OXFORDSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

To: Members of the Cabinet

Notice of a Meeting of the Cabinet

Tuesday, 17 March 2026 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

March 2026

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

Membership

Councillors

Liz Leffman	Leader of the Council
Neil Fawcett	Deputy Leader of the Council and Cabinet Member for Resources
Tim Bearder	Cabinet Member for Adults
Andrew Gant	Cabinet Member for Transport Management
Sean Gaul	Cabinet Member for Children and Young People
Kate Gregory	Cabinet Member for Public Health and Inequalities
Jenny Hannaby	Cabinet Member for Community Wellbeing and Safety
Ben Higgins	Cabinet Member for Future Economy and Innovation
Dan Levy	Cabinet Member for Finance, Property and Transformation
Judy Roberts	Cabinet Member for Place, Environment and Climate Action

The Agenda is attached. Decisions taken at the meeting will become effective at the end of the working day on 23 March 2026 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: 21 April 2026

recycled paper

OXFORDSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

AGENDA

1. Apologies for Absence

2. Declarations of Interest

- guidance note below

3. Minutes (Pages 13 - 18)

To approve the minutes of the meeting held on 24 February 2026 (**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 three working days before the meeting, ask a question on an item on the agenda.

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.

5. Petitions and Public Address

Members of the public who wish to speak on an item on the agenda at this meeting, or present a petition, can attend the meeting in person or 'virtually' through an online connection.

Requests to present a petition must be submitted no later than 9am ten working days before the meeting.

Requests to speak must be submitted no later than 9am three working days before the meeting.

Requests should be submitted to committeesdemocraticservices@oxfordshire.gov.uk

If you are speaking 'virtually', you may submit a written statement of your presentation to ensure that if the technology fails, then your views can still be taken into account. A written copy of your statement can be provided no later than 9am on the day of the meeting. Written submissions should be no longer than 1 A4 sheet.

6. Appointments

7. Reports from Scrutiny Committees (Pages 19 - 64)

Cabinet will receive the following Scrutiny reports: -

Education and Young People Overview and Scrutiny Committee reports on:

Local Area Partnership Monitoring and Priority Action Plan

Education Otherwise Than At School (EOTAS) Guidance

Place Overview and Scrutiny Committee reports on:

Road Safety initiatives in Oxfordshire

Repairing of defects and Superusers

8. Local Government Reorganisation in Oxfordshire: Statutory consultation response (TO FOLLOW)

Cabinet Member: Leader
Forward Plan Ref: 2026/063
Non-key decision
Contact: Lauren Rushen, Senior Policy Officer
Lauren.rushen@oxfordshire.gov.uk

Report by the Deputy Chief Executive (Section 151 Officer) **(CA8)**

To consider the Council's draft response to the Ministry for Housing, Communities, and Local Government (MHCLG) consultation on local government reorganisation in Oxfordshire.

9. Local Transport Consolidated Funding Settlement - Local Transport Delivery Plan (Pages 65 - 120)

Cabinet Member: Transport Management
Forward Plan Ref: 2026/006
Key decision
Contact: Hannah Battye, Head of Place Shaping
Hannah.battye@oxfordshire.gov.uk

Report by Director of Environment and Highways **(CA9)**

The DfT Local Transport Delivery Plan. This item outlines the proposed programme over the next 4 years.

The Cabinet is RECOMMENDED to:

a) **approve the Local Transport Delivery Plan and its submission to the Department for Transport; and**

b) **delegate authority to the Director of Environment & Highways, in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Transport Management, to make changes to specific schemes and projects within the agreed programmes outlined in the Local Transport Delivery Plan.**

10. Movement and Place Plans (Pages 121 - 358)

Cabinet Member: Place, Environment and Climate Action
Forward Plan Ref: 2025/262
Key decision
Contact: Ashley Hayden, Team Leader (Area Travel Plans)
Ashley.hayden@oxfordshire.gov.uk

Report by Director of Environment and Highways **(CA10)**

The Movement and Place (MAP) plans form part 2s of the Local Transport Connectivity Plan. This MAP Plan reflects the Bicester area in the North of the County (Cherwell) with further plans to come forward over the following months.

The Cabinet is RECOMMENDED to: -

Approve the adoption and publication of the Bicester and Surrounding Villages Movement and Place Plan (Annex A), and its subsequent supporting documents at A1-A4 (Delivery Plan, proposals map, people postcards, summary of plan).

11. Treasury Management Q3 Performance Report 2025-26 (Pages 359 - 372)

Cabinet Member: Finance, Property and Transformation
Forward Plan Ref: 2026/060
Non-key decision
Contact: Tim Chapple, Treasury Manager
Tim.chapple@oxfordshire.gov.uk

Report by the Deputy Chief Executive (Section 151 Officer) **(CA12)**

Quarterly report on the Council's treasury management activity.

Cabinet is RECOMMENDED to note the council's treasury management activity for the first three quarters of 2025/26.

12. Business Management & Monitoring Report - Performance and Risk - Quarter 3 2025-26 (Pages 373 - 428)

Cabinet Member: Finance, Property and Transformation
Forward Plan Ref: 2025/102
Non-key decision

Contact: Kathy Wilcox, Head of Corporate Finance
Kathy.wilcox@oxfordshire.gov.uk

Report by Deputy Chief Executive (Section 151 Officer) **(CA13)**

To note the report and approve the recommendations

The Cabinet is RECOMMENDED to:

a) **Note the report and annexes.**
b) **Approve a supplementary estimate request of £0.9m relating to additional election costs and supplementary estimates of £0.5m for Bicester Motion and £2.2m relating to Woodeaton Manor Special School (Annex D paragraph 23).**
c) **Approve the write off of 2 corporate debts totalling £50k (Annex D paragraph 26)**
d) **Approve the write off of 12 Adult Social Care contribution debts totalling £270k (Annex D paragraph 29).**
e) **Note the Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) High Needs Block 2025/26 forecast and accumulated deficit position ((Annex D paragraphs 36 - 40).**
f) **Approve the updates to Fees & Charges for Environment & Highways (Annex D – Appendix 5)**

13. Update on High Needs Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) Funding and Deficits (Pages 429 - 436)

Cabinet Member: Finance, Property and Transformation
Forward Plan Ref: 2026/052
Key decision
Contact: Jane Billington, Strategic Finance Business Partner
Jane.billington@oxfordshire.gov,uk

Report by Deputy Chief Executive (Section 151 Officer) **(CA14)**

Explains the arrangements for funding High Needs Dedicated Schools Grant deficits up to the end of 2025/26 as set out by the Government as part of the Final Local Government Finance Settlement for 2026/27.

Provides an update on the estimated share of the 2025/26 deficit that will need to be funded by the relevant council(s) when the statutory over-ride ends on 1 April 2028.

Cabinet is RECOMMENDED to:

a) **Note the update on the treatment of High Needs DSG Deficits up to 31 March 2026 set out in the Final Local Government Finance Settlement for 2026/27.**
b) **Note the changes to High Needs Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) funding and approve the mid and worst case forecast deficits for 2026/27 (paragraph 21 and Table 1).**
c) **Note the funding that is planned to be available to meet the residual element that the council will need to fund following the end of the statutory override.**

14. Capital Programme Update and Monitoring Report (Pages 437 - 458)

Cabinet Member: Finance, Property and Transformation
Forward Plan Ref: 2026/028
Key decision
Contact: Natalie Crawford, Capital Programme Manager
Natalie.crawford@oxfordshire.gov.uk

Report by Deputy Chief Executive (Section 151 Officer) **(CA15)**

Financial Report on capital spending against budget allocations, including any necessary capital programme approvals

Cabinet is RECOMMENDED to:

a. Note the capital monitoring position for 2025/26 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.

Additions to the Capital Programme

c. Approve the inclusion of Milton Heights Bridge into the capital programme, with a budget of £8.608m, to be funded from a variety of funding sources. (see paragraph 65-66)

EXEMPT ITEMS

It is RECOMMENDED that the public be excluded for the duration of items 15 and 16 since it is likely that if they were present during these items there would be disclosure of exempt information as defined in Part I of Schedule 12A to the Local Government Act 1972 (as amended) and specified below in relation to those items and since it is considered that, in all the circumstances of the case, the public interest in maintaining the exemption outweighs the public interest in disclosing the information.

THE ANNEXES TO THE ITEMS HAVE NOT BEEN MADE PUBLIC AND SHOULD BE REGARDED AS 'CONFIDENTIAL' BY MEMBERS AND OFFICERS ENTITLED TO RECEIVE IT.

THIS ALSO MEANS THAT THE CONTENTS SHOULD NOT BE DISCUSSED WITH OTHERS AND NO COPIES SHOULD BE MADE

15. Household Waste Recycling Centres (HWRC) - Management Reprovision (Pages 459 - 558)

Cabinet Member: Place, Environment and Climate Action
Forward Plan Ref: 2025/057

Non-key decision
Contact: Caroline Coyne, Project Manager (BPSI Team)
Caroline.coyne@oxfordshire.gov.uk

Report by Director of Economy and Place **(CA11)**

The information in the annexes to this report in that it falls within the following prescribed category:

> 3 Information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information)

And since it is considered that, in all the circumstances of the case, the public interest in maintaining the exemption outweighs the public interest in disclosing the information.

Oxfordshire County Council's current household waste recycling centres management contract is in its final extension period and comes to an end on 30th September 2027. A future model for the service delivery is required to be in place and mobilised prior to the expiry of the existing contract. The paper is to approve the preferred model.

Cabinet is RECOMMENDED to

a) **Approve the preferred approach to the reprovision of the Household Waste Recycling Centre (HWRC) management as set out in paragraphs 5 and 31.**

b) **Authorise Officers to prepare and commence the procurement of a new 8-year HWRC management contract to start on 1 October 2027 (following a mobilisation period) with options to support flexibility in Local Government Reorganisation (LGR).**

c) **Endorse exploration and feasibility of the capital purchase of HWRC plant and equipment during the tender bidding, with a view to having an agreed final revenue and capital cost of the contract at the final tender stage.**

d) **Delegate the decision to award the contract, and any extension to the Director of Environment and Highways in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Place, Environment and Climate Action.**

16. Urgent decision relating to the acquisition of a property/lease in Oxfordshire. (TO FOLLOW)

Cabinet Member: Finance, Property and Transformation
Forward Plan Ref: 2026/054
Key decision
Contact: Henry White, Operational Manager, Estates and Investment
Henry.white@oxfordshire.gov.uk

Report by Director of Property and Assets **(CA16)**

The information in the annexes to this report in that it falls within the following prescribed category:

> 3 Information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information)

And since it is considered that, in all the circumstances of the case, the public interest in maintaining the exemption outweighs the public interest in disclosing the information.

17. Forward Plan and Future Business (Pages 559 - 564)

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

The Cabinet Procedure Rules provide that the business of each meeting at the Cabinet is to include "updating of the Forward Plan and proposals for business to be conducted at the following meeting". Items from the Forward Plan for the immediately forthcoming meetings of the Cabinet appear in the Schedule at **CA17.** 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.

18. For information only: Cabinet response to Scrutiny item (Pages 565 - 566)

The Virtual School

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.

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CABINET

MINUTES of the meeting held on Tuesday, 24 February 2026 commencing at 2.00 pm and finishing at 2.50pm

Present:

Voting Members:	Councillor Liz Leffman – in the Chair Councillor Neil Fawcett Councillor Tim Bearder Councillor Andrew Gant Councillor Sean Gaul Councillor Kate Gregory Councillor Ben Higgins Councillor Dan Levy Councillor Judy Roberts
Other Members in Attendance:	Councillors Glynis Phillips and Ian Snowdon

Officers:

Whole of meeting	Martin Reeves (Chief Executive), Anita Bradley (Director of Law & Governance and Monitoring Officer), Lisa Lyons (Director of Children's Services), Robin Rogers (Director of Economy and Place) 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.

18/26 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

(Agenda Item. 1)

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Jenny Hannaby.

19/26 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

(Agenda Item. 2)

There were none.

20/26 MINUTES

(Agenda Item. 3)

The minutes of the meeting held on 27 January 2026 were approved as a correct record.

21/26 QUESTIONS FROM COUNTY COUNCILLORS
(Agenda Item. 4)

See attached.

22/26 PETITIONS AND PUBLIC ADDRESS
(Agenda Item. 5)

There were none.

23/26 APPOINTMENTS
(Agenda Item. 6)

Cabinet noted the following appointments:-

Cllr Ben Higgins had been appointed to the Music Service Hub Board.

Cllr Gareth Epps had been appointed to the Children's Trust Board.

24/26 REPORTS FROM SCRUTINY COMMITTEES
(Agenda Item. 7)

Councillor Ian Snowdon, Chair of the People Overview and Scrutiny Committee, presented the report on Oxfordshire Unpaid Carers Strategy.

Councillor Glynis Phillips, Chair of the Performance and Corporate Services Overview and Scrutiny Committee, presented the report on Social Value Policy.

Cabinet received the reports and will respond in due course.

25/26 SOCIAL VALUE - NEW IN-HOUSE APPROACH
(Agenda Item. 8)

Cabinet had before it a report recommending approval of a new Oxfordshire County Council Social Value Policy and transfer of the council's social value work in-house, ending reliance on external platforms. This shift aimed to streamline processes, reduce costs, and better align social value activity with the council's Strategic Plan 2025–2028.

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

Councillor Levy highlighted the benefits of the proposals such as flexibility, alignment with local priorities, and minor financial savings from not using third-party assessors. The policy defined five priorities: early careers opportunities, supported employment, local area regeneration, youth engagement, and healthy lives, with procurement tenders above £100,000 required to address at least two priorities. Suppliers would be required to

submit a social value delivery plan with specific, measurable, achievable, relevant, and time-bound commitments, and exemptions are provided for certain contracts, such as those under 12 months or limited to voluntary, charity, or social enterprise organisations.

During discussion members

- expressed support for the with Scrutiny Committee recommendations to embed social value holistically, link with economic strategy and community wealth building, and collaborate with local anchor institutions such as the Oxford Inclusive Economy Partnership.

- highlighted the role of the Business Intellectual Property Centre in supporting small and start-up businesses, aligning with the policy's aim to encourage local employment and support smaller contracts.

Councillor Levy moved and Councillor Roberts seconded the recommendations and they were approved.

RESOLVED to:-

a) approve the Oxfordshire County Council Social Value Policy (Annex 1).

b) agree to move the council's social value approach in- house, transitioning away from third- party delivery and/or platforms, to enable a more streamlined approach that better aligns to the council's Strategic Plan 2025–2028 priorities.

26/26 CLIMATE ACTION FRAMEWORK 2026-2030

(Agenda Item. 9)

Cabinet had before it a report on the Oxfordshire Climate Action Framework (CAF) 2026-2030 which outlined the council's vision for achieving a greener, fairer, and healthier county. The framework built on previous work and aimed for carbon neutrality in council operations by 2030 and net zero emissions countywide by the 2040s, integrating emissions reduction, resilience, nature recovery, and waste reduction with a collaborative approach.

Councillor Judy Roberts, Cabinet Member for Place, Environment and Climate Action, presented the report.

The Head of Climate Action and the Zero Carbon Oxfordshire Policy and Project Lead gave a presentation on the main aspects of the framework.

The framework emphasised collaboration with businesses, anchor institutions, community groups, and the Zero Carbon Oxfordshire Partnership, aiming for a holistic programme benefiting residents and supporting sustainable growth. It was organised around eight themes,

including green skills, sustainable transport, energy and buildings, nature recovery, and waste, with delivery priorities such as skills boot camps, retrofit programmes, EV charging expansion, and landscape-scale nature projects.

During discussion, Cabinet members referred to the challenges in meeting climate targets, particularly in transport and housing, the need for more robust action and influence over external stakeholders, and the importance of continued lobbying for national funding. Examples of progress included the introduction of electric buses, commitments to zero-carbon developments, and the use of policy tools such as congestion charges and traffic filters to support climate goals, but members acknowledged the need for further action.

Councillor Roberts moved and Councillor Gregory seconded the recommendation, and it was approved.

RESOLVED to approve the Oxfordshire Climate Action Framework 2026-2030.

27/26 HR & CULTURAL CHANGE - QUARTERLY EMPLOYEE DATA REPORT- QUARTER 3 2025-26

(Agenda Item. 10)

Cabinet had before it a report which provided an overview of the progress towards delivering the Our People and Culture Strategy (as measured by the achievement of its key performance indicators). The report summarised the main employee-related trends for Q3 2025/26 and reviewed trends over the last four quarters.

Councillor Neil Fawcett, Cabinet Member for Resources and Deputy Leader, presented the report. Councillor Fawcett referred, in particular, to improvements in recruitment processes**.** There had been a slight increase in agency spend because of ongoing challenges in recruiting to hard-to-fill roles including legal staff and educational psychologists.

The Council continued to maintain a high percentage of apprenticeship levy spending, particularly in adult and children's social care. Stress and mental health remain the leading causes of staff sickness, reflecting a national trend, and the Council was continuing efforts to support staff well-being.

During discussion**,** Cabinet members noted the need for deeper analysis of agency staff data by department and anticipated challenges in recruitment as local government reorganisation approached.

Councillor Fawcett moved and Councillor Higgins seconded the recommendation.

RESOLVED to note the report.

28/26 FORWARD PLAN AND FUTURE BUSINESS

(Agenda Item. 11)

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

RESOLVED to note the items currently identified for forthcoming meetings.

29/26 FOR INFORMATION ONLY - CABINET RESPONSE TO SCRUTINY ITEMS

(Agenda Item. 12)

Cabinet noted the following responses to Scrutiny items:-

Infrastructure Funding Statement s.106
Movement and Place Plans

…….in the Chair

Date of signing ……..

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Divisions Affected – All

CABINET
17 March 2026

Local Area Partnership Monitoring and Priority Action Plan
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 convened an additional meeting on 30 January 2026. This was principally to consider a report on the Local Area Partnership's SEND monitoring and Priority Action Plan and the opportunity to consider the Area SEND monitoring visit inspection report which had been published at the end of November 2025.

4. The Committee would like to thank Cllr Sean Gaul, Cabinet member for Children and Young People, Lisa Lyons, the Director of Children's Services, Matthew Tait, the Integrated Care Board's Chief Operating Officer, for

attending to present the report, as well as Annette Perrington, Interim Deputy Director for Education and Deborah Smit, Assistant Director: SEND and Inclusion.

5. The Committee was also grateful to Steve Crocker, the Independent Chair of the Oxfordshire SEND Strategic Improvement and Assurance Board (SIAB), Jules Francis-Sinclair, the Chair of the Oxfordshire Parent Carer Forum (OxPCF), and Sophia Johnson, Feedback and Reporting Coordinator at the Oxfordshire Parent Carer Forum for attending.

6. The Committee welcomed the progress since the 2023 Area SEND Inspection and noted that the Local Area Partnership had taken 'effective action' across all five areas for priority action. However, the Committee also heard and noted evidence that improvement must be sustained against ongoing demand and financial pressures; that clarity is needed about the purpose and resourcing of resource bases (i.e., those specialist units within some mainstream schools which provide tailored support to those with specific SEND); the system must strengthen transition arrangements, particularly for pupils moving from primary resource bases into secondary education.

SUMMARY

7. The Cabinet Member for Children and Young People reported that the SEND Local Area Partnership had made significant progress in recent years, evolving into a more coherent and outcome-focused system. This increased confidence was attributed to stronger joint working arrangements and the steady leadership of the Independent Chair, alongside committed effort from officers and partner agencies. Together, these improvements had helped to establish a clearer shared purpose around delivering better outcomes for children and young people with SEND.

8. The Assistant Director for SEND and Inclusion outlined the structured progress made since the 2023 SEND inspection, organised around five priority action areas: strengthening the voice of children and young people, improving communication, enhancing the quality and timeliness of EHCPs, reinforcing commissioning, and bolstering accountability and governance. She reported steady, evidenced improvements across each of these areas but also highlighted ongoing challenges, including inconsistent communication, the need to deepen workforce understanding of SEND, and increasing participation in the youth forum so that a wider range of voices could be heard. Contributions from OxPCF were acknowledged as central to this work, with many of their proposals incorporated into the Priority Action Plan and others redirected to wider improvement streams where they could be meaningfully progressed.

9. The Committee discussed the implications of local government reorganisation (LGR), noting the need for early planning and careful management of any future structural changes. The Independent Chair confirmed that the Partnership had already considered different scenarios and would maintain

continuity through any transition. He emphasised the importance of stability, even as future governance arrangements remain uncertain.

10. Members examined waiting times and early help pathways, distinguishing between statutory EHCP-related timescales – which were generally being met – and the more variable waits within wider health services. Officers highlighted improvements achieved through redesigned pathways, triage processes, and tools like WellComm, which enable early intervention before assessments are complete. Training for school and early years staff was also expanded to ensure practical help could begin while families awaited specialist support.

11. The Committee also explored progress monitoring, performance assurance, and system learning, including safeguards designed to maintain EHCP quality alongside faster processing. Updated governance arrangements now rely on themed highlight reports and escalation processes to identify risks earlier and maintain momentum. Members further considered the role of children and young people's voices, the realism of future targets, and the importance of sustained collaboration to ensure continuous improvement.

12. The Committee makes three recommendations: each is about ensuring that the Council, as part of the wider system, sets out its plans for building on and sustaining the improvements that have been noted. The Committee recommends that plans are set out for targeted SEND support; for resource bases within Oxfordshire schools; for strengthened transition pathways.

13. In making these recommendations, the Committee is cognisant of the uncertainty that the prospect of LGR brings to any medium- to long-term planning on the Council's part. The Committee was encouraged to hear that the Partnership had already started considering the impact of the possible iterations in the current County Council region (i.e., that the County Council becomes a unitary authority for the same footprint; that, with the inclusion of West Berkshire Council's area, the current footprint is divided into either two or three unitary authorities). Despite the potential for significant change to the delivery of children's services, the Committee is of the view that planning remains essential.

RECOMMENDATIONS

14. The Committee welcomed the "effective action" judgement from Ofsted/CQC and recognised that Oxfordshire has taken reasonable steps to address all five areas for priority action since the 2023 inspection. Inspectors pointed to strengthened governance, improved oversight and an increasingly integrated approach to planning and decision-making, with a clearer partnership structure from board level through to delivery groups.

15. However, the Committee also noted that the monitoring letter is explicit that "effective action does not mean the area for priority action is no longer a concern" and that improvement must be sustained to avoid slippage and renewed concern in future inspections.

16. Against that background, the Committee considered sustainability and resourcing to be a pivotal 'next stage' issue because the improvement achieved to date is being delivered in a context of continuing demand growth, workforce pressure and constrained public finances. The report submitted to the Committee is clear that the updated Priority Action Plan continues to carry financial implications across both the Dedicated Schools Grant and the General Fund and, also, that the impacts of improvement activity have not yet been fully quantified. It also highlights specific indicative budget pressures for statutory SEND services (including SEND casework and Educational Psychology), arising from increased statutory demand associated with EHCP assessment and review activity and quality/timeliness improvements.

17. The Committee is very aware that the national SEND system remains under significant pressure and that Oxfordshire's local progress will require constant attention and maintenance to be sustained.

18. The Committee concluded, therefore, that a clear plan for the long-term sustainability and resourcing of targeted SEND support is necessary because it directly addresses an identified risk in the inspection findings and would strengthen the Council's ability to sustain improvement at pace. Inspectors explicitly recorded stakeholder concerns about "the longevity and sustainability of some projects," even whilst noting the positive impact from partnership-funded initiatives and joint commissioning.

19. A published sustainability plan would help the Council and partners move from 'time-limited improvement activity' to 'business-as-usual' delivery by: (i) setting out how targeted interventions will be funded and workforce-supported over the medium term; (ii) aligning improvement commitments to the Council's budget cycle and the DSG management plan; and (iii) clarifying how impact will be maintained and monitored through the existing governance and Key Performance Indicator arrangements described in the Priority Action Plan (particularly with theme groups reporting to the Partnership Delivery Group and the SIAB with agreed indicators and feedback loops).

20. In practical terms, this would strengthen system stability (by reducing stop-start delivery), improve transparency for partners and families, and reduce the risk that short-term gains in inclusion and early support might be lost due to funding cliffs or workforce churn.

Recommendation 1: That the Council should set out a clear plan for the long-term sustainability and resourcing of targeted SEND support across Oxfordshire, ensuring that improvements made through the Local Area SEND Partnership can be maintained despite ongoing financial and demand pressures.

21. The Committee identified resource bases as an increasingly important part of Oxfordshire's inclusion and provision landscape. However, it heard evidence that the current system lacks the strategic clarity needed to ensure they operate consistently and sustainably. Discussion at the meeting highlighted the need for deeper workforce understanding of SEND, stronger

communication across the system, and more coherent delivery across agencies. These are all issues that directly affect how resource bases function and how consistently they support children across the county.

22. The report to the Committee emphasises that improvement activity has prompted better joint work across education and health and care but also recognises that inconsistencies remain and further work is required to embed system-wide coherence. These factors strengthen the case for a refreshed strategic statement on resource bases that sets out purpose, expectations, and alignment with the wider SEND Improvement Programme.

23. The Committee further noted that while Ofsted/CQC found "effective action" across all priority areas, inspectors also recorded stakeholder concerns about the sustainability and sufficiency of provision. The Committee notes that the monitoring letter explicitly highlights the importance of coordinated, consistent practice, and identifies persistent variation in communication and in how children's needs are understood and met across the system.

24. At the meeting, officers and partners stressed that resource bases must be positioned coherently within redesigned pathways, strengthened early-help approaches, and improved transitions, especially given the national context of structural pressures and uneven performance. A clear, updated statement would therefore help to align expectations for schools, professionals, families and commissioners.

25. The Committee concluded that not producing a refreshed strategic statement could carry significant drawbacks. Without clear guidance, resource bases may continue to develop unevenly, risking variation in access, quality, staffing and integration with mainstream settings—issues already highlighted in inspection findings and discussion. The absence of a defined strategic framework could undermine inclusion by weakening pathways between resource bases, mainstream provision and specialist services at a time when the system is already under pressure. Conversely, a formal statement would give the Council and its partners a common reference point for commissioning, workforce planning, sufficiency decisions, and future investment. This would strengthen the system's resilience and support more equitable provision for children and young people across Oxfordshire.

Recommendation 2: That the Council should provide an updated strategic statement on the purpose, role, and operational expectations of resource bases within Oxfordshire schools, including how these bases will be funded and supported in the medium- to long-term as part of the wider SEND Improvement Programme.

26. The Committee noted that transition points are moments of heightened vulnerability for children and young people with SEND, and the discussion reinforced that inconsistent communication and variable practice across agencies can significantly affect families at these stages. The Independent Chair highlighted that experiences still differ depending on the practitioner

involved and that the system, though more cohesive, continues to operate in a national context marked by structural pressures and instability.

27. The Ofsted/CQC monitoring letter also sets out that, although "effective action" has been taken, inconsistencies remain—particularly in how children's needs are understood, recorded and supported across services—making transition a key pressure point that requires deliberate strengthening. The Committee is of the view that having a formally published, strengthened transition pathway would provide a clear, consistent roadmap for all parties, reducing the risk that children fall through gaps during critical educational moves.

28. The Committee also heard explicit evidence about the importance of incorporating the voices and lived experiences of older young people who reflected on earlier transitions and what would have helped them. The Independent Chair confirmed that these retrospective perspectives had already shaped improvement discussions and that they exposed system weaknesses at key points, especially the move from primary to secondary school. This had highlighted areas where earlier support or clearer processes could have changed experiences.

29. The Committee notes that the Priority Action Plan commits to strengthened governance, deeper engagement with children and young people, and improved co-production of processes, all of which align with the need for a clearly defined transition pathway with measurable outcomes. The Committee is therefore of the view that formalising the transition pathway would support both regulatory requirements and the system's aim – which is both stated and laudable – of embedding the child's voice at the centre of planning.

30. The Committee concluded that failing to strengthen and publish a transition pathway would create foreseeable risks to the Council and the wider system. Without a clear and consistent process, variations in communication – which had already been identified both by inspectors and by the Committee – could potentially persist or widen. Were that to be the case, it could well lead to increasing anxiety for families and potentially contribute to breakdowns in placement or unnecessary escalation to specialist settings.

31. The absence of a strengthened assurance framework with benchmarking against statistical neighbours would also hinder the Council's ability to assess performance transparently, respond early to pressures, and demonstrate sustained improvement. This is something that Ofsted/CQC explicitly require.

32. In contrast, the Committee considers that adopting the recommendation would reinforce system stability, support inclusion, strengthen accountability, and help maintain regulatory confidence by ensuring that transition processes are robust, well-evidenced, and consistently applied across the county.

Recommendation 3: That the Council should develop and publish a strengthened transition pathway for children and young people moving from primary resource bases into secondary education, ensuring continuity of provision, clarity for families, and an enhanced assurance framework aligned

to the improvement actions identified since the 2023 SEND inspection which should also include benchmarking against statistical neighbours and comparable authorities.

FURTHER CONSIDERATION

33. The Committee does not anticipate considering the Local Area SEND Partnership again during the remainder of this municipal year.

LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

34. 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.

35. 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 & 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

March 2026

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Overview & Scrutiny Recommendation Response Pro forma

Under section 9FE of the Local Government Act 2000, Overview and Scrutiny Committees must require the Cabinet or local authority to respond to a report or recommendations made thereto by an Overview and Scrutiny Committee. Such a response must be provided within two months from the date on which it is requested[1] and, if the report or recommendations in questions were published, the response also must be so.

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

Issue: **Local Area Partnership Monitoring and Priority Action Plan**

Lead Cabinet Member(s): **Cllr Sean Gaul, Cabinet Member for Children and Young People**

Date response requested:[2] **17 March 2026**

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 set out a clear plan for the long-term sustainability and resourcing of targeted SEND support across Oxfordshire, ensuring that improvements made through the Local Area SEND Partnership can be maintained despite ongoing financial***		

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

Overview & Scrutiny Recommendation Response Pro forma

and demand pressures.		
2. That the Council should provide an updated strategic statement on the purpose, role, and operational expectations of resource bases within Oxfordshire schools, including how these bases will be funded and supported in the medium- to long-term as part of the wider SEND Improvement Programme.		
3. That the Council should develop and publish a strengthened transition pathway for children and young people moving from primary resource bases into secondary education, ensuring continuity of provision, clarity for families, and an enhanced assurance framework aligned to the improvement actions identified since the 2023 SEND inspection which should also include benchmarking against statistical neighbours and comparable authorities.		

Divisions Affected – All

CABINET

17 March 2026

Education Otherwise Than At School (EOTAS) Guidance
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 Education Otherwise Than At School (EOTAS) Guidance and the associated EOTAS Toolkit at its meeting on 30 January 2026.

4. Cabinet had approved Oxfordshire's EOTAS Policy in July 2025 and had also agreed to the Committee's recommendation that the accompanying guidance should be taken through a co-production process and that it should return to the Committee before being finalised. The Committee focussed on whether

the draft guidance was sufficiently accessible for families whilst remaining legally accurate and operationally sound.

5. The Committee would like to thank Cllr Sean Gaul, Cabinet member for Children and Young People, Lisa Lyons, the Director of Children's Services, for attending to present the report, as well as Annette Perrington, Interim Deputy Director for Education and Deborah Smit, Assistant Director: SEND and Inclusion.

6. The Committee was also grateful to Jules Francis-Sinclair, the Chair of the Oxfordshire Parent Carer Forum (OxPCF), and Sophia Johnson, Feedback and Reporting Coordinator at the Oxfordshire Parent Carer Forum for attending.

SUMMARY

7. The Cabinet Member for Children and Young People introduced the Education Other Than At School (EOTAS) Guidance report by recalling his early experience of the topic on joining the County Council and Cabinet, noting the volume of representations and the ongoing public interest. At that point, the Council had required a clear policy framework. Whilst the policy itself had included some co-production, the accompanying guidance had not. Cabinet therefore approved the policy but, in line with the Committee's recommendation, required the guidance to be taken through a co-production process.

8. The Chair of OxPCF acknowledged the substantial effort invested in developing the EOTAS guidance but considered it not yet ready to be treated as final or genuinely co-produced. Concerns centred on the process and the absence of a clear co-production framework, limited senior officer involvement, and unresolved issues raised by parents. The guidance set out expectations of parents with reasonable clarity but it was judged to lack corresponding clarity about the Council's responsibilities, arrangements for monitoring and safeguarding, and accessibility. The Chair of OxPCF recommended further meetings with senior leaders, clearer language and structure, practical appendices, and a proper publication plan, together with a commitment to review the guidance after one year.

9. The Interim Deputy Director: Education and Inclusion recognised the considerable work and engagement undertaken and accepted that confidence in the document's usefulness to parents had not yet been fully established. The point of the current stage was to reflect carefully on the feedback and determine the further steps required to secure a helpful, agreed document.

10. The Chair reminded members that the Committee's function was to make recommendations rather than to dictate to Cabinet. Both the policy and the draft guidance had previously gone to Cabinet; the task now was to focus on what the Committee wished to say about the guidance, rather than revisiting the detailed content line by line.

11. The Committee heard that the draft EOTAS guidance had been developed with considerable effort and engagement, albeit that the previous commitment to full co-production had been challenging to the point that it had not proven practicable. The Committee established that the guidance's purpose was to support parents and carers in understanding the statutory processes, evidence requirements, and decision-making tests involved in EOTAS.

12. The Committee also discussed the implications of not revising the guidance. Members noted that families might continue to struggle to understand decision-making and evidence requirements, increasing the likelihood of delay, disagreement or complaint.

13. The Committee therefore makes one recommendation: that the guidance be broken down so that key information is clearer and more accessible, whilst technical content can be updated in appendices as operational practice evolves.

RECOMMENDATION

14. The Committee was clear on the importance of the Council having an EOTAS Policy. Cabinet had adopted such in July 2025 and the Committee did not consider it appropriate or desirable to re-open discussion about that. However, the Committee did hear from those representing parents and carers that there remained some disquiet about the draft guidance as submitted to the Committee.

15. The Committee regretted that it had not proven possible to co-produce the guidance, despite the intentions of the Council. However, despite the impracticability of co-production, there remained agreement throughout the discussion that what was needed what guidance that was legally robust but also genuinely usable for families.

16. Members noted that confidence in the draft's usefulness to families had not yet been fully established, and that it was reported that its length, structure and technical density made it difficult for some parents and carers to navigate. The Committee recognised the challenge of balancing legal accuracy with accessibility but was clear that greater clarity and a more manageable structure were needed.

17. Members explored how the inherently technical nature of EOTAS had shaped the drafting, including the need to explain the Section 61 test, bespoke package design, and safeguarding and monitoring processes. Officers advised that oversimplifying these elements would risk misleading families or weakening the guidance's legal soundness; however, they accepted that important improvements could still be made. The Committee explored whether a more modular approach – separating parent facing information from officer processes – would help to achieve the necessary balance.

18. The Committee considered that both the EOTAS guidance as drafted and the EOTAS toolkit demonstrated the value of a modular structure. The Committee was of the view that placing procedural and technical content in appendices whilst maintaining a shorter, clearer, parent-facing narrative would do much to improve clarity without weaking legal accuracy.

19. The Committee considers that this would bring wider system benefits in that it would support consistency, reduce misinterpretation, and help to improve the quality of evidence submitted. It would also improve maintainability, in that it would allow technical updates to be made without repeatedly revising the core guidance.

20. The Committee believes that failing to revise the guidance as drafted would pose foreseeable risks, including confusion, delay, and increased likelihood of disagreement or complaint. The Committee does not consider that restructuring the guidance would reopen policy decisions but, instead, would strengthen the likelihood that the guidance will fulfil its intended purpose.

21. The Committee therefore considers such a restructuring to be both proportionate and practical. The Committee recognises that EOTAS packages are currently used by a relatively small number of families (around 70 at the time of the Committee's meeting) but the total cost had previously been estimated at around £3.8 million. Each package is bespoke with the most expensive at around £300k per year, with most falling between £60k and £100k annually. For context, the Committee established that 'enhanced pathways', which support a cohort of around ten children with higher levels of need within mainstream-based inclusion programmes, were funded at the level of one teacher and one Higher Level Teaching Assistant, amounting to roughly £85k per year.

22. Whilst EOTAS packages are only used by a relatively small number of families, the fact that they cost so much money means that it is vital that they are accessed appropriately. The guidance arising from the policy should therefore be appropriate and accessible.

Recommendation: That the EOTAS guidance be broken down, with simpler, plain English and accessible information provided for parents and carers, supported by appendices containing officer processes and technical detail.

FURTHER CONSIDERATION

23. The Committee does not anticipate considering EOTAS again during the remainder of this municipal year.

LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

24. 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.

25. 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 & 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

March 2026

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Overview & Scrutiny Recommendation Response Pro forma

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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: **Education Otherwise Than At School (EOTAS) Guidance**

Lead Cabinet Member(s): **Cllr Sean Gaul, Cabinet Member for Children and Young People**

Date response requested:[2] **17 March 2026**

Response to recommendations:

Recommendation	Accepted, rejected or partially accepted	Proposed action (if different to that recommended) and indicative timescale (unless rejected)
That the Council should arrange for the EOTAS guidance to be broken down, with simpler, plain English and accessible information provided for parents and carers, supported by appendices containing officer processes and technical detail.		

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

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Divisions Affected – All

CABINET

17 March 2026

Road Safety

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 relevant officers will continue to update Scrutiny for 12 months on progress made against actions committed to in response to the recommendations, 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. The Place Overview and Scrutiny Committee considered a report on Road Safety at its meeting on 04 February 2026.

4. The Committee would like to thank Cllr Andrew Gant, Cabinet Member for Transport Management, Paul Fermer, Director of Environment and Highways, Sean Rooney, Head of Service – Highway Maintenance and Road Safety, Andrew Ford, Road Safety Education Team Manager at Oxfordshire Fire & Rescue Service, and Anthony Kirkwood, Team Leader – Vision Zero, for attending to present the report and to answer the Committee's questions.

5. The Committee had anticipated that this item would provide an opportunity to scrutinise both the Council and Thames Valley Police and the work they each

do both separately and together. The Committee noted the apologies from the Road Traffic Unit at Thames Valley Police (TVP) that no-one was able to attend but was grateful for the presentation they had provided[1] as well as both a brief statement and a future commitment to attend a meeting of the Committee.

SUMMARY

6. The Cabinet Member for Transport Management emphasised that road safety sits at the heart of all transport policy, with Vision Zero operating as the overarching framework guiding decision-making. He reiterated the central principle that deaths and serious injuries should never be regarded as an inevitable consequence of economic activity or mobility and stressed the Council's ambition to eliminate such harms entirely. He highlighted a range of ongoing initiatives – including the countywide 20mph programme, expansion of School Streets, and delivery of segregated active-travel infrastructure – emphasising that across the network safety must take precedence.

7. The Head of Service for Highway Maintenance and Road Safety underlined the interdependence of maintenance and safety, stressing that both must be managed together within a unified system. He explained that Vision Zero requires cohesive working across engineering, operations, maintenance and engagement teams, and that collaboration is essential to ensure safety objectives are embedded throughout the Council's activity. His evidence emphasised the need for consistent, cross-service strategies and for safety considerations to be systematically integrated into routine inspection, maintenance, and programme planning.

8. The Road Safety Education Team Manager at Oxfordshire Fire & Rescue Service (OFRS) described how road safety education now forms part of the service's Prevention team and is structured around the longstanding "three Es": Environment, Education, and Enforcement. He outlined a wide range of programmes successfully delivered to schools and communities, including pedestrian training, cycle training reaching more than 6,000 children annually, behavioural-change work with young drivers, and targeted engagement with motorcyclists. He noted a desire to reach all schools, though instructor capacity remained a constraint. The Director of Environment and Highways added that the publication of the new national Road Safety Strategy provided an opportunity to review and update Oxfordshire's Vision Zero Strategy, strengthen partnership work, and ensure alignment with emerging best practice.

9. Public addresses to the Committee had highlighted network design, freight safety, and resource levels for Vision Zero as issues of concern to the public. During the Committee's discussion with the Cabinet member and the officers, members explored trends in casualty data, noting increases in pedestrian Killed or Seriously Injured incidents (KSIs) and concerns around junction

[1] Published as Annex 3 to the report: https://mycouncil.oxfordshire.gov.uk/mgAi.aspx?ID=35248

safety, potholes and arterial road speeds. The Committee discussed the adequacy of enforcement, especially around 20mph compliance, and welcomed TVP's forthcoming tasking team.

10. Detailed questioning covered Bikeability capacity, structural organisation of road safety education, and the need for stable recruitment models. Members raised issues around signage at School Streets, the importance of locality-level data sharing, and inconsistent post-collision communication.

11. The Committee makes 11 recommendations. These are grouped into four sections: there are four which relate to communication, governance, and data use; three relating to education, training, and behaviour change; three under the heading of targeted safety interventions for high-risk users and locations. The last recommendation relates to the Council's role in shaping wider policy and standards.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Communication, Governance, and Data Use

12. The Committees notes that, as part of the Vision Zero strategy, the Council is committed to an holistic post-collision response "that prioritises scene safety and stabilisation, from the initial first aid, all the way through to collision analysis and reviews, learning from investigations, and effective and long-term post-collision care."[2] Effective post-collision communication between relevant agencies is essential to ensure timely intelligence reaches highways teams and improves the Council's ability to respond to serious incidents. One member highlighted a case where it was felt that inconsistent reporting from Thames Valley Police prevented prompt action. Strengthening this process will support the safe system approach emphasised in the Vision Zero Strategy.

13. Improved communication would allow earlier intervention on high-risk locations, helping prevent recurrence and aligning with duties under the Road Traffic Act 1988 s.39. It would also support more transparent data-sharing, which members stressed as critical.

14. The Committee considers that improving both post-collision communication and follow-up would enhance public trust and also demonstrate the Council's proactive commitment to learning from serious incidents. Better follow-up will also support stronger partnership working across the system, with TVP, OFRS and NHS partners.

15. The Committee is concerned that declining to adopt this recommendation risks continued delays in safety-critical responses, higher collision risks, and reputational harm where residents perceive that lessons from serious incidents are not being acted upon. The Committee does not consider this to

[2] https://www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/transport-and-travel/road-safety/vision-zero

be a controversial recommendation but a straightforwardly common sense one. However good the post-collision response might be, it can always be improved.

Recommendation 1: That the Council should work to improve the post-collision responses, especially between the Council and TVP, in regard to communication and follow-up, particularly about serious incidents.

16. Members have repeatedly raised concerns about the need to strengthen communication between officers and elected members. Regrettably, that was felt to be necessary on this occasion too. Members highlighted inconsistent communication channels, particularly in relation to FixMyStreet reporting, collision follow-up, and programme decisions that rely on incident data. The Committee considered that clearer and more reliable reporting routes would improve transparency and ensure that members' detailed knowledge of their divisions, and the specific road safety issues within them, is used effectively.

17. The Vision Zero Strategy places strong emphasis on partnership working across all agencies. Officers acknowledged that communication with members could be improved and the Committee calls upon the Council to ensure that meaningful progress is made. The Committee is firmly of the view that improving trust, enabling members to act as informed advocates for their communities, and supporting more locally responsive programme planning is intrinsically beneficial. It is also wholly aligned with the ambitions of Vision Zero.

18. The Committee believes that failure to improve communication risks decisions being taken without adequate local intelligence, missed opportunities to address emerging risks, and growing frustration among members, which could in turn undermine confidence in the Council's road safety programme. The Committee considers this programme far too important for such avoidable shortcomings to continue.

Recommendation 2: That the Council should strengthen communication between officers and members, with clearer reporting routes and updates.

19. The Committee noted that the Casualty Report 2024 identified district-level variations in pedestrian, cyclist and motorcyclist casualties. District-level trends were explored in Committee, but it was recognised that local members were better-placed to drill down into the data.

20. The Committee considered that the Council's Locality meetings (of councillors in a particular area) are well placed to explore this data in detail. Providing regular data to Locality meetings would allow emerging hotspots to be identified more quickly and enable more transparent prioritisation of safety interventions, consistent with the Safe Roads and Safe Users pillars.

21. Referring data to Locality meetings for local analysis would strengthen evidence-led decision-making as well as ensuring that local members are able to share their knowledge and awareness constructively. It could also ensure

that insights from collision patterns inform future capital and maintenance programme planning.

Recommendation 3: That the Council should ensure Vision Zero / road safety data is taken to Locality meetings for more granular analysis.

22. The Committee recognised that the annexes to the report were not newly-produced documents expressly intended for the Committee's attention. However, members noted actions marked as complete or overdue were not consistently recorded in Annex A. The Committee considers that a clear record is necessary for monitoring accountability, governance and delivery. The Committee considers that failure to update records risks confusion about progress, misalignment of resources, and also weakens the opportunity for effective scrutiny.

23. Vision Zero is a long-term programme requiring clear progress tracking. Accurate action status supports annual reporting and Cabinet oversight and therefore improves transparency, ensuring accurate governance and also member confidence.

24. The Committee was grateful that officers recognised the need to update the action plan and therefore calls on the Council to ensure it is done.

Recommendation 4: That the Council should update the Vision Zero Action Plan (Annex 1 and Annex A) so that actions marked as complete or overdue are properly recorded.

Education, Training, and Behaviour Change

25. The Road Safety Education Manager reported that instructor capacity remains under significant pressure. Whilst more than 6,000 children are trained each year, delivery is increasingly constrained by workforce shortages. The Committee was advised that these recruitment challenges reflect a wider national pattern. Members considered that it would be prudent for the Council to investigate the underlying causes of these shortages, since expanding instructor capacity would directly support the ambition to provide universal cycle training.

26. The Committee noted the broad range of education programmes offered in Oxfordshire but expressed concern about the reliance on multiple contracted providers. Members suggested that Cambridgeshire's more stable model, delivered largely through a single organisation rather than several, may offer a helpful comparator for future consideration.

27. The Committee is keen to ensure that the Council does not face persistent gaps in delivery, reduced school participation, or inequitable access across the county. Given that Bikeability funding is increasingly focused on measurable outcomes, the Committee believes that strengthening internal and external capacity is both necessary and desirable.

28. Launching a successful recruitment campaign would help to support safer cycling outcomes, contribute to the Safe Users element of Vision Zero, and reinforce long-term behaviour change among young people. It would also provide a more resilient basis for programme delivery. The Committee further considers that, given the strong enthusiasm for cycling across many parts of Oxfordshire and the Council's commitment to high-quality cycling infrastructure, it is quite possible that a number of voluntary groups would be willing to support such a campaign.

Recommendation 5: That the Council should launch a campaign to recruit more Bikeability instructors and, also, investigate the underlying limiting factors.

