pro forma

accompanying guidance, should be co-produced and that external experts should be invited to participate in that process.		
2. That the Council, in tandem with re-writing its draft EOTAS policy, should also write a co-produced Alternative Provision policy.		

## **Divisions Affected – All**

### **CABINET 21 January 2025**

#### **Draft Local Nature Recovery Strategy Report of Place Overview & Scrutiny Committee**

### **RECOMMENDATION**

1. The Cabinet is **RECOMMENDED** to —
  - a) Note the recommendations contained in the body of this report and to consider and determine its response to the Place Overview and Scrutiny Committee, and
  - b) Agree that, once Cabinet has responded, relevant officers will continue to provide each meeting of the Place Overview and Scrutiny Committee with a brief written update on progress made against actions committed to in response to the recommendations for 12 months, or until they are completed (if earlier).

### **REQUIREMENT TO RESPOND**

2. In accordance with section 9FE of the Local Government Act 2000, the Place 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. At its meeting on 13 November 2024, the Place Overview and Scrutiny Committee considered a report on the draft Local Nature Recovery Strategy (LNRS) which had been published for public consultation and aimed to summarise the top biodiversity priorities to people and organisations in Oxfordshire.
4. The Committee would like to thank Cllr Dr Pete Sudbury, Deputy Leader of the Council with Responsibility for Climate Change, Environment, and Future Generations, for attending to present the report. The Committee was grateful, too, to Paul Fermer, Director of Environment and Highways, Chloe Edwards, Local Nature Recovery Strategy Project Manager, and Beccy Micklem, Team

Leader Landscape and Nature Recovery, for attending to answer the Committee's questions.

## SUMMARY

5. Following a brief overview from the Deputy Leader, the LNRS Project Manager summarised the report and explained that Local authorities were required to develop and adopt an LNRS to set local biodiversity priorities and map habitat improvements. This involved collaboration with groups such as the Local Nature Partnership. The target was for the final strategy to be published by July 2025, with particular focus on enhancing habitats for biodiversity. It would be reviewed and updated every three to ten years (with the exact timing being at the discretion of the Secretary of State.)
6. The Committee had a very wide-ranging discussion and explored budgets and funding as well as the LNRS's interplay with the Minerals and Waste Plan and with the Local Transport Connectivity Plan and the Oxfordshire Infrastructure Strategy. Collaboration with partners including district councils, National Highways, Network Rail, and the University of Oxford was discussed as, too, was the involvement of agricultural landowners and farmers and the impact of the LNRS on Local Plans. The impact of water extraction and of Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems (SUDS) was considered and members explored how the LNRS would be advanced and how its success would be measured.
7. The Committee agreed 11 recommendations: three of which were about ensuring the LNRS was aligned with other activity, both Council and more widely; one was about ensuring that it is embedded across the Council; one was about the formatting of the documents within the strategy; one was about supporting flood defences. The remaining four were about biodiversity benefits.
8. The Committee also made three observations which do not require Cabinet response.

## OBSERVATIONS

9. The draft Local Nature Recovery Strategy was considered by members of the Committee to be an impressive strategy. Members regarded it as appropriately ambitious and wide-reaching. However, the Committee had reservations that, if it is not strongly integrated with place and movement strategies and with the flood risk management strategy as well as other relevant infrastructure strategies, there is a risk of good intentions coming to naught. The Council should ensure that there is strong integration of its policies with a keen awareness of the interplay between them.

***Observation 1: That the Council needs to ensure that there is strong integration of its policies with a keen awareness of the interplay between them.***

10. The Committee explored at some length the attitudes and engagement of agricultural landowners and farmers with the LNRS. With c.70% of Oxfordshire land cover being farmland<sup>1</sup>, and it being the most rural county in south east England, this is a vitally important sector with which to engage and, indeed, to mobilise for the success of the strategy. The Committee heard that there is considerable enthusiasm on the part of many farmers and/or landowners to be involved and that the team has engaged with the National Farmers Union as a representative body but also individuals.
11. Building awareness of the benefits to individuals of being engaged with the LNRS, including the possibility of receiving grants through, for example, sustainable farming incentive funding will be key. Those who have received such and who have also engaged in, for example, tree planning and reducing the tillage of soil are likely to be persuasive advocates for the strategy and the Committee simply observes that it would be useful for the Council to harness that.

***Observation 2: That the Council will need to engage hesitant farmers with the Local Nature Recovery Strategy and could successfully do that through demonstration of its benefits by early adopters.***

12. The Committee noted that beavers were on the list of priority species and were advised that they could be suitable for recovery work in Oxfordshire. The wisdom of reintroduction of beavers to the county would need careful assessment but the Committee observed that doing such would be an exciting prospect which would bring benefits. As a flagship project of the LNRS, it could garner public interest and attention and build enthusiasm for it more widely.

***Observation 3: That the Council seeking to reintroduce beavers to Oxfordshire would be of interest to many.***

## RECOMMENDATIONS

13. In exploring what funding and budgets were available for the delivery of the strategy, the Committee explored how the Council was taking advantage of the Government's Natural Capital work, with HM Treasury's Green Book: Appraisal and Evaluation in Central Government<sup>2</sup> setting out at page 63 that:
14. *"Natural capital includes certain stocks of the elements of nature that have value to society, such as forests, fisheries, rivers, biodiversity, land and minerals. Natural capital includes both the living and non-living aspects of ecosystems."*

---

<sup>1</sup> See, e.g., <https://www.wildoxfordshire.org.uk/action/wildlife-and-farming>

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/the-green-book-appraisal-and-evaluation-in-central-government>

15. *Stocks of natural capital provide flows of environmental or 'ecosystem' services over time. These services, often in combination with other forms of capital (human, produced and social) produce a wide range of benefits.*
16. *These include use values that involve interaction with the resource and which can have a market value (minerals, timber, freshwater) or non-market value (such as outdoor recreation, landscape amenity).*
17. *They also include non-use values, such as the value people place on the existence of particular habitats or species."*
18. The Committee was advised that, rather than working with the national capital mapping, the Council had been working with the University of Oxford to use their mapping. The Council was seeking to make that clearer in its mapping going forwards.
19. The Committee was advised that the Council was working with the Green Prospectus project developed by OxLEP which had identified a pipeline of projects and that had fed into the LNRS. The Local Nature Partnership also had a nature finance workstream and they were developing the Oxford In Nature Conservation Investment Fund which was using the LNRS to steer where the priorities were.
20. The Committee recognised that the Council was in conversation with DEFRA about future funding for the coordination of the LNRS but there was a concern that the Council should be more proactive about seeking to make the LNRS investable and attractive to both public and private investors. The Committee was aware of the considerable work being done on climate finance and natural capital work locally, particularly through 100 Together<sup>3</sup>, and encouraged the Council to ensure that the work of the LNRS was aligned with that. The Committee also recommended that the Council should seek the advice and assistance of relevant external experts.

***Recommendation 1: That the Council should ensure the Local Nature Recovery Strategy is aligned with climate finance and natural capital work happening locally and nationally.***

21. The Committee also suggested that it would be wise to ensure that the work of the strategy is aligned to the five 'missions' of the Government, around which the Government organised its work. This may give more chance of maximising funding for the delivery of the strategy if the outcomes the Government was focused on were explicitly reflected in the Council's approach.

***Recommendation 2: That the Council should ensure that the Local Nature Recovery Strategy is aligned with the Government's five missions and their outputs.***

---

<sup>3</sup> <https://www.100together.org.uk/>

22. The Committee explored what interrelationship this work had with that of the Local Transport Connectivity Plan and with the Oxfordshire Infrastructure Strategy. The LNRS team emphasised the integrating the LNRS with the Local Transport Connectivity Plan to mitigate road traffic's impact on wildlife, advocating for nature-positive infrastructure like wildlife corridors. Officers stressed alignment with the Oxford Infrastructure Strategy to support biodiversity and habitat connectivity. Collaborating with National Highways and Network Rail, they identified key areas in Oxfordshire to improve habitat connectivity in order to resolve 'points of severance' – where large areas of habitat are broken up by, for example, roads or rails. Partnering with the University of Oxford, the team used statistical analysis and mapping tools to prioritise impactful interventions for biodiversity.
23. It was suggested that the Director of Environmental Sustainability for National Highways would be a keen and valuable source of advice.

***Recommendation 3: That the Council should ensure the Local Nature Recovery Strategy is aligned with the Local Transport Connectivity Plan and the Oxfordshire Infrastructure Strategy on the nature costs of roads and rails.***

24. Members discussed turning the LNRS into reality, highlighting the need for senior sponsorship and cross-team collaboration within the Council. Emphasis was placed on strong influence at appropriate levels and ensuring budget support for LNRS priorities.
25. The Committee was keen that the Local Nature Recovery Strategy was not simply something the Council had coordinated but that it should be something embedded across the Council. Teams within the Council should also have their work integrated and aligned with the strategy and there should be a clear delivery plan for specific actions for the Council to take across a swathe of departments.
26. The Committee was pleased to hear that there was a separate piece of work happening to develop an internal Council biodiversity policy which was about how the Council, through all its functions, can help to deliver the priorities of the LNRS. This would partly function as that delivery plan but the Committee considered it important to have such a delivery plan so that the strategy could be developed and deliver tangibles rather than simply ambitions.

***Recommendation 4: That the Council should develop a delivery plan to ensure that teams within the County Council have integrated and adopted the Local Nature Recovery Strategy.***

27. Whilst the Council is the Responsible Authority, the development of the strategy has been – and its implementation will be – a collaborative project with the district and city councils. Strong collaboration with districts but also with town and parish councils and other partners will be vital. Integrating the LNRS into local planning and capital delivery was crucial for enhancing biodiversity and for reducing flooding. The Leader told the Committee that the

Future Oxfordshire Partnership will have a significant part to play in order to advance the LNRS and is committed to doing so.

28. With a variety of different stakeholders, at different tiers of government, as well as other partners, the Committee considered that it would be beneficial to all stakeholders for the implications and actions for districts, parishes, towns, and other key partners to be made explicit in an annex to the documentation.

***Recommendation 5: That the Council should make explicit in an annex to the documentation the implications of the strategy for district councils, town and parish councils, neighbourhood groups, and other key partners as well as the actions expected of them.***

29. The Committee noted that, within appendix 1 to the LNRS's draft Statement of Biodiversity Priorities, in table A1, there were 'wider benefits' associated with each priority. Whilst health and wellbeing benefits were mentioned in the wider narrative, the Committee considered it slightly surprising that health was not considered one of the 18 primary benefits. The co-benefits of nature recovery for both physical and mental health are incontestable and the Committee considered it would be useful to set out in more detail such benefits.

***Recommendation 6: That the Council should strengthen the explanations within the strategy of the benefits to health and wellbeing of the Local Nature Recovery Strategy.***

30. Increasing public awareness of biodiversity successes was suggested as something the Council should consider. The specific example raised in Committee was that of a growth in the number of otters within the county: whilst they were almost entirely absent from the county following extensive national decline up to the 1990s, the draft Description of the Strategy Area sets out that they are now widespread across the county in both urban and rural areas. Members of the public are likely to find this interesting but, without publicity, they are unlikely to learn it.

***Recommendation 7: That the Council should consider how best it can publicise positive elements of nature recovery that are already happening.***

31. The Committee considered that, as the Responsible Authority, the Council should also be an exemplar in its maintenance of its own land. Parts of the Thames Path in the county were mentioned as being particularly poorly-maintained. Whilst the Council does not have sole responsibility for it, it would be advantageous for it to be able to set an example that it is working for nature recovery and caring for biodiversity on the Thames Path and on other land for which it is responsible.

***Recommendation 8: That the Council should ensure it sets an example maintaining its own land for nature recovery and biodiversity gain, as the Responsible Authority for the Local Nature Recovery Strategy.***



32. Schools were provided as locations which, in the main, were ideally suited to promoting nature recovery, whether in the corners of playing fields or next to cycle racks. This would also have specific educational benefits in learning about both geography and biology as well the creative arts and other subjects. The Committee suggested that the Council should approach schools to offer support and guidance to them in order to manage parts of their land in a way that would create or improve habits for wildlife. This would also engage and educate the local community about the importance and benefits of nature.

***Recommendation 9: That the Council should work with schools to support them to promote biodiversity and nature recovery in their grounds.***

33. There was a discussion in Committee about the benefits or otherwise for wild flowers and invertebrates of removing grass cuttings after mowing on Council land or of piling them up. Both of these provided biodiversity benefits but, inevitably, both of also cost more in time and in money than leaving the clippings behind.
34. The Committee was keen to understand the costs to the Council were it to invest in machines that could easily both cut and collect grass and how many would be feasible for the Council to acquire or use.

***Recommendation 10: That the Council should investigate the costs of collecting and/or piling mown grass to enhance wildflower growth and other biodiversity benefits.***

35. The Committee discussed flooding and retrofitting Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems (SUDS). The example was given of a number of London boroughs implementing rain gardens and SUDS being retrofitted onto highways and questions were raised as to whether – given that there would also be biodiversity benefits of such work – this could be considered as part of the work arising from the LNRS.
36. It was explained that, whilst the priority action points focused on habitat creation and/or improvement opportunities and thus natural flood management opportunities were not mapped, rain gardens, swales, filter strips and the like would help with biodiversity. Whilst the urban sections of the draft strategy tended to focus on people's access to and contact with nature, there was an acceptance that it would be worth reviewing the text to consider if drainage would be appropriate to set out.
37. The Committee was keen to ensure, that where there were different strategies that overlapped and covered some similar areas (including, amongst others, the LNRS and movement strategies, the LTCP, or the Flood Risk Management Strategy), the Council was cognisant of that and ensured that they aligned with each other.

***Recommendation 11: That the Council should explore the possibilities of supporting flood defences through biodiversity means, including swales, sustainable drainage systems, and rain gardens.***

## **FURTHER CONSIDERATION**

38. The Committee does not intend to consider the Local Nature Recovery Strategy again during this municipal year, although it does intend to consider verge and vegetation management in April.

## **LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

39. 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.
40. 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 and Monitoring Officer

Annex: Pro-forma Response Template

Background papers: None

Other Documents: None

Contact Officer: Richard Doney  
Scrutiny Officer  
[richard.doney@oxfordshire.gov.uk](mailto:richard.doney@oxfordshire.gov.uk)

January 2025

# 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<sup>1</sup> 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: Draft Local Nature Recovery Strategy

**Lead Cabinet Member(s):** Cllr Dr Pete Sudbury, Deputy Leader of the Council with Responsibility for Climate Change, Environment, and Future Generations

**Date response requested:**<sup>2</sup> 21 January 2025

### 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)
1. That the Council should ensure the Local Nature Recovery Strategy is aligned with climate finance and		

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

<sup>2</sup> Date of the meeting at which report/recommendations were received

## Overview & Scrutiny Recommendation Response Pro forma

natural capital work happening locally and nationally.		
2. That the Council should ensure that the Local Nature Recovery Strategy is aligned with the Government's five missions and their outputs.		
3. That the Council should ensure the Local Nature Recovery Strategy is aligned with the Local Transport Connectivity Plan and the Oxfordshire Infrastructure Strategy on the nature costs of roads and rails.		
4. That the Council should develop a delivery plan to ensure that teams within the County Council have integrated and adopted the Local Nature Recovery Strategy.		
5. That the Council should make explicit in an annex to the documentation the implications of the strategy for district councils, town and parish councils, neighbourhood groups, and other key partners as well as the actions expected of them.		
6. That the Council should strengthen the explanations within the strategy of		

## Overview & Scrutiny Recommendation Response Pro forma

the benefits to health and wellbeing of the Local Nature Recovery Strategy.		
7. That the Council should consider how best it can publicise positive elements of nature recovery that are already happening.		
8. That the Council should ensure it sets an example maintaining its own land for nature recovery and biodiversity gain, as the Responsible Authority for the Local Nature Recovery Strategy.		
9. That the Council should work with schools to support them to promote biodiversity and nature recovery in their grounds.		
10. That the Council should investigate the costs of collecting and/or piling mown grass to enhance wildflower growth and other biodiversity benefits.		
11. That the Council should explore the possibilities of supporting flood defences through biodiversity means, including swales, sustainable drainage systems, and rain gardens.		

This page is intentionally left blank

## **CABINET – 21 January 2025**

### **Response to Council Motion on Winter Fuel Payments**

#### **Report by Executive Director of Resources**

#### **RECOMMENDATION**

**The Cabinet is RECOMMENDED to**

Note that the actions set out in this report respond to the motion relating to Winter Fuel Payments approved by Council in November 2024, the wording of which is set out in Annex One.

#### **Executive Summary**

1. On 5 November 2024, Council agreed a motion on the subject of recent changes to Winter Fuel Payments (WFP). The motion seeks to ensure that the Council supports low income pensioners who are losing their WFP, and that this support is communicated both to them and those who support them such as family and friends. The full text of this motion is at Annex One of this report.

#### **Background**

2. From this winter only those pensioners in receipt of Pension Credit will receive the WFP. This means that lots of pensioners on low incomes will not receive financial support this winter.

#### **PENSION CREDIT**

3. Pension Credit is one of the most under claimed benefits. Data on Pension Credit from the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) lags considerably. The latest set of locally analysed data is from February 2024, and this shows that only 63% of eligible people claim Pension Credit in Oxfordshire. This means that there are 4,801 local people not claiming benefits worth £10.5 million annually. DWP data from May 2024 has been published recently, and this shows a very similar number of claims to the February data (8,175 claims in May compared to 8,179 for February).
4. Anecdotally it is reported that there has been a surge of claims for Pension Credit since the WFP changes were announced. Unfortunately, the data for this period will not be available until May 2025.
5. As well as those eligible but not claiming Pension Credit, there are a number of low-income pensioners slightly over the threshold for Pension Credit who will have lost their WFP. There is no available data for this group, but with the Pension Credit thresholds being £11,344 for individuals and £17,313 for a

couple, a WFP payment of £100-£300 would be a significant source of support for a large number of people.

### **COST OF LIVING PROGRAMME**

6. Most of the actions required by the council motion fall within the scope of the existing Cost of Living programme. As such this report shows how the programme already addresses many of the requirements of the motion and outlines several actions that will be taken forward to ensure all aspects of the motion are carried out.
7. The Cost of Living programme is funded mainly from the Household Support Fund. This is a government scheme, launched in October 2021, that provides funding to local councils to help people who are vulnerable or cannot pay for essentials like energy and food. The current round of funding is the sixth in the programme (and known as HSF6) and has allocated £3.4 million to the County Council. The following provides a summary of the support available to pensioners within the programme.

### **Residents Support Scheme**

8. The Residents Support Scheme is an open application scheme providing support for the cost of food, energy and essential household items to people experiencing financial hardship. Up until the end of November 2024, £739,000 of support had been provided this financial year. The Council works with over 30 external partners to refer people into the scheme and to help them make applications where required. Partners include Age UK, advice agencies, city and district council teams, housing associations and other third sector support providers. A communications campaign this winter will target low-income pensioners for support. This campaign is explained in more detail at paragraphs 16-19.

### **District Delegations**

9. The city and district councils have been allocated £500,000 between them this year to spend on local cost of living measures. The majority of this funding is spent on food and energy vouchers which are distributed by local advice organisations. Funding is also spent on debt advice, clothing support, energy advice, and community larders. Communities colleagues in the Oxfordshire councils have all agreed to prioritise low income pensioners for support.

### **Better Housing Better Health (BHBH)**

10. The BHBH programme is commissioned by Public Health to provide advice and practical support with energy efficiency measures and supporting people to meet their energy costs. The £50,000 provided by HSF6 will facilitate an expanded BHBH programme, with a particular focus on low-income pensioners.

### **Hospital discharge**

11. The multi-disciplinary Out of Hospital team is based at Oxford City Council and works with people who are unable to be discharged from hospital due to a housing related issue. This may be due to the need for specific types of



furniture, or energy related expenditure which can be met from the Household Support Fund.

### **Contingency funding for pensioners**

12. Due to the loss of WFP payments by so many households, £90,000 in the cost of living programme has been ringfenced for expenditure on pensioners, but not allocated to a particular project. This will create flexibility within the programme to provide additional funding to any of the above projects if they are spending increased amounts of support on low-income pensioners.

### **Oxfordshire Community Foundation (OCF) Grants**

13. The programme has committed £112,000 to OCF's Living Essentials grants programme. This programme will support small community organisations to deliver local cost of living support. Whilst these grants will assist a broad range of vulnerable groups, low-income pensioners will be an important one of these. The Cost-of-Living programme manager was part of the panel which considered applications to this fund in December 2024.

### **LIFT Dashboard**

14. The Cost-of-Living programme funded the purchase of the Low Income Family Tracker (LIFT) Dashboard. This dashboard brings together data on Universal Credit recipients, with locally held data used to assess Housing Benefit and Council Tax Support to identify households who are entitled to unclaimed benefits. This will enable the Oxfordshire councils to run awareness campaigns for Pension Credit (as well as many other welfare benefits) to increase uptake. However, the richness of the data will also support the targeting of households which are over the threshold for Pension Credit, but who would benefit from the support detailed above.
15. It is estimated that this approach in Oxfordshire could provide an additional £1.2m in financial support for low-income pensioners as well as serving as a prevention tool for services such as Adult Social Care and Housing. The model requires the involvement of the City and District councils as they hold the Housing Benefit and Council Tax Support data. They are all keen to make use of the LIFT Dashboard and are at various stages of implementation. Cherwell and West Oxfordshire District Councils were the first to implement the Dashboard and have already run Pension Credit take up campaigns.

### **COMMUNICATIONS**

16. Communications promoting the Residents Support Scheme are ongoing throughout the year. This is mainly undertaken through the partners outlined in paragraph 8 above. Posters and electronic signage have also been used to promote the scheme in libraries, community centres and GP surgeries. Leaflets are periodically distributed through community ladders. The scheme has also been highlighted to internal frontline staff.
17. This autumn, literature promoting the scheme has been refreshed in libraries and staff briefed again on its details. The use of libraries as Warm Spaces this winter provides an opportunity for libraries to promote the scheme to residents likely to be eligible and in need.

18. A targeted campaign will run this winter aimed at low-income pensioners. The campaign will also target friends, family and professionals engaged with older people on low incomes. The campaign will utilise paid for advertising on Facebook and Instagram, and Google adverts to promote the support available following the loss of WFP for many older people. The campaign will be run iteratively from mid-December with regular reviews. These reviews will evaluate the engagement with different messages, which will inform the deployment of each iteration of the campaign. The Council will also utilise regular channels such as our residents' newsletter Your Oxfordshire and Nextdoor to promote these messages. Funding of £1,000 has been allocated from HSF6 to support this campaign.
19. A broader winter warmth campaign is also well under way. This targets a much wider cohort of people who may struggle to heat their homes this winter. The winter warmth campaign targets residents with messages about how to access support, as well as supporting professional networks with a toolkit of resources including posters, leaflets, thermometer cards and digital resources.
20. Part two of the council motion requested that the Leader write to the Chancellor of the Exchequer to request an impact assessment and transitional measures in regard to the restriction of WFP. This letter was sent on 14 November 2024. At the time of writing this report no response had yet been received.

### **PARTNERSHIP APPROACH**

21. The Cost of Living programme is undertaken in partnership with relevant sector-based stakeholders. The Cost of Living programme manager meets weekly with Communities leads from the city and district councils. This enables dialogue to be undertaken on cost of living issues. Meetings are also undertaken with the Oxfordshire advice forum, social prescribing group and local communities-based forums. One-off briefings are also delivered when appropriate to a range of teams working in frontline service delivery who are likely to encounter people needing support with the cost of living.

### **PLANNING FOR 2025/26**

22. In the government's budget it was confirmed that the Household Support Fund will continue in 2025/26, albeit with 90% of the existing annual national budget. Advanced notice of the fund's extension is most welcome, as for the first time it will enable the council to conduct proper planning for fund expenditure. Previous rounds have been announced with only weeks', or even days', notice.
23. The council motion calls for support from such programmes to take account of fuel poverty among low-income pensioners. The 2024 update of the Oxfordshire Joint Strategic Needs Assessment includes detailed data on fuel poverty. This data can be used to target support to those areas of the county with the highest levels of fuel poverty, and will inform the design of next year's Cost of Living programme.

## **Corporate Policies and Priorities**

24. The Cost of Living programme directly addresses the Council's priority of tackling inequality in Oxfordshire. It also indirectly addresses the prioritising of residents' health and wellbeing. This is achieved by targeting financial support at the most vulnerable residents in the county.

## **Financial Implications**

25. There are no new budgetary implications from these proposals. Both the staffing costs and costs of the communications campaign will be met from the £265,000 allocated in the Cost of Living programme to administration.

Comments checked by: Drew Hodgson, Strategic Finance Business Partner  
Drew.Hodgson@oxfordshire.gov.uk

## **Legal Implications**

26. Where the Council is distributing grant funding, it must consider whether a grant constitutes a subsidy. Should any of the proposed grant allocations set out in the report constitute a subsidy, it will be necessary for the Council to ensure that the subsidy is dealt with in accordance with the Subsidy Control Act 2022 (the Act). Where necessary, the Council will carry out a subsidy control assessment to ensure any subsidy is compliant with the subsidy control principles and comply with the transparency requirements under the Act. In providing the support detailed in this report the Council will rely on the general power of competence under the Localism Act 2011.

Comments checked by: Anita Bradley, Director of Law and Governance and Monitoring Officer

## **Staff Implications**

27. There are no staffing implications for this work. The Cost of Living programme includes £265,000 for administration. This will fund the work required in this report.

## **Equality & Inclusion Implications**

28. The actions outlined in this report will be undertaken within the Cost of Living programme. The programme aims to tackle some of the most significant areas of inequality in Oxfordshire by ensuring everyone can access food, energy and essential household items. The overall support package is designed to meet the needs of the most economically disadvantaged residents in Oxfordshire, and to ensure that no-one is digitally excluded because of the design of the programme.

29. A communications programme has been developed to try and reach as many low-income pensioners as possible to ensure that the number of people missing out on available support is minimised.

## Sustainability Implications

30. There are no significant impacts in respect of environmental sustainability in this programme. The programme provides £50,000 to expand the Better Housing Better Health programme which provides advice and financial support to residents on energy use, and energy efficiency measures.

## Risk Management

31. The actions outlined in this report will be undertaken within the Cost of Living programme. This programme was agreed by Cabinet on 19 November 2024 and included an assessment of risk. The November report is listed in the background papers.

## Consultations

32.No formal consultation has been undertaken in respect of the contents of this report. However paragraph 20 above sets out the informal engagement with stakeholders that is undertaken in relation to the Cost of Living programme.

Lorna Baxter

Annex: Annex One – Full Council motion

Background papers: Cost of Living Cabinet report November 2024:  
<https://mycouncil.oxfordshire.gov.uk/documents/s73408/CAB191124R9%20Cost%20of%20Living%20Cabinet%20Report%20Oct24.pdf>

Contact Officer: Paul Wilding, Programme Manager (Cost of Living), 07756 772085, [paul.wilding@oxfordshire.gov.uk](mailto:paul.wilding@oxfordshire.gov.uk)

December 2024

## **Annex One – Text of Council Motion**

The wording of the motion, as amended is as follows:

“This Council notes the government’s decision to means-test Winter Fuel Payments (WFPs). Age UK estimates that such changes could affect 2 million people across the country, some of whom may badly need the money to stay warm this winter.

This Council resolves to:

1. Request that the Cabinet works with NHS, District Councils, and civic groups, to promote the full range of available support for low-income pensioners, including the Resident Support Scheme (RSS) and Better Housing Better Health. Recent Household Support Fund allocations have enabled these programs to expand and directly assist pensioners impacted by WFP changes, with libraries participating in the Warm Spaces initiative positioned for outreach to high-footfall pensioner areas.
2. Request that the Leader of the Council writes to the Chancellor of the Exchequer, calling for an impact assessment and transitional measures for pensioners affected by means testing. This outreach should address barriers to Pension Credit access and advocate for simplified application processes to ensure equitable access.
3. Request Cabinet to include addressing fuel poverty among low-income pensioners in the priorities of the council when allocating resources, for example using the Household Support Fund. Priority should be given to strengthening existing high-demand support programs and partnerships to maximize local resources.”

This page is intentionally left blank

## **CABINET 21 January 2025**

### **Citizens' Assembly Update**

#### **Report by Director of Public Affairs, Policy and Partnerships**

#### **RECOMMENDATION**

1. **The Cabinet is RECOMMENDED to**
  - a) Note progress being made on the citizens' assembly, which is being held in February and March 2025;
  - b) Note that the actions set out in this report respond to the motion agreed by Council on 10 December 2024.

#### **Executive Summary**

2. Oxfordshire County Council has commissioned external agency MutualGain to deliver a citizens' assembly on future travel, transport and connectivity in Oxfordshire in February and March 2025.
3. Following the motion agreed at Full Council on 10 December 2024 (the wording of which is in Annex 1), the assembly will be extended from 30 to 45 hours to enable a dedicated focus to be given, within the wider assembly, to the council's suite of traffic management measures in central Oxfordshire (including the traffic filters trial, the workplace parking levy, and the expanded zero emissions zone).

#### **Background**

4. The 2024/25 Council budget included a Labour and Co-operative Party Group amendment for a citizens' assembly on transport in central Oxfordshire. A one-off £150k investment was allocated for this purpose.
5. An independent external agency, MutualGain, has been commissioned by the council to deliver a citizens' assembly on future travel, transport and connectivity in Oxfordshire.
6. The assembly is a deliberative participatory project that brings together 40 members of the public, who are broadly representative of the county's population. Its purpose is to make recommendations on how the vision and targets set out in the local transport and connectivity plan (LTCP) can be

achieved in ways that best meet the needs and preferences of the people of Oxfordshire and other stakeholders.

7. An independent advisory board has been convened to provide oversight for the citizens' assembly to help it best achieve its objectives. The advisory board comprises national opinion leaders on deliberative democracy, transport and behavioural insights; cross-party political representation; and local experts.
8. The overarching challenge question for the assembly to consider, which has been shaped and agreed by the advisory board, is as follows: "What steps do we need to take so Oxfordshire's transport system enables our county's health, economy, and environment to thrive in 2050?"
9. Before and during the assembly, a wide range of evidence will be provided and presented to assembly participants to consider.
10. As specified in the motion agreed by Council on 10 December 2024, elected members, businesspeople, public sector leaders, and civil society and faith groups will be involved in the assembly process.
11. The assembly is designed to provide meaningful input into the implementation of the local transport and connectivity plan (LTCP). Discussions within the advisory board have highlighted the need to enable public deliberation around implementation whilst ensuring agreed policy is clearly communicated and democratic decisions are respected. This is being carefully managed by MutualGain to ensure the assembly strikes the right balance. Participants will be equipped with a clear understanding of decisions made, including those not yet implemented, while being encouraged to offer future ideas about travel, transport and connectivity in Oxfordshire and constructive insights into how planned initiatives could be effectively delivered.
12. The assembly will run over a series of weekends and evenings during February and March 2025.
13. Assembly participants are being selected by democratic lottery. The process is being managed by the Sortition Foundation, a not-for-profit company dedicated to promoting fair, transparent, inclusive and effective deliberative citizens' assemblies.

### **Extending the assembly**

14. Following the motion agreed at Council on 10 December 2024, the assembly will be extended from 30 to 45 hours to enable a dedicated focus to be given, within the wider assembly, to the council's suite of traffic management measures in central Oxfordshire (including the traffic filters trial, the workplace parking levy, and the expanded zero emissions zone).
15. The additional 15 hours will be dedicated to exploring in depth the key challenges of travelling into, out of, and around central Oxfordshire, including



the three core schemes. Assembly participants will engage with relevant evidence, thinking and policy from Oxfordshire, from other parts of the UK, and potentially from across the globe in the context of the Central Oxfordshire Travel Plan (COTP).

16. The overarching challenge question, which has been agreed by the advisory board, will remain the same. However, specific interim recommendations will be produced for this dedicated part of the assembly. These will be revisited during the final assembly deliberations for review alongside the recommendations relating to the wider county.

## **Corporate Policies and Priorities**

17. The citizens' assembly supports the council's strategic priorities of i) playing our part in a vibrant and participatory local democracy; and ii) investing in an inclusive, integrated and sustainable transport network

## **Financial Implications**

18. There are no new budgetary implications arising from this report. The cost of the assembly will be funded from the one-off £150k allocated for this purpose in the 2024/25 budget approved by Council in February 2024.

Comments checked by:

Lorna Baxter, Executive Director of Resources and Section 151 Officer

## **Legal Implications**

19. There are no legal implications arising from this report.

Comments checked by:

Anita Bradley, Director of Law & Governance and Monitoring Officer

## **Staff Implications**

20. The assembly is being delivered by an external agency, MutualGain, who was appointed following a tender process. The collation of evidence for the assembly is being supported by council teams in the transport planning and communications and engagement service areas, using existing resources.

## **Equality & Inclusion Implications**

21. The assembly will comprise a broadly representative group of participants selected by democratic lottery. Recruitment is being managed by the Sortition

Foundation, a not-for-profit company dedicated to promoting fair, transparent, inclusive and effective deliberative assemblies.

22. The citizens' assembly will be inclusive by design. An independent advisory board has been established to provide oversight for the citizens' assembly. Advisory board members provide an important additional check and balance to the assembly's structure, content and procedure to help it best achieve its objectives and to ensure that equality and inclusion implications are considered throughout.

## **Sustainability Implications**

23. There are no sustainability implications arising from this report.

Susannah Wintersgill  
Director of Public Affairs, Policy and Partnerships

Annex: Motion agreed by Full Council on 10 December 2024

Background papers: Nil

Contact Officer: Susannah Wintersgill  
Director of Public Affairs, Policy and Partnerships  
[susannah.wintersgill@oxfordshire.gov.uk](mailto:susannah.wintersgill@oxfordshire.gov.uk)

January 2025

Annex 1: Motion by Councillor Charlie Hicks, seconded by Councillor Duncan Enright; with amendment by Councillor Eddie Reeves, seconded by Councillor David Bartholomew

This Council considered setting up a Congestion Commission and agreed to set up a Citizens' Assembly as part of its last budget. This Council considers that it is time to establish a Citizens' Assembly of local residents or a Congestion Commission including businesspeople, public sector leaders, civil society and faith group leaders, and academics with relevant expertise, to ensure a greater democratic say in key decision-making.

This Council notes that its ambitious suite of traffic management measures is due to be rolled out in the very near future. These include Oxford's traffic filters and workplace parking levy, which are now largely enshrined in the Council's budget and will take place unless there is a change of administration next year.

If all such measures go ahead, Oxfordshire motorists could be hit by £57million in fines in fines and charges, broken down as follows:

- Expanded Zero Emissions Zone £25m;
- Traffic Filters £11m;
- Workplace Parking Tax £21m.

For clarity, the purpose of a Citizens' Assembly or Congestion Commission would be to assess the effectiveness of such measures, provide recommendations on existing proposals and advise as to whether other measures might be given effect after next year's local elections as supplements or substitutes for such policies, putting residents', businesses' and civil society groups' voices at the heart of local decision-making.

Council requests Cabinet to establish a Congestion Commission or Citizens' Assembly ensuring in so doing that the voices of elected members, businesspeople, public sector leaders and civil society and faith groups are properly heard.

This page is intentionally left blank

## **CABINET 21 January 2025**

### **Response to Council motion on changes to inheritance tax and other farming matters**

#### **Report by Director of Economy and Place**

### **RECOMMENDATION**

1. **The CABINET is RECOMMENDED to**
  - a) Note the council's current and planned policy and programme activity in support of the rural economy;
  - b) Note the requests from Council to Cabinet made through the motion on Farming passed by Council on 10 December 2024 and how the council's approach will address these issues.

### **Executive Summary**

2. This report addresses the motion agreed by Council on 10 December 2024 that related to the impact on farm businesses and farming families of measures announced in the autumn statement of 30 October, 2024.
3. It summarises the council's existing and emerging policy and programme support to rural businesses and sets out how the council's approach will address the issues raised in the motion that are within the influence of the county council.

### **Background**

4. Through a motion agreed by Council on 10 December 2024, Council requested Cabinet to ensure that:
  - Its own policies are as supportive of local farmers as reasonably possible;
  - The newly integrated Oxfordshire Local Enterprise Partnership ('OxLEP') prioritises the local rural economy in its governance structure and ongoing development of its strategic plan;
  - The Cabinet Member for the Environment organises a meeting with local farmers and elected members of all political groups to listen to their concerns with a view to informing the Council's and OxLEP's ongoing policy development.

5. Council also requested that the Leader of the Council write to the Chancellor of the Exchequer and Secretary of State for the Environment, Food and Rural Affairs to ask that changes to inheritance tax exemptions impacting on farming families be reconsidered for the sake of environmental protection and food security.

### **Current policy and programme support**

6. The council's current policy and programme framework provides some elements of support to farming communities in Oxfordshire. These areas are summarised below.

#### ***Economic strategy and business support***

7. Previous economic planning under the management of OxLEP (now Enterprise Oxfordshire) stated the '*need to support the food and farming sectors county-wide*'. It also stated the need to support agricultural business to transition to the regenerative model to deliver carbon and biodiversity benefits, and highlights the growing role Oxfordshire is playing in this context, using the example of the FarmEd initiative, based in Shipton under Wychwood.
8. Oxfordshire's Growth Hub is managed by Enterprise Oxfordshire. It delivers Department of Business & Trade funded SME support and delivers a range of business support activities that are accessible to all SME's, which will naturally include family farms. Activities include webinars, 1-2-1 support, workshops, Foundations to Growth and Peer Networks. It currently supports more than 2,500 SMEs across the county.
9. Enterprise Oxfordshire is also currently delivering two UK Shared Prosperity Fund/Rural England Prosperity Fund business support programmes for West Oxfordshire District Council and Cherwell District Council, including support for rural businesses. However, it is also noted that these funds were limited in terms of how they could support the farming community. It is also noted that Enterprise Oxfordshire have been consulting the Department for Environment, Food & Rural Affairs (DEFRA) on how to access other funding streams that are not locally funded.

#### ***Oxfordshire Food Strategy***

10. The Oxfordshire Food Strategy, developed in partnership between all Oxfordshire Councils and local VCS organisation Good Food Oxfordshire, makes food supply a key strategic priority. The council is a member of a countywide steering group that is working on delivery. This group includes representatives from farmers and food producers, community larders, local authorities, and the universities.
11. The strategy states two clear ambitions which are aimed at supporting farmers:

- Sustainable supply chains: ensure that more locally produced sustainable food is bought and consumed locally, and that supply chains are more resilient.
  - Sustainable food economy: ensure that local food businesses flourish with more production, more outlets, more employment, and better standards for workers
12. This strategy will set the context for decisions on, for example, procurement and investment plans. Local work on the role of ‘anchor institutions’ (large-scale organisations with a long-term economic impact in an area, such as a council or hospital) including within the council, is exploring how procurement can better support local suppliers.
  13. The council will consider becoming a participant in the ‘OxFarmToFork’ scheme. This scheme, run by Good Food Oxfordshire, enables Oxfordshire’s institutions to buy directly from local food producers, thus directly supporting Oxfordshire’s farmers.

***Support for nature, conservation and sustainability***

14. OCC plays a key role in funding and supporting the Local Wildlife Sites Project, in collaboration with the District Councils, the Thames Valley Environmental Records Centre (TVERC), and The Berks, Bucks and Oxon Wildlife Trust (BBOWT). This project provides free surveys and conservation management advice to the owners of Local Wildlife Sites in the County, many of which are farmers.
15. Significant activity is underway to ensure that more support will be given to the farming community in the future. For example, the Local Nature Recovery Strategy (LNRS) is currently being drafted. It picks up specific areas of the county where farming is the main land use and promotes support for farmers to carry out nature-friendly practices that can benefit biodiversity, provide public goods by increasing the resilience of the landscape, and improve the quality of the soils and health of productive land enabling it to continue to produce food into the future. As well as aiming to improve the quality and biodiversity of land in Oxfordshire, it sets out specific priorities for local farmers. It identifies the need to support farm businesses, rural landholdings and tenant farmers to create and improve wildlife-rich habitat that supports biodiversity and businesses helping species to spread through Oxfordshire’s fields, edges, and corridors.
16. Future investment proposals are likely to be designed to support the role of farmers in delivering the objectives of the LNRS (for example through new investment and credit models) and in carbon sequestration (for example through the current draft budget proposals on beyond-net zero). A specific proposal of £500,000 capital investment has been included in the draft budget published for 2025/26. If agreed, this proposal will provide seed investment in a local fund, led by the Oxfordshire Nature Partnership and the Trust for Oxfordshire's Environment. This circulating funding pot will support farmers, and other

landowners, unlock and mobilise up to £1bn of private sector funding in carbon and nature credits with significant opportunity to restore lost habitats.



**Future prioritisation of the local rural economy in economic planning and in the governance structures of Enterprise Oxfordshire (formally OxLEP), engagement with farming communities, and representations to government**

17. Enterprise Oxfordshire, formally operating as OxLEP, is a council owned company, working to support the delivery of economic strategies and objectives set by the council through cabinet.
18. As set out above, economic policy in place includes priority for the rural economy. Cabinet has already set out its requirement to reset economy policy following the new responsibilities it holds and in the light of emerging national requirements with relation to local growth planning. When setting the brief for the development of plans, officers will ensure that proposals to Cabinet reflect the needs of rural communities and farmers.
19. As also set out above, Enterprise Oxfordshire provides an element of business support into the rural economy. Officers have requested that Enterprise Oxfordshire review the extent to which this support reaches rural communities specifically and farming businesses in particular. The future designs of policy and programmes will be impacted by that review.
20. As part of its development of new economic development capacity, OCC will examine its approach to supporting the rural economy directly as well as through Enterprise Oxfordshire and other partnerships. As set out in a November 2024 report to Cabinet, as part of the establishment of revised governance for economic planning, the council will establish an Economic Advisory Partnership. In agreeing the composition of this partnership officers will advise on how rural and farming voices are included. This partnership will influence both the development of council led economic policy and Enterprise Oxfordshire delivery through nominating co-optees onto the company board, as set out in the November cabinet report.
21. Through OCC policy development and Enterprise Oxfordshire development of delivery programmes, all sectors of the economy will need to be engaged and heard. This will build on engagement already in place with rural communities through engagement with Town and Parish Councils, sector groups and through specific initiatives, such as the engagement of farming businesses in the *Together 100* green investment programme. It is also noted that OCC has sought to engage farmers in production of the LNRS, particularly through catchment partnerships and farmer clusters and that there is farmer representation on the LNRS steering group. The County Land and Business Association (CLA) and National Farmers Union (NFU) are also both engaged through associated working groups. Officers will work further with Enterprise Oxfordshire to design an impactful engagement programme that will ensure that all sectors of the economy, including farming communities, are able to have influence on policy and programme development through dedicated meetings or otherwise.
22. Finally, as requested by Council , the Leader of the Council wrote in December to the Chancellor of the Exchequer and the Secretary of State for the

Environment, Food and Rural Affairs to represent the views of Council as expressed through the agreed motion.

## Financial Implications

23. This report sets out existing activity or activity being proposed and agreed elsewhere and there are therefore no direct financial implications of this report.

Comments checked by:

Filipp Skiffins, Assistant Finance Business Partner,  
[filipp.skiffins@oxfordshire.gov.uk](mailto:filipp.skiffins@oxfordshire.gov.uk) (Finance)

## Legal Implications

24. This report sets out existing activity or activity being proposed and agreed elsewhere and there are therefore no legal implications of this report.

Comments checked by:

Paul Grant, Head of Legal and Deputy Monitoring Officer  
[paul.grant@oxfordshire.gov.uk](mailto:paul.grant@oxfordshire.gov.uk) (Legal)

## Equality & Inclusion Implications

25. There are no specific equality and inclusion implications arising from this report and the relevant decision-making reports have or will need to consider equality and inclusion implications of individual decisions. However, it should be noted that *Including Everyone*, the council's equalities, diversity and inclusion framework, states that the specific needs of rural communities should be considered within decision making as an additional characteristic, alongside those characteristics with statutory protections.

## Sustainability Implications

26. Engagement with rural and farming communities offers significant opportunities for environmental improvement, and for climate action and adaptation. However, the specific sustainability implications of the work outlined in this report are or will be dealt with through the relevant decision-making route.

NAME

Robin Rogers, Director of Economy and Place

Background papers: The original Motion, which this paper is responding to, can be found [here](#).

Contact Officer: James Cater, National Management Trainee,  
[james.cater@oxfordshire.gov.uk](mailto:james.cater@oxfordshire.gov.uk)

January 2025

This page is intentionally left blank

## **CABINET**

### **CABINET**

**21 JANUARY 2025**

## **WARM HOMES: LOCAL GRANT – CAPITAL RETROFIT PROGRAMME**

### **Report by Director of Economy & Place**

## **RECOMMENDATION**

**1. Cabinet is RECOMMENDED to**

- (a) Note the submission of a funding request to Department for Energy Security and Net Zero to support retrofit of low-income households in, or at risk of, fuel poverty.
- (b) Delegate authority to the Director of Economy & Place in consultation with the Executive Director of Resources and Section 151 Officer, to consider and conclude any agreements upon notification of a successful application for the Warm Homes: Local Grant (WH:LG).
- (c) Delegate authority to the Director of Economy & Place in consultation with the Executive Director of Resources to issue an extension to the existing agreement for the Provision of Capital Retrofit Grant Distribution and Delivery Management Services (Home Upgrade Grant, Phase 2) for up to 24 months.

## **Executive Summary**

- 2. A funding application has been submitted to the Warm Homes: Local Grant through Department for Energy Security & Net Zero. This supports the Council's climate action and health agendas and follows on from a range of retrofit programmes delivered by the Council to low-income households in fuel poverty. This is a three-year scheme currently and may be extended to up to five years, subject to approval at the spending review.
- 3. If successful, the first year of the project would deliver home energy efficiency retrofits to approximately 210 households living in energy inefficient properties and fuel poverty, and scale from there throughout subsequent years.
- 4. The purpose of this report is to brief Cabinet on the bid and agree delegated authority to the Corporate Director for Economy & Place and Executive Director of Resources and S151 Officer to review and agree to the terms and conditions of the grant should the bid be successful, as well as to extend existing

contractual agreement to allow a smooth transition for our residents into the new scheme.

## Background

5. Residential carbon emissions make up 25% of emissions in Oxfordshire. In the Pathways to a Zero Carbon Oxfordshire (PaZCO) report, it is recognised that there is an urgent need for improving the energy efficiency of existing private homes through large scale retrofit of at least 16,000 properties by 2030 to improve to a 'B' Energy Performance Certificate (EPC) standard. The finance, demand and supply chain need to scale in tandem over the medium term to reach these numbers.
6. There is a very strong correlation between poor energy efficiency in properties, fuel poverty and respiratory illnesses. In Oxfordshire 20% of properties fall into the worst energy efficiency categories (EPC rated E, F and G).
7. Previous phases of this funding (Green Homes Grant, Local Authority Delivered phases 1b and 3, Home Upgrade Grant phases 1 and 2) have delivered long-term improvements for eligible residents, resulting in reduced energy bills, measurable carbon savings and health improvements.
8. Oxfordshire County Council (OCC) delivered approximately five per cent of the total national installations under the Home Upgrade Grant. Under WH:LG applications are capped at a threshold linked to previous performance and therefore the council is in a strong position in its application to this funding.

## Warm Homes: Local Grant

9. The Warm Homes: Local Grant offers wider eligibility criteria than previous schemes and therefore presents a good opportunity to scale the delivery of retrofit grants across the county. The amount the council can apply for under this funding stream is capped but there is potential to increase the Council's request for funding in further years of the scheme.
10. Building on the existing work taking place in Oxfordshire, the Council, with support from all other Oxfordshire Local Authorities, has submitted a bid for £2.6m for year one, and an average of £3.6m per annum across subsequent years of the scheme, to deliver retrofitting of homes for low-income residents and in the worst energy efficient housing.
11. Key details of this funding application are:
  - 210 properties expected to be able to benefit in the first year with an assumed £12,400 average per-property spend.
  - Funding to cover all aspects of this work has been budgeted in from within the fund. This includes non-capital aspects such as internal staffing resource of circa 3 FTE, delivery partner fees, ancillary works and marketing budget. This is 'earned' as a percentage of capital delivered, and paid to OCC by the funder, the Department for Energy Security & Net Zero.
  - Notification of bid outcome expected end of January 2025.

12. Should the bid be successful, the Council intends to use the established operating model through its existing delivery partner Agility Eco Services Ltd (currently in contract with OCC, delivering on the current tranche of funding) to enable delivery against the mobilisation timeline of the funding. Delegation is required, as the value of the extension includes the capital flow-through and is therefore over £500,000 (£2.6m capital plus circa. £285,000 fees, based on the full award bid for). A number of improvements are proposed, for example in order to support and grow the local installer capacity. Legal Services have been engaged in order to support an extension to the existing contractual arrangement. This is important to pass our 'Delivery Assurance Check' with the funder to mobilise delivery as quickly as possible and allow enough time for a future procurement process to take place.
13. A further improvement is to formalise OCC leading on initial customer acquisition, with the Council's delivery partner managing key aspects of the customer journey and installer network. As with previous schemes, the Council will act as the responsible budget holder.
14. The application does not give the Council details of the terms and conditions the funding would be granted upon if successful. As such, it is requested that Cabinet delegate authority to S151 Officer and Director for Economy and Place to review terms and conditions and if acceptable, sign relevant grant agreements to enter into contract for the funding.

## **Corporate Policies and Priorities**

15. This programme will contribute positively towards our Climate Action and healthy place shaping commitments reducing carbon emissions, improving air quality (both indoor and outdoor), improving quality of housing and supporting low income households.

## **Financial Implications**

16. The Council is seeking project management resource and associated delivery costs as part of the funding to deliver the project. £2.6m capital has been requested through an expression of interest process, which would entitle the Council to draw down up to an additional £485,800 for associated (non-capital) project expenses.
17. It is anticipated that all associated costs, both capital and revenue, will be funded through delivery of this project provided capital delivery targets are met.

Comments checked by:

Filipp Skiffins, Assistant Finance Business Partner,  
[filipp.skiffins@oxfordshire.gov.uk](mailto:filipp.skiffins@oxfordshire.gov.uk)

## **Legal Implications**



18. The Council has the statutory power to engage in these activities under the section 12 of the Health and Social Care Act 2012. The early stage of the WH:LG will be delivered through an extension to the Council's existing contractual arrangements for the Home Upgrade Grant that completes in March 2025.
19. The existing contract permits such an extension, so does not constitute a modification under procurement legislation. The maximum permitted extension period does not cover the full period of the WH:LG programme, so the re-procurement of a suitable delivery partner will be conducted before the end of the proposed contract extension in accordance with the Council's procurement procedures.
20. The terms and conditions of the grant will be reviewed by the legal service once the Council is notified in January 2025.

Comments checked by:

Jonathan Pool, Solicitor, Contracts (Legal Services), Law & Governance,  
[jonathan.pool@oxfordshire.gov.uk](mailto:jonathan.pool@oxfordshire.gov.uk)

## **Staff Implications**

21. The Council has bid for funding for circa three full time equivalent (FTE) staff to support delivery of the programme. It is stipulated by DESNZ that a minimum of two FTE is required by all consortium leads, regardless of the level of funding requested. District Councils will further promote the delivery of the project in their areas with existing resources.

## **Equality & Inclusion Implications**

22. There is a strong correlation of residents who are low-income, experiencing fuel poverty, adverse respiratory health conditions and living in fuel poverty often, but not exclusively, in areas that are in the most deprived wards in the County. This programme therefore has positive impact on a range of groups the council wishes to support.
23. The scheme will be open to all residents that meet the eligibility criteria set out by the funder. The Council will work with the comms team, community groups and services across the council to ensure the marketing of this scheme is as accessible as possible to all residents, and that opportunities are explored to reach those households that may not engage with mainstream communication and media.
24. The including Everyone Framework will give us best practice in how to engage with seldom heard communities. We will maintain an open channel of communication with residents who wish to express challenge or offer feedback, so that we can respond to any difficulties faced by them robustly.

## **Sustainability Implications**

25. This project will deliver positive action towards decreasing the energy demands, and subsequent carbon emissions, of residential homes, taking action towards our climate emergency target and supporting improved indoor and outdoor air quality.

## **Risk Management**

26. The project will adhere to the use of risk management within the Council's guidelines to continue to identify risks and opportunities as they arise. The project will recruit a delivery partner to manage the householder and installer networks, with the council acting as a responsible budget holder.
27. Should the bid be successful the terms and conditions associated with the project, and the subsequent risk will be reviewed by legal and with the Corporate Director for Economy and Place.

---

Robin Rogers, Director for Economy and Place

Contact Officer: Sarah Gilbert, Head of Climate Action Service,  
[sarah.gilbert@oxfordshire.gov.uk](mailto:sarah.gilbert@oxfordshire.gov.uk)

**December 2024**

## **CABINET**

**21<sup>st</sup> January 2025**

### **FUNDING CONTRIBUTION TOWARDS A JOINTLY COMMISSIONED MENTAL HEALTH CONTRACT 2025 - 2035**

Report by Director of Adult Social Care

## **RECOMMENDATIONS**

Cabinet is **RECOMMENDED** to:

- a) **Approve the direct award of a new mental health contract between Buckinghamshire, Oxfordshire, Berkshire West Integrated Care Board (“BOB ICB”) and Oxford Health (NHS) Foundation Trust funded under the pooled fund arrangements of the S 75 Agreement (as defined at paragraph 30 below).**
- b) **Agree the Council’s funding contribution under the S 75 Agreement to BOB ICB for mental health services under the new mental health contract to be entered by BOB ICB for the lifetime of the contract.**
- c) **Delegate responsibility to the Director of Adult Social Services (DASS) in consultation with the Executive Member for Adult Social Care for oversight of the approval process as it progresses towards final sign off (by the contracting authority).**

## **Executive Summary**

1. The adult mental health outcomes-based contract commenced in October 2015. It was funded via pooled budget arrangements as part of the section 75 agreement between the then Oxfordshire Clinical Commissioning Group and Oxfordshire County Council. This contract is now managed by the Buckinghamshire, Oxfordshire, Berkshire West Integrated Care Board (BOB ICB) and delivered by Oxford Health NHS Foundation Trust (Oxford Health) as primary provider. Oxford Health sub-contract third and voluntary sector providers; Connection Support, Elmore Support Services, Oxfordshire Mind, Response and Restore.
2. Over the past three years the Health, Education and Social Care Commissioning team (HESC) has worked with NHS and voluntary sector partners, under the direction of the joint Commissioning Executive (JCE), to review the existing contract

and develop Oxfordshire's approach to the transformation of mental health services for the coming decade, to improve outcomes for local people needing support for their mental health, maximising people's independence and wellbeing. The formal contract is part of this work and provides the governance framework for assuring service delivery.

