

OXFORDSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

MEETING OF COUNCIL – 9 DECEMBER 2025

SCHEDULE OF BUSINESS

ITEM / TIME	ITEM	PROPOSALS (M = Motion; SEC = Seconder; Am = Amendment S = Statement; Q = Question;)
1 10:30	Minutes (Pages 1 to 11) To approve the minutes of the Council meeting held on 4 November 2025 (CC1) and to receive information arising from them.	
2	Apologies for Absence	
3	Declarations of Interest	
4 10:35 5 mins	Official Communications Ofsted and the Care Quality Commission (CQC) have confirmed that the Oxfordshire local area partnership has taken effective action to make improvements in services and support for children and young people with special educational needs and disabilities. A monitoring inspection to assess progress began on 15 September and ended with onsite activity between 29 September and 1 October 2025. Ofsted and CQC found that the local area partnership has taken “effective action” in all five areas that were previously identified as priorities. Whilst the partnership recognises there is more to do to ensure all children, parents and carers feel these changes, this is an important milestone which shows a positive direction of travel. The Chair would like to thank everyone who came to the charity Christmas quiz, held on 3 December, which raised £730 for his chosen charities. This was the third of his charity quizzes. Together, £2,000 has now been raised for OXSRAD, Abingdon RDA, and Oxford United in the Community.	

	<p>The Chair was honoured to lay a wreath at the Oxford Service of Remembrance on Remembrance Sunday this year. Thank you to councillors who likewise placed wreaths on behalf of the Chair in their divisions.</p> <p>A list of the Chair's Events since the last Council meeting in November is included in Annex 1.</p> <p>On 10 December from 12.45 pm the Annual City and County Council Christmas Fun Run will take place at Christ Church Meadows.</p> <p>The Chair's Christmas Carol Service will take place at St Nicholas Church in Marston from 6.30 pm on Monday, 15 December. All councillors are warmly invited to attend.</p> <p>Council has been notified of the passing on 19 November of former county councillor Roy Darke. He was elected as a Labour Member for the Headington & Marston Division in 2009 but did not contest the election in 2013. He served as a member of the Audit Committee, which then became the Audit & Governance Committee, and sat as a member of the Standards Committee and Pension Fund Committee at periods during his term of office.</p> <p>He also served on Oxford City Council from 2008 to 2016 and Sheffield City Council from 1990 to 1994. Our thoughts are with his family and friends.</p>	
5	<p>Appointments</p> <p>None notified</p>	
<p>6</p> <p>10:40</p> <p>10 mins</p>	<p>Petitions and Public Address</p> <p><i>Any person may address the Council on an item on the agenda subject to the provisions in CPR 10.2 of the Constitution</i></p> <p>Petitions – 3 minutes to speak (10.1.2(i))</p> <p>Public Address – 3 minutes to speak (10.2.1)</p>	<p>Petitions</p> <p>Becky Howard 'Increase mental health care capacity in Oxfordshire'</p> <p>Public Address</p> <p>None</p>

<p>7</p> <p>10:50</p> <p>10 mins</p>	<p>Questions from Members of the Public</p> <p>See Annex 2 for questions and responses. One supplementary question allowed for each.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Richard Parnham 2. Russell Williamson 3. Peter White 4. Bernadette Evans 5. Nicholas Hardyman 6. Kiki Isidoros 7. Emily Scaysbrook 8. Anne Gwinnett 9. Paul Major 10. Geoffrey Sutton 11. Eric Jansson 	<p>All for Councillor Gant</p>
<p>8</p> <p>11:00</p> <p>30 mins</p>	<p>Questions with Notice from Members of the Council</p> <p>See Annex 3 for questions and responses. One supplementary question allowed for each.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Cherry to Gant 2. Cherry to Gant 3. Bearder to Gant 4. Withdrawn 5. Withdrawn 6. Withdrawn 7. Bearder to Gant 8. Snowdon to Gant 9. Cherry to Hannaby 10. Ley to Gant 11. Ley to Gant 12. Snowdon to Roberts 13. Fry to Gant 14. Fry to Roberts 15. Fry to Roberts 16. Plumb to Gant 17. Plumb to Gaul 18. Plumb to Gant 19. Pressel to Roberts 20. Pressel to Gant 21. Pressel to Levy 22. Robertshaw to Roberts 23. Gordon to Roberts 24. Gordon to Roberts 25. Gordon to Roberts 26. Evans to Roberts 27. Evans to Roberts 	