29. Members heard that, despite extensive educational work, marketing and communication continue to pose a major barrier to reaching the public effectively. Officers explained that they would welcome a clearer and more accessible website dedicated specifically to road safety, rather than relying on pages within the general Council website. This, together with improved publicity materials, would provide stronger support for behaviour-change campaigns.

30. Communication is a central element of both the Safe Users and Safe Speeds pillars within the Vision Zero strategy. Strengthened website content would assist the monthly themed campaigns delivered with TVP and OFRS, and would ensure that residents can easily access guidance on cycling, pedestrian safety, and post-collision support.

31. The Committee is concerned that a sub-optimal website risks ongoing fragmentation of information, reduced public engagement with safety advice, and weaker behaviour-change outcomes that are essential to achieving Vision Zero objectives. It therefore calls on the Council to improve the road safety website and to allocate the necessary resources to do so. The Committee believes that these improvements would strengthen public awareness, support higher compliance with speed limits, and enhance the visibility of safety campaigns. They would also provide a central and trusted source of information for schools, partners and the wider public.

Recommendation 6: That the Council should improve the road safety website and marketing, ensuring clearer public information and better visibility of safety campaigns.

32. Members, and residents generally, are acutely aware that schools are critical partners in shaping long-term behaviour change. Officers outlined a number of successful programmes, including the Footsteps pedestrian training scheme and OFRS's wider road safety education offer, which already engage closely with school communities.

33. The Committee considered that it would be helpful were the Council to encourage schools to designate an internal road safety lead. Such a role

would strengthen coordination between the Council and individual schools, as well as between schools within local areas. Members were of the view that road safety leads would complement existing Bikeability provision and support emerging work to promote a more visible and embedded safety culture across school communities.

34. The Committee further believed that establishing road safety leads would help embed Vision Zero principles from an early age, ensuring consistent messaging and enabling more effective collaboration with Council teams. This is why it believes the Council should encourage schools to identify and empower designated leads, supporting them to champion the importance of road safety within their settings.

Recommendation 7: That the Council should encourage primary schools to have local leads for road safety.

Targeted Safety Interventions for High-Risk Users and Locations

35. The Committee noted that pedestrian casualties rose by 42% in 2024, with 83% occurring at speeds ≤30mph, demonstrating the vulnerability of pedestrians even at lower speeds. District data in Annex 2 showed notable concentrations in the Cherwell District Council and Oxford City Council areas.

36. Members raised concerns about junction safety, turning movements, and inadequate crossings. The Committee considered that a targeted programme would support Safe Roads interventions and improve protection for the most vulnerable road users.

37. The Council's commitments under the Local Transport and Connectivity Plan (LTCP) to improve active travel safety are such that it necessary to strengthen the strategic focus on high-harm user groups. The transport user hierarchy means that pedestrians are at the top according to the Highway Code but it also the case that, under the LTCP, walking will be considered foremost. Not having a specific pedestrian safety programme could risk preventable injuries continuing which would, in turn, undermine public confidence. It would also weaken progress towards Vision Zero's 2030 reduction targets.

38. The Committee recognises that such a campaign would require resource to be dedicated to it but believes that to be necessary.

Recommendation 8: That the Council should develop a specific pedestrian safety programme, focussed on areas with high numbers of fatal and serious pedestrian casualties.

39. The Committee notes that speeding remains one of the "Fatal 5" causes of collisions. The Committee noted that TVP's presentation contained within the papers for the meeting showed significant enforcement activity but, at the same time, growing road policing demand. Members heard that compliance with 20mph limits varied and further enforcement is needed.

40. The Committee highlights that TVP's presentation at Annex 3 outlined emerging technologies including new camera types and a forthcoming agile tasking team. The Committee is of the view that collaboration with TVP would help to ensure that enforcement aligned with local risk. The Committee recognises that TVP taking enforcement action cannot be dictated by either the Committee's recommendations or by the Council's requests.

41. However, the Committee is of the view that it is imperative that the Council seeks to use its leverage to work with TVP to encourage greater enforcement, including the use of more speed cameras. This would, the Committee posits, contribute to improving compliance, reducing collision severity, supporting Safe Speeds outcomes (particularly on the A and B roads highlighted in the casualty data before the Committee), increasing deterrence, and better outcomes from recent policy investments in 20mph rollouts.

Recommendation 9: That the Council should work with Thames Valley Police to encourage the increase of enforcement, including use of more speed cameras.

42. Members highlighted that there had been delays in updating Vehicle Activated Signs (VAS) to reflect newly implemented 20mph speed limits. Officers confirmed that approximately fifty units were still awaiting conversion, and the Committee considered that reviewing the deployment, condition and accuracy of these signs would help to ensure consistency across the network. Such a review was viewed as an important means of improving compliance with the new limits and maximising the effectiveness of the recent 20mph transformation programme.

43. The Committee also recognised that well-placed VAS units can support behavioural change, particularly in locations where enforcement resources may be limited. One 2024 study[3], for example, found that VAS installations at 20 mph sites produced statistically significant reductions in vehicle speeds, even without enforcement presence. Accepting this recommendation would therefore ensure the Council makes the best possible use of its existing assets, both reinforcing the visibility of speed limits and also promoting safer driving behaviour. These, in turn, would contribute to safer streets and strengthen public confidence in the Council's approach to speed management.

44. By contrast, failing to undertake such a review would risk continued inconsistency in signage across the network. This could result in reduced compliance with newly introduced limits, weaken the behavioural impacts expected from the 20mph programme, and undermine the significant investment already made. Inconsistencies in the display and functioning of VAS units also risk generating public dissatisfaction or confusion, diminishing the perceived credibility of the wider Vision Zero programme.

[3] Olowosegun, A.; Fountas, G.; Davis, A. Effective Trigger Speeds for Vehicle Activated Signs on 20 mph Roads in Rural Areas. Safety 2024, 10, 25. https://doi.org/10.3390/safety10010025

Recommendation 10: That the Council should review the use and deployment of Vehicle Activated Signs (VAS) to assess effectiveness and improve the process.

Strategic and National-Level Influence

45. Freight movement is essential to the economy, but the fact that it is often transported by Heavy Goods Vehicles means that large and potentially dangerous vehicles routinely travel through local communities. Members highlighted the importance of the Direct Vision Standard, the Fleet Operator Recognition Scheme (FORS) and the Construction Logistics and Community Safety (CLOCS) framework, noting the safety benefits each can deliver. Officers confirmed that work is already underway locally, particularly through the Council's Freight and Logistics Strategy, but also noted that national type approval is ultimately required to achieve the greatest impact.

46. Given the role of freight in serious collisions, including those involving vulnerable road users, the Committee believes that national standards would deliver significant safety benefits. The Committee recognises that the Council cannot itself create or enforce HGV safety regulations on a wider basis. However, it can advocate for them to national politicians, policy leads and other key stakeholders. The Committee considers that such advocacy has the potential to bring real benefits and should therefore be undertaken.

47. The Committee is clear that no one wishes to see slow progress on freight safety. Successfully advocating for improved HGV safety standards would not only support local safety efforts but would also reinforce the Council's position as a national leader in this area. If the Council has an opportunity to help influence national policy, the Committee believes that it should take that opportunity.

Recommendation 11: That the Council should advocate nationally for improved HGV safety standards (e.g., type-approval requirements).

FURTHER CONSIDERATION

48. The Committee does not anticipate revisiting this topic again during this municipal year.

LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

49. 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.

50. 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

March 2026

Overview & Scrutiny Recommendation Response Pro forma

Under section 9FE of the Local Government Act 2000, Overview and Scrutiny Committees must require the Cabinet or local authority to respond to a report or recommendations made thereto by an Overview and Scrutiny Committee. Such a response must be provided within two months from the date on which it is requested[1] and, if the report or recommendations in questions were published, the response also must be so.

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

Issue: **Road Safety**

Lead Cabinet Member(s): **Cllr Andrew Gant, Cabinet Member for Transport Management**

Date response requested:[2] **17 March 2026**

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 work to improve the post-collision responses, especially between the Council and TVP, in regard to communication and follow-up, particularly about serious incidents.		

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

Overview & Scrutiny Recommendation Response Pro forma

2. That the Council should strengthen communication between officers and members, with clearer reporting routes and updates.		
3. That the Council should ensure Vision Zero/road safety data is taken to Locality meetings for more granular analysis.		
4. That the Council should update the Vision Zero Action Plan (Annex 1 and Annex A) so that actions marked as complete or overdue are properly recorded.		
5. That the Council should launch a campaign to recruit more Bikeability instructors and, also, investigate the underlying limiting factors.		
6. That the Council should improve the road safety website and marketing, ensuring clearer public information and better visibility of safety campaigns.		
7. That the Council should encourage primary schools to have local leads for road safety.		
8. That the Council should develop a specific pedestrian safety programme,		

Overview & Scrutiny Recommendation Response Pro forma

focussed on areas with high numbers of fatal and serious pedestrian casualties.		
9. That the Council should work with Thames Valley Police to encourage the increase of enforcement, including use of more speed cameras.		
10. That the Council should review the use and deployment of Vehicle Activated Signs (VAS) to assess effectiveness and improve the process.		
11. That the Council should advocate nationally for improved HGV safety standards (e.g., type-approval requirements).		

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Divisions Affected – All

CABINET

17 March 2026

Repairing of Defects and Superuser Report
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 relevant officers will continue to update Scrutiny for 12 months on progress made against actions committed to in response to the recommendations, 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. The Place Overview and Scrutiny Committee considered a report on Repair of Defects and Superusers at its meeting on 04 February 2026. This item had been requested by the Committee within a shorter timeframe than would ordinarily be the case and members were grateful to officers for preparing the report so swiftly. As a result, the report was a high level one, but the Committee was grateful for the opportunity to scrutinise the Council's work in this area.

4. The Committee would like to thank Cllr Andrew Gant, Cabinet Member for Transport Management, Paul Fermer, Director of Environment and Highways, Sean Rooney, Head of Service – Highway Maintenance and Road Safety, for attending to present the report. The Committee was pleased to welcome Richard Lovewell, Business Director for MGroup Highways, Andrew Vidovic,

Team Leader – Inspections, Nigel Clark, Team Leader – Volunteer Coordination, Paul Wilson, Operational Manager (Operations), Dale Stevens, Insurance Manager, and Steven Fitzgerald, Operational Manager (Highways Maintenance) to answer the Committee's questions.

SUMMARY

5. The Cabinet Member for Transport Management emphasised that the report was intended to be candid about performance and backlogs and set this in the context of severe seasonal pressures and the ongoing bedding-in of the current maintenance contract. The Committee welcomed the acknowledgement that continuous improvement remains necessary, notwithstanding the scale of the task and the national pressures on labour and materials.

6. Members expressed strong concern on behalf of residents about recurring potholes, perceived inadequacy of some repairs, and a compensation process experienced as complex and slow. Officers acknowledged the level of public frustration and described the shift towards a more asset management-led approach, including larger permanent repairs, increased resurfacing and surface dressing, and a stronger focus on drainage to reduce water-related failures.

7. The Committee welcomed the contribution of Superusers and the service's stated commitment to transparency. It noted the work underway to improve communications, including the development of a public-facing statistics dashboard, and pressed for clearer escalation routes for councillors and more reliable out-of-hours arrangements for urgent safety hazards.

8. Members also raised concerns regarding early failure of temporary repairs, especially on high-stress corridors such as bus routes, and the wider impact of heavy vehicles on the network. Officers described quality assurance arrangements, learning through the joint Project Improvement Team, and the constraints created by funding shortfalls and increasingly extreme weather patterns.

9. The Committee makes 12 recommendations: the first four are around communications, transparency, and public confidence; the next three about member and community intelligence; the last five are about operational quality, resilience, and continuous improvement.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Communications, Transparency, and Public Confidence

10. Members were clear that residents' confidence is shaped not only by whether defects are repaired but also by whether the Council communicates openly and consistently about what is being done, what challenges are being faced, and what realistic timescales look like. The Committee noted comments that

recent public messaging had not always landed well, particularly where winter pressures were presented as the sole explanation even though residents feel that they experience a similar cycle each year.

11. Officers acknowledged that communications had not been strong enough and described work with the Council's communications team to provide clearer and more regular updates, including plainer explanations of prioritisation, scheduling constraints, and the distinction between temporary safety treatments on the one hand and permanent repairs on the other. The Committee welcomed this and considered it essential to sustain clearer communication beyond periods of acute pressure.

12. The Committee considers that improving communications would benefit the Council by reducing avoidable enquiries, complaints and escalation traffic, and by supporting more accurate public reporting, including encouraging the provision of photographs and precise locations. Clearer communications would also protect the Council's reputation by demonstrating transparency and responsiveness in a high-profile service area.

13. Without the improvement of communications, the Committee considers there is a risk of continuing public dissatisfaction, reduced trust in FixMyStreet and other reporting routes, and growing perceptions that the Council is not in control of the situation. This could, in turn, increase service demand through repeat reporting and complaints and could also potentially intensify financial pressures through claims and dispute resolution.

Recommendation 1: That the Council should improve communications with residents, including clearer updates on ongoing works and challenges.

14. The Committee welcomed officers' commitment to transparency, including the development of a public-facing statistics dashboard intended to show defects reported and repaired, workforce deployment, and progress on backlogs. Members considered that, given the public interest in highway conditions, a clear data picture is vital to improving understanding and maintaining confidence.

15. The Committee noted that the service is described as data-rich and intelligence-led, and that internal performance monitoring has been strengthened. The Committee considers that making a proportionate and accessible subset of that information visible to residents and members would help to explain why priorities are set as they are. This would reduce confusion where cases appear to close automatically as part of wider programmes.

16. The Committee is of the view that launching the dashboard would benefit the Council by providing a single authoritative source of information, supporting councillors in responding to queries, and reducing misinformation and repeated reporting. It would also strengthen scrutiny and corporate oversight by making performance trends easier to track.

17. If, though, the dashboard or some very similar alternative is not launched, the Committee considers that residents will continue to rely on anecdote and isolated experiences. That would further undermine confidence and increase service demand. The absence of transparent performance information could also weaken the Council's ability to demonstrate improvement where that applied, particularly in periods of extreme weather when volumes spike.

Recommendation 2: That the Council should launch the new public-facing statistics dashboard to provide visibility of defect volumes and repair progress.

18. Members raised concerns that contact routes can be confusing and inconsistent, particularly during periods of high defect volume. The Committee heard that councillors and residents may variously use FixMyStreet, the Member Portal, engagement officers, and out-of-hours lines, but that, in urgent situations, these routes are not always effective or timely.

19. A specific concern related to out-of-hours arrangements, including an instance reported to the Committee where the response to a councillor seeking assistance with an emergency hazard was considered unacceptable. Officers accepted that this needed investigation and stated that the structure, staffing expectations, and escalation routes of the service would be reviewed to improve reliability.

20. The Committee is of the view that strengthening the escalation routes would bring a multiplicity of benefits. It would help the Council's ability to respond quickly to safety-critical hazards, reduce the risk of harm, and provide councillors with confidence that urgent issues can be escalated to a person empowered to act. Clearer escalation routes also support better governance by ensuring that responsibility and accountability are understood.

21. Without improvement, the Committee is concerned that there is a risk that urgent hazards will not be addressed promptly, increasing both safety risk and potential liability. In addition, councillor frustration and reduced confidence in the service may grow, with consequential impacts on public perception and the Council's ability to manage incidents effectively.

Recommendation 3: That the Council should strengthen communication and escalation routes for elected members, including reviewing the adequacy of the out of hours service.

22. Members noted that a recurrent source of frustration is the lack of clear public visibility about when programmed works will take place and how they relate to ad-hoc defect repairs. Officers described improved forward planning, including earlier publication of multi-year programmes to enable contractors to secure resources in advance and to reduce the impact of predictable seasonal peaks.

23. The Committee considers that clearer publication of planned programmes, including how sections of carriageway are escalated from reactive defect repair to planned resurfacing or surface treatment, would help residents to

understand why some defects are addressed through wider schemes rather than repeated spot repairs.

24. Adopting this recommendation would benefit the Council by improving expectation management, supporting coordination with parishes, districts and utility works, and reducing abortive visits and duplicated reporting. It would also strengthen the Council's ability to demonstrate that it is taking a commendably asset management-led approach rather than reacting piecemeal to individual defects.

25. If not adopted, the Committee believes that confusion will persist about what is planned and when, increasing pressure on customer services and member enquiries. This can also lead to the perception that repairs are delayed without reason, undermining confidence in the service and its prioritisation methods.

Recommendation 4: That the Council should increase visibility and clarity of programmed works, supported by earlier publication of multi-year plans.

Member and Community Intelligence

26. Members emphasised that, whilst data sources such as inspections and FixMyStreet are extremely important, they do not always capture lived realities such as rural pinch points, popular cut-throughs, seasonal hazards, and the particular stresses on bus corridors. The Committee heard that risk-based models can miss nuances that councillors and communities understand well.

27. Officers acknowledged this and committed to clearer escalation routes and improved locality-based engagement, including more consistent member responses via established channels. The Committee welcomes this but, at the same time, considers that integration of local intelligence must be systematic rather than ad hoc and should visibly inform prioritisation decisions.

28. The benefit to the Council of improving the accuracy and legitimacy of prioritisation, enabling earlier identification of high-consequence sites, and reducing the likelihood of repeat failures in places where the local context suggests that more robust interventions are needed should not be underestimated. Without such, the Committee considers there is a risk that decisions will be perceived as overly centralised or opaque, with missed opportunities to prevent emerging risks. This can lead to avoidable dissatisfaction, repeated reporting, and a sense that local democratic knowledge is undervalued.

Recommendation 5: That the Council should improve integration of local knowledge, especially of elected members, into prioritisation of repairs and programmed works.

29. In its discussion, the Committee noted the fact that the Performance and Corporate Services Overview & Scrutiny Committee had scrutinised the effectiveness of the FixMyStreet app and that that Committee had made recommendations to Cabinet already[1]. The Committee's focus was, therefore, not on FixMyStreet as such but, given the connection between highways defects and reporting them on FixMyStreet, there was an element of unavoidable overlap.

30. The Committee noted continuing concerns that some FixMyStreet cases appear to be closed before a visible repair has taken place, which damages public confidence. Officers explained that closures can reflect temporary emergency works or automatic updates where a defect is scheduled into a wider programme. Officers nonetheless accepted that the workflow and messaging must be clearer so that residents can understand what has happened and what will happen next.

31. Members also discussed the importance of photographs and clear location information in improving triage, reducing avoidable site visits, and speeding repairs. Officers highlighted ongoing work to improve FixMyStreet reporting functionality, including enabling images to be uploaded earlier in the process and improving geolocation.

32. The Committee is concerned that, without improvement, mistrust in FixMyStreet will deepen, leading to increased escalation through multiple channels and increased administrative burden. The danger is that poor information quality can also generate abortive visits and inefficiency at a time when operational capacity is under pressure.

33. Instead, the Committee believes that a successful review would benefit the Council by reducing duplicate reporting, improving the quality of information received, and strengthening trust in the primary public reporting channel. Clearer status updates will also support councillors and customer services in responding accurately to enquiries.

Recommendation 6: That the Council should review the FixMyStreet process, ensuring cases are not closed prematurely and status updates are clearer.

34. The Committee welcomed the contribution of Superusers, volunteers across the county who are trained to inspect potholes, blocked drains, and damaged kerbing, and noted that the scheme is a valued example of community partnership. Officers described a large network of volunteers and the role they play in inspecting, escalating and placing instructions for certain categories of defects, bringing local knowledge to bear.

35. Members also heard that Superusers can experience significant workload pressures during peak periods. Feedback suggested that, whilst officer responses to high-risk escalations are often effective, there is still scope to strengthen communication, to refresh training and support, and to ensure that

[1] https://mycouncil.oxfordshire.gov.uk/documents/s80451/FixMyStreet.pdf

there are clearer escalation processes. This would ensure volunteers are empowered and protected from burnout.

36. Adopting this recommendation would benefit the Council by sustaining an important capacity multiplier, improving the quality and consistency of volunteer-raised reports, and strengthening community confidence that local issues are being identified early and acted upon. Without this, the Council could lose a valuable source of intelligence which would, in turn, increase pressure on inspection and customer service capacity.

Recommendation 7: That the Council should enhance training and support in relation to the Superuser scheme.

Operational Quality, Resilience, and Continuous Improvement

37. Members raised concerns about temporary “sweep and fill” repairs that can fail quickly, sometimes within hours or days, and about the public perception that some defects are repeatedly addressed without lasting improvement. Officers explained that temporary repairs are used only in exceptional circumstances. They are intended to address immediate safety risks where full traffic management or a permanent fix is not feasible at the time with such locations being recorded for follow-up permanent works.

38. The Committee considered the discussion about repeat failures on bus routes particularly important. Officers acknowledged that high-stress corridors, including those carrying heavy or electric buses, can experience rapid deterioration and that temporary treatments are not necessarily durable in these environments. The Committee heard that analysis of repeat failures was underway to assess materials, patch size, and scheduling.

39. Adopting this recommendation would benefit the Council by reducing repeat visits, improving safety outcomes, and lowering whole-life cost by directing the right treatment to the right location first time. It would also support public confidence by demonstrating that the Council is learning from failure patterns and adjusting methods accordingly.

40. Perpetuating a costly cycle of repeated repairs, continued disruption to road users, and increased exposure to claims and complaints would be to no-one’s benefit and the Committee is strongly of the view that this should be avoided.

Recommendation 8: That the Council should review approaches to temporary repairs, including failure patterns on bus routes.

41. Members explored whether more could be done to prevent Heavy Goods Vehicles (HGVs) using unsuitable roads, particularly where C roads and rural routes are vulnerable to heavy loading. Officers acknowledged the significant contribution heavy vehicles make to road deterioration and explained that enforcement of weight restrictions rests primarily with Thames Valley Police,

though the Council continues to work with partners through established road safety and freight arrangements.

42. The Committee recognised that preventative approaches such as drainage improvements, structural patching and prioritised resurfacing on HGV and bus corridors are essential. However, it also considered that the Council should keep under review additional tools and interventions, including routing measures, improved signage, engagement with freight operators, and strengthened use of planning and development levers where relevant.

43. Further measures would aid the Council by protecting the network, reducing the rate of deterioration, and improving value for money by targeting interventions that reduce avoidable damage. It would also support wider objectives in the Freight and Logistics Strategy and improve safety for communities exposed to heavy vehicle traffic.

44. The Committee is concerned that, without such further measures, deterioration pressures on vulnerable roads will continue to rise, increasing both reactive repair volumes and long-term maintenance costs. There is also a risk of continued community concern and dissatisfaction where heavy vehicle impacts are visible and persistent.

Recommendation 9: That the Council should explore further measures to limit the impact of HGVs on vulnerable roads.

45. Allied to the discussion about HGVs, members noted that wider changes in vehicle weight, including a trend towards heavier cars and the increasing prevalence of electric vehicles, are likely to be placing additional pressure on road surfaces. One study "by the University of Leeds calculated that the average EV causes 2.24 times more stress on road surfaces than a comparable petrol car"[2] and another has assessed the national fleet impact of electric battery and hydrogen fuel vehicles.[3] The impact of this sits alongside other pressures such as extreme weather and historic under-investment, both of which were acknowledged during the discussion.

46. The Committee considers that understanding the impact of changing vehicle weights is important for both strategic planning and operational practice. It could inform decisions about materials, treatment selection, the prioritisation of routes, and the Council's engagement with national bodies on funding formulas and design standards.

47. Adopting this recommendation would benefit the Council by strengthening the evidence base for asset management and by enabling the service to anticipate and mitigate future deterioration pressures. A clearer understanding of causation would support better targeting of limited resources and also help to make the case for longer-term sustainable funding. The Committee noted it

[2] Can Our Road Infrastructure Handle Heavier Electric Vehicles - Highways Today

[3] Low, J.M., Haszeldine, R.S. & Harrison, G.P. The hidden cost of road maintenance due to the increased weight of battery and hydrogen trucks and buses—a perspective. *Clean Techn Environ Policy* **25**, 757–770 (2023). https://doi.org/10.1007/s10098-022-02433-8

was advised that the Council had not given significant consideration to this and the Committee believes that it should do so.

48. The Council needs such a review because, otherwise, the Committee is nervous that the Council's maintenance approach will be based on assumptions that no longer reflect the reality of network loading. That could lead to less durable interventions, increased defect volumes, and a widening gap between available resources and the level of maintenance required.

Recommendation 10: That the Council should undertake a review of the impact of cars being significantly heavier on average than previously and the resultant pressure on roads.

49. The Committee discussed the importance of inspection routines, not only for identifying defects but also for managing liability. Officers described a combination of routine inspections, ad hoc checks prompted by reports, and joint quality assurance with the contractor. The Committee also heard that inspection resources were stretched during the recent surge, as staff were required both for winter service activity and for defect response.

50. Members sought reassurance about the oversight of repair quality and early failures. Officers described supervision arrangements within the contractor's delivery chain and independent Council inspections, together with the principle that early failures remain the contractor's liability. The Committee welcomed the strengthening of quality checks but considered that inspection capacity should be reviewed to ensure it remains adequate as volumes, weather pressures and network deterioration increase.

51. The Council must meet its duty to maintain the highway to a safe standard. Adopting this recommendation would benefit the Council by improving risk management, ensuring defects are identified and categorised consistently, and supporting defensible decision-making where claims arise. Improved inspection intelligence also strengthens programme planning and reduces the likelihood of preventable deterioration becoming acute.

Recommendation 11: That the Council should consider whether additional inspection capacity is needed and strengthen inspection processes.

52. The Committee welcomed evidence that continuous improvement is being pursued through joint working with the contractor, including the Project Improvement Team. Officers described a move towards more durable permanent repairs, improved defect coding and completion processes, and the use of learning from trials and past performance to inform practice.

53. Members also noted that residents experience repeat failures and therefore expect the system to learn quickly and visibly from what does not work, especially in winter conditions and on high-stress routes. The Committee was reassured that materials and techniques are selected according to road type,

weather and defect characteristics, but emphasised that learning must be embedded, tracked and communicated so that practice evolves and confidence is maintained.

54. Adopting this recommendation would benefit the Council by improving first-time fix rates, reducing abortive visits, increasing asset life, and supporting value for money. It also strengthens contract management by ensuring that evidence of performance informs specifications, benchmarks and workforce practice.

55. If not accepted, the Committee considers that the same patterns of failure are likely to recur which would drive up costs and further exacerbate public dissatisfaction. Failure to embed learning risks undermining the credibility of both the Council's oversight and the contractor's delivery model.

Recommendation 12: That the Council should continue to embed learning from repair failures, including materials choices and method improvements.

FURTHER CONSIDERATION

56. The Committee does not anticipate revisiting this topic again during this municipal year.

LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

57. 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.

58. 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

March 2026

Overview & Scrutiny Recommendation Response Pro forma

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Issue: **Education Otherwise Than At School (EOTAS) Guidance**

Lead Cabinet Member(s): **Cllr Sean Gaul, Cabinet Member for Children and Young People**

Date response requested:[2] **17 March 2026**

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 improve communications with residents, including clearer updates on ongoing works and challenges.		

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

Overview & Scrutiny Recommendation Response Pro forma

2. That the Council should launch the new public-facing statistics dashboard to provide visibility of defect volumes and repair progress.		
3. That the Council should strengthen communication and escalation routes for elected members, including reviewing the adequacy of the out of hours service.		
4. That the Council should increase visibility and clarity of programmed works, supported by earlier publication of multi-year plans.		
5. That the Council should improve integration of local knowledge, especially of elected members, into prioritisation of repairs and programmed works.		
6. That the Council should review the FixMyStreet process, ensuring cases are not closed prematurely and status updates are clearer.		
7. That the Council should enhance training and support in relation to the Superuser scheme.		
8. That the Council should review approaches to temporary repairs, including failure patterns on bus routes.		

Overview & Scrutiny Recommendation Response Pro forma

9. That the Council should explore further measures to limit the impact of HGVs on vulnerable roads.		
10. That the Council should undertake a review of the impact of cars being significantly heavier on average than previously and the resultant pressure on roads.		
11. That the Council should consider whether additional inspection capacity is needed and strengthen inspection processes.		
12. That the Council should continue to embed learning from repair failures, including materials choices and method improvements.		

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CABINET

17 March 2026

Local Transport Consolidated Funding Settlement – Local Transport Delivery Plan

Report by Director of Environment and Highways

RECOMMENDATION

1. **The Cabinet Member is RECOMMENDED to:**

   a) approve the Local Transport Delivery Plan and its submission to the Department for Transport; and

   b) delegate authority to the Director of Environment & Highways, in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Transport Management, to make changes to specific schemes and projects within the agreed programmes outlined in the Local Transport Delivery Plan.

Executive Summary

2. Oxfordshire County Council (the Council) has received a Local Transport Consolidated Funding Settlement letter from the Department for Transport (DfT) commissioning the Council to produce a Local Transport Delivery Plan (LTDP), identifying how the funding will be prioritised and spent.

3. The Council is required to submit a draft of the LTDP (Annex 1) with all spending for 2026/27 and an outline plan to 2029/30, by 20 March 2026. The Council's refined, final LTDP to 2029/30 should be submitted to the Department by 18 September 2026. There is also a requirement to publish the LTDP in September 2026, with annual updates as a minimum and prompt amendments/updates where significant changes have been put forward and agreed with the DfT.

4. The DfT also require the Council to report plans for developing forecast carbon emissions estimates of their LTDP as an outcome framework indicator and to use whole life carbon assessments in transport intervention decision making. Both tasks must follow DfT's Local Transport Quantifiable Carbon Guidance published in August 2025. Further details on reporting, including how to use the guidance to report against carbon indicators, will be made available later in 2026.

5. This report sets out a recommended approach to the grant allocation and identifies the proposed programme to submit to the Department for Transport.

Context

6. Based on the 2025 Spending Review settlement and subsequent Ministerial decisions, the DfT has published their allocations for Oxfordshire County Council **totalling £244.8m** for 2026/27 to 2029/30. This consists of **£223,158,391 Capital Departmental Expenditure Limit (CDEL)** (covering 2026/27 - 2029/30) and **£21,664,992 Resource Departmental Expenditure Limit (RDEL)** (covering 2026/27 - 2028/29). This multi-year allocation differs from the annual allocations typically received to date.

Table 1: Allocations, by year and spending category, in thousands (£000s)

	2026/27	2027/28	2028/29	2029/30
CDEL	45,966.5	52,821.6	58,072.3	66,298.0
RDEL	7,221.7	7,221.7	7,221.7	
Total	**53,188.2**	**60,043.3**	**65,294.0**	**66,298.0**

7. The DfT will issue a formal Grant Determination Letter and a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) for consolidated funding ahead of the next financial year for the Council to sign and return to receive the funding allocation. Grant funding will be received quarterly, with revenue funding allocations running until 2028/29 and capital allocations running until 2029/30.

8. The Local Transport Consolidated Funding Settlement creates more flexibility and choice for authorities by consolidating the following funding streams into an Integrated Transport Fund from 2026/27:
   - Devolved Bus Service Operators Grant
   - City Region Sustainable Transport Settlement/Transport for City Region settlement
   - Local Transport Grant (RDEL and CDEL)
   - Highway Maintenance (CDEL)
   - Active Travel Fund (RDEL and CDEL)
   - LA Bus Grant (CDEL)
   - Local Electric Vehicle Infrastructure (RDEL)

9. The settlement also keeps a Bus Services Fund separate (Previously LA Bus Grant (RDEL)). This combines Bus Service Improvement Plan (BSIP) and Bus Service Operators Grant (BSOG) funding and has to explicitly be spent on bus outcomes.

10. The Table below shows the specific breakdown of how the Local Transport Consolidated Funding Settlement is built up:

Table 2: Allocations, by year and fund type, in thousands (£000s)

		2026/27	2027/28	2028/29	2029/30
Active Travel	CDEL	4,085.1	4,085.1	4,085.1	4,085.1
Active Travel	RDEL	1,281.7	1,281.7	1,281.7	
Highways Maintenance (HM)	CDEL	34,635.0	40,185.0	43,430.0	49,650.0
LA Bus Grant (LABG)	CDEL	3,247.0	3,312.3	3,377.6	3,442.8
LA Bus Grant (LABG)	RDEL	5,132.3	5,132.3	5,132.3	
Local Electric Vehicle Infrastructure Grant (LEVI)	RDEL	216.9	216.9	216.9	
Local Transport Grant (LTG)	CDEL	3,999.4	5,239.2	7,179.6	9,120.0
Local Transport Grant (LTG)	RDEL	590.7	590.7	590.7	
Total		**53,188.2**	**60,043.3**	**65,294.0**	**66,298.0**

11. The DfT have also assumed that particularly for 2026/27, the programmes and schemes identified within the LTDP will already be within the Council's committed programme.

12. The Council needs to protect spend in some areas to ensure it maintains its government rating. Maintaining the budgets for Highway Maintenance (compliance with best practice) and Active Travel (recently upgraded to capability rating 3) will help ensure that the council receives the incentive funding element of the grant from the DfT.

13. In some areas the funding amount has increased and in other areas the Council has seen a reduction. These spend calculations within each service area have been contextualised below:

    a) Bus Grant:

        (1) The revenue bus figure (LA Bus Grant RDEL) for 2026/27 shows a 9% increase, compared to 2025/26. This is largely accounted for by the ongoing revenue support for enhanced bus services, so will restrict some planning for projects that the Council was seeking to support around education, training and publicity.

        (2) The capital figure for bus (LA Bus Grant CDEL) for 2026/27 is 40% less than in 2025/26 aligning similar to average funding in previous years. Although alignment with this reduced funding (as real terms costs have increased each year) figure will result in a number of bus-related projects not being taken forwards, unless alternative funding sources can be identified. In recent years, the Council has been able to make substantial investments in measures such as traffic signal priority, real-time passenger information, corridor infrastructure improvements, network decarbonisation and the development of future schemes. While some limited investment across these areas will still be possible, the level of funding will constrain both the scale and pace of delivery.

b) Highways Maintenance: The Highways capital figure (HM CDEL) is as expected; however, funding levels remain constrained and are being partially mitigated through additional corporate borrowing identified through the capital priorities process in February 2025. This was originally earmarked for 2025/26 & 2026/27 but is is now spread across future years to 2028/29 to maintain current budget levels when the grant and borrowing are combined.

c) Active Travel: Active travel capital and revenue figures align with expectations as a result of the Council's recently increased capability level rating to 3.

Purpose of the Local Transport Consolidated Funding

14. The purpose of consolidation is to give councils flexibility to use funding more effectively and efficiently across programmes and packages of spend to deliver the priorities set out in their Local Transport Plans. As such, the Council will be able to make the strategic decisions that best support the Corporate vision to make Oxfordshire a greener, fairer and healthier county. This includes local network priorities, alignment with wider place-based and local/regional objectives (growth, spatial, environmental and social) and having the freedom to accelerate projects that are most beneficial.

a) The Integrated Transport Fund (ITF) is intended to be used to deliver a wide range of local transport outcomes.
b) The Bus Services Fund (BSF) should only be used to support outcomes for bus passengers/services.
c) For Mayoral Strategic Authorities (MSAs) with an elected mayor in place, the Mayoral Transport Fund (MTF) is a flexible fund that combines the ITF and BSF.

15. To help achieve this, the DfT has consolidated all local transport funding grants for all Local Transport Authorities (LTAs) outside of Integrated Settlement areas.

16. Ahead of the inaugural election of a mayor, MSAs will receive two pots: an ITF and a BSF. Once a mayor is in place, the MSA will receive a single MTF. All other LTAs will receive the ITF and BSF.

17. Certain funds which will be used to deliver specific schemes/outputs (namely Major Road Network, Levelling Up Fund and Structures Fund) are not part of the MTF/ITF/BSF. Neither is the transport element of the resource funding paid via the Local Government Finance Settlement (LGFS).

Development and content of the 'Local Transport Delivery Plan'

18. The Local Transport Delivery Plan (LTDP) produced is aligned with the Council's ambitions of the Local Transport & Connectivity Plan (LTCP), known more commonly to the DfT as the Local Transport Plan (LTP), and its supporting strategies, delivering outcomes through the key themes of:

- Environment
- Health
- Healthy Place Shaping
- Productivity
- Connectivity
- Inclusivity

19. For the purposes of the development of the Council's first LTDP for the DfT allocations of funding have been maintained as per previous years grant types to achieve a fair, balanced programme and towards meeting the outcomes required through the DfT's Outcomes Framework.

20. The Council's current capital and revenue funding programme already assumes a certain level of grant funding from the DfT, and due to the current deficiency of funding from central government to deliver highway and transport services, a significant amount of corporate funding is utilised to deliver these.

21. Due to the overall funding pressures of the Council, where there has been an assumption of grant funding to deliver the programme and/or where there is alignment of corporately funded programmes or schemes with the grant conditions, these programmes and associated schemes have been identified to be part of the LTDP, where they have greatest certainty of delivery.

22. Ongoing, existing programmes of work such as Bus Services and Highway Maintenance, as well as a number of revenue funded Active Travel and Local Transport requirements are therefore covered by this funding proposal. These are existing priorities, which would have looked to use this funding whether received as annual allocations or as part of a four-year funding package.

23. Where the council has more flexibility with regards to Integrated Transport Fund capital funding proposals for 2026/27, the key focus has been on schemes that are well established in these areas and in delivery, including:

    - A40 Eynsham Grade Separated Junction
    - Ambrosden to Bicester Active Travel Scheme phase 2/3
    - Cycle and Micromobility Parking
    - East Oxford Active Neighbourhood
    - Middleton Stoney Road Active Travel Scheme
    - Oxford Traffic Filters
    - St Giles and Broad Street Improvements

24. These schemes are fully funded other than Ambrosden to Bicester Active Travel Scheme (Phase 3) and Middleton Stoney Road Active Travel Scheme, which will use ITF funding to increase the scope of the schemes and deliver improved outcomes.

25. These schemes are already within the council's capital programme and have been through a prioritisation process. . Because these are already well

established the allocations against these schemes are expected to fully utilised in the 2026/27 financial year.

26. Schemes were selected based on continued operation of existing programmes and perceived importance in improving the sustainable transport offer, as well as their deliverability within the time and budgets allowed. The Highways Maintenance programme and how to utilise the Local Electric Vehicle Infrastructure Grant (LEVI) effectively have also been considered. A summary of the proposed funding allocations by Mode can be seen in the table below:

Funding allocations – Bus Service Fund (BSF):

Programme / Scheme Mode	26/27 Revenue	Future Years Revenue (27-29)	26/27 Capital	Future Years Capital (27-30)	Total
Bus	£5,132,300	£10,264,600	N/A	N/A	£15,396,900

Funding allocations – Integrated Transport Fund (ITF):

Programme / Scheme Mode	26/27 Revenue	Future Years Revenue (27-29)	26/27 Capital	Future Years Capital (27-30)	Total
Active Travel	£1,281,700	£2,563,400	£4,085,100	£12,255,300	£20,182,000
Bus	N/A	N/A	£3,247,000	£16,132,700	£19,380,000
Electric Vehicles & Infrastructure	£216,900	£433,800	£0	£0	£651,700
Multimodal	£0	£0	£38,634,400	£148,803,800	£187,438,200
'Back office'	£590,700	£1,181,340	£0	£0	£1,773,000
Total	£2,089,300	£4,178,600	£45,966,500	£177,191,800	£229,426,200

27. Other schemes not included in the LTDP were considered but rejected on the basis that they were not a priority and/or not deliverable within the time and budgets allowed. The Local Transport Consolidated Funding Settlement is only one funding source and there are other Council schemes that will either progress through to construction, require additional funding requirements being sought or be further developed through the optioneering and design process.

28. Due to constraints within the funding previously known as Local Authority Bus Grant allocations, the requirement for the Bus Enhanced Partnership Plus delivery will now be funded through the broader Integrated Transport Fund allocation, demonstrating its flexibility.

29. There are also some key revenue requirements from the DfT included in the LTDP, namely Your Bus Journey Survey, Quantified Carbon Assessment(s) and updates to key policies and strategies.

30. The LTDP will be further refined with regards to the allocations of future years funding i.e. 2027-2030, with the final LTDP submitted to the DfT on 18 September 2026.

31. The summary of the LTDP is contained in Annex 2. This also outlines that, in some instances, Council funding (including S106, CIL and Corporate Resources) and other grant funding is being supplemented by DfT funding.

Corporate Policies and Priorities

32. The LTDP has been developed in accordance with a range of Council policies, primarily the County Council Strategic Plan, the LTCP, and its supporting strategies.

33. The Council's 2025 to 2028 Strategic Plan commits to continue to roll out the LTCP. The LTCP sets a vision for an inclusive and safe net zero Oxfordshire transport system that enables all parts of the County to thrive. It will tackle inequality, be better for health, wellbeing and social inclusivity and have zero road fatalities or serious injuries. It will also enhance the county's natural and historic environment and enable the county to be one of the world's leading innovation economies. The Council's LTCP sets out how to achieve this by reducing the need to travel by private car use through making walking, cycling, public and shared transport the natural first choice.

34. The Council's Strategic Plan also commits to make it easier to travel by train, bus and bike by building mobility hubs across Oxfordshire. These are places where different types of transport come together, making it simple to switch between them. They also offer better facilities like sheltered waiting areas and bike storage. In rural areas, we will create quiet lanes / greenways to make walking, cycling and horse riding safer and more enjoyable.

35. Consequently, the LTDP is aligned with and directly supports the Council's priorities for fostering an inclusive, integrated, and sustainable transportation network, contributing to making Oxfordshire a greener, fairer, and healthier county.

Financial Implications

36. The LTCP fund allocation of £244.8m for 2026/27 to 2029/30 will be paid in quarterly tranches as a consolidated payment under Section 31 of the Local Government Act 2003, following the production of the Council's LTDP, required by the DfT by 20 March 2026.

37. The LTDP in Annex 1 shows how this funding is proposed to be spent. Figures provided for each scheme/programme are best estimate budgets at this stage, however the overall spending for the programmes will be managed so as not to exceed available funds.

38. The summary of the LTDP is contained in Annex 2. This also outlines that, in some instances, Council funding (including S106, CIL and Corporate Resources) and other grant funding is being supplemented by DfT funding.

39. The current proposal aims to maintain programming and spending in accordance with the allocation types previously defined under Table 2. It is important to note, however, that the consolidated funding under the Integrated Transport Fund (ITF), allows allocations to be directed towards the Council's priority schemes and programmes, regardless of transport mode or scheme

type, provided that these measures continue to deliver across the range of outcomes within the DfT Outcomes Framework.

40. The DfT continue to expect baseline bus and highways maintenance resource funding budgets from other sources to be maintained.

41. The 20 March 2026 deadline is to submit a draft to the DfT to allow plans to be received and reviewed ahead of funding being paid out as early as possible in the new financial year. If plans are received later, this will likely delay payment of the grant, putting existing schemes and proposed projects at risk.

42. As was the case in 2025/26, a portion of the Highways Maintenance Funding Allocation included in this grant will be designated as incentive funding. This funding will be subject to the Authority demonstrating they comply with best practice in highways maintenance, for example, by spending all the Department's capital grant on highways maintenance and adopting more preventative maintenance.

Comments checked by:

Rob Finlayson, Strategic Finance Business Partner – rob.finlayson@oxfordshire.gov.uk (Finance)

Legal Implications

43. The adoption of the Local Transport Delivery Plan and submission to the DfT (recommendation 1 (a)) are in accordance with the Council's powers under the Transport Act 2000 and related powers including under the Highways Act 1980 and the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984.

44. Each of the schemes/programmes in Annex 1 will be further considered at the point of implementation and will be proposed and, as appropriate, delivered in compliance with the applicable statutory framework relevant to that scheme/proposal.

45. The delegation at recommendation 1 (b) for the use of the Local Transport allocation and implementation of **the projects and programmes outlined** within the Local Transport Delivery Plan is likely to require a need for funding agreements to be drafted to both satisfy the council's legal requirements, as well as any terms and conditions associated with the funding which will require legal input at that time.

46. There is an intention that individual projects within the Local Transport Delivery Plan which may require legal support will be considered on a case-by-case basis and contracts/grants awarded in line with the Council's current procurement process and use of the direct award provisions available to local authorities through legislation.

Comments checked by: Jennifer Crouch, Principal Solicitor (Regulatory), jennifer.crouch@oxfordshire.gov.uk

Staff Implications

47. Staff resources to implement, monitor and report the progress of the Local Transport Delivery Plan will either be met through existing resources or funded through the specific programmes or schemes themselves. Where necessary, the proposal is to use the Local Transport Consolidated Funding for some existing and new posts.

Equality & Inclusion Implications

48. The DfT have requested that authorities must role model inclusive policy making and embed active consideration of accessibility within the development and delivery of policies funded through their consolidated funding settlement.

49. Section 112 of the Transport Act 2000 (as amended) specifically requires authorities to have regard to the transport needs of "disabled people within the meaning of the Equality Act 2010 and of persons who are elderly or who have mobility problems" when developing and implementing policies included in their Local Transport Plan.

50. An Equalities Impact Assessment (EqIA) has been completed in the development of the LTDP taking into consideration the broader programme. Based on the EqIA the LTDP it is expected to have a positive impact on individuals and communities more broadly. As appropriate, EqIA will be carried out in relation each of the schemes/programmes in Annex 1 as these are proposed.

51. An EqIA for the Local Transport Delivery Plan has been included as Annex 3.

52. A desktop Health Impact Assessment for the LTDP and associated schemes will also be carried out.

Sustainability Implications

53. The DfT require the Council to report on the forecast carbon emissions estimates of their LTDP as an outcome framework indicator. To achieve this, places must use the Quantifiable Carbon Guidance to provide the DfT with carbon metrics for their proposed programme of interventions.

54. The Local Transport Quantifiable Carbon Guidance, published by the DfT in August 2025 suggests that whole life carbon assessments (qualitative and quantitative) should be applied to transport intervention decision making and planning, including schemes already in the capital pipeline. This aligns with Policy 27 of the Local Transport and Connectivity Plan – Embodied Carbon.

55. The DfT have requested that a qualitative update relating to the adoption plans for the Quantifiable Carbon Guidance should be provided for both LTDP initial submission in March and the final submission in September; however, less detail will be expected for March. Further detail will be provided by the DfT on carbon reporting expectations going forward alongside reporting requirements.

56. A Climate Impact Assessment (CIA) has been completed in the development of the LTDP taking into consideration the broader programme and the follow up recommendations of CIAs previously completed on specific projects and programmes included in the LTDP.