3. The new mental health contract will bring together several existing mental health contracts in one place for Oxfordshire residents aged 18+ years whose mental health falls into primary, core or enhanced need in the new framework for defining mental health need. These services aim to ensure adults with poor mental health and serious mental illness receive specialist support as part of their recovery, are supported to achieve good outcomes and can live in our communities with support. Bringing these elements together into a single contract will simplify the management processes and reduce bureaucracy, creating greater flexibility and clearer oversight through a Performance and Assurance Oversight Board.
4. The current contract is due to expire on 31 March 2025 and agreement to contribute towards the mental health contract via pooled budget arrangements is needed to ensure continuation of services. The new contract will be let for 10 years from 1 April 2025 – 31 March 2035. The ICB are proceeding with a direct award process under the Provider Section Regime 2024 for a new contract with Oxford Health. Oxford Health in turn has delegated responsibility within the contract to apply PSR to its sub-contractors. The standard NHS contract is used for this purpose, for both the so-called head contract and the sub-contracts, with detailed specifications which are currently being prepared.

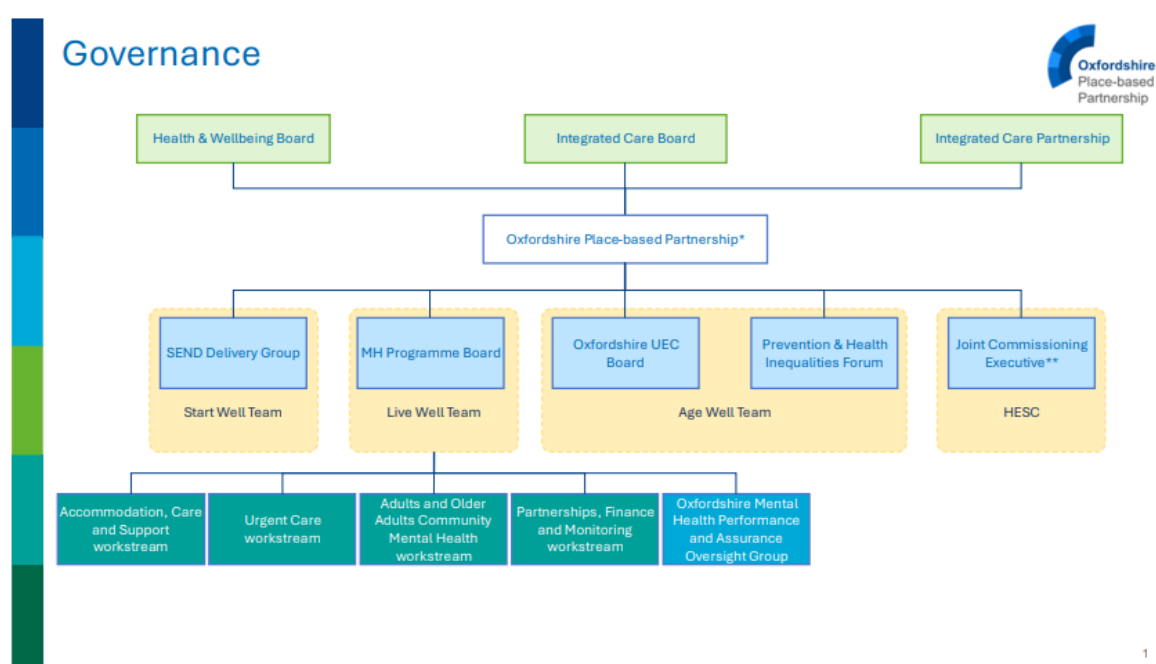
#### **Break clauses with notice periods:**

• Commissioner Notice Period	12 months 6 months notice period to be applied to any agreed part of the contract with the aggregate value not exceeding more than 15% of the contract in any one contract year.
• Commissioner Earliest Termination Date	12 months after the Service Commencement Date
• Provider Notice Period	12 months 6 months notice period to be applied to any agreed part of the contract with the aggregate value not exceeding more than 15% of the contract in any one contract year.
• Provider Earliest Termination Date	12 months after the Service Commencement Date

5. The financial contribution from the Council will be £6.2m per year. Over the course of the contract OCC is required to commit to an indicative figure of £62m.

6. Annual inflationary uplifts to the value of the contract have not been determined and are subject to confirmation as part of annual planning processes.
7. The overall value of the block payment from BOB ICB to Oxford Health in 2024/25 is £111.4m which will include 4 existing contracts in one place, including the current outcomes-based contract.
8. BOB ICB is responsible for managing the new mental health contract to deliver services in Oxfordshire. OCC will be a key stakeholder in the systems assurance and monitoring of the contract.

## Proposed governance



## Context and Background

9. The current mental health contract called the outcomes-based contract delivers a range of health and social care services to support the mental health of people in Oxfordshire. The original scope of the contract was for the following services: acute inpatient wards for adult and separately for older adults, a psychiatric intensive care unit, early intervention psychosis team, crisis care, adult mental health teams, several models of mental health supported housing, floating support and recovery and coaching services.
10. Over the course of the outcomes-based contract following changes to practice, legislation and Mental Health Investment Standards funding from NHSE, the contract has expanded to include physical health for serious mental illness, bi-polar self-management and peer support groups, mental health embedded

workers in primary care, a crisis resolution home treatment team, Safehavens and Primary Care Network embedded workers.

11. The current outcomes-based contract commenced in 2015 with a total value of £64m per year. The 2024/25 contract value puts costs at £70.1m
12. per year. This includes £1.3m OCC contribution towards Mental Health spot residential costs, of which the S117 element is equally shared between OCC and the ICB.
13. The ICB will be consolidating the following current contracts into the new mental health contract outcomes-based contract: Talking Therapies (anxiety and depression), Oxfordshire Mental Health (older adult mental health, adult eating disorders and the emergency department psychiatric service) and Primary Care Well-being Workers. This will increase the total contract value from £70.1m to £111.4m, but will not increase the overall expenditure as it brings existing spend into one place to simplify the contract management process and create opportunities for flexibility. The consolidation of the contracts does not impact OCC as the responsibility for statutory health care provision sits with ICB to fund.
14. The new contract has been designed within the mental health service development programme which has focussed on 4 key areas of accommodation-based support and community activities, urgent and emergency care, bringing together adults and older adults, and partnerships, finance and contracts. Most notable to OCC are the improvements and changes to delivery of accommodation, and care and support at home, floating support, the mental health recovery college and community activities.
15. The work has been underpinned by involvement from people with lived experience and their Carers. Of particular interest to OCC is the work carried out within the accommodation, and care and support at home projects. Initial action in January 2024 saw a review of what people had already said about mental health accommodation-based services e.g. previous staff and resident satisfaction surveys and previous workshops. Themes were identified and used to shape plans for further engagement. During May - July 2024 surveys went live, a public and practitioner survey was released. Later in the summer a secondary survey for older adults and armed forces veterans also went live.
16. In addition to the surveys, a workshop held in May 2024 helped to identify unmet needs. These needs were then focussed into 5 further workshops held in September – October 2024 and the views of people with lived experience and their Carers was vital to helping shape the service development plans and new commissioning intentions.

## **Mental Health Services in Oxfordshire**

17. The new care model will integrate community and adult mental health services ensuring continuity, accessibility and comprehensive care to support people to live longer and have better biopsychosocial and environmental health, good quality of daily life, build resilience and independence, provide choice alongside safe and effective care and support, develop resilience in individuals, families and communities and so they can thrive, and provide preventative intervention to support people to stay well and independent for longer.

## Key Issues

18. The contract will be issued via BOB ICB as a standard NHS contract using the Provider Selection Regime (PSR) 2024. Arrangements for the application of PSR by BOB ICB will see the head contract directly awarded to Oxford Health for a 10year period. At the point of issuing the new mental health contract, service development plans will have been agreed. Therefore, the new contract is being written on a similar basis as the current contract to ensure continuity of provision whilst the development plans are implemented.
19. Oxford Health NHS FT (OHFT) is the 'relevant authority' for all those voluntary, community and social enterprise (VCSE) sector services currently subcontracted and within the scope of, the new OHFT adult mental health services contract with the Integrated Care Board (ICB).
20. During 2024 the system leadership group overseeing the development of the new mental health contract (now constituted as the Mental Health Services Contract Programme Board), has investigated the legal requirements of the new Provider Selection Regime as it relates to the VCSE sub-contracts. All partners have been involved in this work and have agreed with the conclusions, as set out in the following paragraphs.
21. Due to the nature of PSR, each individual procurement activity must be treated on a case-by-case basis. It is recognised that a like for like position would be applicable for the sub-contracts however further consideration needs to be given:
  - Firstly, to the nature of the provision that is being procured, alongside the performance of the current provider and availability of other providers that could reasonably deliver the provision.
  - Secondly, the terms of the current contract, namely the duration and lifetime value. **[Note regarding 'change' criterion:** The lifetime value of the contract can be increased above and beyond 25%, provided it doesn't exceed £500,000, **AND** it can be amended by more than £500,000, provided it is less than 25% of the contract value].
  - Lastly, the extent to which the proposed contract constitutes a meaningful change.
22. In practice this means OHFT will directly award contracts to the current subcontractors for a maximum of 2 years. Once service changes are implemented

longer term contracts will be issued to the existing providers assuming the PSR rules are met.

23. Where there is a requirement to procure new provision, any new providers will also be issued longer term contracts. These contracts will match the end date of the head contract i.e. 31 March 2035.

## Performance and Outcome measures

Key performance measures are included in the current contract and outcomes are reported at national level for the ICB. More recently there has only been reporting of a limited range of indicators for Oxfordshire for the social care due to COVID and an IT cyber-attack which has since been rectified by tendering for a new IT system.

A new Oxfordshire Performance and Assurance Oversight Group has been created to ensure there is system-wide representation to address any performance and monitoring issues. Representation will include ICB, OCC, OHFT, the Oxfordshire mental health provider partnership, clinicians, social care and people with Lived Experience. The Group has been developing revised key performance indicators for the outcomes.

The outcomes identified in the current contract are broadly the same as the new contract, as set out in the table below.

Outcome number	Outcome
1	People will live longer
2	People will improve the quality of their daily life
3	People will receive timely access to assessment and support.
4	Carers will feel supported in their caring role. and supported to understand how to access the system
5	People will have economic independence
6	People continue to live in stable accommodation
7	People with serious mental illness(SMI) will have fewer physical health problems



The aim of the new contract is to support improvements in the mental wellbeing of the people of Oxfordshire through a focus on prevention and strengths-based practice, and to achieve the outcome of people with poor mental health or serious mental illness living longer whilst having improved mental health functioning and fewer preventable physical health problems. People will have timely access to assessment and support and be able to work towards and maintain economic independence. People will live in good quality, affordable and adapted accommodation to meet their needs. Carers will be supported, and there will be a focus on the interface between mental health and dementia in older age.

A key performance indicators(KPI) relating to adult social care specifically are set out as part of the whole system measures for individual and population outcomes for mental health. The mental health contract is a vital contributor to these outcomes and will be held to account for delivery through the new Performance and Assurance Oversight Group. The Joint Commissioning Executive also monitors a dashboard of performance outcomes which includes a range of mental health targets.

## Corporate Policies and Priorities

The above proposal supports the Council's Corporate Plan and in particular points 3,4,5, and 11.

- **Tackle inequalities in Oxfordshire** – adults supported in mental services above service are amongst the most disadvantaged in the county. Service developments will address these inequalities across all key service areas.
- **Prioritise the health and wellbeing of residents** – resource is dedicated to addressing health issues of residents, particularly mental health. Focus on physical health and management of long terms conditions is recognised as a key area of delivery.
- **Work with local businesses and partners for environmental, economic and social benefit** - the joint commissioning arrangement between the Council and the NHS will deliver an integrated contract and facilitate a system wide delivery model in partnership with our local NHS Foundation Trust to improve outcomes for individuals and communities across health and social care.

24. In addition, this service aligns with the following Council Strategies and Transformation Plan:

- [Oxfordshire Health and Wellbeing Strategy 2024 - 2030](#)
- [Mental Health Service Improvement Programme](#)
- [S117 Aftercare Transformation Plan](#)

## Financial Implications

25. There is a Section 75 arrangement for management of a pooled budget. The OCC contribution has stayed flat in nominal terms and fallen in terms of share of the overall budget (£6.2m per year) over the contract term, as the NHS has increased investment targeted towards areas of greatest need for transformation and service development using Mental Health Investment Standard and the Service Development Fund.
26. OCC also contributes towards the Mental Health spot residential costs, £1.3m of these costs are covered within the council's £6.2m contribution. The S117 element is equally shared between OCC and the ICB. In 2023/24 this cost the council a further £1.5m.
27. The overall value of the block payment for the outcomes-based contract from BOB ICB to OHFT in 2024/25 is £70.1m. of which OCC contributes £6.2m. The new contract will amalgamate 4 contracts in total with an estimated spend of £111.4m. This will not impact OCC's contribution.
28. A decision will be required as to whether the OCC contribution to the pool will continue to allow robust planning in relation to a new adult mental health contract from April 2025. If withdrawn, it is likely there will be significant impact on aspects of service delivery which could include increased waiting times for adults to access provision.
29. When the current mental health OBC contract was first let in 2015 it was deemed as innovative for its time and Oxfordshire led the way regionally and nationally. If OCC were to procure these services directly, the years of positive joined up working with the ICB and the service providers would be disrupted.
30. In addition, the joint commissioning team members play a key role as part of the infrastructure to ensure value for money and better outcomes. The team formed in 2021 following an extensive restructuring programme and many of the posts are jointly funded between OCC and the ICB. This joint function hosted by OCC may be at risk if funding for services was separated.
31. The ICB is managing this contract and responsible for ensuring the overall financial value meets contract requirements and includes required uplifts for Agenda for Change, negotiation with OHFT.

Comments Checked by:

Stephen Rowles, Head of Finance Business Partnering. Email:  
[Stephen.rowles@oxfordshire.gov.uk](mailto:Stephen.rowles@oxfordshire.gov.uk)

## Legal Implications

32. Under the Care Act 2014 local authorities have a mandatory duty to integrate care and support provision with health provision and health related provision. The National Health Service Act 2006 ("NHS Act 2006") allows local authorities and NHS bodies to enter into partnership arrangements to provide a more streamlined service and to pool resources, if such arrangements are likely to lead to an improvement in the way their functions are exercised.
33. The powers permit the formation of a fund (pooled budget) made up of contributions by both parties "out of which payments may be made towards expenditure incurred in the exercise of both prescribed functions of the NHS body or bodies and prescribed health-related functions of the authority or authorities" (section 75(2)(a)(ii), NHS Act 2006).
34. In addition the powers permit the exercise of certain prescribed functions of each body by the other (section 75(2)(b) and (c), NHS Act 2006) and the provision of staff, goods or services, or the making of payments between the two partners, in connection with the above arrangements (sections 75(2)(d)-(f), NHS Act 2006).
35. The arrangements for the joint commissioning of the mental health service (and other health and social services) are covered by the existing partnership agreement between the Council and BOB ICB dated 3 April 2023 under section 75 of the National Health Service Act 2006 (S 75 Agreement). Under the S75 Agreement BOB ICB is defined as the Lead Contractor for mental health services.
36. The S75 Agreement allows for the annual agreement of contributions to jointly commissioned services as envisaged by this report.
37. The procurement of health services to individuals is now covered by the Provider Selection Regime (PSR) which came into force on 1 January 2024. The PSR introduced greater flexibilities for contracting authorities in respect of the procurement of health services including the ability to directly award services without competition in certain circumstances. It is the intention for BOB ICB to use such flexibilities to directly award the proposed Mental Health Contract to Oxford Health NHS Foundation Trust.

Comments checked by:

Jonathan Pool, Solicitor (Contracts) Email: [Jonathan.pool@oxfordshire.gov.uk](mailto:Jonathan.pool@oxfordshire.gov.uk)

## Staff Implications

38. There are no new or additional implications for staff providing the mental health contract for the next 12 months.

## Equality & Inclusion Implications

39. Oxford Health includes an individual equalities statement on its website [Equality, Diversity and Inclusion - Oxford Health NHS Foundation Trust](#) that provides assurance that whatever an individual's needs are they will aim to ensure that they are met. They acknowledge that different people have diverse needs, and they will always do whatever they can to ensure these needs are met.
40. The Care Quality Commission (CQC) has rated Oxford Health NHS Foundation Trust in December 2019 as 'good' in four out of five quality measurements – caring, responsive, well-led, effective and 'requiring improvement' for safe. This gives Oxford Health an over-all rating of 'Good' based on weighted scoring across all services inspected.

## Sustainability Implications

41. OHFT is committed to achieving NHS sustainability targets and achieved a 38% reduction in carbon emissions in 2021 exceeding the NHS target of 34% by 2020. In 2021 OHFT signed the zero Carbon Oxford Charter agreeing support to achieve zero net carbon emissions in the City by 2040.

## Risk Management

42. There is evidence that OHFT has satisfied the existing contract 2017-2024 to a sufficient standard according to the detail outlined in that contract.
43. OHFT provided all the relevant documentation, information, and policies for the existing contract.
44. OHFT has followed the contractual service specification, not deviated from the BOB ICB Safeguarding requirements, charged the correct prices as per the contract, issued invoices correctly in accordance with the BOB ICB process, complied with quality reporting requirements and followed schedule 6A reporting requirements.
45. Oxford Health NHS Foundation Trust mental health service has complied with/not fallen foul of the Service Conditions in 2015 NHS Standard contract (full length), including service conditions relating to -service standards, co-operation, information requirements, safeguarding, payment terms and quality requirements.
46. Oxford Health NHS Foundation Trust mental health service has also not fallen foul of the 2015 service conditions including those relating to failing and indemnity, assignment and sub-contracting, and Information Governance.
47. The new contracting arrangements are based on a roll over of the previous contracting arrangements/schedules which the provider has already

satisfied/complied with, and so the provider will highly likely be able to satisfy the new contract to a sufficient standard.

## Consultation

48. The new contract has been designed within an improvement programme of work which has focussed on the following key areas;
- accommodation, and care and support at home, floating support
  - urgent and emergency care
  - adults and older adults
  - partnerships, finance and contract
49. The work has been underpinned by involvement from people with lived experience and their Carers. Of particular interest to OCC is the work carried out within the accommodation, and care and support at home workstream. Initial action in January 2024 saw a review of what people had already said about mental health services e.g. previous staff and resident satisfaction surveys and previous workshops. Themes were identified and used to shape plans for further engagement. During May - July 2024 surveys went live, a public and practitioner survey followed by surveys targeting older adult and armed forces veterans.
50. In addition to the surveys, a workshop held in May 2024 helped to identify unmet needs. These needs were then focussed into 5 further workshops held in September – October 2024 and the views of people with lived experience and their Carers was vital to helping shape the service development plans and new commissioning intentions. In the next two months the service development plans will be refined following the mental health programme meetings and final versions will be shared with DLT in the new year.

Karen Fuller  
Director of Adult Social Services

Background papers: Nil

Contact Officers:

Samia Shibli, Joint Commissioning Manager, Live Well [samia.shibli@oxfordshire.gov.uk](mailto:samia.shibli@oxfordshire.gov.uk)

Sukhi Hersey, Joint Commissioning Manager, Live Well  
[Sukhi.Hersey@Oxfordshire.gov.uk](mailto:Sukhi.Hersey@Oxfordshire.gov.uk)

07 January 2025

This page is intentionally left blank

## **CABINET**

**21st January 2025**

### **Local Flood Risk Management Strategy update**

#### **Report by Director of Environment & Highways**

## **RECOMMENDATION**

1. **The Cabinet is RECOMMENDED to approve the Local Flood Risk Management Strategy contained in Annex 2**

## **Executive Summary**

1. The Local Flood Risk Management Strategy (LFRMS) is the overarching framework developed by Oxfordshire County Council (OCC) as the Lead Local Flood Authority. This strategy is a statutory document as required by the Floods and Water Management Act 2010 and serves to address flood risk within the county.
2. The LFRMS aims to develop, maintain, apply, and monitor effective flood risk management practices across Oxfordshire. It encompasses flood risk from surface runoff, groundwater, and ordinary watercourses. The strategy outlines the roles and responsibilities of risk management authorities including statutory and non-statutory elements.
3. The current LFRMS was published in 2015 and required a review and update to ensure the strategy is current with the latest challenges and risks.
4. The LFRMS provides an overview of flood risk management across the county.
5. It outlines the roles and responsibilities of Risk Management Authorities and other stakeholders. The strategy has been developed by setting out five objectives to guide flood risk management efforts, with each objective being supported by a set of specific measures. The objectives relate to five key

areas: improving understanding, greater collaboration, ensuring holistic & sustainable approaches are used, preventing increases in flood risk and improved communication.

## **Background to Local Flood Risk Management Strategy (LFRMS)**

6. The County Council as the Lead Local Flood Authority (LLFA) is required to develop, maintain, apply and monitor a strategy for local flood risk management in its area (a “local flood risk management strategy”), as required by the Floods and Water Management Act 2010.

Local flood risk means flood risk from—

- surface runoff,
- groundwater, and
- ordinary watercourses.

7. It sets the framework and includes who the risk management authorities are and what they do, the objectives and measures for Oxfordshire and includes statutory and non-statutory elements of our work. It does not allocate land for development or develop its own policies.
8. The current Strategy was published in 2015, and it is required to be reviewed and updated around every 5 years. DEFRA were supposed to issue guidance in 2020 but did not. This delay meant the council was unable to prepare its strategy until after DEFRA confirmed it was not issuing guidance.
9. Wallingford Hydro Solutions were commissioned to update the strategy. They provide a range of environmental consultancy services focusing on the water environment. They have also undertaken Strategic Flood Risk Assessments for Oxford City Council, West Oxfordshire District Council and Cherwell District Council so they have a detailed understanding of current and future flood risk across the county.

## **Purpose of the Local Flood Risk Management Strategy**

10. The purpose of the strategy is to provide an overview of flood risk management across the county and identify the roles and responsibilities of Risk Management Authorities and other key stakeholders. The strategy aims to meet the requirements of the LLFAs role as set out under the Flood and Water Management Act 2010 by developing objectives and measures to manage local sources of flooding.



11. The strategy does not replicate or replace the National Flood and Coastal Erosion Risk Management (FCERM) Strategy as prepared by the Environment Agency and which is available here for reference [National Flood and Coastal Erosion Risk Management Strategy for England - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/61222/national_flood_and_coastal_erosion_risk_management_strategy_for_england.pdf).
12. The strategy does not cover how authorities should respond in an emergency event, or an incident response situation related to flooding. These are still covered by the Local Resilience Forums and multi-agency approaches under the Civil Contingencies Act.
13. The strategy does not allocate land for new developments or develop Local Planning policies, the evidence base for planning decisions in relation to flood risk sits within the Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (SFRA) prepared by the Local Planning Authority within the area.

## **Summary of Local Flood Risk Management Strategy 2015-2021**

14. The current published strategy had an action plan, and as part of the review and update, a review of this previously agreed actions was undertaken. This review and progress update on all actions is provided in Annex 1.
15. The majority of the actions were completed within the strategy period including the development of the Oxfordshire Flood toolkit to support engagement, establishment of the flood asset register, development of the flood warden pilot. Those that were not completed are considered to be ongoing actions or areas of work and will be continued within the updated strategy or incorporated items into business as usual.

## **What the 2025 strategy includes**

16. The strategy provides an overview of flood risk management across the county and the roles and responsibilities of Risk Management Authorities and other key stakeholders. The strategy also provides information for residents, businesses, and developers to help understand and manage flood risk.
17. Underpinning the strategy are a series of objectives and measures that will be followed to manage and where possible reduce flood risk within Oxfordshire. There are 5 objectives, and each objective has a set of measures that support achieving the objective. The objectives were based on the following:
  - Existing Strategy Objectives
  - Our statutory and non-statutory roles within flood risk management
  - Corporate Objectives
18. The objectives relate to five key areas: improving understanding, greater collaboration, ensuring holistic & sustainable approaches are used, preventing increases in flood risk and improved communication.

19. The updated strategy will cover a 5-year period but will also look at the longer-term consequences that need to be taken into account, particularly in relation to climate change.
20. The LFRMS is a statutory document and is required to be produced by OCC as the Lead Local Flood Authority. Other strategies such as the Highway Asset management Plan, emerging Local Nature Recovery Strategy and Climate Adaptation Strategy are likely to help support the objectives of the LFRMS.
21. As part of the LFRMS a screening process must be completed to decide if either a Habitats Regulations Assessment or a Strategic Environmental Assessment is needed. The screening process indicated that neither were required, and this screening has been submitted to the Environment Agency and Natural England for them to confirm the council's approach and conclusions. Natural England and the Environment Agency have confirmed the approach and agree with the conclusions.

## **Public Consultation**

22. The consultation for the LFRMS was conducted over the summer 2024. This involved the following:
  - Prior notification to the parish/ town councils that the consultation was due to be published in advance of the start date.
  - Oxfordshire Flood Toolkit updated to provide links to the Let's Talk page.
  - Draft Local Strategy sent to other Risk Management Authorities in advance (District and City Council, Environment Agency, Thames Water).
  - News item on the main OCC website with relevant links.
  - County Councillors were provided with advance warning of the consultation.
23. The consultation ran from 28 June 2024 to 23 August 2024 and included the Draft Local FRM Strategy document, the Draft Action plan and summary of previous strategy action plan.
24. A survey was prepared inviting responders to say if they agree or disagree with the objectives and measures, whether they had any specific comments on those or whether they thought anything was missing from the strategy.
25. The responses from the survey were very positive with over 70% of respondents either strongly agreeing or agreeing with all the objectives set out in the draft strategy. More information on the results of the consultation can be found in Annex 4.

26. Minor changes to the draft report were made following the consultation. This mostly involved clarifying some of the measures within the strategy and did not require any significant changes.

## **Corporate Policies and Priorities**

27. The Corporate Plan 2023-25 provides nine priorities and the LFRMS and the Action plan will contribute to a number of these priorities:
- Put action to address the climate emergency at the heart of our work.
  - Preserve and improve access to nature and green spaces.
  - Work with local businesses and partners for environmental, economic and social benefit.
28. The LFRMS will cover the LLFAs remit and responsibilities which are wide ranging including improving flood resilience through small scale works, undertaking regulatory activities, working with communities and partners to manage flood risk and inputting into the planning process.

## **Financial Implications**

29. The LFRMS sets out what Oxfordshire County Council as the Lead Local Flood Authority will undertake as part of its statutory role under the Flood and Water Management Act 2010.
30. It also provides objectives and measures including any actions that the county will take as part of wider flood risk management. These actions will be resourced through the current LLFA team and from existing revenue budget.

Comments checked by: Filipp Skiffins Assistant Finance Business Partner  
(filipp.skiffins:Oxfordshire.gov.uk ) on 15/11/2024.

## **Legal Implications**

31. Under Section 9(1) of the Flood and Water Management Act 2010 '*A lead local flood authority for an area in England must develop, maintain, apply and monitor a strategy for local flood risk management in its area*'. The LFRMS must also be consistent with the national flood and coastal erosion risk management strategy

for England and have regard to any guidance issued by the Secretary of State about producing a local flood risk management strategy.

32. The LFRMS proposed in this report meets the statutory requirements

Comments checked by: Jennifer Crouch, Head of Law and LBP Environmental Legal Services [Jennifer.crouch@oxfordshire.gov.uk](mailto:Jennifer.crouch@oxfordshire.gov.uk) on 11/11/2024

## **Staff Implications**

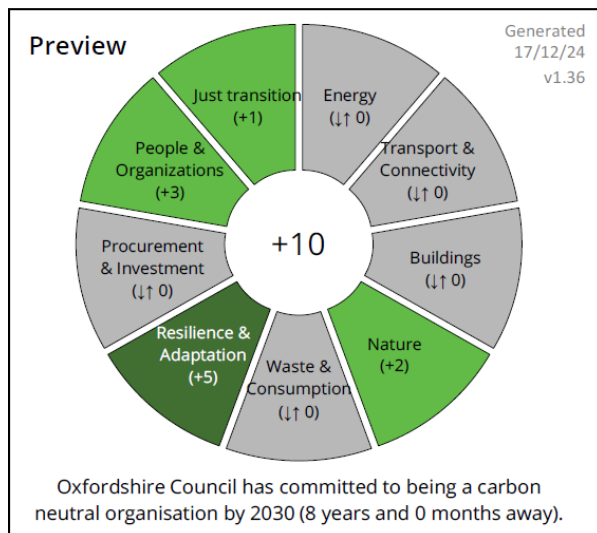
33. The Strategy will guide our LLFA role and staff resources currently in place within the Flood Risk Management Team as part of our business as usual.

## **Equality & Inclusion Implications**

34. The Equality Impact Assessment has been completed and identifies no impacts in relation to this assessment, the strategy is county wide and covers local sources of flooding which is a risk-based assessment of flood risk location.
35. A positive benefit has been identified through the overlap and joining up of other council services through measures that improve biodiversity and adaptations to climate change impacts.

## **Sustainability Implications**

36. The Climate Impact Assessment (CIA) has been completed and concludes that the LFRMS although covering statutory roles also promotes the improvement of flood resilience and adaptation in and by communities, with other authorities and through regulatory roles. The LFRMS objectives and measures support actions to address climate change and promote partnership and community involvement.



## Risk Management

37. A risk register has been developed for the implementation of the LFRMS and the main risk relates to staff resources in delivering the LFRMS.
38. The first risk, concerning insufficient staff resources, poses a medium threat to delivery and will be managed through regular resource reviews. Lastly, changes in legislation represent a low delivery risk and will be mitigated by monitoring legal updates and adjusting the action plan as needed.

## Engagement & Public Consultation

39. As well as the public consultation which was discussed in the above section called 'public consultation', other engagement took place internally at OCC and externally as part of the development of the strategy.
40. Engagement span from September 2023 to December 2024 and included both informal and formal meetings with internal OCC teams, external stakeholders and the public.
41. Key Milestones include:
  - Initial feedback and draft reviews with internal teams and Risk Management Authorities
  - Formal responses regarding SEA/HRA screening from the Environment Agency and Natural England.
  - Regular updates and strategy drafts presented to senior officers, relevant Portfolio Holders, Risk Management Authorities (The Environment Agency, District Councils, Thames Water), and other key groups such as the LLFA steering group. The steering group is made up of relevant officers within OCC who have a flood risk role. The steering group oversees several groups acting at a district level to manage flood risk.
  - Public consultation which ran from 28th June 2024 to 23rd August 2024

- Final strategy approval planned for January 2025 by Cabinet.

Paul Fermer - Director of Environment and Highways

Annex 1: Previous LFRMS 2015-21 action plan review

Annex 2: Local Flood Risk Management Strategy

Annex 3: Local Flood Risk Management Strategy Action Plan

Annex 4: Public consultation and responses

Background papers: Nil

Other Documents: Nil

Contact Officer:

Teresa Kirkham, Head of Environment & Circular Economy

Clare Mills, Operations Manager Flood Risk, [clare.mills@oxfordshire.gov.uk](mailto:clare.mills@oxfordshire.gov.uk)

November 2024



This page is intentionally left blank



Appendix 2  
Oxfordshire County Council Action Plan 2015 – 2021 (reviewed annually)

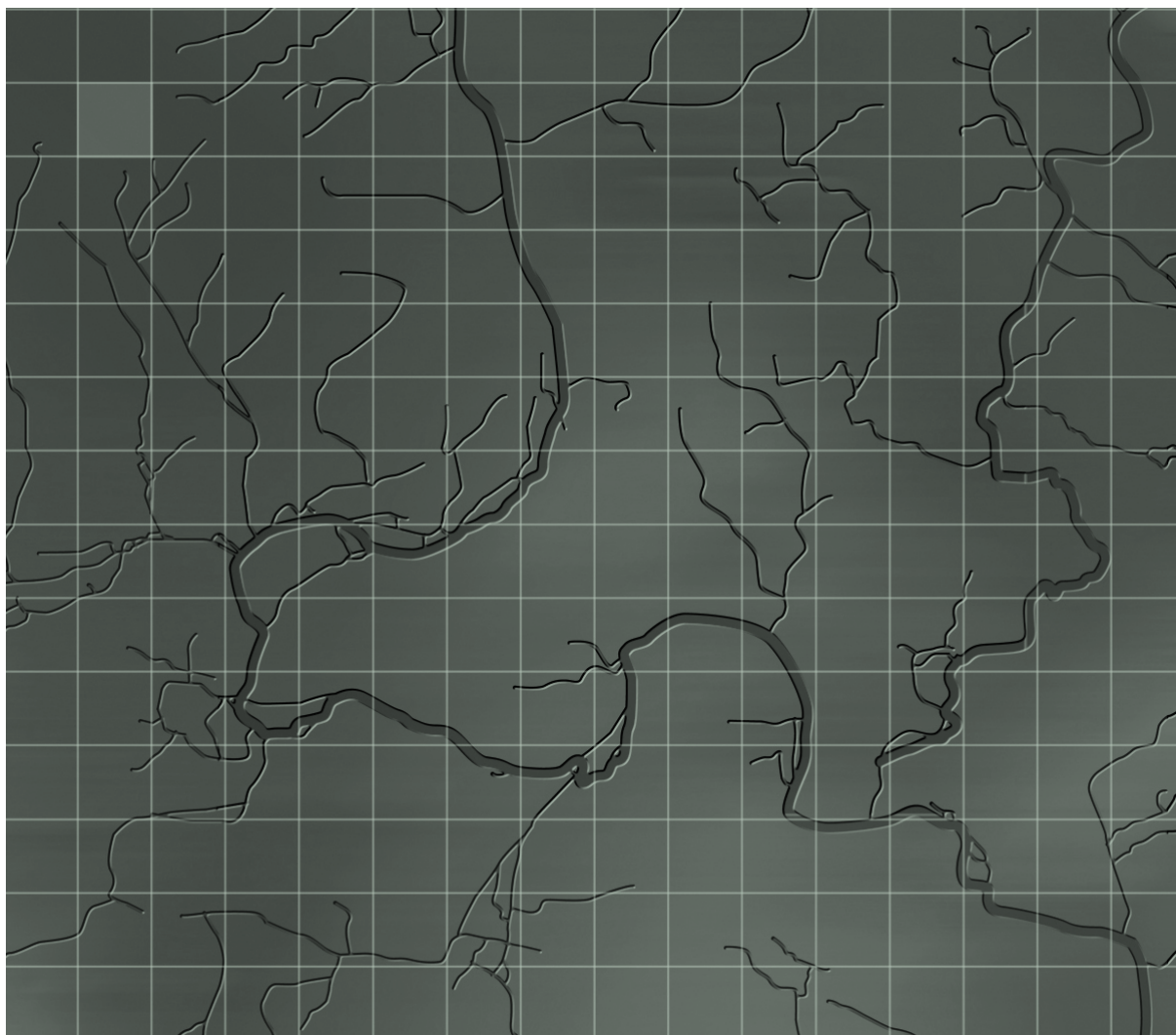
Ref:	Title	Description	Responsibility	Funding/Source	Timescale	Action	Status and comments and end of strategy period - 2024	Local Flood Risk Management Strategy Update - 2024
<b>1. Improve Understanding</b>								
1.1	Explanation of statutory duties of risk management authorities	Roles of Individuals, businesses and land managers	OCC	Lead Local Flood Authority	April 15	OCC website updated.	Completed - The Oxfordshire flood toolkit provides information on roles and responsibilities. This website is reviewed and updated when required.	This will be continued through the next strategy period under Objective 1: Improve understanding of flood risks and ensure that all stakeholders understand their roles and responsibilities for flood risk management.
1.2	Consider comments and representation s by property owners	On Flood Risk Management Decisions	OCC	Lead Local Flood Authority	Oct – Nov 2014	Consultation from strategy.	Completed during last LFRMS consultation and current expectation is that there will be a public consultation commencing in June 2024	NA - This will form part of the LFRMS public consultation
1.3	Information on flood risk	Easy formats for public use	EA & OCC	Lead Local Flood Authority	To be reviewed annually	Maintain updated flood risk information on the public website.	Completed - The Oxfordshire flood toolkit provides regular information including items such as Storm Henk and Section 19 formal flood investigation reports.	This will be continued through the next strategy period under Objective 1: Improve understanding of flood risks and ensure that all stakeholders understand their roles and responsibilities for flood risk management.
1.4	Information on residual flood risk	The public and businesses to make informed decisions	EA & OCC	Lead Local Flood Authority	To be reviewed annually	EA and County Council web site.	Ongoing - flood risk information is available on the Toolkit, we are expecting further information from DEFRA/EA for national flood risk mapping	
1.5	Develop guidance notes on surface water management issues	To inform the public and property owners on reducing flood risk	EA & OCC	Lead Local Flood Authority	April 16 and then reviewed annually	Review information published on County Council website. (Preparing for flooding).	Ongoing - we have reviewed the toolkit information as part of the toolkit refresh in 2023. The information is still relevant and does not require to be updated, but needs to be monitored.	This will be continued through the next strategy period under Objective 1: Improve understanding of flood risks and ensure that all stakeholders understand their roles and responsibilities for flood risk management.
1.6	Develop system to record flooding incidents	To inform the public and undertake flooding investigations	OCC	Lead Local Flood Authority	Reviewed annually	To be updated following flooding events. Thresholds set and published on website.	Completed - we now have a flood incident database which will soon be available on GIS internally initially. We are reviewing the section 19 formal flood investigations threshold in the summer of 2024. Information about on going flood investigations/S19s is published on the Flood Toolkit website.	Completed
1.7	Recording of flood assets	Available to the public	EA & OCC	Lead Local Flood Authority	Reviewed annually	Additional assets being recorded including: grips, headwalls, manholes and carrier drains. Countywide 3 year programme.	Completed - we have a flood risk asset register for internal OCC use and external public use. This shows information on highway, drainage assets, river information and Thames Water (internal use only). This is being updated as the background data is updated from the EA and Highways. A tool has been set up to allow SuDS and other flood risk assets to be added also through the SuDS Asset layer but	This will be continued through the next strategy period under Objective 1: Improve understanding of flood risks and ensure that all stakeholders understand their roles and responsibilities for flood risk management.
1.8	Designation of flood structures i.e walls, banks	Design a consistent approach	OCC & Partners	Lead Local Flood Authority	Reviewed annually	Schedule of flood structure to be developed identifying owner.	On hold - no designations progressed, data capture of existing assets is ongoing.	Data and asset information will be continued in the next strategy period.
1.9	Improve knowledge of surface water flood risks	Produce surface water management plans	OCC with the City and District Councils	Lead Local Flood Authority	Dec 15	Initially prioritise areas at significant risk from surface water flooding.	On going - We have developed a way of spatially mapping high flood risk areas based on surface water and flood incidents and are currently reviewing the output.	This will be continued through the next strategy period under Objective 1: Improve understanding of flood risks and ensure that all stakeholders understand their roles and responsibilities for flood risk management.
1.10	Promote flood resilience	Support and encourage communities concerning emergencies	OCC and Partners	Core Funding	Information updated annually	Continued promotion via County Council website.	On going - A number of sessions with district, parish and town Cllrs also undertaken at the Wallingford flood school promoting property level protection. We also used our flood incident reporting mechanism to allow us to qualify the County for the DEFRA funding for Storm Henk in relation to PFR - All the information was available on the Oxfordshire Toolkit including ability to apply online.	This will be continued through the next strategy period under Objective 1: Improve understanding of flood risks and ensure that all stakeholders understand their roles and responsibilities for flood risk management.
1.11	Co-ordinate flood risk management with emergency planning	Work closely with County Council Emergency Planning and Severe Weather Manager	OCC, EA and City and District Councils	Core Funding	Quarterly meetings	Regular liaison meetings between Drainage, Emergency Planning and Severe weather Manager.	Completed - Emergency planning attend our RMA quarterly meetings and we also coordinate together for events such as running PFR sessions at Wallingford flood school. The Resilience team also sit on the LLFA Steering group within the County	This will be continued through the next strategy period under Objective 1: Improve understanding of flood risks and ensure that all stakeholders understand their roles and responsibilities for flood risk management.
<b>2. Take a Collaborative Approach</b>								
2.1	Oxfordshire Strategic Flooding Group	Develop partnership work	OCC & Partners	Core Funding	Quarterly meetings	To review progress against the Action Plan.	We hold a RMA quarterly meeting with the Districts, Thames Water and the EA. There are also strategic meetings held with Thames Water.	
2.2	Oxfordshire Strategic Flooding Group	Invite emergency planning	OCC & Partners	Core Funding	January 2015	Emergency Planning attends meetings from January.	Completed/ on going - Emergency planning attend our RMA quarterly meetings. The LLFA Steering group which has OCC officers from different teams also is held monthly.	This will be continued through the next strategy period under Objective 2: Take a collaborative approach to reducing flood risks, using all available resources and funds in an integrated way and in so doing manage and reduce overall flood risk.
2.3	Forward planning on potential schemes	Reduce short and longer term flood risk	OCC & Partners	Core Funding	Reviewed Annually	To have developed a plan of forward schemes from relevant partners. Create a graphic review of partner's programmes.	Ongoing - Due to funding and resource issues this has not been progressed. We have developed a LLFA priority actions small scale list, with input from the District and City officers and also parishes. There is also project by project support such as the Littleworth NFM project. On-going - we have regular meetings with our Thames Flood Advisors who offer support for applying for funding and provide information on new funding. We also work closely with our district	This will be continued through the next strategy period under Objective 2: Take a collaborative approach to reducing flood risks, using all available resources and funds in an integrated way and in so doing manage and reduce overall flood risk.
2.4	Oxford and Abingdon Flood Alleviation Schemes	Investigate the potential scheme and financial contributions required.	OCC & Partners	GIA, Levy and partnership contributions	April 2016	To work with partners in order to identify further sources of funding.	We sit on the sponsorship board also the project board for OFAS and provide input and support where appropriate	This will be continued through the next strategy period under Objective 2: Take a collaborative approach to reducing flood risks, using all available resources and funds in an integrated way and in so doing manage and reduce overall flood risk.
2.5	Funding schemes	Co-ordinate funding opportunities available for potential schemes	OCC & Partners	Lead Local Flood Authority	April 2015 and thereafter annually	To review potential schemes by the Strategic Flooding Group. To add as agenda item on the Oxfordshire Strategic Flooding Group.	On-going - partners including district colleagues and Thames Flood Advisors attend quarterly RMA meetings where funding opportunities are discussed. We do not have any schemes currently.	This will be continued through the next strategy period under Objective 2: Take a collaborative approach to reducing flood risks, using all available resources and funds in an integrated way and in so doing manage and reduce overall flood risk.
2.6	Assess resources and skills	To identify flood risk management program	OCC & Partners	Core Funding	Reviewed annually	Agreed by the Strategic Flooding Group.	During 2023 the Flood risk team was formed as a individual team covering the LLFA functions. The Directorate went through a restructure at the end of 2024 where the flood risk team was provided with a structure with permanent roles in order for the resilience of the team to be developed. We	NA
2.7	Promote good practice	On consenting, enforcement and maintenance	OCC & Partners	Core and Lead Local Flood Authority	Reviewed annually	Using County Council and partner websites.	Completed/ on-going - enforcement procedure drafted as part of the agency agreement between OCC and the District Councils. Template letters are also available on the FTR website for parish/ town councils to use.	Completed
2.8	Work with partners	Provide information on riparian responsibilities	EA, OCC & Partners	Core Funding	Reviewed annually	Using County Council and partner websites arrange meetings with larger land owners to discuss issues of riparian ownership.	Completed- information is available for riparian owners on the Flood Toolkit website. An information poster is also to be distributed to parish councils and land owners in 2024.	This will be continued through the next strategy period under Objective 1: Improve understanding of flood risks and ensure that all stakeholders understand their roles and responsibilities for flood risk management.
2.9	Records management	Structures affecting flood management	EA, OCC & Partners	Lead Local Flood Authority	Reviewed annually	Schedule of flood structure to be developed identifying owner.	Completed - we have a flood risk asset register for internal OCC use and external public use. This is constantly being updated and more information added to it e.g. flood incidents & SuDS assets.	This will be continued through the next strategy period under Objective 2: Take a collaborative approach to reducing flood risks, using all available resources and funds in an integrated way and in so doing manage and reduce overall flood risk.
2.10	Establish effective governance arrangements for the Flood Risk Management Strategy	To report progress against the Strategy Action Plan to the Oxfordshire Environmental Partnership	OCC	OCC	Reviewed annually	Reviewed annually, next review December 2015.	On going - we currently have an update draft strategy which is due to go to public consultation in June 2024.	Strategy review will be undertaken annually following publication and will be directed through the OCC governance arrangements.
<b>3. Prevent an increase in Flood Risk</b>								
3.1	Lead Local Flood Authority to comment on all major planning application as a statutory consultee	To Defra guidelines	OCC	Core Funding	April 15 onwards	OCC is carrying out statutory consultee duties as required by the legislation.	On-going - The teams resilience is being improved by recruiting a number of permanent staff to provide key skills in this area.	This will be continued through the next strategy period under Objective 2: Take a collaborative approach to reducing flood risks, using all available resources and funds in an integrated way and in so doing manage and reduce overall flood risk.
3.2	Working with Planning Authorities	Guidance on SuDS	OCC & Partners	Core Funding	To be confirmed	OCC is carrying out statutory consultee duties as required by the legislation.	Completed - The Local SuDS standards were prepared and are currently available on the website. OCC continue to review and respond to major applications with surface water drainage. We also offer a pre-application service to developers for a charge.	This will be continued through the next strategy period under Objective 4: Prevent an increase in flood risk from development where possible, by preventing additional flow entering existing drainage systems and watercourses.
3.3	Developers Guidelines	Guidance on SuDS	OCC & Partners	Core Funding	Commenced. Final approach to be confirmed	OCC is carrying out statutory consultee duties as required by the legislation.	Completed - The Local SuDS standards were prepared and are currently available on the website. OCC continue to review and respond to major applications with surface water drainage. We also offer a pre-application service to developers for a charge.	This will be continued through the next strategy period under Objective 4: Prevent an increase in flood risk from development where possible, by preventing additional flow entering existing drainage systems and watercourses.
3.4	Riparian land ownership	Work with land owners to ensure responsibilities are carried out and to also develop a process for enforcement	OCC & Partners	Core Funding	Reviewed annually	Promote Riparian responsibilities via County Council website.	Completed - information is available for riparian owners on the Flood Toolkit website. An information poster is also to be distributed to parish councils and land owners in 2024.	This will be continued through the next strategy period under Objective 3: Take a sustainable and holistic approach to flood risk management, seeking to deliver wider environmental and social benefits, climate change mitigation and improvements under the Water Framework Directive.
3.5	Flooding database	Guidance for risk management authorities	OCC	Lead Local Flood Authority	Reviewed annually	Details of all flooding events have been collated, information to be mapped and used for informing possible future schemes.	Completed - we now have a flood incident database which will soon be available on GIS, we now also have a flood prioritisation tool which can be used to highlight flood risk, including surface water flood risk.	This will be continued through the next strategy period under Objective 1: Improve understanding of flood risks and ensure that all stakeholders understand their roles and responsibilities for flood risk management.
3.6	Groundwater flood risk	Collate information for advance warning of areas with potential groundwater flood risk	OCC & Local Resilience Forum	Lead Local Flood Authority	April 16	Existing groundwater flood maps shall be cross referenced with historical information and local knowledge.	Ongoing - we are currently working as a partner to the Project Groundwater team which has been funded through DEFRA/EA to develop tools for assessing and considering groundwater risks.	This will be continued through the next strategy period under Objective 2: Take a collaborative approach to reducing flood risks, using all available resources and funds in an integrated way and in so doing manage and reduce overall flood risk.
<b>4. Take a Sustainable and Holistic Approach</b>								
4.1	Community Resilience - Flood Plans	Work with communities and parish councils to establish flood management plans	OCC & Partners	Core Funding	Reviewed annually	Promote the adoption of Flood Plans by Parish Councils. Flood maps to be provided where required.	On-going - we work with the Emergency Planning Team to help parishes establish plans, especially following s19 reports. Information is also available on the Flood Toolkit website.	This will be continued through the next strategy period under Objective 2: Take a collaborative approach to reducing flood risks, using all available resources and funds in an integrated way and in so doing manage and reduce overall flood risk.
4.2	Community Resilience - Communications	Increase the level of communications about self help and support available	OCC & Partners	Core Funding	Reviewed annually	Community Resilience is reviewed on an annual basis. Flood maps to be provided where required.	Completed - flood maps are available on the Flood Toolkit website along with other information booklets, we have ran sessions with district, parish and town Cllrs at Wallingford flood school promoting property level protection. We also qualified for the sotrm Henk DEFRA PFR funding which is on going and all information is available on the Flood Toolkit website.	This will be continued through the next strategy period under Objective 1: Improve understanding of flood risks and ensure that all stakeholders understand their roles and responsibilities for flood risk management.
4.3	Community Resilience – removing barriers	Work with volunteers to remove the barriers to clearing watercourses	OCC & Partners	Core Funding	Reviewed annually	Promoted via Parish Councils and local flood groups.	Ongoing - party within the flood warden pilot and the availability of the parishes to issue riparian owns letters, which are available on the Flood toolkit.	This will be continued through the next strategy period under Objective 3: Take a sustainable and holistic approach to flood risk management, seeking to deliver wider environmental and social benefits, climate change mitigation and improvements under the Water Framework Directive.
4.4	Flood Volunteers	Consider the use of the national website for flood volunteers	OCC & Partners	Core Funding	Reviewed annually	Promote the use of volunteers at a Parish Council level and via Community events.	Completed -We have successfully ran a flood warden pilot scheme in 3 locations across the county for 12 months. This was a success and we are now expanding this across the county and will become business as usual.	This will be continued through the next strategy period under Objective 3: Take a sustainable and holistic approach to flood risk management, seeking to deliver wider environmental and social benefits, climate change mitigation and improvements under the Water Framework Directive.
4.5	Training	Improve training for Customer Service Advisors in dealing with flood related issues	OCC	Core Funding	Reviewed annually	Produce guidance that is reviewed annually to provide appropriate information for Customer Service Advisors.	Ongoing - this is to be continually updated following the promotion of the Flood Toolkit information.	This will be continued through the next strategy period under Objective 1: Improve understanding of flood risks and ensure that all stakeholders understand their roles and responsibilities for flood risk management.
4.6	Promote SuDS design in master planning	Blue and Green Corridors	OCC & Partners	Core Funding	Reviewed annually	County Council Drainage team to attend all relevant Master Planning meetings.	The Local SuDS standards were prepared and are currently available on the website. OCC continue to review and respond to major applications with surface water drainage. We also offer a pre-application service to developers for a	This will be continued through the next strategy period under Objective 4: Prevent an increase in flood risk from development where possible, by preventing additional flow entering existing drainage systems and watercourses.
4.7	Flood risk management schemes	Take account of all plans and policies	OCC & Partners	Capital Programme	Reviewed when appropriate	To monitor the impact of new policies.	Ongoing - new flood risk policies from central government have remained largely unchanged. The SuDS approving body has of yet come forward. Other policies around the biodiversity net gain for example are dealt with across multi-functional workg groups within OCC.	This will be continued through the next strategy period under Objective 3: Take a sustainable and holistic approach to flood risk management, seeking to deliver wider environmental and social benefits, climate change mitigation and improvements under the Water Framework Directive.
4.8	Develop and publish guidance documentation	Include guidance on flood management and environmental issues	OCC & Partners	Lead Local Flood Authority	October 2015 and review as appropriate	Provide links to national and local information as appropriate.	Completed - information is published on the Flood Toolkit website and updates are circulated to partners.	This will be continued through the next strategy period under Objective 5: Seek opportunities to communicate to people the potential impacts of flooding and how they can reduce the impact.
<b>Lead Organisation Key:</b> OCC – Oxfordshire County Council EA – Environment Agency WODC – West Oxfordshire District Council South & Vale – South Oxfordshire & Vale of White Horse District Council City Council – Oxford City Council Cherwell DC – Cherwell District Council E&RE – Environmental & Resource Efficiency EP – Emergency Planning								



This page is intentionally left blank

October 2024

# **Oxfordshire Local Flood Risk Management Strategy**



## Oxfordshire County Council

### Oxfordshire Local Flood Risk Management Strategy

#### Document issue details

WHS10034

Version	Issue date	Issue status	Prepared By	Approved By
4.0	25/10/2024	Draft	Daniel Hamilton (Principal Consultant)	Paul Blackman (Director)

For and on behalf of Wallingford HydroSolutions Ltd.

This report has been prepared by WHS with all reasonable skill, care and diligence within the terms of the Contract with the client and taking account of both the resources allocated to it by agreement with the client and the data that was available to us. We disclaim any responsibility to the client and others in respect of any matters outside the scope of the above. This report is confidential to the client and we accept no responsibility of any nature to third parties to whom this report, or any part thereof, is made known. Any such party relies on the report at their own risk.



The WHS Quality & Environmental Management system is certified as meeting the requirements of ISO 9001:2015 and ISO 14001:2015 providing environmental consultancy (including monitoring and surveying), the development of hydrological software and associated training.

## Contents

<b>1</b>	<b>Introduction</b>	<b>6</b>
1.1	Background	6
1.2	Scope	6
<b>2</b>	<b>Legislative and Strategic Context</b>	<b>8</b>
<b>3</b>	<b>Links to National Strategy</b>	<b>14</b>
3.1	Consistency with the National Strategy	14
3.2	Reporting on the Strategy	15
<b>4</b>	<b>Risk Management Authorities and Functions</b>	<b>16</b>
4.1	Risk Management Authorities	16
4.2	Working Arrangements	21
<b>5</b>	<b>Flood Risk in Oxfordshire</b>	<b>23</b>
5.1	Flood Risk Definition	23
5.2	About Oxfordshire	23
5.3	Fluvial Flood Risk	23
5.4	Surface Water Flood Risk	25
5.5	Groundwater Flood Risk	25
5.6	Sewer Flood Risk	27
5.7	Reservoir Flood Risk	27
<b>6</b>	<b>Objectives &amp; Measures</b>	<b>29</b>
6.2	Objective 1 - Improve understanding	32
6.3	Objective 2 - Taking a Collaborative Approach	35
6.4	Objective 3 - Take a Sustainable and Holistic Approach	37
6.5	Objective 4 - Prevent an Increase in Flood Risk	42
6.6	Objective 5 - Communicate to People	45
<b>7</b>	<b>Implementation</b>	<b>49</b>
7.1	Investment	49
7.2	Funding	49
7.3	Prioritisation	52
<b>8</b>	<b>Monitoring and Reviewing the Strategy</b>	<b>53</b>
8.1	Consultation	53
8.2	Monitoring Procedures and Updating the Strategy	53
	<b>Glossary</b>	<b>54</b>

# 1 Introduction

## 1.1 Background

Wallingford HydroSolutions (WHS) has been commissioned by Oxfordshire County Council (OCC) to undertake a Local Flood Risk Management Strategy (LFRMS). OCC is the Lead Local Flood Authority (LLFA). OCC, working in partnership with key stakeholders, is required to develop, apply, and monitor an LFRMS under the Flood and Water Management Act (2010). OCC's current strategy was written in 2016 and a new strategy is now required.