	28. Walker to Leffman 29. Walker to Gant 30. Walker to Gant 31. Epps to Fawcett 32. Evans to Gant 33. McLauchlan to Roberts 34. Garnett to Leffman 35. Greenaway to Gant 36. Middleton to Roberts 37. Middleton to Gant 38. Middleton to Gant 39. Barlow to Fawcett 40. Barlow to Leffman 41. Barlow to Higgins 42. Epps to Gant 43. Saul to Bearder 44. Saul to Hannaby 45. Malik to Gaul 46. Malik to Gant 47. Malik to Gant 48. Crichton to Roberts 49. Crichton to Gaul 50. Gawrysiak to Hannaby 51. Garnett to Leffman 52. Creed to Gant 53. Creed to Bearder 54. Creed to Roberts 55. Baines to Gant 56. Baines to Gant 57. Baines to Gant 58. Field-Johnson to Leffman 59. Field-Johnson to Leffman 60. Field-Johnson to Leffman 61. Fletcher to Bearder 62. Fletcher to Leffman 63. Ashby to Roberts 64. Ashby to Gant 65. Ashby to Leffman 66. Epps to Leffman 67. Jones to Gant 68. Jones to Gregory	
9 11:30 30 mins	Report of the Cabinet (Pages 13 to 17) <u>Leader (Cllr Leffman)</u> Page 13, Item 1 Local Government Reorganisation – Submission of Proposal to Government Page 13, Item 2	Q Garnett (1) Q Pressel (1) Q Evans (1)

	<p>Review of Member Champions</p> <p><u>Resources and Deputy Leader (Cllr Fawcett)</u> Page 14, Item 3 HR and Cultural Change - Quarterly Employee Data Report - Quarter 2 2025-26</p> <p><u>Finance, Property and Transformation (Cllr Levy)</u> Page 14, Item 4 Treasury Management Mid-Term Review 2025-26</p> <p>Page 15, Item 5 Budget and Business Planning Report 2026/27 - 2030/31</p> <p>Page 15, Item 6 Business Management & Monitoring Report - Performance and Risk Quarter 2 2025/26</p> <p>Page 15, Item 7 Capital Programme Approvals - November 2025</p> <p><u>Children & Young People (Cllr Gaul)</u> Page 15, Item 8 Response to motion by Councillor Creed on Children's Centres</p> <p><u>Public Health & Inequalities (Cllr Gregory)</u> Page 16, Item 9 Response to motion by Councillor Hanna on Healthwatch Oxfordshire</p> <p><u>Place, Environment & Climate Change (Cllr Roberts)</u> Page 16: Item 10 Proposed changes to the Waste Acceptance Policy (WAP) for Oxfordshire's household waste recycling centres (HWRCs)</p> <p>Page 16: Item 11 Carbon Management Plan Residual Carbon and Offsetting Policy</p> <p>Page 17: Item 12 OxRAIL 2040: Plan for Rail strategy</p>	<p>Q Barlow (3) Q Kerr (3) Q Pressel (3)</p> <p>Q Baines (4)</p> <p>Q Baines (5) Q Smith (5)</p> <p>Q Middleton (6) Q Fry (6) Q Baines (6) Q Brighouse (6)</p> <p>Q Kerr (7) Q McLauchlan (7)</p> <p>Q Creed (8) Q Baines (8) Q Brighouse (8) Q Edwards (8)</p> <p>Q Jones (9) Q Hanna (9)</p> <p>Q Middleton (10) Q Phillips (10) Q Creed (10) Q Brighouse (10) Q Snowdon (10) Q Evans (10) Q Smith (10) Q Worgan (10) Q Epps (10) Q Thomas (10)</p> <p>Q Garnett (11) Q Barlow (11) Q Baines (11)</p> <p>Q Garnett (12) Q Kerr (12)</p>
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	<p><u>Scrutiny Reports</u> Page 17: Item 13 (a) Business Management and Monitoring Report (with a focus on Children, Education and Families)</p> <p>Page 17: Item 13 (b) Verge and Vegetation Management</p> <p>Page 17: Item 13 (c) OXRAIL 2040: Plan for Rail Strategy</p>	<p>Q Fry (12) Q Pressel (12) Q Coles (12) Q Epps (12) Q Hanna (12)</p>
<p>10 12:00 5 mins</p>	<p>The Calendar of Council Meetings 2026-27 (Pages 19 - 21)</p> <p>Movers 5 mins and speaking in debate 3 minutes, CPR 15.4.2</p> <p>COUNCIL IS RECOMMENDED to note that the Chair of the Council will consult with Political Group Leaders on a proposal to bring the Council meeting originally scheduled for 7 July 2026 forwards to 30 June 2026 in accordance with Council Procedure Rule 2.1. This is in order to avoid a clash with the Local Government Association Annual Conference.</p>	<p>M Chair SEC Vice-Chair</p>
<p>11 12:05 20 mins</p>	<p>Devolution for Oxfordshire (Pages 23 - 40)</p> <p>Movers 5 mins and speaking in debate 3 minutes, CPR 15.4.2</p> <p>Council is RECOMMENDED to</p> <p>a) NOTE the draft Cabinet report (Annex A)</p> <p>b) RECOMMEND to Cabinet that it approves the submission of the Expression of Interest (EOI) (Annex B) to Government.</p>	<p>M Leffman SEC Higgins</p> <p>S Jones S Baines S Barlow S Phillips</p>
<p>12 12:25 25 mins</p>	<p>Gender and Ethnicity Pay Gap Reports for 2024/25 (Pages 41 – 60)</p> <p>Movers 5 mins and speaking in debate 3 minutes, CPR 15.4.2</p>	<p>M Fawcett SEC Leffman</p> <p>S Jones S Pressel</p>