57. A CIA for the Local Transport Delivery Plan is included as Annex 4.

Risk Management

58. The principal risks associated with the LTDP are:

- delayed approval of the LTDP may place the identified funding at risk, and prevent the award of associated contracts/grants
- there may be insufficient interest in the opportunities to be tendered to be able to provide the required outcomes, or prices may be unaffordable
- complex capital projects could be delayed and/or not completed, due to resource, cost or programme challenges
- some projects are still subject to various approvals (Traffic Regulation Order and other consultations, procurement, etc)
- potential for withdrawal of funding before end of parliamentary period
- business continuity challenges through transition period of Local Government Reorganisation

59. These risks can be mitigated by:

- being dynamic at the scheme level but ensuring the overall outcome of the programme is maintained
- taking the proposed approach of prioritising the continuation of existing revenue and capital projects, which have already been established
- providing a sufficient mobilisation period both for tender returns and for the period between award and contract start date, to maximise the level of potential interest
- utilising existing contractual arrangements or using established frameworks

- providing sufficient communications support to effectively convey the benefits of the proposals to the public, including co-production where appropriate

- robustly monitoring costs throughout the life of the LTDP and making adjustments to projects, if required

60. Individual project managers will be responsible for identifying and mitigating against any risks for their schemes.

Consultations

61. Some schemes will need to undergo the standard processes for scheme development and public consultations, particularly larger schemes. This will provide opportunities for further stakeholder and public review and input.

62. The Council uses best endeavours to consult on transport policy and interventions, when possible, within available timescales, where substantial changes may be made or where there is more than one option available.

PAUL FERMER
Director of Environment and Highways

Annexures
Annex 1: OCC's Local Transport Delivery Plan 2026 – 2030 (DfT template)
Annex 2: OCC's Local Transport Delivery Plan – Summary by Mode
Annex 3: LTDP Equalities Impact Assessment (EqIA)
Annex 4: LTDP Climate Impact Assessment (CIA)

Background papers:
Oxfordshire Strategic Plan 2025-2028
Oxfordshire Local Transport and Connectivity Plan
Oxfordshire Budget and Business Planning 2026/27 - 2030/31

Contact Officer: Ben Smith
Strategic Transport Manager

[March 2026]

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	Consolidated Fund	Scheme ID	Scheme name or intervention grouping	Description (include beneficial outcome)	Mode	Scheme Category	Location	Estimated Cost				Milestones				Retained
								Total Estimated Cost REVENUE (£m)	[MTF/ITF/BSF] REVENUE contribution (£m) TOTAL	Total Estimated Cost CAPITAL (£m)	[MTF/ITF] CAPITAL contribution (£m)	Start Development	Complete Development	Start Delivery	Complete Delivery	
Guidance	[For non-MSAs only] Select whether scheme is funded through Integrated Transport Fund (ITF) or Bus Services Fund (BSF)	(If applicable) Any local ID used for identification purposes	Title of individual scheme or intervention. In the case of rolling programmes (e.g. highways maintenance), or groups of smaller scale similar interventions within the same category, these can be grouped together as a package. Substantial and/or complex schemes should be set out separately.	Description/purpose of the scheme or intervention. If the scheme or intervention is multimodal, include reference to what modes and any additional information on the provision provided for each mode. Note whether schemes are development only within the funding period. Schemes involving the potential purchase of new non-zero emission buses must be highlighted in descriptions. (250 words)	Select the modal option that best aligns with the scheme or intervention. If the scheme is multimodal, ensure all modes are listed in the description field.	Select the scheme category that best aligns with the scheme or intervention.	Sample postcode covered by scheme. For inteventions without a fixed location, mark LTA-wide.	For REVENUE schemes, **overall cost of the scheme** inc. DfT, local funds, private etc.	The value of consolidated REVENUE funding allocated towards scheme costs TOTAL	For CAPITAL schemes, **overall cost of the scheme** inc. DfT, local funds, private etc	The value of consolidated CAPITAL funding allocated towards scheme costs	Estimated high-level delivery milestones - For infrastructure schemes, delivery completion should be when scheme is 'open' for the public. For infrastructure expected to be development only within the delivery plan window, delivery milestones can be marked as N/A. For revenue only schemes without development, development milestones can be marked N/A.				Do you think this scheme meets the threshold for HMG retention of business case decisions?
	BSF	BUS09-ASB	Asylum seekers bus pass scheme	3 year extension of an existing scheme to provide free bus travel for asylum seekers living in Oxford. The scheme helps to break down mobility barriers that limit asylum seekers' access to essential services and community life.	Bus	4. Public Transport: fares & ticketing	LTA wide	0.225	0.225					Apr-26	Mar-29	
	BSF	BUS06-BSS-01	Continued support for enhanced local bus services 2026-2029	Local bus service support (in part or in full) including but not exclusive to the following services: Fleet Support; 46 Wheatley - Cowley - Oxford; 63 Southmoor - Appleton - Oxford; 24 Bicester - Kirtlington - Oxford; 94/94A Harwell Campus/Blewbury - Didcot; 500 Bicester - Brackley; X34 Harwell Campus - Newbury; 64 Witney - Carterton - Swindon; 25 Sonning Common - Reading; 700 Kidlington - Headington - Thornhill; X4 Banbury - Kidlington - Oxford; Oxford Botley Road/Oxford support; 21 Bicester town service; S4 Banbury - Oxford; 14 Risinghurst - Headington - Oxford; X9 Chipping Norton - Witney; 200 Daventry - Banbury; 29/H5 Bicester - Arncott/Headington; ST1 Oxford - Harwell Campus; 44 Oxford - Cumnor - Abingdon; X32 Didcot - Oxford - JR Hospital; 801 Chipping Norton - Cheltenham; 25 Upper Heyford - Bicester; B3/B4 Banbury town services; 17 Bicester - Aylesbury; Enables an improved bus offer to passengers and encourages greater bus use.	Bus	6.Public Transport: existing routes & services	LTA wide	14.881	11.071					*Apr-26*	Mar-29	
	BSF	BUS15-MRTI	Maintenance of the expanded RTPI screen asset base	Funding to sustain the increased asset maintenance requirements for the expanded RTPI screen estate installed through prior BSIP allocations. RTI screens enhance awareness and confidence in the use of the bus network by existing and new passengers.	Bus	8. Road & infrastructure: highways maintenance	LTA wide	0.075	0.075			*Apr-26*	Mar-29			
	BSF	BUS07-MYB	MyBus Oxfordshire ticketing scheme	To continue to reimburse operators for the retention of the successful MyBus Oxfordshire countywide multi operator day and week tickets for up to a further 3 years as budgets allow. The scheme offers passengers simpler and better value fares.	Bus	4. Public Transport: fares & ticketing	LTA wide	2.700	2.700					*Apr-26*	Mar-29	
	BSF	BUS06-BSS-04	New local bus service support	Local bus service support (in part or in full) for new services incuding but not exclusively the X52 Cheltenham - Oxford. Enables an improved bus offer to passengers and encourages greater bus use.	Bus	5. Public Transport: new or enhanced routes & services	LTA wide	0.417	0.417					*Apr-26*	Mar-29	
	BSF	BUS10-C&C	Staff resources to support Bus Delivery Plan and EP activities	To maintain existing Bus Grant funded positions and additional support for scheme delivery and maintenance of the partnership website.	Bus	13. Back office: delivery & resourcing	LTA wide	0.789	0.789					Apr-26	Mar-29	
	BSF	BUS08-YBJ	Transport Focus Your Bus Journey Survey	To fund Oxfordshire's participation in Your Bus Journey 2026/27, 2027/28 and 2028/29. The scheme collects and analyses passenger feedback to assess satisfaction, identify priorities, and monitor performance against targets.	Bus	12. Information and marketing	LTA wide	0.167	0.120					Apr-26	Mar-29	
	ITF	C.AT00841.01	A40 Eynsham Grade Separated Active Travel Crossing - initial design works (C.AT00841.01)	Grade separated active travel solution to connect Eynsham with the Salt Cross Garden Village to the north of the A40. The improvement will provide safe movement for people walking, wheeling or cycling - particularly between the two secondary school sites. Development only.	Active Travel	7. Public transport & active travel: other infrastructure	OX29 4EF			0.800	0.150			Apr-26	Mar-27	
	ITF		Active Travel Delivery Programme 2027-2030	Scheme design and delivery in accordance with prioritisation of LCWIP and SATN.	Active Travel	2. Priority and connectivity measures to achieve modal shift	LTA wide			12.255	12.255			Apr-27	Mar-30	
	ITF		Active Travel planning, scheme development and behaviour change 2027-2029	Programme for scheme development in accordance with LCWIP/SATN prioritisation and behaviour change programme.	Active Travel	2. Priority and connectivity measures to achieve modal shift	LTA wide	2.563	2.563			Apr-27	Mar-29			
	ITF		Active Travel Scheme Development & Feasibility	Optioneering and feasbility for scheme devleopment in accordance with LCWIP/SATN prioritisation	Active Travel	2. Priority and connectivity measures to achieve modal shift	LTA wide	0.527	0.527			Apr-26	Mar-27			
	ITF	C.AT00703.01	Ambrosden to Bicester Active Travel Scheme (Phase 2 & 3)	Provision of a segregated cycling route on the A41/London Road corridor between Launton Road and Ploughley Road. Phase 2 includes construction of the section between Rodney House Roundabout and Pioneer Roundabout on the A41. Phase 3 includes construction of the section between Pioneer Roundabout and Ploughley Road on the A41.	Active Travel	2. Priority and connectivity measures to achieve modal shift	OX26 6JP / OX26 6WH			5.580	1.995			Apr-26	Mar-27	
	ITF		Betterpoints App	Ongoing Betterpoints App for Yr 2	Active Travel	11. Digital, data and technology	LTA wide	0.065	0.065					Apr-26	Mar-27	
	ITF		Bike Loan Scheme	To fund delivery of an e-bike loan scheme for workplaces across Oxfordshire. Funds would cover the cost of a third-party to manage the scheme and provide a small number of e-bikes for staff to loan for a couple of weeks to assist their commute before being directed to a Cycle to Work Scheme to buy or rent an e-bike. Beneficial outcome is to provide a "try before you buy" system for employees within the county to encourage a shift towards commuting by cycling, especially e-bikes.	Active Travel	7. Public transport & active travel: other infrastructure	LTA wide	0.045	0.045					Apr-26	Mar-27	
	ITF	BUS12-EPP	Bus Enhanced Partnership Plus delivery including decarbonisation and ticketing (capital)	To support a wide variety of additional commitments and responsibilities placed on the Council from 27/28 onwards to achieve a step change in bus travel under a new strengthened enhanced partnership. Likely to include decarbonisation and ticketing projects and benefits to continue the impact of the bus on sustainable travel and modal shift.	Bus	15. Other	LTA wide			6.000	6.000			Apr-27	Mar-30	
	ITF	BUS05-BPI	Bus Priority Infrastructure and Improvements (various)	To design and implement various bus priority measures and infrastucture across the County. This will speed up buses, journey times and increase service reliability enabling operator reinvestment in an enhanced bus network and further improving the attractiveness of the network. Increased bus speeds make services more reliable to current and future bus passengers increasing modal shift, directly contributing to LTCP targets.	Bus	2. Priority and connectivity measures to achieve modal shift	LTA wide			3.612	3.613			Apr-27	Mar-30	
	ITF	BUS04-BSI	Bus Stop and Transport hub Infrastructure Improvements	Improvements to the passenger waiting experience at bus stops and transport hubs across the county, gradually bringing them up to a specified range of standards. This provides greater security and safety to current and future bus passengers and encourages modal shift as a direct contribution to LTCP targets.	Bus	1. Interchanges, travel hubs, travel stops	LTA wide			0.525	0.525			*Apr-27*	Mar-30	
	ITF	BUS01-VIF	Bus Vehicle Improvement Fund	Provision of an annual Vehicle Improvement Fund that operators can apply for a funding contribution towards vehicle improvements that will either improve the passenger experience, encouraging modal shift, or contribute towards decarbonisation of the bus network in line with LTCP targets. This was successfully introduced in 2025/26.	Bus	3. Public Transport: fleet & vehicles	LTA wide			14.500	7.250			*Apr-26*	Mar-30	
	ITF		City Schools Officer	Additional role to cover the city school/increase capacity in the team	Active Travel	13. Back office: delivery & resourcing	LTA wide	0.053	0.053					*Apr-26*	Mar-27	
	ITF		Community Outreach Active Travel (COATs) Programme	Grants to external partners for active travel community outreach projects	Active Travel	2. Priority and connectivity measures to achieve modal shift	LTA wide	0.400	0.300					*Apr-26*	Mar-27	
	ITF		Cycle & micromobility parking	Funding to support additional parking for cycle hire and escooter hire within Oxfordshire. Required to support implementation of new contract for micromobility hire.	Active Travel	2. Priority and connectivity measures to achieve modal shift	Oxford (City)			0.075	0.075			*Apr-26*	Mar-27	

	Consolidated Fund	Scheme ID	Scheme name or intervention grouping	Description (include beneficial outcome)	Mode	Scheme Category	Location	Estimated Cost				Milestones				Retained
								Total Estimated Cost REVENUE (£m)	[MTF/ITF/BSF] REVENUE contribution (£m) TOTAL	Total Estimated Cost CAPITAL (£m)	[MTF/ITF] CAPITAL contribution (£m)	Start Development	Complete Development	Start Delivery	Complete Delivery	
	ITF		Cycle interventions/workplace support	Support for the two roles above	Active Travel	13. Back office: delivery & resourcing	LTA wide	0.100	0.100					*Apr-26*	Mar-27	
	ITF	C.AT00840.01	East Oxford Active Neighbourhood (C.AT00840.01)	Building on outputs of an ATE funded feasibility study, delivery of active travel and placemaking measures across East Oxford. Project incorporates several previously identified s106 schemes including, 'Littlemore Active Travel' and 'Old Road Crossing'.	Active Travel	7. Public transport & active travel: other infrastructure	OX4 1XA			4.646	0.865			Apr-26	Mar-27	
	ITF	Sustainable Transport	Implement Behaviour Change Strategy	Implementing interventions identified within the Behaviour Change Strategy towards delivery of LTCP targets.	'Back office'	13. Back office: delivery & resourcing	LTA wide	0.150	0.120					*Apr-27*	Mar-29	
	ITF		Local Transport Delivery Programme 2027-2030	To design and deliver priority transport measures and infrastructure which directly contribute to LTCP targets and deliver on the DfT oucomes framework.	Multimodal	15. Other	LTA wide			9.539	9.539			*Apr-27*	Mar-30	
	ITF	Strategic Transport	LTCP Supporting Policy Documents	Commission Optioneering Appraisal Report/Strategic Outine Business Case towards developing the Oxfordshire Metro mass rapid transit concept. Support and interventions also required for Integrated Transport and Oxfordshire Bus Strategy delivery towards LTCP targets. Possible requirement to develop a new LTCP (Current LTCP adopted in 2022). Programme of Movement and Place Plans across the county (Localised area transport strategies with delivery plans) require resource support, transport modelling, software licences, evidence collection and publishing to expedite producing the plans for how LTCP targets will be delivered. Possibility of a requirement for a new LTCP. Possibility of further Quantified Carbon Assessment. Consideration of accessibility within the development and delivery of policies.	'Back office'	14. Back office: development of future proposals or LTPs	LTA wide	0.773	0.773			*Apr-26*	Mar-29			
	ITF	C.AT00702.01	Middleton Stoney Road Active Travel Scheme	Active travel scheme for provision of segregated cycle track and footway on Middleton Stoney Road in Bicester. Funding required to deliver additional scope identified through Active Travel England design review and public engagement for enhancements to provision for pedestrians and cyclists at the Shakespeare Drive Roundabout and for crossings at the western end of the scheme.	Active Travel	2. Priority and connectivity measures to achieve modal shift	OX26 1AE			6.011	1.000			*Apr-26*	Mar-27	
	ITF		Ongoing British Cycling Officers	Keeping the British Cycling Officers.	Active Travel	13. Back office: delivery & resourcing	LTA wide	0.070	0.070					*Apr-26*	Mar-27	
	ITF		Ongoing School Engagement Officer	Continuation of School Officer Role (Katherine H's post - currently a fixed term post)	Active Travel	13. Back office: delivery & resourcing	LTA wide	0.052	0.052					*Apr-26*	Mar-27	
	ITF	C.AT00587.01	Oxford Traffic Filters (C.AT00587.01)	The Traffic Filters scheme aims to reduce through-traffic on key local roads, improve air quality, and enable safer, more reliable journeys for sustainable modes. Camera-enforced traffic filters restrict access for M1 vehicles (primarily cars) at selected locations while maintaining access for permitted users. The scheme supports objectives for carbon reduction, public health, road safety, and a shift towards more sustainable transport. The scheme is multimodal, prioritising walking, cycling, public transport, and essential vehicle movements. Pedestrians and cyclists retain full access, while buses, emergency services, and other authorised vehicles are permitted through the filters, helping to protect and improve bus reliability and emergency response times. Blue Badge holders, taxis, and other locally agreed exemptions are accommodated through a permit system where appropriate. By reducing congestion on key corridors, the scheme supports more reliable bus operations and is a condition for planned bus investment, including the purchase of new zero-emission buses. The intervention is a development and implementation scheme within the funding period, covering detailed design, statutory processes, procurement, installation of ANPR cameras and signage, and monitoring infrastructure. Post-implementation monitoring will assess impacts on traffic levels, mode shift, air quality, road safety, and community outcomes to inform any future refinements or permanence decisions.	Multimodal	2. Priority and connectivity measures to achieve modal shift	OX1 1TS			6.560	0.399			Apr-26	Mar-27	
	ITF		Oxfordshire EV Infrastructure Strategy (OEVIS) - updates	Refresh of Oxfordshire EV Infrastructure Strategy (OEVIS). The original OEVIS was published 2019 as a 5-year strategy and now requires updating and alignment with latest DfT guidance.	Electric Vehicles & infrastructure	14. Back office: development of future proposals or LTPs	LTA wide	0.050	0.050					Apr-26	Mar-29	
	ITF		OxLEVI Communications	Public engagement to support the roll out of OxLEVI. Note this work also involves City & District Councils and commercial CPO partners (Connected Kerb and EZ-Charge)	Electric Vehicles & infrastructure	12. Information and marketing	LTA wide	0.030	0.030					Apr-26	Mar-29	
	ITF		OxLEVI Programme Delivery Support	Resource to manage/coordinate the delivery of the LEVI supported infrastructure for Oxfordshire across 4 work streams: 1 - On-street charging on County owned and operated land working with Connected Kerb. (790 sockets 112 sites) 2- Supporting City and District Councils to install chargers in car parks owned and opearated by them, working with the chosen CPO, EZ-Charge. (620 sockets, 90 sites) 3 - Community Micro Hubs to support individuals in remote (largely rural) areas (200 sockets, 100 sites) - with Connected Kerb 4 - Delivery of cross-pavement charging channels (c.600-650)	Electric Vehicles & infrastructure	13. Back office: delivery & resourcing	LTA wide	0.571	0.571					Apr-26	Mar-29	
	ITF	Climate Action	Quantified Carbon Assessment	DfT have requested that a qualitative update relating to adoption plans for the Quantifiable Carbon Guidance should be provided for both LTDP initial submission in March and the final submission in September. Further detail will be provided by the DfT on carbon reporting expectations going forward alongside reporting requirements. We will therefore need to resource/commission use of the Quantifiable Carbon Guidance to provide DfT with carbon metrics for the proposed programme of interventions.	'Back office'	14. Back office: development of future proposals or LTPs	LTA wide	0.050	0.050			Apr-26	Mar-27			
	ITF	BUS02-RTPI	Real Time Passenger Information Displays	A targeted rolling programme of new and upgraded RTPI displays at bus stops and key public transport hubs and interchanges across Oxfordshire to enhance safety and security of current and future bus users thereby promoting extended use of the bus network.	Bus	7. Public transport & active travel: other infrastructure	LTA wide			0.500	0.500			Apr-26	Mar-30	
	ITF		School Travel Interventions/SSTS	To deliver the SSTS and other school interventions	Active Travel	13. Back office: delivery & resourcing	LTA wide	0.070	0.070			Apr-26	Mar-27			
	ITF	C.AT00863.01	St Giles and Broad Street Improvements (C.AT00863.01)	A public realm scheme to transform both streets for pedestrians, cyclists and public transport, building on the successful temporary Broad Street scheme and principles from the Central Oxfordshire Movement & Place Framework (COMPF). It will develop a masterplan and initial delivery phase using the allocated £870k budget.	Multimodal	2. Priority and connectivity measures to achieve modal shift	OX1 3AE			0.870	0.700			Apr-26	Mar-27	

	Consolidated Fund	Scheme ID	Scheme name or intervention grouping	Description (include beneficial outcome)	Mode	Scheme Category	Location	Estimated Cost				Milestones				Retained
								Total Estimated Cost REVENUE (£m)	[MTF/ITF/BSF] REVENUE contribution (£m) TOTAL	Total Estimated Cost CAPITAL (£m)	[MTF/ITF] CAPITAL contribution (£m)	Start Development	Complete Development	Start Delivery	Complete Delivery	
	ITF	HAMP All Years	Structural Maintenance Programme	The Structural Maintenance Annual Programme (a majority of OCC's Highways Asset Management Plan - HAMP) is Oxfordshire County Council's data-driven, risk-based framework for maintaining and improving the long-term condition of the county's highway infrastructure, using whole-life-cost principles to prioritise works such as resurfacing, structural repairs, and asset-preservation treatments across a ten-year capital outlook. It is developed through a structured planning cycle that begins with a three-year Forward Plan informed by surveys, inspections, and stakeholder feedback, followed by an Annual Plan shaped by available budgets and lifecycle assessments, and finally a Contractor's Plan that sets out detailed delivery sequencing; this process is overseen by the Structural Maintenance Programme Board, which monitors performance, risks, budgets, KPIs, and governance alignment. The programme delivers significant benefits, including improved asset longevity through earlier and better-targeted interventions; greater budget efficiency and predictability through long-term planning and reduced reactive maintenance; enhanced safety and risk reduction across the network; consistent high-quality delivery supported by robust quality assurance and contractor collaboration; sustainability gains through innovative materials and low-carbon practices; and stronger accountability through transparent governance and performance reporting, ultimately ensuring a stable, efficient and reliable maintenance pipeline for Oxfordshire's residents and stakeholders.	Multimodal	8. Road & infrastructure: highways maintenance	LTA wide			197.708	167.900			Apr-26	Mar-30	
	ITF	BUS03-TSP	Traffic Signal Bus Priority	A targeted rolling programme of implementation and adjustment of smart traffic signals which detect the approach of buses to key junctions and change the signaling sequence to provide approaching buses with priority, enabling buses to run faster and more reliably. Faster bus journeys (closer to timings of general traffic) result in more efficient and effective utilisation of fleets delivering operator reinvestment towards an extended bus network in terms of frequency and routes, collectively providing greater modal shift.	Bus	2. Priority and connectivity measures to achieve modal shift	LTA wide			1.492	1.492			Apr-26	Mar-30	
	ITF	Place Planning (South)	Transport Modelling	Our suite of transport models is aging and needs a plan to ensure our modelling capabilities remain fit for purpose. A transport modelling strategy with a package of updates/upgrades going forward is therefore required. We are working up a plan on something we are calling 'Oxmod'. The aim is for an integrated framework of the tools we use including our strategic and local models and bringing these together with data insights. This will inform planning, scheme development and developer activities, amongst others.	'Back office'	11. Digital, data and technology	LTA wide	0.350	0.350			Apr-26	Mar-27			
	ITF	Strategic Transport	Transport Monitoring and Evaluation	Monitoring of travel behavoiur is key to understanding how and why people travel and the impact of population change/growth and the impact of our interventions. This can then be fed back into our transport models and the LTCP Monitoring report, and gives an indication of what works well where, providing an evidence base for future interventions towards our targets. Considering impacts of spending decisions on groups sharing protected characteristics during the design process and in the monitoring and evaluation stage.	'Back office'	15. Other	LTA wide	0.480	0.480					Apr-27	Mar-29	
	ITF	C.AT00801.01 (Programme Budget) C.AT00802.01 (Cycle Safety & Connectivity) C.AT00803.01 (Corridor & Strategic RSI) C.AT00804.01 (Junction Incident Hot Spots) C.AT00805.01 (Speed Management) C.AT00806.01 (Safer Routes to School)	Vision Zero (Vision Zero Programme)	Vision Zero Road Safety Improvement Schemes are identified and prioritised based on road safety issues at specific highway locations, including road safety colision data provided by Thames Valley Police, local parish and town and member requests for safety improvements as well as where Place led road safety improvements have been highlighted.	Multimodal	10. Road & infrastructure: major maintenance & enhancements projects	LTA wide			8.900	8.900			*Apr-26*	Mar-30	

Mode
Active Travel
Bus
Electric Vehicles & infrastructure
Rail
Motor traffic incl. Highways Asset
Tram / light rail
Multimodal
Other (e.g. maritime)

Scheme types	Scheme type descriptions
1. Interchanges, travel hubs, travel stops	Hub, interchange, Park & Ride, station, stops and shelters for bus or tram, floating bus stop upgrades, accessibility upgrades
2. Priority and connectivity measures to achieve modal shift	bus gates and bus lanes, signal priority; traffic reduction measures; footways & footbridges, segregated cycle lanes, school streets
3. Public Transport: fleet & vehicles	Rolling stock, vehicles, new buses & trams, retrofits, zero-emission fleet or fleet upgrades, vehicles for Demand Responsive Transport, onboard accessibility upgrades (eg wheelchair spaces), onboard CCTV, onboard displays & audio-visual info
4. Public Transport: fares & ticketing	Fare capping, youth offers, discretionary concessionary schemes, integrated ticketing, multi-operator ticketing, accessible fares
5. Public Transport: new or enhanced routes & services	New routes for bus or tram, timetable enhancements, Demand Responsive Transport (DRT) routes
6.Public Transport: existing routes & services	Service support for existing routes for bus or tram, or Demand Responsive Transport (DRT)
7. Public transport & active travel: other infrastructure	Cycle parking, e-bikes, depots, layover facilities, infrastructure and power supply for ZEBs, tramlines. *(Please put EV buses in category 3).*
8. Road & infrastructure: highways maintenance	Potholes, road maintenance, verges, highways asset improvements, road signage, lighting, drop kerbs

Scheme types	Scheme type descriptions
9. Road & infrastructure: improvements, minor enhancements, EV	Road improvements to include junction realignment, junction signalisation, adding or altering roundabouts, traffic calming and speed enforcement , road safety measures. EV infrastructure, including chargepoints, pavement channels, grid upgrades, adaptations for fleet vehicles
10. Road & infrastructure: major maintenance & enhancements projects	New or replacement bridges, tunnels, roads, bypasses, other major structures; dualling; top-ups to schemes funded from other sources (e.g. MRN)
11. Digital, data and technology	Contactless readers, ticket machines; back-office systems, development of apps
12. Information and marketing	Branding & marketing, public information, info points, journey planning tools, promotional campaigns
13. Back office: delivery & resourcing	Staffing, admin, consultancy, operational, capability & capacity spend (C&C), programme management, training
14. Back office: development of future proposals or LTPs	Development only', research, evaluation, feasibility studies, business case development, LTPs (Local Transport Plans)
15. Other	Please give as much information as possible under 'scheme description', so that we can categorize appropriately.

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Annex 2: Local Transport Consolidated Funding

Local Transport Delivery Plan (2026-2030)

Summary by Mode

Funding allocations – Bus Service Fund (BSF):

Programme / Scheme Mode	26/27 Revenue	Future Years Revenue (27-29)	26/27 Capital	Future Years Capital (27-30)	Total
Bus	£5,132,300	£10,264,600	N/A	N/A	£15,396,900

Funding allocations – Integrated Transport Fund (ITF):

Programme / Scheme Mode	26/27 Revenue	Future Years Revenue (27-29)	26/27 Capital	Future Years Capital (27-30)	Total
Active Travel	£1,281,700	£2,563,400	£4,085,100	£12,255,300	£20,182,000
Bus	N/A	N/A	£3,247,000	£16,132,700	£19,380,000
Electric Vehicles & Infrastructure	£216,900	£433,800	£0	£0	£651,700
Multimodal	£0	£0	£38,634,400	£148,803,800	£187,438,200
‘Back office’	£590,700	£1,181,340	£0	£0	£1,773,000
Total	£2,089,300	£4,178,600	£45,966,500	£177,191,800	£229,426,200

Mode Summary: Bus

OCC Corporate Funding of £1.27m applied per annum to be maintained as a condition of receiving BSF for the continued support for enhanced local bus services. **Revenue** funded schemes/programmes (1/2).

Scheme / programme	Financial Year(s)	Total Cost	BSF contribution	Other funding
Asylum seekers bus pass scheme	2026-2029	£225,000	£225,000	NIL
Continued support for enhanced local bus services	2026-2029	£14,880,599	£11,070,599	£3,810,000 (Corporate Resource) TBC (Potentially s106)
Maintenance of expanded RTPI screen asset base	2026-2029	£75,000	£75,000	TBC (Potentially Corporate Resource)
MyBus Oxfordshire ticketing systems	2026-2029	£2,700,000	£2,700,000	TBC (Potentially Corporate Resource / Bus Operator Contributions)
New local bus service support	2026-2029	£417,000	£417,000	TBC (Potentially s106 / Corporate Resource)

Mode Summary: Bus

Revenue funded schemes/programmes (2/2).

Scheme / programme	Financial Year(s)	Total Cost	BSF contribution	Other funding
Staff resources to support Bus Delivery Plan and EP activities	2026-2029	£789,000	£789,000	TBC (Potentially Corporate Resource)
Transport Focus Your Bus Journey Survey	2026-2029	£120,000	£120,000	TBC (Potentially Bus Operator Contributions)

Mode Summary: Active Travel

Revenue funded schemes/programmes (1/2).

Scheme / programme	Financial Year(s)	Total Cost	ITF contribution	Other funding
Betterpoints App	2026/27	£65,000	£65,000	NIL
Bike Loan Scheme	2026/27	£45,000	£45,000	NIL
City Schools Officer	2026/27	£53,000	£53,000	NIL
Community Outreach Active Travel (COATs) Programme	2026/27	£400,000	£300,000	£100,000 (Public Health)
Cycle interventions / workplace support	2026/27	£100,000	£100,000	NIL
Ongoing British Cycling Officers	2026/27	£70,000	£70,000	NIL
Ongoing School Engagement Officer	2026/27	£52,000	£52,000	NIL
School Travel Interventions / SSTS	2026/27	£70,000	£70,000	NIL

Mode Summary: Active Travel

Revenue funded schemes/programmes (2/2).

Scheme / programme	Financial Year(s)	Total Cost	ITF contribution	Other funding
Active Travel Scheme Development & Feasibility	2026/27	£527,000	£527,000	TBC (Potentially OCC Revenue / s106)
Active Travel planning, scheme development and behaviour change	2027-2029	£2,564,000	£2,564,000	TBC (Potentially OCC Revenue / s106)

Mode Summary: Active Travel

Capital funded schemes/programmes (1/1).

Scheme / programme	Financial Year(s)	Total Cost	ITF contribution	Other funding
A40 Eynsham Grade Separated Active Travel Crossing (initial design works)	2026/27	£800,000	£150,000	£650,000 (Corporate Resource)
Ambrosden to Bicester Active Travel Scheme (Phase 2 & 3)	2026/27	£5,580,000	£1,995,000	£1,132,000 (s106) £1,848,000 (ATF) £605,000 (Corporate Resource)
Cycle & micromobility parking	2026/27	£75,000	£75,000	TBC (Potentially S106 / Corporate Resource / CIL / Other Grants)
East Oxford Active Neighbourhood	2026/27	£4,646,000	£865,000	£646,000 (s106) £3,135,000 (Corporate Resource)
Middleton Stoney Road Active Travel Scheme	2026/27	£6,011,000	£1,000,000	£637,000 (s106) £4,374,000 (ATF)
Active Travel Delivery Programme	2027-2030	£12,255,000	£12,255,000	TBC (Potentially S106 / Corporate Resource / CIL / Other Grants)

Mode Summary: Bus

Approximately 50% of the contributions towards Bus Vehicle Improvement is made by Operators.
Capital funded schemes/programmes (1/2).

Scheme / programme	Financial Year(s)	Total Cost	ITF contribution	Other funding
Bus Enhanced Partnership Plus	2027-2030	£6,000,000	£6,000,000	NIL
Bus Priority Infrastructure and Improvements (various)	2027-2030	£3,612,000	£3,612,000	TBC (Potentially S106 / Corporate Resource / / Other Grants)
Bus Stop and Transport hub Infrastructure Improvements	2027-2030	£525,000	£525,000	TBC (Potentially S106 / Corporate Resource / / Other Grants)
Bus Vehicle Improvement Fund	2026-2030	£14,500,500	£7,250,000	£7,250,000 (Operator Contributions)

Mode Summary: Bus

Capital funded schemes/programmes (2/2).

Scheme / programme	Financial Year(s)	Total Cost	ITF contribution	Other funding
Real Time Passenger Information Displays	2026-2030	£500,000	£500,000	TBC (Potentially S106 / Corporate Resource / / Other Grants)
Traffic Signal Bus Priority	2026-2030	£1,492,000	£1,492,000	TBC (Potentially S106 / Corporate Resource / / Other Grants)

Mode Summary: Electric Vehicles & Infrastructure

Revenue funded schemes/programmes (1/1).

Scheme / programme	Financial Year(s)	Total Cost	ITF contribution	Other funding
Oxfordshire EV Infrastructure Strategy (OEVIS) - updates	2026-2029	£50,000	£50,000	NIL
OxLEVI Communications	2026-2029	£30,000	£30,000	NIL
OxLEVI Programme Delivery Support	2026-2029	£571,000	£571,000	NIL

Mode Summary: Multimodal

OCC Corporate Funding of £26.1m committed over the 4-year period towards Highway Maintenance to be maintained as a condition of receiving ITF, including DfT incentive funding. **Capital** funded schemes/programmes (1/1).

Scheme / programme	Financial Year(s)	Total Cost	ITF contribution	Other funding
Oxford Traffic Filters	2026/27	£6,560,000	£399,000	£3,400,000 (BSIP) £760,000 (H&GD) £857,000 (Income) £1,144,000 (Forward Funding)
St Giles and Broad Street Improvements	2026/27	£870,000	£700,000	£170,000 (Corporate Resource)
Structural Maintenance Programme	2026-2030	£197,708,000	£167,900,000	£29,808,000 (Corporate Resource)
Vision Zero Programme	2026-2030	£8,900,000	£8,900,000	TBC (Potentially S106 / Corporate Resource / CIL / Other Grants)
Local Transport Delivery Programme	2027-2030	£9,538,800	£9,538,800	TBC (Potentially S106 / Corporate Resource / CIL / Other Grants)

Mode Summary: ‘Back Office’

Revenue funded schemes/programmes (1/1).

Scheme / programme	Financial Year(s)	Total Cost	ITF contribution	Other funding
LTCP Supporting Policy Documents	2026-2029	£773,000	£773,000	NIL
Quantified Carbon Assessment	2026/27	£50,000	£50,000	NIL
Transport Modelling	2026/27	£350,000	£350,000	NIL
Implement Behaviour Change Strategy	2027-2029	£150,000	£120,000	£30,000 (Public Health)
Transport Monitoring and Evaluation	2027-2029	£480,000	£480,000	NIL

Oxfordshire County Council

Equalities Impact Assessment

DFT LOCAL TRANSPORT DELIVERY PLAN

05.03.2026

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Section 1: Summary details

Directorate and Service Area	Environment and Highways, Place Shaping.
What is being assessed (e.g. name of policy, procedure, project, service or proposed service change).	The proposed Local Transport Delivery Plan for 26/27-29/30, for submission to the DfT.
Is this a new or existing function or policy?	Existing
Summary of assessment Briefly summarise the policy or proposed service change. Summarise possible impacts. Does the proposal bias, discriminate or unfairly disadvantage individuals or groups within the community? (following completion of the assessment).	The Local Transport Delivery Plan outlines how the DfT's consolidated funding settlement will be spent. The Delivery Plan includes schemes to break down the barriers to public transport and active travel, encouraging residents to travel more sustainably and enabling them to access important local services. The Delivery Plan also includes Highways Maintenance, and Vision Zero schemes which aim to improve road safety for users across all modes. The Local Transport Delivery Plan is considered to have a positive impact on both individuals and communities. Some of the expected benefits are reduced congestion, increased active travel and public transport use, improved road safety and accessibility and improved air quality. There are considered to be no negative impacts from an EIA standpoint.
Completed By	Claire Godbolt
Authorised By	Hannah Battye
Date of Assessment	02/03/2026

Section 2: Detail of proposal

Context / Background Briefly summarise the background to the policy or proposed service change, including reasons for any changes from previous versions.	Oxfordshire County Council has received a Local Transport Consolidated Funding Settlement letter from the Department for Transport (DfT), commissioning the Council to produce a Local Transport Delivery Plan (LTDP), which will identify how the funding will be prioritised and spent. Oxfordshire County Council is required to submit a draft of the LTDP with all spending for 2026/27 and an outline plan to 2029/30, by 20 March 2026. The final LTDP to 2029/30 should be submitted to the Department by 18 September 2026. The consolidated funding settlement from 2026/27 to 2029/30 totals £244.8m.
Proposals Explain the detail of the proposals, including why this has been decided as the best course of action.	The Local Transport Delivery Plan (LTDP) produced is aligned with the Council's ambitions of the Local Transport & Connectivity Plan (LTCP), known more commonly to DfT as the Local Transport Plan (LTP), and its supporting strategies, delivering outcomes through the key themes of: Environment, Health, Healthy Place Shaping, Productivity, Connectivity and Inclusivity. The programmes/schemes listed within the Plan are local network priorities and align with wider place-based and local/regional objectives (growth, spatial, environmental and social). The LTDP is aligned with and directly supports the Council's priorities for fostering an inclusive, integrated, and sustainable transportation network, contributing to making Oxfordshire a greener, fairer, and healthier county.
Evidence / Intelligence List and explain any data, consultation outcomes, research findings, feedback from service users and stakeholders etc, that	For 2026/27, the majority of schemes within the existing capital programme will have already undergone Equalities Impact Assessment on a scheme- by- scheme basis as part of their development and approval.

supports your proposals and can help to inform the judgements you make about potential impact on different individuals, communities or groups and our ability to deliver our climate commitments.	For future years, Equalities Impact Assessments will take place prior to schemes being included within the Local Transport Delivery Plan and before any funding is allocated. Consideration of equalities impacts forms a core part of the prioritisation process, ensuring that schemes delivering the greatest overall benefits are progressed. Accessibility and inclusion will be embedded throughout scheme development (in line with the DfT's frameworks and emerging requirements) both prior to and during scheme development and delivery. This approach is supported by alignment with corporate priorities for development and delivery, alongside individual scheme- level consultation to inform design and mitigation of potential impacts.
Alternatives considered / rejected Summarise any other approaches that have been considered in developing the policy or proposed service change, and the reasons why these were not adopted. This could include reasons why doing nothing is not an option.	Producing a Delivery Plan is a condition for the receipt of the DfT funding. The DfT have assumed that particularly for 2026/27, the programmes and schemes identified within the LTDP will already be within the Council's committed programme. The LTDP will be further refined with regards to the allocations of future years funding i.e. 2027-2030, with the final LTDP submitted to DfT on 18 September 2026. Schemes were selected based on continued operation of existing programmes and perceived importance in improving the sustainable transport offer, as well as their deliverability within the time and budgets allowed. The Highways Maintenance programme and how to utilise the Local Electric Vehicle Infrastructure Grant (LEVI) effectively have also been considered. Other schemes not included in the LTDP were considered but rejected on the basis that they were not a priority and/or not deliverable within the time and budgets allowed. They remain an aspiration for the future.

Section 3: Impact Assessment - Protected Characteristics

Protected Characteristic	No Impact	Positive	Negative	Description of Impact	Any actions or mitigation to reduce negative impacts	Action owner* (*Job Title, Organisation)	Timescale and monitoring arrangements
Age	☐	☒	☐	Younger and older people are statistically more likely to rely on buses. This group will benefit from improvements to bus services and access outlined within the Delivery Plan. Vision zero/accessibility and road safety schemes outlined within the Plan support safer roads for all users, but notably more vulnerable groups (including older people). Highways maintenance schemes improve the condition of carriageways, footways and crossings, reducing trip hazards and improving overall safety for all road users. Improving the carriageway should also support those using mobility aids to travel actively.	To consider this group when developing the details of schemes within the Delivery Plan.	Programme Lead, OCC	Delivery of schemes outlined within the 26/27 plan by 31 March 2027. Quarterly monitoring of KPIs for each scheme/programme.

Disability	☐	☒	☐	People with disabilities are statistically more likely to rely on buses. This group will benefit from improvements to bus services and access outlined within the Delivery Plan. Vision zero/accessibility, road safety and highways maintenance schemes outlined within the Plan support safer roads, footways and crossings for all users, and can support those with disabilities by reducing physical barriers and improving accessibility of the public realm. Research shows that often the built environment is cited as a barrier to mobility for disabled users of the highway. Active travel schemes are intended to change the environment in order to enable all users to walk, wheel and cycle and link up with other forms of transport.	To consider this group when developing the details of schemes within the Delivery Plan.	Programme Lead, OCC	Delivery of schemes outlined within the 26/27 plan by 31 March 2027. Quarterly monitoring of KPIs for each scheme/programme.

Gender Reassignment	☒	☐	☐	There is likely to be a neutral impact on this group.	To consider this group when developing the details of schemes within the Delivery Plan.	Programme Lead, OCC	Delivery of schemes outlined within the 26/27 plan by 31 March 2027. Quarterly monitoring of KPIs for each scheme/programme.
Marriage & Civil Partnership	☒	☐	☐	There is likely to be a neutral impact on this group.	To consider this group when developing the details of schemes within the Delivery Plan.	Programme Lead, OCC	Delivery of schemes outlined within the 26/27 plan by 31 March 2027. Quarterly monitoring of KPIs for each scheme/programme

Pregnancy & Maternity	☐	☒	☐	Women are statistically more likely to rely on buses and are more likely to undertake multi-modal journeys. Therefore this group will benefit from improvements to bus services and active travel provision outlined within the Delivery Plan. Exposure to polluted air can be harmful during pregnancy, increasing the risk of premature birth or low birth weight. Transport schemes that encourage modal shift away from private car use and reduce traffic congestion (such as active travel schemes and bus schemes) are therefore likely to have positive health impacts for pregnant women through improved air quality. Improved highway conditions (delivered via the highways maintenance programme) support safer and more comfortable walking environments for those using prams, pushchairs or accompanying young children.	To consider this group when developing the details of schemes within the Delivery Plan.	Programme Lead, OCC	Delivery of schemes outlined within the 26/27 plan by 31 March 2027. Quarterly monitoring of KPIs for each scheme/programme.

Race	☐	☒	☐	Black, Asian, and minority ethnic (BAME) households tend to have the highest rates of poverty and are therefore statistically more likely to rely on buses. Therefore, this group will benefit from improvements to bus services outlined within the Delivery Plan. Active travel schemes are intended to change the environment in order to enable all users to walk, wheel and cycle and link up with other forms of transport Highways maintenance schemes benefit people from all ethnic backgrounds by improving access to essential services, employment and education through safer and more reliable transport networks.	To consider this group when developing the details of schemes within the Delivery Plan.	Programme Lead, OCC	Delivery of schemes outlined within the 26/27 plan by 31 March 2027. Quarterly monitoring of KPIs for each scheme/programme.

Sex	☐	☒	☐	Women are statistically more likely to rely on buses. Therefore, this group will benefit from improvements to bus services outlined within the Delivery Plan. Enhancements such as improved crossings, wider footways, segregated cycle routes, reduced traffic volumes and lighting upgrades can improve real and perceived safety. This is particularly relevant for women, who are more likely to cite safety concerns as a barrier to walking or cycling. Active Travel and Vision Zero schemes outlined in the Delivery Plan that reduce vehicle dominance and prioritise pedestrians and cyclists can therefore increase women's confidence to travel actively. Improved road and footway conditions contribute to safer public spaces for all users, supporting greater confidence when travelling, particularly for women who may feel more	To consider this group when developing the details of schemes within the Delivery Plan.	Programme Lead, OCC	Delivery of schemes outlined within the 26/27 plan by 31 March 2027. Quarterly monitoring of KPIs for each scheme/programme.

				vulnerable in poorly maintained environments. Enhanced highway safety and accessibility benefit everyone by supporting safer, more predictable journeys.			
Sexual Orientation	☒	☐	☐	There is likely to be a neutral impact on this group.	To consider this group when developing the details of schemes within the Delivery Plan.	Programme Lead, OCC	Delivery of schemes outlined within the 26/27 plan by 31 March 2027. Quarterly monitoring of KPIs for each scheme/programme.
Religion or Belief	☒	☐	☐	There is likely to be a neutral impact on this group.	To consider this group when developing the details of schemes within the Delivery Plan.	Programme Lead, OCC	Delivery of schemes outlined within the 26/27 plan by 31 March 2027. Quarterly monitoring of KPIs for each scheme/programme

Section 3: Impact Assessment - Additional Community Impacts

Additional community impacts	No Impact	Positive	Negative	Description of impact	Any actions or mitigation to reduce negative impacts	Action owner (*Job Title, Organisation)	Timescale and monitoring arrangements
Rural communities	☐	☒	☐	The impacts of transport poverty are worst for poor people in rural areas. Therefore, this group will benefit from improvements to bus services and active travel infrastructure outlined within the Delivery Plan. Active travel schemes aim to connect people in rural areas with services in urban locations. Highways maintenance schemes improve the condition, safety and reliability of the local road network, supporting access to employment, education, healthcare and essential services and therefore having a positive impact on residents in rural areas.	To consider this group when developing the details of schemes within the Delivery Plan.	Programme Lead, OCC	Delivery of schemes outlined within the 26/27 plan by 31 March 2027. Quarterly monitoring of KPIs for each scheme/programme.
Armed Forces	☒	☐	☐	There is likely to be a neutral impact on this group.	To consider this group when developing the details of schemes within the Delivery Plan.	Programme Lead, OCC	Delivery of schemes outlined within the 26/27 plan by 31 March 2027. Quarterly monitoring

Additional community impacts	No Impact	Positive	Negative	Description of impact	Any actions or mitigation to reduce negative impacts	Action owner (*Job Title, Organisation)	Timescale and monitoring arrangements
							of KPIs for each scheme/programme
Carers	☐	☒	☐	Carers are likely to be unpaid or on low income and therefore would benefit from improvements to bus services listed within the Delivery Plan. Carers are also more likely to trip-chain undertake multi-modal journeys.	To consider this group when developing the details of schemes within the Delivery Plan.	Programme Lead, OCC	Delivery of schemes outlined within the 26/27 plan by 31 March 2027. Quarterly monitoring of KPIs for each scheme/programme
Areas of deprivation	☐	☒	☐	Those on lower incomes are statistically more likely to rely on buses. In addition, access to work is greatly improved by more accessible and affordable public transport opportunities. Therefore, this group will benefit from improvements to bus services outlined in the Delivery Plan. Increased Active Travel provision also supports users who do not have access to their own vehicle.	To consider this group when developing the details of schemes within the Delivery Plan.	Programme Lead, OCC	Delivery of schemes outlined within the 26/27 plan by 31 March 2027. Quarterly monitoring of KPIs for each scheme/programme.