The LFRMS is a statutory document and Oxfordshire's Risk Management Authorities (RMAs) have a duty to act consistently with the strategy with respect to flood risk management. The strategy provides an overview of flood risk management across the county and the roles and responsibilities of RMAs and other key stakeholders. The strategy also provides information for residents, businesses, and developers to help understand and manage flood risk.

Underpinning the strategy are a series of objectives and measures that will be followed to manage and where possible reduce flood risk within Oxfordshire. These are set out in this document, along with detail on how they will be implemented and monitored through the plan period.

## 1.2 Scope

In developing the LFRMS five key stages, as set out in current guidance,<sup>1</sup> have been followed. These are outlined below:

- Understand Flood Risk
  - Explain and define flood risk issues in Oxfordshire.
  - Incorporate understanding of flood risk authorities working in Oxfordshire.
- Set Objectives
  - Ensure these align with the National Flood and Coastal Erosion Management (FCERM) strategy.
  - Work with others to set holistic objectives which address multiple issues in the community.
  - Objectives should seek to reduce local flood risk.
  - Objectives should encourage public awareness and facilitate engagement with other RMAs.
- Choose Measures
  - Should align with updated objectives.
  - Should be appropriate to the local setting and the consequences of flood risk.
  - Funding and viability should be considered.
  - Costs and benefits should be considered.
- Implementation
  - Details potential funding for measures.
  - Covers assignment of responsibilities and collaboration needed with other RMAs.
- Monitor and Review
  - Sets out how the strategy will be monitored.
  - Details what will trigger a review.

---

<sup>1</sup> Local Government Association, *Develop a local flood risk management strategy*  
<https://www.local.gov.uk/topics/severe-weather/flooding/local-flood-risk-management-strategies-lfrms-guidance/develop-local> accessed 19/01/2023



The strategy will cover a five-year period but also look at the longer-term consequences that need to be taken into account, particularly in relation to climate change. It will apply to flood risk management across the Oxfordshire administrative area which is shown in Figure 1 below.

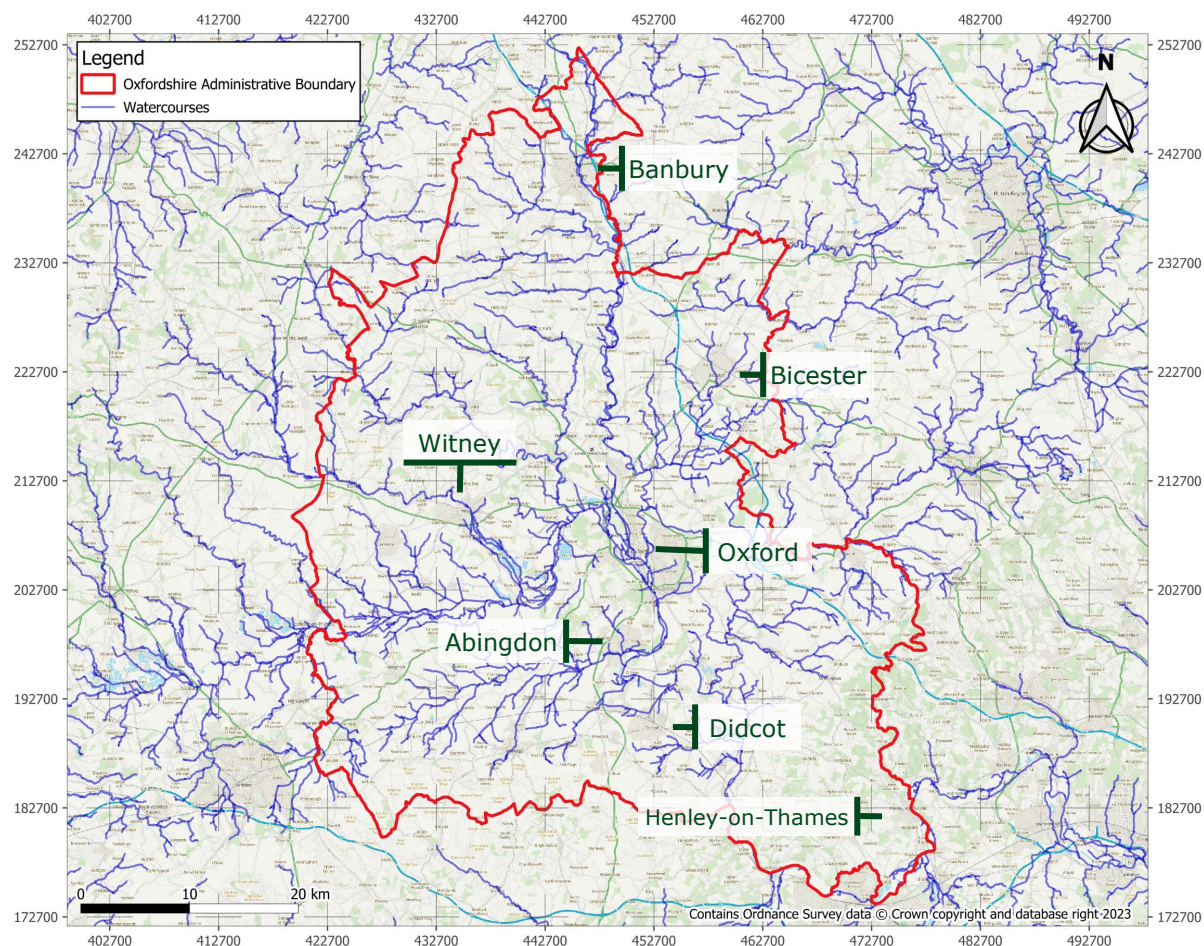


Figure 1- Overview of Study Area with key conurbations marked

## 2 Legislative and Strategic Context

### 2.1.1 Flood and Water Management Act 2010

The Flood and Water Management Act (FWMA) (2010)<sup>2</sup>, sets out legislation on the management of risks in connection with flooding and coastal erosion for the United Kingdom. It highlights the need for an effective flood risk strategy, which must be developed, maintained, applied, and monitored regularly to adequately manage flood risk.

It gives a responsibility to the Environment Agency (EA) for developing a National FCERM Strategy and a responsibility to local authorities (LAs), as LLFAs, to co-ordinate flood risk management in their respective area.

Section 9 of the FWMA, requires LLFAs to develop, apply and monitor an LFRMS for local flood risk management in its area. This strategy has been produced by OCC as the LLFA to fulfil the requirements set out in the FWMA and follows guidance from the Local Government Association<sup>3</sup>. As well as being a legal requirement the LFRMS contributes to delivery of several priorities in OCC's wider strategic plan<sup>4</sup>.

Other duties for the LLFA stated in the FWMA include consenting work on ordinary watercourses, investigating and reporting on significant flooding incidents, acting as a statutory consultee for major planning applications with surface water drainage implications and maintaining a register of designated flood assets and features (e.g. drains, ditches, pipes, gullies etc).

A significant forthcoming development is the implementation of Schedule 3 of the Act, which is expected during 2024. Schedule 3 provides a framework for the approval and adoption of drainage systems, a sustainable drainage system approving body (SAB) within LLFAs, and national standards on the design, construction, operation, and maintenance of sustainable drainage systems (SuDS) for the lifetime of the development. As noted above LLFAs within England are expected to take on the role of SABs which will bring a new set of responsibilities in the future. The potential impacts of Schedule 3 have been considered in development of this strategy. More detail on the roles, responsibilities and powers of the LLFA are provided in section 4.

### 2.1.2 National Strategy for Flood and Coastal Erosion Risk Management

The FWMA (2010) sets out how the EA must develop, maintain, and apply a National Strategy for FCERM in England. The most recent strategy was published in July 2020<sup>5</sup>. The strategy sets out how the EA will manage the risks from flooding and coastal erosion across England. It clarifies roles and responsibilities before setting out the policies and direction for all England's Flood RMAs to follow, with measures also specified to explain how targets will be achieved. The strategy highlights the importance of climate resilience in the development of future infrastructure and communicating flood and climate risk to the public.

---

<sup>2</sup> UK Parliament (2010) *Flood and Water Management Act*, <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2010/29/contents>

<sup>3</sup> Local Government Association, Develop a local flood risk management strategy <https://www.local.gov.uk/topics/severe-weather/flooding/local-flood-risk-management-strategies-lfrms-guidance/develop-local> accessed 19/01/2023.

<sup>4</sup> OCC (2023) *Strategic plan 2023-2025*, [www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/sites/default/files/file/about-council/OCCStrategicPlan2022.pdf](http://www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/sites/default/files/file/about-council/OCCStrategicPlan2022.pdf)

<sup>5</sup> EA (2020) *National Strategy for Flood and Coastal Erosion Risk Management*, [https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/920944/023\\_15482\\_Environment\\_agency\\_digitalAW\\_Strategy.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/920944/023_15482_Environment_agency_digitalAW_Strategy.pdf)



This strategy has been produced to align with the objectives and principles described by the National FCERM Strategy (section 3.1 provides more detail on the national strategy).

### 2.1.3 Thames River Basin District Flood Risk Management Plan 2021-2027

The Flood Risk Regulations (2009) require the EA to work with LLFAs and other partners to develop FRMPs on a six-year cycle. Since UK left the European Union in 2020, the regulations were revoked before being fully retained by the Retained EU Law (Revocation and Reform) Act (2023)<sup>6</sup>.

The latest FRMPs for England cover the period from 2021-2027. These strategic plans focus on the most significant areas of flooding and describe the risk of flooding now and in the future. They explain the objectives and the measures (actions) needed to manage flood risk at a national and local level.

National measures that apply to all river basin districts are described in a national overview document (part a)<sup>7</sup>. Measures that apply to specific river basin districts in nationally identified flood risk areas are described in 10 local flood risk management plans (part b). The relevant FRMP for Oxfordshire is the Thames River Basin FRMP 2021-2027<sup>8</sup>. The individual river basin districts selected including the Thames basin are defined by the Water Environment (Water Framework Directive) (England and Wales) Regulations 2017<sup>9</sup>. According to the EA, the FRMP helps the EA and others to:

- Identify measures (actions) that will reduce the likelihood and consequences of flooding.
- To improve resilience, which is the capacity of people and places to plan for, better protect, respond to, and to recover from flooding and coastal change, while informing the delivery of existing flood programmes.
- Work in partnership to deliver wider resilience measures. These include nature-based solutions, property flood resilience and SuDS.
- Plan and adapt to a changing climate through developing longer-term, adaptive approaches.

The key measures identified for the Thames FRMP are listed below. They are largely the responsibility of the EA however do require the support of other RMAs in many cases. They include to:

- Seek and support early engagement on large third-party infrastructure in Thames River Basin District
- Work as part of the Collaborative Delivery Framework to promote new ways of working in Thames River Basin District
- Work in partnership including with Thames Flood Advisors to support all LLFAs to apply for Government funding in the Thames River Basin District
- Work in partnership to develop a catchment-scale approach which will complement local flood risk schemes in the non-tidal River Thames catchment (Thames Valley)
- Work in partnership with other RMAs to support proactive development of strategic environmental plans in the Thames River Basin District
- Work in partnership with other RMAs to support the implementation of the Thames Regional Flood and Coastal Committee 25-year vision in the Thames River Basin District

---

<sup>6</sup> UK Government (2023) *Retained EU Law (Revocation and Reform) Act 2023*  
<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2023/28/contents>

<sup>7</sup> EA (2022) *National overview (part a)* <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/flood-risk-management-plans-2021-to-2027-national-overview-part-a/national-overview-part-a>

<sup>8</sup> EA (2022) *Thames River Basin District Flood Risk Management Plan 2021 to 2027*

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/thames-river-basin-district-flood-risk-management-plan>

<sup>9</sup> UK Government (2017) *The Water Environment (Water Framework Directive) (England and Wales) Regulations 2017* <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/2017/407/contents>

The FRMPs are an important contribution towards helping to deliver the ambitions of the National FCERM Strategy for England, in addition to the government's 25-year environment plan<sup>10</sup>.

### 2.1.4 National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)

The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)<sup>11</sup> sets out the Government's planning policies for England and how these should be applied. It provides a framework within which locally prepared plans for housing and other development can be produced. The latest NPPF was updated in September 2023 and replaces the previous NPPF published in July 2021.

In terms of flood risk, the NPPF sets out strict tests to protect people and property from flooding which all local planning authorities are expected to follow. The NPPF details the types of development permissible within specific flood risk zones. It also places onus on how a sequential risk-based approach (the sequential test) should be taken for development to ensure that it is directed away from areas at highest risk. Where development is necessary in such areas, an exception test should be applied ensuring development is i) made safe for its lifetime without increasing flood risk elsewhere, and ii) provides wider sustainability benefits to the community.

### 2.1.5 NPPF Flood Zones

As mentioned above, the NPPF categorises areas within the fluvial floodplain into zones of low, medium and high probability, as shown in Table 1.

Table 1- Flood Zones

Flood Zone	Definition
Flood Zone 1 (Low Probability)	Land having a less than 0.1% annual probability of river or sea flooding.
Flood Zone 2 (Medium Probability)	Land having between a 1% and 0.1% annual probability of river flooding; or land having between a 0.5% and 0.1% annual probability of sea flooding.
Flood Zone 3a (High Probability)	Land having a 1% or greater annual probability of river flooding; or land having a 0.5% or greater annual probability of sea flooding.
Flood Zone 3b (Functional Floodplain)	<p>This zone comprises land where water from rivers or the sea has to flow or be stored in times of flood. The identification of functional floodplain should take account of local circumstances and not be defined solely on rigid probability parameters. Functional floodplain will normally comprise:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• land having a 3.3% or greater annual probability of flooding, with any existing flood risk management infrastructure operating effectively; or</li> <li>• land that is designed to flood (such as a flood attenuation scheme), even if it would only flood in more extreme events (such as 0.1% annual probability of flooding).</li> </ul>

<sup>10</sup> HM Government (2018) *A Green Future: Our 25 Year Plan to Improve the Environment* <https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/5ab3a67840f0b65bb584297e/25-year-environment-plan.pdf>

<sup>11</sup> Ministry of Housing, Communities & Local Government (2023) *National Planning Policy Framework*, [https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/1182995/NPPF\\_Sept\\_23.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/1182995/NPPF_Sept_23.pdf)

Flood risk is a function of the probability of a flood occurrence and the direct consequences to the community or a receptor. On this basis, as shown in Table 2 different development types are assigned a vulnerability category which determines which flood zones they are permitted in. The types of development falling within each category (e.g. Residential classed as More vulnerable) are provided in the NPPF.

Table 2- NPPF flood risk vulnerability and flood zone compatibility

Flood Zone	Essential Infrastructure	Water Compatible	Highly vulnerable	More vulnerable	Less vulnerable
Flood Zone 1	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Flood Zone 2	✓	✓	Exception Test required	✓	✓
Flood Zone 3a	Exception Test required	✓	✗	Exception Test required	✓
Flood Zone 3b	Exception Test required	✓	✗	✗	✗

## 2.1.6 Planning Practice Guidance- Flood Risk and coastal change

The Planning Practice Guidance (PPG)<sup>12</sup> supports the NPPF. The PPG on flood risk and coastal change was last updated in June 2021 and advises how to take account of and address the risks associated with flooding and coastal change in the planning process. It supports and aligns with the principles adopted by the NPPF but sets out more specific guidance for developers and planners.

### 2.1.7 Climate Change

The EA release guidance<sup>13</sup> on how local planning authorities, developers and their agents should use climate change allowances in flood risk assessments (FRAs). Making allowances for climate change minimises vulnerability and provides resilience to flooding and coastal change.

The climate change allowances are predictions of anticipated change and are provided for:

- Peak river flow
- Peak rainfall intensity
- Sea level rise
- Offshore wind speed and extreme wave height

There are allowances for different climate scenarios over different epochs, or periods of time, over the coming century. For Oxfordshire the peak river flow and peak rainfall intensity allowances are relevant and are covered in more detail below.

#### Peak river flow

Peak river flow allowances show the anticipated changes to peak flow by management catchment. Management catchments are sub-catchments of river basin districts. The range of allowances is based on percentiles, as follows.

- Central allowance is based on the 50<sup>th</sup> percentile.
- Higher Central allowance is based on the 70<sup>th</sup> percentile.

<sup>12</sup> Ministry of Housing, Communities & Local Government (2022) *Flood risk and coastal change*, <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/flood-risk-and-coastal-change>

<sup>13</sup> EA (2022), *Flood risk assessments: climate change allowances*, <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/flood-risk-assessments-climate-change-allowances>

- Upper End allowance is based on the 95<sup>th</sup> percentile.

The Oxfordshire administrative boundary crosses five management catchments in total. The peak river flow allowances for the five management catchments are summarised in Table 3.

Table 3- Peak River flow allowances for Oxfordshire Management Catchments

Allowance	Total Potential Change (2020s)	Total Potential Change (2050s)	Total Potential Change (2080s)
<b><i>Cherwell and Ray</i></b>			
Central	6%	4%	15%
Higher	11%	10%	25%
Upper	24%	27%	49%
<b><i>Cotswolds</i></b>			
Central	11%	13%	30%
Higher	17%	21%	43%
Upper	31%	43%	82%
<b><i>Gloucestershire and the Vale</i></b>			
Central	11%	11%	26%
Higher	17%	19%	41%
Upper	33%	43%	84%
<b><i>Thames and South Chilterns</i></b>			
Central	12%	14%	31%
Higher	17%	22%	43%
Upper	30%	42%	76%
<b><i>Upper and Bedford Ouse</i></b>			
Central	5%	4%	19%
Higher	10%	11%	30%
Upper	24%	30%	58%

## Peak rainfall

Increased rainfall affects surface water flood risk and the design of drainage systems. Peak rainfall allowances are provided for the central and upper percentile and across two epochs. Once more the allowances are specified for each management catchment. The five management catchments spanning the county have the same central and upper end allowances. These are summarised in Table 4.

Table 4- Peak rainfall allowances applicable to Oxford City

Allowance	Total Potential Change (2050s)	Total Potential Change (2070s)
<b>3.3% Annual Exceedance Probability (AEP)</b>		
Central	20%	25%
Upper	35%	35%
<b>1.0% Annual Exceedance Probability (AEP)</b>		
Central	20%	25%
Upper	40%	40%

### 2.1.8 Non-statutory guidance for SuDS

The non-statutory guidance<sup>14</sup> for SuDS published by the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Defra) in 2015, sets out the technical standards for SuDS systems in England. For greenfield developments, the peak runoff rate from the development to any highway drain, sewer, or surface water body for the 1 in 1 year and 1 in 100-year rainfall event should never exceed the peak greenfield runoff rate for the same event. For developments which were previously developed, the peak runoff rate from the development must be as close as reasonably practicable to the equivalent greenfield runoff rate over the same area; never exceeding the rate of discharge from the development prior to redevelopment for any event.

### 2.1.9 OCC Strategies

Alongside the LFRMS, OCC are also in the process of developing a local nature recovery strategy<sup>15</sup>. Currently the draft strategy is out for consultation. The strategy looks to deliver on the Environment Act 2021<sup>16</sup> and outlines the importance of the natural landscape in Oxfordshire. It sets out how the council will work with others to recover nature and improve air and water quality across Oxfordshire.

Also being developed is the Oxfordshire Climate Adaptation Route Map<sup>17</sup>. The route map is currently in draft status, to be approved by Cabinet in early 2025. OCC, Oxford City Council and the four Oxfordshire District Councils declared a Climate Emergency in 2019, making significant commitments towards net-zero before 2050 as well as climate action to improve climate resilience. The route map aims to set out how OCC will look to achieve this. A climate vulnerability assessment has been undertaken as part of the work and investigates the potential impacts of climate change on Oxfordshire including on flood risk.

---

<sup>14</sup> Department for Environmental, Food and Rural Affairs (2015) *Sustainable Drainage Systems Non-statutory technical standards for sustainable drainage systems*, [https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/415773/sustainable-drainage-technical-standards.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/415773/sustainable-drainage-technical-standards.pdf)

<sup>15</sup> OCC(2024) *Local Nature Recovery Strategy* <https://www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/residents/environment-and-planning/local-nature-recovery-strategy>

<sup>16</sup> UK Government (2021) *Environment Act 2021* <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2021/30/contents>

<sup>17</sup> OCC(2024) *Oxfordshire Climate Adaption Route Map* <https://insight.oxfordshire.gov.uk/cms/environment>

## 3 Links to National Strategy

### 3.1 Consistency with the National Strategy

The National Flood and Coastal Erosion Risk Management Strategy for England is a statutory document and has been produced by the EA under the FWMA (2010). It sets out a framework for flood risk and coastal erosion risk management and what is required of the RMAs involved. The aim of the National Strategy is to ensure that flood and coastal erosion risk management is properly managed and co-ordinated, using a full range of options, supporting local decision making and engagement in risk management across catchments.

Under the FWMA (2010), all RMAs are expected to exercise their flood management functions and any other function that may affect flooding consistently with the national strategy. For example, LFRMS' produced by LLFAs must be consistent with the strategy. Through its 'strategic overview' role the EA exercises its strategic leadership for all sources of flooding and coastal change.

The original National Flood and Coastal Erosion Risk Management Strategy for England was published in 2011. The updated strategy recognises that substantial progress has been made since, with significant investment in flood defence infrastructure and progressively fewer properties flooding following recent incidents. It also recognises that internationally our understanding of future climate hazards has significantly improved, with collective improvements in i). our understanding of climate science, ii). learning from flood events and iii). developments in government policy. Taking this into account the strategy is heavily related to climate change.

This is reflected in the strategy's long-term vision, which is for: *a nation ready for, and resilient to, flooding and coastal change – today, tomorrow and to the year 2100.*

The strategy also has 3 long-term ambitions, underpinned by evidence about future risk and investment needs. They are:

- Climate resilient places: working with partners to bolster resilience to flooding and coastal change across the nation, both now and in the face of climate change.
- Today's growth and infrastructure resilient in tomorrow's climate: making the right investment and planning decisions to secure sustainable growth and environmental improvements, as well as infrastructure resilient to flooding and coastal change.
- A nation ready to respond and adapt to flooding and coastal change: ensuring local people understand their risk to flooding and coastal change and know their responsibilities and how to take action.

The strategy highlights that it will not be effectively delivered by RMAs working on their own. Collaboration between RMAs will be central to delivery of the strategy along with the involvement of local communities. In this regard, the EA worked in collaboration with Flood and Coastal Erosion Risk Management (FCERM) practitioners in a wide range of organisations to develop the strategy.

Underlying each of the long-term ambitions above are a number of strategic objectives and associated measures which provide more detail on the steps that the EA and other RMAs should take to support the ambitions. It is the responsibility of OCC to ensure that the Local Strategy is consistent with the National Strategy. This has been achieved by ensuring that the strategic objectives and measures set out nationally are used to guide OCC's local objectives and measures set out herein.

### **3.2 Reporting on the Strategy**

The EA has a national role in reporting to the Government about flood and coastal risk management, including the application of the National Strategy. OCC will report to the EA on the development and implementation of the Local Strategy, so that they can in turn report this to the government.



## 4 Risk Management Authorities and Functions

### 4.1 Risk Management Authorities

Defra is the policy lead for flood and coastal erosion risk management in England. Working with other parts of government including the Treasury, the Cabinet Office (for emergency response planning) and the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (for land-use and planning policy) they adopt new and revised policies. These national policies are then delivered by RMAs. The RMAs within England include:

- Environment Agency (EA)
- LLFAs
- District and Borough Councils
- Coast protection authorities
- Water and sewerage companies
- Internal Drainage Boards
- Highways authorities.

The Flood and Water Management Act 2010 requires these RMAs to:

- Co-operate with each other.
- Act in a manner that is consistent with the National Flood and Coastal Erosion Risk Management Strategy for England and the local flood risk management strategies developed by LLFAs.
- Exchange information.

They have flexibility to form partnerships and to act on behalf of one another. In Oxfordshire, the LLFA have agency agreements in place with the district councils within the county. These allow the individual councils to undertake some of the functions of the LLFA (e.g. Ordinary watercourse consenting, flood reporting, flood enforcement action and initial flood investigations) with the LLFA funding the work. This approach is considered beneficial in bringing local experience to the fore. Resources for the district teams are fixed and there is no sharing of resources between district teams undertaking these responsibilities.

Table 5 sets out the roles, responsibilities and powers of the RMAs acting within Oxfordshire. This is based on the roles and responsibilities defined in the FWMA (2010), the EA's latest national strategy and discussions with OCC acting as the LLFA. The powers identified tend to either be defined in the FWMA (2010) or the Land Drainage Act (1991)<sup>18</sup>. Note, Network Rail are not defined as an RMA by the FWMA (2010) however monitor flood risk to railways. This includes the deployment of flood defence systems and upgrading tracks and signalling equipment in response to flood events.

Figure 2 provides a high-level summary of who is responsible for different sources of flooding. The Oxfordshire Flood Toolkit<sup>19</sup> also contains information on who is responsible for different sources of flooding along with contact links to each RMA.

---

<sup>18</sup> UK Parliament (1991) *Land Drainage Act*, <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1991/59/contents>

<sup>19</sup> OCC (2024) *Who is responsible?* <https://www.oxfordshirefloodtoolkit.com/contacts/>



Table 5- Risk Management Authorities Role, Responsibilities and Powers

RMA in Oxfordshire	Flood Risk Role	Responsibilities	Powers
<b>Oxfordshire County Council</b>	Acting as the Lead Local Flood Authority manages flood risk from: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Surface Water</li> <li>• Groundwater</li> <li>• Ordinary Watercourses</li> </ul> Also, strategic and coordination role to district council and development.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The development, maintenance, application, and monitoring of a strategy for local flood risk management.</li> <li>• Investigate significant local flooding incidents and publish the results of such investigations (Section 19 reports).</li> <li>• Maintain a register of assets- classed as physical features structures or features which have a significant effect on flood risk in their area.</li> <li>• Undertake a statutory consultee role providing technical advice on surface water drainage to local planning authorities for major developments (10 dwellings or more).</li> <li>• Exercise flood risk management functions in a manner consistent with the national strategy.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Powers to request information from any person in connection with the authority's flood risk management functions.</li> <li>• Power to do works to manage flood risk from surface water, groundwater, and ordinary watercourses.</li> <li>• Power to designate structures and features that could affect flooding.</li> <li>• Power to issue ordinary watercourse consents and ensure a free flow of water within an ordinary watercourse is maintained. In Oxfordshire, this power has been delegated to the district and city councils within the county.</li> </ul>
<b>District Councils</b> Cherwell District Council Oxford City Council South Oxfordshire District Council Vale of White Horse District Council West Oxfordshire District Council	Act as Land Drainage Authorities and manage: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ordinary Watercourses</li> <li>• Contamination (Food &amp; Health)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Work in partnerships with LLFAs and other RMAs to ensure risks are managed effectively, including development allocation.</li> <li>• Exercise flood risk management functions in a manner consistent with the national strategy.</li> </ul> <p>In Oxfordshire some of the responsibilities and powers of the LLFA are taken on by the district councils through agency agreements, this includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ordinary watercourse consenting.</li> <li>• Section 19 reporting.</li> <li>• Flood enforcement action.</li> <li>• Initial flood investigations</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Power to designate structures and features that affect flooding or coastal erosion.</li> <li>• Power to do works on ordinary watercourses and, with the EA's consent, main rivers.</li> <li>• Power to implement and maintain flood defences on ordinary watercourses.</li> <li>• Power to carry out flood risk management works on ordinary watercourses.</li> </ul>
<b>Environment Agency</b>	Provide national strategic overview of coastal erosion and	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Developing long-term approaches to FCERM. This includes developing and</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Powers to request information from any person in connection with the EA's flood</li> </ul>

	<p>flood risk management for all forms of flooding. Manage flood risk from:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Main Rivers</li> <li>• The sea</li> </ul> <p>Also, role in monitoring and investigating pollution incidents.</p>	<p>applying the national flood and coastal erosion risk management strategy.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Allocation of national government funding to projects to manage flood and coastal erosion risks from all sources.</li> <li>• Delivering projects to manage flood risks from main rivers and maintaining assets on main rivers.</li> <li>• Duty to have regard to Local Flood Risk Management Strategies.</li> <li>• Working with other RMAs to prepare and deliver FRMPs.</li> <li>• Providing evidence and advice to support other RMAs.</li> <li>• Forecasting and mapping flood risk</li> <li>• A statutory consultee on development in the floodplain.</li> <li>• Working with the Met Office to provide flood forecasts and warnings.</li> <li>• Regulation of reservoir safety.</li> <li>• Duty to report to Ministers about flood and coastal erosion risk management including application of the national strategy.</li> </ul>	<p>and coastal erosion risk management functions.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Power to designate structures and features that affect flooding or coastal erosion.</li> <li>• Power to undertake works and surveys in relation to flooding from main rivers.</li> <li>• Power to issue flood risk permits for main rivers and ensure a free flow of water within a main river is maintained.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Highway Authorities</b> (National Highways and Oxfordshire County Council)</p>	<p>Highways authority. Manage flood risk from:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Surface Water originating on the highway.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Manage, maintain, and improve the Motorway and trunk roads across England.</li> <li>• Note, in Oxfordshire, National Highways are responsible for the M40 and A34. OCC is responsible for all other public roads.</li> <li>• Providing and managing highway ditches under the Highways Act 1980.</li> <li>• Co-operate with the other RMAs to ensure their flood management activities are well coordinated.</li> <li>• Duty to exercise their functions in a manner consistent with local and national strategies.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Power to discharge surface water run-off into adjacent watercourses, subject to land drainage consent.</li> </ul>

<b>Thames Water, Anglian Water and Severn Trent Water</b>	<p>Water and Sewerage Company operate and maintain the condition of sewerage systems to reduce sewer flooding and protect water quality. Manage flood risk from:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sewer flooding</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Maintain and manage their water supply and sewerage systems to manage the impact and reduce the risk of flooding and pollution to the environment.</li> <li>• Make sure their systems have the appropriate level of resilience to flooding and maintain essential services during emergencies.</li> <li>• Provide advice to LLFAs on their assets' impact on local flood risk.</li> <li>• Work with developers, landowners and LLFAs to understand and manage risks.</li> <li>• Work with the EA, LLFAs and district councils to coordinate the management of water supply and sewerage systems with other flood risk management work.</li> <li>• Duty to exercise their functions in a manner consistent with local and national strategies.</li> <li>• Undertake and publish Drainage and Wastewater Management Plans (DWMPs). Since the introduction of the Environment Act 2021, these plans are now a statutory duty for water companies.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Power to undertaker to lay sewers, lateral drains, and disposal mains.</li> <li>• Power to specify requirements for discharge to public sewers and water mains requirements.</li> <li>• Power to adopt private sewers.</li> </ul>
<b>Buckingham &amp; River Ouzel Internal Drainage Board</b>	<p>Act as Land Drainage Authority. Manage flood risk from:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ordinary Watercourses</li> </ul> <p>The Buckingham and River Ouzel IDB is the only IDB in Oxfordshire and covers a relatively small area.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Supervise land drainage and flood defence works on ordinary watercourses within their area.</li> <li>• Advise on planning applications, specifically the use of SuDS within their area.</li> <li>• Duty to exercise their functions in a manner consistent with local and national strategies.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Power to designate structures and features that could affect flooding.</li> <li>• Power to do works on ordinary watercourses flooding within their boundary.</li> <li>• Power to issue ordinary watercourse consents and ensure a free flow of water within an ordinary watercourse is maintained.</li> </ul>

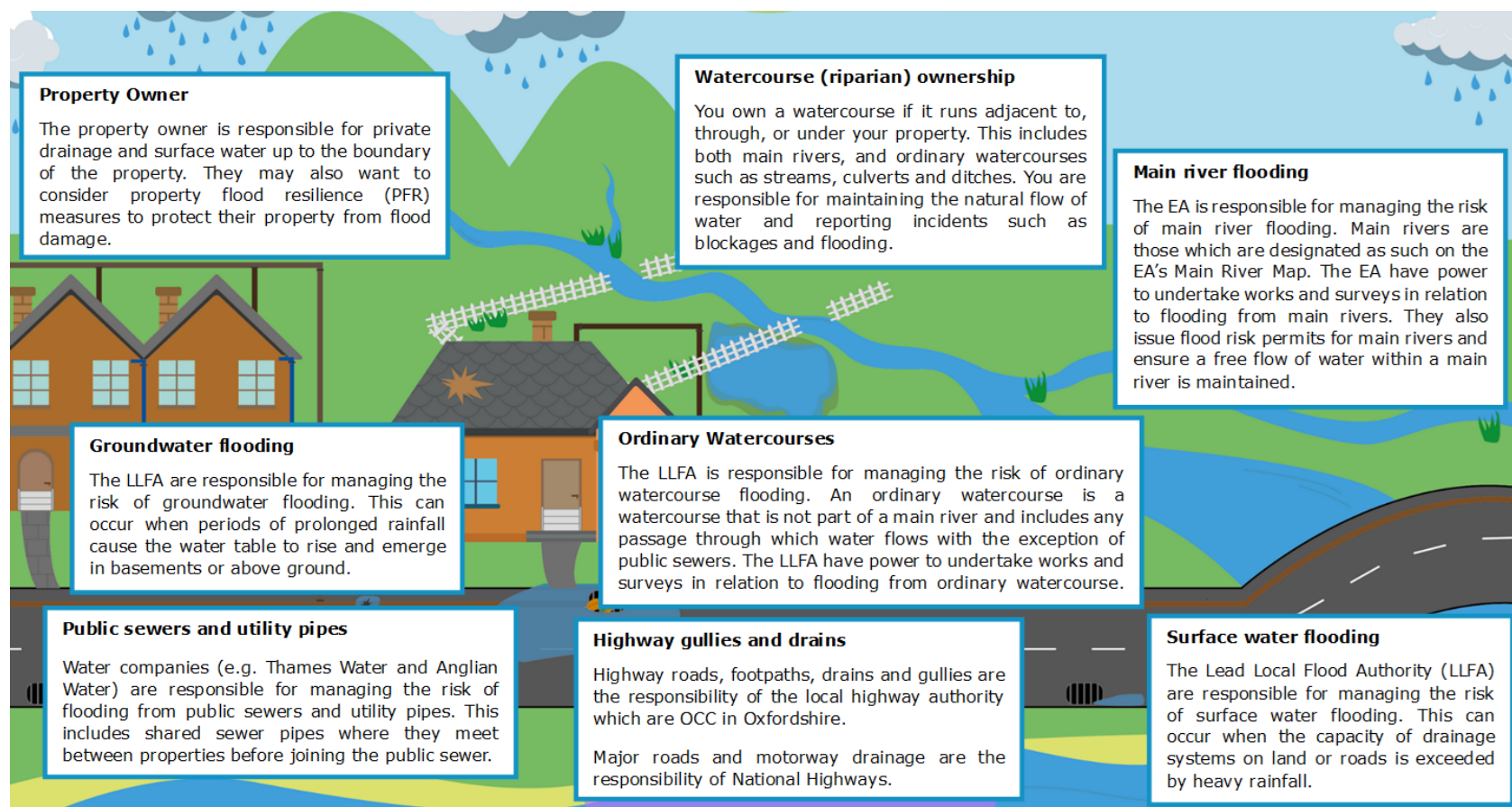


Figure 2-Schematic showing who is responsible for different sources of flood risk (image source: Flood Hub<sup>20</sup>)

<sup>20</sup> Flood Hub (2024) <https://thefloodhub.co.uk>

## 4.2 Working Arrangements

The previous section summarised the main roles and responsibilities of the different RMAs acting within Oxfordshire. This section outlines their key working arrangements and interactions.

The Oxfordshire Risk Management Authority flood group comprises the main RMAs acting within Oxfordshire and was initially formed following the floods in July 2007. Its purpose is to facilitate a joined-up approach to flood risk management seeking to follow the recommendations of the Pitt Review. Following the introduction of the Flood Risk Regulations (2009) and FWMA (2010), one of the principal aims of the groups has been in ensuring that there is a synergy between each authority's approach to flooding and that there is joint ownership of an approach to addressing flood risk issues.

The group meets quarterly and includes representatives from:

- Environment Agency (EA)
- Oxfordshire County Council (LLFA)
- District Councils
  - Cherwell District Council
  - Oxford City Council
  - South Oxfordshire Council
  - Vale of White Horse District Council
  - West Oxfordshire District Council
- Thames Water

The group's membership includes engineers and planning officers from each of the districts along with Thames Water and the EA. It also considers engineering and operational aspects.

The group interacts with the LLFA internal steering group, the steering group is made up of relevant officers within OCC who have a flood risk role. The steering group oversees several groups acting at a district level to manage flood risk.

Figure 3 below identifies the governance arrangements. The diagram relates only to the management of this strategy and not to the prioritisation of schemes and allocation of funding which follow existing OCC and District Council governance.

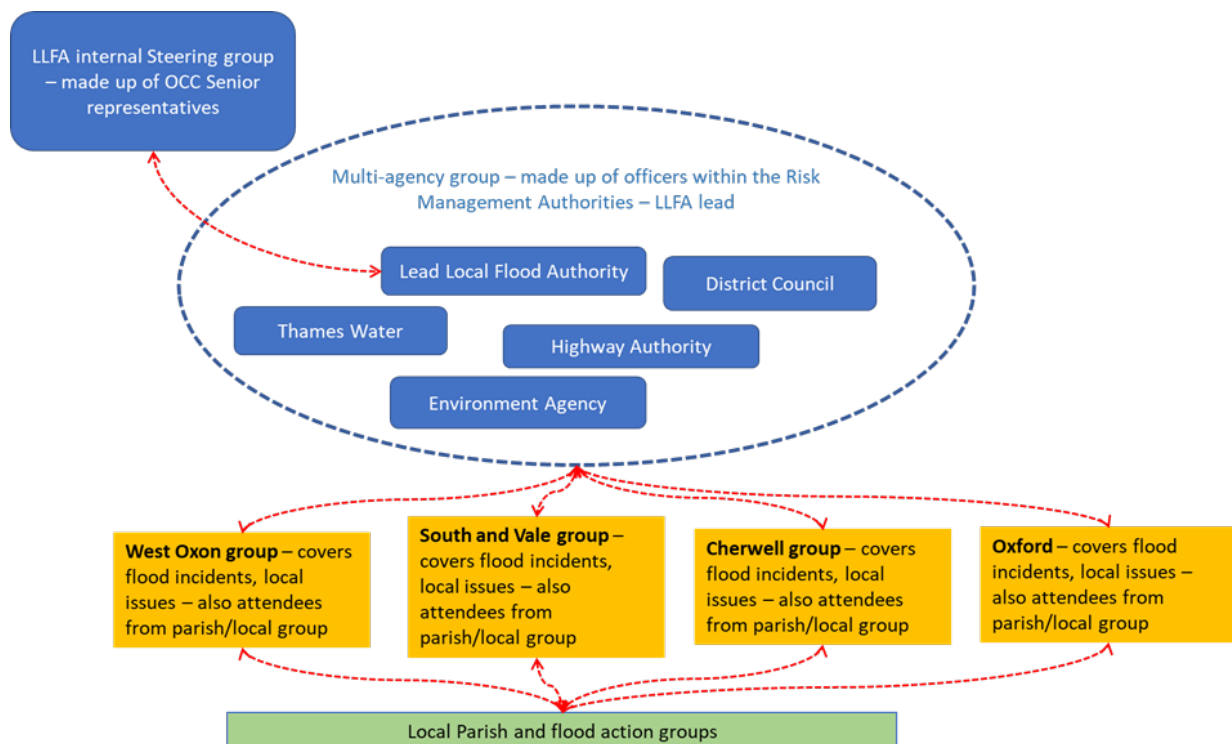


Figure 3- Governance Workflow Diagram

As mentioned, there are a number of groups acting at a district level to manage flood risk. This includes four district led groups, the Oxford Flood group, the South Oxfordshire and Vale of White Horse Flood Group, the West Oxfordshire Flood Group and the Cherwell Flood Group which pertain to the districts across Oxfordshire.

Communication with the districts at present tends to be on an informal basis, with the exception of the West Oxfordshire Multi Agency meeting which occurs quarterly. Despite this the LLFA and councils often work together and communicate with one another frequently, through regular partner meetings. Matters discussed include land, highway, foul and surface water drainage problems along with future programs for flood risk within their districts. Information is readily shared, and OCC keep regularly updated on the operations of the district councils.

Riparian owners are responsible maintaining watercourses under their ownership. However, the RMAs also use their powers where appropriate to help manage and maintain the network of pipes, culverts, ditches, and rivers that carry water through Oxford.

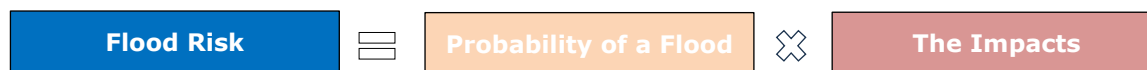
At the local and community level there are action groups. They work with local bodies including the EA, OCC, district councils, Thames Water and Network Rail. Working with these bodies, many of the groups have been involved with interventions to reduce flood risk.



## 5 Flood Risk in Oxfordshire

### 5.1 Flood Risk Definition

Flood risk is defined as the combination of the probability of flooding occurring (which is often expressed as a return period or Annual Exceedance Probability) combined with the consequences of it occurring. Thus, it is possible to define flood risk as:



### 5.2 About Oxfordshire

Oxfordshire has an estimated population of 725,291<sup>21</sup> in an area of 2,605 km<sup>2</sup>. The place with the highest population in the county is the historic university city of Oxford, which is located in the centre of Oxfordshire and has a population of 162,000. Other significant urban areas are found in Banbury, Abingdon, Bicester, Witney, and Didcot which have populations ranging from 31,000 to 54,000. Outside of these population centres the county is largely rural and the majority of land use is agricultural.

The topography is dominated by the major river valley of the Thames which runs in a northwest to southeast direction across the county and many tributaries across Oxfordshire flow into the Thames. Most of the county is characterised by low rolling hills. White Horse Hill is the highest point, at 260m above Ordnance Datum.

The underlying bedrock geology follows bands running in a southwest to northeast direction, which dip to the southeast. The Lias Mudstone in the north of the county is proceeded by the Oolitic Limestone of the Cotswolds in the northwest followed progressively by overlying bands of clays, mudstone, siltstone, limestone, and sandstone in the Oxford area, before a significant area of chalk in the south and southeast.

### 5.3 Fluvial Flood Risk

The EA is responsible for managing the risk of flooding from main rivers, whereas LLFAs, district councils and IDBs carry out flood risk management work on ordinary watercourses.

The EA's 'Flood Map for Planning (Rivers and the Sea)' provides information on areas that are at risk of flooding if there were no flood defences. This dataset is available online and is the main reference for planning purposes. The mapping is updated when new flood risk models become available which provide an improved representation of flood risk. For smaller catchments not present in the 'Flood Map for Planning (Rivers and Sea)' the EA's Risk of Flooding from Surface Water (RoFSW) mapping can be used to estimate flood risk.

As mentioned, Oxfordshire is dominated by the Thames River basin, in total 96.8% of the Oxfordshire area. Smaller areas drain to the Anglian River basin to the East (2.4%) and the Severn River basin to the West (0.8 %).

Fluvial flooding is a major flood risk across Oxfordshire. The EA's 'Flood Map for Planning (Rivers and the Sea) across Oxfordshire is shown in Figure 4.

---

<sup>21</sup> Office for National Statistics (2021) 2021 Census Area Profile- Oxfordshire County  
[https://www.nomisweb.co.uk/sources/census\\_2021/report?compare=E10000025](https://www.nomisweb.co.uk/sources/census_2021/report?compare=E10000025) accessed 05/12/23.

In Oxford it is the primary source of flood risk in terms of flooding extent, the number of properties at risk and historical flood damages. Oxford is located at the confluence of the River Thames and River Cherwell, and is at risk from both watercourses independently, as well as concurrently in large flood events.

Upstream of Oxford in western Oxfordshire, the Thames flows through largely rural land with a floodplain that is relatively broad and flat. It does incorporate several other tributaries including the River Evenlode and the River Windrush. These tributaries also flow through largely rural areas however the Windrush does pose a risk to parts of Burford, Swinbrook, Asthall and Witney.

Downstream of Oxford, many settlements in south Oxfordshire lie within the Thames floodplain and have experienced historical flooding from the river, including Sandford on Thames, Abingdon, Wallingford and Henley on Thames in addition to a number of smaller settlements along this reach.

In North Oxfordshire, fluvial flooding also presents a significant flood risk. Flooding associated with the River Cherwell is the dominant flooding mechanism in Banbury and effects parts of Kidlington. The Langford Brook presents a flood risk to some areas in Bicester and the River Ray to smaller settlements including Islip and Charlton-on-Otmoor. In general, fluvial flood extents are relatively constrained in urban areas where manmade structures act to control flood waters to a degree. In rural areas the flood extents are often extensive due to the flat topography.

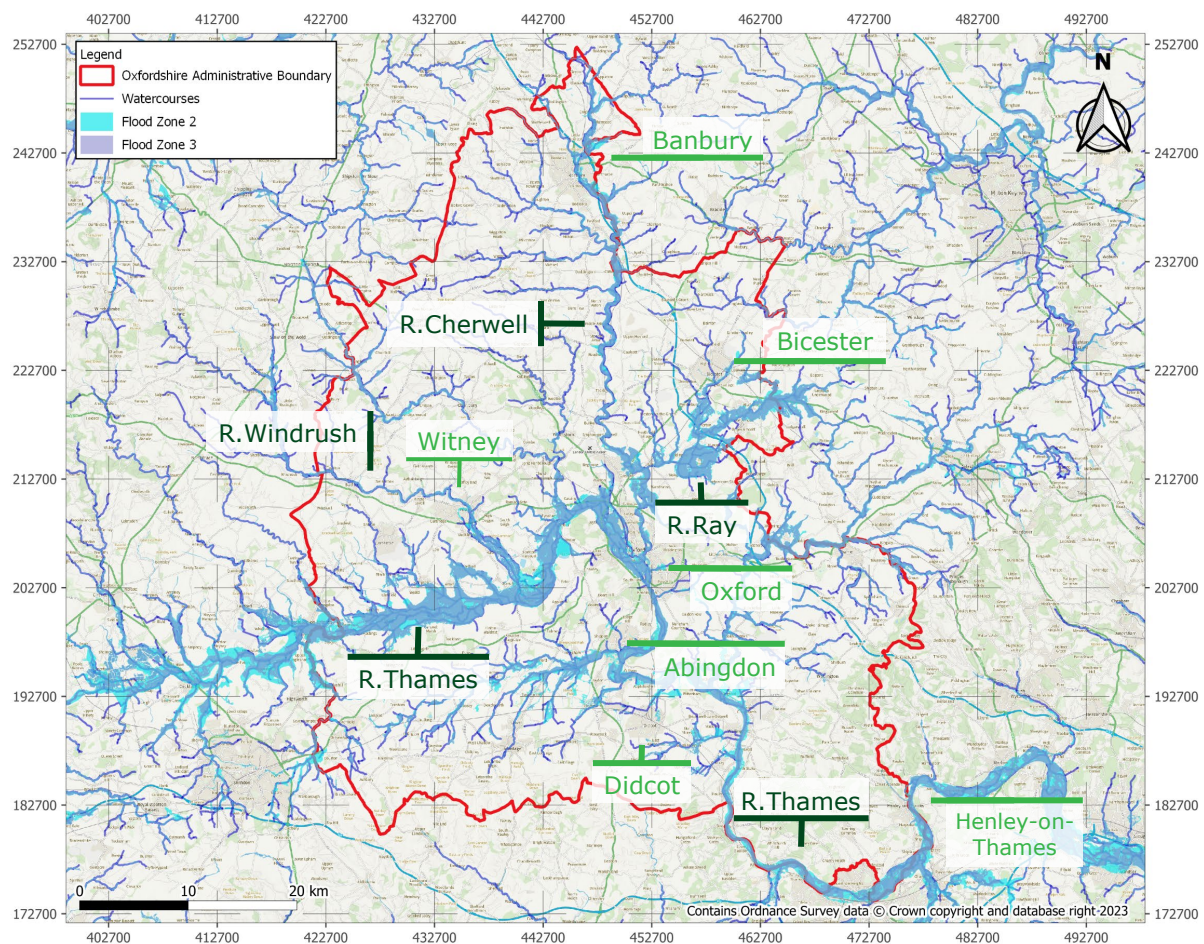


Figure 4- Fluvial Flood Map for Oxfordshire with main watercourses and key conurbations marked



## 5.4 Surface Water Flood Risk

Surface water flooding occurs when rainfall exceeds the ability of the ground to absorb that rainfall, and the resulting runoff impacts property or infrastructure. Surface water flooding is often worse following very intense rain and in areas where the ground is less able to absorb water. This includes urban areas with lots of hard surfacing, areas underlain by impermeable bedrock or soils such as clay and areas subject to soil compaction due to intense land use.

Insufficient capacity in the surface water drains can also contribute to surface water flood risk. Drains in many cases are old and not designed to cope with heavy rainfall, especially with the impact of climate change. Surface water flooding is a significant flood risk in urban areas due to the high proportion of impermeable surfaces, which cause a significant increase in runoff rates and consequently the volume of water that flows into the sewer network.

One of the main issues with surface water flooding is that in areas with no history of flooding relatively small changes to hard surfacing and surface gradients can cause flooding. As a result, continuing development could mean that surface water flooding can become more frequent and, although not on the same scale as fluvial flooding, it can still cause significant disruption.

Managing the risk of surface water flooding is the responsibility of LLFAs. The EA produce the Risk of Flooding from Surface Water (RoFSW) map. This national scale mapping identifies those areas at risk of surface water flooding during three probability events: 3.33% annual probability (1 in 30 year), 1% annual probability (1 in 100 year) and 0.1% annual probability (1 in 1,000 year).

A limited number of properties in many of Oxfordshire's urban centres are shown to be at medium to high risk including in parts of Oxford, Banbury, Bicester, Kidlington, Abingdon, Didcot, Witney and Henley-on-Thames along with a number of smaller settlements. Based on the LLFA's flood incident record there have also been many historical incidents of surface water flooding in these areas related to overland flow paths, areas of ponding and exceedance of drainage systems during heavy rainfall.

In Oxfordshire's rural areas whilst the risks to people and property are less, these areas have still experienced flooding, mostly from overland flow. Rural roads can become impassable due to overland flow and properties have been flooded directly. Changes in farming practices can exacerbate overland flow due to the removal of hedgerows and trees.

## 5.5 Groundwater Flood Risk

Groundwater flooding occurs when groundwater exceeds its normal range and emerges at ground level affecting property and infrastructure. The LLFA are responsible for managing the risk of groundwater flooding. This can occur when periods of prolonged rainfall cause the water table to rise and emerge in basements or above ground. There are no publicly available flood risk maps for groundwater.

In Oxfordshire the degree of groundwater flood risk is largely dependent on the underlying geology (see Figure 5) and ground levels. Groundwater flooding usually occurs in low lying areas underlain by permeable rock and aquifers that allow groundwater to rise to the surface through the permeable subsoil following long periods of wet weather. Low lying areas may be more susceptible to groundwater flooding because the water table is usually at a much shallower depth and groundwater paths tend to travel from high to low ground.

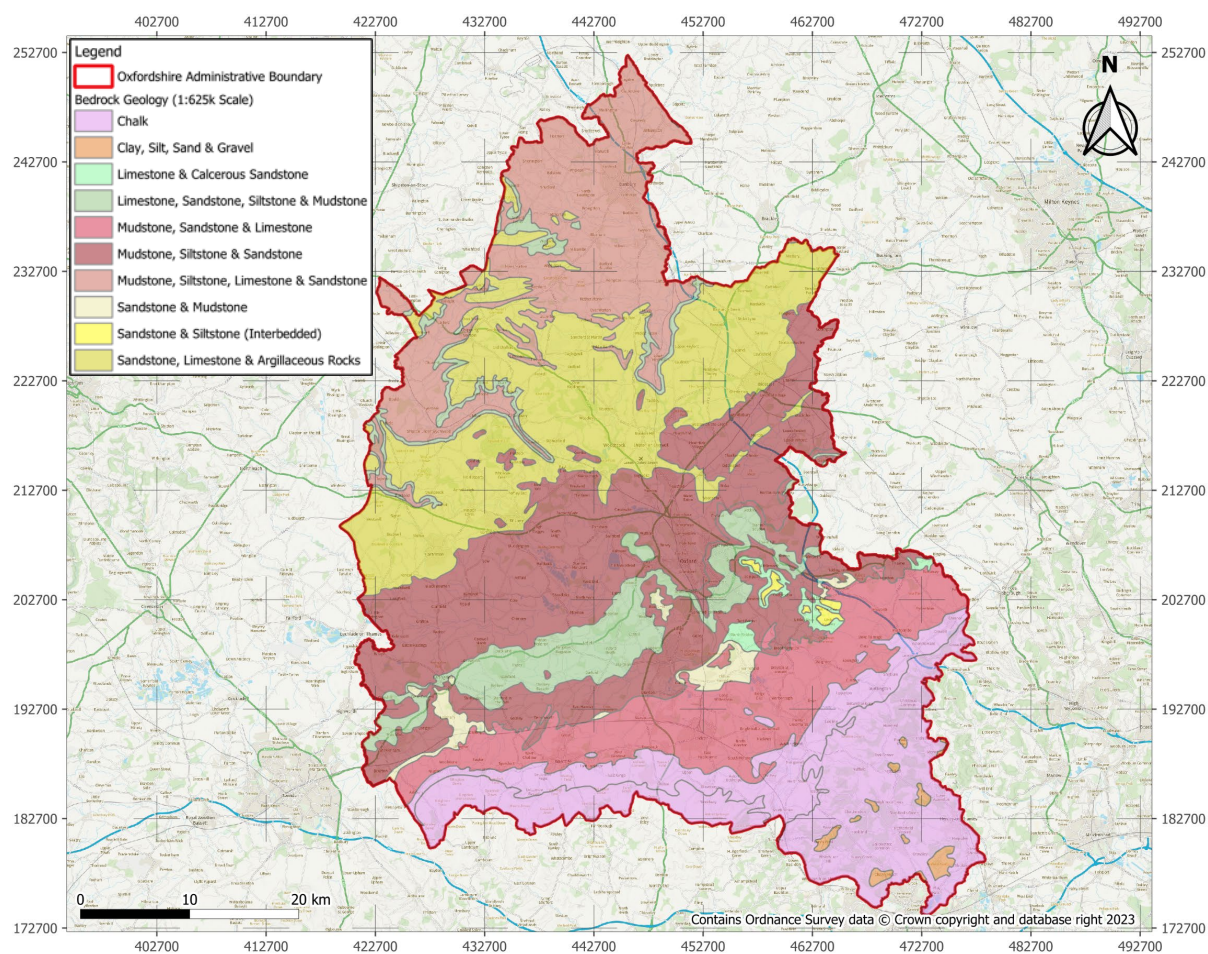


Figure 5- BGS Geology 1:625k for Oxfordshire. Contains British Geological Survey materials © UKRI (2024)

Over more permeable substrates including the Oolitic Limestone of the Cotswolds, the sandstone and limestone layers near Oxford and the significant area of chalk in the south of the county, groundwater recharge will be greater and the water table more likely to be mobile. In these areas groundwater flood risk is more significant.