	<p>Council is RECOMMENDED to</p> <p>a) Note Oxfordshire County Council's statutory Gender Pay Gap report of 2025 and approve it for onward submission to the Gender Pay Gap Service by 31 March 2026.</p> <p>b) Note the Council's voluntary Ethnicity Pay Gap report of 2025.</p> <p>c) Agree to the publishing of both reports on the Council's website by 31 March 2026.</p>	<p>S Creed S Brighthouse</p>
<p>13</p> <p>12:50</p> <p>10 mins</p>	<p>Treasury Management Mid-term Review (Pages 61 – 76)</p> <p>Movers 5 mins and speaking in debate 3 minutes, CPR 15.4.2</p> <p>Council is RECOMMENDED to note the council's treasury management activity in the first half of 2025/26.</p>	<p>M Levy SEC Higgins</p> <p>S Barlow S Baines S McLauchlan</p>
<p>13:00</p> <p>40 mins</p>	<p>LUNCH</p>	
<p>14</p> <p>13:40</p> <p>20 mins</p>	<p>Report of the Independent Remuneration Panel (Pages 77 – 102)</p> <p>Movers 5 mins and speaking in debate 3 minutes, CPR 15.4.2</p> <p>The Council is RECOMMENDED to adopt a Scheme of Members' Allowances for the financial year 2026/27, and in so doing to consider the following options, either:</p> <p>1) To adopt the recommendations of the Independent Remuneration Panel made in November 2025 and as set out in Annex 1 to this report; OR</p> <p>2) To adopt any particular recommendations of the Independent Remuneration Panel as the Council may determine; OR</p>	<p>M Leffman SEC Fawcett</p> <p>S Barlow S Middleton S McLauchlan</p>

	<p>3) To agree alternative values for any of the allowances, as the Council may determine; OR</p> <p>4) If the Council does not wish to accept the Panel's recommendations at this time, in whole or in part, or to substitute alternative amounts, to agree a status quo Scheme of Allowances for 2026/27 for any unchanged aspect; AND</p> <p>5) That in any event, the Council adopts an annual index for a four year period (whereby if no other changes occur to a Scheme, then the Members' Allowances may increase in relation to that index for a period of no more than four years), and that this should relate (as in previous years) to the annual pay award for local government staff. If adopted, the increase will be in line with the percentage rise in overall employee costs for Oxfordshire County Council arising from the annual Local Government Pay Award for staff and that this should take effect from the date on which the award for staff similarly takes effect.</p>	
<p>15</p> <p>14:00</p> <p>20 mins</p>	<p>Review of Member Champions (Pages 103 - 114)</p> <p>Movers 5 mins and speaking in debate 3 minutes, CPR 15.4.2</p> <p>Council is RECOMMENDED to: amend the Council's Constitution to replace part 8.5, Member Champion Role with the text in Appendix 2.</p>	<p>M Leffman SEC Fawcett</p> <p>S Kerr S Pressel S Jones S Baines S Creed</p>
<p>16</p> <p>14:20</p> <p>30 mins</p>	<p>Motion by Councillor Gavin McLauchlan</p> <p>Movers 5 mins and speaking in debate 3 minutes, CPR 15.4.2</p> <p>Council notes that in July 2025 a judicial review upheld the Secretary Of State for the Environment's decision to approve the proposed Thames Water Resources Management Plan which includes the South East Strategic Reservoir Option in Abingdon.</p> <p>As a result, Thames Water has to have an Emergency Discharge facility in place including the ability to empty the reservoir at a rate of 1</p>	<p>M McLauchlan SEC Jones</p> <p>S Henwood S Stevens S Plumb S Middleton S Batstone S Malik S Hanna</p>