Additional community impacts	No Impact	Positive	Negative	Description of impact	Any actions or mitigation to reduce negative impacts	Action owner (*Job Title, Organisation)	Timescale and monitoring arrangements
Refugees, Asylum seekers and Undocumented migrants (i.e. vulnerable migrants	☐	☒	☐	A programme of transport schemes supporting active travel and improved bus services, as outlined in the Delivery Plan, can improve access to employment, healthcare, education and other community services. Investment in public transport and safe walking and cycling infrastructure can reduce reliance on taxis/private vehicles, supporting refugees on low incomes to manage travel costs more effectively.	To consider this group when developing the details of schemes within the Delivery Plan.	Programme Lead, OCC	Delivery of schemes outlined within the 26/27 plan by 31 March 2027. Quarterly monitoring of KPIs for each scheme/programme.
Socio-Economic Duty	☐	☒	☐	The Local Transport Delivery Plan, which includes highways, bus and active travel schemes, supports the Socio- Economic Duty by improving affordable access to employment, education, healthcare and community services, particularly for people on lower incomes, in rural areas and in areas of deprivation. By prioritising public transport, walking and cycling, and	To consider this group when developing the details of schemes within the Delivery Plan.	Programme Lead, OCC	Delivery of schemes outlined within the 26/27 plan by 31 March 2027. Quarterly monitoring of KPIs for each scheme/programme.

Additional community impacts	No Impact	Positive	Negative	Description of impact	Any actions or mitigation to reduce negative impacts	Action owner (*Job Title, Organisation)	Timescale and monitoring arrangements
				embedding inclusive design and mitigation through scheme- specific EqIAs, the programme seeks to reduce inequalities of outcome associated with socio- economic disadvantage.			

Section 3: Impact Assessment - Additional Wider Impacts

Additional Wider Impacts	No Impact	Positive	Negative	Description of Impact	Any actions or mitigation to reduce negative impacts	Action owner* (*Job Title, Organisation)	Timescale and monitoring arrangements
Staff	☐	☒	☐	Access to work is greatly improved by more accessible and affordable public transport opportunities and increased active travel provision (such as safer cycle routes). Therefore, this group will benefit from improvements to bus services and improved active travel links. As staff mostly use the highways network in Oxfordshire, they will also benefit from the highways maintenance schemes outlined within this delivery plan.	To consider this group when developing the details of schemes within the Delivery Plan.	Programme Lead, OCC	Delivery of schemes outlined within the 26/27 plan by 31 March 2027. Quarterly monitoring of KPIs for each scheme/programme.
Other Council Services	☐	☒	☐	Other Council Services have a reliance on the highways network within Oxfordshire. An example of this is the Fire Service. Increased spend on highways maintenance could also help to reduce road accidents.	To consider this group when developing the details of schemes within the Delivery Plan.	Programme Lead, OCC	Delivery of schemes outlined within the 26/27 plan by 31 March 2027. Quarterly monitoring of KPIs for each scheme/programme
Providers	☒	☐	☐	There is likely to be a neutral impact on this group.	To consider this group when developing the details of	Programme Lead, OCC	Delivery of schemes outlined within the 26/27 plan by 31

Additional Wider Impacts	No Impact	Positive	Negative	Description of Impact	Any actions or mitigation to reduce negative impacts	Action owner* (*Job Title, Organisation)	Timescale and monitoring arrangements
					schemes within the Delivery Plan.		March 2027. Quarterly monitoring of KPIs for each scheme/programme
Social Value [1]	☐	☒	☐	The Delivery Plan lists a mixture of highways, bus and active travel schemes. Overall, this is expected to deliver positive social value by improving accessibility, safety, affordability and health outcomes. The schemes outlined within the Delivery Plan help to connect people to jobs and customers to businesses, facilitate access to education and essential services. and contribute to environmental improvements by encouraging a shift from private to public transport/active travel. Social value is also embedded within the Highways	To consider this group when developing the details of schemes within the Delivery Plan.	Programme Lead, OCC	Delivery of schemes outlined within the 26/27 plan by 31 March 2027. Quarterly monitoring of KPIs for each scheme/programme.

[1] If the Public Services (Social Value) Act 2012 applies to this proposal, please summarise here how you have considered how the contract might improve the economic, social, and environmental well-being of the relevant area

Additional Wider Impacts	No Impact	Positive	Negative	Description of Impact	Any actions or mitigation to reduce negative impacts	Action owner* (*Job Title, Organisation)	Timescale and monitoring arrangements
				maintenance contract, therefore additional investment in this area allows for more of this activity to take place.			

Section 4: Review

Where bias, negative impact or disadvantage is identified, the proposal and/or implementation can be adapted or changed; meaning there is a need for regular review. This review may also be needed to reflect additional data and evidence for a fuller assessment (proportionate to the decision in question). Please state the agreed review timescale for the identified impacts of the policy implementation or service change.

Review Date	**September 2026**
Person Responsible for Review	**Ben Smith (Strategic Transport Manager)**
Authorised By	**Hannah Battye (Head of Place Shaping)**

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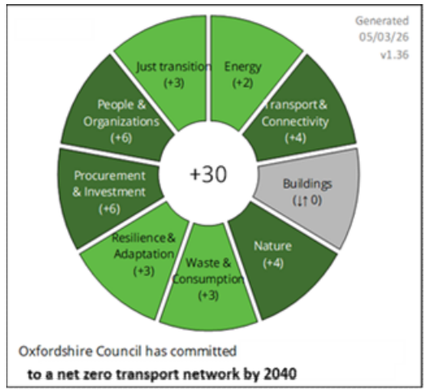
Climate Impact Assessment

Summary

Directorate and Service Area	Environment and Highways, Economy and Place Transport Policy
What is being assessed	DfT Local Transport Delivery Plan 2026-2030
Is this a new or existing function or policy?	Existing
Summary of assessment	DfT new mandatory requirement for Local Transport Authorities to produce carbon forecasts and to assess whole life carbon in transport intervention decision making contribute to the objective of achieving a net zero transport network by 2040 and to address whole life carbon as established in Policy 27 of the Local Transport and Connectivity Plans. There are many positive benefits of the proposals included in the Local Transport Delivery Plan particularly those related with highways maintenance, active travelling, bus service improvements, bus service prioritisation and affordability approach, traffic modelling/monitoring. However, the implementation of Local Transport Quantifiable Carbon Guidance (LTQCG) requires the establishment of assessment boundaries on an area basis (rather than on a project/intervention level as presented in this LTDP), therefore the assessment of combined effects of LTDP projects and other projects/interventions in the same area (excluded in LTDP) that have known potential negative risks are missing. The risks are that if these negative impacts materialise, they may offset the positive benefits of LTDP projects. The recommendation is to present a LTDP in DfT submissions from an area boundary approach in alignment with LTQCG.
Completed by	Franco Gonzalez
Climate action sign off by	Franco Gonzalez
Director sign off by	Paul Fermer
Assessment date	05/03/2026



Detail of proposal

Context / Background	Oxfordshire County Council has received a Local Transport Consolidated Funding Settlement letter from the Department for Transport (DfT), commissioning the Council to produce a Local Transport Delivery Plan (LTDP), which will identify how the funding will be prioritised and spent. Oxfordshire County Council is required to submit a draft of the LTDP with all spending for 2026/27 and an outline plan to 2029/30, by 20 March 2026. The final LTDP to 2029/30 should be submitted to the Department by 18 September 2026. The DfT also require Local Transport Authorities to report plans for developing carbon emissions forecast estimates of their LTDP as an outcome framework indicator and to use whole life carbon assessments in transport intervention decision making. Both tasks must follow DfT's Local Transport Quantifiable Carbon Guidance published in August 2025. Further details on reporting, including how to use the guidance to report against carbon indicators, will be made available later in 2026. The consolidated funding settlement from 2026/27 to 2029/30 totals £244.8m.
Proposal	The Local Transport Delivery Plan (LTDP) produced is aligned with the Council's ambitions of the Local Transport & Connectivity Plan (LTCP), known more commonly to DfT as the Local Transport Plan (LTP), and its supporting strategies, delivering outcomes through the key themes of: Environment, Health, Healthy Place Shaping, Productivity, Connectivity and Inclusivity. The programmes/schemes listed within the Plan are local network priorities and align with wider place-based and local/regional objectives (growth, spatial, environmental and social). The LTDP is aligned with and directly supports the Council's priorities for fostering an inclusive, integrated, and sustainable transportation network, contributing to making Oxfordshire a greener, fairer, and healthier county.
Evidence / Intelligence	For 2026/27, most schemes within the existing capital programme will already have undergone proportionate carbon assessment as part of their development and approval. For future years, carbon impact assessments will be undertaken prior to schemes being included in the Local Transport Delivery Plan and before funding is allocated, representing a clear change in governance. This approach aligns with Department for Transport Quantifiable Carbon Guidance and emerging requirements. Carbon performance, including proportionate consideration of whole-life carbon, will form a core part of scheme prioritisation and option development. Carbon considerations will be embedded throughout the project lifecycle to inform decision-making and identify opportunities to reduce emissions, supporting both DfT objectives and corporate climate commitments.
Alternatives considered / rejected	Producing a Delivery Plan is a condition for the receipt of the DfT funding. The DfT have assumed that particularly for 2026/27, the programmes and schemes identified within the LTDP will already be within the Council's committed programme. The LTDP will be further refined with regards to the allocations of future years funding i.e. 2027-2030, with the final LTDP submitted to DfT on 18 September 2026. Schemes were selected based on continued operation of existing programmes and perceived importance in improving the sustainable transport offer, as well as their deliverability within the time and budgets allowed. The Highways Maintenance programme and how to utilise the Local Electric Vehicle Infrastructure Grant (LEVI) effectively have also been considered.

Category	Impact criteria	Score (-3 to +3)	Description of impact	Actions or mitigations to reduce negative impacts	Action owner	Timeline and monitoring arrangements
Energy	Increases energy efficiency	1	Highways Maintenance partnership has a focus on energy efficiency in operations.		Highways Maintenance team	
Energy	Promotes a switch to low-carbon or renewable energy	1	Highways Maintenance partnership includes provisions for the installation of photovoltaic technology in highways maintennce depots for supporting EV charging.		Highways Maintenance team	
Energy	Promotes resilient, local, smart energy systems	N/A				
Transport & Connectivity	Reduces need to travel and/or the need for private car ownership	-1	The Local Transport Delivery Plan include explicit projects for reducing the need to travel by car by one the one hand prioritising active travelling (e.g. Ambrosden to Bicester Active Travel Scheme, Phase 2 & 3, - C.AT00703.01), prioritisng public transport (e.g. Bus Priority Infrastructure and Improvements - BUS05-BP1; Traffic Signal Bus Priority- BUS03-TSP) and desintivising the use of cars (Oxford Traffic Filters - C.AT00587.01). There are plans to keep affordable ticketing schemes in bus public transport (MyBus - BUS07-MYB) and to address affordability in Bus Enhanced Partnership negotiations with bus operators (Bus EP+ delivery - BUS12 -EPP) which as highlighed in Bus Delivery models CIA remains a barrier for further public transport adoption.	Focus on affordability in Bus EP+ negotiations with bus operators. The implementation of Local Transport Quantifiable Carbon Guidance requires the establishment of assessment boundaries on an area basis (rather than on a project/intervention level as presented in this LTDP), therefore the combined effects of LTDP projects with other projects in the same area with potential negative risks are missing in this assessment. Some of these excluded projects as presented in previous CIAs have the risk of induced traffic (e.g. South East Peripheral Road and A41 Corridor Improvements), a risk that has not been quantified and if materialised. If negative impacts of these projects are materialised they could neutralise partially or totally the potential positive benefits of other active travel and public transport interventions.	Transport Policy and Planning team.	
Transport & Connectivity	Supports active travel	3	Delivery Plan includes multiple programmes of Active Travel schemes (e.g. multiple projects under following IDs: C.AT00841.01, C.AT00703.01)		Transport Planning and Infrastructure Delivery teams	

Transport & Connectivity	Increases use of public transport	2	The Local Transport Delivery Plan include explicit projects for reducing the need to travel by car by one the one hand prioritising active travelling (e.g. Ambrosden to Bicester Active Travel Scheme, Phase 2 & 3, - C.AT00703.01), prioritisng public transport (e.g. Bus Priority Infrastructure and Improvements - BUS05-BP1; Traffic Signal Bus Priority- BUS03-TSP) and desintivising the use of cars (Oxford Traffic Filters - C.AT00587.01). There are plans to keep affordable ticketing schemes in bus public transport (MyBus - BUS07-MYB) and to address affordability in Bus Enhanced Partnership negotiations with bus operators (Bus EP+ delivery - BUS12 -EPP) which as highlighed in Bus Delivery models CIA remains a barrier for further public transport adoption.	Focus on affordability in Bus Enhanced Partnership (EP+) negotiations with bus operators.	OCC Bus team.
Transport & Connectivity	Accelerates electrification of transport	3	LTDP includes provisions for updating Oxfordshire EV infrastructure strategy, communication and delivery support for district and city councils in relation to local electric vehicle infrastructure (see interventions under ID C.AT00587.01). Bus Partnership has already produced excellent results in decarbonising bus fleets. The LTDP includdes provisions for Bus Enhanced Partnership to continue efforst in decarbonisation.		Transport Planning and Infrastructure Delivery teams
Buildings	Promotes net zero new builds and developments	N/A			
Buildings	Accelerates retrofitting of existing buildings	N/A			
Nature	Protects, restores or enhances biodiversity, landscape and ecosystems	3	Highways Maintenance Partnership has Biodiversity Net Gain targets aiming for a 20% net gain.		Highways Maintenance team
Nature	Develops blue and green infrastructure	N/A			
Nature	Improves access to nature and green spaces	1	A part of highways mainteinance program includes roads and bridges that provide access to nature and green spaces.		Highways Maintenance team
Waste & Consumption	Reduces overall consumption	1	Highways Maintenance Partnership has circular economy targets		Highways Maintenance team/Climate Action team
Waste & Consumption	Supports waste prevention and drive reuse and recycling	1	Highways Maintenance Partnership has circular economy targets		Highways Maintenance team/Climate Action team
Resilience & Adaptation	Increases resilience to flooding	3	Highways Mainteinance program has an important role in drainage maintenance.		Highways Maintenance team
Resilience & Adaptation	Increases resilience to other extreme weather events (e.g., storms, cold snaps, heatwaves, droughts)	N/A			
Resilience & Adaptation	Increases resilience of council services, communities, energy systems, transport infrastructure and/or supply chains	N/A			

Procurement & Investment	Procurement practices prioritise low-carbon options, circular economy and sustainability	3	Highways Maintenance Contract established climate change target requireements such as contractor adopting Science Based Targets and translating those targets to the contract. LTCP established PAS2080 as a requirement in Policy 27.		Highways Maintenance team
Procurement & Investment	Investment being considered supports climate action/ is consistent with path to net zero	1	Investment prioritises delivery of sustainable transport infrastructure and low carbon options, including supporting active travel and bus transport. Also the LTDP includes investement in Transport Modelling and Transport Monitoring Technologies which will contribute to facilitate the implementation of the Local Transport Quantifiable Guidance. However the scope of the LTDP is based on boundaries established on a project/intervention basis rather than area basis as established in the Local Transport Quantifiable Carbon Guidance. The implication of this discrepancy in assessment boundary approach is that potential negative risks of other projects in the same area are neglected.	Implement Local Transport Quantifiable Carbon Guidance through an area based approach.	Transport Policy and Planning team.
People & Organizations	Drives behavioural change to address the climate and ecological emergency	3	Delivery Plan includes behaviour change schemes (Active Travel planning, scheme development and behaviour change 2027-2029 - C.AT00841.01)		Transport Policy and Planning team.
People & Organizations	Drives organizational and systemic change to address the climate and ecological emergency	1	Prioritises investment in supporting transport infrastructure and services in a manner that makes walking, cycling, buses etc. a viable choice for more people. Thus enabling choices to shift modes of transport. Yet the LTDP has a project boundary approach which is not consistent with the area boundary approach of the Local Transport Quantifiable Guidance. The implication is that projects/interventions with potential negative risk in the same area are neglected in LTDP.	Implement Local Transport Quantifiable Carbon Guidance through an area based approach.	Transport Policy and Planning team.
Just transition	Promotes green innovation and job creation	3	Highways Maintenance program has focused and will continue to focus on low carbon innovation. LTDP includes provisions for innovation in monitoring traffic.		Highways Maintenance team

Just transition	Promotes health and wellbeing	-1	LTDP significantly support investment in active travel, providing the opportunity to have knock-on benefits for health and wellbeing. However the scheme may reverse those benefits if the risk of induced traffic is not adressed in projects that are planned in the same areas.	Explore risk and mitigation measures of induced traffic.	Transport Policy and Planning team.
Just transition	Reduces poverty and inequality	1	There are plans to keep affordable ticketing schemes in bus public transport (MyBus - BUS07-MYB) and to address affordability in Bus Enhanced Partnership negotiations with bus operators (Bus EP+ delivery - BUS12 -EPP) which as highlighed in Bus Delivery models CIA remains a barrier for further public transport adoption.	Focus on affordability in Bus EP+ negotiations with bus operators.	Bus team

CABINET

17 MARCH 2026

Movement and Place Plan: Bicester and Surrounding Villages

Report by Director for Environment & Highways

RECOMMENDATION

1. **The Cabinet is RECOMMENDED to: -**

   a) Approve the adoption and publication of the Bicester and Surrounding Villages Movement and Place Plan (**Annex A**), and its subsequent supporting documents at A1-A4 (Delivery Plan, proposals map, people postcards, summary of plan).

Executive Summary

2. This paper seeks cabinet approval for the Bicester and Surrounding Villages Movement and Place (MAP) Plan – the second plan in the MAP Plan programme.

3. These Movement & Place Plans will replace the current "Area Strategies" as adopted in 2016, as part of Local Transport Plan 4 (LTP4). The MAP Plans form "Part 2s" of the Local Transport Connectivity Plan (LTCP). This specifically addresses and supports, ***Policies 52 and 53 of the LTCP***.

4. During the pre-engagement phase, stakeholder officers collaborated with the Portfolio Holder, Local Members, Town and Parish Members, and key stakeholders to develop the Plan.

5. The team planned to hold a public exhibition in November (2025) but due to a weather event this was cancelled. Nonetheless, further online engagement and discussions with key stakeholders took place.

6. After the public consultation held over four weeks in November 2025 through the Let's Talk Webpages, a decision was reached to initiate additional engagement with local members and parishes in response to feedback received during the consultation process. Consequently, the adaptation of the plans has been postponed until now.

7. An additional three meetings were held in January and February to obtain feedback from local councillors, including those representing towns and parishes. The feedback gathered was thoroughly reviewed and integrated into the preparation of the plan submitted to the cabinet.

Background: Movement and Place Plans

8. MAP Plans are 'daughter' documents ("Part 2s") of the council's LTCP, adopted in July 2022 – a statutory requirement of the Transport Act 2000. A number of MAP Plans are being developed, which will support the LTCP and its' targets. This is alongside other specific strategies (i.e. Mobility Hubs, Freight and Logistics, Active Travel, Rail and Bus and Coach).

9. Each MAP Plan builds upon and replaces the '*Connecting Oxfordshire: Area Strategies'*, adopted in 2016 as part of LTP4, where they exist (Science Vale, Witney, Carterton, Banbury & Bicester). The MAP Plans are informed and will be developed using a comprehensive evidence base, from national, regional, and local data sources along with site visits. The evidence gathered establishes the existing conditions in each area, which will help identify the challenges and opportunities.

10. The requirement to replace the area strategies from LTP4 is set out in ***Policies 52 and 53 of the LTCP***.

11. The MAP Plans are considered "*live*" documents, with annual or biennial updates, where required. This will ensure that they reflect the latest local policy guidance, future Local Plans, likely speculative growth, new or updated government guidance, funding streams, and the development of schemes. It is worth noting that continuing resource will be required (e.g. staff resource) to deliver this.

Engagement and Consultation: Bicester and Surrounding Villages

12. Extensive engagement and public consultation took place to inform the final version of the MAP Plan, subject to cabinet feedback. **Figure 1,** outlines the engagement and consultation the team followed, and officers presented at following local events prior to formal consultation:
    - Bicester Area Oversight Group – (July - October 2025)
    - Bicester Locality Meeting – (September 2025)
    - County and District Councillors – (September 2025)
    - Parish and Town Councils – (September 2025)

- Bicester Town Council Meeting – (October 2025)

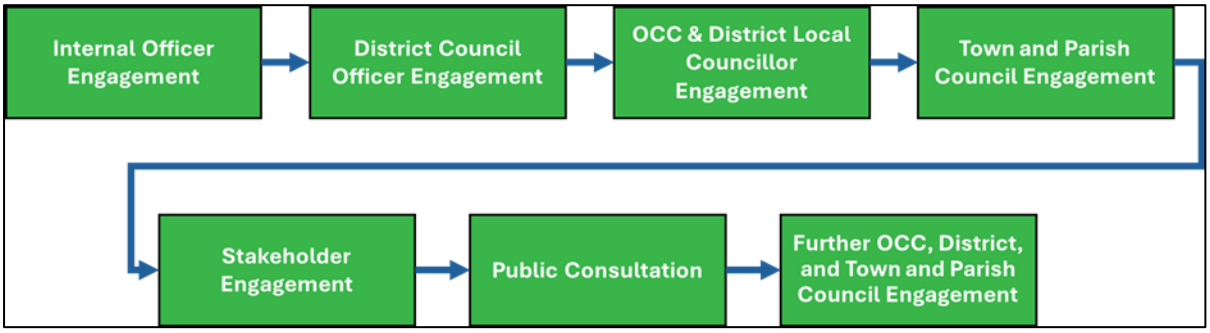


Figure 1: MAP Plan: Engagement and consultation process for Bicester and Surrounding Villages.

13. The public consultation was conducted over a four-week period, from Monday 3rd November to Monday 1st December. During this time, respondents were invited to complete an online questionnaire via the council's Let's Talk Oxfordshire interactive platform. The planned public exhibition could not take place due to an amber weather warning (Storm Claudia). Nevertheless, additional engagement was carried out with local members, town and parish councils, and key stakeholders throughout the consultation period.

14. The consultation yielded 118 responses, the majority of which were submitted by local residents (78%), with additional input from councillors, business representatives, and visitors. The gender distribution was relatively even, comprising 49% male, 39% female, and 12% who chose not to disclose their gender.

15. Among the respondents, 45% expressed support for the vision, 17% were uncertain, and 38% indicated disagreement. The primary concerns originated from village residents, who felt their priorities were not adequately considered and questioned the accuracy of the plan's name, 'Mid-Cherwell.' Consequently, adoption of the plan was deferred to allow for further engagement, including three additional meetings with local councillors and councils. **Annex B** contains a comprehensive breakdown of feedback obtained during the public consultation.

Delivery programme & funding

16. The Bicester and Surrounding Villages MAP Plan outlines a comprehensive delivery programme spanning the next 25 years, which the council is aspires to implementing. The plan includes 13 objectives and 83 actions, systematically arranged according to the transport user hierarchy.

17. It is recognised that to deliver each objective, the council will need to work with central government, partners, developers and key stakeholders etc. to deliver, fund and enforce these actions. Each action will continue to be monitored. This is set out in the delivery Plan (see **Annex A1**)

Corporate Policies and Priorities

18. The county council's Strategic Plan for 2022-28 sets out a vision for Oxfordshire to be a place where everyone has the opportunity to live well, where communities thrive, and where our local economy benefits all our residents. The MAP Plan builds upon all of these principles, as it addresses the meaning of movement and place for all the residents noted within the designated area.

19. The council's Strategic Plan outlines key headline projects delivering a "Greener, Fairer and Healthier" Oxfordshire. This is alongside the nine strategic priorities. The Bicester and Surrounding Villages MAP Plan helps to address this, due to the relationship between transport, quality of life, health and the environment. The plan will directly seek to reduce carbon emissions and aim for a net-zero transport system by 2040. There is also a strong focus on healthy place shaping and encouraging active lives. This will help to improve health and wellbeing by providing safer walking, wheeling and cycling routes to school and improving air quality.

20. The MAP Plans do not introduce any policies or proposed service changes that are not in line with the corporate policies and priorities.

21. As noted above, this specifically works towards achieving the LTCP targets and aspirations, and directly addresses the commitments made in ***policies 52 and 53***.

Financial Implications

22. The adoption of the documents as set out in the recommendations do not have any direct financial implications but do help and support future investment decisions of the county council. They set out a development plan for a specific area, noting potential investment and funding opportunities, which will be needed to deliver the outlined transport schemes.

23. Any additional investment to enhance existing monitoring capabilities and delivery of the Movement and Place Plans will be considered through individual business cases and funding would be sought in line with the council's budget setting process.

Comments checked by:
Filipp Skiffins, Finance Business Partner,
filipp.skiffins@oxfordshire.gov.uk (Finance)

Legal Implications

24. Under the Transport Act 2000, local transport authorities in England are required to prepare and maintain a Local Transport Plan (or plans) that set out their transport policies and proposals.

25. The Bicester and Surrounding Villages MAP Plan is considered part of the council's LTCP. This was last updated in 2016 and therefore a more up to date document is considered positive from a legal perspective.

26. There are no specific legal implications for the council in adoption of documents as recommended in this report.

27. Any schemes being delivered under the Bicester and Surrounding Villages MAP Plan will be assessed on their own merits as they develop and will be implemented in accordance with the relevant statutory framework applying at the time.

Comments checked by:
Jennifer Crouch Principal Solicitor (Regulatory)
jennifer.crouch@oxfordshire.gov.uk (Legal)

Staff Implications

28. The development and subsequent review and delivery of the Movement and Place Plans are and will continue to be delivered through existing council resources.

29. Any additional staff resource requirements to implement schemes within the MAP Plans will be considered and included within specific scheme budgets.

Equality & Inclusion Implications

30. An Equalities Impact Assessment (EqIAs) has been completed, please see **Annex C**. This will be further developed as specific commitments within the MAP are progressed, with specific scheme EqIAs undertaken as required for the development of the MAP Plan programme; reflecting their unique and distinct challenges and characteristics.

Sustainability Implications

31. The approved Climate Impact Assessment (CIA) by the climate impact team is available in **Annex D.** The plan outlines how LTCP policies will be implemented within the MAP Plan area, references the goal of achieving a net zero transport network by 2040, and adopts a whole life carbon approach referencing inclusion of PAS2080 — including embodied emissions — in line with Policy 27.

32. The plan prioritises sustainable transport enhancements, including the promotion of walking, cycling, and infrastructure to accommodate anticipated growth. While the proposals detail measures to encourage active travel and increased public transport usage, they also support the development of new transport infrastructure. Further actions to mitigate induced traffic and improve the affordability of public transport should be explored.

33. It is worth noting, the South-East Peripheral Road is included in the plan. Although due to its current CIA score and the need for at least a 20% biodiversity net gain, further review is recommended once the scheme is conceptualised/if brought forward.

34. Figure 2, demonstrates where the Plan builds and supports the council's aspirations to reduce carbon emissions and achieve the aspirations detailed in the LTCP.

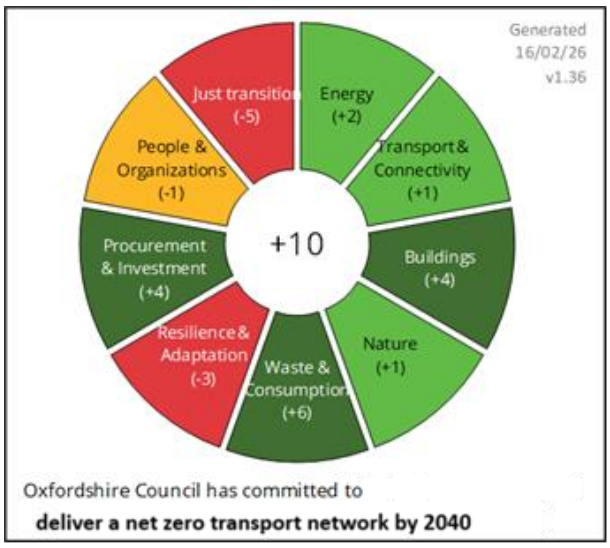


Figure 2: Carbon Impact Assessment Score

Risk Management

35. A Risk Management Strategy was developed for this programme of work. It identified risks associated with the progress and development of the plans.

36. As part of the Risk Management Strategy a mitigation action for each of the risks identified will be implemented to reduce the risk. They are reviewed on a biannual basis to ensure that this reflects the most up to date information.

37. The primary strategic risk concerned achieving effective engagement to secure a positive consultation outcome. This risk was proactively managed and mitigated through regular communication with members and key stakeholders, providing them with opportunities to contribute and shape the plan before it proceeds to public consultation, where there remained a final opportunity to influence its content.

PAUL FERMER
Director of Environment and Highways

Annexes:

Annex A – Bicester and Surrounding Villages Movement Place Plan
- **Annex A1** Delivery Plan
- **Annex A2** Proposals Map
- **Annex A3** People Post Cards
- **Annex A4** Summary of Plan

Annex B – Bicester and Surrounding Villages Consultation Summary Report
- **Annex B1 – B4** Consultation email responses

Annex C – Equalities Impact Assessment

Annex D – Climate Impact Assessment

Background Documents:
Local Transport Connectivity Plan
Connecting Oxfordshire: Area Strategies
Strategic Plan for 2022-28

Contact Officers:
Ben Smith
Strategic Transport Manager

Ashley Hayden (Transport Policy and Strategy Team Lead)
Email: Ashley.Hayden@Oxfordshire.gov.uk
Tel: 0752 6567299

Tim Snazell (Lead Officer for Bicester and Surrounding Villages MAP Plan)
Email: Tim.Snazell@Oxfordshire.gov.uk
Tel: 07511 867 318

27 February 2026

Bicester and the Surrounding Villages
Movement and Place Plan

Local Transport and Connectivity Plan – Supporting strategy

You can contact us at
AreaMovementandPlaceStrategies@oxfordshire.gov.uk

OXFORDSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

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Vision: Bicester and the Surrounding Villages

We envisage Bicester and the surrounding villages as sustainable, connected healthy places where communities thrive.

A people-first approach will be utilised, focusing on sustainable connectivity to new developments, prioritising walking, wheeling, cycling, and public transport to provide choice in how residents travel to schools, leisure facilities and local employment.

We will deliver streets that support sustainable growth, enhance biodiversity and connect people to nature, showcasing Bicester's Garden Town status and the beauty of the surrounding villages. To improve the public realm, creating places for people to meet, places to stop and rest, while ensuring this is sensitive to the character and needs of residential areas and the historic core of Bicester, improving the connectivity of villages whilst maintaining their rural nature making the surrounding villages and Bicester a more desirable place to live, work, and visit.

Area context

The overall population of the Plan area based on the 2021 census data is 58,570. The plan covers Bicester and surrounding villages recognising the strong association the villages and town of Bicester have with one another (i.e. for education, employment, recreational and leisure trips) this is likely to strengthen over the coming years. The MAP Plan area is outlined in **Figure BSV1**. Alongside Bicester the MAP Plan covers the surrounding villages of (not an exhaustive list): to the north of Bicester, Ardley, Bucknell, Mixbury, Fringford, Stoke Lyne, Stratton Audley; to the south east, Launton, Upper Arncott, Piddington, to the west; Wendlebury, Chesterton, Kirtlington, Duns Tew, The Astons, The Heyfords, and Somerton.

Some villages fall under neighbourhood plans, such as the Mid-Cherwell Neighbourhood Plan area. This MAP Plan does not override those plans but complements and strengthens their goals. The Mid-Cherwell Neighbourhood Plan will be reviewed in early 2026, with policy updates integrated into revisions of this ongoing MAP Plan, as this document remains live. Additionally, this Plan supports both existing and emerging Cherwell Local Plan policies and aligns with Oxfordshire's Local Transport Connectivity Plan (LTCP) targets. When adopted, the MAP Plan will replace current LTP 4 Connectivity Area Strategies and help secure funding for future projects.

Bicester, the main town in the plan area will be the significant focus of this plan although the cumulative impact of the development on the surrounding areas will need to be considered. Bicester is an historic market town in north Oxfordshire with a rich history. It lies approximately 18km northeast of Oxford with a population of 37,172[1] residents and has seen significant growth over the last few decades. In 2014, Bicester was designated a Garden Town and located in the Cherwell district of Oxfordshire. It has a range of amenities and services including restaurants, library, supermarkets, pharmacies, thriving weekly market and other shops centred mostly around Market Square, at the heart of the town. There has been a significant investment in Bicester town centre with the opening of Pioneer Square in 2013 and associated retail units and amenities.

Map of Bicester and the Surrounding Villages

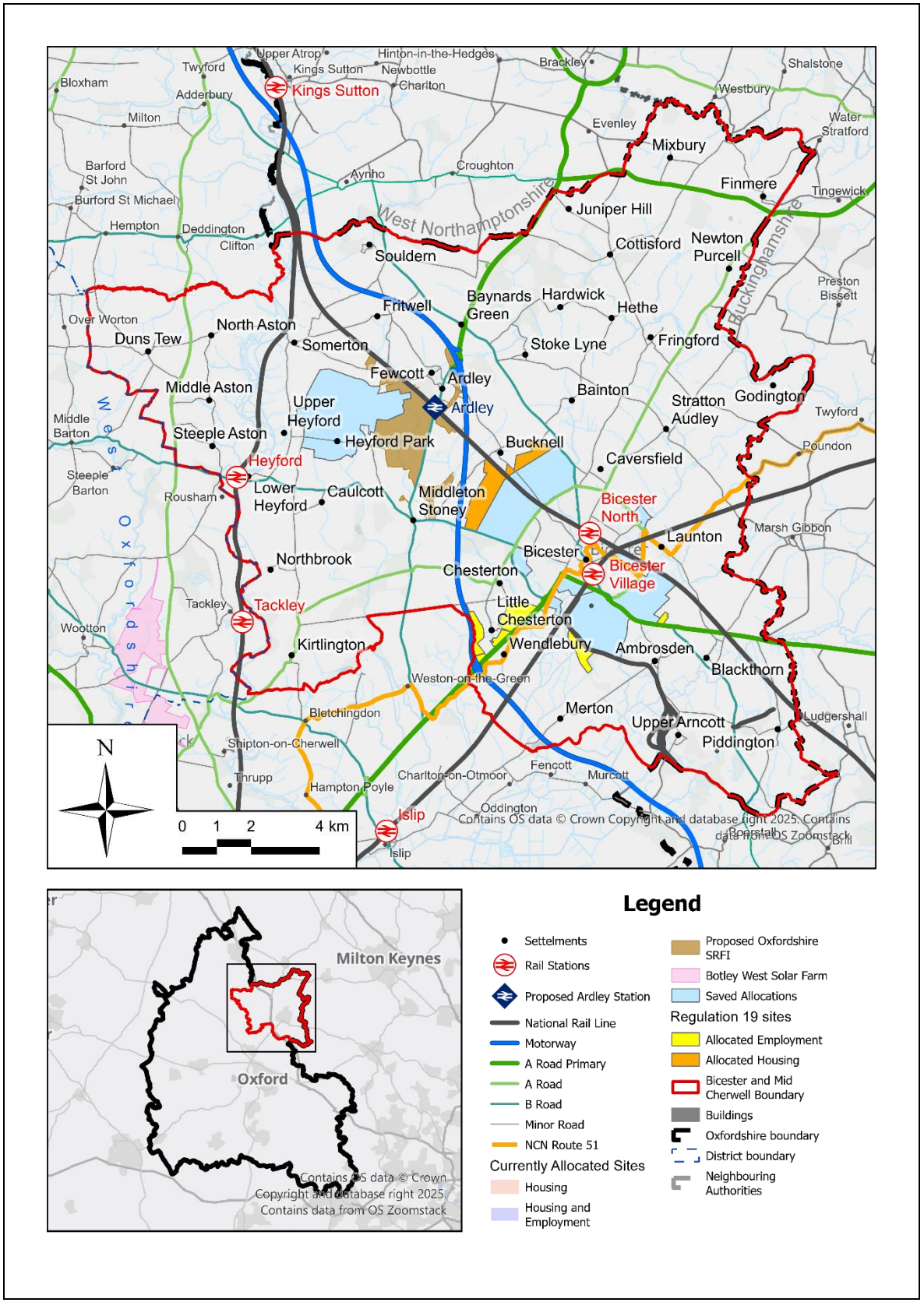


Figure BSV1: Map of Bicester and Surrounding Villages

The Bicester and the surrounding villages MAP Plan will consider the interactions between the town and rural communities which rely on Bicester and each other for essential services, employment, education and leisure etc. The area illustrated in **Figure BSV1**, Bicester and surrounding villages, is not officially a planning area or boundary and the impact of future development will go beyond the highlighted area. Albeit for the purpose of the plan, it was considered a good reference, as there are many associated movement and community links between the areas now which will grow over the life of this planning period – up until 2050 to align with LTCP planning period.

The MAP Plan will also consider how movement will develop within the plan area such as connections and links between Bicester and Heyford Park which at the time of writing has been identified as one of the proposed 12 new towns in the government's New Town Taskforce published in September 2025[2]. This Plan will need to take account of decisions that will be made by the new task force, which will bring a variety opportunities to this area as the residential allocation could be more than 10,000 homes. Should Heyford Park be put forward as a deliverable New Town, this Plan will be updated, and further work will be identified to provide the best outcomes for communities from a movement and place perspective. In addition to planned growth, speculative developments have been proposed within the MAP Plan area which would put additional pressure on infrastructure and key amenities. The cumulative impact on movement and places will need to be assessed as planning decisions are confirmed.

Bicester supports a wide variety of employment opportunities. Due to its proximity to the city of Oxford, and its location within the Oxfordshire Knowledge Spine, the Oxford-Cambridge Arc and its good transport connections to other major employment areas such as London or Birmingham. Bicester benefits from a diverse set of industries including distribution, retail, motorsports, offices, and defence due to its status as a garrison town. The Oxfordshire Industrial Strategy[3] also identifies Bicester as an Eco Zone and Corporate HQ Hub providing an opportunity for 'living labs'. In 2024, planning was approved for Bicester Motion to be a 'living lab' for the UK's first vertiport[4]. There are also employment opportunities in the surrounding villages including Baynards Green Industrial Estate, Cherwell Valley services, Heyford Park, Ardley Quarry, the Ardley Energy Waste Power Plant, Kirtlington Park, Manor Farm (Weston-on-the-Green), HM Prison Bullingdon, Lakeside Farm Business Park (Steeple Aston) and Park Farm Kirtlington.

The rural landscape within the MAP Plan area, and the Cherwell Valley provide a scenic environment for locals and visitors. Merton, Weston-on-the-Green, and Charlton-on-

Otmoor are within Oxford's Green Belt. These open spaces support recreation and benefit health and wellbeing.

One of the major employers in the area is Bicester Village, a world-renowned outlet shopping centre attracting many local and international visitors. The shopping outlet attracts nearly 6 million visitors per year and ranks as one of the top tourist destinations for the UK. Bicester Village is a key economic driver in the area, employing around 3,500 people directly and many others indirectly. Another significant employment site is Bicester Motion, the UK's only business park dedicated to the promotion and preservation of historic motor cars. Alongside this, it is a centre for future mobility technology such as drones and being a 'vertiport' for flying electric taxis.[5]

Bicester's topography is well-suited to walking and cycling, as the town is compact and flat, and this is true of surrounding villages especially to the south. Route 51 of the National Cycle Network (NCN) from Oxford to Felixstowe passes through Bicester and some of its surrounding villages (e.g. Wendlebury and Launton) and Route 5 of the NCN runs North – South along rural roads to the west of Duns Tew. Within Bicester there is a network of footways, footpaths and some cycleways that provide links around the town and to key facilities such as the town centre, schools, doctors surgeries and other shopping facilities. With the town centre being located right in the middle, most residents can access it within a 30-minute walk or a 10-minute cycle. However, as detailed in the Bicester Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan (LCWIP), residential streets lack permeability, creating barriers to movement. This plan will seek to address barriers to walking, wheeling and cycling, including the absence of safe / dedicated routes, specifically in **Objectives BSV1 and 2**.

The villages within the MAP Plan area generally have footways to provide links for those walking or wheeling within each of the settlements. The villages are connected to the surrounding countryside, other villages, Bicester and employment sites via a mix of walking, wheeling and cycling routes and paths that vary in quality and accessibility, including options suitable for horse riders. There is a comprehensive network of Public Rights of Way (PRoW) within the MAP Plan area which consists of over 900 paths or approximately 406 km in distance. National Cycle Route 51 runs through the MAP Plan area and is composed of quiet roads, bridleways, byways, and purpose-built paths, the quality of which varies significantly. Furthermore, there are a range of nationally recognised recreational routes extending through the MAP Plan area, namely the Oxfordshire Way, Palladian Way, Oxford Canal Walk, Roman Way, Seven Shires Way and the Claude Duval Bridleroute. The recreational routes provide walking, wheeling and cycling opportunities for leisure

purposes. In addition, the National Byway Network, which is a 5,000km sign-posted leisure cycling route in the UK runs through the MAP Plan area.

The MAP Plan area is well-connected by various transport links, typically attracting people who need to commute for work (i.e. to Oxford, London, Birmingham or further afield). This makes living in Oxfordshire villages attractive to people who need to work in urban areas. Bicester has the advantage of having two railway stations, Bicester North and Bicester Village. A third station is also accessible at Heyford. These strategic transport connections link Bicester to key destinations such as Oxford, London, Birmingham, and Milton Keynes. This increases the attractiveness for future development and growth, although the capacity of the strategic network is itself limited and at times exceeded. The rail network is supported by a comprehensive bus network centred around Bicester. The bus network provides a range of connections between the rural and urban areas of the MAP Plan, as well as to other key regional destinations including Oxford, Buckingham, Milton Keynes, Brackley, Kidlington, Banbury and Aylesbury. In terms of the strategic highway network, it is connected to the A41, which links to the nearby M40 motorway and the A34.

Over the coming years, the town is projected to grow significantly, up to 18% by 2031[6]. New residential and employment sites are planned to be developed. The proposed North-West Bicester development will deliver thousands of new homes, and the hectares of allocated land for employment along the A41 corridor plus other sites identified in Cherwell District Council Local Plan 2042 will deliver new opportunities in the area.

Key facts and figures

66,100 residents in 2030

58,570 residents in 2021

7,977 new homes by 2042 and a **further 4,075** beyond 2042 at NW Bicester. With 100 in Mid-Cherwell

Bicester:

- First documented in **Domesday Book (1086)**
- **Historic town centre**
- Designated as a **Garden Town** in 2014, but also as a **Healthy Town** and **Eco-town**
- A **garrison town,** hosting the Ministry of Defence
- Bicester Village attracted over **7 million visitors in 2019**

150 hectares of land for new employment

35% of commuting trips start and end in Bicester

65% of residents travel to work by driving

Within Bicester the Town centre is accessible within **30 minutes by walking,** or **10 minutes by cycling**

Transport links include:

3 railway stations plus one station proposed at Ardley.

Future EastWest Rail services from Bicester to **Milton Keynes** and **Cambridge**

88% of households own at least one car
(vs 77% of national average)

Bus services connecting the **villages** as well as **Oxford, Banbury, Aylesbury and Milton Keynes.**

Bicester Park & Ride

Direct access to A41 linking to M40

49% of households own multiple vehicles
(vs 35% of national average)

Challenges and opportunities

The MAP plan area is undergoing significant changes from development that will affect movement and connectivity across the area. These changes will provide challenges and opportunities that we can take advantage of to make Bicester and surrounding villages a healthy, sustainable and connected place but at the same time, protecting its rural and village fabric/ lifestyle that is enjoyed by the community. It is essential that the development must go hand in hand with preserving the feel and rural nature of the area at the same time this presents a wealth of opportunities for the area to exploit. In addition, OCC needs to ensure the local transport network helps to deliver net-zero transport network by 2040, a key headline target in OCC's Local Transport and Connectivity Plan (LTCP).

A challenge common to all MAP Plan documents is the need to deliver against the policies and targets of the LTCP. As this document forms part of the LTCP, it should be read alongside the LTCP and its supporting strategies, with this MAP Plan helping to achieve the policies and targets within the LTCP.

Future growth

Cherwell's Local Plan identifies Bicester and Heyford Park as areas to focus further development with 7,977 new homes are planned to be delivered in Bicester from 2020 to 2042 with a further 2,342 planned at Heyford Park. Further homes are allocated in the

villages, with 100 homes allocated in the Mid-Cherwell neighbourhood plan, as set out in Policy RUR 1[7] of the emerging Local Plan 2042. This is around a third of the growth for Cherwell district. Additionally, 4,075 homes will be delivered at North-West Bicester beyond 2042. Aside from the increased housing supply in Bicester, 150 hectares of land are planned to be developed for new employment. These figures are subject to the Government's New Town Taskforce. The UK government shortlisted Heyford Park (former RAF Upper Heyford) as proposed "New Towns" in late 2025 to create a large, sustainable community with up to 13,000 homes, focusing on clean technology, green energy, and new infrastructure, with plans including schools, jobs, and improved transport links like better bus/rail services. In total, 12 areas have been identified across England with Heyford Park being the only one in Oxfordshire. The government is likely to decide on which proposals it takes forward during Spring / Summer 2026. New Towns Taskforce: Report to government sets out the full proposals. While allocations for development for housing and employment are contained in the Cherwell Local Plan (2042), a number of speculative development applications are proposed in addition to planned allocations. The MAP Plan will be updated to reflect the outcome of these applications and the outcome of New Towns Taskforce.

The new developments will provide opportunities to enhance existing and provide new transport infrastructure and public realm to support population and employment growth; this will support the area to grow sustainably and provide opportunities for residents to thrive. Moving home or starting a new job is regarded as a key life moment when individuals are most likely to switch to a different transport mode[8], the growth in Bicester and its surrounding villages will help create the conditions to enable and promote modal shift toward walking, wheeling, cycling and public transport in alignment with LTCP objectives. There is a balance to be struck between investment in transport infrastructure to support growth and conserving the sense of place created by village environments and its inherent biodiversity, maintaining healthy levels of air quality as well as keeping natural constraints on transport, such as the LTCP's objective to achieve a net zero transport network by 2040.

To provide the environment for Bicester and surrounding villages to grow sustainably, future residential and employment developments will need to be in locations which are accessible by walking, wheeling, cycling and public transport.