In less permeable substrates such as the Lias Mudstone in the north of the county and the mudstone and clay layers in and around Oxford, drainage into the subsurface will be more impeded and the strata are generally unproductive. In these areas surface water flooding is likely to be more of an issue than groundwater flooding.

Groundwater flooding may appear as a wide area of flooding (across flat ground) or at a point (at a spring or within a basement of a property). Its impacts include:

- Flooding of basements, underground car parks and similar structures
- Flooding of land and property, damaging possessions/crops/stock
- Flooding of sewer systems, in some cases opening manhole covers and flooding the area with sewage (causing pollution as well as a flood incident)
- Flooding of utilities sited underground (power lines/telecoms/drinking water supply) causing service failures.

Groundwater flooding may last far longer compared to other types (from weeks to months). The amount of damage that can result may also be substantially higher, and there may be prolonged closure of access routes, roads and railways.

## 5.6 Sewer Flood Risk

Sewer flooding generally results in localised short-term flooding caused by intense rainfall events overloading the capacity of sewers. Flooding can also occur as a result of blockage, poor maintenance or structural failure.

Thames Water, Anglian Water and Severn Trent Water manage the risk of flooding to water supply and public sewerage facilities in addition to the flood risks generated from the failure of their infrastructure. They make sure their systems have the appropriate level of resilience to flooding and provide advice to LLFAs on how their assets impact on local flood risk and how this risk can be managed.

Private drains are those serving a single property, within that property's boundary. These drains are the responsibility of the property owner who gains benefit from them.

Sewer flooding incidents have been recorded across the majority of the Oxfordshire area in Thames Water's DG5<sup>22</sup> records, which date back to privatisation in 1989. There have been 153 incidents in Oxford City, 192 in West Oxfordshire, 240 in Cherwell, 223 in the Vale of White Horse and 293 incidents in South Oxfordshire. As Anglian Water and Severn Trent Water only serve a very small proportion of the county, which is predominantly rural, their DG5 records have not been requested.

## 5.7 Reservoir Flood Risk

The EA regulate reservoir safety with reservoir owners having to meet the standards they implement. In Oxfordshire owners include the EA, Thames Water, the Canal and River Trust, the RSPB and private individuals.

In 2021 the EA published updated maps showing the flood risk associated with reservoirs. Dam breach and flood modelling techniques were used to produce a new national set of reservoir flood maps for England. The maps show two flooding scenarios, including a 'dry-day' and a 'wet-day'. The 'dry-day' scenario predicts the flooding that would occur if the dam or reservoir failed when rivers are at normal levels. The 'wet day' scenario predicts how much worse the flooding might be if a river is already experiencing an extreme natural flood.

The main reservoirs which could impact Oxfordshire include the following:

- Banbury FAS (grid reference SP4672443436) Owner: Environment Agency
- Farmoor No.1 (grid reference: SP4450006800) Owner: Thames Water Limited
- Farmoor No.2 (grid reference: SP4450006000) Owner: Thames Water Limited
- Clattercote (grid reference SP4510048500) Owner: Canal & River Trust
- Wormleighton (grid refence SP4483351747) Owner: Canal & River Trust
- Grimsbury (grid reference SP4590042200) Owner: Thames Water Limited
- Bodicote (grid reference SP4532737665) Owner: Private Individual
- Otmoor Phase 1 (grid reference SP5610013900) Owner: RSPB
- Otmoor Phase 2 (grid reference SP5610013600) Owner: RSPB

---

<sup>22</sup> OCC (2023) Oxfordshire CC SFHD data\_Mar23.xlsx

The modelled extents tend to lie along the River Thames, River Cherwell, and River Ray. The two Farmoor reservoirs impact the River Thames whilst the Banbury FAS, Grimsbury Clattercote, Wormleighton and Boticote impact the River Cherwell and River Thames downstream of the confluence between the two watercourses. The River Ray could be impacted by the two reservoirs at Otmoor.

Whilst many areas within the floodplains of these rivers are shown to be at risk, reservoir failure is a rare event with a very low probability of occurrence. Current reservoir regulation, which has been further enhanced by the FWMA (2010), aims to make sure that all reservoirs are properly maintained and monitored to detect and repair any problem.

## 6 Objectives & Measures

As the LLFA, OCC have a duty to develop, apply and monitor a LFRMS. The primary goal of the strategy is to manage flood risk and the impacts of flooding on people and property across the county. Supporting the strategy are a series of objectives and measures which will act as the framework across the plan period for meeting this goal. These have been set through a number of workshops and consultation within OCC, in addition to consultation with other RMAs working in Oxfordshire.

The objectives contained in this strategy relate to five key areas: improving understanding, greater collaboration, preventing increases in flood risk, ensuring holistic and sustainable approaches, and improved communication. These look to align with the National FCERM Strategy to reduce local flood risk. They also consider the aims and aspirations of people living and businesses working in the area.

Underpinning each of these objectives are a collection of associated measures. These identify specific flood risk management actions to address local needs and meet the objectives set. The measures reflect the nature of flooding within Oxfordshire and its consequences. They also prioritise how the LLFA will work with others to maximise outcomes.

Table 6 overpage provides a summary of the objectives and measures for the LFRMS. The following sections provide further detail and explain how they will be implemented.



Table 6- Objectives and measures in Oxfordshire's LFRMS

Objectives	Measures
Objective 1: Improve understanding of flood risks and ensure that all stakeholders understand their roles and responsibilities for flood risk management.	<p>1.1 Clarify roles and responsibilities and publish LFRMS on Flood Toolkit website.</p> <p>1.2 Continue to prepare Section 19 reports to investigate flood incidents which meet the flood investigation criteria establishing their causes and identifying potential solutions.</p> <p>1.3 Continue preparation of a prioritised list of locations and potential schemes.</p> <p>1.4 Review Section 30 Schedule 1 asset register and confirm any actions to improve knowledge of third-party assets that manage flood risk by end of the plan period.</p> <p>1.5 Continue to review and maintain flood incident record to improve knowledge of flood hotspots within Oxfordshire, ensuring that the most relevant data are collected.</p>
Objective 2: Take a collaborative approach to reducing flood risks, using all available resources and funds in an integrated way and in so doing manage and reduce overall flood risk.	<p>2.1 Continue to maintain links with the Highways Department and work collaboratively to identify opportunities for flood risk improvements throughout the plan period.</p> <p>2.2 Increase interaction and data sharing with Thames Water through targeted engagement and escalation process where required.</p> <p>2.3 Develop skills and capability in different forms of flood risk management, including different funding sources and partnership funding schemes.</p> <p>2.4 Continue to work with other RMAs and others in order to take a collaborative approach to managing flood risk.</p>
Objective 3: Take a sustainable and holistic approach to flood risk management, seeking to deliver wider environmental and social benefits, climate change mitigation and improvements under the Water Framework Directive.	<p>3.1 – Seek opportunities to provide biodiversity and surface water run-off water quality enhancements through statutory planning consultations on drainage, and potentially through the SuDS Approval Body, if the legislation is approved by end of the plan period.</p> <p>3.2 – Develop on existing pilot schemes for local flood wardens and expand to further flood risk areas by the end of the plan period.</p> <p>3.3 – Liaise with town councils and parish councils to develop community emergency plans</p> <p>3.4 – Work with landowners to implement the mitigation recommendations identified in S19 reports, and priority areas.</p>

<p>Objective 4: Prevent an increase in flood risk from development where possible, by preventing additional flow entering existing drainage systems and watercourses.</p>	<p>4.1 – Seek opportunities to manage and improve surface water run-off impacts from developments through statutory consultations on planning applications and SuDS Approval Body consents by end of the plan period.</p>
	<p>4.2 – Update local SuDS guidance in conjunction with Highway department to ensure a common set of standards by end of the plan period.</p>
	<p>4.3 –Develop joint approaches between Highways and the LLFA to explore how SuDS principles can be used for new developments or retro-fitted where problems exist.</p>
	<p>4.4 – Identify highway networks that are at risk of flooding and establish the resilience measures required by end of the plan period, making use of the current ‘resilient highways’ initiatives undertaken by Highways.</p>
	<p>4.5 – Ongoing development of a SuDS maintenance database and maintenance database for highway assets by end of the plan period.</p>
	<p>4.6 – In our LLFA role as consultees on SFRAs and FRAs for major developments, ensure adaptive approaches are explored to mitigate climate change impacts in relation to flooding.</p>
<p>Objective 5: Seek opportunities to communicate to people the potential impacts of flooding and how they can reduce the impact.</p>	<p>5.1 – Continue promotion and development of the Oxfordshire County Council Flood Toolkit website with updated information on LLFA role, resilience, post event recovery and links to other services.</p>
	<p>5.2 – Establish links with the BeFloodReady Property Flood Resilience Centre in Wallingford and if appropriate other initiatives to identify resources available and make accessible through the Flood Toolkit website by end of the plan period.</p>
	<p>5.3 –Encourage greater collaboration and data sharing between Highways fix my street reports and LLFA toolkit reports by end of the plan period.</p>
	<p>5.4 – Reinforce links with the Environment Agency and other RMAs through the Thames Valley Local Resilience Forum to ensure aligned communication during flood events and sharing of best practice on working with communities by end of the plan period.</p>
	<p>5.5 – Ensure LLFA attendance at local flood forum meetings</p>
	<p>5.6- Communicate flood risk issues to councillors through lunch &amp; learn sessions and/or newsletters by end of the plan period.</p>

## 6.2 Objective 1 - Improve understanding

***Improve understanding of flood risks and ensure that all stakeholders understand their roles and responsibilities for flood risk management.***

As outlined in section 5 Oxfordshire is at risk from a number of different sources of flood risk with a range of RMAs responsible for flood risk management. Interaction between these sources is often complicated so a coordinated approach to flood risk management is vital. Having a strong understanding of flood risk helps support this, therefore through the plan period the LLFA working independently and with other RMAs will seek where possible to improve understanding of flood risk. This will be supported by implementation of the measures outlined below.

### **Measure 1.1: Clarify roles and responsibilities and publish LFRMS on Flood Toolkit website**

The Oxfordshire Flood Toolkit<sup>23</sup> developed by the LLFA since publication of the previous strategy provides advice about flooding in Oxfordshire. This includes but is not limited to finding if you are at risk of flooding, how planning and development should take account of flood risk and what to do in an emergency. It also provides a high-level summary of who is responsible for different forms of flooding. During the plan period this will be developed and maintained to provide greater detail on the roles, responsibilities, and powers of RMAs within Oxfordshire.

### **Measure 1.2: Continue to prepare Section 19 reports to investigate flood incidents which meet the flood investigation criteria establishing their causes and identifying potential solutions**

As part of the duties under the FWMA (2010), LLFAs are required to investigate significant flood incidents, known as Section 19 reports. In Oxfordshire, to date a flood event must meet one of the thresholds listed on the Oxfordshire Flood Toolkit website<sup>24</sup> to initiate the requirement for an investigation and report. During the plan period and in response to learning from future floods OCC will review their thresholds for undertaking Section 19 flood investigation reports.

On becoming aware of a flood which meets the thresholds or is agreed to require further investigation by the Flood Risk Management Team in collaboration with RMAs, section 19 of the FWMA (2010) states that an LLFA must, to the extent that it considers it necessary or appropriate, investigate:

- Which RMAs have relevant flood risk management functions
- Whether each of those RMAs has exercised, or is proposing to exercise, those functions in response to the flood

Where an authority carries out an investigation it must publish the results of its investigation and notify other RMAs.

To meet these requirements, Section 19 reports in Oxfordshire tend to follow the stages and structure detailed in the workflow shown in Figure 6.

---

<sup>23</sup> Oxfordshire County Council (2023) *Oxfordshire Flood Toolkit* <https://www.oxfordshirefloodtoolkit.com/>

<sup>24</sup> Oxfordshire County Council (2024) *Report a Flood* <https://www.oxfordshirefloodtoolkit.com/emergency/report-flood/>



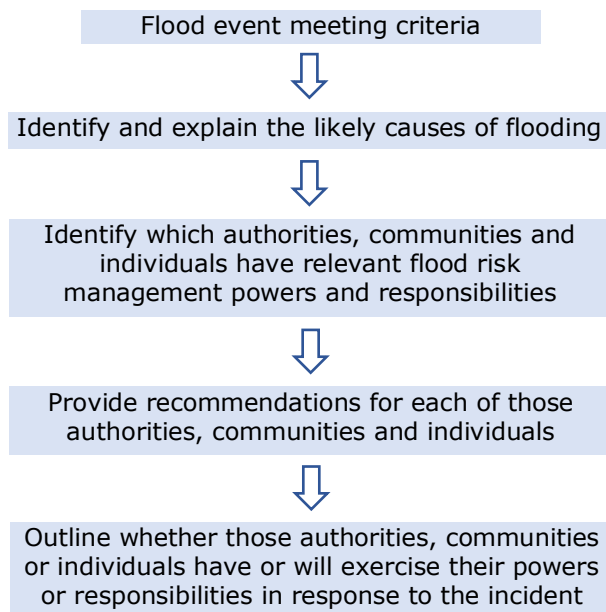


Figure 6- S19 reporting workflow

It should be noted that whilst the LLFA has the power to make recommendations for future flood risk management within a Section 19 report, it cannot:

- Resolve the flooding issues or provide designed solutions; or
- Force authorities to undertake any of the recommended actions.



Figure 7-Flooding in Witney during Christmas 2020, an event which prompted a requirement for a S19 report

Under this measure, the LLFA will continue to prepare S19 reports and work with district councils and other RMAs to fully establish the causes and potential solutions to the flooding issues encountered. They will also maintain close links to Oxfordshire's highway teams for any events meeting the Class C and Class U S19 criteria.

### **Measure 1.3: Continue preparation of a prioritised list of locations and potential schemes**

OCC acting as the LLFA is preparing information and a methodology to support the prioritisation of flood risk areas for further flood risk investigative work, and support a longer-term programme of opportunities and actions.

This project will use a Geographical Information System (GIS) multi-criteria analysis tool, to identify and prioritise locations most at risk of flooding from local sources and specific to Oxfordshire. It will also provide evidence and support decision making for the County and will work in conjunction with partners and other strategies.

Better knowledge of flood risk areas will allow for the identification of potential schemes, and also help deliver capital maintenance including smaller scale interventions and more focussed monitoring.

### **Measure 1.4: Review Section 30 Schedule 1 asset register and confirm any actions to improve knowledge of third-party assets that manage flood risk by end of the plan period**

Section 30 Schedule 1 of the FWMA (2010) provides the power for 'designating authorities' to formally designate features or assets which form flood risk management systems, but which are not maintained or operated by those responsible for managing the risk. The LLFA has the power to provide consent to the alteration, removal, or replacement of a feature. There is also an enforcement element to this process, where action can be taken against anyone contravening the Act; for example, altering a feature without consent.

Under this measure, the council will review the current asset register and identify where information may be lacking on the presence, location, condition, and function of 3<sup>rd</sup> party assets before confirming actions to improve this knowledge and the management of these assets in general.

### **Measure 1.5: Continue to review and maintain flood incident record to improve knowledge of flood hotspots within Oxfordshire, ensuring that the most relevant data are collected.**

The LLFA maintain a flood incident record, listing all the flood incidents reported since 2007. Floods can be reported via the Oxfordshire Toolkit website by the public and through direct consultation with the LLFA (from the EA, district councils and emergency services).

Flood incidents come from multiple sources which does result in some inconsistencies with the level of detail ascribed to each flood incident. However, the Toolkit website now has several useful fields which guide users to ensure that the most relevant data is collected.

The flood incident record is also currently being transferred to a GIS Layer which will help make it more accessible and manageable. These actions, along with continued review and maintenance of the incident record will bring an improved knowledge of flood hotspots across the county.



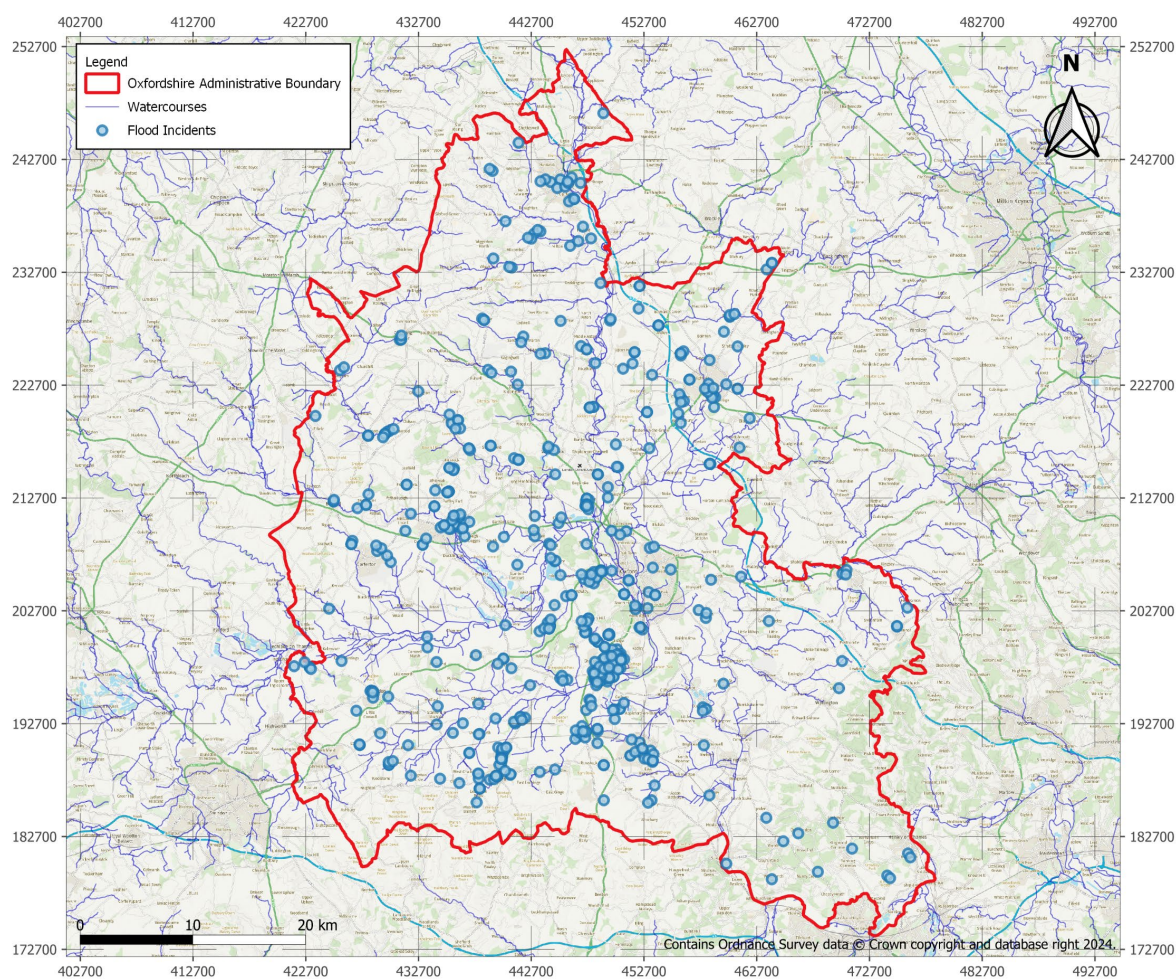


Figure 8- Oxfordshire Recorded Flood Incidents

It should be noted that in addition to the flood hotspots database, OCC are also a member of Project Groundwater<sup>25</sup>. The programme aims to improve monitoring of when and where groundwater emerges and overall awareness of groundwater flooding. It is led by Buckinghamshire Council in partnership with five other authorities including OCC and Flood Community Groups.

### 6.3 Objective 2 - Taking a Collaborative Approach

***Take a collaborative approach to reducing flood risks, using all available resources and funds in an integrated way and in so doing manage and reduce overall flood risk.***

A collaborative approach is vital to ensure effective delivery of the strategy. As outlined in section 4.2 there are existing governance arrangements in place which support collaboration within Oxfordshire. Ensuring that these arrangements are maintained and strengthened through the plan period will support flood risk management and ensure that the needs of all stakeholders are factored into the decision-making process.

<sup>25</sup> Project Groundwater (2024) <https://www.projectgroundwater.co.uk/>

**Measure 2.1: Continue to maintain links with the Highways Department and work collaboratively to identify opportunities for flood risk improvements throughout the plan period.**

Highways authorities are responsible for providing and managing highway drainage and roadside ditches. They must ensure that road projects do not increase flood risk. National Highways is responsible for motorways and major trunk roads. OCC is responsible for other roads. The LLFA already have quarterly meetings with the Highways department in OCC, and both often work alongside each other. The focus of this measure is in continuing to maintain these links and identify opportunities collaboratively.

**Measure 2.2: Increase interaction and data sharing with Thames Water through targeted engagement and escalation process where required.**

Thames Water manage the risk of flooding to water supply and sewerage facilities and flood risks from the failure of their infrastructure. As part of this role, they should also collaborate with the LLFA, this includes the following actions:

- Providing advice to LLFAs on how water and sewerage company assets impact on local flood risk.
- Working with developers, landowners and LLFAs to understand and manage risks – for example, by working to manage the amount of rainfall that enters sewerage systems.
- Work with the EA, LLFAs and district councils to coordinate the management of water supply and sewerage systems with other flood risk management work.

This measure seeks to help facilitate these responsibilities and improve collaboration between the LLFA and Thames Water, it should include:

- Attendance at quarterly meetings of the Oxfordshire Risk Management Authority flood group.
- Targeted engagement with Thames Water and escalation process to ensure efficient communication.
- Increased data sharing of flooding associated with sewer assets.

**Measure 2.3: Develop skills and capability in different forms of flood risk management, including different funding sources and partnership funding schemes.**

Collaboration between RMAs will help develop the skills and capabilities in different forms of flood risk management within the LLFA. Seeking opportunities for new funding could also help support the development of skills through experience on different flood risk management projects.

The government uses a partnership funding approach to allocate grants for flood and coastal erosion risk management projects. The Partnership Funding policy approach was introduced in 2011 to replace a priority scoring system. The approach to funding flood risk management projects shares the costs between national and local sources of funding. Any project where the benefits are greater than the costs can qualify for a contribution from government funding. The amount of funding a project is eligible for will depend on the benefits it provides; typically measured as the benefits to people and property. Projects in more deprived areas, and ones that provide environmental or other wider economic benefits may attract more grant.

Where the Government funding available does not cover its full cost, additional funding may need to be raised from partners. Anyone who benefits from an FCERM project can be a partner, including:

- Local communities
- Businesses
- Developers
- Local councils

The EA has published guidance<sup>26</sup> on partnership funding for flood risk management projects, which provides more detail on how funding can be calculated and some of the main principles governing partnership funding.

This measure commits the LLFA to investigating different funding sources to support partnership funding schemes. This could support the successful delivery of flood risk management projects and comes with the added benefit of developing skills and experience within the LLFA.

**Measure 2.4: Continue to work with other RMAs and others in order to take a collaborative approach to managing flood risk.**

This measure relates to the continued functioning of the Oxfordshire Risk Management Authority flood group and specific collaboration between the LLFA and each RMA on specific flood risk matters.

It ties closely with the EA's national strategy which highlights that effective flood risk management will not be delivered by RMAs working on their own. Collaboration between RMAs, as well as individuals, communities, the third sector, businesses, farmers and land managers should contribute to planning and adapting to future flooding. This includes working collaboratively, and where appropriate supporting RMAs and others on flood risk management schemes.

The EA's programme of flood risk management schemes is important in this regard, it relates to main rivers and includes some of the rivers in Oxfordshire. For example, the Oxford Flood Alleviation Scheme, which OCC are currently supporting on. OCC are also supporting the Littleworth Natural Flood Management project. The Thames Valley Flood Scheme could also potentially be of relevance in the future. It is investigating ways to manage flood risk on a large scale across the Thames Valley including flood storage and natural flood management (NFM).

Under this measure OCC will also continue working with RMAs and others in order to take a collaborative approach to managing flood risk. OCC will also ensure where possible that they are up to date and aware of any EA, district or Thames Water plans that could contribute to managing flood in the county.

## **6.4 Objective 3 - Take a Sustainable and Holistic Approach**

***Take a sustainable and holistic approach to flood risk management, seeking to deliver wider environmental and social benefits, climate change mitigation and improvements under the Water Framework Directive.***

The strategy will sit alongside the council's other strategic policies related to climate change, sustainability, and biodiversity along with river basin management plans, the EA's national strategy for flood risk and wider national legislation. The strategy will look to align with these, seeking approaches to flood risk management which are holistic and bring multiple benefits. In its role as LLFA OCC will consider the full range of appropriate flood risk management techniques, including innovative approaches or technologies.

In terms of climate change, the latest projections for the UK published in 2021 show that Oxfordshire is likely to experience more frequent extremes in temperature, rainfall, and wind. OCC declared a climate emergency in 2019 and developed a climate action framework<sup>27</sup>, which sets out their targets

---

<sup>26</sup> Environment Agency (2023) *Partnership funding for FCERM projects*  
<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/partnership-funding-for-fcerm-projects> accessed 18/12/2023

<sup>27</sup> Oxfordshire County Council (2020) *2020 Climate Action Framework*  
[https://www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/sites/default/files/file/about-council/OCC\\_Climate\\_Action\\_Framework2020.pdf](https://www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/sites/default/files/file/about-council/OCC_Climate_Action_Framework2020.pdf)  
accessed 19/12/2023



and approach to tackling climate change in the short, medium, and long term. Currently the council is also developing a climate change strategy, assessing the risk and vulnerability of areas across Oxfordshire. The council are also committed to becoming carbon neutral by 2030. The LLFA will work within these frameworks and aims, with the approach to flood risk informed by the latest climate change modelling and most reliable evidence that becomes available.

Sustainability and biodiversity will also be prioritised in line with the latest NPPF. Local guidance will also be considered, OCC has worked with the Berkshire, Buckinghamshire, and Oxfordshire Wildlife Trust (BBOWT) and the Thames Valley Environmental Records Centre (TVERC) to produce a Biodiversity and Planning guidance document<sup>28</sup> published in 2014. The guidance combines planning policy with information about wildlife sites, habitats, and species to help identify where biodiversity should be protected. OCC has also published a green infrastructure report<sup>29</sup> which sets out the strategic case for investment in green infrastructure to meet the county's sustainability challenges.

Oxfordshire is largely covered by the Thames River Basin Management Plan<sup>30</sup> (RBMP) with a small area in the northwest of the county falling within the Anglian RBMP<sup>31</sup>. The latest plans were both published in October 2022. They set the legally binding locally specific environmental objectives that underpin water regulation (such as permitting) and planning activities. This also includes investment programmes to enhance the water environment. The RBMPs tie into the EU Water Framework Directive which is transposed into law in England and Wales by the Water Environment (Water Framework Directive) (England and Wales) 2017 Regulations. The overall aim is to ensure that all watercourses achieve a "good status" by defined date (2027 in the latest RBMPs). OCC has a major role in this and will work with the EA to ensure that all relevant actions are identified, prioritised, resourced, and implemented.

Thames Water's future plans for Oxfordshire also need to be considered. They are currently developing the Southeast Strategic Reservoir Option. This is a reservoir in the Upper Thames catchment, southwest of Abingdon. The reservoir will be filled with water from the Thames in winter and when river levels drop, or demand for water increases, water would be released from the reservoir back into the river for re-abstraction downstream. As well as providing a resilient water supply for the southeast, the reservoir also provides opportunities to create new habitats and increase biodiversity.

As outlined in taking a holistic approach to flood risk other strategic objectives related to the environment will be considered, so too will the views and needs of communities across Oxfordshire. Community resilience plays a critical role in being prepared for and during flooding events. Following the 2007 floods several communities across the county began to develop community and parish emergency plans. OCC will continue to support these with the LLFA working with community groups

---

<sup>28</sup> OCC, BBOWT, TVERC (2014) *Biodiversity and Planning in Oxfordshire*  
<https://www2.oxfordshire.gov.uk/cms/sites/default/files/folders/documents/environmentandplanning/countryside/naturalenvironment/Wholedocument.pdf> accessed 19/12/2023

<sup>29</sup> Oxfordshire County Council (2020) *Making the case for investment in Green Infrastructure in Oxfordshire*  
<https://www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/sites/default/files/file/countryside/GreenInfrastructurefulltext.pdf> accessed 19/12/2023

<sup>30</sup> Environment Agency (2022) *Thames River basin district river basin management plan*  
<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/thames-river-basin-district-river-basin-management-plan-updated-2022> accessed 19/12/23

<sup>31</sup> Environment Agency (2022) *Anglian River basin district river basin management plan*  
<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/anglian-river-basin-district-river-basin-management-plan-updated-2022> accessed 19/12/23

to help facilitate their development. The measures below provide more detail on how the LFRMS will seek to deliver Objective 3 throughout the plan period.

**Measure 3.1: Seek opportunities to provide biodiversity and surface water run-off water quality enhancements through statutory planning consultations on drainage, and potentially through the SuDS Approval Body, if the legislation is approved by end of the plan period.**

The LLFA are statutory consultees in the planning process to assess major planning applications (e.g. 10 or more homes or major commercial developments) for their surface water drainage implications.

New developments should consider Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS), moving away from traditional below ground piped drainage systems. SuDS manage rainwater runoff in a way that is more similar to the natural runoff process retaining water at or near the ground surface.

SuDS can take many forms, both above and below ground. Some types of SuDS include planting, others include proprietary manufactured products.

There are four main categories of benefits that can be achieved by SuDS water quantity, water quality, amenity, and biodiversity. These are referred to as the four pillars of SuDS (see Figure 9).

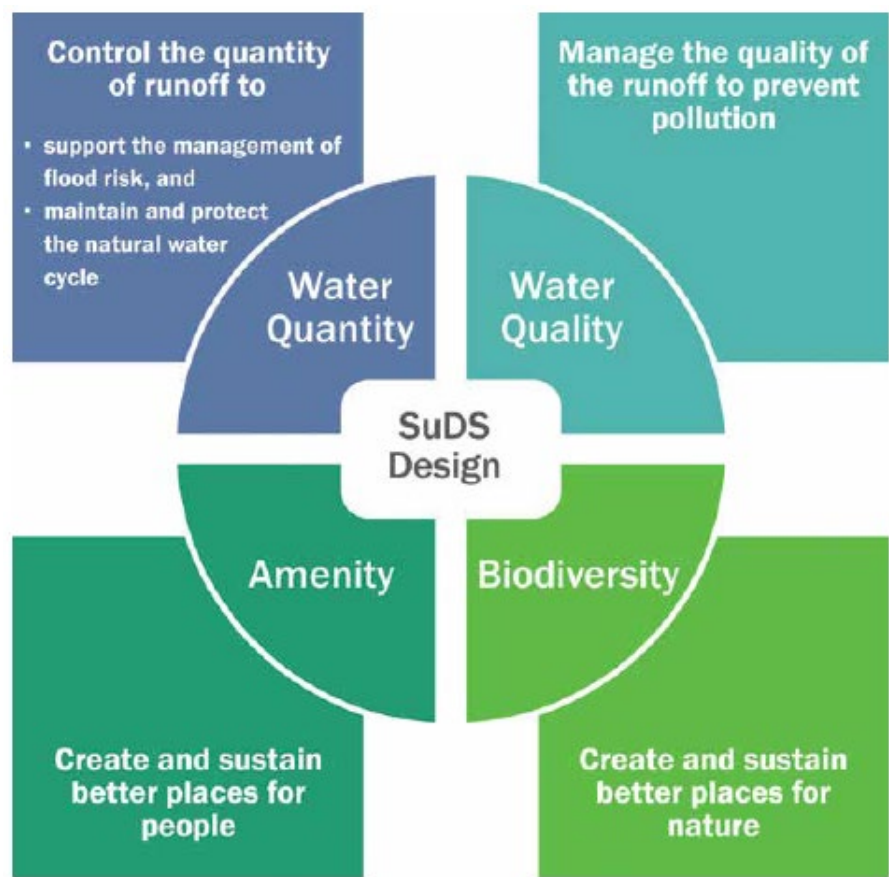


Figure 9- Four main categories of benefits that can be achieved by SuDS (Source: CIRIA<sup>32</sup>)

<sup>32</sup> CIRIA (2015) *The SuDS Manual C753*

In its role as statutory consultee the LLFA will work with developers to ensure that the benefits of SuDS are maximised. During the plan period, Schedule 3 of the FWMA is set to be implemented in England (scheduled for 2024). The core purpose of Schedule 3 is to make the incorporation of SuDS into new developments mandatory. It will involve the introduction of SuDS approval bodies (SAB) whose duty it will be to adopt new SuDS on the basis that they meet certain conditions. OCC will take on the role of the SAB in Oxfordshire, giving the council greater responsibilities in managing, approving, and maintaining SuDS throughout the county. The SAB process forms another statutory process outside of planning.

In taking on this role, OCC will require more resources not only in approving SuDS plans but also inspecting and maintaining SuDS when it is built. It will also bring more opportunities to ensure that SuDS schemes are developed consistently.

It should also be noted that OCC also engage with the districts on the wider local plans for future development. In these roles, OCC can shape future development in Oxfordshire ensuring that the holistic benefits that SuDS can provide are prioritised.

**Measure 3.2: Develop on existing pilot schemes for local flood wardens and expand to further flood risk areas by the end of the plan period.**

Flood wardens are members of the local community, they can be individuals, representatives of the parish council or existing volunteers. The main role of flood wardens is to monitor blocked drains, culverts, ditches in need of repair, tree branches or obstructions in rivers/watercourses, and anything else that may cause a flood risk and report them to the appropriate land, property owners or the LLFA so that they can be resolved before a major flood event occurs.

Flood wardens can also play a role in helping local communities to understand their flood risk and offering their local knowledge to emergency service during and after a flood.

The Joint Oxfordshire Resilience Team (JORT), highways team and volunteer coordination team, can support flood wardens in their role and provide the necessary training. The council has helped set up three pilot flood warden schemes within Oxfordshire located in Ascott under Wychwood, Witney and more recently Sunningwell. They have also published a flood warden handbook<sup>33</sup> providing flood wardens with the information they need to undertake their role; the diagram below shows the five key responsibilities covered by the handbook.

---

<sup>33</sup> Oxfordshire County Council (2023) *The Flood Warden Handbook Version 1.03*



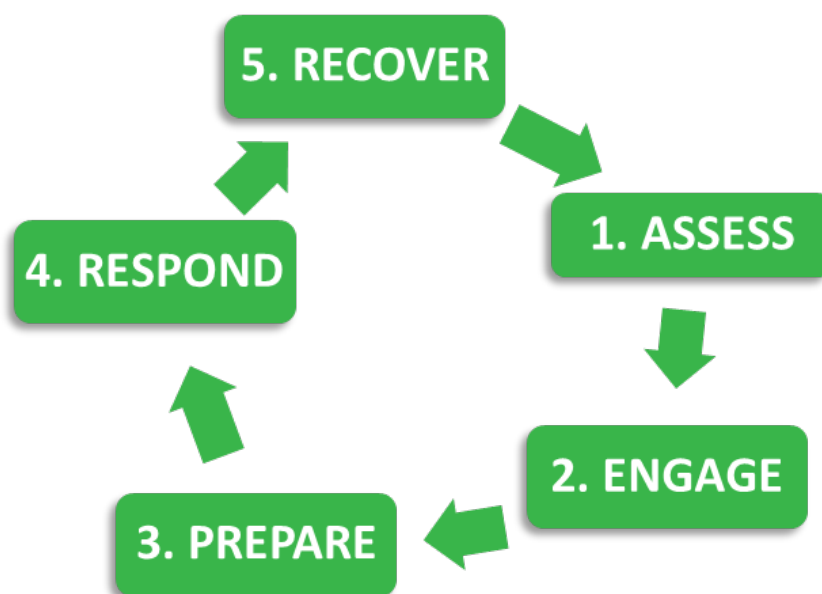


Figure 10- Five steps identified in OCC's Flood Warden Handbook

Under this measure, the council will look to expand flood warden schemes to more locations at flood risk. This should help bring more community awareness of flood risk and improves the LLFA's awareness of issues present in particular areas. Schemes such as this tie into one of the ambitions of EA's national strategy which seeks to aim for a nation ready to respond to flooding and highlights the training and supporting of flood wardens as a means of supporting this.

**Measure 3.3: Liaise with town and parish councils to develop community emergency plans.**

Developing a community flood plan can be an effective way to encourage the community to become more resilient. This may involve members of the parish council forming a Flood Action Group, a core of local people who act as a representative voice for the wider community on flood risk matters. Members of the action group would be most familiar with the plan and the actions they should take, with the wider community also made aware that there is a plan in place. The plan can support emergency services to identify the resources available, contact key members of the group, and identify properties that may have vulnerable residents inside.

As part of the strategy, the council's resilience team will liaise with respective parish councils to offer support in developing community emergency plans, outlining their scope and implementation. The strategy further recognises and encourages the important role Parish councils play in gathering information on areas at risk of flooding, in raising additional funding for local flood defence measures and for undertaking regular maintenance.

**Measure 3.4: Work with landowners to implement the mitigation recommendations identified in S19 reports, and priority areas.**

This measure strongly aligns with a strategic objective in the latest EA's strategy, which is for RMAs to work with landowners to help adapt their land use practices in order to contribute to greater resilience to flooding.

Mitigative actions have been identified in a number of the LLFA's existing S19 reports including recommendations for agricultural landowners to carry out works to help to retain the natural land drainage regime, provide the best soil conditions for the continued agricultural use of the land and reduce surface runoff where possible.

During the plan period, the LLFA will increase engagement with landowners to better monitor and encourage suitable land use practices with respect to identified flood risks. The LLFA will investigate and where appropriate adopt processes to streamline implementation of flood risk management measures, such as establishing an LLFA minor groundworks contractor framework.

## **6.5 Objective 4 - Prevent an Increase in Flood Risk**

***Prevent an increase in flood risk from development where possible, by preventing additional flow entering existing drainage systems and watercourses.***

New development tends to be associated with an increase in the impermeable areas which if not properly managed will increase existing surface water run-off rates causing an increase to flood risk. The LLFA acting as statutory consultee on surface water drainage for major developments, promote the use of SuDS and review strategies to safeguard against additional flow entering existing drainage systems and watercourses.

Prevention of flood risk also relies on riparian owners being aware of and undertaking their responsibilities to let water flow through their land, maintain bed and banks, leave banks free of development (unless permitted), not cause obstructions and inform the relevant people if planning to build or alter a structure. In its role the LLFA will continue to work with riparian owners to encourage a proactive approach to managing watercourses reducing the likelihood of future flooding.

Increases in flood risk are also minimised through collaboration with other RMAs on major flood alleviation projects (e.g. Oxford Flood Alleviation Scheme), shared knowledge of flood defence assets (permanent and temporary) and coordinated flood response.

**Measure 4.1: Seek opportunities to manage and improve surface water run-off impacts from developments through statutory consultations on planning applications and SuDS Approval Body consents by end of the plan period.**

The LLFA acting as statutory consultee on surface water drainage for major developments, promote the use of SuDS and review strategies to safeguard against additional flow entering existing drainage systems and watercourses. Under this measure the LLFA will continue in this role, whilst also seeking opportunities to improve surface water run-off impacts from development. This could include seeking a betterment on existing runoff rates in areas at risk of flooding or supporting blue and green infrastructure in urban settings. Following the implementation of Schedule 3 of the FWMA in England (scheduled for 2024), OCC will take on the role of the SAB in Oxfordshire, this gives the council greater responsibilities in managing, approving, and maintaining SuDS throughout the county, thereby offering more opportunities to ensure that SuDS schemes are being implemented properly with their performance maintained going forward.

OCC also engage with the districts on the wider local plans for development which SFRAs support. In these roles, OCC can shape future development in Oxfordshire ensuring that the management of surface water impacts are brought to the fore.

**Measure 4.2: Update local SuDS guidance in conjunction with Highway department to ensure a common set of standards by end of the plan period.**

The LLFA has published local SuDS guidance<sup>34</sup> intended to assist developers in the design of all surface water drainage systems, and to support Local Planning Authorities in considering drainage proposals for new development in Oxfordshire. The guidance sets out the standards that the LLFA apply in assessing all surface water drainage proposals. The guidance document is continually updated, the latest version was published in 2021.

The guidance currently only focuses on major development, the OCC highways department has its own drainage policy<sup>35</sup> and follows the national standards for highways which cover the design of highway drainage systems<sup>36</sup>. The highways department have been consulted in the development of the LFRMS and it has been agreed that during the plan period the LLFA and highways department will work together to update the existing guidance for SuDS so that they cover both major developments and highways. The construction of new highways goes hand in hand with new development so having a universal document for both should encourage more joined up thinking and more integrated applications of SuDS. It also ensures that a common set of standards are being followed to reduce the impacts on surface water runoff from impermeable land uses.

The allowable discharge rates and volumes in the standards are likely to remain largely steered by national guidance in the form of non-statutory guidance for SuDS. However, updates to the guidance will also focus on ensuring that the document is user friendly and understandable to a range of stakeholders. The LLFA will also consult with the district councils on the standards to help ensure a clear consistent awareness for minor developments.

**Measure 4.3: Develop joint approaches between Highways and the LLFA to explore how SuDS principles can be used for new developments or retrofitted where problems exist.**

Under this measure, investigating how SuDS principles can be used to address issues will be prioritised, with a specific focus on development and highways as one system rather than as separate elements.

There are already formal quarterly meetings between the LLFA, the highways department and other RMAs. The LLFA and highways team already work together and share information so there exists a precedent to further develop joint approaches. Joint approaches that consider a broader range of stakeholders are more likely to bring the holistic benefits sought by Objective 3 of the strategy.

---

<sup>34</sup> Oxfordshire County Council (2021) *Local Standards and Guidance for Surface Water Drainage on Major Development in Oxfordshire* <https://www.oxfordshirefloodtoolkit.com/wp-content/uploads/2022/01/LOCAL-STANDARDS-AND-GUIDANCE-FOR-SURFACE-WATER-DRAINAGE-ON-MAJOR-DEVELOPMENT-IN-OXFORDSHIRE-Jan-22-2.pdf> accessed 22/12/2023

<sup>35</sup> Oxfordshire County Council (2023) *Highways Drainage Policy* <https://www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/sites/default/files/file/roads-and-transport-major-projects/drainagepolicy.pdf>

<sup>36</sup> Standards for Highways (2022) *CG 501 – Design of highways drainage systems* <https://www.standardsforhighways.co.uk/search/6355ee38-413a-4a11-989b-0f33af89c4ed> accessed 22/12/2023



Figure 11- Broad Meadow Scheme, an example of temporary SuDS retrofitting, (Source: Oxford City Council<sup>37</sup>)

**Measure 4.4: Identify highway networks that are at risk of flooding and establish the resilience measures required by end of the plan period, making use of the current 'resilient highways' initiatives undertaken by Highways.**

The highways department are already undertaking this measure as part of their *resilient highways' initiatives*. As part of this work there is a move away from treating issues at source to focusing on the highway system as a whole. The LLFA will support this and look to help identify areas at risk of flooding based on the information they hold and advise on potential measures where appropriate.

**Measure 4.5: Ongoing development of a SuDS maintenance database and maintenance database for highway assets by end of the plan period.**

The LLFA have been developing a SuDS maintenance database and there also exists a database for highway assets. The information from these two databases will be shared between the LLFA and highways so that problem areas are known, and action can be taken. Continued development of the SuDS maintenance database will be particularly useful with the introduction of Schedule 3, when the LLFA become responsible for maintaining SuDS features.

**Measure 4.6: In our LLFA role as consultees on SFRAs and FRAs for major developments, ensure adaptive approaches are explored to mitigate climate change impacts in relation to flooding.**

In advising and reviewing SFRAs, the LLFA can shape development allocations put forward by the district councils and will ensure that these adequately account for the impacts of climate change. They will also advise on the principles outlined within SFRAs for flood mitigation, flood resilience and SuDS. OCC also engage with the districts on the wider local plans for development that SFRAs support. In these roles, OCC can shape future development in Oxfordshire ensuring that a sequential approach to development has been applied which considers climate change and is resilient to flooding.

At the site level, the LLFA act as a statutory consultee for surface water drainage and groundwater, they also have a regulatory role on consenting works on ordinary watercourses. In these roles they

---

<sup>37</sup> Oxford City Council (2022) Broad Meadow  
[https://www.oxford.gov.uk/info/20359/building\\_projects/1530/broad\\_meadow](https://www.oxford.gov.uk/info/20359/building_projects/1530/broad_meadow)

can ensure that the impacts associated with these sources of flood risk are considered in site-specific FRAs. Where flood risks are significant, they will ensure that suitable mitigation and resilience measures are being proposed that consider the impacts of climate change. They will also work closely with the EA and Thames Water to ensure that climate change is considered when addressing risk from main rivers and sewers.

In their approval role for drainage from major developments within Oxfordshire, the LLFA will also ensure that drainage strategies account for the impacts of climate change on surface water runoff. This will ensure that developments maintain existing runoff rates and volumes throughout their lifetime and do not contribute to flood risk in the future.

## 6.6 Objective 5 - Communicate to People

***Seek opportunities to communicate to people the potential impacts of flooding and how they can reduce the impact.***

Community engagement is a fundamental part of local flood risk management. Through engagement with the public, a greater awareness of flood risk and the measures available to address it is achieved. This in turn improves community resilience and preparedness in the event of a flood.

This objective ties into one of the key ambitions of the national strategy- *a nation ready to respond to flooding* and one of its strategic objectives *Between now and 2050, people will understand the potential impact of flooding and coastal change on their lives and livelihoods and will take action to reduce that impact.*

Communication links with other RMAs are also vital in all aspects of flood risk management and ensure that the needs of all stakeholders are factored into the decision-making process.

OCC already engage with the public and other RMAs through face-to-face engagement and online resources such as the Oxfordshire Flood toolkit. The measures associated with this objective focus on continuing these roles and strengthening links where possible.

**Measure 5.1: Continue promotion and development of the Oxfordshire County Council Flood Toolkit website with updated information on LLFA role, resilience, post event recovery and links to other services.**

The Flood Toolkit website (see Figure 12) has been developed by OCC in recent years and provides homeowners, businesses, landowners, and the community with key information on flooding. This includes how to find whether you are at risk of flooding, how to report a flood incident, information on flood prevention, advice on post event recovery and how flood risk relates to the planning system. It also outlines the responsibilities of RMAs and other stakeholders and provides links to other services.

Under this measure, OCC will continue to develop the website making sure that it is kept up to date. By further promoting the website to residents and businesses in Oxfordshire, there is an opportunity to raise awareness of flood risk and the resources available. This in turn will help people better understand the potential impacts of flooding and how to take action.



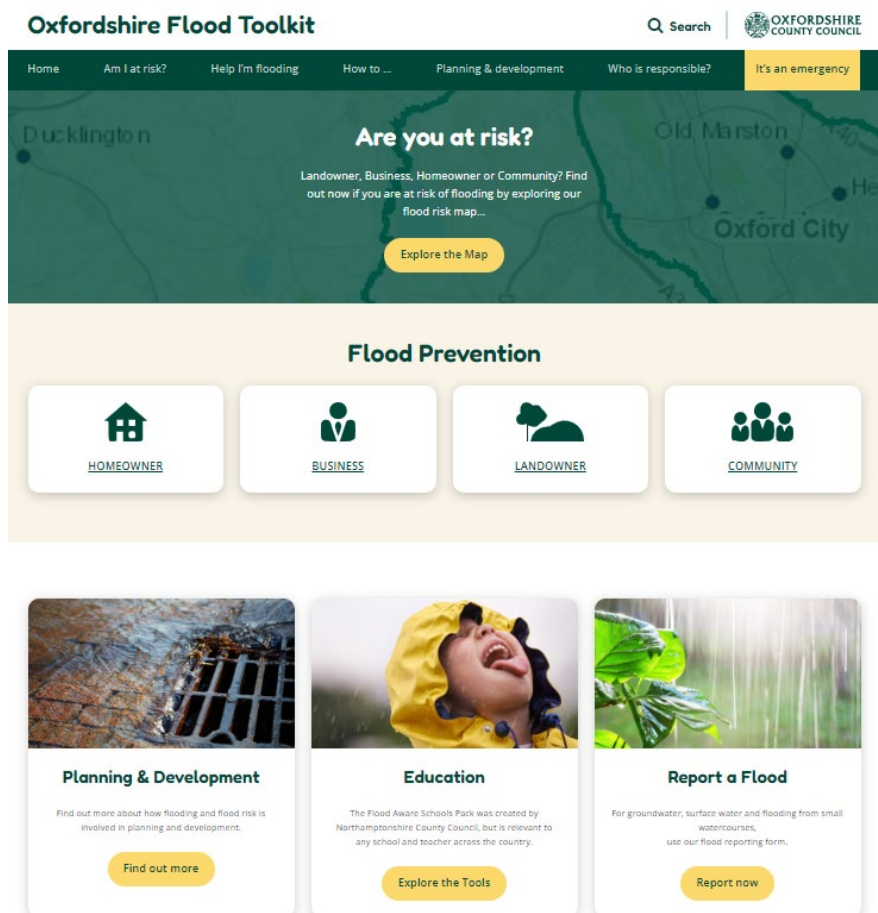


Figure 12- Oxfordshire Flood Toolkit Website

**Measure 5.2: Establish links with the BeFloodReady Property Flood Resilience Centre in Wallingford and if appropriate other initiatives to identify resources available and make accessible through the Flood Toolkit website by end of the plan period.**

The BeFloodReady Property Flood Resilience Centre was opened in Wallingford in May 2023. It is the UK's first dedicated facility to deliver accredited training on the specification, installation, and maintenance of Property Flood Resilience (PFR) measures. Funded by Defra, the centre is used to upskill professionals from a wide range of industries.

The LLFA will establish links with the centre to identify any resources and training available to improve knowledge of PFR internally. It will also identify opportunities to work with the centre to promote flood resilience in the county. This will include providing a link to the BeFloodReady website<sup>38</sup> via its Flood Toolkit website. The BeFloodReady website provides guidance and information on PFR to homes, businesses, and communities. The LLFA has also published a short guidance document on PFR<sup>39</sup>, this could also be updated to provide links to BeFloodReady' resources.

<sup>38</sup> BeFloodReady (2023) <https://www.befloodready.uk/>

<sup>39</sup> Oxfordshire County Council (2023) *Reduce the impact of flooding on your home* <https://www.oxfordshirefloodtoolkit.com/pdfs/12/protect-your-home.pdf> accessed 02/01/2024.



Figure 13- Oxfordshire guidance document for homeowners

It should be noted that whilst PFR measures do help the resilience of individual homes and businesses, this option often forms a last line of defence. In this regard, they should be considered holistically and weighed against other measures which may provide flood prevention such as community flood defence schemes or larger flood alleviation works.

**Measure 5.3: Encourage greater collaboration and data sharing between Highways fix my street reports and LLFA toolkit reports by end of the plan period**

OCC provide a fix my street resource online<sup>40</sup>, which can be used to report, view, and discuss local highway faults. Whilst many of the issues reported relate to non-flood related issues (e.g. potholes, electrical faults etc), drainage and flooding issues are sometimes reported. It is important that these issues are also captured in the LLFA's flood incident record to provide as full a picture as possible of flood hotspots across Oxfordshire.

Under this measure, the LLFA will work with highways over the plan period to ensure that measures are put in place to ensure that the relevant data between the two datasets are shared. This should also help with incident response ensuring that the correct team are alerted when managing particular issues.

<sup>40</sup> Oxfordshire County Council (2023) Fix my street <https://fixmystreet.oxfordshire.gov.uk/> accessed 02/01/2024.

**Measure 5.4: Reinforce links with the Environment Agency and other RMAs through the Thames Valley Local Resilience Forum to ensure aligned communication during flood events and sharing of best practice on working with communities by end of the plan period**

As mentioned in the EA's current national strategy, effective flood risk management will not be delivered by RMAs working on their own. In this regard, OCC will take steps during the plan period to reinforce links with the EA and other RMAs. This measure specifically relates to improving communication during flood events and jointly finding ways to best work with communities.

As an initial stage, it would be helpful to establish the EA's and other RMAs current engagement with the community before, during and after flood events. This should help ensure that a consistent message is being delivered to residents and should safeguard against repetition. Expanding upon this opportunities will be sought to share methods of engagement in the community. This could be undertaken during Risk Management Authority flood group meetings or through more informal liaison.

There can be challenges and inefficiencies in sharing data due to data confidentiality issues with the need for individual data sharing agreements for separate projects and with each RMA. Through the plan period the LLFA will explore ways in which this process can be streamlined.

**Measure 5.5: Ensure LLFA attendance at local flood forum meetings.**

The LLFA currently attend a number of formal and informal meetings. Some examples of the local flood forum meetings the LLFA attend and contribute to are listed below:

- Thames Valley Local Resilience Forum Meeting- set up by the EA/OCC resilience team.
- Thames RFCC Main Committee Meeting- set up by the EA.
- ADEPT Flood meeting- ADEPT are a flood management group consisting of a number of LLFAs. This meeting is typically set up by Kent County Council
- Oxford Flood Alleviation Scheme Programme Board Meeting- set up by the EA.

On a more informal bases the LLFA also meet with the EA monthly and are in regular communication with the district councils. The frequency of these communications is often dependent on the time of year and any recent flood events. Meetings with Thames Water are formalised as and when needed.

Under this measure the LLFA will work to ensure continued attendance at each of these meetings and any other relevant flood forum meetings that may arise during the plan period. This will ensure that the LLFA are updated on flood risk matters at the local to regional scale.

**Measure 5.6: Communicate flood risk issues to councillors through lunch & learn sessions and/or newsletters by end of the plan period.**

In Oxfordshire councillors can be elected to a parish or town council, a district council, and the county council. County councillors are elected for a four-year term. Councillors engage with their local communities and reflect their views. They form a vital source of information for issues in the community including flooding and can play a key role in influencing local policy. In this regard keeping councillors up to date on flood risk issues across the county could prove vital in the management of future flood risk.