	<p>metre per day, possibly over a period of 3 to 4 weeks. This would put water back into the Thames at a rate of 75 m³/s just south of Abingdon c.3x greater than its normal flow.</p> <p>Such a discharge could cause havoc along the Thames, endangering Life, residences, businesses, wildlife and the environment, yet there is no requirement for the reservoir operator to have an emergency plan before building the reservoir, only before filling it. Dealing with the emergency in the wider area will be the responsibility of this Council as the local emergency planning authority along with the emergency services.</p> <p>This Council makes clear its deep concern that we could be made responsible by default for safely managing such an emergency, leaving us with impossible decisions about which lives, homes and businesses to save in a crisis situation.</p> <p>We therefore call on the Leader to write to the Secretary of State to request clarity on how such an emergency discharge would be managed and to provide a commitment that we will be provided with the resources to do so before any Development Consent Order is considered.</p>	
<p>17</p> <p>14:50</p> <p>30 mins</p>	<p>Motion by Councillor Maggie Filipova-Rivers</p> <p>Movers 5 mins and speaking in debate 3 minutes, CPR 15.4.2</p> <p>Council notes that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Oxfordshire residents have endured successive crises in recent years: Covid, the cost-of-living emergency, underfunding of public services by successive governments, leaving many residents in precarious situations, creating a climate of uncertainty and fear. • Research shows that rising inequality fuels support for far-right movements, eroding trust in institutions and creating fertile ground for scapegoating and division. • Against this backdrop, right-wing media and far-right groups have wrongly blamed migrant communities to further their agendas. 	<p>M Filipova-Rivers SEC Levy</p> <p>S Middleton S Pressel S Malik S Leffman S Barlow S Creed S Heritage S Markham S Brighouse S Overton S Gregory S Gordon S Gant</p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Extensive research, including the Migration Observatory's 2024 study, finds that migration contributes positively to the UK economy by expanding the labour force, addressing skill shortages, and supporting productivity and growth, with little evidence of wage suppression for native workers. Migrants' net fiscal impact is generally positive, with greater contributions in taxes than cost to public services. • Oxfordshire is proud to be the first County Council of Sanctuary, committed to ensuring that everyone who lives here, whether newly arrived or long settled, is treated fairly. <p>Council therefore resolves to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recognise the risks to our communities if the disinformation, suspicion, and intolerance disinformation generates go unchallenged, and commit to addressing them wherever they occur. • Work with partners to ensure the safety and wellbeing of everyone in our communities and that racism is confronted wherever it occurs, in schools, workplaces, and on our streets. • Request that Cabinet supports the co-production of a community cohesion action plan with key stakeholders in consultation with councillors, including actions to support community-led dialogue and ensure appropriate resourcing is considered during budget setting. <p><i>Note: The motion, if passed, would constitute the exercise of an executive function in which case it will be referred to the Cabinet together with any advice the Council may wish to give, in accordance with Rule 13.5.1 (i) of the Council Procedure Rules in the Constitution.</i></p>	
<p>18</p> <p>15:20</p>	<p>Motion by Councillor Liz Brighthouse</p> <p>Movers 5 mins and speaking in debate 3 minutes, CPR 15.4.2</p> <p>This Council being deeply concerned by the impact of poor mental health on adults and children in the County asks the Health and Wellbeing Board to request the Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee to investigate and report</p>	<p>M Brighthouse SEC Creed</p> <p>S Jones S Epps S Malik S Phillips S Garnett S Hanna</p>