Proposals for a new rail freight interchange at Ardley, connected to the Chiltern Mainline, have been put forward as a Nationally Significant Infrastructure Project (NSIP). Should this proposal come forward, air quality will need to be monitored to assess the impact on the local environment and need for mitigations.

Working with partners, we aim to transform how people move around Bicester and the surrounding villages. Improving the availability and accessibility of alternatives to private cars, will provide communities with choice in how they travel and will improve the outcomes through enhancing access to education, employment, key amenities and support social cohesion. It will support Local Transport and Connectivity Plan (LTCP) transport targets as well as contribute to climate change mitigation, adaption and the improvement of public health. Creating an equitable transport system will remove barriers to the labour market and education, evidence shows that transport problems are a known barrier to accepting job offers[9]. Analysis of the National Travel Survey showed 19% of unemployed people in England turned down a job or did not apply due to transport problems.

To reduce the potential impact growth may have on the A41, central and peripheral corridors, we will need to work with partners and the community to address congestion, safety and invest in walking, wheeling, cycling and public transport to enable modal shift. The delivery of the South East Peripheral Road (SEPR) will be required to support growth and limit the impact of through traffic: enabling Bicester to become a town where walking, wheeling, cycling and public transport are the first choice for local journeys. Streets and footways need to be of high quality and safe, with attention paid to dropped kerbs and other accessibility features. We will need to invest in public realm to create places which enhance community cohesion: creating wider health and wellbeing benefits.

In 2025 a Climate Impact Assessment (CIA) was submitted and reviewed for SEPR. The CIA set out the potential risk of flooding, induced traffic and risk of feasibility of bus routes. It is acknowledged further work is required to mitigate concerns raised in the initial CIA and a further CIA will be required as feasibility work progresses.

Future growth will create opportunities for Bicester and the village communities to exploit its position in the Oxford-Cambridge corridor and deliver transport and healthy place

shaping schemes which meet the needs of a healthy and sustainable town and villages. Through forward planning, we can integrate new and existing housing and employment developments with Bicester town centre by prioritising sustainable modes of travel from the start, reducing reliance on private motor vehicles. Providing a high-quality walking, cycling, and public transport network along with enhancing biodiversity will support growth, improve public health, and make it a more attractive place for residents, workers, visitors, wider community, and investment.

Improving connectivity

To maintain and improve connectivity for existing and new residents and those living in the surrounding villages, enhancements will be required for walking, wheeling, cycling and public transport. The planned growth across Bicester and the surrounding villages will provide opportunities to enhance the existing walking, wheeling, cycling and public transport connectivity and complete gaps in the transport network where severance or barriers to access currently exist, this will provide opportunities to maximise Bicester's compact nature and enhance the connections with surrounding villages. We will seek to make walking, wheeling, cycling and public transport the first choice for journeys within Bicester and to become a viable option for travel into Bicester from surrounding villages and while travelling around neighbouring rural areas. New developments will have the services and amenities, creating liveable neighbourhoods where residents will be able to walk, wheel, cycle and take public transport to local shops, schools and other key amenities. They will provide connections to existing routes, enabling residents to access Bicester town centre, rail stations and leisure facilities by sustainable means. All new developments must submit and work towards an approved Travel Plan by OCC.

The future planning period will support the delivery of infrastructure which provides a variety of transport options including quality pedestrian corridors, electric bikes, segregated cycling infrastructure, conveniently located cycle parking and electric bike charging facilities. It will provide opportunities to deliver micromobility hubs supporting shared bike/ scooter network and allowing for seamless transition between different modes of transport. To provide transport choice public transport will be enhanced and integrated with other modes of transport with frequent services to support a changing economy. Other transport alternatives may include a comprehensive car club offering, reducing the need for car ownership or removing the need for a second car. The provision of transport choice will mean residents will not need to rely on their car, this will improve air quality, health outcomes[10], reduce congestion and enable public transport to run efficiently, and those who need to travel by car will be able to do so.

Transport choice will help Bicester and the villages thrive as it develops and support opportunity for people to live and work within Bicester and wider area. It will further the area's economic reach and increase communities' access to the labour market. Providing choice will reduce the need to travel by car for short journeys and remove the reliance on vehicle ownership. 2021 census data shows 85.5% of households in Bicester own at least one car or van, for the whole MAP Plan area this rises to 88.4%. If Bicester is excluded from the census data, then the number of households with at least one vehicle rises further to 93.6%[11]. In Bicester, 43% of households owning at least two cars and this rises to 49% including the surrounding villages[12]. This is higher than the national average but locally it is broadly in line with other areas of Oxfordshire such as Science Vale (89% own a car) and West Oxfordshire Lowlands (88% own a car)[13]. This shows the greater reliance on car ownership in rural areas and the opportunity to enable a greater number of people to walk, wheel, cycle and use public transport through improved infrastructure and services.

Health, wellbeing and inequalities

Increasing walking, wheeling and cycling has various positive impacts on health and wellbeing. From an increase in physical activity levels, which are linked to lower levels of cardiovascular disease (CVD), such as diabetes, hypertension and stroke to reduced levels of overweight and obesity. The design of cities, villages and towns with better active travel and public transport options can contribute to better mental wellbeing and community connection[14]. High speed roads cutting communities in half or creating residential areas where it is not safe for children to play increase the likelihood of loneliness, isolation and anxiety.

Oxfordshire County Council is committed to reducing inequalities, in 2024 became A Marmot Place with the aim to create a fairer and healthier Oxfordshire[15]. Inequalities within rural areas can be dispersed in nature making it difficult to assess using standard mapping approaches to deprivation and research is being undertaken to understand rural inequalities as part of OCC's commitment to being A Marmot Place. Oxfordshire's Health and Wellbeing Strategy[16] identifies Thriving Communities and Climate Change and Health as enablers to good health. Walking, wheeling and cycling supports these priorities by supporting connection in communities and reducing carbon emissions, and air pollution associated with private car use for local trips. Since December 1997, all local authorities in the UK have been carrying out a review and assessment of air quality in their areas through monitoring air pollution levels[17]. During this process, if an area has air pollution levels above or close to the limit values set out in the Air Quality Standards Regulations (2010) legislation, they must declare an Air Quality Management Area (AQMA)[18].

There is currently one AQMA in Bicester which incorporates sections of Kings End, Queens Avenue, Field Street and St Johns Street.[19] Poor air quality is associated with poor health outcomes. Some health indicators for Bicester are significantly worse than the national average such as deaths from respiratory diseases in Bicester North and Caversfield, and the incidence of lung cancer in Bicester East.[20] Improving air quality is necessary to reduce the risk to public health. Recent monitoring data shown in Cherwell's annual status report[21] shows that air quality in Bicester is improving since 2015 when the AQMA was declared however, more work is required to further lower air pollution levels to enable health benefits.

Road transport is responsible for significant contributions to air pollution.[22] The greenhouse gas emissions from road traffic also contributes to climate change, increasing the risk of heatwaves, droughts and flooding, which exacerbates threats to human health and safety. In addition to poor air quality, car dominance creates a more sedentary lifestyle, increasing other health risks such as obesity and type 2 diabetes[23]. In Bicester, around 1 in 3 children in Year 6 are overweight.[24] Studies suggest that children who regularly walk or cycle to school are less likely to be overweight or obese than those who travel by car[2526]. Health conditions such as obesity, diabetes and heart disease are linked to physical inactivity. Transport interventions to support walking, wheeling and cycling have the potential to mitigate health problems which are borne out of inactivity[27]. Bicester and Surrounding Villages MAP Plan will seek to provide policy to create transport infrastructure which gives residents and visitors the choice to travel actively and enjoy the associated health and wellbeing benefits this provides.

No_2 and $PM_{2.5}$ are the key pollutants considered in terms of local air quality management. The annual mean modelled concentrations in 2023 for Bicester were 13.04 µg/m^3 for NO_2 and 8.78 µg/m^3 for $PM_{2.5}$.[1] The maximum annual concentrations within the Bicester were 15.88 µg/m^3 for NO_2 and 12.45 µg/m^3 for $PM_{2.5.}$ All concentrations exceed the annual mean 2021 air quality guidelines recommended by the World Health Organisation of 10 µg/m^3 for NO_2 and 5 µg/m^3 for $PM_{2.5}$ [1].

The Air Quality Lifecourse Assessment Tool (AQLAT) has been developed by the University of Birmingham for Oxfordshire County Council. The tool looks at health and economic savings where air pollutant concentrations are reduced in Oxfordshire. The AQLAT was used to calculate the health and economic savings that would be seen if pollution levels in the MAAP plan area reached those set out in the World Health Organisation 2021 air quality

[1] Figures were calculated by taking the average of LSOA-averaged annual mean concentrations. The calculations included all LSOAs fully within the Bicester and surrounding villages geographical boundary. LSOAs partially within the boundary were removed from the average annual mean concentration calculation.

guidelines for NO_2 and $PM_{2.5}$.[2] The following savings could be seen in 10 years: £1.12 million NHS cost savings, £523 k social care cost savings, £464 k in productivity costs, 93 early deaths prevented, 74 asthma cases prevented, 50 coronary heart disease cases prevented, 10 lung cancer cases prevented, and 26 stroke cases prevented. This shows the importance of lowering air pollution levels in MAAP plan area.

To obtain better health outcomes we must reduce air pollution, and in doing so, we will simultaneously reduce greenhouse gas emissions that will affect our local climate. One way to do this is to tackle the use of the most polluting forms of transport by delivering transport interventions that will support the decarbonisation of the transport network, creating choice which enables travel behaviours that are more sustainable and active.

The burden of poor health is not equally experienced across the population, with some groups having poorer health than others. Those on lower incomes are one group which is more likely to have poor health. Financial hardship can cause transport poverty, which in turn impacts access to the labour market, education, services and leisure. Although Bicester and its surrounding villages typically does not have high levels of deprivation, there are wards which are in the top 20% most deprived areas of Cherwell[28], Bicester West and Bicester South and Ambrosden. There are areas in Bicester deprived in aspects of education, skills and training. Bicester has small areas within the top 10% and 20% most deprived in England[29]. Additionally, dispersed deprivation within rural communities requires specific approaches which the research being carried out by being A Marmot Place is supporting.

Research published by Active Lives Survey[30] shows the widening gap between those living in the most deprived areas compared to those living in the least and mid deprived areas. If we are to reduce this gap, we need to ensure equitable opportunities to walking, wheeling, cycling and public transport. It is known that the negative impacts of transport affect poorer, more vulnerable groups more[31]. Consequently, vulnerable groups are most in need of public transport, quality walking and cycle routes to access healthcare, education, employment and social networks along with access to safe spaces for children to play.

Understanding inequalities and the barriers to access public transport, walking, wheeling and cycling will be vital to transforming how residents of Bicester and its villages move around. The availability of transport options impacts the accessibility of health services especially for the more vulnerable and those who do not have access to a car. Providing

[2] AQLAT calculations were completed with a 2023 baseline. The results may over-estimate health and economic savings as the tool works at a MSOA-level, therefore some parts of the input MSOAs may not be within the MAAP plan geographical boundary.

transport options which support the needs of all communities can reduce missed appointments[32], creating positive health outcomes and savings for the health sector.

Data on Transport-Related Social Exclusion (TRSE) indicates that transport may be contributing to social exclusion in parts Bicester and the surrounding villages, however it is varied across MAP Plan area. Typically, areas close to the town centre, such as Kingsmere, Glory Farm and Highfield all are within the top 20% nationally that are most at risk of TRSE. This appears to be driven by high levels of deprivation, high levels of caring or those with disabilities. This is in comparison to other areas such as Kirtlington, Stratton Audley or Finmere, which all feature in 80% national areas less at risk to TRSE. These figures all have been derived from the TRSE in England Visualiser. This tool allows the user to focus in on any given English authority to obtain TRSE data. The typical trend being the closer towards the town centre of Bicester the more at risk you become of TRSE and bringing forward objectives to address this will hopefully address this and re-balance this across the MAP Plan reducing social exclusion.

According to the Index of Multiple Deprivation (IMD), most neighbourhoods in the area are amongst the least deprived in the country, with neighbourhoods on the periphery of Bicester being amongst the 10% least deprived, while many of the rural areas are within the area 20% least deprived. Within this there are pockets of deprivation. For instance, areas around Kingclere Road and Bicester Town Centre are in the 40% most deprived in the country. In rural areas, areas around Upper Arncott, Piddington, Brill, and Boarstall are among the 40% most deprived in the country.

Place-shaping – The Garden Town and its surrounding villages

In 2014, Bicester was designated as a Garden Town as it was identified as a key area for growth in the UK. As a Garden Town, government funding has aimed to create new homes with access to green spaces that will enable healthy living. There are also aims to enhance the town centre which, like many towns, has seen the closure of retail units resulting in empty units in the town centre. The Cherwell District Council 2022 Retail Study identified challenges and opportunities, recommending investment in public realm, to create a more attractive and distinctive place. Additionally, the North West Bicester development was named the UK's first eco-town, which aims to create truly sustainable communities embracing blue green infrastructure.

To fulfil these aims, movement and places in Bicester will need to be low carbon, be resilient to climate change, and provide transport choice for the residents of Bicester and visitors. This can be achieved by delivering healthy place shaping interventions that enable walking, wheeling and cycling and public transport whilst reducing reliance on private motor vehicles. One notable example of this is the Health Routes funded by NHS England as part of the Bicester Healthy New Town Programme[33]. Various routes around the town were marked with blue lines to create a 5km circular route, with the aim of encouraging daily exercise and increasing physical activity amongst residents.[34] The focus will be to deliver nature-based solutions to ensure greening of new and existing developments to make Bicester a healthier, environmentally friendly place and support the aims of the LTCP in creating a net-zero transport system by 2040. Future place making schemes will build on Bicester's unique character and heritage, creating identity and a sense of place. For example, sheep bollards along Sheep Street help reinforce the area's unique character, history and identity of Bicester.

Place shaping will require a holistic approach across the MAP Plan area. Each village and community will have different needs, ideas and heritage which will form the basis of shaping the places of rural and urban communities. Recognising and celebrating the cultural assets in a sustainable way will add value and preserve the fabric of communities within the MAP Plan area.

Developing healthy place-shaping across the whole of the plan area will improve access to healthcare, community facilities, help support community cohesion, reduce rural inequalities and make it easier for people to live healthy lives. To develop this, we will work closely with communities using Marmot Principles[35], to create places where everyone has the same opportunities.

Taking a holistic approach, place shaping should consider the presence and accessability of leisure and retail facilities. Many of the villages surrounding Bicester do not have a village shop, and are losing vital community assets such as pubs or other 'third spaces' and do not have the required walking, wheeling, cycling and public transport links which promote healthy lives and opportunity. Collectively this erodes the sense of place and togetherness, as well as creating the conditions requiring residents to drive for shopping, leisure, health appointments and visit friends. Within Heyford Park there is a philosophy to become self-contained, where residents have access to key amenities and reducing the need to travel beyond Heyford Park. Where growth is planned around these settlements, we will actively seek opportunities to address gaps and provision for all.

Walking, wheeling and cycling

Bicester, the surrounding villages and employment sites can be more accessible for walking, wheeling and cycling through physical infrastructure improvements, demand management and behaviour change initiatives. Bicester is well-suited for walking, wheeling and cycling, as it is particularly flat and compact. There are no pronounced elevation changes except Graven Hill in the south, and the town centre is approximately 2km away from the ring road in all directions. As previously highlighted, future growth will increase the need for high quality cycle connections for trip distances beyond 2km when walking becomes less viable. In contrast, the topography of a number of villages surrounding Bicester are undulating. The UK topographic map provides a visualization of this. For example, Steeple Aston sits atop a valley and places like Somerton and North Aston share similar gradients and undulations. These villages are popular for leisure cyclists; however, undulations provide a barrier to accessing cycling. (There are very good examples of places using e-bikes to remove such barriers including Staveley, Lake District where the community have rental access to two e-bikes).

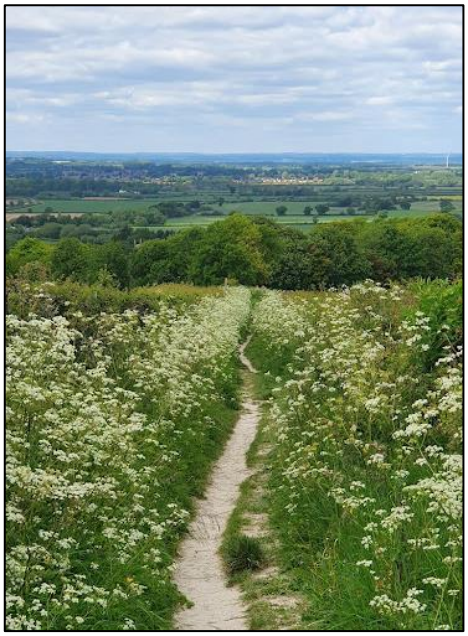
The rural roads within the MAP Plan area tend to be narrow and have significant through traffic, which creates concerns for less confident cyclists. To the south of Bicester, the flatter landscape means cycling is more accessible, but the same challenge of narrow roads remains, and often these are bordered by deep drainage ditches which can be off putting to new or less confident cyclists. Footpaths and bridleways can fall into disrepair and are not inclusive for all users creating further barriers to access walking, wheeling and cycling.

To improve cross town connectivity an 18-month trial began in February 2025 removing the prohibition of cycling on Sheep Street. However, as detailed in the Bicester Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan (LCWIP), residential streets lack permeability and the main corridors are highly trafficked and frequently congested, and lack the necessary infrastructure to provide safe and easy to navigate routes for people who walk, wheel and cycle.

A significant number of people in the MAP Plan area travel short distances, where walking (up to 2km), wheeling and cycling (up to 8km) can provide a suitable alternative. In total 42% of people in the MAP Plan areas travel less than 10km for work, with this being 46% in Bicester[36]. Of the trips that are less than 10km the majority are undertaken by car, with 58% of trips less than 10km across the whole MAP Plan area being undertaken by car, with this being 55% for those in living in Bicester[37]. In the surrounding villages 35% travel less than 10km, with driving again being preferred mode[38]. Trips of less than 10km generally have viable alternatives to car use, mainly through cycling and public transport. When looking at trips of 2km or less, where walking, wheeling and cycling are a viable alternative, the data

shows a similar pattern. Data from the 2011 Census showed that 22% of people in the MAP Plan area travelled less than 2km for work, for Bicester this was 30% while in the surrounding villages this was 9%[39]. For the MAP Plan area 45% of trips of less than 2km are driven, with this being 48% in Bicester, making it more popular than walking, cycling, and using public transport combined which demonstrates that there is a high level of opportunity for shifting short distance trips to sustainable transport. It is noted that despite Bicester having a more comprehensive network of walking, wheeling and cycling routes more people in the surrounding villages walk for trips of less than 2km, with 51% of trips undertaken on foot and only 36% undertaken by a vehicle[40].

The 2011 census data outlined above shows there are significant opportunities to increase levels of walking, cycling and public transport. The data shows 35%[41] of work trips are internalised within Bicester meaning that nearly a third of people both live and work in Bicester. The localisation of these trips and compact nature of Bicester provide an excellent opportunity to increase the number of people who walk, wheel and cycle with the provision of high-quality infrastructure. Achieving this, Bicester will gain public health and environmental benefits from the added physical exercise, noise reduction, reduced congestion, increased productivity[42], climate change mitigation, greater road safety, and improved community cohesion.[43]



In the rural areas and villages, it is not realistic to undertake all journeys by walking, wheeling and cycling. This can be due to the distance, topography and infrastructure as well as individual circumstances. However, rural areas offer a great opportunity to enhance access to walking, wheeling and cycling increasing connectivity within and between villages. Developer funding as well as existing planning obligations are starting to lead to the creation of some walking, wheeling and cycling routes. An opportunity exists in the form of former road links from Somerton, Fritwell and Ardley to Heyford Park, severed on construction of the former Upper Heyford Airbase runway, which could be reopened as a walking, wheeling and cycling route.

PRoWs are important in achieving rural connectivity, and Oxfordshire County Council has in place its Oxfordshire Rights of Way Management Plan (2015); the county council's plan to manage, improve and extend the public rights of way and countryside access network. This also helps to provide traffic free routes between the villages in the MAP Plan area, as well as to Bicester. In this MAP Plan area, there are 250 Bridleway equating to approximately 119km, 634 footpaths equating to nearly approximately 278km and 26 restricted byways equating

to approximately 9km. This helps to provide a network of walking routes. These PRoW are also supported by recreational walking, wheeling and cycle routes formed of national trails. In the MAP Plan area, these are as follows:

- **National Byway Network**: A 5,150km signposted cycle route between through England, Scotland and Wales[44]. This route runs through Kirtlington, Weston-on-the-Green, Wendlebury Bicester, Launton, Marsh Gibbon and Charlton-on-Otmoor providing onward connections to Tackley, Charlbury and Buckingham.
- **Oxfordshire Way**: A 108km route which crosses Oxfordshire between the Cotswolds to the Chilterns. This route runs through Kirtlington and Weston-on-the-Green providing onward connections to Islip, Henley-on-Thames, Charlbury and Bourton-on-the-Water.
- **Palladian Way**: A 189km route between Bath and Buckingham. This route runs through Enslow, Kirtlington, Tackley, Middleton Stoney and Evenley and providing onward connections to Brackley, Buckingham and Woodstock.
- **Oxford Canal Walk**: A 137km route along the UK canal network between Oxford and Coventry. This route runs through Somerton, the Heyfords, providing onward connections to Tackley, Kings Sutton and Banbury.
- **Roman Way**: A 275km circular route around Oxfordshire, Gloucestershire, Wiltshire, Hampshire and Berkshire. This route runs through Kirtlington, Weston-on-the-Green, Chesterton, Merton and Chalton-on-Otmoor providing onward connections to Oxford's Eastern Arc and the Cotswolds.
- **Seven Shires Way**: A 372km circular route along the county boundary of Oxfordshire which also runs through the counties of Buckinghamshire, Gloucestershire, Northamptonshire, Oxfordshire, Warwickshire, West Berkshire and Wiltshire. This route runs through Souldern, Finmere, Mixbury, Marsh Gibbon and Blackthorn, providing onward connections to Kings Sutton and Thame.
- **Claude Duval Bridleroute**: A 120km route between Quainton and the Ridgeway near Faringdon. This route runs through Kirtlington, Heyford, Bucknell, Stratton Audley, Calvert and Great Tew.

Walking increases social interactions and connectedness in our communities. Places and spaces that prioritise and support walking help to foster safer, more accessible and inviting neighbourhoods and reduce air and noise pollution. Walking is an excellent way for people to connect with greenspaces which boosts mental wellbeing. High quality people-focused walking infrastructure improves pedestrian safety, encourages people to walk more, and makes our communities more attractive, friendlier and healthier places. Where commuting on foot is possible it can enhance work productivity and improves employee wellbeing. The

cost-benefit ratio of walking is exceptional, particularly when combined with the health, social and environmental benefits[45].

A challenge in the areas is to achieve the improvement of PRoW to allow use at all times of the day and year and by a bigger range of users. Another challenge to achieving increased levels of walking, wheeling, and cycling is the removal of physical barriers to movement in rural and urban areas - this can include roads, rivers and railways by providing safe crossing opportunities for those walking, wheeling, and cycling. In the MAP Plan area this includes but is not limited to the River Cherwell, M40, A34, A41, Cherwell Mainline and the Cherwell Valley Line. Another barrier faced in rural and urban areas are design access barriers which disproportionately affects people with mobility aids and non-standard cycles[46]. Removing barriers to walking, wheeling and cycling will create an inclusive network of routes for all. Research carried out by Cycling UK shows demand to improve connectivity in rural areas, providing communities choice in how they travel[47]. In 2021 the Government published a Call for Evidence whereby innovation could improve the range of transport options available in rural areas. The report states one of the strongest messages was the opportunity for e-bikes[48] to make cycling more accessible in rural areas. Improving infrastructure and enabling access to e-bikes would deliver health and well-being benefits to communities and reduce the reliance on private motor vehicle for trips. It would also improve access to employment and reduce social isolation for people without access to a motor vehicle.

Improving infrastructure in urban and rural areas can enable children to walk, wheel and cycle to school, providing transport independence, give choice in everyday journeys and deliver health and wellbeing benefits[49], providing stronger and more connected communities. A range of schemes and initiatives are currently being developed to help address these challenges, including the walking, wheeling and cycling improvements set out in Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plans (LCWIPs) as well delivering Strategic Active Travel Network (**SATN**) routes. Further work will be required with a view to incorporating the surrounding villages into future iterations of Bicester's LCWIP to create a network of walking, wheeling and cycling across the Plan area. The SATN routes proposed are as follows:

- **Primary Links**
    - Bicester to Oxford via Otmoor
    - Bicester to Kidlington
    - Bicester to Heyford
    - Bicester to Steeple Claydon
    - Heyford to Kings Sutton
    - Heyford to Kidlington
- **Secondary Links**

- Bicester to Brackley
- Bicester to Westcott
- Bicester to Buckingham

Enhancing public transport

Bicester has a wide range of options for public transport services, although within the surrounding villages this is more limited. Data from the 2011 census outlined that 8.0% of residents and 4.8% of those work in the MAP Plan area commute to work by public transport[50]. The census data also shows a similar mode share within Bicester, with 8.3% of residents and 5.2% of those work the town commuting to work by public transport. The public transport options in Bicester provide the town with various bus and rail links to several key destinations such as Oxford, London, Milton Keynes, Birmingham, and Bedford. Bus and rail connections provide a viable alternative to driving a car. For example, it will take around 35 minutes to drive from Bicester to Oxford. Travelling by bus is a bit longer (40-60 minutes), but takes people closer to the facilities in Oxford, is cheaper, and there is a service every 10-15 minutes at peak times. Taking the train is quicker, only 17 minutes, from station to station.

To maximise the services, further enhancements will be required particularly for the villages who do not have or enjoy the same level of service. Bicester is the main hub for buses across the MAP Plan area being served by five (out of six) of the inter-urban bus routes as well as being the hub for the local routes serving the villages. The existing local bus network provides a range of connections within the area and to other destinations such as Oxford, Brackley, Banbury, Kidlington, Heyford, Aylesbury, John Radcliffe Hospital, Buckingham and Milton Keynes.

A single high-frequency (minimum of four buses per hour) bus service operates in the MAP Plan area, with this being the S5 between Bicester and Oxford. The principal bus services are operated by Stagecoach (X5, S4, S5, 25, 26, 29, 500 H5), Red Rose Travel (17, 18, 24, 25, 108) Ability (81,82) and Oxford Bus Company (21, BV1) are operated by diesel buses. Bus services serving the surrounding villages are more mixed in terms of frequency and coverage. Heyford Park, Caversfield, Arncott, Steeple Aston, Ambrosden, Merton and Middleton Stoney are serviced by hourly bus services operated by Stagecoach, providing connection to Oxford and/ or Bicester and / or Banbury. The other villages in the plan area are either served by less frequent bus services on local routes, such as the five per day

service 24 between Bicester and Oxford serving Kirtlington, Bletchingdon, Weston on the Green and Wendlebury, or by community buses – typically because they don't have a regular bus - such as the Bicester Bee or OurBusBartons etc (e.g. , operated by not-for-profit community interest group, Ability Community Transport. They work in many ways just like a 'normal bus' operated for commercial profit or private organisations i.e. benefiting from the DfT fare cap of £3 per journey, offering contactless pay mechanisms, dedicated routes and timetables. For example, the Bicester Bee is a valuable asset linking residents to communities, key services and amenities, though does have service limitations. Supporting Bicester Bee to expanding the service would provide a great benefit, it would enable people to link up with rail services and long-distance bus network and reduce reliance on motor vehicle for journeys into Bicester and beyond. Promised developer-funded shuttle services between Heyford Park and Heyford station, as well as a direct bus link from Heyford Park to Oxford, would also address existing service gaps.

The quality of bus infrastructure varies across the Bicester and surrounding villages area, with limited provision of real-time information (RTI), raised kerbs, shelters, seating and lighting. These features are associated with improved passenger experience, increased efficiency, enhanced reliability, and accessibility. Pedestrian routes to bus stops require upgrading through pavement provision, repair and/or the provision of dropped kerbs to allow pushchair or wheelchair users to access public transport safely. In terms Real Time Information (RTI) only 6.3% of bus stops in Bicester have RTI, with the only villages within the MAP Plan area that benefit from on-street RTI being Heyford Park, Launton, Elmsbrook and Upper Arncott. When looking at other bus infrastructure across the MAP Plan area, there are limited bus priority measures, with bus stops themselves varying with generally limited provision of raised kerbs, shelters and seating at bus stops. This highlights the need for further investment to improve the passenger experience[51].

We will need to deliver priority bus lanes and integrate public transport with other forms of transport to create seamless transition from one to the other. We will need to ensure that they are safe, accessible and comfortable for everyone. We also must improve reliability, frequency, and provide more economical services for passengers. Increased patronage on public transport will also make services more viable in the long run. The Bus Service Improvement Plan (BSIP) identifies some of the improvements that have already been made with some further identified service and infrastructure improvements noted for Bicester and surrounding villages. Further to this, an objective of the Mid-Cherwell Neighbourhood Plan is to secure the future of bus services linking the neighbourhood's

villages with each other and local towns and the need to improve rural rail services. In the villages within walking distance of existing regular bus services such as Duns Tew, Arncott and Finmere, safe footway links would make a significant contribution to sustainable movement.

The MAP Plan area is served by three rail stations Bicester Village, Bicester North and Heyford. Furthermore, as detailed in OxRail 2040: A Plan for Rail there are plans to explore the potential of opening a fourth rail station in the area at Ardley, on Chiltern Railways (in future Great British Railways) route between Birmingham and London Marylebone.

Bicester Village and Bicester North Stations are the fourth and sixth busiest stations in Oxfordshire, seeing 1.93 million and 822,816 entries and exits[52]. The stations in Bicester benefit from two trains per hour between Oxford and London (Bicester Village) and Birmingham and London (Bicester North). Heyford is the 16th busiest station in Oxfordshire with only 45,552 entries and exits in 2024-2025, an increase of 36% on the previous year and offers fewer services than Bicester's two stations, with just one train running every two hours between Banbury and Oxford. Additionally, it lacks facilities like a café, toilets, lifts, and other amenities and growth here is constrained by the physical environment. This therefore presents another challenge – something which has been addressed in the recent OxRail 2040: A Plan for Rail.

Rail improvements are necessary for Bicester and its villages to benefit from their position within the Oxford Knowledge Spine and the Oxford-Cambridge Arc. The upcoming East West Rail (EWR) will connect to Cambridge by the mid-2030s with up to six trains per hour. Plans include a new Ardley station and increased service at Heyford. Chiltern Railways, which operates the UK's oldest rolling stock, introduced new MK5 coaches in January 2026.

Achieving local and national transport goals requires an integrated network that ensures smooth connections between all modes of travel – essential for achieving national and local transport targets. This includes accessible footways, improved cycling infrastructure, well-placed bus stops, integrated ticketing, and consideration for the entire journey from home to destination.

These interventions will bring changes to the MAP Plan area and will need careful consideration to ensure they are right for the people of Bicester and surrounding villages. For example, working with partners to identify solutions for the London Road Level Crossing to maintain cross town connections and understand the cumulative impact of EWR, as it will

provide opportunities for people to live in MAP Plan area to work in town/city locations such as Milton Keynes, Oxford and Cambridge.

Road safety

By improving and managing the road network we can ensure the residents can move around by any mode safely within an inclusive transport network, across the area. The LTCP adopted a Vision Zero Strategy using a Safe System approach[53] which aims to eliminate all Killed or Seriously Injured incidents (KSIs) on Oxfordshire's roads and streets, with the Council seeking to '*have zero, or as close as possible, road fatalities or life-changing injuries'* by 2050. Safe System[54] is a concept that originated in Sweden and the Netherlands in 1990's, and it contains five pillars that need to work together to minimise the chance of a collision, or if one takes place, to prevent death or serious injury occurring. The five pillars are:

1 Safe Roads
2 Safe Speeds
3 Safe Vehicles
4 Safe Road Users
5 Post-crash Care

Minimising road danger is fundamental in creating a safe environment for those walking, wheeling, riding a bike and using public transport. Looking at KSIs in the Bicester and the surrounding area, several areas were identified as having high concentrations of KSI collisions. These are:

- A4095 (between Bucknell Road and the B4100)
- Entrance to Bicester Park and Ride
- M40 (Junction 9, Wendlebury Interchange)
- Peregrine Way and the A4421 Roundabout
- A4421 Bicester Road Junction (Caversfield)
- A41 Blackthorn
- A4260/North Aston/Duns Tew crossroads
- M40 J10 (Ardley)
- M40 Junction 9 (Wendlebury)
- A4095/ B4030 Junction
- A43 Baynards Green Junction
- Camp Road - Heyford

Vehicle trips

In Bicester, the A41 is a primary route linking from J9 of the M40 to Aylesbury, Watford and beyond. The A41 carries 36,000[55] vehicles each day, impacting how people move within and around the area. There is also a significant demand between the A34 and the A4421, with cars using either the central corridor through the AQMA on King's End/Queens Avenue or the eastern peripheral route using Charbridge Lane and Skimmingdish Lane.

The issue of high vehicle flows is exacerbated by large amounts of Single Occupancy Vehicle (SOV) trips, which account for 70% of trips for both residents and workers[56]. Furthermore, a significant number of SOV trips are short distances (45.65% for trips less than 2km, 67.1% of trips between 2km and 5km and 80.9% of trips between 5km and 10km[57]) where alternative modes of transport offer a practical and viable alternative.

The issue of high vehicle flows is not limited solely to Bicester, with a number of the classified A and B roads in the MAP Plan area having high flows, which can have a severe impact on villages along these routes, many of which have properties and amenities (such as schools or villages halls) fronting on to these roads, often with very limited space between the highway and houses. Traffic on rural roads has increased in recent years due to growth in the local area as well as in the neighbouring towns in Buckinghamshire. This is a prevalent issue on the following roads which as per the latest traffic counts have significant vehicle flows: the A4421 (Newton Purcell, Newton Morell and Caversfield) with 12,210, the B4100 (Elmsbrook) with 11,831 vehicles per day, the B4030 (Lower Heyford and Middleton Stoney) with 8,417 vehicles per day and the B4011 (Blackthorn) with 7,123 vehicles per day. As well as on Ploughley Road (Ambrosden, Arncott) with 7,135 per day. It is likely without interventions car levels will continue to increase and the aspirations of the MAP Plan and LTCP will not be achieved.

Roads can present a distinctive barrier to walking, wheeling and cycling for residents who reside in rural villages, creating severance in our communities. There is no predominant East – West corridor for walking, wheeling and cycling and a shortage of safe routes from most villages even where distance would otherwise make travelling actively a feasible option. It also affects our ability to provide high-quality public transport, with buses unable to move freely at peak times, resulting in long bus journey times and poor service reliability. With the right interventions there is significant potential to increase walking, wheeling, and cycling within the towns and villages in the area. However, high traffic volume limits this potential, discouraging active travel, reducing road safety, raising air and noise pollution levels, and negatively affecting health, especially for vulnerable groups and those with respiratory conditions[58].

To deliver a transport system which supports the projected growth in Bicester and within the surrounding villages we will need to work alongside various partners to create transport choice for the communities and for those visiting/commuting for work, which will support LTCP targets to remove 1 in 4 vehicle trips by 2030 and 1 in 3 by 2040. Measures to mitigate growth in vehicle trips will create opportunities, support growth and reduce the number of motorised vehicle trips passing through Bicester and support LTCP Vision Zero ambition. We will need to balance addressing the immediate opportunities to deliver impact, with planning and where possible investing for the longer term to lay the groundwork for future improvements.

Climate Change, resilience and the environment

We recognise the need to take action to tackle climate change. The LTCP has a 2040 net zero transport target that puts addressing the climate emergency at the forefront, by seeking to decarbonise the transport system which will contribute to a climate-positive and net-zero future, protecting our communities and supporting their long-term wellbeing. In 2019, the County Council declared a Climate Emergency and prepared a climate action framework in response. The Cherwell Local Plan (and emerging) shares this commitment. Flooding, extreme temperatures and droughts are the most serious climate related challenges faced by people across the UK, affecting homes, businesses and daily life. Through the LTCP, we are putting people at the heart of our response to the climate emergency. By reducing emissions from transport and creating cleaner, safer and more reliable ways for people to travel, we can build a climate positive future. This approach will help ensure that the infrastructure communities rely on is as resilient as possible to the impacts of climate change.

In addition to LTCP targets to reduce car trip dependence, promote active travel and public transport, **Policies 27** to **30**, also put addressing the climate emergency at the forefront, contributing to a climate-positive future, and improving resilience for our communities. An important feature is ensuring schemes and interventions are prioritised and delivered in accordance with PAS2080 - a global standard by the British Standards Institution for managing whole-life carbon in buildings and infrastructure. Similarly, every scheme, project or intervention needs to align to Climate Change Adaptation Route Map[59] for Oxfordshire.

Within the MAP Plan area, there is a risk of flooding from rivers and surface water, with several locations in the area at the greatest risk (a greater than 1 in 30 (3.3%) chance of flooding each year[60]) from river flooding. This is mainly apparent in locations in the catchment for either the River Cherwell or River Ray or Langford Brook including Lower Heyford, Upper Heyford, Merton Somerton, Wendlebury, Ambrosden, Upper and Lower Arncott, Blackthorn, Launton, Langford and Stratton Audley[61].

There are locations also at a high risk of surface water flooding, in particular the low-lying areas to the south and east of Bicester including Ambrosden, Upper and Lower Arncott, Blackthorn, Launton[62]. While flooding directly affects the communities in these areas, it can also severely disrupt local walking, wheeling, and cycling routes as well as motorised transport links, rendering routes impassable and cutting off communities. This for example is becoming very clearly demonstrated by the noted cancellation of Bicester Park Run which takes place in Langford Fields, off Mallards Way. An area which floods annually, during the winter, due to the nearby Brook bursting is banks. The latest event taking place on the 17th January 2026, as detailed further by the Oxford Mail and previous cancellations detailed on the Bicester Facebook page.

The MAP Plan will seek to support Oxfordshire's Local Nature Recovery Strategy by setting objectives and actions which provide opportunities for ecological connectivity and recovery to deliver measurable biodiversity gains, it is now mandatory that each scheme provides biodiversity net gain of at least 20%[63]. It will ensure that the Council's transport proposals "have regard" to the Local Nature Recovery Strategy and actively contribute to nature recovery and environmental resilience.

Summary

The challenges and opportunities section of the Bicester and surrounding villages MAP Plan provides the context for the objectives and actions set out later in this document which the council alongside developers, district councils, and stakeholders are expected to deliver as a supporting document to LTCP. What follows will outline how Bicester and surrounding villages can grow sustainably over the following 25 years with a people first approach, whilst also helping to improve the lives of those who currently live, work and visit the area.

The objectives and actions will share how we and partners intend to improve the urban environment and deliver an inclusive transport system within Bicester and the surrounding villages, making streets safer and better for walking, cycling and public transport, enhancing access to schools, workplaces, improving Bicester town centre and it district centres and improving the local facilities and infrastructure in the villages. There will also be a focus on improving connections for rural communities surrounding Bicester and providing choice with how people wish to travel.

Enhancing public spaces will be a key element of the MAP Plan. The objectives and actions will support the delivery of schemes which will enable people to be more active and enjoy social lifestyles. Every objective and action will support the aim, vision and targets of the LTCP and create a greener, fairer and healthier county.

Delivered infrastructure and schemes

Transport strategy over the last few decades has focused on delivering peripheral routes around Bicester to reduce the number of cars driving through the central corridor of King's End and Queens Avenue and then splitting between Banbury Road and Buckingham Road. Previous developments on the edge of the town have delivered various sections of this system, including most recently Vendee Drive as the south west peripheral route. Complementary measures were put in using chicanes at the northern end of Banbury Road and Buckingham Road to encourage use of these routes.

Over the last few years, a range of infrastructure and transport schemes have been delivered by the County Council, developers and other partners across the MAP Plan area, reflecting the ongoing investment in movement, safety and connectivity. The following list highlights key schemes that have been completed or implemented in Bicester and the surrounding villages:

- **Ploughley Road/ A41 junction improvements –** The signalisation of the Ploughley Road/ A41 junction (southeast of Graven Hill) and the provision of walk, wheel and cycle facilities including Toucan crossings and improved footways within the vicinity of the junction.

- **A41/ Pioneer Roundabout –** New roundabout on the A41 to the southeast of Graven Hill and the provision of walk, wheel and cycle facilities including Toucan crossings and improved footways within the vicinity of the junction.
- **A41 Oxford Road corridor -** Widening of A41 at the logistics site just north of M40 J9 to provide a dedicated turning lane and new signalised crossing, with pedestrian crossing facilities to serve Wendlebury. The northbound bus layby at the same location has also been improved.
- **Banbury Road junction (B4100/ A4095):** Conversion of the Banbury Road (B4100)/ A4095 roundabout and the Fringford Road/ A4095 priority junctions to signal controlled junctions to help improve capacity. The conversion of these junctions also allowed the improvement of the existing shared footway / cycleway to include segregated paths, Toucan crossings and cycle bypasses.
- **Highway capacity improvements to peripheral routes –** Provision of two new bridges under the Chiltern Mainline to the north west of Howes Lane/ Bucknell Road to support the future realignment of the A4095 (Howes Lane) and to provide walking, wheeling and cycling links across the new housing area.
- **Middleton Stoney Road –** New roundabout with crossing facilities for pedestrians and cyclists at the Middleton Stoney Road/ Whitelands Way/ Shakespeare Drive junction and an improved shared footway/cycleway between Villiers Road and the town centre via either Kings End or Piggy Lane.
- **Charbridge Lane crossing:** Conversion of the level crossing on Charbridge Lane (A4421) to a grade separated overbridge to support the double tracking of the railway line as part of EWR.
- **Bicester Park & Ride –** providing a connection to buses to Oxford, staff parking for Bicester Village and overspill parking on special event days.
- **Electric Vehicle (EV) initiatives:**
    - Introduction of new Park & Charge EV charging hubs at Cattle Market and Claremont Car Parks
    - Introduction of charging points at The Heyford Hotel (2 chargers), Charlotte Avenue (1 charger), Holiday Inn Bicester (5 chargers), Bicester A4421 - Greggs Bicester (8 chargers), David Lloyd Bicester, 17 (chargers), Holm Square (1 charger), Elmsbrook (Bicester Eco Town, 6 chargers), Bicester Village Shopping Centre, (5 chargers), Palmer Avenue (6 chargers). The full list of them can be found here.
    - Provision of a Car Club and associated infrastructure at the Elmsbrook development (NW Bicester Phase 1).
- **Bicester pedestrian and cycle links**:
    - Provision of a footpath and appropriate signage from Priory Lane to Bicester Village Rail Station.

  - Introduction of pedestrian crossings over South West Perimeter Road (Vendee Drive), Oxford Road and Middleton Stoney Road.
  - Implementation of new cycle route on the B4100 from the Elmsbrook site to Lord's Lane junction and across Lord's Lane.
- **Bicester Wayfinding Project** – Project working with CDC as part of Healthy Bicester which aims to enhance the town's infrastructure and promote active, sustainable travel. The project includes the installation of monoliths and fingerposts in Bicester, providing detailed information on distances and times for travel by foot and cycle.
- **Tubbs Crossing–** Provision of a new pedestrian, wheeling and cycle overbridge over the Chiltern mainline between Launton Drive and Gavray Drive/ Mallards Way, to provide connections between Langford and Bicester town centre.
- **Village mitigation measures –** so far, the following has been delivered:

Measures	**Village/ Parish**
New Chicanes	Ambrosden (on Arncott Road).
New Footpaths	Caversfield (Fringford Road between Springfield Road and public footpath to Bainton).
Vehicle-Activated Signs	Ardley, Caulcott, Chesterton, Fringford, Kirtlington, Langford Village, Launton, Lower Heyford, Middleton Stoney, Newton Purcell, Steeple Aston, Stratton Audley.
20mph speed limits	Ambrosden, Ardley, Bucknell, Chesterton, Cottisford, Duns Tew, Fringford, Fritwell, Hethe, Juniper Hill, Kirtlington, Langford Village, Launton, Little Chesterton, Lower Heyford, Middleton Aston, Middleton Stoney, North Aston, Somerton, Souldern, Stoke Lyne, Stratton Audley, Upper Heyford, Wendlebury.
30mph speed limits	Ardley, Lower Heyford, Middleton Stoney, Upper Arncott (Palmer Avenue).
40mph speed limits	Chesterton, Kirtlington, Little Chesterton, Lower Heyford, Stoke Lyne.
New Gateways and Signage	Cottisford, Juniper Hill, Launton, Stoke Lyne, Upper Arncott.
New Parking at Primary School	Fringford.
New Village Nameplates	Godington, Heyford Park.
Pedestrian and Oncoming vehicles warning signs in	Somerton.

place, Bridge regulatory signs changed to deter HGVs	
Gated Road	Little Chesterton.

- **SATN Routes** – Oxfordshire proposed SATN is a proposal for a countywide Active Travel network of walking and cycling routes. Stage 1 (Routing) of the development process is now complete with Stage 2 underway. The current proposals include a number of routes with the MAP Plan area.
- **Bicester LCWIP** – Was approved in September 2020 and provides a ten-year plan to improve and increase cycling and walking in the town. It sets out cycling and walking interventions that should be implemented to maximise the uptake of walking, wheeling and cycling.
- **Buses route improvements** – Bus service and infrastructure improvements have been introduced over the last few years, including:
    - Bus lane on Charlotte Avenue, Elmsbrook.
    - New bus stops on A4421 adjacent to Bicester Business Park.
    - The provision of bus facilities at Bicester Village Station including a new turning head and new bus stops on London Road within the vicinity of the Shell Garage.
    - Route 81 and 82 have been restored to many villages to the north of Bicester as well as the provision of Route 108 serving Langford village[64].
    - Introduction of routes 24/25 to replace withdrawn route 250. Providing connections to Heyford, Middleton Stoney, Kirtlington, Wendlebury and Weston-on-the-Green. The 24 has provided Wendlebury and Weston-on-the-Green there first bus routes since 2016.
    - Introduction of route H5 between Bicester and the John Radcliffe Hospital and Headington, creating a bus connection for Merton, Graven Hill, Ambrosden and Islip.
    - Introduction of route 29 between Bicester and Bullingdon Prison/ Arncott via Graven Hill.