Within the LLFA, communication with councillors on flood risk matters is currently on an ad-hoc basis. However, under this measure the LLFA will take steps to engage with councillors more actively. This could include arranging face to face lunch and learn sessions on key flood risk issues or circulation of a periodic newsletter to keep councillors regularly updated on the LLFA's function and activities.



## 7 Implementation

### 7.1 Investment

RMA in Oxfordshire have a responsibility to investigate and promote opportunities to deliver flood risk management activities that will aim to reduce the number of people and properties at risk of flooding. There is limited financial support from the government to deliver all the identified requirements, therefore, in line with the system for national allocation of capital funding, all RMAs should prioritise activities using a risk-based approach. This includes the measures identified in this strategy.

The Action Plan supporting this strategy will indicate how investment in flood risk management will be prioritised in Oxfordshire. Other RMAs will be consulted regarding the implementation of the strategy and development of the action plan, to ensure responsibilities are clearly assigned and that priorities are aligned between relevant partners.

### 7.2 Funding

Flood risk management funding is available through multiple sources and in many cases funding of measures relies on pooling resources from more than one of these sources. Figure 14 shows the various routes and combinations of funding that can be sought, whilst Table 7 provides more detail on each funding source.

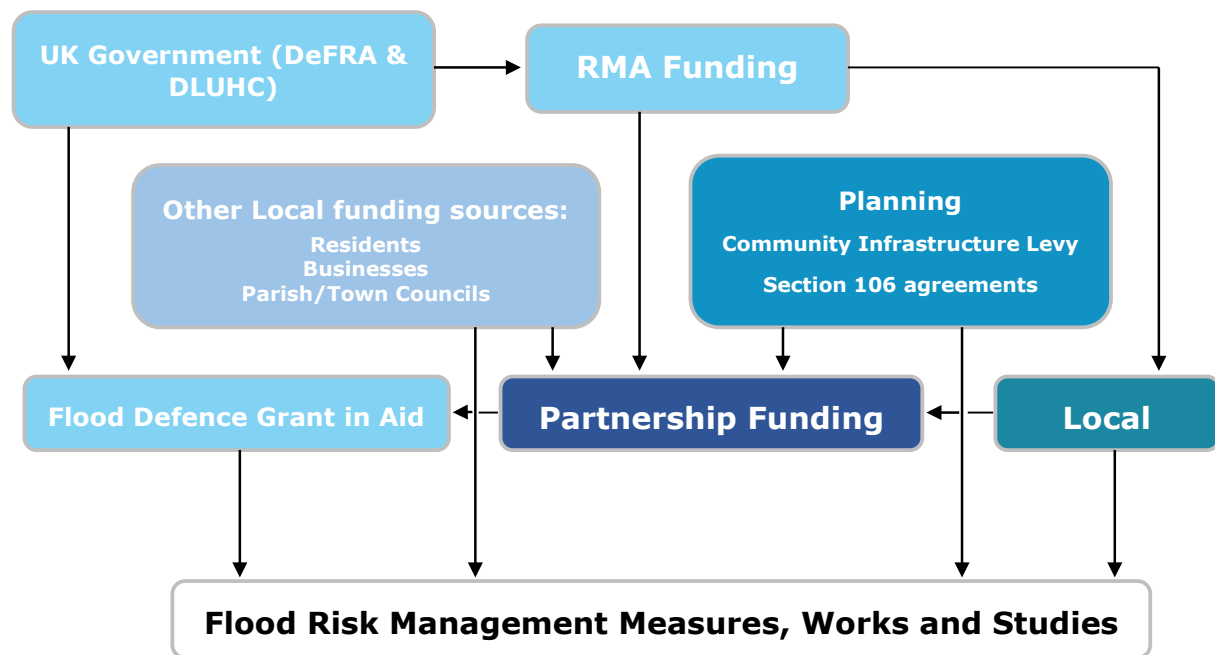


Figure 14- Funding mechanisms available to support flood risk management

Table 7- Information on funding mechanisms

Funding Mechanism	Source	Summary	Eligible Uses
<b>National Funding: Flood Defence Grant in Aid (FDGiA)</b>	DeFRA (through the EA)	<p>The primary tool for obtaining capital funding of flood improvements is through the FDGiA process. Potential measures are submitted to the Medium-Term Plan (MTP), administered by the EA. Each scheme will then be considered, along with others from across the Country, for allocation of funding.</p> <p>It is unlikely that any measures will achieve 100% funding via FDGiA, therefore often proposals are submitted once other sources of partnership funding have been secured.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Build new flood defences (e.g. channels, walls or embankments)</li> <li>• Build new structures (e.g. sluices or pumping stations)</li> <li>• Improve existing defences and structures.</li> <li>• Refurbish existing defences or structures where it extends their original design life.</li> <li>• Produce natural flood management measures.</li> <li>• Improve preparing for, responding to and recovering from flood or erosion events.</li> <li>• Dredge and de-silt – one off projects to bring a channel to a condition where the RMA can maintain it.</li> <li>• Protect or enhance the natural environment where there is a legal requirement to do so.</li> </ul>
<b>Lead Local Flood Authority Funding</b>	DeFRA and Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities (through the LLFA)	Funding for LLFAs to carry out their new duties under the FWMA (2010) is set out under a burdens agreement between Defra and the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities. The funding is not ring fenced and local authorities are free to decide how much to spend in light of other local priorities.	<p>Funding for LLFA to carry out their duties as defined by the FWMA (2010) including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Development of LFRMS</li> <li>• Employment of flood risk staff</li> <li>• Commission of investigative studies (S19 reports)</li> <li>• Contribute towards the practical delivery of flood improvement measures</li> </ul>
<b>Local Levy</b>	Funds are raised by a levy on county and unitary authorities which fall within the regional flood and coastal committee boundary (e.g. Thames region)	The local levy is managed by Regional Flood and Coastal Committees (RFCC). The Thames Local Levy is obtained through payments from Oxfordshire, Swindon, London, Essex, Buckingham, Hertfordshire, Surrey, and Hampshire. All RMAs within these areas can apply for local levy funds from the RFCC for carrying out any of the flood and coastal erosion risk management functions within their area. The levy is set and voted for by the committee which includes representative from LLFAs and independent members.	<p>The local levy can fund or part fund all types of flood risk management projects, both traditional and natural approaches. It can be used as partnership funding on GiA funded projects.</p> <p>The local levy therefore allows locally important projects to be progressed ahead of larger-scale national priorities.</p>

<b>Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL)</b>	Funds are raised by local authorities choosing to charge a levy on new developments in their area	<p>The CIL is a charge which can be levied by local authorities on new development in their area to help them deliver the infrastructure.</p> <p>The levy only applies in areas where a local authority has approved, a charging schedule which sets out its levy rates. In most cases new development (&gt;100 m<sup>2</sup>) is liable.</p>	The money raised from the CIL can be used to support a range of infrastructure, which could include flood improvement works.
<b>Section 106 Agreements</b>	Agreement of financial contribution between developer and local authority	Planning obligations under Section 106 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended) are a mechanism which make a development proposal acceptable in planning terms, that would not otherwise be acceptable. They are focused on site specific mitigation to limit the impact of development.	Contributions from the developer will be used to address issues that are necessary to make a development acceptable. This could include mitigation against potential flood risk. Contributions can be pooled (max 5 developments) towards the same item of infrastructure. Section 106 cannot be used to fund infrastructure that is already identified for potential CIL funding.
<b>Partnership Projects and Shared Resource</b>	Collaboration between RMAs to align investment and pool resources	Collaboration between RMAs on flood infrastructure projects is a means of pooling resources to secure FDGiA funding. Resources can also be pooled to support local measures not applying for FDGiA funding.	Can fund or part fund all types of flood risk management projects, both traditional and natural approaches including those covered by GiA and local levy arrangements.
<b>Other Potential Partners</b>	<p>Examples include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Network Rail</li> <li>• Natural England</li> <li>• NGOs</li> <li>• Forestry Commission</li> <li>• Parish Councils</li> <li>• National Farmers Union</li> <li>• Utilities companies</li> <li>• Waste management</li> <li>• Residents</li> </ul>	As well as RMAs there are several other organisations that will have a major interest in flood risk management activities and can be sought to provide funding.	Can fund or part fund all types of flood risk management projects, both traditional and natural approaches including those covered by GiA and local levy arrangements.

The table above outlines the funding sources available and it is clear that to help reduce damage from flooding at the property level, to businesses and to communities, funding is often needed. The Oxfordshire Flood Toolkit has a funding tool<sup>41</sup> to help users find the best sources of funding for potential projects. This involves completing five questions related to who is looking for funding, the flood risk measures sought, funds already available and when funding is required.

### 7.3 Prioritisation

The current process for prioritisation of measures to manage local flood risk is for OCC acting as the LLFA and its partners to identify potential measures based on areas considered to be at risk of flooding.

This is typically based on a review of past flood events including information and evidence received from district councils, parish councils and residents of Oxfordshire. It will also cover the GIS project being undertaken to identify flood hotspots as outlined in measure 1.3.

Potential measures are then assessed by the relevant RMAs before being submitted to the Oxfordshire Risk Management Authority flooding group for further consideration and approval. In some cases, measures may need to bid for additional funding.

The Risk Management Authority flooding group establishes the relative priority of measures based on a range of criteria including but not limited to flood risk to property, flood risk to highway routes, flood risk to land, health hazard and risks to vulnerable people.

OCC work with partners to co-ordinate and submit bids to the EA indicating the level of grant aid support required and compete nationally for grant funding. In this process the relative priority of applications might be adjusted to take account of other factors including the availability of alternative sources of funding, interaction with other policies, and other matters that would influence a holistic Oxfordshire approach.

---

<sup>41</sup> OCC(2024) *Funder finder* <https://www.oxfordshirefloodtoolkit.com/risk/funding/>

## **8 Monitoring and Reviewing the Strategy**

### **8.1 Consultation**

OCC will consult all RMAs on outline timetabling arrangements a significant time before the date proposed for formal adoption. This will enable approval and adoption procedures to be programmed.

The timetable will also include an appropriate period for public consultation. This consultation will involve online consultation. For this, materials will be prepared to help clearly inform consultees, along with questionnaires and/or other methods to record feedback.

Consultation will also be undertaken by raising the profile of the strategy's main outcomes on the Oxfordshire flood toolkit website. Direct e-mails will be sent to key stakeholders making them aware of the consultation procedures available and inviting them to comment on the strategy.

### **8.2 Monitoring Procedures and Updating the Strategy**

The LFRMS will be fully reviewed and updated within a minimum of five years from adoption, denoting the end of the plan period. OCC will maintain a log of issues arising from operation of the strategy to which all local authorities can contribute and to which all partners can refer.

OCC will also consider the need for any updates in the interim due to major changes in legislation, a significant flood event or any other issues arising from operation. When determining whether an update is required consideration will be given to the degree to which an event or issue could influence the focus of flood risk management in Oxfordshire including the objectives and measures underlying the strategy and the action plan supporting it.

## Glossary

**Annual Exceedance Probability (AEP)-** The probability of a certain size of flood flow occurring in a single year. A 1 per cent AEP flood flow has a 1 per cent, or 1-in-100 chance of occurring in any one year.

**Exception Test-** The exception test is a test required before allowing development to be allocated or permitted in situations where suitable sites at lower risk of flooding are not available following application of the sequential test. It requires two elements to be satisfied:

- development that has to be in a flood risk area will provide wider sustainability benefits to the community that outweigh flood risk; and
- the development will be safe for its lifetime taking account of the vulnerability of its users, without increasing flood risk elsewhere, and, where possible, will reduce flood risk overall.

**Flood Risk Activity Permits-** Work on or near main rivers is regulated by environmental permits issued by the EA. You may need to apply for permission to do any of the following regulated flood risk activities:

- erecting any temporary or permanent structure in, over or under a main river, such as a culvert, outfall, weir, dam, pipe crossing, erosion protection, scaffolding or bridge
- altering, repairing or maintaining any temporary or permanent structure in, over or under a main river, where the work could affect the flow of water in the river or affect any drainage work.
- building or altering any permanent or temporary structure designed to contain or divert flood waters from a main river.
- dredging, raising or removing any material from a main river, including when you are intending to improve flow in the river or use the materials removed.
- diverting or impounding the flow of water or changing the level of water in a main river
- quarrying or excavation within 16 metres of any main river, flood defence (including a remote defence) or culvert
- any activity within 8 metres of the bank of a main river, or 16 metres if it is a tidal main river.
- any activity within 8 metres of any flood defence structure or culvert on a main river, or 16 metres on a tidal river

**Fluvial Flooding-** Fluvial flooding or river flooding, occurs when the water level in a river, lake or stream rises and overflows onto the neighbouring land. The water level rise of the river could be due to excessive rain or snowmelt.

**Groundwater Flooding-** Groundwater flooding is when groundwater exceeds its normal range and emerges at ground level.

**Main Rivers-** Main rivers are usually larger rivers and streams. They are designated as such and shown on the Main River Map. The Environment Agency carries out maintenance, improvement, or construction work on main rivers to manage flood risk.

**Ordinary Watercourse-** Ordinary watercourses include every river, stream, ditch, drain, cut, dyke, sluice, sewer (other than a public sewer) and passage through which water flows and which does not form part of a main river.

**Ordinary Watercourse Consent-** If planning to do works on an ordinary watercourse consent is often required from the LLFA. This includes works that are:

- Likely to cause an obstruction to flow or restrict storage.
- That involve the construction of a culvert.
- That will cause changes to structures (dams, weirs, culverts or other like structures) already in place. These will also need consent from the council regardless of other consents or planning permission you may already have obtained.
- That construct temporary works or structures that interfere with or change the flow of water in a watercourse.

**Surface Water Flooding-** Surface water flooding is when intense rainfall overwhelms the ground's ability to absorb rainfall or the capacity of drainage systems.

**Sewer Flooding-** Sewer flooding is typically when intense rainfall events overloads the capacity of sewers. Flooding can also occur as a result of blockage, poor maintenance or structural failure of sewerage assets.

**Sequential Test-** The Sequential Test looks to steer new development to areas with the lowest risk of flooding, taking all sources of flood risk and climate change into account. Where it is not possible to locate development in low-risk areas, the Sequential Test should go on to compare reasonably available sites:

- Within medium risk areas; and
- Then, only where there are no reasonably available sites in low and medium risk areas, within high-risk areas.

**Return Period-** The average length of time in years between events such as the flooding of a particular level. A 1 in 100-year return level is where there is a 1 in 100 chance of that level being exceeded in a year.

**Reservoir Flooding-** Reservoir flooding relates to flooding which occurs in the unlikely event of a dam or reservoir failure.

**Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS)-** SuDS are a collection of water management practices that aim to align modern drainage systems with natural water processes and are part of a larger green infrastructure strategy.

This page is intentionally left blank



Objectives	Measures	Expected timescale	Funding Source	Key Actions
Objective 1: Improve understanding of flood risks and ensure that all stakeholders understand their roles and responsibilities for flood risk management.	1.1 Clarify roles and responsibilities and publish LFRMS on Oxfordshire Flood Toolkit website.	End of Plan Period	OCC	During the plan period the Oxfordshire Flood Toolkit website will be i) maintained to ensure it is up to date and ii) developed where possible to provide greater detail.
	1.2 Continue to prepare Section 19 reports to investigate flood incidents which meet the flood investigation criteria establishing their causes and identifying potential solutions.	Ongoing	OCC	OCC will i) continue to prepare S19 reports and ii) review their thresholds for undertaking S19 flood investigation reports.
	1.3 Continue preparation of a prioritised list of locations and potential schemes.	End of Plan Period	OCC	OCC will i) review the results from the prioritisation tool being developed and ii) outline potential schemes to address any flood risk issues identified.
	1.4 Review Section 30 Schedule 1 asset register and confirm any actions to improve knowledge of third-party assets that manage flood risk by end of the plan period.	End of Plan Period	OCC	OCC will i) review the current asset register and ii) identify where information may be lacking on 3rd party assets before iii) confirming actions to improve knowledge and the management of assets.
	1.5 Continue to review and maintain flood incident records to improve knowledge of flood hotspots within Oxfordshire, ensuring that the most relevant data is collected.	Ongoing	OCC	OCC will i) continue to maintain a flood incident record, ii) transfer the record to a GIS layer and iii) apply the data contained in the layer to improve knowledge of flood hotspots.
Objective 2: Take a collaborative approach to reducing flood risks, using all available resources and funds in an integrated way and in so doing manage and reduce overall flood risk.	2.1 Continue to maintain links with the Highways Department and work collaboratively to identify opportunities for flood risk improvements throughout the plan period.	Ongoing	OCC	LLFA will i) continue quarterly meetings with the Highways department in OCC and ii) look to identify opportunities collaboratively.
	2.2 Increase interaction and data sharing with Thames Water through targeted engagement and an escalation process where required.	End of Plan Period	Various- Multiple RMAs	OCC will i) ensure regular attendance at quarterly meetings, ii) targeted engagement with Thames Water and if necessary iii) develop an escalation process to ensure efficient communication.
	2.3 Develop skills and capability in different forms of flood risk management, including different funding sources and partnership funding schemes.	End of Plan Period	Various	OCC will investigate different funding sources to support partnership funding schemes, potentially aiding flood risk management projects and developing skills within the LLFA.
	2.4 Continue to work with other RMAs and others in order to take a collaborative approach to managing flood risk.	Ongoing	Various- Multiple RMAs	OCC will i) continue working with RMAs and others as part of the Thames Valley Local Resilience Forum and ii) ensure they are aware of any EA, district or Thames Water plans that could contribute to managing flood risk within the county.
Objective 3: Take a sustainable and holistic approach to flood risk management, seeking to deliver wider environmental and social benefits, climate change mitigation and improvements under the Water Framework Directive.	3.1 – Seek opportunities to provide biodiversity and surface water run-off water quality enhancements through statutory planning consultations on drainage, and potentially through the SuDS Approval Body, if the legislation is approved by end of the plan period.	End of Plan Period	OCC and section 106 agreements	OCC will i) work with developers to ensure that the benefits of SuDS are maximised. If Schdule 3 is enacted, the LLFA will begin ii) approving SuDS plans, and iii) inspecting and maintaining SuDS when it is built.
	3.2 –Develop on existing pilot schemes for local flood wardens and expand to further flood risk areas by the end of the plan period.	End of Plan Period	OCC and Parish Council Funds	OCC will look to expand flood warden schemes to more locations at risk of flooding.
	3.3 – Liaise with town councils and parish councils to develop community emergency plans.	End of Plan Period	OCC and Parish Council Funds	OCC will liaise with respective parish councils to offer support in developing community action plans.
	3.4- Work with landowners to implement the mitigation recommendations identified in S19 reports, and priority areas.	Ongoing	OCC and riparian owners	OCC will i) increase engagement with landowners to encourage suitable land use practices and ii) investigate processes to streamline implementation of flood risk management measures.
Objective 4: Prevent an increase in flood risk from development where possible, by preventing additional flow entering existing drainage systems and watercourses.	4.1 – Seek opportunities to manage and improve surface water run-off impacts from developments through statutory consultations on planning applications and SuDS Approval Body consents by end of the plan period.	End of plan period	OCC and section 106 agreements	The LLFA will i) continue to act as statutory consultee and also ii) seek opportunities to improve surface water run-off impacts from developments.
	4.2 – Update local SuDS guidance in conjunction with Highways Department to ensure a common set of standards by end of the plan period.	End of plan period	OCC	The LLFA and Highways Department will i) work together to update the existing guidance for SuDS so that they cover both major developments and highways. The LLFA will also ii) consult with the District councils on the standards to help ensure a clear consistent awareness for minor developments.
	4.3–Develop joint approaches between Highways and the LLFA to explore how SuDS principles can be used for new developments or retro-fitted where problems exist.	End of plan period	OCC	The LLFA and Highways Department will i) continue to work together and share information in order to ii) develop joint approaches to flood risk issues.
	4.4 – Identify highway networks that are at risk of flooding and establish the resilience measures required by end of the plan period, making use of the current 'resilient highways' initiatives undertaken by Highways.	End of plan period	OCC	The LLFA will i) support the Highways Department's resilient highways initiative and ii) look to help identify areas at risk of flooding based on the information they hold and iii) advise on potential measures where appropriate.
	4.5 – Ongoing development of a SuDS maintenance database and maintenance database for highway assets by end of the plan period.	End of plan period	OCC	The LLFA will i) continue developing a SuDS maintenance database, ii) incorporate information from the Highways assets database and iii) use both databases to identify problem areas and iv) agree on actions that can be taken.
	4.6 – In our LLFA role as consultees on SFRAs and FRAs for major developments, ensure adaptive approaches are explored to mitigate climate change impacts in relation to flooding.	End of plan period	OCC and section 106 agreements	LLFA will i) continue to advise and review SFRAs, engage with district councils on local plans for development and act as statutory consultee for surface water drainage. They will ii) ensure that climate change impacts are considered when undertaking all of these roles and iii) work with the EA and Thames Water when addressing flood risk and climate change.
Objective 5: Seek opportunities to communicate to people the potential impacts of flooding and how they can reduce the impact.	5.1 – Continued promotion and development of the Oxfordshire County Council Flood Toolkit website with updated information on LLFA role, resilience, post event recovery and links to other services.	Ongoing	OCC	OCC will continue to develop the Oxfordshire Flood Toolkit website making sure that it is kept up to date and raises awareness of flood risk and the resources available.
	5.2 – Establish links with the BeFloodReady Property Flood Resilience Centre in Wallingford and if appropriate other initiatives to identify resources available and make accessible through the Oxfordshire Flood Toolkit website by end of the plan period.	End of plan period	OCC	The LLFA will i). establish links with the centre to identify any resources and training available. It will ii) identify opportunities to work with the centre to promote flood resilience in the county and iii) provide a link to the BeFloodReady website via its Oxfordshire Flood Toolkit website.
	5.3–Encourage greater collaboration and data sharing between Highways Fix My Street reports and Oxfordshire Flood Toolkit reports by end of the plan period.	End of plan period	OCC	The LLFA will work with Highways to ensure that the relevant data between the two datasets are shared aiding incident response.
	5.4 – Reinforce links with the Environment Agency and other RMAs through the Thames Valley Local Resilience Forum to ensure aligned communication during flood events and sharing of best practice on working with communities by end of the plan period.	Ongoing	Various- Multiple RMAs	OCC will i) seek to establish the EA's and other RMAs current engagement with the community before, during and after flood events. The LLFA will ii) explore ways in which data sharing between RMAs can be streamlined.
	5.5 – Ensure LLFA attendance at local flood forum meetings	Ongoing	OCC	The LLFA ensure continued attendance at local flood forum meetings.
	5.6- Communicate flood risk issues to councillors through lunch & learn sessions and/or newsletters by end of the plan period.	End of plan period	OCC	The LLFA will take steps to engage with councillors more actively (e.g. face to face lunch and learn sessions, newsletter)

This page is intentionally left blank

## **Summary of consultation responses**

The consultation for the Local FRM Strategy was conducted through summer 2024. This involved the following:

- Heads up to the parish/town councils that the consultation was due to be published in advance of the start date.
- Oxfordshire Flood Toolkit updated to provide links to the Let's Talk pages
- Draft Local Strategy sent to other Risk Management Authorities in advance (District and City council, Environment Agency, Thames Water)
- News item on the main OCC website with relevant links
- Email to County Councillors to provide them with advance warning
- Internal teams were consulted via email with Draft document and action plan.

## **Public consultation**

The consultation ran from 28<sup>th</sup> June 2024 to 23<sup>rd</sup> August 2024 and included the Draft Local FRM Strategy document, the Draft Action plan and summary of previous strategy action plan.

A survey was prepared inviting responders to say if they agree or disagree with the objectives and measures, whether they had any specific comments on those or whether they thought anything was missing from the strategy.

We also received email responses separately from a number of organisations as follows:

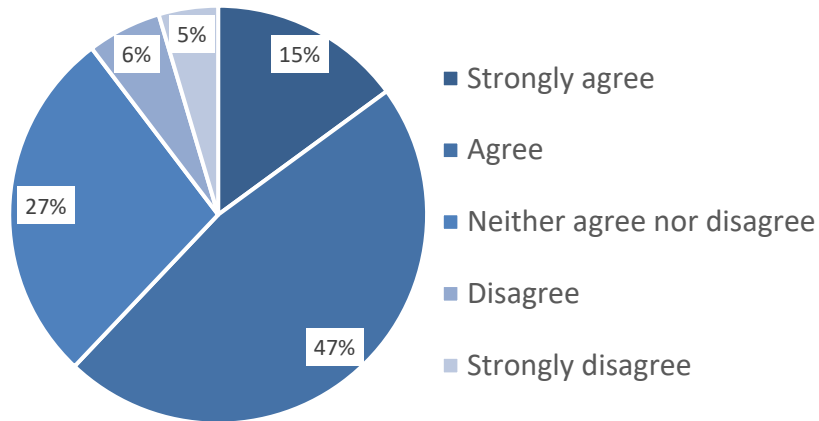
- Environment Agency
- Oxford Flood Alliance
- Witney Flood Group
- West Oxfordshire District Council

## **Feedback responses**

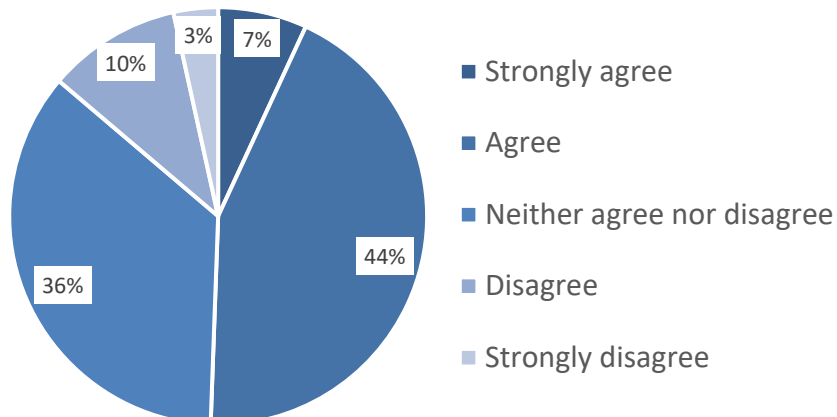
From the Lets Talk page we received 92 responses. 62 of these were from residents of Oxfordshire, 22 were from a local authority/ County Councillor, 5 were on behalf of a local group or charity. The remaining responses were marked as 'other' or were from businesses or OCC employees. A summary of these responses are given below.

## General Questions about the Strategy

Please indicate to what extent you agree or disagree that it is clear in the Strategy which Risk Management Authorities are responsible for managing which sources of flooding?

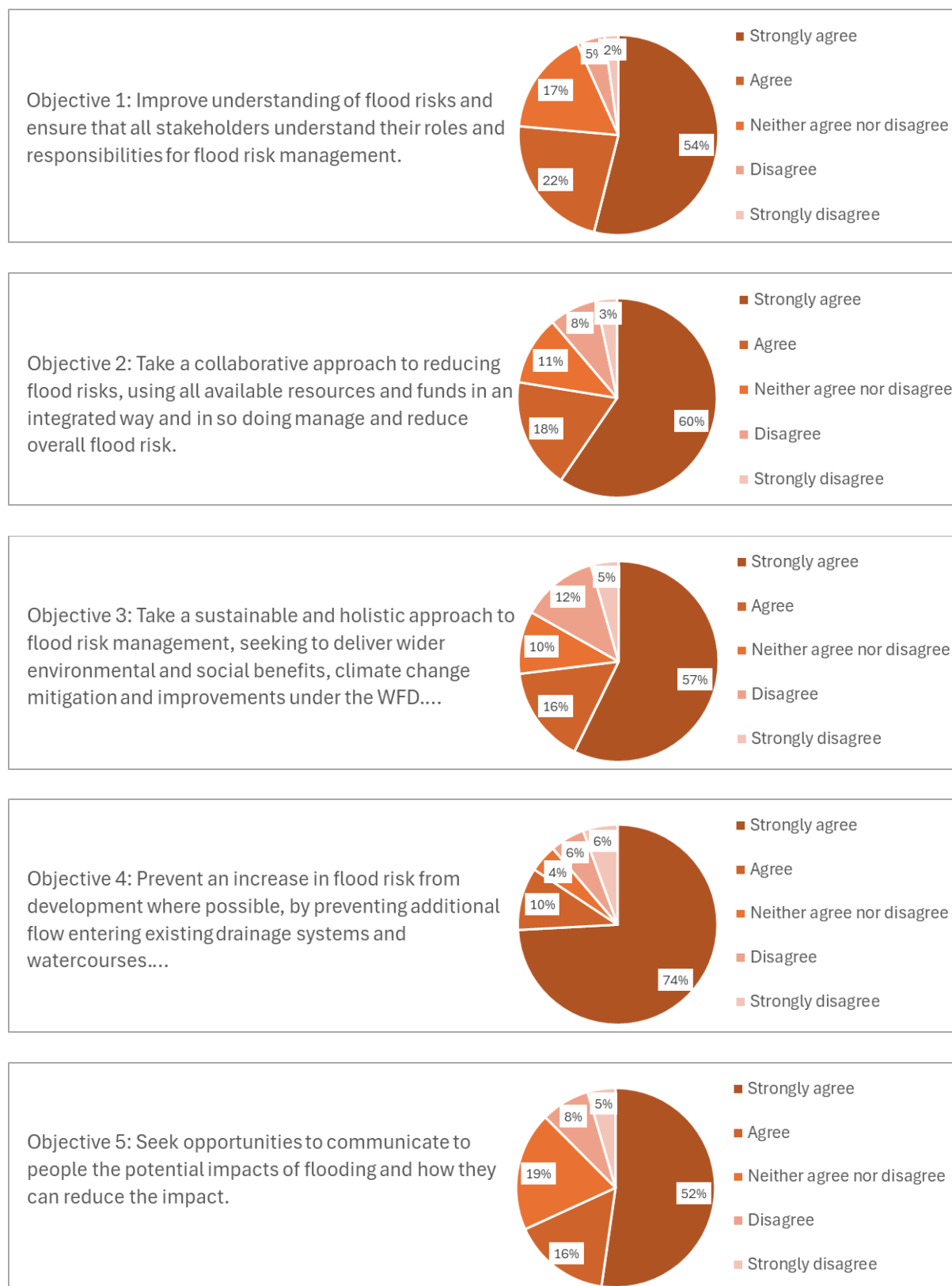


Please indicate to what extent you agree or disagree that the information about sources of funding for flood risk management is clear within the strategy?

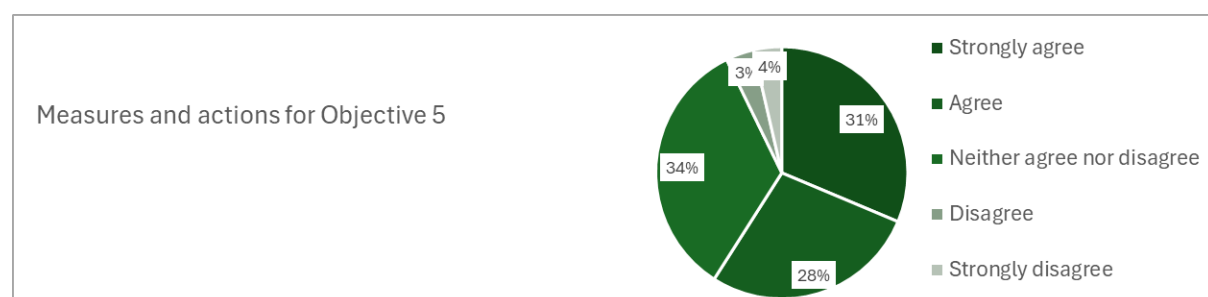
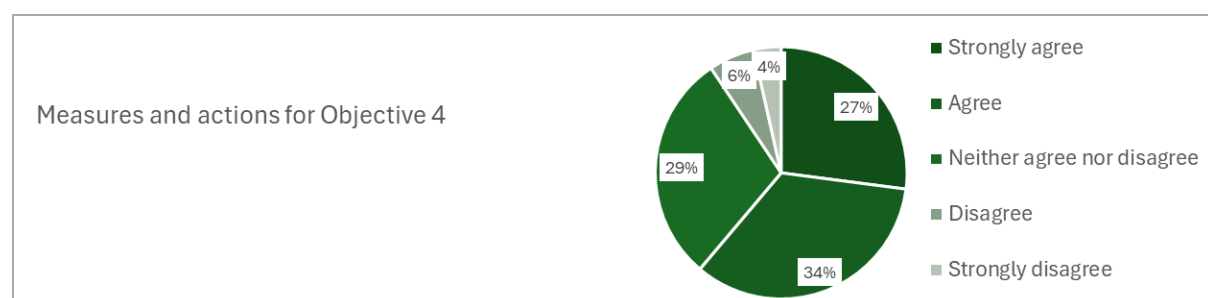
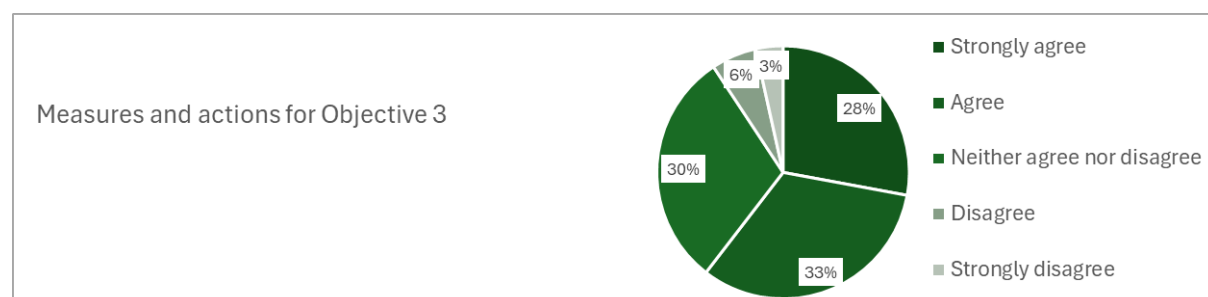
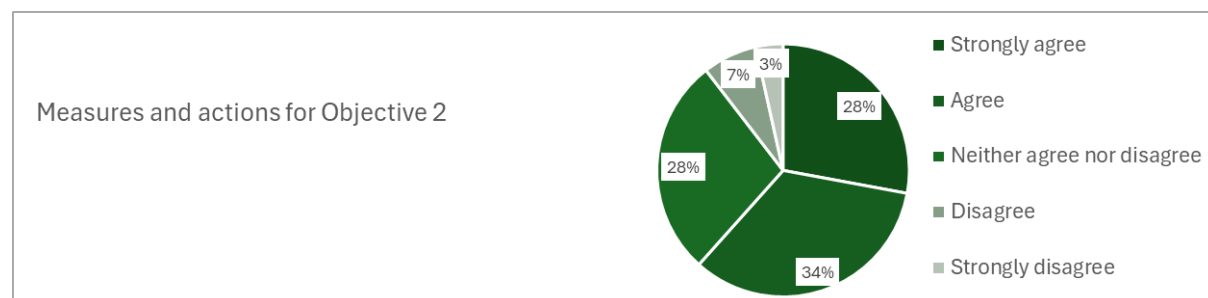
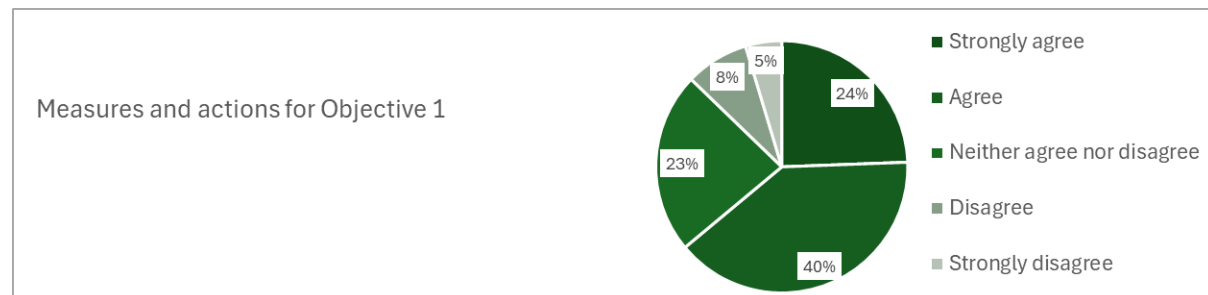


## Objectives

The Strategy sets out objectives for managing local flood risk. Please indicate how strongly you agree or disagree with each of the following objectives?



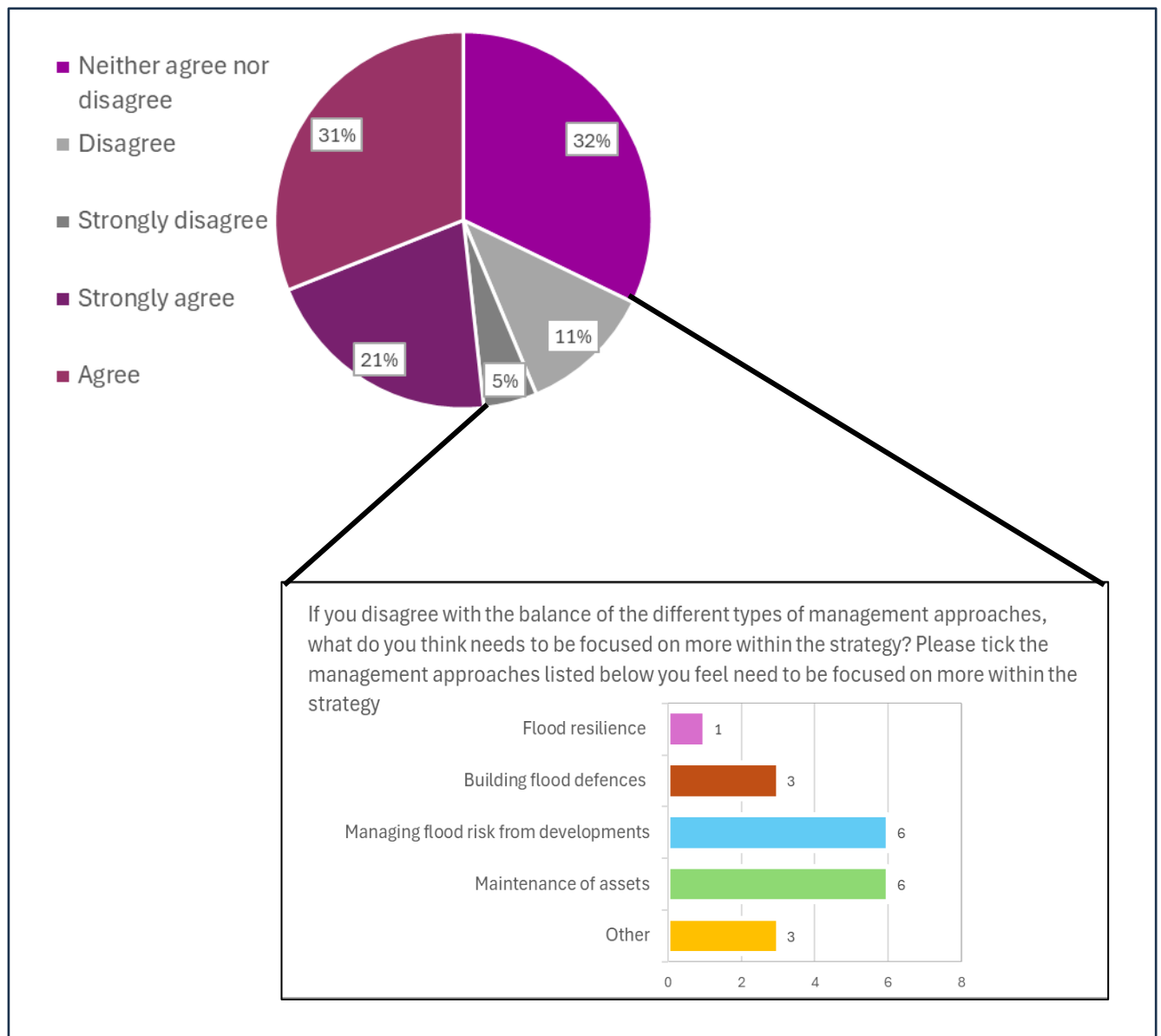
The Strategy sets out the measures and actions we propose to take to meet the objectives. Please indicate how strongly you agree or disagree that the measures and actions are appropriate for each objective?



## Balance of measures

Flood risk can be managed in a number of different ways, these can include flood warning and resilience, maintenance of assets, managing flood risk from development and building flood defences.

Please indicate to what extent you agree or disagree that the Strategy balances these different types of management approaches?



## Analysis

Over 70% of respondents definitely or somewhat agreed with all objectives, which is positive response. When measures and actions are considered for each of these objectives this falls to 60% and is likely to be reflective of the more specific nature of measures, however this was still positive. There was less certainty on whether measures and actions were suitable.

Generally there were 80% of respondents who strongly agreed or agreed with the information on funding sources and 74% agreed that the information on which risk management authorities were involved in flood risk management was clear. Those agreeing with the balance of measures was above 60% there was however 21% that could not agree or disagree to the balance. Of those that disagreed managing flood risk from developments and maintaining assets was suggested should have more focus, but overall those that disagreed was 16%.

## Detailed responses

There were a number of responses that referred to specific locations or issues. These are not relevant for strategy consultation, but were passed to the relevant organisation to be able to respond.

The more detailed comments were categorised into a number of themes that were not directly related or were important to note but would not alter the strategy content.

Theme	Comments	Response
Planning and the planning of new development	More emphasis on new development reducing flood risk and being directed to other areas. More control on new development locations.	The LFRMS is not the mechanism to allocate land or set policy on new developments. The NPPF and Local Planning policies as well as the evidence base such as the SFRA are used to determine the most appropriate location. The LLFA are a statutory consultee in the planning process in surface water drainage for major developments. The LFRMS sets out how we are managing this role and inputting into this process.
Highway drainage	There were a number of comments around the maintenance of highways drainage and gullies in both general terms and specific area examples.	Our objectives include working with the highway team to improve flood resilience on their assets and identify areas that have specific issues.
Role of parish councils	Comments in relation to the role and whether we had misrepresented their input in terms of funding and ability to	Although we have not proposed to change any wording we are reviewing this to ensure we have not misrepresented them. As part of the collaboration work we are doing we are aiming to engage and collaborate more with communities.



	deliver flood resilience work	
--	-------------------------------	--

### Changes to the strategy text as a result of the consultation.

There were a number of responses which included typographical changes which have been updated. More detailed responses resulted in some amendments to the text in order for clarification, these are listed below but do not change the Local Flood Risk Management strategy fundamentally.

Section	Comment	Response
7.2 Funding	the available funding sources are not very clear and would be better in something like a table eg “ Funding source available “, amount if known, how to access, what can be bid for/claimed etc	
General Comment	Consider adding a section on other OCC strategies/plans. For example LNRS, Climate Adaption Route Map, Climate Engagement Route Map, Climate Vulnerability Assessment etc. with a link to them?	
Measure 2.4	Reword a measure to make it more encompassing. <i>Continue to work with other RMAs and others in order to take a collaborative approach to managing flood risk.</i> This will need updating on all documents.	
Page 22 sec 4.2	We have a number of groups either formal or informal flood groups so we need to include them in more general terms and consider how we keep an upto date list.	
General Comment	Need to include within the strategy reference to Drainage and Wastewater Management Plans (DWMPs). These plans are now a statutory duty for water companies. The Environment Act 2021 allows the Drainage and Wastewater Management Plans to be made statutory. The government will implement the relevant provisions during the next Drainage and Wastewater Management planning cycle (2023-2028) Storm Overflows Discharge Reduction Plan (publishing.service.gov.uk)	



**Divisions Affected - All**

**CABINET**  
**21 January 2025**

**FUTURE CIVIL ENFORCEMENT CONTRACT MODEL**

**Report by Director of Environment and Highways**

**RECOMMENDATION**

1. The Cabinet is **RECOMMENDED** to
  - a. Approve the commencement of work to explore and consider options for Civil Enforcement provision for the county council due to contracts coming to an end March 2026.
  - b. Endorse the proposed approach and key stages as set out in this paper.

**Executive Summary**

2. The existing five contracts with Conduent (now sold to Modaxo and trading as Trellint) are set to expire in March 2026 (including a one-year extension). Oxfordshire County Council therefore needs to decide on a model for civil enforcement delivery from that date and have undertaken any procurement or recruitment prior to the expiry of the existing contracts.
3. Due to the changing nature of the civil enforcement sector and the new ambitious council policy, the model for how the council manages its civil enforcement needs to be fully explored before determining the best option for Oxfordshire.
4. It is proposed there are three main decision points for Cabinet:
  - a) Today's paper seeking support for the proposed approach.
  - b) When initial options have explored, and the project team have a preferred option/s for development and progression.
  - c) To seek approval to commence procurement of the preferred option.

## **Exempt Information**

5. Not applicable

## **Current Civil Enforcement arrangements**

### **Background**

6. Oxfordshire County Council first took on the powers of parking enforcement in Oxford City in 1997. The Council has continued to offer Civil Enforcement since. In October 2020 the Cabinet agreed to pursue an application to DfT to take on powers covering Cherwell, Vale of White Horse and South Oxfordshire districts. Enforcement of these districts went live in November 2021.
7. West Oxfordshire was operated by West Oxfordshire District Council, and it was agreed between the Councils for the County to take on the West Oxfordshire on-street area. At this time negotiation also took place with Cherwell District Council for the County to undertake the off-street enforcement of their car parks via an agency agreement. West Oxfordshire enforcement went live in April 2023 and the Cherwell off-street Car Park enforcement went live in September 2023.
8. In April 2022 the Council successfully applied to the Secretary of State for the powers to enforce moving traffic contraventions such as prohibited vehicles, banned turns, School Streets etc.
9. The Council also operates a road user charging scheme, the Zero Emissions Zone (ZEZ) under Transport Act 2000 and its subsequent regulation under The Road User Charging Schemes (Penalty Charges, Adjudication and Enforcement) (England) Regulations 2013. The scheme started as a pilot in February 2022. The original contract which was awarded to Conduent Public Sector UK Ltd was in place for the initial pilot stage.
10. A new contract is also required for continued enforcement of the ZEZ.
11. As a result, Oxfordshire County Council has five civil enforcement contracts with an external supplier which allow for the enforcement of restrictions across the County. Subject to completion of extension negotiations of these contracts, they will all come to an end in March 2026.

### **Proposed approach**

12. Whilst the existing model of an externally provided service has traditionally been the preferred choice for many authorities, given the changing nature of the industry and new county council priorities, it is recognised that alternative approaches for the provision of civil enforcement should be explored to assess if it continues to be the right approach for Oxfordshire.
13. The proposed approach has three main stages: Investigation and optioneering; development of the preferred option; and then

procurement/delivery of that option. It is important that we undertake the first stage with an open mind and fully engage with county councillors, the market, and other local authorities to help shape the service for the future. It is also important the council utilises data to understand the cost, risks and deliverability of options to shape and determine the preferred option for Oxfordshire.

14. It is considered important to understand which elements of the existing contract works well and which do not. Using this data a qualitative baseline can then be set to inform procurements. To achieve this, it is proposed engagement is undertaken to enable councillors and key stakeholders to feed back on their experiences of the civil enforcement service. This data will then be analysed by officers with outcomes feeding into identifying a preferred model.
15. Engagement and learning from other local authorities to understand their models and approaches and to learn from their previous experiences to help inform which model may be most appropriate for Oxfordshire. Where possible qualitative data will also be reviewed to see how different models perform against the existing Oxfordshire model.
16. Early soft market testing has started to understand industry views on market direction of travel, what the market can and cannot offer and future innovations to understand what other elements may need to be considered when developing a preferred model.
17. The Cabinet Member for Highway Management will lead and steer officers, with Cabinet shaping and approving the future model. It is proposed Cabinet will take formal decisions at three key stages during the optioneering and procurement process.
  - 1) Presentation and approval of proposed approach (December 2024)
  - 2) Confirmation and approval of the preferred model to develop (February 25)
  - 3) Approval to procure preferred model (June 25)

### **Proposed programme**

18. High level timescales for delivery have developed showing expected key milestones, once an approach has been approved a more detailed plan will be developed.

Approval of approach by Cabinet	<b>January 2025</b>
Investigation and development of preferred model	September 2024 - January 2025
Approval of preferred model by Cabinet	<b>February 2025</b>
Development of specification/s to support model	March 2025
Approval to procure preferred model by Cabinet	<b>June 2025</b>
Launch of procurement	July 2025
Closure and bid evaluation	September 2025 - October 2025
Appointment of contractor/s	December 2025

Mobilisation of new contract	January 2026 - March 2026
Launch of new contract	<b>April 2026</b>

## Corporate Policies and Priorities

19. Civil Enforcement is a key policy within the Council's Local Transport and Connectivity Plan (LTCP) and the Network Management Plan - Policies 33 and 34 of LTCP refer to this as per below:
20. **Policy 33 – We will:**
  - a. Ensure the parking requirements of all modes of transport are considered, in line with our transport user hierarchy.*
  - b. Work to embed our parking guidance (Appendix 5) into relevant guidance and decision-making processes and progress the associated actions.*
  - c. Take measures to reduce and restrict car parking availability. As part of developing LCWIPs and in LTCP area strategies, the following measures will be assessed:*
    - Introduce parking charges in Council-managed car parks.*
    - Introduce parking costs for businesses such as a workplace parking levy.*
    - Introduce on-street restrictions and control such as double and single yellow lines via decriminalised parking enforcement powers.*
    - Control on-street parking in neighbourhoods via Controlled Parking Zones (CPZs).*
    - Changes to car parking to allow the introduction of bike hangars.*
21. **Policy 34 – We will:**
  - a. Conduct civil parking enforcement across the county.*
  - b. Maintain strategic partnerships with the District and City Councils to ensure a joined-up approach to enforcement and car parking management.*
  - c. Work with our District and City councils and other stakeholders to introduce a coherent approach to car parking charges.*
  - d. Work to tackle pavement parking by:*
    - Closely following changes to national legislation, and will act to take on any new powers to allow better enforcement of pavement parking offences*
    - Supporting enforcement to ensure that all footways (pavements) and cycleways are clear of pavement parking, except where legally marked out*
    - Taking measures to reduce parking pressures on road space which result in pavement parking, such as CPZs.*
22. Parking management is an important transport planning tool, enabling the council to influence how people may choose to travel, with the aim of encouraging them to use more sustainable forms of transport, including Park and Ride facilities.

23. If left unmanaged, parking would soon become disruptive to the transport networks and services, as people would park for convenience, rather than considering other people's needs. This could lead to increased pressures on neighbourhoods, and movement could be affected to the detriment of road safety. There could also be an impact on emergency service response times. If the council is to deliver our vision and targets, it also needs to make alternatives to the private car more attractive. Parking is a key part of this and can help to make alternative modes just as convenient, if not more convenient than the private car.
24. The powers for the council to enforce Moving Traffic contraventions were granted after the LTCP was published however these types of restrictions are generally implemented to improve traffic flows or safety. Enforcement supports Council policies on Net Zero, Low Traffic Neighbourhoods, Traffic Filters project and School Streets. Moving enforcement will be picked up both in the area travel plans, being produced to support the LTCP. As well as operational polices specific to the legislation governing them.
25. The current service is contracted out as noted above. The contracts are funded by the revenue raised by parking permits, parking bay suspensions, pay and display income and Penalty Charge Notices ((PCNs) i.e. fines)) that are issued to drivers that contravene the restrictions.
26. The Traffic Management Act 2004 requires the Council to hold a separate account for parking and enforcement. Any running costs are offset against the revenue received. Currently the Parking account generates a surplus which is then used on highway related projects, in-line with the legislation governing spend.
27. The ZEZ also forms policy of the Council's LTCP (policy 28) - Clean Air and Zero Emissions Zones. This scheme has driven down emissions within the centre of Oxford City.

## **Financial Implications**

28. Within the current contracts and operating methodology, cost is £7.5m per annum with income generated at £10.5m per annum. Any surplus is collected into the Parking Account and spending allocation against the legislative requirements, maintenance of existing facilities, supporting highway maintenance etc.
29. Costs have been increasing over the years as enforcement is largely a 'feet on the ground' operation relying on a physical presence to issue a ticket to a vehicle in breach of a restriction. Legislation dictates that people (feet on the ground) must undertake the act of enforcement. For moving traffic enforcement, cameras are deployed to capture data which then has to be reviewed by an Officer before a ticket can be issued. Labour costs in the industry are raising, notwithstanding pay rates are relatively low in the industry. Penalties, set nationally, have been static since 2008 with no indication from Central Government that these will rise anytime soon.

30. As part of the options appraisal Officers are looking at a number of methods to drive down costs including:
- (a) Operational methodology; including the most cost-effective method to deliver the overall service.
  - (b) Innovation available in the industry to drive down costs, including greater development of scan vehicles and kerbside management.
  - (c) Greater investment in intelligent deployment of limited resources; and
  - (d) Competition in the marketplace using the British Parking Association (BPA) model contract to incentivise industry performance (if that is the option going forward).
31. Evaluation of the options and costings will be the subject to a further report to Cabinet, which will set out the recommendations based on the findings.
32. Due to the scale and complexity of the project it is expected external specialist consultancy services will be required for the project. This is for both the optioneering and procurement stages, from both highways service and Legal & Procurement perspectives. It is estimated this will cost in the region of at least £100k split as follows:
- 2024/25 - £30,000  
2025/26 - £70,000
33. The cost of this will be met through existing budgets and or if necessary, from the parking account reserve.

Comments checked by:

Filipp Skiffins, Assistant Finance Business Partner,  
filipp.skiffins@oxfordshire.gov.uk (Finance)

## Legal Implications

34. As covered earlier the council has devolved powers to undertake civil enforcement across Oxfordshire under the Traffic Management Act 2004. Therefore, the council has a legal obligation to provide this service. A solution needs to be agreed and implemented prior to the current contracts ending.
35. Depending on the option selected, legal implications will be considered in the follow up report to Cabinet. A member of the Legal Team will be appointed to the project team. Legal Services (Contracts) will usually be engaged in procurement of the external consultant in the first instance, and in the procurement of a contractor for the mode of delivery selected.

Comments checked by:

Busola Akande, Solicitor (Contracts),



## **Procurement Implications**

36. Any procurement exercise to appoint professional services to support the project and new parking contract/s will be completed in line with all relevant procurement policy and guidelines. Due to the scale and value of the contract/s being procured a member of the procurement team will be appointed to the project team and will take ownership for the procurement elements of the project. Once a preferred approach has been identified a detailed procurement strategy will be developed to support the delivery of the contract/s. It should be noted that legislative changes to the Procurement Regulations will come into effect February 2025 and the specific timings of the tender will need to be taken into consideration with regard to the project programme and risks.