	<p>back to them and to the County Council on how Mental Health services provided by Oxford Health and other organisations are tackling this issue.</p> <p>Such an investigation of issues needs to include addressing accessibility to services including</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prevention • Assessment • Therapeutic support • Medication • Emergency intervention such as "sectioning" • Inpatient beds <p>How these issues impact on other public services such Community Safety, Public Health, Housing, Schools, Fire and Rescue and the Police also needs to be assessed and understood. Most of all poor mental health impacts on individuals, families, and communities around the County and this must be addressed.</p> <p>Council requests that the outcome of the investigation be sent to the appropriate Secretaries of State.</p>	
19	<p>Motion by Councillor James Plumb</p> <p>Movers 5 mins and speaking in debate 3 minutes, CPR 15.4.2</p> <p>Council notes that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • November is Men's Health Awareness Month ("Movember"), raising awareness of key issues affecting men and boys, including mental health, suicide prevention, prostate cancer, and testicular cancer. • Men across Oxfordshire, as nationally, continue to experience significant health challenges, including lower healthy life expectancy and a greater likelihood of living more years in poor health. • Men are statistically less likely to seek help for both physical and mental health issues. This is especially true in rural communities, where access to services may be more limited and traditional stigma around help-seeking can be stronger. • Men continue to account for the majority of suicide deaths, demonstrating the urgent 	<p>M Plumb SEC Walker</p> <p>S McLauchlan S Creed S Gordon S Robertshaw S Garnett S Worgan S Snowdon S Jones</p>

	<p>need for early intervention, better support, and improved signposting to local services.</p> <p>Council welcomes the work already taking place across Oxfordshire to support men's physical and mental health.</p> <p>Council resolves to:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Request Cabinet to recognise November each year as "Men's Health Month in Oxfordshire", working with NHS partners, veteran groups, charities, and community organisations to promote awareness, early intervention, and personal responsibility for health and wellbeing. 2. Request Cabinet to seek a standalone report from the Director of Public Health on men's health outcomes in Oxfordshire, including mental health, suicide prevention, cancer awareness, rural and urban access to services, and practical recommendations that strengthen early help and reduce health inequalities. 3. Ask the Leader to write to the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care giving this council's support for the introduction of the government's National Men's Health Strategy. <p><i>Note: The motion, if passed, would constitute the exercise of an executive function in which case it will be referred to the Cabinet together with any advice the Council may wish to give, in accordance with Rule 13.5.1 (i) of the Council Procedure Rules in the Constitution.</i></p>	
20	<p>Cross-party Motion from Councillor Nathan Ley, seconded by Councillor James Barlow</p> <p>Movers 5 mins and speaking in debate 3 minutes, CPR 15.4.2</p> <p>Pride in the appearance of the public realm is important to our residents. Clean and well-maintained pavements make people feel good about their neighbourhood, reduce accidents, and prevent more costly problems later. Neglect leads to uneven footways, hazards for those with</p>	<p>M Filipova-Rivers SEC Barlow</p> <p>S Snowdon S Epps S Middleton S Ashby S Smith S Field-Johnson</p>

	<p>mobility difficulties, and higher long-term repair bills.</p> <p>Routine weed clearance on county pavements was part of highways maintenance until 2007/08, when budget cuts removed the programme. Some parishes now commission their own weed spraying and may be using glyphosate, increasingly opposed by residents because of its risks to health, pets, rivers, and biodiversity. Other parishes are now beginning to trial alternative approaches.</p> <p>Council resolves to:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Note the historic withdrawal of routine weed clearance and the resulting concerns about accessibility, safety, and neighbourhood appearance. 2. Recognise the Council's statutory duty to keep pavements free of hazards, and that neglect increases both risks and costs. 3. Request Cabinet to seek an officer report with options for re-establishing pavement weed clearance and scheduled maintenance, including alternatives to glyphosate, and how the Council can support towns and parishes to reduce reliance on chemical spraying. 4. Request that the Cabinet Member for Finance, Property and Transformation give due consideration to the findings of this report as part of the next round of budget setting. <p><i>Note: The motion, if passed, would constitute the exercise of an executive function in which case it will be referred to the Cabinet together with any advice the Council may wish to give, in accordance with Rule 13.5.1 (i) of the Council Procedure Rules in the Constitution</i></p>	
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