Planned infrastructure delivery

Work continues to improve transport and movement in Bicester. There are several transport projects that are in progress, with a particular focus on delivering the priority schemes in the Bicester LCWIP. These are the following:

- **Middleton Stoney Road Active Travel Scheme (an LCWIP route):** A new two-way cycleway along the full length of Middleton Stoney Road, between Oxford Road and Howes Lane, together with new footway and zebra crossings at five locations along Middleton Stoney Road, new footway on the south side between Whitelands Way and King's End, and a traffic restriction on Chalvey Road/ Villiers Road junction. Consultation was completed and design approved in 2025, with delivery anticipated for Autum 2026.
- **London Road Active Travel Scheme (an LCWIP route):** A new two-way cycleway between the A41/ Ploughley Road junction and London Road/ Launton Road junction together with new footway and zebra crossings. To provide a cycling/ walking link between Graven Hill and Talisman Roundabout. Consultation was completed and design approved in 2025, with delivery anticipated for Autum 2026.
- **Redesign of the Middleton Stoney Road / Oxford Road junction:** with a strong focus on walking, wheeling and cycling connectivity. Delivery due Summer 2026.

- **A41 Active Travel Scheme (south):** Provision of a pedestrian and cycle facilities linking Siemens employment site near M40 Junction 9 to Vendee Drive roundabout. Options and feasibility work will complete March 2026.
- **A41 Active Travel Scheme (east):** Provision of cycle route along the A41 from its junction with the A4421 to Pioneer roundabout, with a potential extension to Ploughley Road junction. Delivery expected in 2027.
- **Active Travel connections between Graven Hill and Bicester (LCWIP routes):** Two routes are being considered to address the lack of a walking, wheeling, cycling route between Graven Hill and Kingsmere. A route to the north of Boundary Way using a 'cattle creep' under the railway line is being developed and one to the south across to Lakeview Drive. A further connection from Graven Hill into the countryside is also being investigated.
- **Realignment of the A4095 at Howes Lane / Lords Lane:** to reduce congestion at the Bucknell Road junction, reduce the impact on residents east of Howes Lane and provide high quality walking, wheeling and cycling connectivity for the new housing and employment area.
- **EV Charging Points** – The council has ambitious plans, as part of Oxfordshire's LEVI programme, to deliver at least 1,200 new public EV charging points across Oxfordshire by the end of 2027, with this including at least 230 low power EV charging points across Cherwell.
- **Village mitigation measures** – A range of mitigation measures are proposed, including:
  - Gateway features at Caulcott, Upper Heyford and Steeple Aston.
  - Traffic calming features in Somerton, Bucknell, Kirtlington, Middleton Stoney, The Astons, Fritwell, Lower Heyford and Upper Heyford, Wendlebury
  - A trial of chicanes in North Aston.
  - Ardley – New build-outs, various roads in the village.
  - Caversfield – Traffic calming Fringford Road and Skimmingdish Lane.
  - Chesterton – Build out on A4095.
  - Lower Heyford – Fixed solar-powered Vehicle Activated Sign (VAS) x 2.
  - Newton Purcell – HS2 A4421 diversion needs relocation.
  - North Aston – Traffic calming, temporary trial to be set up.
  - Somerton - Extension to 20mph on Heyford Road, new 40mph between Somerton & Ardley.
  - Stratton Audley - Extension to 20mph and new 50mph on Station Road.
- **Heyford Station** - investigation into the viability and practicality of the introduction of a new walking, wheeling and cycle route to the station from Heyford Park, with enhanced bus connectivity to the surrounding areas. This would support sustainable growth and connectivity at Heyford Park and surrounding areas, unlocking more frequent access to Oxford and Banbury.

Vision: Bicester and the Surrounding Villages

For Bicester and the surrounding villages to be sustainable and healthy places where communities thrive and protection is given to the fabric and identity of its villages.

Utilise a people-first approach

Support sustainable growth

Prioritise walking, wheeling, cycling, and public transport

Enhance biodiversity and connect people to nature

Providing choice in how residents travel to schools, leisure facilities and local employment.

Focus on sustainable connectivity

Improve the connectivity of the villages whilst making the area a more desirable place to live, work, and visit

Improve public realm, creating opportunities for interaction

Objectives and actions

Oxfordshire's transport system affects the lives of all residents in Bicester and surrounding villages by connecting communities, supporting businesses, and enabling journeys for education, leisure, and work. It is therefore vital that we improve the lives of those who live and work within Bicester and the surrounding villages, and support the council's nine priorities, its LTCP targets, the existing and emerging local plans and national planning requirements. At the time of writing this MAP Plan, the area is subject to proposed speculative growth and a potential New Town at Heyford Park. The objectives and actions reflect this, however, will need updating once the details of future developments are known.

This section defines how the Bicester and Surrounding Villages Movement and Place (MAP) Plan will help to achieve the targets of the LTCP, whilst also helping to address challenges that are specific to the area, as established from the review of the evidence base and from site visits. Each objective will be supported by a series of actions that set out how the objective will achieve the aims and targets of the LTCP. Every action included below is categorised to show which of the place components (more detail can be found in MAP Plans: An Introduction) is relevant to that action, with this shown as follows:

This section defines how the Bicester and Surrounding Villages Movement and Place Plan (MAP Plan) will help to achieve the targets of the Local Transport and Connectivity Plan (LTCP), whilst also helping to address challenges that are specific to the area. Each objective will be supported by a series of actions that set out how the objective will achieve the aims and targets of the LTCP. There is a clear shift from LTP4 to having a place-shaping focus as part of the MAP Plan, where attention is given not just to movement but the places through which people travel and how this influences the design.

In LTP4 Bicester Area Strategy, various schemes were proposed for the town, and a number of these schemes have either been completed, partially completed, or are currently being progressed. Schemes already delivered and in progress are listed in pages 30-36. Where schemes have not been completed or progressed, they have been assessed to determine whether they are still relevant. The relevant schemes have been carried forward and developed in this MAP Plan to build upon the policies included within the LTCP and the local plans.

Place shaping

Objectives BSV1 and BSV2 focus on providing transport choices and healthy place shaping for trips to and from:

- **School**
- **Local Shops**
- **Shopping**
- **Community Centres/facilities**
- **Work**
- **Healthcare**
- **Public Transport**
- **Leisure facilities**
- **Access to greenspaces**

The first objective focuses on place shaping and is directly aligned to **Policies 8 to 14** of the LTCP and indirectly supports other policies within the LTCP. As set out in the Introduction chapter for the MAP Plans, place shaping has defined by a 'place wheel'. It is made up of six components all of which are detailed after each action in this Plan. When considering places, it is important to recognise that streets are not just about movement, they are important public spaces which create social interactions and enable people to partake in various activities. Streets play a vital role in delivering vibrant, healthy, liveable communities in urban and rural areas. Each place is unique, has its own history, purpose and sense of community. By delivering places people want to be in, we will create a street environment which is attractive, safe, sustainable and accessible for everyone.

It is important that streets facilitate social engagement and are multi-functional, creating the spaces where local businesses can thrive, enhance the quality of the local environment, and can host cultural and recreational activities. This will improve the quality of life for residents and visitors. This approach is vital to achieving LTCP outcomes such as improved public health, reduced inequalities, and stronger local economies.

Objective BSV1

Create a sense of place through implementing healthy place shaping interventions

Why this objective?

Bicester's historic town centre and the surrounding villages are dominated by motor vehicles to the detriment of the movement of people. There are many listed buildings in Bicester's historic core based around a narrow road layout which is not suitable for today's vehicles. The focal point of Bicester, Market Square, is a car park with multiple motor vehicle movements. Local centres and amenities provide excellent facilities for motor vehicles, however, spaces for pedestrians and cycles are limited and often an afterthought which limits how residents and visitors interact with the space. To establish healthy behaviours, we will aim to create places which enable social interactions and provide the space for people to walk, wheel, cycle and use public transport. We will also explore understanding the cumulative impact of planned or speculative development on the transport network and ensuring the evolving MAP Plan and surrounding areas (e.g. but not limited to Deddington, Marsh Gibbon, and Tackley) include place shaping measures to mitigate the impact.

Within the villages the focus will be to create vibrant, connected rural communities through healthy place-shaping that enhances and protects their history and fabric, at the same time, creating opportunities to enjoy and utilise the local environment. Utilising the Healthy Streets Approach highlighted in **Policy 8** of the LTCP, we will create streets which are easy to cross for everyone, reduce street clutter, enhance biodiversity, reduce noise and create places where people wish to dwell. Also, this work will support local shops and hospitality venues, of particular importance in keeping village communities served and connected to their surrounding areas and creating a sense of belonging. Improvements to the walking environment which are well-planned can see an increase of up to 40% in shopping footfall[65].

We will focus on place shaping in rural villages, working with communities to understand what makes them unique to deliver positive health outcomes, and strengthen communities. It will be important to ensure community ownership of placemaking assets such as community facilities, co-working spaces and play areas. There is increasingly strong evidence to show that time spent with neighbours, friends and in green spaces is good for

both physical and mental health. It is also important to recognise that walking should be considered and encouraged as part of accessing and improving connectivity to green spaces. We will re-examine Bicester's streets and surrounding villages to create an area which is well connected to key facilities and provides public spaces for residents and visitors to enjoy using the principles of the Transport User Hierarchy highlighted in **Policy 1** of the LTCP.

The National Design Guide[66] states '*well designed places influence the quality of our experience as we spend more time in them and move around them*.' These principles underpin the following actions, which will deliver well designed interventions to create a vibrant, healthy, and successful town which supports Bicester's growth in a sustainable way. Through healthy place shaping interventions, this objective will enable and support **Policy 1 - 3, 7 – 11, 13 – 16, 18, 21, 22 and 30** of the LTCP.

We will deliver Objective **BSV1** through the following actions:

1.1 Conduct an audit across Bicester and surrounding villages using the Healthy Streets Toolkit, to support implementation of place-shaping schemes along with inclusive and accessible walking, wheeling and cycling routes.
Travel & Connectivity | Economic Growth | Health & Wellbeing | Social & Community | Culture & Assets | Climate & Environment

1.2 Prepare a strategy and action plan to develop place shaping solutions for improved public realm in Bicester within the town centre, central corridor, local/ district centres and surrounding villages. For example, Kirtlington, Launton, Middleton Stoney, Fritwell, Heyford Park, Stratton Audley and Ambrosden.
Travel & Connectivity | Economic Growth | Health & Wellbeing | Social & Community | Culture & Assets | Climate & Environment

1.3 Build upon and deliver a cohesive wayfinding scheme working towards a localised branding, to benefit all residents and visitors, aiming to ensure a consistent brand across Bicester and its surrounding villages.
Travel & Connectivity | Economic Growth | Health & Wellbeing | Social & Community | Culture & Assets

1.4 Collaborate with the community and partners to support the introduction of murals, artwork, rest places, greener spaces, pocket parks, play spaces, and community parks.
Social & Community | Culture & Assets | Climate & Environment

1.5 Collaborate with communities and partners to identify locations to deliver play streets and to how best to use local parks and recreational grounds to encourage safe play and foster social interaction.
Social & Community | Culture & Assets | Climate & Environment

1.6 Identify and delivery School Streets and School Zones where appropriate.
Travel & Connectivity | Health & Wellbeing | Social & Community | Climate & Environment

1.7 Working with partners to explore regeneration opportunities in and around Bicester town centre with a focus on place shaping.
Economic Growth | Health & Wellbeing | Social & Community | Culture & Assets

1.8 Work with partners and communities to develop place shaping measures in light of a cumulative impact assessment to understand the impact of both allocated and speculative development. Consideration should also be given to surrounding neighbouring villages/towns, for example, but not limited to i.e. Deddington, Clifton, Marsh Gibbon and Tackley.
Travel & Connectivity | Economic Growth | Health & Wellbeing | Social & Community | Culture & Assets | Climate & Environment

1.9 Explore solutions to deliver streets for people (e.g. by providing benches, widening footpaths etc) to create place shaping opportunities and cater for all modes of transport. To support the council's emerging Street Design Code and transport user hierarchy.
Travel & Connectivity | Social & Community

1.10 Work with partners and communities to enhance village amenities and community hubs which supports future development and social cohesion, and where development is planned to actively enhance place shaping amenities (e.g. play facilities, retail and communal spaces).
Travel & Connectivity | Economic Growth | Health & Wellbeing | Social & Community

Walking, wheeling and cycling

This objective focuses on walking, wheeling and cycling. Walking and cycling are at the heart of the LTCP, with both at the top of the transport user hierarchy. The LTCP also recognises the wider role of how we design our neighbourhoods, and how we need to make it easy and enjoyable for people to walk, wheel and cycle by considering the design and connectivity of our streets and places. There is an overarching ambition to create movement corridors and streets which enable extensive walking, wheeling and cycling routes and prioritise public transport in and around Bicester and the surrounding villages, with peripheral routes and or spine routes through major developments. If this ambition is achieved, it would deliver liveable neighbourhoods aligned with **Policy 13** of the LTCP enabling children to walk, wheel and cycle to school, support people to live healthy lives and provide choice in how everyone moves around the MAP Plan area. A similar approach has been taken in Ghent[67], Belgium delivering a positive impact by reducing collisions, improving air quality, decreasing noise levels, reducing congestion and increasing the number of people cycling. Such measures would need to be incorporated within a wider mobility strategy for Bicester which factors in public transport, motor vehicle movements and parking.

A review of 2011 census demonstrates the opportunities that exist to grow the modal share for walking and cycling. Across the MAP Plan area, 13.4% of residents walked to work, while 4.9% of residents cycled, for people that work in the MAP Plan area, 10.3% commute on foot and 4.1% use a bike[68]. Furthermore, it is also important to note a significant number of the trips that are undertaken over short distances, where walking (up to 2km), wheeling and cycling (up to 8km) can provide a suitable alternative. For example, 45% of trips of less than 2km are driven.

In Bicester, which is compact area, the number of people walking and cycling is still low and, in some circumstances, lower than across the MAP Plan area. In total 12.2% of residents walked to work, while 5.0% of residents cycled, for people that work in Bicester, 15% commute on foot and 5.9% use a bike[69]. As indicated these numbers show the importance of making walking, wheeling and cycling the natural choice so that a shift in transport behaviour can be achieved.

Alongside the LTCP, the council also adopted an Active Travel Strategy, a supporting document which expands on the LTCP policies related to walking, wheeling and cycling. This plan set cycling targets at a local level, and for Bicester it aims to increase the number of cycle trips by 200%, or 60,000 cycle trips a week by 2031 from a baseline of 20,000. The objectives and actions set out in this MAP Plan will support the delivery of these targets and the LTCP vision of creating an inclusive and safe Oxfordshire net-zero transport system.

Objective BSV2

Deliver comprehensive and inclusive walking, wheeling and cycling network interventions

Why this objective?

Bicester is well suited to becoming a town where walking, wheeling, and cycling is the natural choice for short journeys. As noted earlier, the topography of Bicester is relatively flat, and very compact (roughly 3.5 km edge to edge). As the town expands over the next planning period up to 2042 a much higher commitment will be required to reach the government's targets and to avoid new developments becoming isolated and car dependant. In Bicester, focus should be given to the creation and support of local centres, where residents can access food and other services, particularly in the more distant areas to Bicester's town centre. This will reduce the need for residents to have to drive into the centre of Bicester. The schemes should create cycle infrastructure which is accessible to everyone, adheres to Local Transport Note (LTN) 1/20[70] guidance, and is accessible for non-standard cycles[71] if Bicester is to meet government targets of 50% of trips in England towns

to be walked, wheeled or cycled by 2030[72] and LTCP target to replace or remove 1 out of every 4 current car trips in Oxfordshire by 2030 and additional 1 in 3 by 2040.

There is limited space on routes within Bicester to create the space where all modes of travel can co-exist without conflicts. We will need to look at innovative ways such as reprioritising road space to enable and increase in walking, wheeling and cycling. To improve walking, wheeling and cycling conditions in Bicester, the LCWIP[73] for the town was published in 2020. The LCWIP identified how the current cycle infrastructure is lacking, resulting in a disjointed network. The town and villages within MAP Plan area have significant severance caused by the highway, historic planning with limited permeability, rail network, the high level of vehicle flows along key corridors, poor-quality footway network and a disconnected street network for pedestrians. The LCWIP proposed measures to enable more people to walk, wheel and cycle.

Providing high-quality links to give residents of Bicester access to nature which reflects Bicester's Garden Town status will be at the forefront of the walking, wheeling and cycling network, this will include providing green corridors to new developments, villages, and places of interest. This will provide transport choice and enable residents of Bicester to live healthy lives. Green corridors will provide places for people to dwell, connect with nature and children to play which support Liveable Neighbourhoods. To help support this Cherwell District Council worked with the NHS as part of the Bicester Healthy New Town Programme to create three 5km Health Routes in Bicester, to help increase physical activity amongst residents. This scheme could be expanded to more locations, particularly in the villages.

We will need to look at a range of measures including expanding the existing Bicester LCWIP to incorporate surrounding villages and / or assessing the need for a standalone LCWIP for Heyford Park and surrounding rural areas. Improvements to the walking, wheeling and cycling network could include rural quiet lanes, upgrading public rights of way and canal tow paths, traffic calming, widening and improving footways within and between villages. The new SATN, a county-wide project for walking and cycling infrastructure, will incorporate existing walking and cycling routes and expand upon them, in line with Policy 4 'Strategic Walking, wheeling and cycle Network' of the LTCP. The SATN routes will help to ensure connectivity between settlements in Bicester and surrounding villages, providing connections to key local facilities and services. By protecting the rural way of life and giving people greater options in how they move around will improve public health and create more social interactions.

For the villages, providing walking, wheeling and cycling routes will require different ideas to enable residents and visitors to travel between places and to ensure connectivity between them. One way of achieving this, is by enhancing and improving the existing Public Rights of Way (PRoW) which connect villages within the Plan area - of which there are over

900 paths (approximately 11km in length). National recognised recreational routes which extend through the MAP Plan are: - National Cycle Route 51 and the nationally recognised recreational routes which extend through the MAP Plan area (Oxfordshire Way, Palladian Way, Oxford Canal Walk, Roman Way, Seven Shires Way, Claude Duval Bridle Route and National Byway Network).

Furthermore Cherwell District Council has developed a series of Countryside walks and health routes across the district these include Cherwell Circular Walks and Village Trails, at present there is a single route in the MAP Plan area, in Fringford. There would be benefit expanding these countryside walks and health routes to more of the villages in the MAP Plan area.

Case Study: Quite Lane Suffolk

A Quiet Lane is a nationally recognised designation for single-track roads that have no line markings or footpaths and experience low levels of traffic. These lanes are shared by both motorised and non-motorised users, with the aim of encouraging considerate driving and making the road space enjoyable and safe for everyone. Official Quiet Lanes are clearly marked with advisory signage at each end, informing motorists that they are entering a shared space.

In Suffolk, there are two notable examples of Quiet Lanes: one in Snape and another in Glemsford. In Snape, five lanes were formally designated as Quiet Lanes on 16 March 2021. These routes were already popular with both residents and visitors for activities such as walking, horse riding, jogging, and cycling, as they provided a relatively safe environment for such uses.

The implementation of the Quiet Lanes in Suffolk was supported by Snape Parish Council and Glemsford Parish Council, with guidance and advice from Quiet Lanes Suffolk. The designation has helped to formalise and protect these valued local routes, ensuring they remain accessible and enjoyable for all who use them.

Whilst sustainable modes of transport are promoted and encouraged for the benefit of all, not everyone has the same access to them. Cycling, for example, requires equipment that some may find difficult to access due to constraints related to finances or space. Shared micromobility (short term rental of zero emission vehicles capable of speeds up to 15mph such as e-bikes, e-cargo bikes and e-scooters) which can provide this access, enabling more people to participate in changing their behaviour towards travel. Steps to improve access have already been undertaken by Active Oxfordshire who launched a Bike Library at Bicester

School with up to 45 young people regularly attending sessions to develop their bike skills[74] and further initiatives will be required across the Plan area.

A shared micromobility scheme in Bicester can complement other transport schemes introduced in the town, to support first and last mile trips. Although micromobility schemes typically operate in cities with bigger population sizes such as Oxford, some schemes in smaller cities have been operating successfully as demonstrated in Hereford (see case study). Bicester's compact size, flat topography, and anticipated growth make the town an ideal location for shared micromobility. A shared e-bike scheme should be considered to enhance connections between Heyford Park and Heyford Station. There is significant elevation change between the two places, and an e-bike would remove a significant barrier and reduce reliance on vehicle trips to the station.

Delivering a comprehensive inclusive walking, wheeling and cycling network will help towards achieving **Policies 1 - 8, 10, 11, 13 - 16, 18, 21 - 23, 38, 50 and 54** of the LTCP which will provide numerous health and economic benefits for Bicester and its surrounding villages [75].

We will deliver Objective **BSV2** through the following actions:

2.1 Ensure the delivery of walking, wheeling and cycling schemes contained within adopted documents (such as LCWIPs and SATN) to create seamless links to existing and new developments, ensuring safe routes along the central corridors, radial routes, peripheral routes and other linking corridors. This could also include looking outside of the highway boundary.

Travel & Connectivity | Economic Growth | Health & Wellbeing | Social & Community | Culture & Assets | Climate & Environment

2.2 To review the LCWIP for Bicester assessing the scope, to include links to the surrounding villages.

Travel & Connectivity | Economic Growth | Health & Wellbeing | Social & Community | Culture & Assets | Climate & Environment

2.3 To deliver a separate and standalone LCWIP for Heyford Park and its surrounding villages, ensuring it is reflective of the current needs and aspirations and explore other routes not noted within the LCWIP.

Travel & Connectivity | Economic Growth | Health & Wellbeing | Social & Community | Culture & Assets | Climate & Environment

2.4 To support the delivery of schemes in the capital programme:

a. BR1 - Middleton Stoney Road Active Travel Scheme.
b. BR8 - London Road Active Travel Scheme.
c. BR10 - A41 Corridor – Siemens to Vendee Road.

d. BR8 - A41 Corridor – Rodney House Roundabout to Ploughley Road to provide connectivity to Ambrosden.

Travel & Connectivity | Economic Growth | Health & Wellbeing | Social & Community | Culture & Assets | Climate & Environment

2.5 Seek funding through S106 developer funds, Active Travel England and other sources to progress schemes in the pipeline (not limited to) or where deemed required:

a. BR17 and BR18 - Kingsmere to Graven Hill link - two route options identified within the LCWIP.
b. BR8 - Walking, wheeling and cycling link between along Ploughley Road between Ambrosden and A41.
c. BR3 - The Causeway.
d. Aunt Em's Lane (Elmsbrook to Caversfield).
e. Banbury and Buckingham Road junction.
f. BR0 - Bicester peripheral routes.
g. BR5 - Bucknell Road.
h. BR10 - Central Corridor / Oxford Road / Buckingham Road.
i. BR12 - Launton Road.
j. BR13 - Churchill Road.
k. BR22 - Whitelands Way / Shakespeare Drive.
l. Heyford Park to Bicester.

Travel & Connectivity | Economic Growth | Health & Wellbeing | Social & Community | Culture & Assets | Climate & Environment

2.6 Create a strategy and action plan to deliver quality pedestrian corridors to integrate with other modes of transport.

Travel & Connectivity | Economic Growth | Health & Wellbeing | Social & Community | Culture & Assets | Climate & Environment

2.7 Explore opportunities to work with partners and stakeholders to create movement corridors which enable and prioritise extensive walking, wheeling, cycling and public transport.

Travel & Connectivity | Economic Growth | Health & Wellbeing | Social & Community | Culture & Assets | Climate & Environment

2.8 Explore opportunities to develop rural quiet lanes between villages in the MAP Plan area and toward Bicester to encourage walking, wheeling and cycling creating a pleasant environment for everyone to enjoy.

Travel & Connectivity | Health & Wellbeing | Social & Community | Climate & Environment

2.9 Develop blue and green infrastructure, aligning with the emerging Street Design Code, including investigating changes to the PRoW and Greenway network to enable use by a wider range of Non-Motorised Users for different journey purposes to support connectivity around villages of Bicester.

Travel & Connectivity | Economic Growth | Health & Wellbeing | Social & Community | Climate & Environment

2.10 Ensure all developments provide direct links to wider walking, wheeling and cycling schemes such as LCWIP, SATN, PRoW and Greenway routes to align with Oxfordshire County Council's standards (e.g. cycling and walking).

Travel & Connectivity Economic Growth Health & Wellbeing Social & Community Climate & Environment

2.11 Explore opportunities to connect villages within the MAP Plan area by (not limited to):

a. Upgrading PRoW routes. Including and updated alongside updates of the LCWIP:
   - BR0 - (Graven Hill to Wendlebury).
   - BR6 - (King's End to Heyford Park).
   - BR8 - (Elmsbrook to Baynard's Green).
   - BR12 - (Glory Farm to Stratton Audley).
   - BR15 - (Langford to Launton).
   - BR21 - (Kingsmere to Chesterton).

b. Upgrading canal tow path between Somerton, Upper Heyford and Heyford.

c. Connect villages of Mixbury and Finmere to the proposed Buckinghamshire Greenway.

d. Developing walking, wheeling and cycling links to Heyford Rail Station including community e-bike scheme.

Travel & Connectivity Economic Growth Health & Wellbeing Social & Community Climate & Environment

2.12 Ensure future junction improvements in Middleton Stoney create a safer environment for walking, wheeling and cycling, including potential Middleton Stoney bypass which will create the opportunity for further Place shaping measures.

Travel & Connectivity Health & Wellbeing Social & Community Climate & Environment

2.13 Prepare a strategy and action plan to deliver with partners a network of inclusive cycle parking, hubs, hangars including provision for non-standard cycles within Bicester town centre, village centres, along key bus routes/stops, rail stations, public transport interchanges, local centres and residential streets.

Travel & Connectivity Economic Growth Health & Wellbeing Social & Community Climate & Environment

2.14 Remove or redesign Access Control Barriers to enable equality of access and ensure walking, cycling and wheeling is accessible to everyone with no barriers in place for continuous movement.

Travel & Connectivity Economic Growth Health & Wellbeing Social & Community Climate & Environment

2.15 Work with partners to develop e-bike micro-mobility schemes in to support longer distance travel and to improve connections between the surrounding villages and Bicester.

Travel & Connectivity | Economic Growth | Health & Wellbeing | Social & Community | Climate & Environment | Culture & Assets

2.16 Depending upon national legislation, work with partners to develop an e-scooter based micro-mobility scheme to support internal travel within Bicester and Heyford Park.

Travel & Connectivity | Social & Community | Climate & Environment

2.17 Work with partners and the community to assess the long-term feasibility of an e-bike hub for Heyford Park, Heyford Station and explore other potential locations.

Travel & Connectivity | Economic Growth | Social & Community | Climate & Environment | Health & Wellbeing

2.18 Work with partners to deliver a suite of behaviour change initiatives which will support the delivery of new infrastructure and provide the skills and confidence to walk, wheel and cycle, including but not limited to:

a. Bikeability for schools, families and adults.
b. Work with partners to explore a community bike loan scheme.
c. Explore opportunities to work with local employers to deliver bike share schemes.
d. Work with partners to develop Active Travel Hubs / Bike Kitchens / Dr Bike (or something similar).

Travel & Connectivity | Economic Growth | Health & Wellbeing | Social & Community | Climate & Environment

2.19 Working with partners and stakeholders to support a monitoring process to measure active travel modal share across the wider Bicester and the surrounding villages and assess the effectiveness of policy interventions.

Travel & Connectivity | Economic Growth | Social & Community | Climate & Environment

Case study: Hereford shared bike scheme[76] add e-scooter trial in North Northamptonshire[77]

Shared micromobility schemes have been implemented successfully in some market towns in the UK. Hereford, a city in the West Midlands with a population of 60,000, has a shared bicycle scheme operating since 2019. The scheme, operated by Beryl, has since recorded 425,000 journeys covering more than one million km. According to the local council, this helped reduce congestion and improve the health of its residents. Industry calculations showed nearly 40 tonnes of carbon emissions had been saved due to the scheme.

Another example of a successful scheme is the e-scooter trials in North Northamptonshire launched in 2020. The e-scooters are available in various towns in the district such as Corby

with a population of 75 thousand, and in towns as small as Higham Ferrers with a population of only eight thousand. The council says that since launch, 1.9 million trips in total have been taken and 3.64 million km have been travelled, saving 998,000 car journeys and 365 tonnes of carbon emissions.

Beryl and Herefordshire Council celebrate the impact of e-bikes in first year | Beryl

Public transport

Objectives BSV3 to BSV6 focus on public transport and build on the six policies set out in the LTCP. Increased public transport use will help to reduce the number of private motor-vehicle trips, improve connectivity, and deliver air quality improvements.

Objectives BSV3 and BSV4 centre on improving bus services and infrastructure to enable wide bus usage to and from

- **Villages, Towns and Cities**
- **Leisure facilities**
- **School**
- **Work**
- **Healthcare**
- **Transport Hubs**

Based on census data, less than 10% of commuting trips are undertaken by public transport in Bicester.[78] Meanwhile, more than 60% are completed by driving a car.[79] Commuting data also shows that 35% of commuting trips start and end in Bicester, 17% end in Oxford, 3.5% end in Banbury, and 3% end in London[80]. These are locations where bus and train links are present, thus indicate excellent potential for encouraging more commuting trips by public transport.

From 2019 to 2023, overall satisfaction of bus passengers across Oxfordshire declined by 16 percentage points, the highest among the local authorities in the survey. This decline can discourage potential passengers from using the bus as their primary method of travel. Some

key elements of a bus service that must be improved are cost, service frequency, travel time, waiting facilities and convenience.

Additionally, Bicester, a relatively medium sized town, benefits from two train stations (Bicester North and Bicester Village) with services linking the town to major cities such as London and Birmingham. The introduction of new East West Rail services to Milton Keynes and in the future Bedford and Cambridge will provide more opportunities for Bicester and its surrounding Villages.

In terms of the villages, Heyford benefits from its own train station which has connections between Banbury and Didcot Parkway, enabling onward travel to either Birmingham and Manchester in the north and Bristol, Cardiff, Swindon, Reading and Cheltenham. Services from Heyford are typically the peak hours to Oxford and less frequent (i.e. one services every other hour). The route is currently served by a two-train coach diesel service, something Great Western Railways is looking to improve and recognised in the recent OxRAIL 2040: Plan for Rail. Nonetheless, this reinforces that train services do not operate the same frequency in rural areas compared to Bicester, therefore meaning people are going to be more reliant on their cars. To enable more sustainable journeys within the MAP Plan area, as highlighted in OxRail 2040: Plan for Rail, we are exploring the feasibility of a new rail station close to Ardley and proposed Heyford Park New Town on the Chiltern Mainline.

Public transport will be vital in ensuring multi-modal journeys. The integration of public transport with walking, wheeling, and cycling for first and last mile connectivity will deliver greater choice for communities and provide a more sustainable transport network.

Objective BSV3

Create a network of mobility hubs

Why this objective?

Levels of travel by sustainable modes are low in Bicester and its surrounding villages and as a result many choose to drive as it is more convenient than other modes of transport. Data from the 2011 census outlined that 8.0% of residents and 4.8% of those work in the MAP Plan area commute to work by public transport[81]. For walking and cycling the census data show 13.4% of residents walked to work, while 4.9% of residents cycled, for people that work in the MAP Plan area, 10.3% commute on foot and 4.1% use a bike[82]. The need to improve multi-modal

Objective BSV5 focuses on integration between different modes of transport to support trips of all lengths, for the following purposes:

- **Leisure**
- **Work**
- **Healthcare**
- **Shopping**
- **Holiday Travel**

travel and integrate different transport modes is key to addressing transport challenges faced in Bicester and surrounding villages. As set out in Policies 22 and 23 of the LTCP, developing mobility hubs that integrate multiple modes seamlessly will help encourage people to walk, cycle, and use public and shared transport more.

The delivery of this objective is guided by the council's Mobility Hub Strategy which was adopted in 2023. Distinct types of mobility hubs will be developed based on their specific locations and contexts. This objective supports **LTCP Policies 1 - 4, 8, 11, 12, 13, 14, 18 – 23, 29, 38, 39, 50, 51 and 54.**

We will deliver Objective **BSV3** through the following actions:

3.1 Explore the feasibility and opportunities to provide a network of mobility hubs within Bicester and the surrounding villages including, but not limited to:

a. Redesigning Bicester Park and Ride into a Mobility Hub.
b. Bicester North Railway Station.
c. Bicester Village Railway Station.
d. Pioneer Square.
e. Explore other new strategic locations on the radial routes around Bicester (including potential enhancement at Heyford Railway Station and delivery of Ardley station).
f. Work with EWR to develop mobility hubs at EWR stations.

Travel & Connectivity **Economic Growth**

3.2 Explore opportunities to improve mobility hubs by, but not limited to:

a. Improving waiting facilities.
b. Improving safety and security.
c. Providing digital connectivity.
d. Providing rest, and toilet facilities, etc.
e. Providing cycle parking (including e-bike charging facilities) and connections towards the existing and or new walking and cycling network.
f. Providing EV charging facilities, helping to support parcel/taxi operators.
g. Linking to long distance coach services.
h. Co-locating with complimentary land uses and services.
i. Linking to leisure and educational facilities.

Travel & Connectivity **Economic Growth** **Culture & Assets**

3.3 Support the implementation of rural, suburban, and mini mobility hubs, in line with the Mobility Hub Strategy.

Travel & Connectivity **Economic Growth** **Social & Community**

Objective BSV4

Interventions to enhance bus infrastructure

Why this objective?

The infrastructure which supports bus services is a critical element in the smooth running of bus services. To maximise the bus network in Bicester and surrounding villages, we will need to ensure roads and footpaths are well maintained and crossing points are safe and inclusive to ensure users experience a smooth and safe journey. We will need to think about how we integrate walking and cycling with bus services by improving first and last mile connections to create a seamless transition between modes and 'door to door' connectivity in Bicester and surrounding villages. Bus stops are the calling card for bus services and attention should be given to given to their visual presence. If bus stops are poorly maintained, missing information or of inadequate quality, and are poorly connecting to walking and cycling network, people will be more likely to use other modes of transport.

The quality and accessibility of bus stops vary across the area, with limited provision of real-time information (RTI), raised kerbs, shelters, seating and lighting. Some bus stops in the area only have a flag and pole with some also not having timetable information, while some have shelters, seating, lighting or raised kerbs. Very few across the MAP Plan area feature safe crossing points. Footpaths to bus stops also vary significantly in quality and accessibility, with broken pavements, lack of dropped kerbs, and poorly-maintained footpaths all generating barriers to access. In terms Real Time Information (RTI) only 6.3% of bus stops in Bicester have RTI, with the only villages within the MAP Plan area that benefit from on-street RTI being Heyford Park, Launton, Elmsbrook and Upper Arncott. The inconsistency and poor quality of bus stops will impact use of local buses. To create an inclusive network, bus stops would ideally be accessible for all users featuring a covered waiting area with seating, as well as having crossings points with dropped kerbs, tactile paving and connections for footways or footpaths. Where it may not be practical to roll out RTI creating live bus arrival information for all bus services via mobile phone apps would greatly benefit those in more rural locations and support journey planning.

Bus infrastructure also includes bus priority measures that can help to speed up bus services such as bus gates, bus lane and traffic signal priority. Across the MAP Plan area, the

provision of bus priority measures is limited with only two traffic signals with pre-detection located in the area (two in Bicester) and a single bus gate in Elmsbrook. To help speed up bus services and to make them more reliable we would look to implement bus prioritisation/ SMART infrastructure throughout the MAP Plan area.

Bus infrastructure also extends to the types of vehicles used to provide bus services. In Bicester and the surrounding villages only a single route, BV1, is operated by an Electric Vehicle (EV), although Stagecoach occasionally uses an EV on its S5 or H5 service. As such, provision of zero-emission buses for all routes in Bicester and the surrounding villages is a key priority, as it will help to improve air quality, passenger experience and speed of journeys through improved acceleration.

Enhancing bus infrastructure will support **LTCP Policies 1-3, 7, 8, 10 - 15, 18- 23, 35 – 37 and 54.**

We will deliver Objective **BSV4** through the following actions:

4.1 Working alongside public transport operators to develop a strategy and action plan for a bus route hierarchy and to implement bus prioritisation/SMART infrastructure along key movement corridors including as per Infrastructure Delivery Plan:

a. On the B4030 and at the Vendee Drive Roundabout
b. On the A41
c. On the B4100 between Baynard's Green roundabout and A4095 junction.
d. Bus only link, west of Howes Lane – linking to the A4095 re-alignment.

Travel & Connectivity **Economic Growth** **Social & Community** **Climate & Environment**

4.2 Develop a strategy and action plan with the local community and stakeholders in Bicester and the surrounding parishes to identify opportunities to improve bus infrastructure (e.g. waiting facilities, location for new bus stops, Real Time Information (RTI), live bus information for all services on smart phones, AI, raised kerbs, lighting, shelters, CCTV, onward travel maps and greening/solar.) including the following:

a. Town Centre interchange at Pioneer Square – including space constraints.
b. Bus routes into strategic employment and residential sites.
c. Along bus routes through North West Bicester and on Middleton Stoney Road and potentially beyond to Ardley and Heyford.
d. Work alongside developers to ensure they provide new bus stop infrastructure in new developments.
e. In the surrounding villages across the MAP plan area.

f. Mobility Hubs: Strategic locations offering co-located services (bus stops, bike hire, EV charging, real-time info) to improve accessibility and encourage modal shift.

Travel & Connectivity | Economic Growth | Health & Wellbeing | Social & Community | Climate & Environment

4.3 Work with stakeholders to investigate the opportunities to enhance bus stops, safety and public realm at Pioneer Square and assess future needs.

Travel & Connectivity | Social & Community | Culture & Assets | Climate & Environment

4.4 Explore opportunities to improve bus stops and public realm in villages across MAP Plan area and align with adopted neighbourhood plans for area, to reduce the barriers to access public transport ensuring there is high quality walking and cycling footpath provision.

Travel & Connectivity | Social & Community | Culture & Assets | Climate & Environment

4.5 Work with public transport operators to deliver a zero-emission bus fleet within Bicester and its surrounding villages.

Travel & Connectivity | Health & Wellbeing | Climate & Environment

Objective BSV5

Interventions to enhance bus services

Why this objective?

Bicester and the surrounding villages are served by a variety of bus operators, providing connections to Oxford, Brackley, Banbury, Kidlington, Heyford, Aylesbury, John Radcliffe Hospital, Buckingham and Milton Keynes. There are no high-frequency (minimum of four buses per hour) bus services operating in the MAP Plan area, the S5 is the most frequent bus service, three per hour. The remaining buses in the area having a range of frequencies including one half-hourly service, and six hourly services with the remaining services being less than once per hour. As a result, the villages are generally served by buses with a frequency of one bus per hour or less. Another issue is the lack of services, particularly in the villages, during the evening and over the weekend. For example, of the 14 regular bus services (minimum five per day) only four (X5, S4, S5, 500) operate in the evenings and on both days of the weekend. When looking specifically at evenings (after 1930) there are only six services (X5, 29 (not full route), S4, S5, H5, 500), while on a Sunday only five routes operate (X5, S4, S5, 25, 500). Providing a bus service linking Heyford Park to Oxford is important now and will become more so with the proposed growth.

Bicester Village Railway Station is accessible from Heyford Park via the No. 25 bus service, which will route via Bicester Park & Ride, reinforcing Bicester Village Railway Stations position as a key node in the integrated transport system.

The majority of the bus services accept the recently launched MyBus Oxfordshire ticket, the benefits of which could be amplified by expanding this ticket to all operators. However, why the majority of the local buses can be accessed through a single ticket, due to large number of different operators (Stagecoach, Red Rose, Oxford Bus Company, Langston & Tasker, ABILITY and OurBus Bartons) coordination between services is poor limiting the opportunity for users to change services.

According to the 2011 census, across the MAP Plan area 4.2% of residents and 3.0% of those work in the MAP Plan area commute to work by bus[83]. In Bicester 4.7% of residents commute to work by bus and 3.2% of those work in the town commute by bus. In the villages, this is lower, 1.5% of residents commute by bus although interestingly, 40% of residents mainly work from home compared to around 25% of residents in Bicester. This trend is to be expected as villages have more elderly population, over retirement age in the villages so fewer people need to commute to work.

Frequency and reliability are crucial[84] if we are to see an increase in patronage on services. Passenger satisfaction plays a big part in determining someone's preference for their main mode of travel. Therefore, it is important that we improve bus services to make sure people are satisfied. We will collaborate with operators to identify the potential for improvements by making them more frequent and more reliable. We will also work with the operators and developers through S106 funding to ensure new developments in the area will have access to buses through new services or improving existing routes, including improving services for the rural hinterland. Initially, it will be the responsibility of the developer to fund bus services to and from new developments to meet the travel needs of the local community. This objective supports **Policies 1, 2, 7, 11 - 14, 18, 21 – 23, 35, 37, 51 and 54** of the LTCP, the goals of BSIP, and the aims of the forthcoming countywide Bus Strategy.

We will deliver Objective **BSV4** through the following actions:

5.1 Develop a strategy and action plan with stakeholders and partners to identify opportunities to deliver and fund long distance coach services which link to regional and national locations.
Travel & Connectivity Economic Growth

5.2 Ensure developers provide S106 funding to enhance existing services and provide new services to enable sustainable development and reduce car dependency. Routes would include but not limited to:

a. NW Bicester bus service connecting to the town centre.
b. Investigate the potential of providing a new bus service to strategic employment sites (developments to fund additional services).

c. Work with developers (to fund additional services) to ensure bus services connect to key residential and leisure facilities, such as but not limited to, key places Bicester, Banbury, Deddington, Oxford and Heyford Station.
d. Explore an orbital bus route to serve the villages of Bicester.
e. Other villages across the MAP Plan area (e.g. improve community transport options).

Travel & Connectivity | Health & Wellbeing | Social & Community | Climate & Environment

5.3 Work with partners to enhance bus services to meet demands, with consideration given to increasing frequencies (including "turn up and go" services) and express, or limited stop services and the optimisation of existing services.

Travel & Connectivity | Economic Growth

5.4 Work with bus operators and employers to ensure improved reliability, attractiveness and resilience of services.

Travel & Connectivity | Economic Growth | Culture & Assets

5.5 Work with partners to develop a digital strategy to support the bus network within Bicester and surrounding areas.

Travel & Connectivity | Economic Growth

5.6 Work with partners to develop a behavioural strategy to raise awareness about the existing bus network and enhancements.

Travel & Connectivity | Social & Community

Objective BSV6

Work alongside partners to improve rail services and infrastructure

Objective BSV6 focuses on rail connectivity and facilities to improve access for those travelling to and from:

- **Holiday and Travel**
- **Villages, Town and Cities**
- **Work**
- **Transport Hubs**
- **Healthcare facilities**
- **Shopping**

And to Support

- **Improved Air Quality**
- **Increased Rail Freight**
- **Decarbonisation**

Why this objective?

The rail network in the MAP Plan area consists of three rail stations Bicester Village, Bicester North and Heyford. In addition, there are aspirations to open a fourth rail station in the area at Ardley. Bicester Village will also be location on EWR, which by the mid-2030's is expected to provide up to six trains per hour along the EWR route with services in the west towards Milton Keynes, Bedford and Cambridge. As part OxRail 2040: A Plan for Rail there are also aspirations to extend the EWR services from Oxford along the Cowley Branch Line for connections to Oxfords Eastern Arc, Didcot for the Science Vale and potentially on to Swindon, Bristol or Reading. The following rail-based improvements will collectively reduce pressure on the local and strategic road network, offering high-capacity alternatives for regional trips and improving overall transport sustainability for the wider area.

Bicester Village and Bicester North Railway Stations, provide fast and easy connections to key destinations such as Oxford, Birmingham, Wycombe and London. Both stations feature cycle parking stands (Bicester North 65 spaces, Bicester Village 50 spaces) as well as large car parks (Bicester North 530 spaces, Bicester Village 223 spaces) to support access for those in the surrounding villages. Bicester Village and Bicester North are highly important from a tourism perspective helping open the doors for visitors from far and wide to access easily Bicester's attractions, such as Bicester Village and in the future Great Wolf and the emerging scheme for a Puy du Fou resort, subject to this receiving planning permission. Once East West Rail comes into operation it will provide opportunities for residents to travel to the Universal Resort proposed near Bedford. According to the latest figures from Office for Rail and Road (ORR), Bicester Village and Bicester North Stations are the fourth and sixth busiest stations in Oxfordshire, seeing 1.93 million and 882,816 entries and exits[85], respectively. Bicester North and Bicester Village are two of the best performing stations for on-time services as well as the number of cancellations in Oxfordshire (top 7)[86]. The top five destinations from Bicester Village are London Marylebone, Oxford, London Paddington, Oxford Parkway and Reading, while three destinations have direct services, those in

travelling to Paddington and Reading have to change trains at Oxford[87]. While the top 5 from Bicester North are London Marylebone, Banbury, Birmingham Moor Street, Haddenham and Thame Parkway and Leamington Spa, all these destinations are direct[88].

Heyford is the 16th busiest station in Oxfordshire with 45,552 entries and exits in 2024-2025. The station offers fewer services than Bicester's two stations, with just one train running every two hours between Banbury and Oxford. Additionally, it lacks facilities like a café, toilets, lifts, and other amenities. This therefore presents another challenge – something which has been addressed in the recent OxRail 2040: A Plan for Rail. This includes the aspirations for two trains per hour at Heyford as well as the improvement of the station and its facilities. The top five destinations from Heyford are Oxford, Banbury, London Paddington, Reading and London Marylebone[89]. Heyford Station sits within the Rousham conservation area and is bordered by the Oxford Canal and the Cherwell floodplain; all of these constrain potential growth at this location.

Also, if approval is granted for major developments such as Puy du Fou and Heyford Park New Town, there is a proposal to re-open the Ardley Railway station. This will offer direct services to Banbury, Birmingham Moor Street, High Wycombe and London Marylebone. There are existing bridleways and footpaths that could link to the proposed new station. If found feasible, it will need high quality active links and public transport links to ensure the site is sustainable and reduce the need to travel by car, aligning with the council's LTCP targets. Where required, OCC will be able to work up appropriate business cases for any additional funding to deliver extra value and services for the proposed developments.

Train journeys are much more sustainable, emitting 10 times less carbon than cars[90]. To encourage people to use the train for longer distance journeys and to shift away from cars, we need to improve rail services infrastructure and explore opportunities for new stations in areas with high level growth to create an integrated transport network. We will do this by making services more dependable and frequent, and infrastructure more comfortable and accessible. Some of the rail improvements in the Bicester area have already been delivered. This includes the first phase of the East West Rail project, improving connections between Bicester and Oxford. Further phases of this project will link Bicester to destinations such as Milton Keynes, Bedford and Cambridge. In addition, enhancements to the existing rail rolling stock are being undertaken in 2026 with Chiltern Railways, replacing its MK3 coaches with new MK5 coaches.