Comments checked by:

Becky Funnell

Head of Category – Environment and Place

[Becky.funnell@oxfordshire.gov.uk](mailto:Becky.funnell@oxfordshire.gov.uk) (procurement)

## **Staff Implications**

37. Due to the scale and complexity of the project there will be the need to appoint additional subject matter expertise on a fixed term / consultancy basis to support the optioneering and subsequent procurement activity. The wider project team will be internally resourced from both within the directorate and corporate centre.
38. Depending on the option selected, ultimate staffing implications on the service to manage the service and contract/s will be considered in further reports to Cabinet. As mentioned previously activity to undertake this service is governed by legislation and the requirement to have people to undertake physical enforcement and reviewing of data.

## **Equality & Inclusion Implications and Sustainability Implications**

39. It is not anticipated the procurement of a new parking enforcement model and associated contract/s will impact negatively on any 'protected characteristics' groups, nor on the armed forces, carers, staff, other Council services or providers. There is an opportunity through any procurement to positively impact rural communities and areas of deprivation. These will be considered as part of the options appraisal and reported on in detail in the follow up reports to Cabinet.

## **Sustainability Implications**

40. A climate impact assessment will be completed as part of the project plan and reported to in follow up reports to Cabinet. Any future options will look to adopt the latest technologies and innovations and reduce carbon through efficient deployment planning and techniques where possible. A Climate Impact Assessment will be completed and reported to follow up reports to Cabinet.

## **Risk Management**

41. The procurement of a civil enforcement model offers many opportunities for Oxfordshire County Council by ensuring any selected model is appropriate for the current and perceived future challenges for the council.
42. Failure to award a new contract/s holds significant risk for this project, failure to do so by 31st March 2026 will potentially leave Oxfordshire County Council without a civil enforcement service to fulfil our statutory obligations. To minimise this risk the project has been established well in advance of this date to enable a robust assessment and procurement process to take place.

Paul Fermer Director for Environment and Highways

Contact Officers: Keith Stenning – Head of Network Management  
[keith.stenning@oxfordshire.gov.uk](mailto:keith.stenning@oxfordshire.gov.uk)

Cathy Champion – Operational Manager – Civil Enforcement  
[Cathy.champion@oxfordshire.gov.uk](mailto:Cathy.champion@oxfordshire.gov.uk)

John Charlton – Team Leader – Civil Enforcement  
[John.charlton@oxfordshire.gov.uk](mailto:John.charlton@oxfordshire.gov.uk)

November 2024

## **CABINET** **21 January 2025**

### **Affiliation between Oxfordshire and HMS Diamond**

#### **Report by Executive Director of Resources and S151 Officer**

#### **RECOMMENDATION**

1. **The Cabinet is RECOMMENDED to**
  - a) **Agree to forming an affiliation between Oxfordshire and His Majesty's Ship (HMS) 'Diamond'**

#### **Executive Summary**

2. Oxfordshire County Council has been approached by the Royal Navy to propose an affiliation between Oxfordshire and His Majesty's Ship (HMS) Diamond. The proposed affiliation aims to strengthen the bond and support between the Royal Navy and the local community in Oxfordshire by raising awareness of the Royal Navy and specifically of HMS Diamond. Affiliations with ships can take many forms, but all aim to provide mutual benefit. If the affiliation is pursued, a Memorandum of Understanding will be developed to outline the affiliation's intentions and commitments. Oxfordshire has a large armed forces community, and the council has a strong reputation for supporting the military and veteran communities in Oxfordshire. Therefore, it is recommended to build on this reputation by demonstrating our support for the military beyond Oxfordshire's borders through the affiliation with HMS Diamond.

#### **Background**

3. In 2024, Oxfordshire County Council and the Oxfordshire Lord Lieutenancy were approached by the Naval Regional Commander for London and Eastern England, with a proposition to affiliate the county of Oxfordshire with HMS Diamond. The aim of an affiliation would be to strengthen the bond and support between the Royal Navy and the local community in Oxfordshire by raising awareness of the Royal Navy and specifically of the ship.
4. HMS Diamond is one of the Royal Navy's Type 45 destroyers, boasting a displacement of 8,000 tons and a crew of 240 sailors, including a Royal Marines boarding team. The ship's motto, "*Honor Clarissima Gemma*," translates to "Honour is the Brightest Jewel." Beyond her primary role in air defence, HMS Diamond is versatile, capable of performing a wide range of duties, from counter-narcotics operations to providing humanitarian aid. Her most recent operations involved protecting merchant shipping lanes in the Red Sea.

## Affiliation

5. Oxfordshire has a sizeable armed forces community and the council has strong reputation for its commitment to the armed forces covenant. As an inland county, the council mostly engages with the RAF and the British Army, as well as local reservists and cadets, with little engagement with the Royal Navy due to Oxfordshire's geography. However, there are a number of local and historical links between Oxfordshire and the Royal Navy. An affiliation with HMS Diamond is an excellent opportunity for the council to engage with and demonstrate support for the Navy.
6. Many Royal Navy ships have affiliations as part of a long-standing tradition that binds their crews to the land via a network of relationships across the United Kingdom. The range of organisations and establishments that are invited to become part of a ship's extended family can encompass cities, hospital trusts, cadet units, army regiments and air force squadrons, as well as venerable city institutions – and in this case, counties. The benefits of affiliation are mutual. An affiliation gives the ship and the ship's company a link to the organisation or place. The affiliation will demonstrate the council's unwavering support to the armed forces, and specifically the Royal Navy from an inland locality.
7. There are examples of existing affiliations between places and ships. HMS Diamond has an existing affiliation with Coventry, Essex recently affiliated with HMS Venturer, and the town of Wantage has an affiliation with HMS Queen Elizabeth. The affiliation between Oxfordshire and HMS Diamond could take various forms, fostering a strong connection between the Royal Navy and the local community.
8. Examples of how the proposed affiliation could manifest include:
  - (a) **Celebrations and Parades:** Organizing events to bring communities together and celebrate the affiliation.
  - (b) **Naming:** Naming buildings, rooms, or assets after affiliated partners.
  - (c) **Granting Freedoms:** Granting HMS Diamond the 'Freedom of Oxfordshire' under s249 Local Government Act 1972.
  - (d) **Visits:** Facilitating visits between affiliated parties to strengthen ties.
  - (e) **Symbolic Gestures:** such as donating items for display or commemoration, such as Coventry's donation of a cross of nails to HMS Diamond.
  - (f) **Services:** Providing services, like Jaguar Land Rover's contribution of leather upholstery and a table for HMS Diamond.
  - (g) **Youth Engagement:** Supporting local cadets (including Oxfordshire's sea cadets in Abingdon, Banbury and Oxford) and engagement with young people.
  - (h) **Careers and Recruitment:** Supporting careers and recruitment outreach and engagement.
  - (i) **Public Display:** Displaying the affiliation publicly, such as visual representations of the ship in public buildings.

- (j) **Communications:** Raising awareness of the affiliation and related activities.

## **Memorandum of Understanding**

9. If the council agrees to pursue the affiliation, a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) will be developed to outline the affiliation's intentions and details, to be mutually agreed by Oxfordshire County Council and the Royal Navy.
10. The MoU's purpose will be to outline the purpose of the affiliation and specifically, the role of Oxfordshire County Council in facilitating the affiliation and relationship with HMS Diamond. It will also outline the process to end the affiliation.
11. The MoU will not be a legal agreement, but is intended to serve as a point of reference to the mutual support, understanding and engagement offered by each party.

## **Corporate Policies and Priorities**

12. An affiliation with HMS Diamond will demonstrate the council's support and commitment to the wider military community and is an opportunity to work in partnership for the benefit of Oxfordshire beyond the county's borders.
13. The affiliation would support the council's ninth strategic priority as an example of partnership working for social benefit: Work with local businesses and partners for environmental, economic and social benefit.
14. It is also anticipated that the affiliation will create engagement and career / skills development opportunities for young people and other groups in Oxfordshire, supporting the council's commitments to young people and future generations.

## **Financial Implications**

15. The affiliation itself has no direct budget implications, however events and activities arising from the affiliation may require resource beyond existing capacity and budget. Any costs arising from affiliation-related activities that cannot be met through existing budgets will be subject to senior oversight and existing approval processes. As of October 2024, the ship has entered a period of refit for two years and any major events to commemorate the affiliation would likely not take place until the ship is back in service, in 2026

Comments checked by:

Drew Hodgson, Strategic Finance Business Partner,  
[drew.hodgson@oxfordshire.gov.uk](mailto:drew.hodgson@oxfordshire.gov.uk)

## **Legal Implications**

16. The proposed affiliation and Memorandum of Understanding are not legal agreements and are not expected to create any legal liabilities for the council.

Anita Bradley, Director of Law and Governance  
[Anita.bradley@oxfordshire.gov.uk](mailto:Anita.bradley@oxfordshire.gov.uk)

## **Staff Implications**

17. Managing the affiliation and ongoing relationship with HMS Diamond will be delivered within existing resource and capacity, therefore no staffing implications are anticipated with the affiliation.

## **Equality & Inclusion Implications**

18. The affiliation is expected to have a positive impact on our armed forces and veteran communities by demonstrating our support and appreciation for those who serve in the military. There are no negative equalities implications anticipated from the affiliation.

## **Sustainability Implications**

19. There are no sustainability implications arising out of this report.

## **Risk Management**

20. There is the potential for reputational risk among the armed forces communities if an affiliation is not pursued.
21. There are potential risks around public perception of the affiliation, which may be exacerbated by the ship's future deployment and operations in relation to geopolitical issues. However, as the ship is in refit until autumn 2026, this is not an immediate risk. Any public communications around the affiliation will be considered with sensitivity, and any risks will be managed through the council's relationship with HMS Diamond.

Lorna Baxter  
Executive Director of Resources and s151 Officer (Deputy Chief Executive)

Annex: Nil

Background papers: Nil

Contact Officer: Tannah Collier, Policy Officer, 07872805604,  
tannah.collier@oxfordshire.gov.uk

January 2025

This page is intentionally left blank



**CABINET**  
**21 January 2025**

**BUSINESS MANAGEMENT AND MONITORING REPORT**  
**NOVEMBER 2024**

**Report by the Executive Director of Resources & Section 151 Officer**

**RECOMMENDATION**

- 1. The Cabinet is RECOMMENDED 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 creation of a new reserve to support costs associated with Local Government Devolution and Reorganisation and the transfer of £5.0m to the reserve.
  - d) Approve the transfer of £3.0m from Adult Services to the Budget Priorities reserve.

**Executive Summary**

2. The business management reports are part of a suite of performance, risk and budget documents which set out the council's ambitions, priorities, and financial performance. The [2022 – 2025 Strategic Plan](#) sets out the Council's ambitions. It also shows the priority activities for the current financial year.
3. This report presents the November 2024 performance, risk, and finance position for the council.
4. Further information is provided in the following annexes to the report:
  - i. Annex A – Performance
  - ii. Annex B – Finance
5. The performance section of this report concentrates on performance exceptions (measures reporting Red (off target), or Amber, (slightly off target, Amber for the last two consecutive months or more). The full performance report is included at Annex A.

**Amendments to Measures:**

6. **OCC10.06 Overall customer satisfaction rates for standard Registration Service** has been moved to service level. Performance of this measure over the last three years has been consistently exceeding the target set, and therefore this measure does not allow the Council to show progress in this area. As part of the business planning process all KPIs are being reviewed and developed for 2025/26.

7. **OCC10.07 Overall customer satisfaction rate for Coroners Inquest Service** has been moved to service level. Performance of this measure over the last three years has also been consistently exceeding the target set, and therefore this measure does not allow the Council to show progress in this area. As part of the business planning process all KPIs are being reviewed and developed for 2025/26.
8. **OCC9.02 Participation in innovation funding bids or new projects in support of Living Oxfordshire** has been moved to service level.

### Measures where the data is unavailable:

9. **OCC10.03 Overall customer satisfaction rate for the Customer Service Centre – telephony:** As per last month, the customer satisfaction score (CSAT) process has been placed on hold, while the service embeds the new Zoom system. The Customer Service Centre is designing a new measure to be reported on from 2025/26.  
Zoom has been implemented as the new omnichannel contact centre platform, replacing 8x8. The system went live with voice only on 8<sup>th</sup> September, with further functionality and contact methods coming in the near future. The implementation of Zoom will give the Council greater insight and data capabilities which will improve the customer journey and experience, in line with the customer experience strategy, whilst also improving efficiencies.

### Performance Overview

10. The Outcomes Framework for 2024/2025 reports on the council's nine strategic priorities. A further priority relates to running the business and includes the Customer Service Centre and measures included in the council's Financial Strategy. The Outcomes Framework which sits underneath the strategic priorities comprises monthly, quarterly, termly, six-monthly and annual measures which may change as the year progresses. At the appropriate period, relevant measures will be included in the report.
11. As at the end of November 2024 the measures were rated as follows:

November 2024	Green		Amber		Red		Monitoring Only		Data Unavailable		Number of complaint measures where no complaint received or open within time*		Total	
Monthly	14	46.7%	5	16.7%	0	0%	6	20.0%	1	3.3%	4	13.3%	30	100 %
<b>Total</b>	14	46.7%	5	16.7%	0	0%	6	20.0%	1	3.3%	4	13.3%	30	100 %

*Table 1: Summary of November 2024 performance for all measures. RAG = Green = meets or exceeds target, Amber = misses target by narrow margin and Red = misses target by significant margin. This table does not include measures from priority OCC11 (finance). \*This column refers only to complaint measures where there were no complaints received or complaints were still open within timescale.*

- a) A total of 30 measures reported in November 2024 (Table 1), consisting of:
- 14 measures rated as Green (meeting or exceeding target).
  - Five measures rated as Amber (missing the target by a narrow margin), of which three were Amber for 2+ months.
  - Zero measures rated as Red (missing the target by a significant margin).
  - Six measures rated as Monitoring only (No target).
  - One measure as Data unavailable.
  - Four measures as no data due to no complaints being received and within timeframe.

12. This bi-monthly Cabinet report is the fourth of 2024/2025. The table (Table 2) below compares monthly measures for the 2024/2025 reporting year, please note the number of reported measures fluctuates throughout the year. Any complaints measures that do not receive a complaint within the reporting period are removed for reporting purposes.

Reporting month	Green		Amber		Red		Monitoring Only / No data		Total
April 2024	13	48%	3	11%	2	7%	9	33%	27
May 2024	22	58%	6	16%	2	5%	8	21%	38
June 2024	35	64%	7	12%	2	4%	11	20%	55
July 2024	22	55%	6	15%	4	10%	8	20%	40
August 2024	15	52%	5	17%	2	6%	7	24%	29
September 2024	43	64%	9	14%	7	10%	8	12%	67
October 2024	18	60%	4	13%	1	3%	7	24%	30
<b>November 2024</b>	22	<b>58%</b>	6	<b>16%</b>	3	<b>8%</b>	7	<b>18%</b>	<b>38</b>

Table 2: Comparison of monthly reporting measures for Financial Year 2024/2025. \*April, June, August and October measures do not include measures from priority OCC11 (finance). This table does not include complaint measures where no complaints were received in the reporting period.

- b) There are three measures reporting as Red for the reporting period.

Performance measures reporting Red for November 2024
OCC11.02 Achievement of planned savings
OCC11.06 Total outturn variation for DSG funded services (high needs)
OCC11.11 Debt requiring impairment – Adult Social Care contribution debtors

Table 3: Red RAG Status Measures November 2024 Reporting Period.

- c) This table indicates the direction of travel of measures compared to October 2024.

Status changes – October to November 2024	
Red to Green	OCC10.11 % of Corporate Complaints (Stage 1) responded to within timescales
Amber to Green	OCC11.05 Total outturn variation for DSG funded services (Schools / Early years)
Red to Amber	Not applicable
Green to Amber	OCC10.04 Answer 80% of calls to the Customer Service Centre within 30 seconds exclude Social Healthcare Team (SHCT)
	OCC10.13 The percentage of customer telephone calls abandoned at the Customer Service Centre
Amber to Red	Not applicable
Green to Red	Not applicable

Table 4: Change in Performance across October to November 2024.

## Performance Exceptions

13. This section of the report details all measures reporting Red or Amber status (*consecutive for two months or more*) with extracted supporting commentary from the Directorate, the full commentary can be seen at Annex A. The exception report focuses on six exceptions, three measures have Red ratings, and three measures have Amber ratings for two months or more.

### Priority OCC01: Put action to address the climate emergency at the heart of our activities.

This priority has two measures being reported in November 2024: one (50%) is reporting as Green and one (50%) is reporting as an Amber exception.

Measure	October Status:	November Status:	Director:
OCC01.07 Total % of household waste which is reused, recycled or composted	Amber	Amber	Paul Fermer

Table 5: Priority OCC01 Measure Exception - November 2024

## OCC01.07 Total % of household waste which is reused, recycled or composted

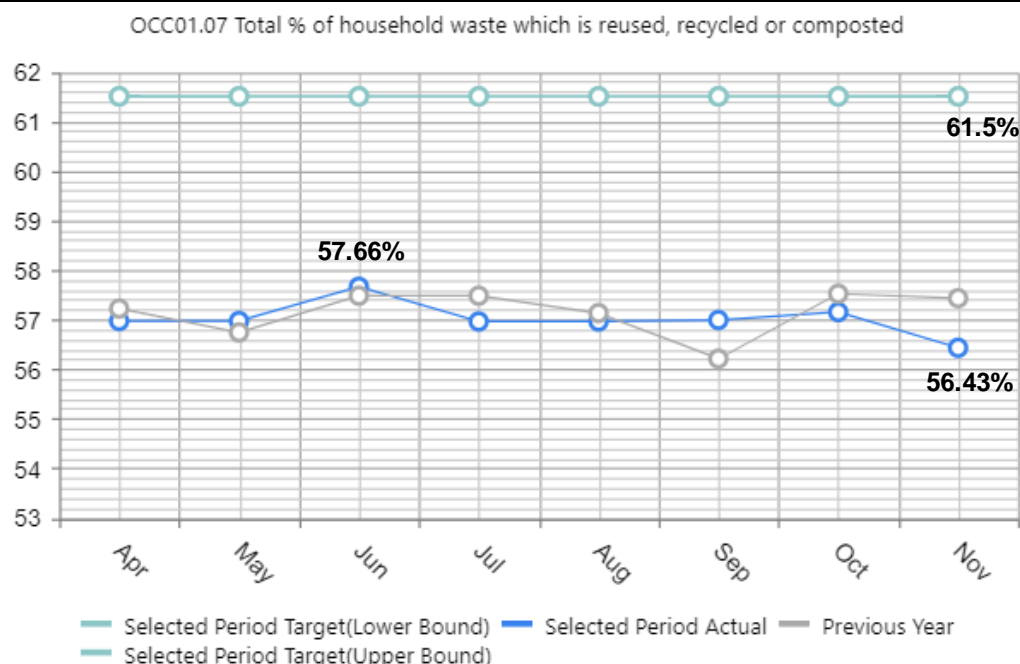


Figure 1: OCC01.07 Monthly performance for 2024/2025 financial year.

The Service continues to wait for policy guidance from DEFRA. There is no indication from government when this will occur. The target remains at 61.5%.

### Priority OCC04: Support carers and the social care system

This priority has five measures being reported in November 2024: two (40%) are reporting as Green and two (40%) are reporting as Amber exceptions. One measure (20%) is reported as monitoring only.

Measure	October Status:	November Status:	Director:
OCC04.01 % of people who received short-term services during 24/25 with no further support request	Amber	Amber	Karen Fuller
OCC04.05 Adults aged 65+ (per 100,000) admitted to residential and care homes (stretched target)	Amber	Amber	Karen Fuller

Table 6: Priority OCC04 Measure Exception – November 2024

## OCC04.01 % of people who received short-term services during 24/25 with no further support request

OCC04.01 % of people who received short-term services during 24/25 with no further support request

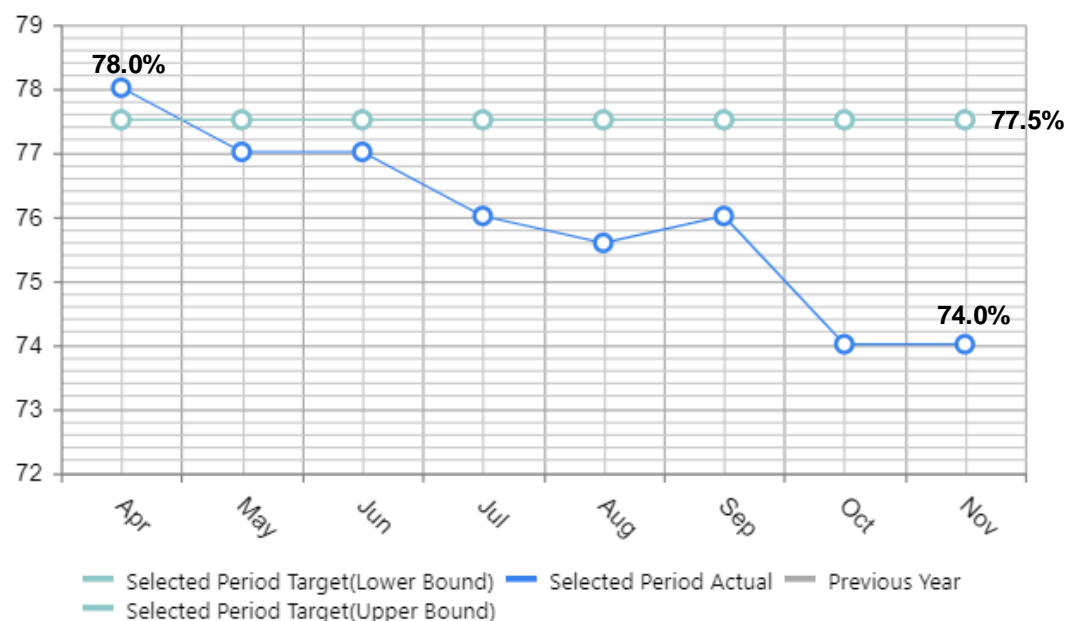


Figure 2: OCC04.01 Monthly performance for 2024/2025 financial year

The percentage of residents who received reablement, that needed no on-going care has remained at 74%, below the national target 77.5%.

The council is showing significant improvements each financial year and by expanding the criteria of those who are able to access this service, we have increased the number of people who receive this service and therefore, increasing the care we are providing to residents.

In the first 8 months of this year 1,775 people have completed reablement compared with 1,437 in the same period last year 2023/2024 (an increase of 24%). 1,310 people who have used the service were completely independent (compared to 1,147 this time last year) and 207 people had reduced care needs compared to 174 people last year. If 21 of the 207 people with reduced care needs had become completely independent, then the measure would be at target.

### OCC04.05 Adults aged 65+ (per 100,000) admitted to residential and care homes (stretched target)

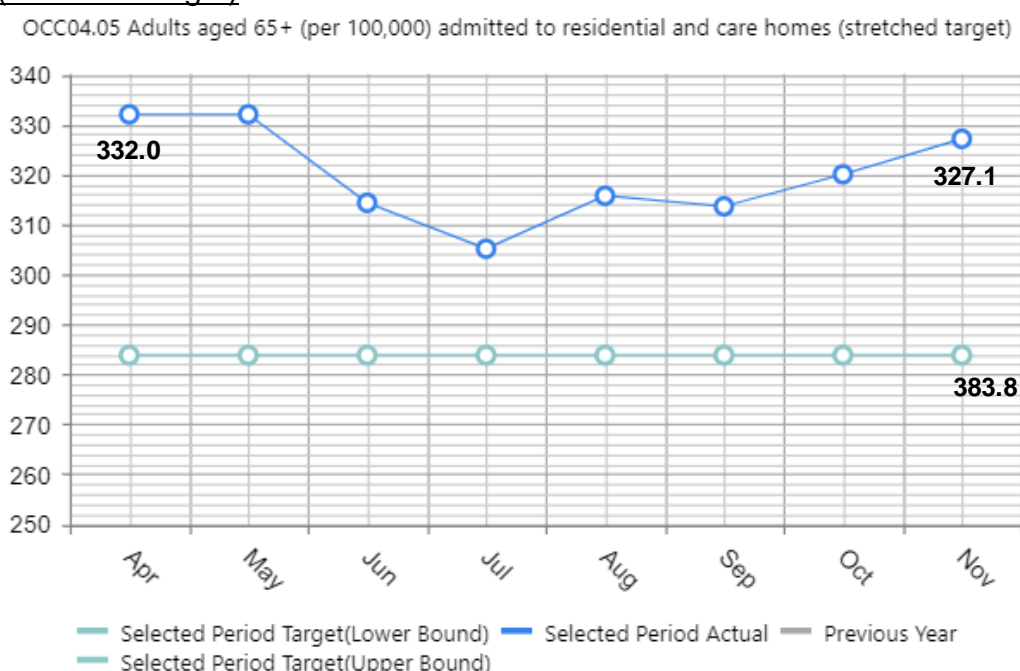


Figure 3: OCC04.05 Monthly performance for 2024/2025 financial year

In November, the rate of adults aged 65 and over admitted to residential and care homes in Oxfordshire was 327.1 per 100,000 residents, much lower than the national average of 560.8 and lower than Oxfordshire's rate in 2022/23 (357.7).

Since April 2024 the rate of adults admitted to residential and care home has decreased from 332.0 in April to 327.1 per 100,000.

The target set for this measure is provided as part of the Better Care Fund (BCF), which is a stretched target, based on our previous year's performance. This target would place the Council in the 10% of all top performers nationally.

### **Priority OCC11: Running the business**

This priority has 12 bi-monthly measures being reported in November 2024: eight (67%) are Green, one (8%) Amber, and three (25%) Red.

Measure:	Sept Status:	November Status:	Director:
OCC11.02 Achievement of planned savings	Red	Red	Lorna Baxter
OCC11.06 Total outturn variation for DSG funded services (high needs)	Red	Red	Lorna Baxter
OCC11.10 Debt requiring impairment – Corporate debtors	Amber	Amber	Lorna Baxter
OCC11.11 Debt requiring impairment – Adult Social Care contribution debtors	Red	Red	Lorna Baxter

Table 7: Priority OCC11 Measure Exceptions - November 2024.

Please refer to 'Financial Position' Section and Annex B for additional information relating to OCC11: Running the business - Finance.

## Performance Highlights

14. This section of the report concentrates on several highlights achieved this period in delivering the council's strategic priorities.

### **Put action to address the climate emergency at the heart of our work.**

*Link:* [Communities and Council Win National Recycling Award](#)

Oxfordshire County Council and over 100 community action groups (CAG Oxfordshire) have won the partnership category at the 2024 Local Authority Recycling Advisory Committee awards. This award recognises their joint efforts to improve recycling and reduce waste. The partnership has diverted around 2,000 tonnes of material from disposal in 2023/24. The council and CAG Oxfordshire support grassroots initiatives to reduce, reuse, and repair, significantly contributing to environmental sustainability and community resilience.

### **Tackle inequalities in Oxfordshire**

*Link:* [Oxfordshire celebrates Get Online Week 2024](#)

Events were held during the week of 14 October across the county to help people improve their digital skills as part of Get Online Week. The UK's largest digital inclusion campaign, Get Online Week, aims to help tens of thousands of people get online in just one week.

### **Prioritise the health and wellbeing of residents**

*Link:* [New mental health app for young people in Oxfordshire](#)

Oxfordshire County Council has launched a new mental health support service for young people aged 11 to 18 through the Tellmi app. This app provides 365-day access to a safe space where young people can discuss their feelings anonymously. It offers pre-moderated peer support and in-house counsellors for high-risk users. The app also connects users to over 700 crisis specialists and local support services. This initiative aims to address the increasing mental health needs among school pupils in Oxfordshire, as highlighted by the 2023 OxWell Student Survey.

### **Support carers and the social care system**

*Link:* [One year on - positive impact of innovative hospital discharge programme revealed](#)

A programme that supports people in Oxfordshire to leave hospital more quickly to continue their recovery at home, has shown significant benefits for residents since its roll out last year. Discharge to Assess is a system partnership programme, involving staff from Oxfordshire County Council, Oxford University Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust, Oxford Health NHS Foundation Trust and Age UK Oxfordshire, working together to identify the best way of supporting a patient to leave hospital safely and quickly. The latest figures demonstrate it has enabled 23 per cent more people to leave hospital compared to last year.



### **Invest in an inclusive, integrated, and sustainable transport network**

*Link:* [£106,500 of Grants Awarded to Support Community Transport in Oxfordshire](#)

Oxfordshire County Council has awarded £106,500 in grants to nine organisations to support community transport services. These grants, ranging from £2,730 to £21,000, will fund drivers, operating costs, volunteer recruitment and training, and promotion. The recipients include the Volunteer Driver Service, OurBus Bartons, Vale Community Impact, and others. This funding aims to sustain vital community transport services that fill gaps where public transport is unavailable, providing safe, accessible, and cost-effective transport options.

### **Preserve and improve access to nature and Green spaces.**

*Link:* [People in Oxfordshire urged to have their say on local nature recovery](#)

Oxfordshire residents, landowners, businesses, farmers and other organisations are being offered the chance to help shape the priorities for recovering areas of nature and wildlife across the county. Last year, Oxfordshire County Council was named by the government as a responsible authority for driving nature recovery. The council is one of 48 authorities who have been funded by the government to work with local people and organisations to develop a local nature recovery strategy (LNRS).

### **Creating opportunities for children and young people to reach their full potential**

*Link:* [Transforming young people's lives one coffee at a time](#)

After years as a youth worker and seeing firsthand the issues that so many young people face, Tim Parkhouse came up with an idea: a business that provides coffee but also helps at risk young people gain employability skills for the future. With support from Oxfordshire County Council's Business and Intellectual Property Centre (BIPC) 55-year-old Tim Pakouse has made his idea a reality. Get Fed CIC (Community Interest Company) launched back in 2022 as a means of supporting young people identified as at particular risk of exploitation or exclusion from school. It aims to help them access employment while developing entrepreneurial skills along the way.

### **Work with local businesses and partners for environmental, economic, and social benefit**

*Link:* [Record-breaking monthly event empowers entrepreneurs](#)

Oxfordshire County Council's Business and Intellectual Property Centre (BIPC) has organised a record-breaking monthly event that empowers aspiring entrepreneurs. The event, which saw over 100 participants in September, provides a platform for networking, sharing knowledge, and growing businesses. The BIPC offers various free resources and support services, including workshops and one-on-one consultations, to help individuals turn their business ideas into reality. This initiative is part of the council's broader efforts to foster entrepreneurship and innovation in the region.

## Strategic Risk Management Overview

15. A strategic risk is a risk to the council's strategic priorities or long-term outcomes; or a risk with a significance that has an impact at the corporate level.
16. The table below provides an overview of the current strategic risk position. Strategic risks are reviewed monthly as part of the business management and monitoring process. Risks can be added and escalated at any time during the year.
17. Of the ten strategic risks, all remain static, with the same scoring as reported in October 2024.







Status Indicator	Status Description
	Residual risk rating is high (Score 16 and above)
	Residual risk rating is medium (Score 10 - 15)
	Residual risk rating is low (Score 1 – 9)
	Residual risk rating has decreased
	Residual risk rating has maintained
	Residual risk rating has increased

Table 7 Strategic Risk Key for November 2024

Risk name	Risk Description	Inherent Score	Previous Residual Risk Score	Current Residual Risk Score	Current Residual Risk Rating	Direction of Travel
01. Financial resilience	The council is not financially sustainable in the immediate/medium term.	25	12	12		→
02. Cyber security	A successful and significant Cyber-attack leading to disruption, damage or compromise of any of the council's computer services, information systems, infrastructure or data.	25	15	15		→
03. HIF1 & HIF2	HIF1 and HIF2 become undeliverable and/or potential financial risk to the council.	16	12	12		→
04. Managing Demand across Adults' and Children's Services	Fluctuating demand of community across Oxfordshire can result in varying requirements in resource.	15	8	8		→
05. Special Educational Needs and Disabilities	Local area SEND partnership inspection outcomes found widespread systemic failure. Delay for children having their SEND needs met. Reputational damage (locally, regionally, and nationally).	20	12	12		→
06. Oxford Core Schemes	Failure to deliver Oxford Core Schemes (Traffic Filters, Workplace Parking Levy, Zero Emissions Zone and associated city area schemes such as Low Traffic Neighbourhoods) with public support.	20	16	16		→
07. Strategic Workforce Planning	A risk that the county council's workforce does not have capacity, capability or resilience to deliver key functions, statutory services or transformational changes required to ensure the council's objectives and long-term priorities are met. Further, that the diversity of the workforce satisfies statutory requirements.	16	12	12		→
08. Policy & Budget	Inability to seek agreement in relation to the policy and budget framework from a minority administration.	25	8	8		→
09. Delivering the Future Together	Failure to deliver organisation wide transformation.	25	8	8		→
10. Climate Impact	Increasing vulnerability to climate impacts leads to failure of key infrastructure and services with a direct impact on health, safety, environment, and businesses.	25	20	20		→

Table 8 Strategic Risk Overview for November 2024

## Financial position

18. As shown below there is a forecast service area overspend of £4.3m. This has reduced by £1.8m compared to the position reported to Cabinet in November 2024. After taking account of an underspend against budgets held for contingency and inflation, additional interest receivable on balances held by the council and anticipated capital financing costs, the overall position is a forecast underspend of £8.5m.

	Latest Budget Sept-24 £m	Forecast Spend Sept-24 £m	Forecast Variance Sept-24 £m	Forecast Variance Sept-24 %	Forecast Variance July-24 £m	Change Since July-24 £m
Adult Services	250.1	250.1	0.0	0.0%	0.0	0.0
Children's Services	200.6	201.9	1.3	0.7%	3.5	-2.2
Environment & Highways	69.4	70.2	0.8	1.2%	0.6	0.2
Economy & Place	1.6	1.6	0.0	0.0%	0.0	0.0
Oxfordshire Fire & Rescue Service and Community Safety	28.7	29.4	0.7	2.3%	0.7	0.0
Public Health & Communities	12.6	12.8	0.2	1.6%	0.0	0.2
Resources and Law & Governance	57.8	59.1	1.3	2.3%	1.3	0.0
Transformation, Digital & Customer Experience	8.1	8.1	0.0	0.0%	0.0	0.0
<b>Service Areas Total</b>	<b>628.8</b>	<b>633.1</b>	<b>4.3</b>	<b>7.9%</b>	<b>6.1</b>	<b>-1.8</b>
<b>Budgets Held Centrally</b>						
Capital Financing	21.3	17.9	-3.5	-16.2%	-3.5	0.0
Interest on Balances	-10.7	-15.3	-4.6	43.5%	-3.9	-0.7
Contingency	7.5	7.5	0.0	0.0%	0.0	0.0
Pay Inflation	14.4	9.7	-4.7	-32.8%	0.0	-4.7
Un-ringfenced Specific Grants	-55.5	-55.5	0.0	0.0%	0.0	0.0
Insurance	1.7	1.7	0.0	0.0%	0.0	0.0
Contribution from COVID-19 reserve	-3.8	-3.8	0.0	0.0%	0.0	0.0
Contribution from Budget Priority Reserve	-1.4	-1.4	0.0	0.0%	0.0	0.0
Contributions to reserves	11.1	11.1	0.0	0.0%	0.0	0.0
<b>Total Budgets Held Centrally</b>	<b>-15.4</b>	<b>-28.2</b>	<b>-12.8</b>	<b>83.3%</b>	<b>-7.4</b>	<b>-5.4</b>
<b>Net Operating Budget</b>	<b>613.5</b>	<b>605.0</b>	<b>-8.5</b>	<b>-1.4%</b>	<b>-1.3</b>	<b>-7.2</b>
Business Rates & Council Tax funding	-613.5	-613.5	0.0	0.0%	0.0	0.0
<b>Forecast Year End Position</b>	<b>0.0</b>	<b>-8.5</b>	<b>-8.5</b>	<b>-1.4%</b>	<b>-1.3</b>	<b>-7.2</b>

Table 9 Finance overall forecast position

### **Service Areas**

19. The breakeven position for Adult Services reported to the November Cabinet remains unchanged. Due to the Integrated Care Board (ICB) now funding their share of the section 117 aftercare support costs for older mental health service users, this is after taking account of a proposed contribution of £3.0m to the Budget Priorities Reserve. This will be used to support future risks within social care.
20. The forecast overspend of £3.5m for Children's Services has reduced by £2.2m since the position reported in November 2024 due to a reduction in the staffing budgets forecast overspend and underspends noted in investments. There are still risks in the delivery of previously agreed savings built into the 2024/25 budget.
21. The forecast overspend for Environment & Highways has increased by £0.2m compared to the position in November because of increased waste tonnages. There is still a £2.2m pressure in Network Management relating to the underachievement of lane rental income savings, offset by a £1.6m underspend in Highways maintenance from a reduction in energy costs from lower energy activity.
22. The forecast breakeven position for Economy and Place remains unchanged.
23. Public Health & Communities are forecasting an overspend of £0.2m due to pressures in the Library Service. Within that a forecast £0.6m underspend against the Public Health grant funding is assumed to be transferred to reserves at year end.
24. The forecast overspend of £0.7m for Oxfordshire Fire & Rescue Service and Community Safety remains unchanged and is due to risks in the delivery of previously agreed savings built into the 2024/25 budget.
25. The forecast overspend of £1.3m for Resources and Law & Governance remains unchanged from the position reported to Cabinet in November and is in part driven by high locum costs in the Legal service.
26. Transformation, Digital & Customer Experience are forecasting a breakeven position.
27. The 2024/25 budget includes planned service areas savings of £30.1m. 54% of these savings are assessed as delivered and 75% are forecast to be delivered.

### **Budgets Held Centrally**

28. £6.5m of the £14.4m pay inflation budget has been used to meet the cost of the additional pay inflation in 2024/25 following the agreement of the Green Book pay award. £1.9m will be held to meet the cost of pay inflation for vacant posts when they are recruited to, £1.3m is proposed to be used to fund a one-off contribution to the Local Government Devolution and Reorganisation reserve. This leaves a one - off underspend of at least £4.7m which has been reflected in the forecast. The on-going budget that is not needed to fund pay inflation in 2024/25 will roll forward. £3.5m is assumed to be used to fund the anticipated

pay award in 2025/26.

29. £3.7m of the £7.4m on-going funding held in the contingency budget is proposed to be used to fund a one-off contribution to a new reserve intended to support costs related to Local Government Devolution and Reorganisation. The remaining balance is being held to meet potential risks around demand increases in Adults and Children's Services in the remainder of the financial year. If these do not materialise there would be a further underspend of £3.7m by year end.
30. The risk assessed level of one – off funding held in general balances in 2024/25 is £30.2m. A residual balance of £2.3m relating to the underspend at the end of 2023/24 was agreed to be held in balances as part of the Provisional Outturn Report for 2023/24. After taking account of the forecast underspend, balances are currently forecast to be £10.8m above the risk assessed level as at 31 March 2024.
31. The forecast 2024/25 deficit compared to Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) funding for High Needs is £28.4m, £7.1m higher than the budget approved by Council in February 2024. The CIPFA code of practice requires negative High Needs DSG balances to be held in an unusable reserve. The forecast deficit would increase the cumulative negative High Needs DSG balance held in this reserve from £55.8m as at 31 March 2024 to £84.2m at 31 March 2025.

### **Financial Implications**

32. This report includes an update on the forecast financial position and risks for the council along with action being taken to manage the budget within the position agreed by Council in February 2024. Strong and sustained financial management, collective action and oversight continues to be required to ensure that services are managed within budgets in 2024/25 and on-going into 2025/26.

Comments checked by: Kathy Wilcox, Head of Corporate Finance and Deputy Section 151 Officer.

### **Legal Implications**

- a) The Council's constitution at Part 3.2 (Budget and Policy Framework) and Part 3.3 (Virement Rules) sets out the obligations and responsibilities of both the Cabinet and the Full Council in approving, adopting and implementing the council's budget and policy framework.
- b) The Council has a fiduciary duty to council taxpayers, which means it must consider the prudent use of resources, including control of expenditure, financial prudence in the short and long term and the need to act in good faith in relation to compliance with statutory duties and exercising statutory powers. The report sets out as at November 2024 performance, risk and finance position for the Council as part of its fiduciary duty to implement budgetary controls and monitoring.

Comments checked by: Paul Grant, Head of Legal and Deputy Monitoring Officer

**LORNA BAXTER**

Executive Director of Resources & Section 151 Officer

**Contact Officers:**

Louise Tustian, Director Transformation, Digital and Customer Experience

Ian Dyson, Director of Financial and Commercial Services




This page is intentionally left blank



# Annex A

Oxfordshire County Council







## Key

Indicator	Status Description
 GREEN	Meets or exceeds target
 AMBER	Misses target by narrow margin
 RED	Misses target by significant margin
n/a	Monitoring only



## CORECARD: Reporting Pattern 2: May, July, November and January

FROM 01-APR-2024 TO 30-NOV-2024



Page 194

Linked Items	Unit	Trend	Period Performance			YTD Performance		
			Target	Actual	Indicator	Target	Actual	Indicator
OCC01.02 Total No. of streetlights fitted with LED Lanterns	#	↑	119.00	253.00	 GREEN	820.00	1,364.00	 GREEN
<b>Comments :</b> The number of LED lanterns installed during the month of November 2024, is 238 on residential areas and 15 on the traffic routes which is a total of 253.								
OCC01.07 Total % of household waste which is reused, recycled or composted	%	↓	61.50	56.43	 AMBER	61.50	56.43	 AMBER
<b>Comments :</b> Figure is the forecast end of year performance. Oxfordshire is the best county in England for recycling, but nationally recycling rates have stagnated for several years. A step change is needed through partnership working with the waste collection authorities, and implementation of national waste policy reforms expected in the next few years. In the meantime work to encourage better use of existing re-use and recycling systems is continuing.								
OCC02.01 Digital Inclusion through libraries (number of hours of use of library public computers)	m	↑	6,000.00	7,858.00	 GREEN	6,000.00	7,858.00	 GREEN



**Comments :** Usage of public computers remains well above target. This month's figure includes usage from new devices as part of the pilot for a PN (People's Network) replacement programme. This pilot is being run at our 3 busiest libraries for computer use (Westgate, Abingdon and Cowley), and sees the new devices available for use alongside traditional PN computers. This pilot scheme will shortly be widened to 3 additional branches.

OCC02.03 Number of physical visits to Libraries	#	↑	110,000.00	174,938.00	 GREEN	110,000.00	174,938.00	 GREEN
---	---	---	------------	------------	--	------------	------------	--

**Comments :** This figure remains above target, and continues to show an increase over 2023-24. We remain optimistic of achieving 2 million visits this year.

OCC03.09 No of people contacted via Making Every Conversation Count	#	↓	450.00	696.00	 GREEN	450.00	696.00	 GREEN
---	---	---	--------	--------	--	--------	--------	--

**Comments :** MECC interactions remain well above target and this successful partnership with Public Health has received interest from other local authorities.



OCC04.01 % of people who received short-term services during 24/25 with no further support request	%	↔	77.50	74.00	 AMBER	77.50	74.00	 AMBER
--	---	---	-------	-------	--	-------	-------	--

**Comments :** This is a national measure which aims to monitor the effectiveness of reablement support. Reablement is a short term service which aims to help people regain their independence following a hospital admission or in the community.

This measure monitors of the people who have completed a reablement episode the proportion that need no on-going care. Performance has increased in recent years - improving from 57% in 2020/21; to 76% in 23/24. This is slightly below the latest reported national figure of 77.5%.

OCC04.02 % of residents 18-64 with Learning Disability support who live on their own or with family	%		89.60	n/a		89.60	n/a	
---	---	--	-------	-----	--	-------	-----	--

**Comments :** This is a national measure. Latest published national data was in 2022/23 when Oxfordshire scores 88.4% against a national position of 80.5% and was in the top quartile nationally. Performance has subsequently improved by 1.2% points

OCC04.03 % Section 42 safeguarding enquiries where identified risk was reduced or removed	%	↑	93.00	93.40	 GREEN	93.00	93.40	 GREEN
---	---	---	-------	-------	--	-------	-------	--

**Comments :** This is a national measure which is being reported for the first time in 23/24 and the figure is due to be published on December 19th. Provisional indication is that nationally 91% of enquiries lead to risk being reduced. Oxfordshire is therefore better than the national position

The target was set at 93%

OCC04.04 Adults aged 65+ (per 100,000)  
admitted to residential and care homes

#



437.70

327.10



437.70

327.10



**Comments :** This is a national measure that looks at the number of people whose support needs are met by a permanent care home admission. Most people want to live in their own home and we work to help people stay at home as long as possible. However there are occasions where a person is best supported in a care home.

The aim is to therefore reduce the number of people needing a permanent care home admission.

Last year (2023/24) 453 people were permanently admitted to a care home or a rate of 346.2 people per 100,000 population. This is lower (i.e. better than the national average). The latest comparative data which is for 22/23, Oxfordshire's rate was 357.7 and the 16 best of 151 reporting authorities. In the last 12 months 463 people have been permanently admitted to a care home, whilst this is a slight rise on last year it is in the top 10% in the country.

People are supported to live at home through increasing the availability of services such as home care and extra care housing. In the last 12 months we have purchased over 5% more hours of home care.

OCC04.05 Adults aged 65+ (per 100,000)  
admitted to residential and care homes  
(stretched target)

#



283.80

327.10



283.80

327.10



**Comments :** This is a national measure that looks at the number of people whose support needs are met by a permanent care home admission. Most people want to live in their own home and we work to help people stay at home as long as possible. However there are occasions where a person is best supported in a care home.

The aim is to therefore reduce the number of people needing a permanent care home admission.

Last year (2023/24) 453 people were permanently admitted to a care home or a rate of 346.2 people per 100,000 population. This is lower (i.e. better than the national average). The latest comparative data which is for 22/23, Oxfordshire's rate was 357.7 and the 16 best of 151 reporting authorities.

As part of the Better Care Fund the Council agrees an improvement target with the Department of Health and Social Care, which must show improvement on the previous year. This stretched target for 2024/25 is 400 admissions or a rate of 284 per 100,000 people 65+.

In the last 12 months 463 people have been permanently admitted to a care home, whilst this is a slight rise on last year it is in the top 10% in the country, but it is below the stretched target.

People are supported to live at home through increasing the availability of services such as home care and extra care housing. In the last 12 months we have purchased over 5% more hours of home care.

OCC05.03 204.6 KM (4.4%) of the road network  
to be treated

km



0.00

1.26



204.60

213.97





**Comments :** The annual target for the 2024/25 total surfacing program has been set at 4.4% of the network (excluding patching).

-1.26 km were treated during November (0.03% of the network).

-As of 30th of November 214 km (4.63% of the network) has been treated, exceeding the final target.

-There are a few schemes yet to be delivered, which will bring the total to 220 km treated.

OCC06.02 Percentage of newly planted trees still alive on land OCC own & manage	%	↑	90.00	94.90	 GREEN	90.00	94.90	 GREEN
---	---	---	-------	-------	--	-------	-------	--

**Comments :** Tree watering has ceased as planned because there is no need to water trees after October. The Tree Aftercare & Planting Service is now focused on delivering the programmed planting, with the first tree delivery arriving on 19/11/2024 (200 trees) and by 29/11/2024 117 trees had been planted, mainly in West Oxfordshire.



OCC07.02 No of children we care for who are Unaccompanied Asylum Seeking Children	#		99.00	n/a		99.00	n/a	
---	---	--	-------	-----	--	-------	-----	--

**Comments :** N/A



OCC07.03 % of children we care for placed out of county and more than 20 miles away from home	%		35.00	n/a		35.00	n/a	
---	---	--	-------	-----	--	-------	-----	--

**Comments :** 275 children out of 792 looked after children are placed out of county and more than 20 miles away (35%). This is twice the national figure (17%)

A placement and Sufficiency Board meets monthly to oversee an action plan which aims to increase local care home provision, foster care provision and accommodation for young people 16 plus.

OCC07.04 Number of Children and Young People accessing the Music Service	#	↑	8,500.00	8,900.00	 GREEN	8,500.00	8,900.00	 GREEN
--	---	---	----------	----------	--	----------	----------	--

**Comments :** pleased to see significant growth. School buy in up 10%

OCC07.05 The number of children subject of a child protection plan	#	↑	618.00	479.00	 GREEN	618.00	479.00	 GREEN
--	---	---	--------	--------	--	--------	--------	--

**Comments :** N/A

OCC07.06 Number of Oxfordshire children we care for	#	693.00	n/a	693.00	n/a
---	---	--------	-----	--------	-----



**Comments :** N/A

OCC07.07 % of Education Health & Care Plans completed within 20 weeks	%	15.10	n/a	15.10	n/a
---	---	-------	-----	-------	-----



**Comments :** N/A

OCC07.08 The number of Education Health Care Plans maintained by the local authority	#	7,201.00	n/a	7,201.00	n/a
--	---	----------	-----	----------	-----

**Comments :** There are 866 (13.7%) more EHCPs maintained by Oxfordshire in November 2024 than there were during the same month in the previous year.

OCC10.01 % of Adult Social Care complaints (Stage 1) responded to within statutory timescales	%	↔	80.00	100.00	 GREEN	80.00	100.00	 GREEN
---	---	---	-------	--------	--	-------	--------	--



**Comments :** 5 Adult Social Care statutory stage 1 complaints have been received in November 2024. 2 cases are closed within timescale and 3 are still open within timescale

OCC10.02 % of Adult Social Care complaints (Stage 2) responded to within statutory timescales	%	↔	80.00	0.00	 RED	80.00	0.00	 RED
---	---	---	-------	------	--	-------	------	--



**Comments :** 1 Adult Social Care statutory stage 2 complaints has been received in November 2024., which is still open within timescale

OCC10.03 Overall customer satisfaction rate for the Customer Service Centre - telephony	%	↔	80.00	0.00	 RED	80.00	0.00	 RED
---	---	---	-------	------	--	-------	------	--

**Comments :** CSAT process on hold due to Zoom launch and training

OCC10.04 Answer 80% of calls to the Customer Service Centre within 30 seconds (exclude SHCT)	%	↑	80.00	75.00	 AMBER	80.00	75.00	 AMBER
--	---	---	-------	-------	--	-------	-------	--

**Comments :** In November the number of calls answered decreased by 748 to 8,735 calls and 6,559 of these were answered within 30 seconds equalling 75%. This compares to 11,700 calls where 8,178 were presented and 7,932 calls were answered within 30 seconds (84%)

OCC10.05 Percentage of FOIs responded to within timescales	%	↔	90.00	100.00	 GREEN	90.00	100.00	 GREEN
--	---	---	-------	--------	--	-------	--------	--

**Comments :** A total of 156 requests for information were received during November, with an additional 17 requests redirected to the other organisations, mainly the local district councils. This is a decrease of 12.8% compared to October (179), and an increase of 32.6% compared to November 2023 (135). A total of 70 requests were responded to on-time (100%), and 86 requests remain open and on-time (100%).

Why outcome occurred?



The number of requests decreased in November, returning to normal levels. There is no clear explanation for the increase in October, with analysis of the requests showing no specific trend regarding subject matter.

What actions are we taking to move toward target?



We are currently in the period where responses are due over the Christmas/New Year timeframe. Managers are asked to ensure they provide their response promptly to meet deadlines. The FOI clock continues to run during the Christmas/New Year period, so it is important to respond in a timely manner.

When do you expect to see improvement?



We are continuing to strive to achieve a high response rate and have successfully responded to 98% of initial requests within the statutory timeframe.

OCC10.08 % of Children Social Care complaints (Stage 1) responded to within statutory timescales	%	↔	80.00	100.00	 GREEN	80.00	100.00	 GREEN
--	---	---	-------	--------	--	-------	--------	--



**Comments :** 4 Children Social Care statutory stage 1 complaints were received in November 2024. 1 case is closed within timescale and 3 are still open within timescale

OCC10.09 % of Children Social Care complaints (Stage 2) responded to within statutory timescales	%	↔	80.00	0.00	 RED	80.00	0.00	 RED
--	---	---	-------	------	--	-------	------	--

**Comments :** 2 Children Social Care statutory stage 2 complaints has been received in November 2024., both of them are still open within timescale

OCC10.10 % of Children Social Care complaints (Stage 3) responded to within statutory timescales	%	↔	80.00	0.00	 RED	80.00	0.00	 RED
--	---	---	-------	------	--	-------	------	--

**Comments :** 1 Children Social Care statutory stage 3 complaints has been received in November 2024 which is still open within timescale



OCC10.11 % of Corporate Complaints (Stage 1) responded to within timescales	%	↑	80.00	100.00	 GREEN	80.00	100.00	 GREEN
---	---	---	-------	--------	--	-------	--------	--

**Comments :** 33 Corporate stage 1 complaints have been received in November 2024. 7 were closed within timescale, 21 are still open within timescale and 5 are overdue. Of these, 1 falls into the Highways and Environment directorate, 3 into the Children's corporate directorate, 1 into Environment and Place.

We will continue to chase and escalate the complaints that are overdue and work with services to ensure timeliness of complaints in line with the policy.



OCC10.12 % of Corporate Complaints (Stage 2) responded to within timescales	%	↓	80.00	0.00	 RED	80.00	0.00	 RED
---	---	---	-------	------	--	-------	------	--

**Comments :** 6 Corporate stage 2 complaints were received in November 2024, all of them are still open within timescale

OCC10.13 The percentage of customer telephone calls abandoned at the Customer Service Centre	%	↓	10.00	10.50	 AMBER	10.00	10.50	 AMBER
--	---	---	-------	-------	--	-------	-------	--

**Comments :** In November 2024, the Customer Service Centre was offered 11,275 calls across all services. Of these, 1190 were abandoned equating to 10.5.% of calls. Compared to the previous month, there was a decrease of 756 calls offered.

Compared to November 2023, there is a 3.8% increase in the abandonment call rate

OCC11.01 Overall forecast revenue variance across the Council	%	↔	0.00	(-1.4)	 GREEN	0.00	(-1.4)	 GREEN
---	---	---	------	--------	--	------	--------	--

**Comments :** Comment













This measures the overall forecast revenue variance across the Council. The target is to breakeven or underspend. September position is -0.2% (ie underspend)

OCC11.02 Achievement of planned savings	%	↔	90.00	71.00	 RED	90.00	71.00	 RED
---	---	---	-------	-------	--	-------	-------	--

**Comments :** Comment



The target for the achievement of planned savings is 90%. September position is 71% of savings are on track to be delivered by year end.





OCC11.03 General balances are forecast to remain at or above the risk assessed level	%	↑	85.00	136.00	 GREEN	85.00		 GREEN
<b>Comments :</b> Comment General balances are forecast to remain within 85% of the risk assessed level for 2024/25 (£30.2m). September position is 112% as balances are forecast to be £33.8m at year end.								
OCC11.04 Directorates deliver services and achieve planned performance within agreed budget	%	↑	1.00	0.70	 GREEN	1.00	0.70	 GREEN
<b>Comments :</b> Comment This measures service areas delivering services and achieving planned performance within budget. The target is 1% variance. September performance is 1% overspend.								
OCC11.05 Total Outturn variation for DSG funded services (schools/early years)	%	↔	0.00	0.00	 GREEN	0.00	0.00	 GREEN
<b>Comments :</b> Comment Total Outturn variation for DSG funded services (schools and early years). Target is breakeven or underspend. September position is 0% variance.								
OCC11.06 Total Outturn variation for DSG funded services (high needs)	£	↓	21,300,000.00	28,420,000.00	 RED	21,300,000.00	28,420,000.00	 RED
<b>Comments :</b> Comment Total Outturn variation for DSG funded services (high needs). Target is overspend no higher than £21.3m. September position is £26.1m overspend.								
OCC11.07 Use of non-DSG revenue grant funding	%	↔	95.00	95.00	 GREEN	95.00	95.00	 GREEN
<b>Comments :</b> Comment Use of non-DSG revenue grant funding, target is at least 95% is spent by the year end. September position is on track to spend 95%.								
OCC11.08 % of agreed invoices paid within 30 days	%	↓	95.00	95.37	 GREEN	95.00	95.37	 GREEN

**Comments :** Comment

For July performance is above target at 95.81% a slight increase from 95.64% in June 2024. Breaking down the figures Children Social Care invoices are slightly below the 95% target 94.2%; both purchase orders and Adult Social Care are above target.

OCC11.09 Invoice collection rate - Corporate Debtors	%	↓	95.00	95.13	 GREEN	95.00	95.13	 GREEN
--	---	---	-------	-------	--	-------	-------	--

**Comments :** This measure identifies the percentage of invoices issued that have been paid within 120 days. In this period, we measured invoices issued in August 2024. The collection rate was 95.13%, above the target of 95%.

OCC11.10 Debt requiring impairment - Corporate Debtors	£	↓	300,000.00	830,438.00	 AMBER	300,000.00	830,438.00	 AMBER
--	---	---	------------	------------	--	------------	------------	--

**Comments :** Debt requiring impairment is the value of invoices with potential to become unrecoverable. The potential loss requires recording in the accounts at year end. If at year end there is an overall increase in the value of invoices at risk, we are required to top up the impairment balance. Consequently, this figure is tracked through the year.



Debt requiring impairment this month is £0.830m. The top five cases, including two which are in liquidation, account for 56% of the total bad debt and is being actively worked on by Legal Services and Debt Recovery Officers.

OCC11.11 Debt requiring impairment - Adult Social Care contribution debtors	£	↑	3,500,000.00	5,122,290.00	 RED	3,500,000.00	5,122,290.00	 RED
---	---	---	--------------	--------------	--	--------------	--------------	--

**Comments :** The 2023-24 year-end adults care contribution impairment for bad debt was £4.52m. At 30 November 2024 it is £5.12m, an increase of £0.60m.

As reported previously, wider economic factors have had a significant effect on means tested social care contribution debt levels, as have delays with the court of protection and related activity. This tracks with other local authorities' experience.

We are revising our approach to overdue debt and bringing together a debt reduction and recovery plan.

OCC11.15 Invoice Collection Rate - Adult Social Care contribution debtors	%	↑	92.00	92.54	 GREEN	92.00	92.54	 GREEN
---	---	---	-------	-------	--	-------	-------	--

**Comments :** In this period, we measured invoices issued in August 2024. The 120-day invoice collection rate was 92.54% for this period, above the 92% target.

<b>Overall Performance</b>			<b>100.00</b>	<b>79.39</b>	 RED	<b>100.00</b>	<b>79.39</b>	 RED
----------------------------	--	--	---------------	--------------	--	---------------	--------------	--



This page is intentionally left blank

## Introduction

1. This annex sets out the fourth financial monitoring update for the 2024/25 financial year and is based on information to the end of November 2024. Key issues, as well as risks relating to inflation, demand and other factors, plus areas of emerging pressure are explained below.

The following information is also provided within the annex:

Annex B – 1 (a) to (e)	Detailed service areas positions
Annex B – 2a	Virements to approve
Annex B – 2b	Virements to note
Annex B – 3	Earmarked reserves
Annex B – 4	Government grants
Annex B – 5	General Balances

## Overall Financial Position

2. As shown below there is a forecast service area overspend of £4.3m. This has reduced by £1.8m compared to the position reported to Cabinet in November 2024. After taking account of an underspend against budgets held for contingency and inflation, additional interest receivable on balances held by the council and anticipated capital financing costs, the overall position is a forecast underspend of £8.5m.

	Latest Budget Nov-24 £m	Forecast Spend Nov-24 £m	Forecast Variance Nov-24 £m	Forecast Variance Nov-24 %	Forecast Variance Sept-24 £m	Change Since Sept-24 £m
Adult Services	250.1	250.1	0.0	0.0%	0.0	0.0
Children's Services	200.6	201.9	1.3	0.7%	3.5	-2.2
Environment & Highways	69.4	70.2	0.8	1.2%	0.6	0.2
Economy & Place	1.6	1.6	0.0	0.0%	0.0	0.0
Oxfordshire Fire & Rescue Service and Community Safety	28.7	29.4	0.7	2.3%	0.7	0.0
Public Health & Communities	12.6	12.8	0.2	1.6%	0.0	0.2
Resources and Law & Governance	57.8	59.1	1.3	2.3%	1.3	0.0
Transformation, Digital & Customer Experience	8.1	8.1	0.0	0.0%	0.0	0.0
<b>Service Areas Total</b>	<b>628.8</b>	<b>633.1</b>	<b>4.3</b>	<b>7.9%</b>	<b>6.1</b>	<b>-1.8</b>
<b>Budgets Held Centrally</b>						
Capital Financing	21.3	17.9	-3.5	-16.2%	-3.5	0.0
Interest on Balances	-10.7	-15.3	-4.6	43.5%	-3.9	-0.7
Contingency	7.5	7.5	0.0	0.0%	0.0	0.0
Pay Inflation	14.4	9.7	-4.7	-32.8%	0.0	-4.7
Un-ringfenced Specific Grants	-55.5	-55.5	0.0	0.0%	0.0	0.0
Insurance	1.7	1.7	0.0	0.0%	0.0	0.0
Contribution from COVID-19 reserve	-3.8	-3.8	0.0	0.0%	0.0	0.0
Contribution from Budget Priority Reserve	-1.4	-1.4	0.0	0.0%	0.0	0.0
Contributions to reserves	11.1	11.1	0.0	0.0%	0.0	0.0
<b>Total Budgets Held Centrally</b>	<b>-15.4</b>	<b>-28.2</b>	<b>-12.8</b>	<b>83.3%</b>	<b>-7.4</b>	<b>-5.4</b>
<b>Net Operating Budget</b>	<b>613.5</b>	<b>605.0</b>	<b>-8.5</b>	<b>-1.4%</b>	<b>-1.3</b>	<b>-7.2</b>
Business Rates & Council Tax funding	-613.5	-613.5	0.0	0.0%	0.0	0.0
<b>Forecast Year End Position</b>	<b>0.0</b>	<b>-8.5</b>	<b>-8.5</b>	<b>-1.4%</b>	<b>-1.3</b>	<b>-7.2</b>

3. The breakeven position for Adult Services reported to the November Cabinet remains unchanged. Due to the Integrated Care Board (ICB) now funding their share of the section 117 aftercare support costs for older mental health service users, this is after taking account of a proposed contribution of £3.0m to the Budget Priorities Reserve. This will be used to support future risks within social care.
4. The forecast overspend of £3.5m for Children's Services has reduced by £2.2m since the position reported in November 2024 due to a reduction in the staffing budgets forecast overspend and underspends noted in investments. There are still risks in the delivery of previously agreed savings built into the 2024/25 budget.
5. The forecast overspend for Environment & Highways has increased by £0.2m compared to the position in November because of increased waste tonnages. There is still a £2.2m pressure in Network Management relating to the underachievement of lane rental income savings, offset by a £1.6m underspend in Highways maintenance from a reduction in energy costs from lower energy activity.
6. The forecast breakeven position for Economy and Place remains unchanged.
7. Public Health & Communities are forecasting an overspend of £0.2m due to pressures in the Library Service. Within that a forecast £0.6m underspend against the Public Health grant funding is assumed to be transferred to reserves at year end.
8. The forecast overspend of £0.7m for Oxfordshire Fire & Rescue Service and Community Safety has remains unchanged and is due to risks in the delivery of previously agreed savings built into the 2024/25 budget.
9. The forecast overspend of £1.3m for Resources and Law & Governance remains unchanged from the position reported to Cabinet in November and is mainly driven by high locum costs in the Legal service.
10. Transformation, Digital & Customer Experience are forecasting a breakeven position.
11. £6.5m of the £14.4m pay inflation budget has been used to meet the cost of the additional pay inflation in 2024/25 following the agreement of the Green Book pay award. £1.9m will be held to meet the cost of pay inflation for vacant posts when they are recruited to, £1.3m is proposed to be used to fund a one-off contribution to the Local Government Devolution and Reorganisation reserve. This leaves a one - off underspend of at least £4.7m which has been reflected in the forecast. The on-going budget that is not needed to fund pay inflation in 2024/25 will roll forward. £3.5m is assumed to be used to fund the anticipated pay award in 2025/26.

12. £7.3m on-going budget was agreed to be held in contingency as part of the 2024/25 budget, this has now increased to £7.5m after taking into account the receipt of unringfenced grants funding. £3.7m will be used to fund a one-off contribution to the Local Government Devolution and Reorganisation reserve. The rest of this funding has not been factored into the forecast at this stage on the basis that it may be needed to meet potential service pressures in the remainder of the financial year.
13. The 2024/25 budget includes planned service areas savings of £30.1m. 54% of these savings are assessed as delivered and 75% are forecast to be delivered.
14. The risk assessed level of one – off funding held in general balances in 2024/25 is £30.2m. A residual balance of £2.3m relating to the underspend at the end of 2023/24 was agreed to be held in balances as part of the Provisional Outturn Report for 2023/24. After taking account of the forecast underspend, balances are currently forecast to be £10.8m above the risk assessed level as at 31 March 2024.
15. The forecast 2024/25 deficit compared to Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) funding for High Needs is £28.4m, £7.1m higher than the budget approved by Council in February 2024. The CIPFA code of practice requires negative High Needs DSG balances to be held in an unusable reserve. The forecast deficit would increase the cumulative negative High Needs DSG balance held in this reserve from £55.8m as at 31 March 2024 to £84.2m at 31 March 2025.

## Service Areas Forecasts

### Adult Services

16. Adult Services are forecasting a breakeven position against a budget of £250.1m.

Service Area	Latest Budget Nov-24 £m	Forecast Spend Nov-24 £m	Forecast Variance Nov-24 £m	Forecast Variance Sept-24 £m	Change Since Sept-24 £m
Adult Social Care	27.2	27.5	0.3	0.3	0.0
Health, Education & Social Care Commissioning	5.4	5.1	-0.3	-0.3	0.0
Housing & Social Care Commissioning	1.4	1.4	0.0	0.0	0.0
Business Support Service	1.1	1.1	0.0	0.0	0.0
Pooled Budgets	214.9	214.9	0.0	0.0	0.0
<b>Total Adult Services</b>	<b>250.1</b>	<b>250.1</b>	<b>0.0</b>	<b>0.0</b>	<b>0.0</b>

### Pooled Budgets

#### Age Well Pooled Budget

17. The Age Well pool combines health and social care expenditure on care homes, activity relating to hospital avoidance and prevention and early support activities for older people.

18. Budgets within the pool are managed on an aligned basis with the Integrated Care Board (ICB) for Buckinghamshire, Oxfordshire, and Berkshire West (BOB) so each partner is responsible for the variation against their element of the funding.
19. The council elements of the Age Well pool as at the end of November are forecast to breakeven.
20. The position assumes that majority of the savings are delivered. Further detail is provided in the savings section of the report.
21. The council's share of the Better Care Fund (BCF) being utilised within the pool is £31.1m in 2024/25, an increase of 5.7% from 2023/24.
22. There are significant risks and assumptions within the forecast where certainty is not possible at this stage. These include:
  - Growth in placements, particularly residential, through the year. Although there is a seasonal trend, it is difficult to predict accurately how activity will move. The forecast includes an element of growth held to mitigate this risk.
  - Requests for fee uplifts for unit costs over and above ceiling rates are still being requested and this is being managed through a fee uplift panel.
  - The ICB have begun a programme of Continuing Healthcare package reviews, resulting in a number of packages being assessed as no longer having a health need and therefore becoming a social care commitment. To date the increase in costs to the council within older people is £1.0m in 2024/25. This has potential to increase depending on the outcomes of any further assessments taking place by the ICB.
  - The reablement and discharge to assess services has seen a continued increase in numbers over recent months.

Live Well Pooled Budget

23. The Live Well pool supports a combination of health and social care needs for adults of working age with learning disabilities, acquired brain injury or mental health needs and adults with physical disabilities.
24. Budgets within the pool are managed on an aligned basis with the Integrated Care Board (ICB) for Buckinghamshire, Oxfordshire, and Berkshire West (BOB).
25. The council elements of the Live Well pool are forecast to spend to budgets.
26. Risks or uncertainties in both service groups relate to:
  - The ICB have begun a programme of package reviews, resulting in a number of packages being assessed as no longer having a health need and therefore becoming a social care commitment. To date the increase in costs to the



council within learning and physical disabilities is £1.1m in 2024/25.

- Transport costs are forecast to overspend by £0.7m. This is due to market conditions rather than increased demand. Work is ongoing to reduce these costs in future years via a transport working group.
- Growth in care packages, particularly for supported living and home support, through the year. It is difficult to predict accurately how activity will move throughout the remaining months of the year.

### **Non-Pool Services**

27. A breakeven position is forecast across all other services.

### **Reserves**

28. £1.0m held in the Budget Priorities reserve for Adult Social Care at 1 April 2024 will be used to fund known pressures in 2024/25.

29. A contribution to budget prioritisation reserve of £3.0m will be made in 2024/25. The council has previously been funding the health element of S117 aftercare support for older people mental health service users. Approval has been received that the ICB will now fund their share of these costs releasing the council funding into a reserve to cover future risk within social care.

30. £0.6m held in reserves because of additional contributions made by the ICB in previous years will be allocated in 2024/25 and 2025/26 as agreed with the Joint Commissioning Executive.

31. As the Supervisory Body the council has a statutory obligation to assess and authorise Deprivation of Liberty Safeguarding (DoLS) requests. The number of requests the council receives has increased so £0.4m has been held in the Budget Priorities reserve to help meet its statutory obligation. This funding will be utilised in 2024/25.

32. £0.1m held in the Government Initiative Reserve relates to ongoing costs associated with charging reforms prior to implementation which is now scheduled for autumn 2025.

33. £0.3m of Apprenticeship funding is held within the grants and contributions reserve, funding was awarded to the council late in February 2024 to increase social work capacity within adult social care, the funding will be used before March 2025. Noting the positive impact of the recruitment campaign, 300 applications were received for social work apprenticeships from which 30 were appointed.

34. £0.2m Accelerated Reform Fund funding awarded in January 2024 will be used to address barriers to adopting innovative practices and build capacity and capability within adult social care.

### **Ringfenced Grants**

35. As set out in Annex 4, ring-fenced government grants expected to be received by Adult Services in 2024/25 total £23.2m.

36. The Improved Better Care Fund Grant is £10.7m, with no change since 2023/24.

The conditions attached to the grant funding require it to be used for the purposes of meeting adult social care needs, including contributing to the stabilisation of local care markets and supporting the NHS in addressing pressures such as delayed discharges.

37. The Market Sustainability and Improvement Fund is £10.0m and is being used to support the provider fee uplift in 2024/25 in line with the terms of the grant, to enhance the uplift, and to maintain uplifts from 2023/24 funded through the Market Sustainability and Fair Cost of Care grant which now forms part of this grant.

38. The Adult Social Care Discharge Fund is £2.5m. This will be used to provide interventions that improve discharge of patients from hospital to the most appropriate location for their ongoing care.

### **Non-ringfenced Grants**

39. The council will receive £0.5m from the Accelerated Reform Fund to be used to address barriers by adopting innovative practices and build capacity and capability in the adult social care market. An element of this funding will be moved into a reserve to be used in 2025/26.

### **Virements**

40. There are a number of virements to note reflecting budget movements within the pools linked to inflationary uplifts, an increased contribution from the ICB towards the Quality and Improvement team within the Health, Education and Social Care Commissioning Team; budget realignments reflecting Oxfordshire's role in managing the South East Association of Directors of Adult Social Services administration; and the moving of a one off investment into the Economy and Place service.

### **Savings**

41. The 2024/25 budget includes planned savings of £4.3m. 98% of these savings are expected to be delivered and 2% is not expected to be achieved.

42. The unconfirmed savings relate to an action to reduce the outstanding unsecured debt. This will not be confirmed until the end of the financial year but while action continues to be taken early reports indicate that this will not be achieved. Updates will continue to be provided in future reports.

43. There are also £0.3m of savings brought forward from 2023/24 to be delivered in 2024/25. 100% of these savings are expected to be delivered.

### **Investments**

44. Planned one – off investments of £1.4m were agreed as part of the 2024/25 budget. Commitments have been made to spend £0.6m of this funding with further work being carried out to utilise the remaining investment. To maximise the effect of this funding an element may be required to be carried forward into the following year, an update will be provided within the next report. £0.2m of the investment linked to the Oxfordshire Way is to be managed by the Partnership Delivery Service. £0.1m has been moved across to the Economy and Place service who are leading on establishing a care Co-operative employment hub.

## **Children's Services**

45. Children's services are forecasting an overspend of £1.3m against a budget of £200.6m.

46. For High Needs DSG there is a forecast in year deficit of £28.4m. Forecast expenditure is £7.1m higher than the budget approved by Council in February 2024.

<b>Service Area</b>	<b>Latest Budget Nov-24 £m</b>	<b>Forecast Spend Nov-24 £m</b>	<b>Forecast Variance Nov-24 £m</b>	<b>Forecast Variance Sept-24 £m</b>	<b>Change Since Sept-24 £m</b>
Education & Learning	54.2	55.2	1.0	1.0	0.0
Schools <sup>1</sup>	0.2	0.2	0.0	0.0	0.0
<b>Subtotal Education</b>	<b>54.4</b>	<b>55.4</b>	<b>1.0</b>	<b>1.0</b>	<b>0.0</b>
Early Help, Front Door & Social Care	85.5	84.0	-1.5	-2.1	0.6
Provider Services & Safeguarding	51.9	50.4	-1.5	0.1	-1.6
<b>Subtotal Childrens' Social Care</b>	<b>137.5</b>	<b>134.5</b>	<b>-3.0</b>	<b>-2.0</b>	<b>-1.0</b>
Children's Services Central Costs	8.8	12.1	3.3	4.5	-1.2
<b>Total Childrens' Services</b>	<b>200.6</b>	<b>201.9</b>	<b>1.3</b>	<b>3.5</b>	<b>-2.2</b>
<b>Overspend on High Needs DSG that will be transferred to the unusable reserve</b>	<b>88.4</b>	<b>116.9</b>	<b>28.4</b>	<b>26.1</b>	<b>2.3</b>

### **Education**

47. Within Education & Learning, Home to School Transport continues to be high risk. At this point in the year expenditure is forecast to exceed the budget by £1.0m based on the pupils and transport requirements for the current academic year.

### **Children's Social Care & Central Costs**

48. There is a forecast underspend of £3.0m for Children's Social Care as a result of a reduction in the forecast against staff budgets and underspends noted in investments.

49. There remains the risk of demand pressures in Children's Social Care including the cost of children's placements, agency social workers and the challenges delivering savings targets during the financial year.

50. In relation to staffing, several initiatives are planned to support the reduction of agency social workers. For 2024/25 this is currently expected to be managed within the budget, however there could be risks in future financial years should the number and cost of agency social workers not reduce in line with

---

<sup>1</sup> \*Maintained Schools are funded by Dedicated Schools Grant

51. The latest activity for Children's Social Care is as below:

	Q2 2022/23	Q4 2022/23	Q2 2023/24	Q4 2023/24	Q2 2024/25	October 2024/25	November 2024/25
Oxfordshire born children	778	735	677	624	643	640	650
Disabled Children	61	58	51	49	43	44	44
<b>Subtotal</b>	<b>839</b>	<b>793</b>	<b>728</b>	<b>673</b>	<b>686</b>	<b>684</b>	<b>694</b>
Unaccompanied	69	108	94	95	99	100	101
<b>Total</b>	<b>908</b>	<b>901</b>	<b>822</b>	<b>768</b>	<b>785</b>	<b>784</b>	<b>795</b>

52. The number of Oxfordshire born cared for children for during 2024/25, excluding the Unaccompanied Asylum-Seeking Children, has continued to broadly stabilise below the 700 level and is in line with the numbers forecast for the budget at this point in the year.

### **Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG)**

53. The forecast overspend against High Needs DSG funding is a deficit of £28.4m, £7.1m higher than the budget approved by Council in February 2024.

Summary of DSG funding	2024/25 Budget £m	2024/25 Projected Outturn £m	Variance £m
Schools block	129.1	129.1	0.0
Central Services Schools block	5.2	5.2	0.0
High Needs block	88.4	116.9	28.4
Early Years block	74.8	74.8	0.0
<b>Total</b>	<b>297.5</b>	<b>325.9</b>	<b>28.4</b>

54. The CIPFA code of practice requires negative High Needs DSG balances to be held in an unusable reserve. The forecast deficit would increase the cumulative negative High Needs DSG balance held in this reserve from £55.8m as at 31 March 2024 to £84.2m at 31 March 2025.

### **Savings**

55. The 2024/25 budget includes planned savings of £12.3m, 65% is forecast to be delivered. Savings at risk of delivery include the children we care for savings of £6.2m.

### **Investments**

56. Planned investments of £6.7m agreed as part of the 2024/25 budget include:

- £1.5m investment for additional capacity in the SEND service.
- £1.0m investment to extend the Family Safeguarding model to reduce demand.
- £1.0m investment on Recruitment & Retention Strategy.

- £0.8m investment on Home to School Transport to improve data and systems and increase independent travel.
- £0.5m investment in Digital innovation to assist customer pathways and user experience in information finding and advice.
- £0.7m to develop the Oxfordshire Way approach.

### **Environment & Highways**

57.Environment & Highways is forecasting an overspend of £0.8m against a budget of £69.4m.

Service Area	Latest Budget Nov-24 £m	Forecast Spend Nov-24 £m	Forecast Variance Nov-24 £m	Forecast Variance Sept-24 £m	Change Since Sept-24 £m
Infrastructure Delivery	1.2	1.2	0.0	0.0	0.0
Environment	36.9	37.1	0.2	0.0	0.2
Transport Policy	13.2	13.2	0.0	0.0	0.0
Highways & Maintenance	20.3	18.7	-1.6	-1.6	0.0
Network Management	-6.4	-4.2	2.2	2.2	0.0
Supported Transport	1.9	1.9	0.0	0.0	0.0
Senior Management Team	0.6	0.6	0.0	0.0	0.0
Data Intelligence & Business Support	1.7	1.7	0.0	0.0	0.0
<b>Total Environment &amp; Highways</b>	<b>69.4</b>	<b>70.2</b>	<b>0.8</b>	<b>0.6</b>	<b>0.2</b>

### **Infrastructure Delivery**

58.The Infrastructure Delivery service area is forecasting a breakeven position.

### **Environment**

59.The Environment service area is forecasting an overspend of £0.2m.

60.Waste Management are forecasting an overspend due to increases in tonnages transferred to the Energy Recovery Facility, this is offset by a reduction in recycling tonnages. The service will continue to monitor the waste data trends and report any significant changes in future reports.

61.The table below summarises budgeted and actual waste activity.

**	Budget				Outturn Forecast*			
Waste Stream	Annual	Tonnage		Price/ Tonne	Annual	Tonnage		Price/ Tonne
	£m	K'Tonnes	%	£	£m	K'Tonnes	%	£
Recycling/ Composting	8.362	175	60%	47.86	8.158	153	56%	53.24
ERF	16.167	105	36%	154.41	17.302	112	41%	154.62

Annex B  
Business Management and Monitoring Report November 2024

Landfill	1.624	11	4%	149.30	1.307	7	3%	167.56
<b>Total</b>	<b>26.153</b>	<b>291</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>90.09</b>	<b>26.767</b>	<b>272</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>98.07</b>
<p>*October figures presented as the latest dataset.</p> <p>** Please note that budget, outturn &amp; variance figures are rounded to the nearest 1000</p>								

62. Other services within Environment & Circular economy are forecasting a break-even position. All investments in flood management activity agreed as part of the 2024/25 budget are currently on track to spend to budget at the year end.

### Transport Policy

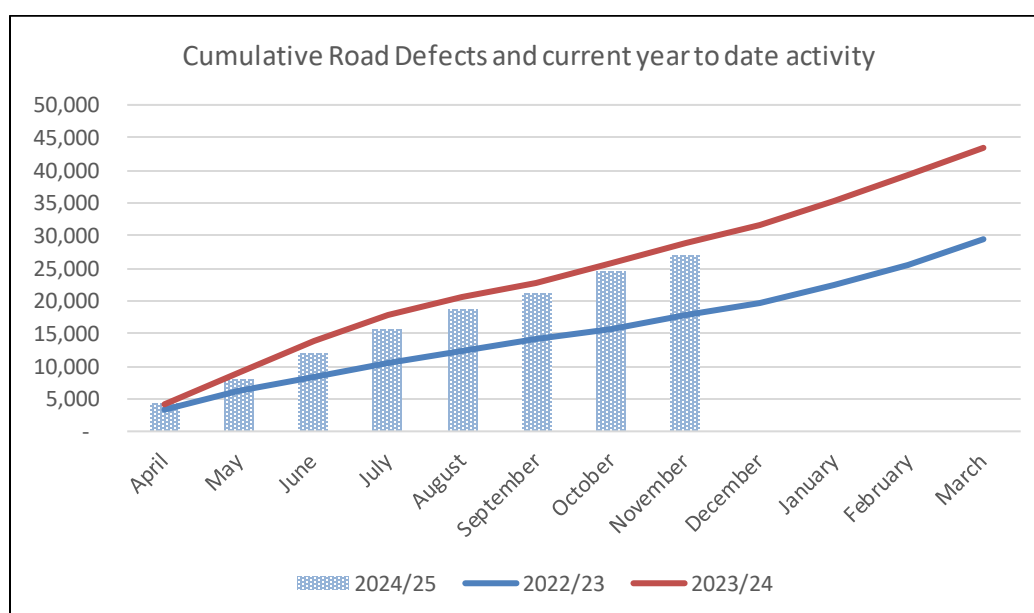
63. The Transport policy service area is forecasting a breakeven position. The Demand Response Transport feasibility study is likely not to be delivered due to a requirement to change the scope of the project which is yet to be agreed.

### Highways & Maintenance

64. Highways & Maintenance are forecasting an underspend of £1.6m. This reflects a reduction in energy consumption for street lighting and the ongoing effect of a price update received during 2023/24 setting out more favourable energy prices.

65. There are pressures across maintenance predominantly in defect repairs, incident response and winter maintenance, as a result of bad weather across the county. These pressures are currently being mitigated through underspends across the service.

66. Current level of defects remains lower than last year and in line with the current budget.



### **Network Management**

67. Network Management is forecasting an overspend of £2.2m. This is due to a delay in approval of the council's application to implement charging for Lane Rental by the Department for Transport. Although the full level of income will not be achieved options and risks are being assessed to mitigate the impact, such as delays in other planned expenditure, income trends and additional drawdown of the parking account reserve.

### **Supported transport**

68. The Supported transport service area is forecasting a breakeven position. The service have reported a minor slip on the Demand Response Transport project due to a delay in reaching a decision on rescope of the initial project.

### **Senior Management Team**

69. £0.6m costs associated with early retirement and redundancy costs from the Organisation Redesign Programme be funded through the Redundancy reserve.
70. There is a risk of not fully achieving savings of £0.3m relating to staffing and commercial allocated to the service in 2024/25.

### **Data Intelligence & Business Support**

71. The Data Intelligence & Business Support service area is forecasting a breakeven position.

### **Virements**

72. There are number of virements that predominantly realign and correct internal budgets as detailed in Annex B-2b.

### **Savings**

73. The 2024/25 budget includes planned savings of £8.1m. 57% are forecast to be delivered. Savings at risk of delivery include:
- Lane rental an introduction of charges for all works on the business roads at the busiest times to minimise disruption: the service anticipates that the full £2.2m income expectation will not be achieved.
  - Income of £0.2m from introduction of a new Controlled Parking Zones (CPZs): Income realisation is likely to be between December 2024 and March 2025 through a mix of permit fees and fines. An update on additional CPZ income will be reported later in the monitoring cycle.
  - Prevention of unsorted waste at Household Waste Recycling Centres. A saving of £0.2m is now unlikely to be delivered this year due to implementation delays.
  - £0.5m commercial savings to be achieved through contractual negotiation is not likely to be fully delivered by the end of this financial year.

### **Investments**

74. The 2024/25 budget includes planned investments of £2.5m. 94% are on track to be delivered and include:

- £0.2m to improve the collection of fees, charges, and penalties.
- £0.5m for gully and ditch clearing and repairs in areas recently flooded.
- £0.5m to reclaim footpaths and cycleways and manage vegetation.
- £0.1m investment in improved enforcement of Controlled Parking Zones.

75. Investments that are at risk of being delivered include:

- £0.2m to introduce new Controlled Parking Zones: the Network and Co-ordination service is currently working on CPZ programme prioritisation to identify, design and consult four new schemes. New CPZs could go live by December 2024 at the earliest depending on the complexity/consultation response.
- £0.1m investment in a feasibility study to introduce a new Demand Responsive transport project is currently on hold pending a decision on whether to reallocate this investment to another project.

### **Economy & Place**

76. Economy & Place is forecasting an overspend a breakeven position against a budget of £1.6m.

Service Area	Latest Budget Nov-24 £m	Forecast Spend Nov-24 £m	Forecast Variance Nov-24 £m	Forecast Variance Sept-24 £m	Change Since Sept-24 £m
OXLEP	0.1	0.1	0.0	0.0	0.0
Economy	0.1	0.1	0.0	0.0	0.0
Strategic Planning	0.7	0.7	0.0	0.0	0.0
Climate Action	1.2	1.2	0.0	0.0	0.0
Place Making	-2.2	-2.2	0.0	0.0	0.0
Innovation	0.3	0.3	0.0	0.0	0.0
Senior Management Team	0.9	0.9	0.0	0.0	0.0
Business Performance & Services Improvement	0.5	0.5	0.0	0.0	0.0
<b>Total Environment &amp; Place</b>	<b>1.6</b>	<b>1.6</b>	<b>0.0</b>	<b>0.0</b>	<b>0.0</b>

77. £0.6m early retirement and redundancy costs from the layering of the Tiers 1 and 2 management structure will be funded through the Redundancy reserve.

78. All other services in Economy & Place are forecasting a breakeven position.

### **Savings**

79. The 2024/25 budget includes planned savings of £1.0m. 100% are forecast to



## **Public Health and Communities**

80. Public Health and Communities are forecasting a £0.2m overspend against a budget of £12.6m.

Service Area	Latest Budget Nov-24 £m	Forecast Spend Nov-24 £m	Forecast Variance Nov-24 £m	Forecast Variance Sept-24 £m	Change Since Sept-24 £m
Public Health Functions	40.1	39.5	-0.6	-0.2	-0.4
Public Health Recharges	0.6	0.6	0.0	0.0	0.0
Other Income	-1.4	-1.4	0.0	0.0	0.0
Grant Income	-34.4	-34.4	0.0	0.0	0.0
Transfer to Public Health Reserve	0.0	0.6	0.6	0.2	0.4
<b>Total Public Health</b>	<b>4.8</b>	<b>4.8</b>	<b>0.0</b>	<b>0.0</b>	<b>0.0</b>
<b>Total Libraries &amp; Heritage</b>	<b>7.8</b>	<b>8.0</b>	<b>0.2</b>	<b>0.0</b>	<b>0.2</b>
<b>Total Public Health and Communities</b>	<b>12.6</b>	<b>12.8</b>	<b>0.2</b>	<b>0.0</b>	<b>0.2</b>

81. A £0.6m underspend in services funded by the Public Health ringfenced grant will be transferred to the Public Health reserve at year end.

82. Sexual health services are reporting a £0.1m underspend due to activity levels being lower than anticipated.

83. Tobacco Control is forecast to underspend by £0.1m due to an increase in the Section 31 grant to support the increase in tobacco control and stop smoking activity.

84. The budget for NHS Health Checks is forecast to underspend by £0.1m due to lower activity.

85. Other Public health services are reporting underspends of £0.3m, £0.1m relating to delayed research spend now earmarked for 2025/26 and £0.2m related to staff restructures and delays in delivering NHS partnership evaluation work.

### **Libraries & Heritage**

86. Libraries & Heritage are forecasting an overspend of £0.2m.

87. The Home Library Service is forecast to overspend by £0.1m. Pressures within branch libraries are being managed

### **Ringfenced Government Grants**

88. The ringfenced Public Health grant totals £35.0m, an increase of £0.6m from the previous report to Cabinet. The increase should cover the additional in-year cost impact of the National Health Service pay awards for health services

commissioned by local authorities and funded through the public health grant.

89. A ringfenced Stop Smoking Services Grant £0.8m has been awarded to the council to increase the number of smokers engaging with effective interventions to quit smoking.

### **Use of Un-ringfenced Government Grant Funding**

90. Un-ringfenced grants held centrally and agreed to be used to support expenditure budgets within Public Health include:

- £1.2m Domestic Abuse Duty Grant supporting the provision of accommodation-based support to victims of domestic abuse and their children.
- £0.6m Substance Misuse Treatment & Recovery Housing Grant being used to deliver the Government's aim that by 2024/25 there will be more people recovering from addiction in stable and secure housing.
- £1.2m Supplementary Substance Misuse Treatment and Recovery grant. This is the second year of a three-year scheme where the Office for Health Improvement and Disparities (OHID) is working alongside other government departments to support a process of investment in a whole system approach to tackling illicit drug use, including enforcement, diversion and treatment and recovery interventions.
- £0.2m Employment Individual Placement Support in community drug and alcohol treatment grant, to improve quality of life for people with alcohol and 'other drug' dependence.
- £1.1m Rough Sleeping Drug and Alcohol Grant is being used to provide specialist support for rough sleepers and those at risk.

### **Reserves**

91. Public Health earmarked reserves were £4.5m at 1 April 2024. £1.4m is earmarked to be spent in 2024/25, £1.1m in 2025/26, £0.6m in 2026/27 and £0.4m in 2027/28, leaving a balance of £1.6m. The use of the reserve is continuously being reviewed and it is anticipated that there will be further commitments against this funding agreed throughout 2024/25.

92. £0.1m is being held to expand the Making Every Contact Count work programme in Oxfordshire; this will be spent in 2024/25.

93. The History Service donations reserve of £0.02m is earmarked to be spent in 2024/25

94. The Museum Service donations reserve of £0.1m is earmarked to be spent equally over the next 3 years.

### **Virements**

95. There is one virement to note relating to funding for the Marmot Place proposal.

### **Savings**

96. The 2024/25 budget includes planned savings of £0.5m. 100% are forecast to be achieved.

## **Oxfordshire Fire & Rescue Service and Community Safety (OFRSC)**

97. Oxfordshire Fire & Rescue Service and Community Safety are forecasting a £0.7m overspend against a budget of £28.1m. This is unchanged from the position reported previously.

Service Area	Latest Budget Nov-24 £m	Forecast Spend Nov-24 £m	Forecast Variance Nov-24 £m	Forecast Variance Sept-24 £m	Change Since Sept-24 £m
Community Safety Management	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Fire & Rescue	27.0	27.7	0.7	0.7	0.0
Emergency Planning	0.3	0.3	0.0	0.0	0.0
Trading Standards	1.4	1.4	0.0	0.0	0.0
<b>Total Oxfordshire Fire &amp; Rescue Service and Community Safety</b>	<b>28.7</b>	<b>29.4</b>	<b>0.7</b>	<b>0.7</b>	<b>0.0</b>

98. All services are forecasting a breakeven position with the exception of Fire and Rescue which is forecasting an overspend of £0.7m due to staffing savings that are not expected to be achieved.

### **Use of Un-ringfenced Government Grant Funding**

99. Un-ringfenced grant funding held centrally and agreed to be used to support expenditure budgets within Oxfordshire Fire & Rescue Service includes:

- £0.1m Firelink Grant - The council has been notified of a 20% reduction in this grant from the previous year and that this grant will continue to reduce by 20% in each of the next two years.

### **Reserves**

100. £3.2m is held in reserves for the renewal of fire and rescue vehicles and breathing apparatus equipment. A fleet replacement strategy has been developed and several vehicles have been ordered and expected to be received in 2024/25, the reserve will be fully utilised by 2025/26.

101. £0.5m was available in the Fire Uplift Grant reserve as at 1 April 2024. This is being held to fund employee costs expected to be incurred over the next three to five years.

102. £0.5m is being held to cover the cost of the replacement of Airwave for Oxfordshire Fire and Rescue Service and the implementation of the new national Emergency Service Mobile Communications Programme.

## **Resources and Law & Governance**

103. The services within Resources are forecasting an overspend of £1.3m against a budget of £57.8m. This is unchanged from the last report.

Service Area	Latest Budget Nov-24 £m	Forecast Spend Nov-24 £m	Forecast Variance Nov-24 £m	Forecast Variance Sept-24 £m	Change Since Sept-24 £m
Corporate Services	10.7	11.6	0.9	0.9	0.0
HR & Cultural Change	5.1	4.9	-0.2	-0.2	0.0
Financial & Commercial Services	9.5	9.5	0.0	0.0	0.0
Property & Assets	19.3	19.3	0.0	0.0	0.0
Public Affairs, Policy & Partnership	4.3	4.3	0.0	0.0	0.0
Law, Governance, Coroner & Registration Services	8.9	9.5	0.6	0.6	0.0
<b>Total Resources</b>	<b>57.8</b>	<b>59.1</b>	<b>1.3</b>	<b>1.3</b>	<b>0.0</b>

104. There is a forecast overspend of £0.9m within **Corporate Services** due to previously agreed savings of £0.9m which were held corporately but expected to be achieved through reductions in costs related to IT expenditure across the organisation. Since further work has identified that these are not achievable there is a forecast pressure in 2024/25 and the on-going impact is being considered as part of the 2025/26 budget process.

105. **Human Resources & Organisational Development (HR&OD)** are forecasting an underspend of £0.2m due to in year savings from staff seconded to transformation projects. All savings are expected to be fully delivered.

106. **Financial & Commercial Services** are forecasting a breakeven position. Within that all savings and investments are expected to be fully delivered.

107. **Property & Assets Services** are forecasting a breakeven position, however some risks identified by the service will require mitigation. All savings are expected to be fully delivered.

108. **Public Affairs, Policy & Partnership services** are forecasting a breakeven position. All savings and investments are expected to be fully delivered.

109. **Law, Governance, Coroners & Registration Services** are forecasting an overspend of £0.6m as a result of high locum costs in the Legal service where recruitment continues to be a challenge.

### **Savings**

110. The 2024/25 budget includes planned savings of £1.9m. 98% are forecast to be achieved.

## **Transformation, Digital & Customer Experience (TDCE)**

111. The services within TDCE are forecasting a breakeven position against a budget of £8.1m.

Service Area	Latest Budget Nov-24 £m	Forecast Spend Nov-24 £m	Forecast Variance Nov-24 £m	Forecast Variance Sept-24 £m	Change Since Sept-24 £m
Delivery Unit	3.8	3.8	0.0	0.0	0.0
Customer Experience	3.4	3.4	0.0	0.0	0.0
Insight & Corporate Programmes	0.7	0.7	0.0	0.0	0.0
TDCE Management	0.2	0.2	0.0	0.0	0.0
<b>Total Resources</b>	<b>8.1</b>	<b>8.1</b>	<b>0.0</b>	<b>0.0</b>	<b>0.0</b>

112. The **Delivery Unit** is forecasting a breakeven position.

113. **Customer Experience** service are forecasting a breakeven position and 100% of savings are expected to be delivered.

114. **Insight & Corporate Programmes and TDCE Management** are forecasting breakeven positions.

### **Overview of Medium Term Financial Strategy Investments and Savings**

115. The 2024/25 budget includes planned services savings of £30.1m. 54% of these savings are assessed as delivered and 75% is forecast to be delivered. Work is continuing to ensure that these savings are achieved.

Service areas	2024/25 Planned Savings	Actual Delivery to Date	Actual Delivery to Date	Forecast delivery	Forecast delivery
	£m	£m	%	£m	%
Adult Services	4.3	2.9	67%	4.2	98%
Children's Services	12.3	6.4	52%	7.9	65%
Environment & Highways	8.1	3.9	48%	5.3	66%
Economy and Place	1.0	0.6	65%	1.0	100%
Public Health & Communities	0.5	0.2	53%	0.5	100%
Oxfordshire Fire & Rescue Service and Community Safety	0.5	0.1	15%	0.2	46%
Resources and Law & Governance	1.9	1.8	95%	1.9	98%
Transformation, Digital & Customer Experience	1.5	0.4	23%	1.5	100%
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>30.1</b>	<b>16.3</b>	<b>54%</b>	<b>22.5</b>	<b>75%</b>

116. The 2024/25 budget also includes planned service areas investments of £111.6m. 9% of these is assessed as delivered and 68% is forecast to be delivered.

Service Areas	2024/25 Planned Investments	Actual Delivery to Date	Actual Delivery to Date	Forecast delivery	Forecast delivery
	£m	£m	%	£m	%
Adult Services	1.4	0.0	0%	0.7	53%
Children's Services	6.7	0.2	3%	3.9	57%
Environment & Highways	2.5	0.3	12%	2.4	94%
Economy and Place	0.4	0.2	63%	0.3	85%
Resources and Law & Governance	0.6	0.4	62%	0.6	92%
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>11.6</b>	<b>1.1</b>	<b>9%</b>	<b>7.8</b>	<b>68%</b>

#### Adult Services

117. The 2024/25 budget includes planned savings of £4.3m. 98% are forecast to be delivered. The £0.1m saving relating to a reduction in outstanding unsecured debt by year end is at risk of being delivered.

#### Children's Services

118. The 2024/25 budget includes planned savings of £12.3m. Savings at risk of delivery include the Children we care for savings of £6.2m.

#### Environment & Highways

119. The 2024/25 budget includes planned savings of £8.1m. 66% are forecast to be delivered. The savings at risk of being delivered include the £2.2m lane rental income underachievement, £0.2m to reduce the amount of waste that is sent to the Energy Recovery Facility, and £0.1m reduction in fleet management costs. 94% of planned investments of £2.5m are on track to be delivered.

#### Economy and Place

120. The 2024/25 budget includes planned savings of £1.0m. 100% are forecast to be delivered. 85% of planned investments of £0.3m are on track to be delivered.

#### Public Health & Communities

121. The 2024/25 budget includes planned savings of £0.5m. 100% are forecast to be delivered.

#### Oxfordshire Fire & Rescue Service and Community Safety

122. The 2024/25 budget includes planned savings of £0.5m. 46% are forecast to be delivered, £0.3m staffing savings is at risk of being delivered.

#### Resources and Law & Governance

123. The 2024/25 budget includes planned savings of £1.9m. 95% of these savings have been delivered and 98% are forecast to be delivered. 92% of planned investments of £0.6m are expected to be achieved.

#### Transformation, Digital & Customer Experience

124. The delayering staffing savings of £1.5m has been reallocated from service areas to the Transformation service. Budgets for senior managers have been adjusted to reflect the new structure. £0.4m of the £1.5m saving has been achieved so far and it is anticipated that this will increase later in the year as the next layer is completed.

### **Debt Management**

#### **Corporate Debtors**

125. The combined collection rate, based on invoice volumes up to November 2024 is 95%, in line with the 95% target. The collection rate based on value of invoices for the same period is also 95%, down 4% on the previous period.
126. Debt requiring impairment at the end of the November 2024 is £0.8m, £0.5m above the year-end target of £0.3m. The top five debt cases account for 56% of all bad debt; these cases are being actively managed by the relevant service with support from the Financial Services team.

#### **Adult Social Care Debtors**

127. The combined 120-day invoice collection rate up to November 2024 is 93%, 1% above the target collection. The collection rate based on value of invoices for the same period is 85%.
128. The 2023/24 year-end adults care contribution impairment for bad debt was £4.5m. The current projected 2024/25 year-end bad debt position is £5.1m, a reduction of £0.1m since the last report to cabinet but £0.6m higher than the impairment. In addition, there is a 2024/25 £0.1m saving linked to reducing social care debt not expected to be delivered. The cumulative impact creates a pressure of £0.7m. Financial Services continue to work with the service to support activity to reduce the debt.

### **Budgets Held Centrally**

129. After taking account of the use of contingency and additional interest on balances to support the forecast service areas overspend, there is a combined underspend of £12.8m against budgets held centrally.

#### **Capital Financing Costs**

130. The borrowing costs and minimum revenue provision (MRP) for capital projects funded by Prudential Borrowing are either recharged to service areas where savings arising from the scheme are expected to meet them or met corporately from the budget for capital financing costs. It is anticipated that after taking account of recharges to service areas costs will be in line with budget.
131. Interest payable is currently forecast to be £11.9m, £3.5m below budget. This reflects the early repayment of two LOBO loans and actual interest costs being lower than budgeted. This is expected to be one – off in 2024/25 as interest payable is expected to increase in 2025/26.

#### **Interest on Balances**

132. The forecast for interest receivable is £27.1m, £7.8m above the budget. The additional interest is a result of higher than forecast cash balances coupled with

higher than forecast deposit rates. Of the £7.8m, an estimated £3.3m of this will be applied to developer contribution balances.

133. Cash balances for the year are forecast to be £81.9m lower than they would otherwise have been as a result of negative DSG balances. The impact of this is an estimated opportunity cost of £3.4m in unearned interest during 2024/25.

#### Pay Inflation and Contingency

134. Ongoing funding for pay inflation in 2024/25 total £14.4m and the contingency budget for 2024/25 totals £7.5m.
135. £6.5m of the £14.4m pay inflation budget has been used to meet the cost of the additional pay inflation in 2024/25 following the agreement of the Green Book pay award. £1.9m will be held to meet the cost of pay inflation for vacant posts when they are recruited to. £1.3m is proposed to be used to fund a one-off contribution to a new Local Government Devolution and Reorganisation reserve. This leaves a one - off underspend of at least £4.7m which has been reflected in the forecast. The on-going budget that is not needed to fund pay inflation in 2024/25 will roll forward. £3.5m is assumed to be used to fund the anticipated pay award in 2025/26.
136. £3.7m of the £7.4m on-going funding held in the contingency budget will be used to fund a one-off contribution to the Local Government Devolution and Reorganisation reserve. The remaining balance is being held to meet potential risks around demand increases in Adults and Children's Services in the remainder of the financial year. If these do not materialise there would be a further underspend of £3.7m by year end.
137. Further virements will be transacted to add funding for the pay award to vacant posts which have been recruited to at the end of the financial year.

### **Reserves**

138. As set out in Annex B - 3 Earmarked Reserves are forecast to be £194.9m at 31 March 2025.

#### **Local Government Reorganisation Reserve**

139. On 16 December 2024, the government published its English Devolution White Paper and the Minister of State for Local Government and English Devolution set out a summary of plans in a Written Ministerial Statement to Parliament.
140. All two-tier areas and small/failing unitary councils are invited to submit reorganisation proposals with the government aiming for all Local Authorities to be unitary authorities with 500,000 population or more. Furthermore, all areas will need to be within Strategic Authorities (including combined authorities) covering at least 1.5 million residents.
141. It is proposed to create a new reserve to support the development of



devolution and reorganisation proposals for Oxfordshire and to make an initial one - off contribution of £5.0m made up of £3.7m from the contingency budget and £1.3m from the remaining unallocated budget for pay inflation that is not required to be used in 2024/25.

### **Budget Priorities Reserve**

142. Existing funding held in the Budget Priorities reserve continues to be used to fund priorities agreed as part of the 2024/25 budget. Following agreement that the ICB will fund their share of the S117 aftercare support costs, Cabinet is recommended to approve the transfer of £3.0m from Adult Services to the reserve on a one-off basis. This funding will be used to cover future risks within Adult Services.

143. A contribution of £1.0m was made into the reserve at the end of 2023/24 to extend schemes already agreed as part of the Cabinet's priorities including Rail Studies (£0.2m) and an extension of the funding for efficiency loans to schools (£0.8m).

### **Transformation Reserve**

144. The Transformation Reserve is being used to support the costs of the implementation of the council's transformation programme, Delivering the Future Together.

145. To enable the priorities for the next phase of transformation to be delivered and to create a sustainable council for the future funding of £10.0m was agreed to be added to the reserve as part of the 2024/25 budget. £2.3m of this funding is being used to support revenue budget investments also agreed as part of the 2024/25 budget, with £1.5m supporting the 2024/25 budget and a further £0.8m in 2025/26.

146. The use of £4.5m of the reserve has been agreed during 2024/25. The remaining balance of £2.1m is expected to be committed during 2024/25.

### **Redundancy Reserve**

147. The balance held in the Redundancy Reserve was £2.4m at 31 March 2024. Reflecting the need to reduce the size of the council to be sustainable in future £5.0m was agreed to be added to the reserve as part of the 2024/25 budget. To date the estimated redundancy costs to be funded from this reserve in 2024/25 are £2.5m. After taking account of the cost of redundancies relating to the senior management structure including the Organisation Redesign programme at Tier 3 and 4 managers in 2024/25 the remaining balance is forecast to be £4.5m.

### **Collection Fund Reserve**

148. The Collection Fund reserve is used to manage fluctuations in Business Rate and Council Tax income that the Council receives. As part of the 2024/25 budget it was agreed to hold £4.0m to fund future volatility in the collection fund position alongside the potential impact of a business rates reset.

149. The forecast balance at 31 March 2025 is £8.4m after taking account of additional business rates funding of £1.3m notified during 2024/25 plus £0.9m

### **COVID-19 Reserve**

150. The balance held in the reserve at 31 March 2024 was £7.9m with further budgeted planned use of £3.8m in 2024/25 and £2.3m in 2025/26. £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.

### **Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) Unusable Reserve**

151. An unusable reserve was created in 2020/21 to hold **negative High Needs DSG balances** in line with a change to the CIPFA code of practice on DSG High Needs deficits. The net deficit of £28.4m for 2024/25 will increase the total High Needs deficit held in the reserve from £55.8m to £84.2m as at 31 March 2025. The regulations which require the negative balance to be held in an unusable reserve will come to an end on 31 March 2026. The impact of the unusable reserve on the council's ability to set a balanced budget over the medium term will need to be considered through the Budget & Business Planning Process for 2025/26.

## **Grants**

152. As set out in Annex B - 4 government grants totalling £535.9m are expected to be received by the Council during 2024/25. This includes £26.0m in schools' grants for additional mainstream funding, early years funding and pupil premium, plus Adult Social Care Market Sustainability and Improvement Fund (£10.0m).

### Household Support Fund

153. In September 2024, the Government announced that it would extend the Household Support Fund for a further six months, from October 2024 to March 2025, with a further £421m of funding. Oxfordshire's will receive a further £3.4m increasing the total grant expected for 2024/25 to £6.7m.

### Homes for Ukraine

154. Following the launch of the Homes for Ukraine (HfU) scheme by the UK government in March 2022, upper tier councils have been in receipt of a tariff fund for individual arrivals in their area of responsibility as well as funding for thank you payments for hosts. Funding for the tariff element was originally provided as a one-off payment at the level of £10,500 per guest, falling to £5,900 for all new arrivals from 1 January 2023. For eligible minors the tariff continues at £10,500.
155. Based on the position as at the end of November 2024, £27.8m of the grant funding received to date has now been allocated and £4.0m remains unallocated. A further £1.5m funding is expected to be received following the quarter 2 claim.

## **General Balances**

156. The risk assessed level of balances for 2024/25 is £30.2m.
157. As set out in the Provisional Outturn Report for 2023/24, a one-off balance of £2.3m has been held in balances pending a decision about future use.
158. After taking account of the forecast underspend and the £2.3m funding held since the end of 2023/24, balances are currently forecast to be £10.8m above the risk assessed level at 31 March 2025.