Bicester Village Railway Station is accessible from Heyford Park via the No. 25 bus service, which will route via Bicester Park & Ride, reinforcing Bicester Village's position as a key node in the integrated transport system. Bicester Village Railway Station also benefits from sheltered bicycle parking for 50 bicycles with CCTV monitoring, allowing access to the

station for cyclists through the local road network. It is noted there are wider / committed proposals to provide a direct cycle link from Heyford Park to Bicester town centre.

The proposed OxSRFI is located between the B430 and the former Upper Heyford Airfield. It is immediately south of the Chiltern Main Line. As part of the proposed development, new infrastructure proposals are included which will need to be considered through the planning process for Nationally Significant Infrastructure Projects (NSIP).

By delivering this objective, we will enable better rail connectivity in Bicester and surrounding area which will provide better opportunities for the town and its residents. This objective supports **Policies 1 – 3, 9, 11 – 14, 15, 18 – 23, 29, 37, 38, 51 and 54** of the LTCP and will support the aspirations of OxRail 2040: A Plan for Rail.

We will deliver Objective **BSV6** through the following actions:

6.1 Support and promote additional services to improve the passenger experience at Bicester North and Bicester Village Rail Stations.

Travel & Connectivity | Economic Growth | Climate & Environment

6.2 **Bicester Village Railway Station**

a. Support the upgrade of the station to accommodate an increase in patronage by enhancing the waiting facilities, interaction of bus and train services, alongside information and improve and enhance cycling and e-mobility.
b. Support the delivery of East West Rail services unlocking the benefits of regional connectivity between Oxford and Cambridge.
c. Work with partners to deliver 5G connectivity along the East West Rail route.
d. Promote and support the delivery of the electrification of the East West Rail route.

Travel & Connectivity | Economic Growth | Climate & Environment

6.3 Work with EWR Company to ensure they deliver an underpass to the London Road Crossing making appropriate provision for walking, wheeling, cycling, public transport and motor vehicle solutions, and to consider appropriate opportunities to maximise sustainable and active door-to-door connectivity.

Travel & Connectivity | Economic Growth | Health & Wellbeing | Social & Community | Climate & Environment

6.4 **Bicester North Railway Station**

a. Explore feasibility of additional pedestrian access.
b. Assess existing and future parking capacity.
c. Develop feasibility to enhance cycling access.

Travel & Connectivity | Economic Growth | Health & Wellbeing | Social & Community | Climate & Environment

6.5 Heyford Railway Station

a. Work with stakeholders to explore better connectivity between Heyford Station and the residential areas. Subject to the New Towns Taskforce decision and other planning applications, further collaboration will be required to ensure seamless door to door connectivity between Heyford Station (other stations) and Heyford Park.

b. Work with partners to monitor the impact of future e-bike trials in Heyford Park.

c. Explore feasibility of enhanced rail connectivity to support employment, education and leisure.

Travel & Connectivity | Economic Growth | Health & Wellbeing | Social & Community | Climate & Environment

6.6 Ensure delivery of high-quality public transport and walking, wheeling and cycling links to Bicester North and Bicester Village and Heyford rail stations.

Travel & Connectivity | Health & Wellbeing | Climate & Environment

6.7 Work with partners and stakeholders to support the ability to provide charging infrastructure for zero-emission battery trains aligning to OxRAIL 2040: Plan for Rail.

Travel & Connectivity | Climate & Environment

6.8 Enhance station facilities across the Bicester MAP Plan area to meet future population growth, and to improve accessibility and where applicable, consider opportunities for new stations (e.g. Ardley), aligning to OxRAIL 2040: Plan for Rail.

Travel & Connectivity | Economic Growth | Social & Community | Climate & Environment

6.9 Ardley Railway Station

a. Collaborate with partners to deliver and develop a Strategic Outline Business Case for the re-opening of Ardley station.

b. Subject to the successful Strategic Outline Business Case, work with partners and the community to Ardley rail station, improving and enhancing connectivity for the area.

Travel & Connectivity | Economic Growth | Climate & Environment

6.10 Work with partners to explore the delivery of the proposed OxSFRI on the Chiltern mainline.

Travel & Connectivity | Economic Growth

Car clubs and car sharing

Car clubs and car sharing are covered by the term shared mobility. Shared mobility such as car clubs and car sharing help to reduce car ownership and use, improve air quality, and encourage a shift towards the use of active travel or public transport, as evidenced by **Policy 39** of the LTCP. It notes that car clubs offer residents an attractive, convenient alternative to private car ownership; encouraging a greater usage of public transport, walking and cycling, whilst giving access to a car when needed. This therefore improves local air quality and makes local areas more relaxing. Other benefits include reduction in inequalities – as it provided opportunities for people who don't have access and/or afford a car - or breaks downs barriers for people who are unable to walk or cycle.

Objective BSV7 focuses on providing an alternative to car ownership to support a variety of trips, including:

- **Holiday and Travel**
- **Villages, Towns and Cities**
- **Shopping**
- **Leisure Facilities**
- **Day Trips**
- **Large purchases**

Objective BSV7

Support the development of a car club network and car share schemes

Why this objective?

There are currently no car clubs operating in Bicester or its surrounding villages. There is an opportunity to develop car clubs and establish a comprehensive network of zero-emission car club vehicles located at employment sites, transport interchanges, leisure facilities and within residential areas. Most households in Bicester have access to a car, with 85% of households owning at least one car[91]. This is much higher than the national average of 77%, although it is lower than in the Science Vale and in the West Oxfordshire Lowlands area (Witney and Carterton). Car clubs can play a key role in driving this modal shift away from private cars. According to CoMoUK, each car club in the UK replaces between 14 and 32 private cars[92]. It also reduces the need for people to require two or more cars[93].

Car clubs also encourage a more thoughtful approach to mobility, as it is seen members of car clubs are likely to walk and cycle more than they did prior to obtaining membership. For example, 42% car club members travel by bicycle at least once a week compared to the average in England of 14%[94]. Moreover, one of the added benefits of car clubs is the ability to lead to considerable financial savings compared to traditional car ownership. On average, EV use through car clubs annually saves £5,573 compared to owning a new EV[95].

Car share involves people sharing trips with at least one other person rather than travelling separately. Schemes within Bicester are promoted via Cherwell District Council and development webpages such as Kingsmere Bicester. With participants encouraged to join the Liftshare website. Car sharing, even once per week, can reduce trips by in the region of 20%[96], resulting in reduced congestion, whilst also saving those who car share, either as a driver or passenger[97]. The Eco Business Centre in Bicester, Elmsbrook, is an example whereby they encourage those who are travelling there to do so by this method. Although there are no published examples for the villages, echoing the disparity in terms travel options between a town and village landscape. In addition, car sharing can reduce the costs of travelling, cut congestion, pollution and help alleviate parking issues; it also provides social benefits by improving networking opportunities and allowing users to make new friends[98]. This objective will support **LTCP Policies 13, 14, 22, 23, 29, 38 and 39.**

We will deliver Objective **BSV7** through the following actions:

7.1 Identify with partners a comprehensive network of car clubs, including the prioritisation of parking for car clubs at existing and new developments across Bicester and surrounding villages.
Travel & Connectivity | Climate & Environment | Social & Community

7.2 Aim for car clubs to be zero emission only.
Travel & Connectivity | Climate & Environment | Health & Wellbeing

7.3 Work with developers and businesses to provide EV charging (e.g. e-bikes, cars and motorbikes) and parking to support car clubs and car share, including the delivery of a guidance document for delivery.
Travel & Connectivity | Climate & Environment | Health & Wellbeing | Social & Community

7.4 Collaborate with partners and businesses to develop a car share awareness/ expansion programme.
Travel & Connectivity | Economic Growth | Health & Wellbeing | Social & Community | Climate & Environment

Demand management

As set out in LTCP **Policy 34**, there are situations where it will be necessary to discourage private car use through demand management measures to improve air quality, enable an increased use in sustainable transport and reduce congestion. Although it is important to set out that any proposals for demand management will only be proposed in locations with good levels of sustainable travel access.

The focus of Objective BSV8 is to enable our communities to have transport choice by improving safety, access and inclusivity for those:

- **Walking**
- **Wheeling**
- **Cycling**
- **Using Micro-mobility**
- **Buses**
- **Rail**

Objective BSV8

Implement demand management

Why this objective?

High car ownership and through traffic in Bicester and the surrounding villages are creating congestion which impacts air quality[99], public health, access to active travel and the reliability of public transport. The future housing and employment growth will put further pressure on the existing transport network and sustainable mitigations will be required. This is particularly the case for many of the rural roads within MAP Plan area which are typically engineered for light traffic only, often single track and unsuitable for the increases in traffic volume experienced over recent years. This can be exacerbated in the event of disruption to the strategic road network. Measures to differentiate through and rural traffic, involving elements of demand management, form a part of this.

To address the cumulative impacts, as set out in LTCP **Policy 34** it may be necessary to implement measures which discourage private car use. Such measures would only be implemented where attractive sustainable alternatives exist which provide choice for those who reside, work in and visit Bicester. This objective will support **LTCP Policies 1 - 3, 8, 10, 11, 13 - 16, 18, 19 - 23, 28, 34 and 35.**

Demand management, which includes reducing public and private car parking using Parking Standards for New Developments[100], Workplace Parking Levy[101] and on and off-street parking reductions. Implementing Controlled Parking Zones[102] (CPZs), other on-street parking or movement restrictions (double yellow lines, loading bans, clearways, banned turns, red routes), low emission zones, use of modal filters, or charging schemes will be considered to help mitigate or support the following issues:

- **Pollution/Air Quality** – Bicester contains an AQMA which has been in place since 2014[103]. High levels of NOx, CO2, and Particulate Matter $(PM)_{2.5}$ create significant health risks for the most vulnerable in society[104].
- **Vision Zero -** There have been 68 KSIs in the Bicester MAP Plan area over the last five years, equating to 1.13 KSIs per month. The LTCP aims to get the number of KSIs as close to zero as possible.
- **Active Travel** – Busy, congested roads are a barrier to active travel. Demand management schemes which create space for other transport modes and reduce congestion will increase uptake and deliver health benefits.
- **Travel distances** – Within the MAP Plan area 28% (33% in Bicester Town) of people commute distances less than 2km, with 44% commuting less than 5km and 56% commuting less than 10km. These trip lengths are suitable to be undertaken by either active travel or public transport with the right infrastructure and services.
- **Car dominance** – Bicester and in particular the surrounding villages have high car ownership compared to national figures, and the central corridor is heavily trafficked which creates a barrier for active travel, creates severance and perpetuates car journeys due to poor alternatives.
- **HGV Use** – Some roads in the rural villages are too narrow for HGV's to safely use. The presence of HGV's presents a safety hazard and an even greater barrier to walking, wheeling and cycling and HGV's are recommended to follow OCC HGV routes.
- **Parking** – Bicester is well served by car parking including free parking within the town centre. This convenience compared to other modes makes car use extremely attractive within Bicester. The existing over supply of car parking was illustrated in Bicester Sustainable Transport Strategy[105] with car parks on average 50% full.
- **Capacity** – Future employment and housing growth will impact the capacity of the road network. Attractive alternatives which prioritise sustainable transport modes will be required. An assessment of alternative routes in the event of disruption on the Strategic Road Network will also be required to access and minimise the impact in rural areas.

We will deliver Objective **BSV8** through the following actions:

8.1 Identify the demand management tools and appropriate locations where these may be required in short to medium term, agree further measures to complement the delivery of the Southeast Peripheral Road to mitigate the risk of induced traffic and enable an increase in walking, wheeling and cycling for local journeys within Bicester.

Travel & Connectivity | Economic Growth | Health & Wellbeing | Social & Community | Climate & Environment | Culture & Assets

8.2 In support of our Vision Zero Strategy, using a Safe System approach, we will reduce vehicle speeds within Bicester and its surrounding villages to prioritise the safe movement of people.

Travel & Connectivity | Economic Growth | Health & Wellbeing | Social & Community | Culture & Assets | Climate & Environment

8.3 Work with partners to investigate opportunities to consolidate public parking within town centre and village locations and other public areas, to reduce the need to travel by car as per the LTCP, to prioritise sustainable travel.

Travel & Connectivity | Health & Wellbeing | Climate & Environment

8.4 Ensure future employment sites adhere to OCC Parking Standards for New Developments[106] and implement Travel Plans with sustainable travel measures, encourage a modal shift away from private car usage towards public and active travel.

Travel & Connectivity | Health & Wellbeing | Climate & Environment

8.5 Explore the viability of a Clean Air Zone and Zero Emission Zone identified in the CDC Air Quality Action Plan 2024.

Travel & Connectivity | Health & Wellbeing | Climate & Environment

8.6 Explore opportunities to deliver a Workplace Parking Levy and Controlled Parking Zones.

Travel & Connectivity | Health & Wellbeing | Climate & Environment

8.7 Where applicable and in accordance with OCC parking standards ensure provision for motorcycle parking and bikes / e-bikes is delivered which caters for non-standard bikes and land is safeguarded to allow for future growth in usage.

Travel & Connectivity | Climate & Environment

Infrastructure development

As set out in **Policy 36** of the LTCP, the general approach is that new road capacity should only be provided where other options have been explored first. This includes providing new or improved walking, wheeling, cycling, public transport facilities, to improve safety or to improve highway capacity for private vehicles where it provides wider community benefits such as improving air quality. This MAP Plan will seek to apply these principles in the development of new schemes.

To ensure that any infrastructure schemes align with our transport vision, we take a 'decide and provide' approach rather than the traditional

Objectives BSV9 to BSV10 focuses on those travelling within MAP Plan area, to provide transport choice, improve journey time for all users, reduce congestion, to benefit those making trips to and from:

- **School**
- **Shops**
- **Community Facilities**
- **Work**
- **Healthcare Facilities**
- **Villages, Towns and Cities**
- **Leisure Facilities**
- **Holidays and Travel**

'predict and provide' approach, when assessing impacts and the need for such schemes. All schemes will need to deliver at least 20% biodiversity net gain and include a Climate Impact Assessment to assess the impact and mitigations of proposed schemes.

In certain circumstances there are benefits to new or upgraded infrastructure, and these include removing severance and physical barriers, tackling congestion and pollution which provide benefits to health, encouraging suitable routeing of motorised vehicles, supporting the economy, improving the connectivity between villages and ensuring the county remains an attractive place to work and live. The delivery of new or upgraded infrastructure is key, as many of our infrastructure schemes incorporate new walking, wheeling, cycling and public transport infrastructure. The following two objectives will support Policies 1 – 4, 8, 9, 11, 14, 15, 18 – 23, 28, 31, 35, 36, 47 – 51 and 53 of the LTCP, the objectives of the Air Quality Strategy and as previously outlined, support the implementation of the Planned Infrastructure delivery section.

Objective BSV9

Deliver existing movement infrastructure schemes

9.1 W**e will deliver** Objective BSV9 **through the following actions:**
Progress the current ongoing schemes in the pipeline:

a. A4095 realignment (strategic link road).
b. Eastern Peripheral Movement Corridor (Charbridge Lane / Skimmingdish Lane).
c. South East Peripheral Road (SEPR).
d. Work with National Highways to secure improvements to Junction 10 of the M40, including Baynard's Green and the B4100 (north and south of the junction).

Travel & Connectivity **Health & Wellbeing** **Climate & Environment** **Economic Growth** **Culture & Assets**

Objective BSV10

Deliver future movement infrastructure schemes

Why these objectives?

Whilst our priority is on reducing car usage and enabling sustainable travel, we recognise that in some cases, new highway infrastructure and/or improvements such as re-purposing the highway may be necessary to ensure a reliable, efficient transport network and to deliver schemes which support walking, wheeling, cycling and public transport. To

transform the central area of Bicester, and make it a more attractive place for walking, wheeling and cycling, we intend to divert traffic to peripheral routes around Bicester through delivering the South East Peripheral Road (SEPR) and enhancing Vendee Drive and the A41 corridor. Should further major development occur in the area between M40 Junction 10 and Heyford Park and the potential OxSRFI, mitigation measures will need to be explored to divert traffic away from villages, including a proposed bypass of Ardley and Middleton Stoney Relief Road.

The SEPR would allow traffic to bypass the central section of the A41, notably the Oxford Road/Boundary Way signalised roundabout adjacent to Bicester Village. It is currently envisaged that the road would be provided as single carriageway.

Vendee Drive / A41 highway improvements, high level design review is being carried out of four potential junction upgrade options to understand their operational performance, capacity implications, and opportunities for improved pedestrian provision. This will be used in negotiations with developers to secure its funding to implement the scheme.

A41 Corridor Study: A study was produced to identify and assess a range of potential schemes and interventions, to address existing issues along the A41 corridor and to determine two preferred packages of measures.

By delivering these objectives, we will be able to improve road safety and air quality in the area. As in the LTCP, we will adopt a Vision Zero approach, making sure that any infrastructure development or improvements will incorporate design aiming for zero road fatalities and serious injuries. Redirecting vehicular traffic away from areas with high activity will also extend the distance from pollution sources, improving air quality for people to breathe safely.

We will deliver **Objective BSV10** through the following actions:

10.1 Work with partners and the local community to explore the following schemes (but not limited to):

a. Place shaping improvements to the central corridor, Kings End to Queen Avenue and extending along Banbury Road and Buckingham Road (phased with delivery of other measures in the MAP Plan).

b. SEPR complementary place shaping measures along relieved sections of the current A41 (e.g. bus lanes and cycling improvements).

c. Work with National Highways to consider future improvements at Junction 9 of the M40.

d. Develop junction capacity and safety improvements on priority highway routes with high quality walking, wheeling and cycling access and bus priority measures where space permits (but not limited to):
    - A41 / Vendee Drive
    - A4095 / B4030 (Howes Lane / Middleton Stoney Road)
    - A4095 / A4421 (Southwold Lane / Buckingham Road)
    - A41 / A4421 (Rodney House Roundabout / Seelscheid Way)

e. Develop junction safety improvements for all users along radial routes into Bicester, for example, but not limited to:
    - Caversfield junction improvements (Junction of Aunt Ems Lane and B4100)
    - Blackthorn Rd (junctions)
    - Charlotte Avenue, explore signalisations to improve safety

f. Explore junction safety improvements for all users along routes in the villages within the MAP Plan area. For example, but not limited to:
    - Ardley Roundabout
    - Middleton Stoney Crossroads
    - B4030/ Port Way
    - B4030 Lower Heyford Road/ Unnamed Road
    - A4260/ Somerton Road
    - Hopcrofts Holt
    - A4260/ B4027
    - Ardley Road/ Station Road
    - Other village locations to be considered as appropriate

g. Discourage use of unsuitable rural routes by through traffic, by working with communities to develop place shaping measures through villages in the MAP Plan area that slow traffic and provide a more inviting environment for local people.

h. Work with developers and local communities, if large-scale speculative sites are given planning permission, to seek agreement for mitigation measures for movements to safeguard the fabric of the local community.

Travel & Connectivity **Economic Growth** **Health & Wellbeing** **Social & Community** **Culture & Assets** **Climate & Environment**

Freight, deliveries, and servicing

Delivery of goods is important to support the residents and the wider community of Bicester and the surrounding villages. It is essential in supporting the town's economy by delivering supplies to industries, and more locally, bringing food and other products to shops and

homes. The freight system is a complex process, and in Oxfordshire's Freight and Logistics Strategy, it recognises three distinct movements reflecting this complexity: long distance, local, and last-mile movements.[107]

Objective BSV11 focuses on improving and reducing freight, deliveries and servicing, the benefits of this are

- **Improved Air Quality**
- **Decarbonisation**
- **Reduced HGV movements**
- **Improvements Road Safety**
- **More Local Access**

In 2023 an HGV report was published by transport consultants on behalf of OCC, the purpose of the report was to support future decision making relating to Heavy Goods Vehicle movements across Oxfordshire[108]. The report highlights that Bicester (as an area) ranked highest amongst the towns and villages tested for safety concerns and network performance issues. Finding solutions to the concerns raised will be required, this objective and associated actions will be part of this process.

Objective BSV11

Work with freight and delivery operators to improve movement efficiency and provide zero emission deliveries

Why this objective?

Using a Healthy Streets approach, people will be at the heart of transport and place making schemes in Bicester and surrounding villages. It is imperative that people within MAP Plan area feel safe, a core component of Healthy Streets and OCC Vision Zero Strategy. The growth in online shopping means residential streets see a greater number in Light Goods Vehicles (LGVs) than ever before. The number of LGVs on UK roads increased by over a third in the past decade, with more than 1.1 million vans recorded.

The movement of freight is a complex process and to support Vision Zero, innovative solutions will be required to remove conflicts between goods vehicles and people walking, cycling and riding motorcycles and action will be required to ensure safe freight vehicles are used within Oxfordshire. There are a number of locations in the MAP Plan area being used by significant numbers of Heavy Good Vehicles (HGVs) (greater than 5% of total traffic) and LGVs (greater than 15% of total traffic)[109]. For HGVs this includes the M40, A41 (both

south and east of Bicester), A43, A4421 (both in Caversfield and south of Finmere), Charbridge Lane in Bicester, B4030 in Ardley. Meanwhile for LGVs this includes the M40, A41 (both south and east of Bicester), A43, A4421 south of Finmere, Charbridge Lane, the A4095 (in Kirtlington and Chesterton) and the A4260 near Duns Tew. It is also noted that the B4030 through Ardley and Middelton Stoney is used as a diversionary route during closures of the M40 between Junctions 9 and 10.

HGVs and LGVs contribute significantly to congestion, carbon and nitrogen oxide emissions. The impact can be reduced through zero-emission vehicles and ensuring that HGV vehicles are travelling on dedicated routes, as per OCCs Freight Map.

HGVs and LGVs can make vulnerable road users feel less safe, posing a greater risk to pedestrians, cyclists, and other vulnerable road users due to their size, weight, and manoeuvrability – which could be a particular concern in rural communities where there is limited dedicated footpath or cycle provision and action is needed where there is greatest risk due to the interactions between people, vulnerable road users and freight. This can be a barrier to walking, wheeling and cycling, particularly in rural areas with less developed infrastructure. As development comes forward, consideration will need to be given towards place shaping interventions and / or other measures to mitigate the traffic impact on communities within the MAP Plan area, including weight restrictions enforced by ANPR equipment.

Furthermore, we can look to reduce the number of LGV and HGV journeys by exploring micro consolidating hubs and utilising the potential of collection hubs which can be reached on foot, saving unnecessary delivery journeys through consolidation, which can provide societal, environmental and economic benefits[110] and supporting other transition (e.g. towards rail). E-cargo bikes are a great alternative for last-mile deliveries and will require the infrastructure to support their potential. This will remove carbon emissions associated with deliveries, and as reported from pilot schemes in other parts of the UK, can provide other benefits such as reduced journey times and improved health and wellbeing.[111]

In terms of potential increases in HGV movements towards the area this is likely to be driven by the proposed and speculative development sites. For example, with EWR to ensure the environmental impact of HGV traffic to and from OxSRFI is minimised it is intended to implement a routeing strategy for HGVs and OCC will work with them to ensure the Transport Assessment is upheld. This approach will be needed with other development locations thus the need to deliver area wide HGV study, aiming to deliver an action plan of potential mitigation measures to preserve the character of the area.

This objective will support the county's Freight and Logistics Strategy for the local and last mile movements, specifically those occurring in Bicester. The delivery of this objective will ultimately support **Policies 1 – 3, 8, 10, 13, 15, 29, 47 - 50** of the LTCP.

We will deliver Objective **BSV11** through the following actions:

11.1 Actively seek opportunities to identify further HGV restrictions in areas with high walking, wheeling and cycling movements, areas with limited footpath provision and consider enforcement across the Bicester and surrounding villages to protect villages' fabric, learning lessons from previous and/or emerging HGV studies (e.g. Henley-on-Thames and Windrush Valley) to develop bespoke mitigation schemes for this area.

Travel & Connectivity | Health & Wellbeing | Climate & Environment

11.2 Work with partners to understand HGV concerns and find solutions for the area (e.g. as recommended in the 2023 Atkins freight study[112] or utilising dedicated freight studies conducted by the council), conducting an audit of lay-by provision and to ensure HGVs are travelling on designated roads as per OCCs Freight Map. Also, consideration will be given of signage, physical measures, environmental weight restrictions and monitoring using ANPR cameras or other technology.

Travel & Connectivity | Economic Growth | Health & Wellbeing | Climate & Environment

11.3 In support of OCC Vision Zero Strategy, we will actively seek to implement and use Direct Vision Standard for HGVs across the Plan area.

Travel & Connectivity | Economic Growth | Health & Wellbeing | Climate & Environment

11.4 Working with local community groups, stakeholder etc., conduct an area wide restriction study for this MAP Plan area, exploring the proposed and speculative development.

Travel & Connectivity | Economic Growth | Health & Wellbeing | Climate & Environment

11.5 Collaborate with partners to develop feasibility of first and last mile delivery hubs using cargo bikes and e-cargo bikes at employment sites.

Travel & Connectivity | Economic Growth | Health & Wellbeing | Climate & Environment

11.6 Support the rollout of parcel / grocery lockers at key transport locations such as Bicester Village and Bicester North Rail Station's, Bicester Bus Interchange (Pioneer Square), Heyford Park, Bicester Park and Ride, Mobility Hubs, and local/ district centres to support integrated travel.

Travel & Connectivity | Health & Wellbeing | Social & Community | Climate & Environment

11.7 Explore opportunities which support the transition of freight from road to rail.

Travel & Connectivity | Economic Growth | Climate & Environment | Health & Wellbeing

11.8 Identify EV charging locations for freight to support the transition towards low carbon freight travel.

Travel & Connectivity | Economic Growth | Climate & Environment

11.9 Working with partners to explore the potential impact of the proposed OxSRFI to minimise and mitigate the impact of HGVs needed for construction and ensure an HGV routing strategy is agreed before work commences.
Travel & Connectivity | Economic Growth | Climate & Environment

Climate resilience

The growing frequency and severity of extreme weather events including flooding, storms, droughts, wildfires and air pollution pose risks to Bicester and the surrounding villages. Creating communities which are resilient to climate change is one of the six key themes in LTCP.

We intend to deliver transport and place-shaping schemes to withstand the increases in severe weather events. We will develop blue green infrastructure and build on Cherwell's Green and Blue Strategy[113], Green Infrastructure Framework[114] and Oxfordshire's Local Nature Recovery Strategy[115]. This will ultimately support the LTCP vision of a transport network that contributes to a climate positive future by 2050. Delivering urban green spaces will deliver biodiversity and air quality benefits, assist with revoking the existing AQMA[116] in Bicester along with providing active and healthy places for residents.

Objective BSV12

Deliver infrastructure and placemaking schemes which are resilient to changing climate

Why this objective?

As already demonstrated, the transport sector is responsible for a large percentage of carbon emissions in the area, directly contributing to climate change. It is therefore essential that the schemes we are going to deliver consider the wider effects to the environment and are resilient to the changing climate. We also need to ensure that these schemes enhance the environment and make nature more accessible to residents.

Objective BSV12 focuses on climate resilience to the benefit of:

- **Biodiversity**
- **Air Quality**
- **The Local Economy**
- **Reduced Damage**
- **Flooding**
- **Infrastructure**

National Planning Policy Framework identifies provision of safe and accessible green infrastructure as a way to enable and support healthy lives.[117] Green infrastructure is defined as a "network of multi-functional green and blue

spaces and other natural features, urban and rural, which is capable of delivering a wide range of environmental, economic, health and wellbeing benefits for nature, climate, local and wider communities and prosperity." Examples of green infrastructure include links to the rights of way network, sustainable drainage systems, tree planting in public spaces, green roofs, rain gardens and green walls. Developing green infrastructure adjacent to more traditional infrastructure has the potential to deliver biodiversity benefits.

The council recognises the value of green infrastructure in benefitting all our lives. In 2021, it commissioned a review of the role and benefits of green infrastructure in Oxfordshire.[118] The report estimated that investing in green infrastructure will provide £6 billion in economic benefits up to 2050 in Oxfordshire, due to reduced flood risk, better health and wellbeing, improved air quality, thriving biodiversity, among others.

In Bicester, this means protecting existing green spaces, making them more accessible, such as Bure Park and Gavray Meadows and creating new green spaces in new developments like North West Bicester where 40% is targeted for green infrastructure[119].

As previously noted, across this MAP Plan areas are at risk from river and surface flooding – a number of areas have a greater than 1 in 30 (3.3%) chance of flooding each year, one way of reducing this is by including Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDs) for new and existing developments. By delivering these objectives, this will help ensure that we protect homes, businesses and communities from such events. Finally, this objective will help deliver the policies of the LTCP and of this MAP Plan area, including **Policies 2 - 9, 13, 18, 21, 23, 28 and 30.**

We will deliver Objective **BSV12** through the following actions:

12.1 Ensure development and highways schemes across the MAP Plan area protect and enhance existing green and blue infrastructure in line with Cherwell District Council Local Plan.
Travel & Connectivity **Health & Wellbeing** **Social & Community** **Culture & Assets** **Climate & Environment**

12.2 Develop a strategy to provide greening of and placing solar panels on bus stops, car parks, train stations, signage, mobility hubs, etc.
Travel & Connectivity **Health & Wellbeing** **Culture & Assets** **Climate & Environment**

12.3 Work with partners using nature-based solutions to ensure new green and blue infrastructure is created in new developments and highways schemes to protect and enhance biodiversity in line with OCC's Local Nature Recovery Strategy (LNRS) to deliver at least 20% biodiversity net gain.
Travel & Connectivity **Health & Wellbeing** **Social & Community** **Culture & Assets** **Climate & Environment**

12.4 To support the delivery of a net zero transport network by 2040 (a target of the LTCP), all infrastructure developments should aim to minimise whole life carbon emissions following PAS 2080 standard (in accordance with **Policy 27** of LTCP).
Travel & Connectivity | Health & Wellbeing | Social & Community | Culture & Assets | Climate & Environment

12.5 Support wider use of SuDS and at new developments, where applicable.
Travel & Connectivity | Health & Wellbeing | Social & Community | Culture & Assets | Climate & Environment

12.6 Support schemes that achieve greening and re-wilding of places, contributing to the Local Nature Recovery Strategy.
Travel & Connectivity | Health & Wellbeing | Social & Community | Culture & Assets | Climate & Environment

Innovation and new technologies

Objective BSV13 concentrates on innovation and new technologies for our communities. Innovation can mean a number of things depending on the context. However, in accordance with LTCP, innovation is defined as anything which is new or being applied in new ways or contexts to traditional approaches. This can range from new technologies to new processes or approaches. Further details regarding this are outlined in the councils Innovation Framework.

Objective BSV13 is in relation to innovation, the benefits of this are:

- **New Technology**
- **Decarbonisation**
- **The Local Economy**
- **Business Growth**
- **Digital Connectivity**
- **Green Freight**

Objective BSV13

Utilise emerging and future technologies to develop innovation in Bicester and support a vibrant and connected village community

Why this objective?

Innovation has flourished in Bicester and the surrounding areas for years. Within the town is a former RAF airbase which now houses Bicester Motion, an estate at the forefront of mobility technology. For example, in 2024, Bicester Motion unveiled plans with Skyports Infrastructure to become the UK's first vertiport testbed for the air taxi industry – pouting Bicester and county as the forefront of this new technology.

In the Oxfordshire Local Industrial Strategy published by Oxfordshire Local Enterprise Partnership (OxLEP), Bicester was one of the towns identified as a Living Labs Testbed, a

scheme where smart living pilots can be undertaken at scale using emerging technologies integrated into major housing developments[120]. Utilising new technology and allowing innovation to flourish, Bicester will be able to maximise its potential as a growing town.

Providing better connectivity across the Plan area will enable this growth. Exploring opportunities to improve transport via new technologies will be necessary to achieve our vision of an inclusive, safe, and net-zero transport system. This objective supports various policies of the LTCP including **Policies 2, 11, 15, 18, 20 - 25, 29, 38 and 41 - 43**.

We will deliver Objective **BSV13** through the following actions:

13.1 Working with partners, explore innovation opportunities to support the delivery of the following, but not limited to:

a. Electric charging hubs for bus, car, e-bikes etc.
b. Deliver full network coverage and access to WI-FI across the MAP area.
c. East-West Rail 5G network Bicester and Bletchley (short term) and between Oxford and Bicester on to Milton Keynes (long term).
d. Develop integrated SMART Infrastructure, such as smart lighting to support active travel and luminous lining.
e. Work with partners to develop a zero-emission shared self-driving vehicles to link key employment sites.
f. Deliver EV charging infrastructure at Bicester Park and Ride, across Plan Area to enable the transition to EV vehicles.
g. Drone flights/air taxis at Bicester Motion.
h. Explore innovative Mobility as a Service (MaaS) solutions within the Plan area.
i. Utilising the growth in Bicester and across the Plan area to explore innovative ways to integrate new developments and existing communities.
j. Utilise the opportunities to exploit and deliver new technologies at Heyford Park, subject to national government decision on the New Towns.
k. Driverless bus/guided bus routes.

Travel & Connectivity **Economic Growth** **Social & Community** **Culture & Assets** **Climate & Environment**

13.2 We will seek to:

a. Facilitate forthcoming new technology to inform future movement and place networks.
b. Pro-actively seek funding opportunities to deliver and support innovation.
c. Facilitate forthcoming new technology on our transport network.

d. Undertake monitoring and evaluation of schemes.
e. Support the county and other LAs by providing data and insights (living lab).

Travel & Connectivity | Economic Growth | Social & Community | Culture & Assets

Our 9 defined outcomes:

1. A place that works towards delivering on net-zero carbon transport network

2. A place with a transport network that clearly reflects the priorities of the transport user hierarchy

3. Improved safety realised through the Vision Zero approach to transport safety across Oxfordshire

4. A comprehensive, safe, inclusive walking, wheeling and cycling network through the implementation of the LCWIP and Strategic Active Travel Network

5. A connected and inclusive public and shared transport network including the development of mobility hubs

6. A place where freight movements are appropriate and safe

7. A place where EV charging, and other low-carbon technologies help to reduce the impact of motorised vehicles

8. Improve air quality to safe levels, to remove the need for Air Quality Management Areas on transport grounds

9. A place where people are more receptive to active travel, sustainable modes and want to promote travel changes.

Objectives summary

Table 1 below sets out the objectives identified for Bicester and the surrounding area and their connection to the nine MAP Plan outcomes:

		Outcome								
		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
BSV1	Create a sense of place through implementing healthy place-shaping interventions	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓
BSV2	Deliver comprehensive and inclusive walking, wheeling and cycling network interventions	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓
BSV3	Create a network of mobility hubs	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓
BSV4	Interventions to enhance bus infrastructure	✓	✓	✓		✓		✓	✓	✓
BSV5	Interventions to enhance bus services	✓	✓	✓		✓		✓	✓	✓
BSV6	Work alongside partners to improve rail services and infrastructure	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓		✓	✓
BSV7	Support the development of a car club network and car share schemes	✓				✓		✓	✓	✓
BSV8	Implement demand management	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
BSV9	Deliver existing movement infrastructure schemes	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
BSV10	Deliver future movement infrastructure schemes	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
BSV11	Work with freight and delivery operators to improve movement efficiency and provide zero emission deliveries	✓	✓	✓			✓	✓	✓	✓
BSV12	Deliver infrastructure and placemaking schemes which are resilient to changing climate	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓
BSV13	Utilise emerging and future technologies to develop innovation in Bicester and support a vibrant and connected village community	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓

Table 1: Bicester and Surrounding Villages Objectives vs MAP Plan outcomes

Conclusion and Next Steps

This MAP Plan has set out the objectives and actions to enable the residents of Bicester, and the surrounding villages flourish to live healthy, active and happy lifestyles by taking a people first approach.

Taking a holistic approach to how people embark on their day-to-day journeys will create the opportunity to delivery an inclusive transport network which thinks of every aspect someone's journey from the moment they leave the front door to the moment they return home. What this document must do is deliver a transport network where children can walk, wheel and cycle to school, deliver choice for how people travel and support the creation of places which people want to visit and spend time in.

The MAP Plan will be and remain a live document which will be monitored, and subsequent updates will share in greater detail, as funding is secured, how we will engage with residents to deliver identified schemes. Subject to the findings of the governments New Town Taskforce this plan will be required to be reviewed to ensure it meets the aspirations of the community from a movement and place perspective.

This document is the start of a journey which will support the long-term investment in people of Bicester and its connected villages – which are so uniquely important to its rich heritage. It will be a focal point for those investing in the area and help secure additional funding to achieve the vision of the MAP Plan and LTCP. It is recognised to deliver some of the actions within this plan enforcement will be key. The council will therefore need to work with our partners to uphold and deliver some of the actions, as we don't hold the full enforcement powers necessary.

Objectives and Actions

Objective BSV1: Create a sense of place through implementing healthy place-shaping.

1.1. Conduct an audit across Bicester and surrounding villages using the Healthy Streets Toolkit, to support implementation of place-shaping schemes along with inclusive and accessible walking, wheeling and cycling routes.

1.2. Prepare a strategy and action plan to develop place shaping solutions for improved public realm in Bicester within the town centre, central corridor, local/ district centres and surrounding villages. For example, Kirtlington, Launton, Middleton Stoney, Fritwell, Heyford Park, Stratton Audley and Ambrosden.

1.3. Build upon and deliver a cohesive wayfinding scheme working towards a localised branding, to benefit all residents and visitors, aiming to ensure a consistent brand across Bicester and its surrounding villages.

1.4. Collaborate with the community and partners to support the introduction of murals, artwork, rest places, greener spaces, pocket parks, play spaces, and community parks.

1.5. Collaborate with communities and partners to identify locations to deliver play streets and to how best to use local parks and recreational grounds to encourage safe play and foster social interaction.

1.6. Identify and delivery School Streets and School Zones where appropriate.

1.7. Working with partners to explore regeneration opportunities in and around Bicester town centre with a focus on place shaping.

1.8. Work with partners and communities to develop place shaping measures in light of a cumulative impact assessment to understand the impact of both allocated and speculative development. Consideration should also be given to surrounding neighbouring villages /towns, for example, but not limited to i.e. Deddington, Clifton, Marsh Gibbon and Tackley.

1.9. Explore solutions to deliver streets for people (e.g. by providing benches, widening footpaths etc) to create place shaping opportunities and cater for all modes of transport. To support the council's emerging Street Design Code and transport user hierarchy.

1.10. Work with partners and communities to enhance village amenities and community hubs which supports future development and social cohesion, and where development is planned to actively enhance place shaping amenities (e.g. play facilities, retail and communal spaces).

Objective BSV2: Deliver comprehensive and inclusive walking, wheeling and cycling network interventions.

2.1 Ensure the delivery of walking, wheeling and cycling schemes contained within adopted documents (such as LCWIPs and SATN) to create seamless links to existing and new developments, ensuring safe routes along the central corridors, radial routes, peripheral routes and other linking corridors. This could also include looking outside of the highway boundary.

2.2 To review the LCWIP for Bicester assessing the scope, to include links to the surrounding villages.

2.3 To deliver a separate and standalone LCWIP for Heyford Park and its surrounding villages, ensuring it is reflective of the current needs and aspirations and explore other routes not noted within the LCWIP.

2.4 To support the delivery of schemes in the capital programme:

a. BR1 - Middleton Stoney Road Active Travel Scheme.
b. BR8 - London Road Active Travel Scheme.
c. BR10 - A41 Corridor – Siemens to Vendee Road.
d. BR8 - A41 Corridor – Rodney House Roundabout to Ploughley Road to provide connectivity to Ambrosden.

2.5 Seek funding through S106 developer funds, Active Travel England and other sources to progress schemes in the pipeline (not limited to) or where deemed required:

a. BR17 and BR18 - Kingsmere to Graven Hill link - two route options identified within the LCWIP.
b. BR8 - Walking, wheeling and cycling link between along Ploughley Road between Ambrosden and A41.
c. BR3 - The Causeway.
d. Aunt Em's Lane (Elmsbrook to Caversfield).
e. Banbury and Buckingham Road junction.
f. BR0 - Bicester peripheral routes.
g. BR5 - Bucknell Road.
h. BR10 - Central Corridor / Oxford Road / Buckingham Road.
i. BR12 - Launton Road.
j. BR13 - Churchill Road.
k. BR22 - Whitelands Way / Shakespeare Drive.
l. Heyford Park to Bicester.

2.6 Create a strategy and action plan to deliver quality pedestrian corridors to integrate with other modes of transport.

2.7 Explore opportunities to work with partners and stakeholders to create movement corridors which enable and prioritise extensive walking, wheeling, cycling and public transport.

2.8 Explore opportunities to develop rural quiet lanes between villages in the MAP Plan area and toward Bicester to encourage walking, wheeling and cycling creating a pleasant environment for everyone to enjoy.

2.9 Develop blue and green infrastructure, aligning with the emerging Street Design Code, including investigating changes to the PRoW and Greenway network to enable use by a wider range of Non-Motorised Users for different journey purposes to support connectivity around villages of Bicester.

2.10 Ensure all developments provide direct links to wider walking, wheeling and cycling schemes such as LCWIP, SATN, PRoW and Greenway routes to align with Oxfordshire County Council's standards (e.g. cycling and walking).

2.11 Explore opportunities to connect villages within the MAP Plan area by (not limited to):

a. Upgrading PRoW routes. Including and updated alongside updates of the LCWIP:
   - BR0 - (Graven Hill to Wendlebury).
   - BR6 - (King's End to Heyford Park).
   - BR8 - (Elmsbrook to Baynard's Green).
   - BR12 - (Glory Farm to Stratton Audley).
   - BR15 - (Langford to Launton).
   - BR21 - (Kingsmere to Chesterton).

b. Upgrading canal tow path between Somerton, Upper Heyford and Heyford.

c. Connect villages of Mixbury and Finmere to the proposed Buckinghamshire Greenway.

d. Developing walking, wheeling and cycling links to Heyford Rail Station including community e-bike scheme.

2.12 Ensure future junction improvements in Middleton Stoney create a safer environment for walking, wheeling and cycling, including potential Middleton Stoney bypass which will create the opportunity for further Place shaping measures.

2.13 Prepare a strategy and action plan to deliver with partners a network of inclusive cycle parking, hubs, hangars including provision for non-standard cycles within Bicester town centre, village centres, along key bus routes/stops, rail stations, public transport interchanges, local centres and residential streets.

2.14 Remove or redesign Access Control Barriers to enable equality of access and ensure walking, cycling and wheeling is accessible to everyone with no barriers in place for continuous movement.

2.15 Work with partners to develop e-bike micro-mobility schemes in to support longer distance travel and to improve connections between the surrounding villages and Bicester.

2.16 Depending upon national legislation, work with partners to develop an e-scooter based micro-mobility scheme to support internal travel within Bicester and Heyford Park.

2.17 Work with partners and the community to assess the long-term feasibility of an e-bike hub for Heyford Park, Heyford Station and explore other potential locations.

2.18 Work with partners to deliver a suite of behaviour change initiatives which will support the delivery of new infrastructure and provide the skills and confidence to walk, wheel and cycle, including but not limited to:

a. Bikeability for schools, families and adults.
b. Work with partners to explore a community bike loan scheme.
c. Explore opportunities to work with local employers to deliver bike share schemes.
d. Work with partners to develop Active Travel Hubs / Bike Kitchens / Dr Bike (or something similar).

2.19 Working with partners and stakeholders to support a monitoring process to measure active travel modal share across the wider Bicester and the surrounding villages and assess the effectiveness of policy interventions.

Objective BSV3: Create a network of mobility hubs.

3.1 Explore the feasibility and opportunities to provide a network of mobility hubs within Bicester and the surrounding villages including, but not limited to:

a. Redesigning Bicester Park and Ride into a Mobility Hub.
b. Bicester North Railway Station.
c. Bicester Village Railway Station.
d. Pioneer Square.
e. Explore other new strategic locations on the radial routes around Bicester (including potential enhancement at Heyford Railway Station and delivery of Ardley station).
f. Work with EWR to develop mobility hubs at EWR stations.

3.2 Explore opportunities to improve mobility hubs by, but not limited to:

a. Improving waiting facilities.
b. Improving safety and security.
c. Providing digital connectivity.
d. Providing rest, and toilet facilities, etc.
e. Providing cycle parking (including e-bike charging facilities) and connections towards the existing and or new walking and cycling network.
f. Providing EV charging facilities, helping to support parcel/taxi operators.
g. Linking to long distance coach services.
h. Co-locating with complimentary land uses and services.
i. Linking to leisure and educational facilities.

3.3 Support the implementation of rural, suburban, and mini mobility hubs, in line with the Mobility Hub Strategy.

Objective BSV4: Interventions to enhance bus infrastructure.

4.1 Working alongside public transport operators to develop a strategy and action plan for a bus route hierarchy and to implement bus prioritisation/SMART infrastructure along key movement corridors including as per Infrastructure Delivery Plan:

a. On the B4030 and at the Vendee Drive Roundabout
b. On the A41
c. On the B4100 between Baynard's Green roundabout and A4095 junction.
d. Bus only link, west of Howes Lane – linking to the A4095 re-alignment.

4.2 Develop a strategy and action plan with the local community and stakeholders in Bicester and the surrounding parishes to identify opportunities to improve bus infrastructure (e.g. waiting facilities, location for new bus stops, Real Time Information (RTI), live bus information for all services on smart phones, AI, raised kerbs, lighting, shelters, CCTV, onward travel maps and greening/solar.) including the following:

a. Town Centre interchange at Pioneer Square – including space constraints.
b. Bus routes into strategic employment and residential sites.
c. Along bus routes through North West Bicester and on Middleton Stoney Road and potentially beyond to Ardley and Heyford.
d. Work alongside developers to ensure they provide new bus stop infrastructure in new developments.
e. In the surrounding villages across the MAP plan area.
f. Mobility Hubs: Strategic locations offering co-located services (bus stops, bike hire, EV charging, real-time info) to improve accessibility and encourage modal shift.

4.3 Work with stakeholders to investigate the opportunities to enhance bus stops, safety and public realm at Pioneer Square and assess future needs.

4.4 Explore opportunities to improve bus stops and public realm in villages across MAP Plan area and align with adopted neighbourhood plans for area, to reduce the barriers to access public transport ensuring there is high quality walking and cycling footpath provision.

4.5 Work with public transport operators to deliver a zero-emission bus fleet within Bicester and its surrounding villages.

Objective BSV5: Interventions to enhance bus services.

5.1 Develop a strategy and action plan with stakeholders and partners to identify opportunities to deliver and fund long distance coach services which link to regional and national locations.