This page is intentionally left blank

**Business Management & Monitoring Report**  
**Position to the end of November 2024**  
**Budget Monitoring**

Directorate	Net Budget (Latest Estimate)	Projected Full Year Spend	Projected Year End Variance	Projected Year End Variance	Variance Last Reported (September Position)	Change in Variance	Projected Year End Traffic Light
	£000	£000	underspend- overspend+	%	Reporting Month	£000	Red > 1.5% Amber >1.1% <1.5% Green on track
Adult Services	250,121	250,121	0	0.00%	0	0	G
Children's Services	200,632	201,943	1,311	0.65%	3,516	-2,205	G
Environment & Highways	69,392	70,192	800	1.15%	600	200	A
Economy and Place	1,572	1,572	0	0.00%	0	0	G
Oxfordshire Fire & Rescue Service and Community Safety	28,703	29,353	650	2.26%	650	0	R
Public Health & Communities	12,600	12,800	200	-0.54%	0	200	R
Resources and Law & Governance	57,769	59,089	1,320	2.28%	1,320	0	R
Transformation, Digital & Customer Experience	8,058	8,058	0	0.00%	0	0	G
<b>Directorate Total Net</b>	<b>628,847</b>	<b>633,128</b>	<b>4,281</b>	<b>0.68%</b>	<b>6,086</b>	<b>-1,805</b>	<b>G</b>

**Business Management & Monitoring Report**  
**Position to the end of November 2024**  
**Budget Monitoring**

Directorate	Net Budget (Latest Estimate)	Projected Full Year Spend	Projected Year End Variance	Projected Year End Variance	Variance Last Reported (September Position)  Reporting Month	Change in Variance	Projected Year End Traffic Light
	£000	£000	underspend- overspend+	%	£000	£000	Red > 1.5% Amber >1.1% <1.5% Green on track
<b>Budget held Centrally</b>							
Capital Financing							
Capital Financing - Principal	15,533	15,533	0	0.00%	0	0	
Prudential Borrowing Recharges	-9,557	-9,557	0	0.00%	0	0	
Capital Financing - Interest	15,351	11,900	-3,451	-22.48%	-3,451	0	
Interest on Balances	-10,673	-15,320	-4,647	43.54%	-3,947	-700	
Contingency	7,454	7,454	0	0.00%	0	0	
Pay Inflation held corporately	14,358	9,700	-4,658	-32.44%	0	-4,658	
Unringfenced Specific Government Grants	-55,546	-55,546	0	0.00%	0	0	
Insurance	1,737	1,737	0	0.00%	0	0	
Contribution from COVID-19 Reserve	-3,756	-3,756	0	0.00%	0	0	
Contribution from Budget Priorities Reserve	-1,396	-1,396	0	0.00%	0	0	
Contributions to (+)/from (-)reserves	11,132	11,132	0	0.00%	0	0	
<b>Total Budget held Centrally</b>	<b>-15,363</b>	<b>-28,119</b>	<b>-12,756</b>	<b>83.03%</b>	<b>-7,398</b>	<b>-5,358</b>	
<b>Net Operating Budget</b>	<b>613,484</b>	<b>605,008</b>	<b>-8,476</b>	<b>-1.38%</b>	<b>-1,312</b>	<b>-7,163</b>	
Business Rates & Council Tax Funding	-613,484	-613,484	0	0.00%	0	0	
<b>Forecast Year End Position</b>	<b>0.4</b>	<b>-8,475</b>	<b>-8,476</b>	<b>-1.38%</b>	<b>-1,312</b>	<b>-7,163</b>	

**Business Management and Monitoring Report: Adult Services**  
**Position to the end of November 2024**  
**Revenue Budget Monitoring**

		Net Budget (Latest Estimate)	Projected Full Year Spend	Projected Year End Variance	Variance Last Cabinet Reporting Month	Change in Variance
		£000	£000	underspend- overspend+	£000	£000
SCS1	Adult Social Care	27,209	27,509	300	300	0
SCS2	Other Adult Social Care Services	5,446	5,146	-300	-300	0
SCS3	Housing & Social Care Commissioning	1,378	1,378	0	0	0
SCS4	Business Support Service	1,141	1,141	0	0	0
SCS5	Pooled Budget Contributions	214,947	214,947	0	0	0
<b>Total Adult Services</b>		<b>250,121</b>	<b>250,121</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>

**Business Management & Monitoring Report: Children's Services**  
**Forecast Position at the end of November 2024**  
**Revenue Budget Monitoring**

		Net Budget (Latest Estimate)	Projected Full Year Spend	Projected Year End Variance	Variance Last Cabinet Reporting Month	Change in Variance
		£000	£000	underspend-overspend+	£000	£000
CEF1	Education & Learning	54,191	55,191	1,000	1,000	0
CEF2	Early Help, Front Door + Social Care	85,518	84,040	-1,478	-2,088	611
CEF3	Provider Services & Safeguarding	51,946	50,439	-1,507	65	-1,572
CEF4	Schools	215	215	0	0	0
CEF5	Children's Services Central Costs	8,762	12,057	3,295	4,539	-1,243
CEF9	Children's Services Corporate Overheads	0	0	0	0	0
<b>Total Children's Services</b>		<b>200,632</b>	<b>201,943</b>	<b>1,311</b>	<b>3,516</b>	<b>-2,205</b>
<b>MEMORANDUM: DEDICATED SCHOOLS GRANT - DSG Funded Expenditure (Gross)</b>						
	Schools DSG	129,099	129,099	0	0	0
	High Needs DSG	88,440	116,860	28,420	26,148	2,272
	Early Years DSG	74,767	74,767	0	0	0
	Central DSG	5,154	5,154	0	0	0



**Business Management & Monitoring Report: Children's Services**  
**Forecast Position at the end of November 2024**  
**Revenue Budget Monitoring**

	Net Budget (Latest Estimate)	Projected Full Year Spend	Projected Year End Variance	Variance Last Cabinet Reporting Month	Change in Variance
	£000	£000	underspend- overspend+	£000	£000
Total DSG Funded Expenditure	297,460	325,880	28,420	26,148	2,272

**Business Management & Monitoring Report : Oxfordshire Fire & Rescue Service and Community Safety**  
**Position to the end of November 2024**  
**Revenue Budget Monitoring**

		Net Budget (Latest Estimate)	Projected Full Year Spend	Projected Year End Variance	Variance Last Cabinet Reporting Month	Change in Variance
		£000	£000	underspend- overspend+	£000	£000
<b>CDA3</b>	<b>Community Safety</b>					
COM4-1	Community Safety Management	0	0	0	0	0
COM4-2	Fire & Rescue	27,004	27,654	650	650	0
COM4-3	Emergency Planning	309	309	0	0	0
COM4-5	Trading Standards	1,391	1,391	0	0	0
<b>Total Community Safety</b>		<b>28,703</b>	<b>29,353</b>	<b>650</b>	<b>650</b>	<b>0</b>

**Business Management & Monitoring Report : Public Health & Communities**  
**Position to the end of November 2024**  
**Revenue Budget Monitoring**

		Net Budget (Latest Estimate)	Projected Full Year Spend	Projected Year End Variance	Variance Last Reported	Change in Variance
		£000	£000	underspend- overspend+	£000	£000
PH1	PH - Mandatory Functions	19,470	19,270	-200	-100	-100
PH2	PH - Non Mandatory Functions	19,180	18,780	-400	-100	-300
PH3	Public Health Recharges	577	577	0	0	0
PH4	Grant Income	-34,401	-34,401	0	0	0
	<b>Transfer to Public Health Reserve</b>	0	600	600	200	400
<b>Total Public Health</b>		4,826	4,826	0	0	0
COD1-2	Homes for Ukraine	0	0	0	0	0
COD5-3	Libraries & Heritage	7,774	7,974	200	0	200
COD9-3	Migration	0	0	0	0	0
<b>Total Libraries &amp; Heritage</b>		7,774	7,974	200	0	200
<b>Total Public Health &amp; Communities</b>		<b>12,600</b>	<b>12,800</b>	<b>200</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>200</b>

**Business Management & Monitoring Report: Economy and Place**  
**Position to the end of November 2024**  
**Revenue Budget Monitoring**

		Net Budget (Latest Estimate)	Projected Full Year Spend	Projected Year End Variance	Variance Last Cabinet Reporting Month	Change in Variance
		£000	£000	underspend-overspend+	£000	£000
EP1	OXLEP	55	55	0	0	0
EP2	Economy	105	105	0	0	0
EP3	Strategic Planning	696	696	0	0	0
EP4	Climate Action	1,184	1,184	0	0	0
EP5	Place Making	-2,209	-2,209	0	0	0
EP6	Innovation	328	328	0	0	0
EP7	Senior Management Team	917	917	0	0	0
EP8	Business Performance & Services Improvement	496	496	0	0	0
<b>Total Economy &amp; Place</b>		<b>1,572</b>	<b>1,572</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>

**Business Management & Monitoring Report: Environment & Highways**  
**Position to the end of November 2024**  
**Revenue Budget Monitoring**

		Net Budget (Latest Estimate)	Projected Full Year Spend	Projected Year End Variance	Variance Last Cabinet Reporting Month	Change in Variance
		£000	£000	underspend-overspend+	£000	£000
EH1	Infrastructure Delivery	1,243	1,243	0	0	0
EH2	Environment	36,886	37,086	200	0	200
EH3	Transport Policy	13,186	13,186	0	0	0
EH4	Highways & Maintenance	20,307	18,707	-1,600	-1,600	0
EH5	Network Management	-6,414	-4,214	2,200	2,200	0
EH6	Supported Transport	1,875	1,875	0	0	0
EH7	Senior Management Team	621	621	0	0	0
EH8	Data Intelligence & Business Support	1,688	1,688	0	0	0
<b>Total Environment &amp; Highways</b>		<b>69,392</b>	<b>70,192</b>	<b>800</b>	<b>600</b>	<b>200</b>

**Business Management & Monitoring Report: Resources and Law & Governance**  
**Position to the end of November 2024**  
**Revenue Budget Monitoring**

		Net Budget (Latest Estimate)	Projected Full Year Spend	Projected Year End Variance	Variance Last Cabinet Reporting Month	Change in Variance
		£000	£000	underspend-overspend+	£000	£000
HRCCDIR	HR & Cultural Change	5,105	4,925	-180	-180	0
FCSDIR	Financial & Commercial Services	9,506	9,506	0	0	0
PADIR	Property & Assets	19,318	19,318	0	0	0
PAPPDIR	Public Affairs, Policy & Partnership	4,301	4,301	0	0	0
CORPDIR	Corporate Services	10,661	11,561	900	900	0
LGCRDIR	Law & Governance	8,878	9,478	600	600	0
<b>Total Resources and Law &amp; Governance</b>		<b>57,769</b>	<b>59,089</b>	<b>1,320</b>	<b>1,320</b>	<b>0</b>

**Business Management & Monitoring Report: Transformation, Digital & Customer Experience**  
**Position to the end of November 2024**  
**Revenue Budget Monitoring**

		Net Budget (Latest Estimate)	Projected Full Year Spend	Projected Year End Variance	Variance Last Cabinet Reporting Month	Change in Variance
		£000	£000	underspend-overspend+	£000	£000
TDCE1	Delivery Unit	3,770	3,770	0	0	0
TDCE2	Customer Experience	3,436	3,436	0	0	0
TDCE3	Digital	0	0	0	0	0
TDCE4	Insight & Corporate Programmes	676	676	0	0	0
TDCE5	TDCE Management	176	176	0	0	0
Total Transformation, Digital & Customer Experience		8,058	8,058	0	0	0

**Business Management Report**  
**Position to the end of November 2024**

CABINET IS RECOMMENDED TO APPROVE THE VIREMENTS AS DETAILED BELOW:

Directorate (CD = Cross Directorate)	Month of Cabinet Meeting	Month of Directorate MMR	Narration	Budget Book Line	Service Area	Permanent / Temporary	Expenditure + increase / - decrease £000	Income - increase / + decrease £000
CD	Jan	Nov	New unringfenced grant: Accelerating Reform Fund Grant	SCS1-8	Grants & Funding	T	519	0
				VSMMGT	Strategic Measures	T	0	-519
Grand Total							519	-519



**Business Management Report**  
**Position to the end of November 2024**

**NEW VIREMENTS THAT HAVE BEEN ACTIONED FOR CABINET TO NOTE**

Directorate (CD = Cross Directorate)	Month of Cabinet Meeting	Month of Directorate MMR	Narration	Budget Book Line	Service Area	Permanent / Temporary	Expenditure + increase / - decrease £000	Income - increase / + decrease £000
CS	Jan	Oct	Allocate inflation budget 2024/25 in line with agreed uplifts	CEF2-3	Childrens Social Care	P	-139	0
				CEF3-1	Provider Services	P	139	0
			Budget tidy - 2025CS791 - Finance Strategy Investment Recruitment	CEF2-3	Childrens Social Care	P	-250	0
				CEF3-2	QA Safeguarding + Recruit + Retention	P	250	0
		Nov	Agency child and family SW data collection 24.25	CEF3-2	QA Safeguarding + Recruit + Retention	T	1	-1
			ATV Budget tidy re Swindon SGO post removal	CEFATV	Adopt Thames Valley	P	-57	57
			Children's social care grant tidy	CEF2-3	Childrens Social Care	T	178	-178
				CEF3-1	Provider Services	T	-5	5
				CEF3-2	QA Safeguarding + Recruit + Retention	T	67	-67
			Remand Framework grant 24.25	CEF3-1	Provider Services	P	34	-34
			Budget tidy to realign the income & expenditure targets for unregistered 2024-25	CEF3-1	Provider Services	P	-1,622	1,622
			Consolidate QA Team budgets	CEF3-2	QA Safeguarding + Recruit + Retention	P	0	0
AS	Jan	Oct	Panel Meeting Inflation reallocation & HIA uplift	ACSNPOOL	Live Well Pool	P	52	-52
				BCFPPOOL	Age Well Pool	P	17	-17
				SCS5	Pooled Budget Contributions	P	0	0
			24/25 BCF Grant & Realign Home Support	BCFPPOOL	Age Well Pool	P	287	-287
			SSHB 24.25 Inflation	BCFPPOOL	Age Well Pool	P	27	-27
				SCS5	Pooled Budget Contributions	P	0	0
		Nov	Added Income From ICB, Relating to Childrens Health Funding Brokerage and Quality and Improvement	SCS2	Health Ed. & Social Care Commissioning	P	90	-120
				SCS5	Pooled Budget Contributions	P	30	0
EP	Jan	Oct	ADASS allocation	SCS1-7	SE ADASS	T	425	-425
			Grant to be spread over 3 financial years	EP3	Strategic Planning	T	94	-94
SM	Jan	Oct	Correction 2024002285 Financial Reporting grant	VSMMGT	Strategic Measures	T	-41	41
		Nov	Strategic Measures Un-ringfenced grant budgets	VSMMGT	Strategic Measures	P	129	-129
CD	Jan	Oct	2025L&CO07,16,17 Capital Proposals Borrowing Costs	EH4	Highways & Maintenance	T	-300	0
				EP5	Place Making	T	-120	-180
				VSMMGT	Strategic Measures	T	600	0

**Business Management Report**  
**Position to the end of November 2024**

**NEW VIREMENTS THAT HAVE BEEN ACTIONED FOR CABINET TO NOTE**

Directorate (CD = Cross Directorate)	Month of Cabinet Meeting	Month of Directorate MMR	Narration	Budget Book Line	Service Area	Permanent / Temporary	Expenditure + increase / - decrease £000	Income - increase / + decrease £000
			Perm Savings Targets EP & EH	EH7	Senior Management Team	P	120	0
				EP7	Senior Management Team	P	-120	0
			EP EH Budget Savings Targets Temp	EH7	Senior Management Team	T	-29	0
				EP7	Senior Management Team	T	29	0
			Q2 Temp Staff Saving EP & EH	EH2	Environment	T	-6	0
				EH3	Transport Policy	T	-14	0
				EH4	Highways & Maintenance	T	-25	0
				EH5	Network Management	T	-23	0
				EH7	Senior Management Team	T	74	0
				EH8	Data Intelligence & Business Support	T	-6	0
				EP5	Place Making	T	-29	0
				EP7	Senior Management Team	T	29	0
			Investment funding to establish a care co-op employment hub	EP1	OXLEP	T	55	0
				SCS2	Health Ed. & Social Care Commissioning	T	-55	0
		Nov	Supporting Families -PBR Q2 24.25	CEF2-1	Early Help	T	183	0
				VSMMGT	Strategic Measures	T	0	-183
			Accelerator Programme	EP6	Innovation	T	25	0
				SCS5	Pooled Budget Contributions	T	-25	0
			Transformation PMO approved budget £355k to cost centres from V00025	TDCEDIR	Transformation, Digital & Customer Service	T	355	0
				VSMMGT	Strategic Measures	T	-355	0
			OFFENSIVE WEAPONS ACT 2019 TRADING STANDARDS Grant	COM4-5	Trading Standards	T	10	0
				VSMMGT	Strategic Measures	T	0	-10
			Fire Pay Award 2024-25	COM4-2	Fire & Rescue	P	17	0
				VSMMGT	Strategic Measures	P	-17	0
EH	Jan	Oct	Budget Tidy Signals/UTMC Staff	EH5	Network Management	P	170	-170
			Adjusting budget allocations within EP1-3	EH1	Infrastructure Delivery	P	651	-651
			Third Party Savings Part 1	EH2	Environment	P	-174	0
				EH4	Highways & Maintenance	P	-108	0
				EH7	Senior Management Team	P	282	0
		Nov	Adjusting budget allocations within EP1-3	EH1	Infrastructure Delivery	P	-291	291
			Pressure 2025L&CO12 - One-Off N20550 to NTH245	EH3	Transport Policy	T	30	0

**Business Management Report**  
**Position to the end of November 2024**

**NEW VIREMENTS THAT HAVE BEEN ACTIONED FOR CABINET TO NOTE**

Directorate (CD = Cross Directorate)	Month of Cabinet Meeting	Month of Directorate MMR	Narration	Budget Book Line	Service Area	Permanent / Temporary	Expenditure + increase / - decrease £000	Income - increase / + decrease £000
				EH5	Network Management	T	-30	0
			Redistribution of H2ST budgets based on activity	EH6	Supported Transport	P	50	-50
PH & C	Jan	Nov	First 2 installments for Marmot work.	PH2	Public Health - Non-Mandatory Functions	T	-90	90
TD & CE	Jan	Oct	Consolidate staff budget from multiple cost centres to support forecasting. Cost centre manager will update staff allocations to A27200 on IBC effective 1st April 24	TDCEDIR	Transformation, Digital & Customer Service	P	5	-5
RLG	Jan	Oct	Internal Comms Team move from PAPP to HR	HRCCDIR	HR & Cultural Change	P	30	0
				PAPPDIR	Public Affairs, Policy & Partnership	P	-30	0
			Realign staff budget between A16000 and A21000 and A21011	PAPPDIR	Public Affairs, Policy & Partnership	P	-46	46
				CORPDIR	Corporate Services	P	-158	158
	Nov		Housekeeping of IT Ops GLs and cost centres	PADIR	Property & Assets	P	-30	30
Grand Total							341	-341

**Business Management & Monitoring Report**  
**Position to the end of November 2024**  
**Earmarked Reserves**

	2024/25			Last reported forecast as at 31 March 2024	Change in closing balance to last forecast	Description
	Balance at 1 April 2024	Forecast Movement	Forecast Balance at 31 March 2025			
	£m	£m	£m	£m	£m	
<b>Revenue Grants Unapplied</b>						
Grants and Contributions Reserve	33.7	-9.9	23.8	37.3	-13.5	This reserve holds unspent ring-fenced grants and contributions committed to be spent in future years. This includes Public Health ringfenced grant and funding for the Homes for Ukraine Scheme in Oxfordshire.
Covid-19 Reserve	7.9	-4.3	3.6	15.4	-11.8	This reserve is set up to meet ongoing and emerging pressures and longer term service demands arising from the COVID-19 Pandemic. The use of £6.1m funding from the reserve is built into the council's Medium Term Financial Plan agreed in February 2024. After taking account of the position at the end of 2023/24 £1.4m is uncommitted and available to support pressures.
Government Initiatives Reserve	3.2	-0.5	2.7	2.3	0.4	This reserve is used to hold underspends on budgets funded by unringfenced grants held that relate to specific agreed outcomes or the implementation of Government initiatives.
<b>Subtotal Revenue Grants Unapplied</b>	<b>44.7</b>	<b>-14.6</b>	<b>30.1</b>			
<b>Corporate Priorities</b>						
Budget Priorities Reserve	10.7	-6.9	3.9	11.2	-7.3	This reserve is being used to support the implementation of the Council's priorities and the Medium Term Financial Strategy.
Transformation Reserve	1.8	4.0	5.8	1.5	4.3	This reserve is needed to fund the implementation costs of the Council's Transformation programme.
Zero Emissions Zone (ZEE)	1.2	0.0	1.2	0.5	0.7	This reserve holds surpluses generated by Network Coordination for the development and expansion of the ZEE in the future years.
Youth Provision Reserve	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.2	-0.2	Funding for locality based youth provision
Green Financing Reserve	0.0	1.0	1.0			A new reserve created in 2024/25 to kick start Green initiatives
Commercial Pump Priming Reserve	0.0	1.9	1.9			This reserve is being used to support the Council's Commercial Strategy
Local Government Reorganisation Reserve	0.0	5.0	5.0			This reserve has been created to support the development of reorganisation proposals
<b>Subtotal Corporate Priorities</b>	<b>13.8</b>	<b>5.0</b>	<b>18.8</b>			

**Business Management & Monitoring Report**  
**Position to the end of November 2024**  
**Earmarked Reserves**

	2024/25			Last reported forecast as at 31 March 2024	Change in closing balance to last forecast	Description
	Balance at 1 April 2024	Forecast Movement	Forecast Balance at 31 March 2025			
	£m	£m	£m	£m	£m	
<b>Funding for Risk</b>						
Insurance Reserve	10.3	0.0	10.3	12.9	-2.6	This reserve covers the County Council for insurance claims that, based on the previous experience of the County Council, are likely to be received, as well as a number of insurance related issues.
Demographic Risk Reserve	17.0	4.0	21.0	13.0	8.0	In light of the significant pressures relating to High Needs DSG and other budgets with demographic volatility this reserve is being held to help manage demographic risk. The MTFS includes a budgeted contribution of £4.0m in each year.
Council Elections	0.6	0.2	0.8	0.3	0.5	This will be used to fund future elections. In years where no County Elections take place any underspend on the Council Elections budget will be transferred to this reserve.
Redundancy Reserve	2.4	2.2	4.5	2.4	2.1	This reserve is available to fund redundancy costs arising from Transformational Change.
Trading Accounts	0.1	-0.1	0.0	0.1	-0.1	This reserve holds funds relating to traded activities to help manage volatility year to year or future investments.
Council Tax Collection Fund Reserve	3.0	-3.0	0.0	3.0	-3.0	This reserve holds any surplus/ deficit as a result of income from council tax being more or less than originally estimated. This reserve has been replaced with the Collection Fund reserve in 2024/25.
Business Rates Reserve	11.7	-11.7	0.0	9.5	-9.5	This reserve is to smooth the volatility of Business Rates income and to mitigate risk around future changes to Business Rates. This reserve has been replaced with the Collection Fund reserve in 2024/25.
Collection Fund Reserve	0.0	8.4	8.4			Create one new collection fund reserve and remove balances from Business Rates and CT reserves. Total includes £4.0m planned balance + additional Business Rates funding of £2.0m received in 2023/24 and a further £2.2m forecast additional funding in 2024/25.
IFRS 9 (Changes in the Value of Treasury Management Pooled Funds)	0.0	5.0	5.0			New reserve created as part of the 2024/25 budget to smooth the potential impact of IFRS9 (changes in the value of Treasury Management Pooled Funds at year end) which may otherwise impact on the revenue account if the statutory override which removes changes in their value from the accounts ends on 1 April 2025.
<b>Subtotal Risk</b>	<b>45.0</b>	<b>5.0</b>	<b>49.9</b>			

**Business Management & Monitoring Report**  
**Position to the end of November 2024**  
**Earmarked Reserves**

	2024/25			Last reported forecast as at 31 March 2024	Change in closing balance to last forecast	Description
	Balance at 1 April 2024	Forecast Movement	Forecast Balance at 31 March 2025			
	£m	£m	£m	£m	£m	
<b>Capital &amp; Equipment</b>						
Capital Reserves	80.8	-6.5	74.4	67.8	6.6	This reserve has been established for the purpose of financing capital expenditure in future years. Drawdown will be confirmed later in the year. This reserve is to fund future replacements of vehicles and equipment.  Funding held to meet the costs of self-financing schemes which require pump priming until the funds are returned. Agreed to be used to support the following schemes as part of the 2023/24 budget: Low Carbon Business Travel Project (grey fleet) £0.8m, Energy Efficiency Recycling Fund for OCC Maintained Schools £0.8m, Initial funding to develop plans for the workplace charging levy £0.2m.
Vehicle and Equipment Reserve	4.1	-1.0	3.1	3.5	-0.4	
Investment Pump Priming Reserve	0.1	0.0	0.1	2.0	-1.9	
<b>Subtotal Capital &amp; Equipment</b>	<b>85.1</b>	<b>-7.5</b>	<b>77.6</b>			
<b>Other Reserves</b>						
Schools' Reserves	13.0	0.0	13.0	13.0	0	In accordance with the Education Reform Act 1988, the scheme of Local Management of Schools provides for the carry forward of individual schools surpluses and deficits. These reserves are committed to be spent on schools. Other School Reserves cover a number of miscellaneous education activities, including amounts loaned to individual schools against school reserves, and School Partnership Accounts which are operated in respect of inter-school activities. This relates to funding for the Growth Deal  This surplus has arisen under the operation of the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984 (section 55). The purposes for which these monies can be used are defined by statute.
Partnership Reserves	2.1	-0.9	1.1	1.9	-0.8	
On Street Car Parking Reserve	6.5	-2.2	4.3	5.0	-0.7	
<b>Subtotal Other Reserves</b>	<b>21.6</b>	<b>-3.1</b>	<b>18.4</b>			

Business Management & Monitoring Report  
Position to the end of November 2024  
Earmarked Reserves

	2024/25			Last reported forecast as at 31 March 2025	Change in closing balance to last forecast	Description
	Balance at 1 April 2024	Forecast Movement	Forecast Balance at 31 March 2025			
	£m	£m	£m	£m	£m	
Total Earmarked Reserves	210.1	-15.2	194.9	19.9	-1.5	
DSG Unusable Reserve *	-45.6	-28.4	-74.0			
DSG High Needs deficit within Unusable Reserve *	-55.8	-28.4	-84.2			* total excluding positive balances (eg. new schools set up fund offset by High Needs Deficit)
Total Earmarked Reserves after DSG Unusable Reserve	164.5	-43.6	120.9			

**Business Management Report**  
**Position to the end of November 2024**  
**Government Grants 2024/25**

Ringfenced	Directorate	Issued By	Estimate 2024/25	In year Adjustments / New Allocations previously reported	In year Adjustments/ New Allocations reported this time	Latest Allocation
			£000	£000	£000	£000
R	<b>Adult Services</b>					
	Improved Better Care Fund	DHSC	10,705	0	0	10,705
	Adult Social Care Market Sustainability and Improvement Fund	DHSC	10,026	0	0	10,026
	Adult Social Care Discharge Fund	DHSC	1,501	1,000	0	2,501
	<b>TOTAL ADULT SERVICES</b>		<b>22,232</b>	<b>1,000</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>23,232</b>
R	<b>Children's Services</b>					
	<b>Dedicated School Grants</b>					
	Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) - Schools Block	DfE	132,163	-3,721	-839	127,603
	Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) - Central Block	DfE	5,153	1	42	5,196
R	Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) - Early Years Block	DfE	73,221	386	1,759	75,366
R	Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) - High Needs Block	DfE	89,405	81	-12	89,474
	<b>Subtotal DSG Grants</b>		<b>299,942</b>	<b>-3,253</b>	<b>950</b>	<b>297,639</b>
R	<b>School Grants</b>					
	Pupil Premium	DfE	8,194	-122	0	8,072
	Education Funding Agency - Sixth Form Funding and Threshold	DfE	321	0	50	371
	PE and Sport Grant	DfE	2,217	0	-136	2,081
R	Universal Infant Free School Meals	DfE	4,047	0	-118	3,929
R	Teacher's Pension Grant	DfE	10	2,342	1,709	4,061
R	Recovery Premium Grant	DfE	0	137	0	137
R	National Tutoring Grant	DfE	0	96	0	96
R	Early Career Framework - Off Timetable	DfE	0	0	166	166
R	Early Career Framework - Mentor	DfE	0	0	65	65
R	Teacher's Pay Additional Grant	DfE	0	1,684	1,220	2,904
R	ESFA Training Grant	DfE	0	19	0	19
R	Core Schools Budget Grant	DfE	0	0	4,063	4,063



**Business Management Report**  
**Position to the end of November 2024**  
**Government Grants 2024/25**

Ringfenced	Directorate	Issued By	Estimate 2024/25	In year Adjustments / New Allocations previously reported	In year Adjustments/ New Allocations reported this time	Latest Allocation
			£000	£000	£000	£000
R	Early Years Supplement Grant	DfE	0	0	0	0
	<b>Subtotal School Grants</b>		<b>14,789</b>	<b>4,156</b>	<b>7,018</b>	<b>25,963</b>
	<b>Other Children's Services Grants</b>					
	<u>Education</u>					
R	Role of Virtual School Heads to children with a social worker	DfE	0	88	76	164
R	Multiply	DfE	0	717	182	899
R	Music Service	AC	844	0	6,722	7,566
	<u>Social Care</u>					
R	Youth Justice Grant	YJB	704	9	0	713
R	Asylum (UASC and Post 18)	HO	4,636	1,335	0	5,971
R	Extended Personal Adviser Duty Grant - Care Leavers Staffing	DfE	112	0	0	112
R	Staying Put Implementation Grant - Fostering Main	DfE	288	0	0	288
R	Remand Framework	YJB	37	0	34	71
R	Reducing Parental Conflict Workforce Development Grant	DWP	0	60	-12	48
R	Matching project - Adoption Grant	DfE	0	114	0	114
R	Holiday Activities and Food Programme	DfE	0	1,547	0	1,547
R	Family Group Conferences	DfE	0	178	-54	124
R	Turnaround Programme	YJB	0	170	0	170
R	Child Decision Making Pilots (NRM)	HO	0	48	-5	44
R	Fostering Recruitment Support Hub Mobilisation	DfE	0	42	0	42
R	Employer Support Fund - Social Work Apprenticeships	DfE	0	2	65	67
U	Implementation of Supported Accommodation Reforms	DfE	299	-299	0	0
	<b>Subtotal Other Children's Services Grants</b>		<b>6,920</b>	<b>4,011</b>	<b>7,223</b>	<b>18,154</b>
	<b>TOTAL CHILDREN'S SERVICES</b>		<b>321,651</b>	<b>4,914</b>	<b>15,192</b>	<b>341,756</b>

**Business Management Report**  
**Position to the end of November 2024**  
**Government Grants 2024/25**

Ringfenced	Directorate	Issued By	Estimate 2024/25	In year Adjustments / New Allocations previously reported	In year Adjustments/ New Allocations reported this time	Latest Allocation
			£000	£000	£000	£000
R	<b>Economy &amp; Place</b>					
	Zero Emissions Transport City		0	187	0	187
	LEP		0	615	0	615
	OBS		0	205	0	205
	<b>TOTAL ECONOMY &amp; PLACE</b>		<b>0</b>	<b>1,007</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>1,007</b>
R	<b>Environment &amp; Highways</b>					
	Bus Service Operators Grant	DfT	309	0	0	309
	Natural England	DEFRA	227	0	0	227
	PMO	H&GD	70	0	0	70
	LNRS Natural Environment	NE	0	111	0	111
	Active travel	ATE	0	90	0	90
	Capability & Ambition Fund	ATE	0	1,136	0	1,136
	Bus Service Improvement Plan	DfT	0	3,564	0	3,564
	<b>TOTAL ENVIRONMENT &amp; HIGHWAYS</b>		<b>606</b>	<b>4,901</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>5,507</b>
R	<b>Public Health &amp; Communities</b>					
	Public Health Grant	DHSC	34,401	0	629	35,030
	Local Stop Smoking Grant	DHSC	790	5	0	795
	Homes for Ukraine	DLUHC	0	0	0	0
	<b>TOTAL PUBLIC HEALTH &amp; COMMUNITIES</b>		<b>35,191</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>629</b>	<b>35,825</b>

**Business Management Report**  
**Position to the end of November 2024**  
**Government Grants 2024/25**

Ringfenced	Directorate	Issued By	Estimate 2024/25 £000	In year Adjustments / New Allocations previously reported £000	In year Adjustments/ New Allocations reported this time £000	Latest Allocation £000
R	<b>Fire &amp; Rescue Service and Community Safety</b>	DLUHC	1,061	0	0	1,061
R	Fire Fighter's Pension Fund Grant	DLUHC	75	0	0	75
R	Fire Protection Uplift Grant	DLUHC	303	-52	0	251
R	Fire Fighter's New Dimensions Grant	DLUHC	40	0	0	40
	<b>TOTAL FIRE &amp; RESCUE and COMMUNITY SAFETY</b>		<b>1,479</b>	<b>-52</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>1,427</b>
R	<b>Resources and Law &amp; Governance</b>	DWP				
	Household Support Fund - April 24 to Mar 25				6,722	6,722
	<b>TOTAL RESOURCES and LAW &amp; GOVERNANCE</b>		<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>6,722</b>	<b>6,722</b>
	<b>Transformation, Digital &amp; Customer Experience</b>					
	<b>TOTAL TRANSFORMATION, DIGITAL &amp; CUSTOMER EXPERIENCE</b>		<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>
U	<b>Strategic Measures</b>	DEFRA	45	-45		0
U	Lead Local Flood Authority	DLUHC	1,700	-26		1,674
U	New Homes Bonus	DfE	328		0	329
U	Local Reform & Community Voices Grant	DfE	183		7	190
U	Social Care in Prisons Grant	DfE	4		102	106
U	War Pensions Disregard Grant	DLUHC	42,443			42,443
U	Social Care Support Grant (including Independent Living Fund)	DHSC	444	58		502
U	Services Grant	DHSC	0		0	0
U	Accelerated Reform Fund	DfE	278	707	0	985
U	Extended Rights to Free Travel	HO	213	-126	0	87
U	Firelink	OHID	635	501	0	1,136
U	Supplementary Substance Misuse Treatment & Recovery Grant					

**Business Management Report**  
**Position to the end of November 2024**  
**Government Grants 2024/25**

Ringfenced	Directorate	Issued By	Estimate 2024/25	In year Adjustments / New Allocations previously reported	In year Adjustments/ New Allocations reported this time	Latest Allocation
			£000	£000	£000	£000
U	Supplementary Substance Misuse Treatment & Recovery Housing Grant	OHID	622	0	0	622
U	Supplementary Substance Misuse Inpatient Detox & Rehabilitation	OHID	80	0	0	80
U	Rough Sleeping Drugs & Alcohol Grant	OHID	1,140	0	0	1,140
U	Domestic Abuse Duty Grant	DLUHC	1,151	38	0	1,189
U	Individual Placement and Support in community drug and alcohol treatment	OHID	228	0	0	228
U	Supporting Families - previously Troubled Families	DfE	1,048	245	183	1,476
U	Leaving Care Allowance Uplift Grant	DfE	0	136	0	136
U	Rough sleeping strategy - Care Leavers	DfE	0	95	0	95
U	Implementation of Supported Accommodation Reforms	DfE	0	990	0	990
U	Wraparound Childcare Programme	DfE	0	2,110	0	2,110
U	Phonics & Moderation Grant	DfE	0		20	20
U	Trading Standards - Offensive Weapons Act grant	HO	0	0	10	10
U	Financial Reporting Grant	DLUHC	0	41	-41	0
	<b>Subtotal Strategic Measures</b>		<b>50,541</b>	<b>4,723</b>	<b>281</b>	<b>55,546</b>
	<b>Business Rates</b>					
U	Section 31 Grant for Business Rate Compensation	DLUHC	19,945	1,289		21,234
U	Business Rates S31 Grant Top-Up	DLUHC	42,128			42,128
U	Revenue Support Grant	DLUHC	1,394	141		1,535
	<b>Subtotal Business Rates</b>		<b>63,467</b>	<b>1,430</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>64,897</b>
	<b>Grants held on behalf of Local Enterprise Partnership</b>					
R	Dept for Business & Trade funding	BEIS	261	-261		0
R	DfE Skills Bootcamp funding	DLUHC	2,696	-2,696		0
	<b>Subtotal Grants held on behalf of Local Enterprise Partnership</b>		<b>2,957</b>	<b>-2,957</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>
	<b>TOTAL STRATEGIC MEASURES</b>		<b>116,965</b>	<b>3,196</b>	<b>281</b>	<b>120,443</b>

Business Management Report  
Position to the end of November 2024  
Government Grants 2024/25

Ringfenced	Directorate	Issued By	Esimate 2024/25	In year Adjustments / New Allocations previously reported	In year Adjustments/ New Allocations reported this time	Latest Allocation
			£000	£000	£000	£000
	Total All Grants					
			498,124	14,971	22,824	535,919

- R

Ringfenced grant
- U

Un-ringfenced grant
- Issued by
- HO

Home Office
- DHSC

Department of Health & Social Care
- DfT

Department for Transport
- DfE

Department for Education

- DLUHC

Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities
- BEIS

Department for Business, Energy & Industrial Strategy
- OHID

Office for Health Improvement and Disparities
- DEFRA

Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs
- AC

Arts Council
- YJB

Youth Justice Board
- NDTi

National Development team for Inclusion

**Business Management & Monitoring Report**  
**Position to the end of November 2024**  
**General Revenue Balances**

	<b>Forecast 2024/25</b>	
	£m	£m
General Balances: Outturn 2023/24	42.026	
County Fund Balance		<b>42.026</b>
Planned Contribution from Balances (February 2024)		-3.700
Planned Contribution from Balances (June 2024)		-5.800
<b>Original forecast outturn position 2023/24</b>		<b>32.526</b>
<b>Additions</b>		0.000
<b>Calls on balances deducted</b>		0.000
<b>Automatic calls on/returns to balances</b>		0.000
<b>Additional Strategic Measures</b>		0.000
<b>Net General Balances</b>		<b>32.526</b>
<b>Calls on / returns to balances requested in this report</b>		0.000
<b>Forecast Variation at Year End</b>		
Less forecast (overspend)/underspend (as set out in Annex 1)		8.476
<b>Forecast Outturn position</b>		<b>41.002</b>
<b>Risk Assessed Level of Balances for 2024/25</b>		<b>30.200</b>
<b>Surplus/(deficit) balances compared to risk assessed level</b>		10.8

## CABINET – 21 JANUARY 2025

### CAPITAL PROGRAMME APPROVALS – JANUARY 2025

Report by the Executive Director of Resources and Section 151 Officer

#### Recommendations

1. The Cabinet is RECOMMENDED to:
  - a) approve the inclusion of 'The Greenwood Centre', an 11-bed accommodation block for 16–17-year-olds in need of supported accommodation, into the Capital Programme at an indicative cost of £1.932m, to be funded from £6.000m agreed by Council in February 2024 for additional Children's Homes.
  - b) approve a budget increase of £6.39m for 'Great Western Park Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND) School', to be funded from the High Needs Grant.
  - c) approve a budget increase of £1.500m to the Energy Saving Measures Programme, to be addressed through the annual Budget and Business Planning process and approval by Council in February 2025.
  - d) approve a budget increase of £11.516m to the Didcot to Culham River Crossing, part of the Housing Infrastructure 1 (HIF1) programme, to be funded through additional funds granted by Homes England and agreed by Cabinet in July 2024.
  - e) approve a budget increase of £12.537m to Didcot Science Bridge, part of the Housing Infrastructure 1 (HIF1) programme to be funded through additional funds granted by Homes England and agreed by Cabinet in July 2024.
  - f) approve a budget increase of £11.916m to the Clifton Hampden Bypass project, part of the Housing Infrastructure 1 (HIF1) programme to be funded through additional funds granted by Homes England and agreed by Cabinet in July 2024.

#### Executive Summary

2. The Capital Programme was approved by Council in February 2024 and updated during the year through the capital programme and monitoring reports. This report sets out change requests requiring Cabinet approval that will be incorporated into the agreed programme and included in the next update to the Capital Programme in March 2025.

#### Introduction

3. The Capital Programme sets out how the Council will use Capital expenditure to deliver the Council's priorities as set out in the Strategic Plan 2022-25. 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.

4. On occasion, variations to the Capital programme are recommended to Cabinet; those variations are included in this report.

## **Property**

### The Greenwood Centre

5. The council needs to provide housing for children under the age of 18 who are classified as “Children We Care For.” This includes children who cannot return home, those who have been lost or abandoned and unaccompanied asylum seeker children. Contracts currently in place do not meet the needs of these children and so an existing property, owned by the council is to be remodelled to provide an 11-bed supported accommodation block.

6. Approval is required to enter this scheme into the Capital Programme at an indicative cost of £1.932m, to be funded from funds of £6.00m agreed by Council in February 2024 for additional Children’s Homes.

7. Great Western Park SEND School

Great Western Park SEND School will deliver 120 places for pupils aged 7-19 and was entered into the Capital Programme in January 2024.

8. Following completion of the feasibility phase, a shortfall in budget has been identified due to higher than expected construction cost estimates, overall project costs and additional risk and contingency required to deliver the project. Approval is required to increase the budget from £14.43m to £20.82m, an increase of £6.39m to be met from the High Needs Grant.
9. The additional cost pressure will impact on available funding remaining to deliver other projects identified to be funded by the High Needs grant funding. The previous funding covered the period 2021/22 to 2024/25, and the Council is waiting for information on the continuation of the grant and any funding being provided for 2025/26.

10. Energy Saving Measures Programme

The Energy Saving Measures Programme is the Council’s approach to the replacement or maintenance of heating systems and addressing the reduction of the property carbon footprint associated with meeting the Council’s ambition of net zero carbon in operation by 2030.

11. Due to a number of cost pressures, including poorer than expected estate conditions and supply chain challenges, there is a budget pressure on the programme of £1.500m. The additional funding required to complete the programme is to be addressed through the Budget and Business Planning process which will be approved by Council in February 2025.



12. HIF1 Schemes

The HIF1 Scheme is the cornerstone of the Science Vale transport strategy and helps to support employment and growth ambitions in neighbouring Oxford City. It will benefit a large swathe of Oxfordshire residents that are required to travel from or into the Science Vale area for work, shopping and leisure.

The following schemes all require additional budget due to additional costs from the joint Compulsory Purchase Order (CPO), the planning inquiry and associated delays, mainly due to inflation. The additional costs are to be met by the HIF1 grant from Homes England, following an updated Grant Determination Agreement approved by Cabinet in July 2024.

13. Didcot to Culham River Crossing

The Didcot to Culham River Crossing is a new road project connecting the A4130 at Didcot with the A415 at Culham. It includes bridges over the River Thames and a private rail siding providing connections to Appleford and Sutton Courtenay. The project also features walking and cycling facilities.

Approval is required to increase the budget by £11.516m to be funded by the HIF1 grant from Homes England.

14. Didcot Science Bridge

The project includes a new single carriageway bridge over the A4130, Great Western Railway Mainline, and Milton Road, with segregated walking and cycling facilities. It also features a link road through the former Didcot A Power Station site, rejoining the A4130 Northern Perimeter Road with segregated walking and cycling facilities.

Approval is required to increase the budget by £12.537m to be funded by the HIF1 grant from Homes England.

15. Clifton Hampden Bypass

The project includes a single carriageway bypass for Clifton Hampden, between Culham Science Centre and B4015 just north of Clifton Hampden Village. It includes a new relief road, northwest of the village, a new roundabout near Culham Science centre and Culham Rail station and various access junctions along the bypass. Additionally, the project will include segregated walking and cycling facilities.

Approval is required to increase the budget by £11.916m to be funded by the HIF1 grant from Homes England.

## **Financial Implications**

16. The financial implications are contained within the report. n the body of the report.

Comments checked by:  
Lorna Baxter, Executive Director of Resources and Section 151 Officer

### **Staff Implications**

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

### **Equality & Inclusion Implications**

18. There are no equality and inclusion implications arising directly from this report.

### **Legal Implications**

19. In year changes to the capital programme must be approved by Cabinet in accordance with Financial Regulation and in particular paragraph 5.1.1(iv) permitting Cabinet to agree resource inclusion into the capital programme via a periodic Capital Report to Cabinet, based on the recommendation of the Strategic Capital Board (chaired by the Chief Executive).

Comments checked by:  
Anita Bradley, Director of Law & Governance and Monitoring Officer

### **LORNA BAXTER**

Executive Director of Resources and Section 151 Officer

Background papers: none

Contact Officers:  
Natalie Crawford, Capital Programme Manager  
January 2025

Divisions: N/A

## CABINET – 21 JANUARY 2025

### DELEGATED POWERS – QUARTERLY REPORT

Report by the Director of Law and Governance and Monitoring Officer

#### RECOMMENDATION

1. Cabinet is **RECOMMENDED** to note the executive decisions taken under delegated powers, set out in paragraph 4.

#### Executive Summary

2. Under the Scheme of Delegation in the Council's Constitution (Part 7.2, paragraph 6.3 (c)(i)), the Chief Executive is authorised to undertake an executive function on behalf of the Cabinet. Cabinet receives a quarterly report on the use of this delegated power in relation to such executive decisions; that is, decisions that might otherwise have been taken by Cabinet.
3. This report refers to executive decisions taken during the period October to December 2024 inclusive.

#### Executive decisions – October to December 2024

4. The following executive decisions were taken during this period:

Date	Subject	Decision	Reason
14 October 2024	Delivery of the Marmot Places programme	To approve an exemption from tendering under Contract Procedure Rule 19.8 in respect of a contract for consultancy services to be awarded to UCL.	<p>Oxfordshire becoming a Marmot Place aims to improve the lives of residents and reduce health inequalities. The Marmot approach will act as a catalyst for joined-up action and sustained change, driven by local communities and organisations. It will bring together a range of existing work happening on inequalities and provide increased cohesion, consistent approach and improved effectiveness.</p> <p>UCL's Institute of Health Equity (IHE) has considerable experience and expertise in the field of inequalities and being led by Sir Michael Marmot, was in a unique position to support our work in</p>

Date	Subject	Decision	Reason
			<p>Oxfordshire to address inequalities.</p> <p>Taking the procurement route of a direct award allowed the Council to mobilise the programme quickly to begin this work at a pivotal time of change within the system. This included the County Council transformation programme and the ICB re-organisation already underway. The Marmot Places work is expected to make a significant contribution to Oxfordshire County Council's 'Place Maker of Choice' programme:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 'Oxfordshire has sustainable resilient communities'</li> <li>• 'Oxfordshire has communities where healthy behaviours are the norm'</li> <li>• 'Oxfordshire has an inclusive economy'</li> <li>• Oxfordshire is a collaborative community with a clear identity and sense of belonging'</li> </ul>
29 October 2024	Drug & Alcohol Treatment Data System	To approve an exemption pursuant to Contract Procedure Rule 19.8 relating to a contract with Illy Systems Ltd for the provision of a hosted drug and alcohol treatment information data system.	<p>There were a number of significant risks associated with conducting an open procurement process for the continued delivery of this System:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ A full tender procedure had no commercial benefit to the Council. There was no competitive market position to be leveraged by conducting a procurement.</li> </ul>

Date	Subject	Decision	Reason
			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Engaging an alternative service provider would have resulted in the need to migrate patient records, including all documentation and complex prescribing data, for over 3,450 people currently in drug and alcohol treatment, to the new data system provider. This exercise would have required extensive ICT support to manage the process, and was likely to carry significant additional costs.</li> <li>▪ An alternative provider would also have posed a significant risk of downtime and retraining of staff for both alcohol and drug Service Providers.</li> <li>▪ Going to the market could have increased costs as inflation, transition and time for undertaking the procurement process would be factored into the pricing be it the existing supplier or a new provider.</li> <li>▪ If records were not migrated smoothly or prescriptions were missed off, or if there were disruptions in service provision, individuals could return to using illicit drugs, which pose risk to health and wellbeing.</li> </ul> <p>The new maximum length contract with Illy will end around Dec 2028. The main contract with Turning Point for the provision of the Community Alcohol and Drug Service was due to end on 31 Mar 2028. This therefore provided the opportunity to review this service when procuring the</p>

Date	Subject	Decision	Reason
			main Community Alcohol and Drug Service contract and explore whether there was an opportunity to align the tendering processes.

## Legal Implications

- There are no legal implications arising from this report. It is a requirement of the Council's Constitution (Part 7.2, paragraph 6.3(c)) that "any exercise of these functions shall be reported to the Cabinet or other relevant committee or sub-committee and shall be published on the website as soon as possible".

- The decisions were published on the website at these links:

[Decision - Delivery of the Marmot Places programme | Oxfordshire County Council](#)

[Decision - Drug & Alcohol Treatment Data System | Oxfordshire County Council](#)

- The decisions were undertaken in the context of legal appraisals.

Comments checked by: Paul Grant, Head of Legal and Deputy Monitoring Officer,  
[paul.grant@oxfordshire.gov.uk](mailto:paul.grant@oxfordshire.gov.uk)

## Financial Implications

- There are no financial implications arising from the recommendations in this report. It is a procedural item reporting on a decision previously taken. The decisions reported were undertaken in consultation with the Director of Finance.

Comments checked by: Drew Hodgson, Strategic Finance Business Partner,  
[drew.hodgson@oxfordshire.gov.uk](mailto:drew.hodgson@oxfordshire.gov.uk)

### ANITA BRADLEY

Director of Law & Governance

Background Papers: Nil

Contact Officer: Colm Ó Caomhánaigh, Democratic Services Manager,  
[colm.ocaomhanaigh@oxfordshire.gov.uk](mailto:colm.ocaomhanaigh@oxfordshire.gov.uk)

January 2025

Division(s): N/A

## CABINET – 21 January 2025

### FORWARD PLAN AND FUTURE BUSINESS

Items identified from the Forward Plan for Forthcoming Decision

Topic/Decision

Portfolio/Ref

**Cabinet, 25 February 2025**

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ <b>EOTAS Policy (Education other than at School)</b> Agree final draft of policy following delivery at other education meetings and implementation.</li> </ul>	Cabinet, 2024/342 - Cabinet Member for Children, Education & Young People's Services
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ <b>Response to Motion from Councillor Cherry on Councils for Fair Tax</b> A motion was passed at Council on 5 November 2024 requesting Cabinet to consider approving the Councils for Fair Tax declaration.</li> </ul>	Cabinet, 2024/353 - Cabinet Member for Finance
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ <b>Capital Programme Approvals - February 2025</b> Report on variation to the capital programme for approval (as required).</li> </ul>	Cabinet, 2024/226 - Cabinet Member for Finance
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ <b>City Centre Strategy</b> Review options and officers recommendations with a view to deciding how to proceed on the next stage of the City Centre Strategy, including a Key Decision</li> </ul>	Cabinet, 2024/294 - Cabinet Member for Finance
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ <b>Oxfordshire Climate Adaptation Route Map &amp; Oxfordshire County Council Climate Adaptation Delivery Plan</b> Approve the adoption of The Oxfordshire Climate Adaption Route Map and OCC Delivery Plan, which includes a set of actions to minimise the impact of climate change on Oxfordshire.</li> </ul>	Cabinet, 2024/365 - Deputy Leader of the Council with Responsibility for Climate Change, Environment & Future Generations
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ <b>Response to Council Motion from Cllr Middleton on Badger Culling</b> Follow up on Council Motion regarding Badger Culling policy.</li> </ul>	Cabinet, 2024/374 - 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, 12 February 2025**

<p>▪ <b>Homes 2 Inspire - Contract Extension and Amendments</b></p> <p>Homes 2 Inspire have a Block Contract commissioned as a call off from the South Central Framework.</p>	Delegated Decisions by Cabinet Member for Children, Education & Young People's Services, 2024/341 - Cabinet Member for Children, Education & Young People's Services
<p>▪ <b>Formal Approval of Early Years Funding Formula 2025/26</b></p> <p>The local authority is required to set a funding formula for 2-year old and for 3 and 4 year old provision.</p>	Delegated Decisions by Cabinet Member for Children, Education & Young People's Services, - Cabinet Member for Children, Education & Young People's Services
<p>▪ <b>Young Peoples Supported Accommodation (YPSA) - Contract Extensions</b></p> <p>To seek approval on the 2 year extension of the YPSA 18+ contracts (1 October 2025 - 30th September 2027)</p>	Delegated Decisions by Cabinet Member for Children, Education & Young People's Services, 2024/370 - Cabinet Member for Children, Education & Young People's Services



## Delegated Decisions by Cabinet Member for Transport Management, 27 February 2025

<p>▪ <b>Shirburn - Proposed Traffic Calming Chicane and Extension of Existing 30mph Speed Limit</b> To seek approval for the introduction of Traffic Calming and speed limit changes in Shirburn</p>	<p>Delegated Decisions by Cabinet Member for Transport Management, 2024/273 - Cabinet Member for Transport Management</p>
<p>▪ <b>Standing Advice - Transport Development Minor Planning Applications</b> To proceed with the revised approach for the Minor Planning Application Process. Asking District Planning Officers to consult Standing Advice (standard guidance for planning) before asking Transport Development Officers for comments.</p>	<p>Delegated Decisions by Cabinet Member for Transport Management, 2024/373 - Cabinet Member for Transport Management</p>
<p>▪ <b>Oxford - Howard Street Proposed Amendment to a Residential Parking Place to Accommodate Cycle Access</b> a) Approval to remove 5 metres of existing 'No Waiting at Any Time' (double yellow lines) parking restrictions on Howard Street in place of existing 'Permit Holders Only' parking places.  b) Approval for the removal of the existing pedestrian guard railing adjacent to the dropped kerb by Flower Lane, with appropriate measures (including signing &amp; lining) introduced to help mitigate the risk of conflicts between pedestrians and pedal cyclists, and a dropped kerb to be installed on the north side of Howard Street in line with the one on the south side.</p>	<p>Delegated Decisions by Cabinet Member for Transport Management, 2024/255 - Cabinet Member for Transport Management</p>
<p>▪ <b>Cuxham Road, Watlington - Proposed 30mph Speed Limit</b> To seek approval for the speed limit reduction from 50mph to 30mph on Cuxham Road, Watlington</p>	<p>Delegated Decisions by Cabinet Member for Transport Management, 2024/354 - Cabinet Member for Transport Management</p>
<p>▪ <b>Oxford City, Various Locations - Proposed New and Deleted Disabled Persons Parking Places (February 2025)</b></p>	<p>Delegated Decisions by Cabinet Member</p>

To seek approval for the introduction and amendments to disabled persons parking places	for Transport Management, 2024/351 - Cabinet Member for Transport Management
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ <b>Drayton Village - Proposed Traffic Calming and New Pedestrian Crossings</b> To seek approval for the introduction of traffic calming features and new pedestrian crossings</li> </ul>	Delegated Decisions by Cabinet Member for Transport Management, 2024/350 - Cabinet Member for Transport Management
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ <b>Proposed ANPR Enforcement of Moving Traffic Sites</b> OCC were able to obtain powers to enforce Moving Traffic offences back in 2022 (Camera enforcement traffic management measures consultation   Let's Talk Oxfordshire) and a first tranche of sites have been implemented. We have identified further sites that meet our site justification criteria and will benefit from ANPR enforcement.</li> </ul>	Delegated Decisions by Cabinet Member for Transport Management, 2024/362 - Cabinet Member for Transport Management
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ <b>Great Clarendon Street, Oxford - Proposed Parking Restriction Amendments</b> To seek a decision on proposals to remove a redundant car club bay and extend an existing pay and display bay.</li> </ul>	Delegated Decisions by Cabinet Member for Transport Management, 2024/361 - Cabinet Member for Transport Management

### **Delegated Decisions by Cabinet Member for Finance, 14 February 2025**

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ <b>Wood Green School, Witney</b> To seek approval to enter into contract with Acer Trust to provide funding for the design and construction of a new teaching block.</li> </ul>	Delegated Decisions by Cabinet Member for Finance, 2024/333 - Cabinet Member for Finance
--	--

## Delegated Decisions by Cabinet Member for Public Health, Inequalities & Community Safety, 4 February 2025

<p>▪ <b>Approval of Changes to Oxfordshire County Council Air Quality Strategy Route Map Actions</b></p> <p>The Oxfordshire County Council Air Quality Strategy has a Route Map with actions. In order to ensure the actions remain up to date and relevant some have been completed, removed, amended or new ones added.</p>	<p>Delegated Decisions by Cabinet Member for Public Health, Inequalities &amp; Community Safety, 2024/347 - Cabinet Member for Public Health, Inequalities &amp; Community Safety</p>
---	---

This page is intentionally left blank