5.2 Ensure developers provide S106 funding to enhance existing services and provide new services to enable sustainable development and reduce car dependency. Routes would include but not limited to:

a. NW Bicester bus service connecting to the town centre.
b. Investigate the potential of providing a new bus service to strategic employment sites (developments to fund additional services).
c. Work with developers (to fund additional services) to ensure bus services connect to key residential and leisure facilities, such as but not limited to, key places Bicester, Banbury, Deddington, Oxford and Heyford Station.
d. Explore an orbital bus route to serve the villages of Bicester.
e. Other villages across the MAP Plan area (e.g. improve community transport options).

5.3 Work with partners to enhance bus services to meet demands, with consideration given to increasing frequencies (including "turn up and go" services) and express, or limited stop services and the optimisation of existing services.

5.4 Work with bus operators and employers to ensure improved reliability, attractiveness and resilience of services.

5.5 Work with partners to develop a digital strategy to support the bus network within Bicester and surrounding areas.

5.6 Work with partners to develop a behavioural strategy to raise awareness about the existing bus network and enhancements.

Objective BSV6: Work alongside partners to improve rail services and infrastructure.

6.1 Support and promote additional services to improve the passenger experience at Bicester North and Bicester Village Rail Stations.

6.2 **Bicester Village Railway Station**

a. Support the upgrade of the station to accommodate an increase in patronage by enhancing the waiting facilities, interaction of bus and train services, alongside information and improve and enhance cycling and e-mobility.
b. Support the delivery of East West Rail services unlocking the benefits of regional connectivity between Oxford and Cambridge.
c. Work with partners to deliver 5G connectivity along the East West Rail route.
d. Promote and support the delivery of the electrification of the East West Rail route.

6.3 Work with EWR Company to ensure they deliver an underpass to the London Road Crossing making appropriate provision for walking, wheeling, cycling, public transport and motor vehicle solutions, and to consider appropriate opportunities to maximise sustainable and active door-to-door connectivity.

6.4 **Bicester North Railway Station**

a. Explore feasibility of additional pedestrian access
b. Assess existing and future parking capacity
c. Develop feasibility to enhance cycling access

6.5 **Heyford Railway Station**

a. Work with stakeholders to explore better connectivity between Heyford Station and the residential areas. Subject to the New Towns Taskforce decision and other planning applications, further collaboration will be required to ensure seamless door to door connectivity between Heyford Station (other stations) and Heyford Park.
b. Work with partners to monitor the impact of future e-bike trials in Heyford Park.
c. Explore feasibility of enhanced rail connectivity to support employment, education and leisure.

6.6 Ensure delivery of high-quality public transport and walking, wheeling and cycling links to Bicester North and Bicester Village and Heyford rail stations.

6.7 Work with partners and stakeholders to support the ability to provide charging infrastructure for zero-emission battery trains.

6.8 Enhance station facilities across the Bicester MAP Plan area to meet future population growth, and to improve accessibility and where applicable, consider opportunities for new stations (e.g. Ardley), aligning to OxRAIL 2040: Plan for Rail.

6.9 **Ardley Railway Station**

a. Collaborate with partners to deliver and develop a Strategic Outline Business Case for the re-opening of Ardley station.
b. Subject to the successful Strategic Outline Business Case, work with partners and the community to Ardley rail station, improving and enhancing connectivity for the area.

6.10 Work with partners to explore the delivery of the proposed OxSFRI on the Chiltern mainline.

Objective BSV7: Support the development of a car club network and car share schemes.

7.1 Identify with partners a comprehensive network of car clubs, including the prioritisation of parking for car clubs at existing and new developments across Bicester and surrounding villages.

7.2 Aim for car clubs to be zero emission only.

7.3 Work with developers and businesses to provide EV charging (e.g. e-bikes, cars and motorbikes) and parking to support car clubs and car share, including the delivery of a guidance document for delivery.

7.4 Collaborate with partners and businesses to develop a car share awareness/ expansion programme.

Objective BSV8: Implement demand management.

8.1 Identify the demand management tools and appropriate locations where these may be required in short to medium term, agree further measures to complement the delivery of the Southeast Peripheral Road to enable an increase in walking, wheeling and cycling for local journeys within Bicester.

8.2 In support of our Vision Zero Strategy, using a Safe System approach, we will reduce vehicle speeds within Bicester and its surrounding villages to prioritise the safe movement of people.

8.3 Work with partners to investigate opportunities to consolidate public parking within town centre and village locations and other public areas, to reduce the need to travel by car as per the LTCP, to prioritise sustainable travel.

8.4 Ensure future employment sites adhere to OCC Parking Standards for New Developments and implement Travel Plans with sustainable travel measures, encourage a modal shift away from private car usage towards public and active travel.

8.5 Explore the viability of a Clean Air Zone and Zero Emission Zone identified in the CDC Air Quality Action Plan 2024.

8.6 Explore opportunities to deliver a Workplace Parking Levy and Controlled Parking Zones.

8.7 Where applicable and in accordance with OCC parking standards ensure provision for motorcycle parking and bikes / e-bikes is delivered which caters for non-standard bikes and land is safeguarded to allow for future growth in usage.

Objective BSV9: Deliver existing movement infrastructure schemes.

9.1 We **will deliver** Objective BSV9 **through the following actions:**

Progress the current ongoing schemes in the pipeline:

a. A4095 realignment (strategic link road).
b. Eastern Peripheral Movement Corridor (Charbridge Lane / Skimmingdish Lane).
c. South East Peripheral Road (SEPR).
d. Work with National Highways to secure improvements to Junction 10 of the M40, including Baynard's Green and the B4100 (north and south of the junction).

Objective BSV10: Deliver future movement infrastructure schemes.

10.1 Work with partners and the local community to explore the following schemes (but not limited to):

a. Place shaping improvements to the central corridor, Kings End to Queen Avenue and extending along Banbury Road and Buckingham Road (phased with delivery of other measures in the MAPP).

b. SEPR complementary place shaping measures along relieved sections of the current A41 (e.g. bus lanes and cycling improvements).

c. Work with National Highways to consider future improvements at Junction 9 of the M40.

d. Develop junction capacity and safety improvements on priority highway routes with high quality walking, wheeling and cycling access and bus priority measures where space permits (but not limited to):
   - A41 / Vendee Drive
   - A4095 / B4030 (Howes Lane / Middleton Stoney Road)
   - A4095 / A4421 (Southwold Lane / Buckingham Road)
   - A41 / A4421 (Rodney House Roundabout / Seelscheid Way)

e. Develop junction safety improvements for all users along radial routes into Bicester, for example, but not limited to:
   - Caversfield junction improvements (Junction of Aunt Ems Lane and B4100)
   - Blackthorn Rd (junctions)
   - Charlotte Avenue, explore signalisations to improve safety

f. Explore junction safety improvements for all users along routes in the villages within the MAP Plan. For example, but not limited to:
   - Ardley Roundabout
   - Middleton Stoney Crossroads
   - B4030/ Port Way
   - B4030 Lower Heyford Road/ Unnamed Road
   - A4260/ Somerton Road
   - Hopcrofts Holt
   - A4260/ B4027
   - Ardley Road/ Station Road
   - Other village locations to be considered as appropriate

g. Discourage use of unsuitable rural routes by through traffic, by working with communities to develop place shaping measures through villages in the MAPP area that slow traffic and provide a more inviting environment for local people.

h. Work with developers and local communities, if large-scale speculative sites are given planning permission, to seek agreement for mitigation measures for movements to safeguard the fabric of the local community.

Objective BSV11: Work with freight and delivery operators to improve movement efficiency and provide zero emission deliveries.

11.1 Actively seek opportunities to identify further HGV restrictions in areas with high walking, wheeling and cycling movements, areas with limited footpath provision and consider enforcement across the Bicester and surrounding villages to protect villages' fabric, learning lessons from previous and/or emerging HGV studies (e.g. Henley-on-Thames and Windrush Valley) to develop bespoke mitigation schemes for this area.

11.2 Work with partners to understand HGV concerns and find solutions for the area (e.g. as recommended in the 2023 Atkins freight study or utilising dedicated freight studies conducted by the council), conducting an audit of lay-by provision and to ensure HGVs are travelling on designated roads as per OCCs Freight Map. Also, consideration will be given of signage, physical measures, environmental weight restrictions and monitoring using ANPR cameras or other technology.

11.3 In support of OCC Vision Zero Strategy, we will actively seek to implement and use Direct Vision Standard for HGVs across the Plan area.

11.4 Working with local community groups, stakeholder etc., conduct an area wide restriction study for this MAP Plan area, exploring the proposed and speculative development.

11.5 Collaborate with partners to develop feasibility of first and last mile delivery hubs using cargo bikes and e-cargo bikes at employment sites.

11.6 Support the rollout of parcel / grocery lockers at key transport locations such as Bicester Village and Bicester North Rail Station's, Bicester Bus Interchange (Pioneer Square), Heyford Park, Bicester Park and Ride, Mobility Hubs, and local/ district centres to support integrated travel.

11.7 Explore opportunities which support the transition of freight from road to rail.

11.8 Identify EV charging locations for freight to support the transition towards low carbon freight travel.

11.9 Working with partners to explore the potential impact of the proposed OxSRFI to minimise and mitigate the impact of HGVs needed for construction and ensure an HGV routing strategy is agreed before work commences.

Objective BSV12: Deliver infrastructure and placemaking schemes which are resilient to changing climate

12.1 Ensure development and highways schemes across the MAP Plan area protect and enhance existing green and blue infrastructure in line with Cherwell District Council Local Plan.

12.2 Develop a strategy to provide greening of and placing solar panels on bus stops, car parks, train stations, signage, mobility hubs, etc.

12.3 Work with partners using nature-based solutions to ensure new green and blue infrastructure is created in new developments and highways schemes to protect and enhance biodiversity.

12.4 To support the delivery of a net zero transport network by 2040 (a target of the LTCP), all infrastructure developments should aim to minimise whole life carbon emissions following PAS 2080 standard (in accordance with **Policy 27** of LTCP).

12.5 Support wider use of SuDS and at new developments, where applicable.

12.6 Support schemes that achieve greening and re-wilding of places, contributing to the Local Nature Recovery Strategy.

Objective BSV13: Utilise emerging and future technologies to develop innovation in Bicester.

13.1 Working with partners, explore innovation opportunities to support the delivery of the following, but not limited to:

a. Electric charging hubs for bus, car, e-bikes etc.
b. Deliver full network coverage and access to WI-FI across the MAP area.
c. East-West Rail 5G network Bicester and Bletchley (short term) and between Oxford and Bicester on to Milton Keynes (long term).
d. Develop integrated SMART Infrastructure, such as smart lighting to support active travel and luminous lining.
e. Work with partners to develop a zero-emission shared self-driving vehicles to link key employment sites.
f. Deliver EV charging infrastructure at Bicester Park and Ride, across Plan Area to enable the transition to EV vehicles.
g. Drone flights/air taxis at Bicester Motion.
h. Explore innovative Mobility as a Service (MaaS) solutions within the Plan area.
i. Utilising the growth in Bicester and across the Plan area to explore innovative ways to integrate new developments and existing communities.
j. Utilise the opportunities to exploit and deliver new technologies at Heyford Park, subject to national government decision on the New Towns.
k. Driverless bus/guide bus routes.

13.2 We will seek to:

a. Facilitate forthcoming new technology to inform future movement and place networks.
b. Pro-actively seek funding opportunities to deliver and support innovation.
c. Facilitate forthcoming new technology on our transport network.
d. Undertake monitoring and evaluation of schemes.
e. Support the county and other LAs by providing data and insights (living lab).

Glossary

Term	Definition
Access Control Barriers	Access control infrastructure such as bollards used to address a safety issue or prevent illegal motor vehicle access. It must not limit access for people walking, wheeling and cycling.
Active travel	Active travel refers to modes of travel that involve a level of activity. The term is often used interchangeably with walking and cycling, but active travel can also include trips made by wheelchair, mobility scooters, adapted cycles, e-cycles, scooters, as well as cycle sharing schemes.[121]
Air Quality Management Area (AQMA)	Since December 1997 each local authority in the UK has been carrying out a review and assessment of air quality in their area. This involves measuring air pollution and trying to predict how it will change in the next few years. The aim of the review is to make sure that the national air quality objectives (PDF) will be achieved throughout the UK by the relevant deadlines. These objectives have been put in place to protect people's health and the environment. If a local authority finds any places where the objectives are not likely to be achieved, it must declare an Air Quality Management Area there.
Annual Mean Modelled Concentration	The annual mean is the average concentration of a pollutant measured over one year.
Bicester Transport Model (BTM)	The BTM is a SATURN based highway model that also includes a variable demand model and public transport module. The model includes M40 Junctions 9 and 10 and is used to support the transport work for the town of Bicester and adjacent developments including Heyford Park and the OxSRFI.

Term	Definition
Car club	Car clubs provide residents, visitors or businesses with access to a vehicle as a short-term rental, usually by the hour. Car clubs may also include other vehicles such as vans alongside cars. Car club operating models include commercial car clubs, peer-to-peer commercial car sharing and community car clubs.
Car share	Lift sharing, also known as car sharing, car-pooling or ride sharing is the coordinated matching up of lifts between drivers and passengers who share a common or similar route.
CDC	Cherwell District Council
Census	A national survey of the population of the United Kingdom, taking place every 10 years. This includes asking questions on car ownership and travel to work. The last two were in 2011 and 2021.
Connected and Autonomous Vehicle (CAV)	Vehicles equipped to exchange information with surrounding environment and can operate in a mode which is not being controlled by an individual
Controlled Parking Zones (CPZs)	An area where parking is only permitted in designated parking bays, and the rest of the kerbside space is restricted by yellow lines. Any illegally parked cars are issued with a parking ticket.
Decide and Provide	The Decide and Provide approach to transport planning decides on a preferred vision of the future and then provides the means to work towards that whilst also accommodating uncertainty about the future.
Defra	Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs - A department of the UK Government of the United Kingdom that is responsible for environmental protection, food production and standards, agriculture, fisheries and rural communities.

Term	Definition
Department for Transport (DfT)	A department of the UK Government of the United Kingdom that is responsible for the transport network.
Direct Vision Standard (DVS)	The DVS measures how much an HGV driver can see directly through their cab windows. This is expressed as a star rating from zero (limited) to five (good) direct vision, indicating the level of risk to vulnerable road users, such as people walking and cycling.
Electric vehicle (EV)	A vehicle that uses an electric motor for propulsion, comprising BEV's, as well as plugin hybrid electric vehicles that have an attached petrol or diesel engine to power the battery engine.
Fatal collision	A collision in which at least one person is killed.
Freight	Freight is the general term for goods transported from one place to another by any means. Freight can therefore be moved in a variety of ways including by Heavy Goods Vehicles (HGV), Light Goods Vehicles (LGV), rail, cargo bikes and emerging modes such as drones.
Heavy Goods Vehicles (HGV)	Commercial trucks that feature a gross combination mass of over 3500kg. In the UK HGVs have a max legal length of 16.5m.
Heyford Park	Heyford Park is an existing settlement and has been announced by the Government to be one of the locations recommended in the New Towns Taskforce Final Report, to be developed as a New Town, designed to deliver thousands of homes, new infrastructure, and support economic growth in the area. The final decision is yet to be announced at time of writing.
Injury collision	A collision involving human injury or death.
Killed or Seriously Injured (KSI)	The number of people, or number of collisions on the highway network which result in people being, killed or seriously injured as a result of a road traffic collision.

Term	Definition
Light Goods Vehicles (LGV)	Commercial trucks that feature a gross combination mass of under 3500kg.
Living Labs	The Eco-Bicester Living Lab (EBLL), which is a joint collaboration between Oxford Institute for Sustainable Development (OISD) at Oxford Brookes and BioRegional Development Group, has been developed to capture the learning and innovation that is happening in Bicester.
Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plans (LCWIPs)	LCWIPs are a strategic approach to identifying cycling and walking improvements at the local level. They enable a long-term approach to developing local cycling and walking networks over the next ten years and form a vital part of the Government's strategy to increase the number of trips made on foot or by cycle.
Local Plan	A Local Plan is a statutory, council-produced document (CDC in this context) setting a 15–20-year vision for land use, development, and infrastructure in a specific area. It acts as the primary framework for deciding planning applications, addressing housing, employment, and environmental protection in line with national policy.
Local Transport and Connectivity Plan (LTCP)	Oxfordshire County Council's new Local Transport Plan.
Local Transport Note (LTN) 1/20 – Cycle Infrastructure Design	Guidance for local authorities on delivering high-quality, safe cycle infrastructure. Cycle Infrastructure Design
Micromobility	Micromobility refers to a range of small, lightweight vehicles that are driven by users personally. This includes electric bikes (e-bike): Bicycles with a battery-powered assist and electric scooter (e-scooters): Motorised stand-up scooter with an electric motor. It can also include private e-scooters, rollerblades and 'hoverboards'.

Term	Definition
Mobility Hub	Mobility hubs bring together shared transport with public transport and active travel making it easier for people to interchange from one mode of transport to another.
Mode of transport	Method of travelling from one place to another.
Multi-modal	Using two or more modes of transport, like bus, train, walking, or cycling, in one journey.
National Cycle Network (NCN)	The UK-wide network of signed paths and walking routes for walking, wheeling, and cycling outdoors. Routes forming part of the National Cycle Network shall be designed in accordance with current best practice design guidance, in collaboration with the local community and provide convenient links to key destinations – connecting cities, towns and countryside.
National Travel Survey (NTS)	A household survey designed to monitor long-term trends in personal travel and to inform the development of policy. It is the primary source of data on personal travel patterns by residents of England within Great Britain.
Non-Motorised Users (NMU)	A 'non-motorised user' (or NMU) is someone walking or cycling, or a horse rider.
Office for Rail and Road (ORR)	Is the independent economic and safety regulator for Britain's railways. They also regulate performance and efficiency on England's strategic road network.

Term	Definition
Oxides of Nitrogen (NO_X)	Combustion processes emit a mixture of nitrogen oxides (NO_X), primarily nitric oxide (NO) which is quickly oxidised in the atmosphere to nitrogen dioxide (NO_2). Nitrogen dioxide has a variety of environmental and health impacts. It is a respiratory irritant which may exacerbate asthma and possibly increase susceptibility to infections. In the presence of sunlight, it reacts with hydrocarbons to produce photochemical pollutants such as ozone. NO_2 can be further oxidised in air to acidic gases, which contribute towards the generation of acid rain.
Oxfordshire Strategic Rail Freight Interchange (OxSRFI)	An SRFI is a large multi-purpose freight interchange and distribution centre linked into both the rail and trunk road systems. The proposed OxSRFI is located east of the former Upper Heyford Air Base, south of the Chiltern Main Line, and southwest of Junction 10 of the M40 motorway.
Particle Matter (PM)	Airborne PM includes a wide range of particle sizes and different chemical constituents. It consists of both primary components, which are emitted directly into the atmosphere, and secondary components, which are formed within the atmosphere as a result of chemical reactions. Of greatest concern to public health are the particles small enough to be inhaled into the deepest parts of the lung. Air Quality Objectives are in place for the protection of human health for PM_{10} and $PM_{2.5}$ – particles of less than 10 and 2.5 micrometres in diameter, respectively.
Place shaping	Creating places which improves the quality of life for residents, enables growth and supports vibrant sustainable communities.
Predict and Provide	Predict and Provide can be broadly described as an approach to transport planning that uses current or historical traffic patterns to determine the future need for infrastructure.
Public realm	The public realm is the publicly accessible spaces between buildings that allow people to move around and interact. It includes streets, squares, parks, and other outdoor spaces.

Term	Definition
Public Rights of Way (PRoW):	Network of routes where public use is legally protected.
Quality Pedestrian Corridors (QPC)	A quality pedestrian corridor is a walkway that's comfortable, safe, and well-connected, with adequate space for pedestrians. It also includes features like lighting, signage, and crossing facilities.
Real Time Information (RTI)	Live tracking of bus and rail services provided either via information screens of applications.
Safe System Approach	A road safety strategy targets zero deaths or serious injuries by creating a system tolerant of human error, so crashes are not fatal. Responsibility is shared among all stakeholders, and multiple layers of protection—safe roads, vehicles, speeds, users, and post-crash care—work together to prevent serious harm, treating every fatality as both unacceptable and preventable.
Section 106 (S106) contribution	A financial contribution made by a developer under Section 106 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990, often for a specific purpose (e.g. new infrastructure).
Severance	This refers to barriers to movement and consist of hard severance features – such as rivers, major roads and railways and soft severance features – minor roads.
Strategic Active Travel Network (SATN)	The Strategic Active Travel Network is a proposal for a countywide Active Travel network of walking and cycling routes. Oxfordshire towns already have LCWIPs, creating a network of walking and cycling routes within towns. The SATN will connect these networks, enabling longer-distance walking and cycling across the county. Some of these routes already exist, others are proposed and will be developed in the future.

Term	Definition
Strategic Road Network (SRN)	Roads managed by National Highways comprising motorways and some A roads
Sustainable drainage systems (SuDS)	Designed to manage stormwater locally (as close its source as possible), to mimic natural drainage and encourage its infiltration, attenuation and passive treatment.
Transport-related Social Exclusion (TRSE)	This tool allows the user to focus in on any given English authority to obtain TRSE data.
Vision Zero	The aim of vision zero is to have zero road fatalities or serious injuries on Oxfordshire's transport system by 2050. This aligns with and will contribute to the global political commitment to improve road safety made through the Stockholm Declaration.
Walking, Wheeling, and Cycling	Walking, wheeling and cycling refers to modes of travel that involve a level of activity. The term is often used interchangeably with walking and cycling, but walking, wheeling and cycling can also include trips made by wheelchair, mobility scooters, adapted cycles, e-cycles, scooters, as well as cycle sharing schemes.
Zero Emission Zones (ZEZs)	An area where all vehicles except those with zero tailpipe emissions are restricted or charged.

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Objectives			Actions	Spacial Level	Components of Placemaking						Time Scale	Indicative Cost	Potential Funding Streams	Partners	Progress
					Economic Growth	Travel and Connectivity	Social and Community	Health and Wellbeing	Culture and Assets	Climate and Environment					
Place Shaping															
BSV1	Create a sense of place through implementing healthy place-shaping interventions	1.1	Conduct an audit across Bicester and surrounding villages using the Healthy Streets Toolkit, to support implementation of place-shaping schemes along with inclusive and accessible walking, wheeling and cycling routes.	Local							Up to 5 years	Between £100,000 and £500,000	S106, Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) Funding, Active Travel England (ATE) Funding, DfT, Funding Bids, Central Government, Parish/ Town Councils, Sport England, Walk Wheel & Cycle Trust	OCC, CDC, Parishes, Community Groups	Not started
		1.2	Prepare a strategy and action plan to develop place shaping solutions for improved public realm in Bicester within the town centre, central corridor, local/ district centres and surrounding villages. For example, Kirtlington, Launton, Middleton Stoney, Fritwell, Heyford Park, Stratton Audley and Ambrosden.	Local							Up to two years	Between £100,000 and £500,000		OCC, CDC, Parishes, Community Groups	Not started
		1.3	Build upon and deliver a cohesive wayfinding scheme working towards a localised branding, to benefit all residents and visitors, aiming to ensure a consistent brand across Bicester and its surrounding villages.	Local							Up to two years	Up to £100,000		OCC, CDC, Community Groups, Healthy Streets	Not started
		1.4	Collaborate with the community and partners to support the introduction of murals, artwork, rest places, greener spaces, pocket parks, play spaces, and community parks.	Local							Up to two years	Up to £100,000		OCC, CDC, Community Groups	In progress
		1.5	Collaborate with communities and partners to identify locations to deliver play streets and to how best to use local parks and recreational grounds to encourage safe play and foster social interaction.	Hyper-Local							Up to two years	Up to £100,000		OCC, CDC, Community Groups	Not started
		1.6	Identify and delivery School Streets and School Zones where appropriate.	Hyper-Local							Ongoing	Up to £100,000		OCC, Walk Wheel & Cycle Trust	Not started
		1.7	Working with partners to explore regeneration opportunities in and around Bicester town centre with a focus on place shaping.	Hyper-Local							Up to 5 years	Between £100,000 and £500,000		OCC, CDC, Developers, Community Groups	In progress
		1.8	Work with partners and communities to develop place shaping measures in light of a cumulative impact assessment to understand the impact of both allocated and speculative development. Consideration should also be given to surrounding neighbouring villages/towns, for example, but not limited to i.e. Deddington, Clifton, Marsh Gibbon and Tackley.	District							Ongoing	Between £100,000 and £500,000		OCC, CDC, Developers, Community Groups	In progress
		1.9	Explore solutions to deliver streets for people (e.g. by providing benches, widening footpaths etc) to create place shaping opportunities and cater for all modes of transport. To support the council's emerging Street Design Code and transport user hierarchy.	Local							Ongoing	Between £500,000 and £1 Million		OCC, Community Groups	In progress
		1.10	Work with partners and communities to enhance village amenities and community hubs which supports future development and social cohesion, and where development is planned to actively enhance place shaping amenities (e.g. play facilities, retail and communal spaces).	Hyper-Local							Up to two years	Between £100,000 and £500,000		OCC, CDC, Parishes, Community Groups, Sport England	Not started
Walking, Wheeling and Cycling															
BSV2	Deliver comprehensive and inclusive walking, wheeling and cycling network interventions	2.1	Ensure the delivery of walking, wheeling and cycling schemes contained within adopted documents (such as LCWIPs and SATN) to create seamless links to existing and new developments, ensuring safe routes along the central corridors, radial routes, peripheral routes and other linking corridors. This could also include looking outside of the highway boundary.	Local							Ongoing	Over £1 Millon	S106, Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) Funding, Active Travel England (ATE) Finding, DfT, Funding Bids, Central Government, Parish/ Town Councils, Sport England, Walk Wheel & Cycle Trust	OCC, CDC, Developers, ATE, Walk Wheel & Cycle Trust, Canal & River Trust	In progress
		2.2	To review the LCWIP for Bicester assessing the scope, to include links to the surrounding villages.	Local							Up to 5 years	Up to £100,000		OCC	Not started
		2.3	To deliver a separate and standalone LCWIP for Heyford Park and its surrounding villages, ensuring it is reflective of the current needs and aspirations and explore other routes not noted within the LCWIP.	Local							Between 2 and 5 years	Over £1 Millon		OCC	Not started
		2.4	To support the delivery of schemes in the capital programme: a.BR1 - Middleton Stoney Road Active Travel Scheme. b.BR8 - London Road Active Travel Scheme. c.BR10 - A41 Corridor – Siemens to Vendee Road. d. BR8 - A41 Corridor – Rodney House Roundabout to Ploughley Road to provide connectivity to Ambrosden.	Local							Up to 5 years	Over £1 Millon		OCC, ATE	In progress
		2.5	Seek funding through S106 developer funds, Active Travel England and other sources to progress schemes in the pipeline (not limited to) or where deemed required: a.BR17 and BR18 - Kingsmere to Graven Hill link - two route options identified within the LCWIP. b.BR8 - Walking, wheeling and cycling link between along Ploughley Road between Ambrosden and A41. c.BR3 - The Causeway. d.Aunt Em's Lane (Elmsbrook to Caversfield). e.Banbury and Buckingham Road junction. f.BR0 - Bicester peripheral routes. g.BR5 - Bucknell Road. h.BR10 - Central Corridor / Oxford Road / Buckingham Road. i.BR12 - Launton Road. j.BR13 - Churchill Road. k.BR22 - Whitelands Way / Shakespeare Drive. l.Heyford Park to Bicester.	Local							Ongoing	Over £1 Millon		OCC, ATE, Walk Wheel & Cycle Trust	In progress
		2.6	Create a strategy and action plan to deliver quality pedestrian corridors to integrate with other modes of transport.	Local							Up to 5 years	Up to £100,000		OCC, CDC, Developers	Not started
		2.7	Explore opportunities to work with partners and stakeholders to create movement corridors which enable and prioritise extensive walking, wheeling, cycling and public transport.	Local							Ongoing	Over £1 Millon		OCC, CDC	Not started
		2.8	Explore opportunities to develop rural quiet lanes between villages in the MAP Plan area and toward Bicester to encourage walking, wheeling and cycling creating a pleasant environment for everyone to enjoy.	Local							Ongoing	Over £1 Millon		OCC, CDC, Developers, ATE, Walk Wheel & Cycle Trust	Not started
		2.9	Develop blue and green infrastructure, aligning with the emerging Street Design Code, including investigating changes to the PRoW and Greenway network to enable use by a wider range of Non-Motorised Users for different journey purposes to support connectivity around villages of Bicester.	Local							Ongoing	Over £1 Millon		OCC, CDC, ATE, Walk Wheel & Cycle Trust, Canal & River Trust, Natural England	Not started
		2.10	Ensure all developments provide direct links to wider walking, wheeling and cycling schemes such as LCWIP, SATN, PRoW and Greenway routes to align with Oxfordshire County Council's standards (e.g. cycling and walking).	District							Up to 5 years	Between £100,000 and £500,000		OCC, Developers	In progress
		2.11	Explore opportunities to connect villages within the MAP Plan area by (not limited to): a.Upgrading PRoW routes. Including and updated alongside updates of the LCWIP: •BR0 - (Graven Hill to Wendlebury). •BR6 - (King's End to Heyford Park). •BR8 - (Elmsbrook to Baynard's Green). •BR12 - (Glory Farm to Stratton Audley). •BR15 - (Langford to Launton). •BR21 - (Kingsmere to Chesterton) . b.Upgrading canal tow path between Somerton, Upper Heyford and Heyford. c.Connect villages of Mixbury and Finmere to the proposed Buckinghamshire Greenway. d.Developing walking, wheeling and cycling links to Heyford Rail Station including community e-bike scheme.	District							Ongoing	Over £1 Millon		OCC, CDC, Walk Wheel & Cycle Trust, Canal & River Trust	Not started
		2.12	Ensure future junction improvements in Middleton Stoney create a safer environment for walking, wheeling and cycling, including potential Middleton Stoney bypass which will create the opportunity for further Place shaping measures.	Local							Up to 5 years	Over £1 Millon		OCC, Developers	In progress
		2.13	Prepare a strategy and action plan to deliver with partners a network of inclusive cycle parking, hubs, hangars including provision for non-standard cycles within Bicester town centre, village centres, along key bus routes/stops, rail stations, public transport interchanges, local centres and residential streets.	District							Up to two years	Up to £100,000		OCC, CDC, Developers, Bus Operators, Network Rail	Not started
		2.14	Remove or redesign Access Control Barriers to enable equality of access and ensure walking, cycling and wheeling is accessible to everyone with no barriers in place for continuous movement.	District							Ongoing	Up to £100,000		OCC, CDC, Walk Wheel & Cycle Trust, Canal & River Trust	In progress
		2.15	Work with partners to develop e-bike micro-mobility schemes in to support longer distance travel and to improve connections between the surrounding villages and Bicester.	District							Up to 5 years	Between £100,000 and £500,000		OCC, CDC, Parishes, Operators (E.g. Voi, Lime, Donkey Republic)	Not started
		2.16	Depending upon national legislation, work with partners to develop an e-scooter based micro-mobility scheme to support internal travel within Bicester and Heyford Park.	Local							Between 5 and 10 years	Between £100,000 and £500,000		OCC, CDC, Parishes, Operators (E.g. Voi, Lime, Donkey Republic), Developers, Network Rail	Not started
		2.17	Work with partners and the community to assess the long-term feasibility of an e-bike hub for Heyford Park, Heyford Station and explore other potential locations.	District							Ongoing	Between £100,000 and £500,000		OCC, CDC, Parishes, Operators (E.g. Voi, Lime, Donkey Republic)	Not started

		2.18	Work with partners to deliver a suite of behaviour change initiatives which will support the delivery of new infrastructure and provide the skills and confidence to walk, wheel and cycle, including but not limited to: a.Bikeability for schools, families and adults. b.Work with partners to explore a community bike loan scheme. c.Explore opportunities to work with local employers to deliver bike share schemes. d.Work with partners to develop Active Travel Hubs / Bike Kitchens / Dr Bike (or something similar).	Hyper-Local							Ongoing	Between £100,000 and £500,000		OCC, CDC, Parishes, Walk Wheel & Cycle Trust	In progress
		2.19	Working with partners and stakeholders to support a monitoring process to measure active travel modal share across the wider Bicester and the surrounding villages and assess the effectiveness of policy interventions.	District							Ongoing	Between £100,000 and £500,000		OCC	In progress
			Public transport													
BSV3	Create a network of mobility hubs	3.1	Explore the feasibility and opportunities to provide a network of mobility hubs within Bicester and the surrounding villages including, but not limited to: a.Redesigning Bicester Park and Ride into a Mobility Hub. b.Bicester North Railway Station. c.Bicester Village Railway Station. d.Pioneer Square. e.Explore other new strategic locations on the radial routes around Bicester (including potential enhancement at Heyford Railway Station and delivery of Ardley station). f.Work with EWR to develop mobility hubs at EWR stations.	Hyper-Local							Up to 5 years	Over £1 Millon	S106, Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) Funding, Local Authority Bus Grant (LABG), DfT, Funding Bids, Central Government, Parish/ Town Councils	OCC, CDC, Parishes, Bus Operators, Network Rail, Developers	In progress
		3.2	Explore opportunities to improve mobility hubs by, but not limited to: a.Improving waiting facilities. b.Improving safety and security. c.Providing digital connectivity. d.Providing rest, and toilet facilities, etc. e. Providing cycle parking (including e-bike charging facilities) and connections towards the existing and or new walking and cycling network. f.Providing EV charging facilities, helping to support parcel/taxi operators. g.Linking to long distance coach services. h.Co-locating with complimentary land uses and services. i.Linking to leisure and educational facilities.	Hyper-Local							Ongoing	Over £1 Millon		OCC, CDC, Parishes, Bus Operators, Network Rail, Developers	Not started
		3.3	Support the implementation of rural, suburban, and mini mobility hubs, in line with the Mobility Hub Strategy.	District							Ongoing	Over £1 Millon		OCC, CDC, Parishes, Bus Operators, Network Rail, Developers	In progress
BSV4	Interventions to enhance bus infrastructure	4.1	Working alongside public transport operators to develop a strategy and action plan for a bus route hierarchy and to implement bus prioritisation/SMART infrastructure along key movement corridors including as per Infrastructure Delivery Plan: a.On the B4030 and at the Vendee Drive Roundabout b.On the A41 c.On the B4100 between Baynard's Green roundabout and A4095 junction. d.Bus only link, west of Howes Lane – linking to the A4095 re-alignment.	Local							Up to 5 years	Between £100,000 and £500,000	S106, Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) Funding, Local Authority Bus Grant (LABG), DfT, Funding Bids, Central Government, Parish/ Town Councils	OCC, Bus Operators, Developers	Not started
		4.2	Develop a strategy and action plan with the local community and stakeholders in Bicester and the surrounding parishes to identify opportunities to improve bus infrastructure (e.g. waiting facilities, location for new bus stops, Real Time Information (RTI), live bus information for all services on smart phones, AI, raised kerbs, lighting, shelters, CCTV, onward travel maps and greening/solar.) including the following: a.Town Centre interchange at Pioneer Square – including space constraints. b.Bus routes into strategic employment and residential sites. c.Along bus routes through North West Bicester and on Middleton Stoney Road and potentially beyond to Ardley and Heyford. d.Work alongside developers to ensure they provide new bus stop infrastructure in new developments. e.In the surrounding villages across the MAP plan area. f. Mobility Hubs: Strategic locations offering co-located services (bus stops, bike hire, EV charging, real-time info) to improve accessibility and encourage modal shift.	District							Up to 5 years	Up to £100,000		OCC, CDC, Bus Operators, Community Groups, Businesses	Not started
		4.3	Work with stakeholders to investigate the opportunities to enhance bus stops, safety and public realm at Pioneer Square and assess future needs.	Hyper-Local							Up to 5 years	Between £100,000 and £500,000		OCC, CDC, Bus Operators	Not started
		4.4	Explore opportunities to improve bus stops and public realm in villages across MAP Plan area and align with adopted neighbourhood plans for area, to reduce the barriers to access public transport ensuring there is high quality walking and cycling footpath provision.	District							Up to 5 years	Over £1 Millon		OCC,CDC, Parishes, Bus Operators	Not started
		4.5	Work with public transport operators to deliver a zero-emission bus fleet within Bicester and its surrounding villages.	County							Ongoing	Over £1 Millon		OCC, Bus Operators	Not started
BSV5	Interventions to enhance bus services	5.1	Develop a strategy and action plan with stakeholders and partners to identify opportunities to deliver and fund long distance coach services which link to regional and national locations.	National							Up to 5 years	Up to £100,000	S106, Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) Funding, Local Authority Bus Grant (LABG), DfT, Funding Bids, Central Government, Parish/ Town Councils	OCC, Bus Operators	Not started
		5.2	Ensure developers provide S106 funding to enhance existing services and provide new services to enable sustainable development and reduce car dependency. Routes would include but not limited to: a.NW Bicester bus service connecting to the town centre. b.Investigate the potential of providing a new bus service to strategic employment sites (developments to fund additional services). c.Work with developers (to fund additional services) to ensure bus services connect to key residential and leisure facilities, such as but not limited to, key places Bicester, Banbury, Deddington, Oxford and Heyford Station. d.Explore an orbital bus route to serve the villages of Bicester. e.Other villages across the MAP Plan area (e.g. improve community transport options).	District							Ongoing	Between £500,000 and £1 Million		OCC, CDC, Developers, Bus Operators, Businesses	Not started
		5.3	Work with partners to enhance bus services to meet demands, with consideration given to increasing frequencies (including "turn up and go" services) and express, or limited stop services and the optimisation of existing services.	County							Ongoing	Over £1 Millon		OCC, Bus Operators, Developers	Not started
		5.4	Work with bus operators and employers to ensure improved reliability, attractiveness and resilience of services.	County							Ongoing	Over £1 Millon		OCC, Bus Operators, Businesses	Not started
		5.5	Work with partners to develop a digital strategy to support the bus network within Bicester and surrounding areas.	Local							Between 2 and 5 years	Between £100,000 and £500,000		OCC, CDC, Bus Operators, Community Groups, Businesses, Developers	Not started
		5.6	Work with partners to develop a behavioural strategy to raise awareness about the existing bus network and enhancements.	Local							Up to two years	Between £100,000 and £500,000		OCC, Bus Operators	Not started
BSV6	Work alongside partners to improve rail services and infrastructure.	6.1	Support and promote additional services to improve the passenger experience at Bicester North and Bicester Village Rail Stations.	Hyper-Local							Ongoing	Between £100,000 and £500,000	OCC Capital Funding, Housing Infrastructure Fund (HIF) ,Network Rail, UK Government Funding, S106	OCC, Rail Operators, Network Rail, Businesses	Not started
		6.2	Bicester Village Railway Station a.Support the upgrade of the station to accommodate an increase in patronage by enhancing the waiting facilities, interaction of bus and train services, alongside information and improve and enhance cycling and e-mobility. b.Support the delivery of East West Rail services unlocking the benefits of regional connectivity between Oxford and Cambridge. c.Work with partners to deliver 5G connectivity along the East West Rail route. d.Promote and support the delivery of the electrification of the East West Rail route. or e-mobility).	Regional							Ongoing	Over £1 Millon		OCC, Rail Operators, Network Rail, Bus Operators, EEH	Not started
		6.3	Work with EWR Company to ensure they deliver an underpass to the London Road Crossing making appropriate provision for walking, wheeling, cycling, public transport and motor vehicle solutions, and to consider appropriate opportunities to maximise sustainable and active door-to-door connectivity.	Hyper-Local							Ongoing	Up to £100,000		OCC, Rail Operators	In progress
		6.4	Bicester North Railway Station a.Explore feasibility of additional pedestrian access. b.Assess existing and future parking capacity. c.Develop feasibility to enhance cycling access.	Hyper-Local							Up to 5 years	Up to £100,000		OCC, Rail Operators, Network Rail	Not started
		6.5	Heyford Railway Station a.Work with stakeholders to explore better connectivity between Heyford Station and the residential areas. Subject to the New Towns Taskforce decision and other planning applications , further collaboration will be required to ensure seamless door to door connectivity between Heyford Station (other stations) and Heyford Park. b.Work with partners to monitor the impact of future e-bike trials in Heyford Park. c.Explore feasibility of enhanced rail connectivity to support employment, education and leisure.	Local							Up to 5 years	Between £100,000 and £500,000		OCC, Rail Operators, Network Rail, Developers, Businesses, Bus Operators, Canal & River Trust	In progress

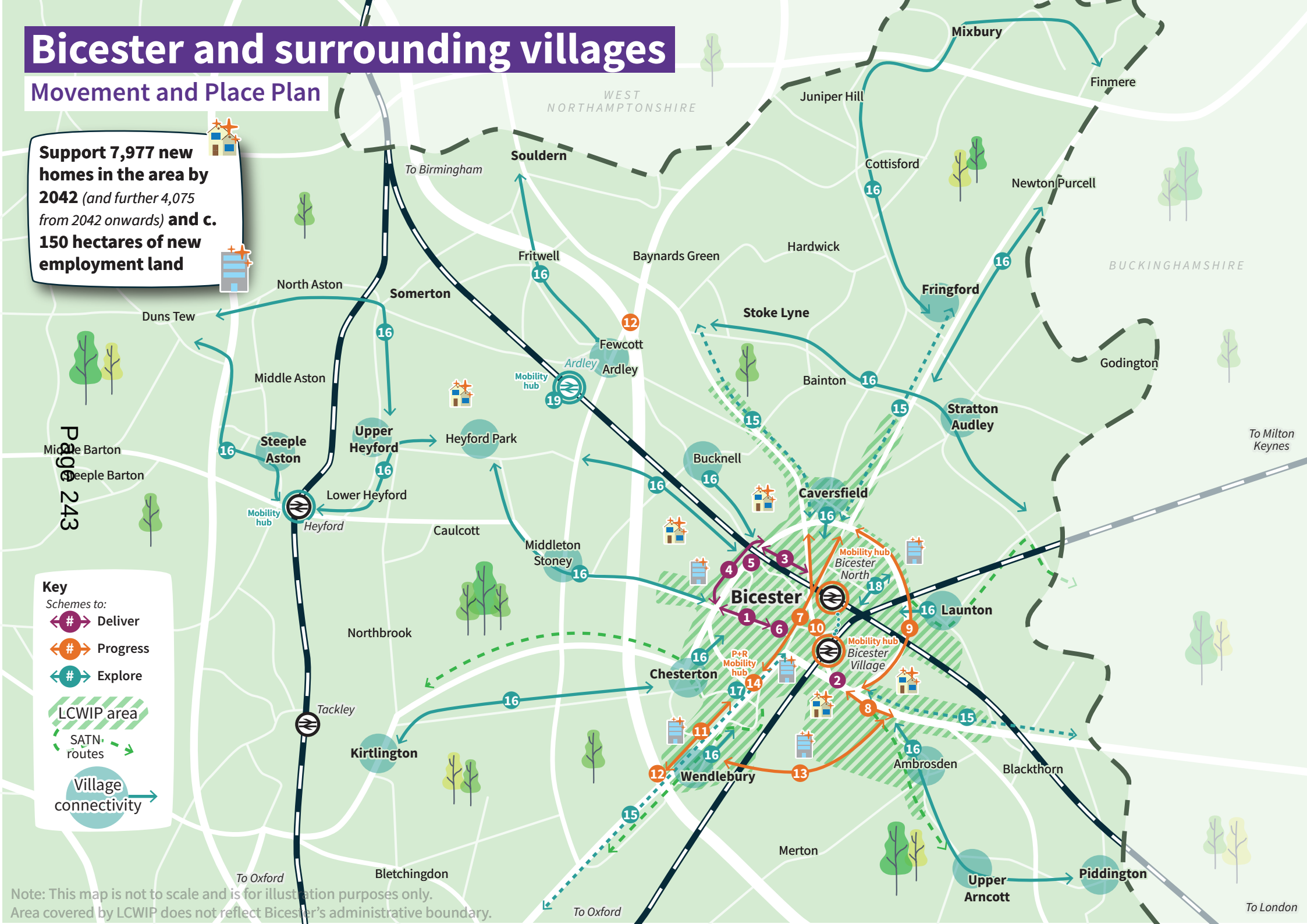
		6.6	Ensure delivery of high-quality public transport and walking, wheeling and cycling links to Bicester North and Bicester Village and Heyford rail stations.	Local							Ongoing	Over £1 Millon		OCC, Rail Operators, Bus Operators, Developers	In progress
		6.7	Work with partners and stakeholders to support the ability to provide charging infrastructure for zero-emission battery trains to align with OxRAIL 2040: Plan for Rail.	County							Over 10 years	Over £1 Millon		OCC, Rail Operators, Network Rail	Not started
		6.8	Enhance station facilities across the Bicester MAP Plan area to meet future population growth, and to improve accessibility and where applicable, consider opportunities for new stations (e.g. Ardley), aligning to OxRAIL 2040: Plan for Rail .	District							Ongoing	Over £1 Millon		OCC, Rail Operators, Network Rail, Developers	Not started
		6.9	Ardley Railway Station a.Collaborate with partners to deliver and develop a Strategic Outline Business Case for the re-opening of Ardley station. b.Subject to the successful Strategic Outline Business Case, work with partners and the community to Ardley rail station, improving and enhancing connectivity for the area.	District							Over 10 years	Over £1 Millon		OCC, CDC, Parishes, Rail Operators Network Rail, Developers, Businesses	Not started
		6.10	Work with partners to explore the delivery of the proposed OxSFRI on the Chiltern maintine.	County							Ongoing	Over £1 Millon		OCC, Rail Operators, Network Rail, Developers	Not started
			Car club and car share												
BSV7	Support the development of a car club network and car share schemes	7.1	Identify with partners a comprehensive network of car clubs, including the prioritisation of parking for car clubs at existing and new developments across Bicester and surrounding villages.	Local							Up to 5 years	Between £500,000 and £1 Million	OCC Capital Funding, Parish / Town Councils, S106, Private Investment	OCC, CDC, Car Club Operators, Developers	Not started
		7.2	Aim for car clubs to be zero emission only.	County							Ongoing	Between £500,000 and £1 Million		OCC, Car Club Operators	Not started
		7.3	Work with developers and businesses to provide EV charging (e.g. e-bikes, cars and motorbikes) and parking to support car clubs and car share, including the delivery of a guidance document for delivery.	Local							Ongoing	Between £100,000 and £500,000		OCC, CDC, Developers, Businesses, Car Club Operators	Not started
		7.4	Collaborate with partners and businesses to develop a car share awareness/ expansion programme.	County							Up to 5 years	Up to £100,000		OCC, CDC, Car Share Operators, Developers, Businesses	Not started
			Demand management												
BSV8	Implement demand management	8.1	Identify the demand management tools and appropriate locations where these may be required in short to medium term, agree further measures to complement the delivery of the Southeast Peripheral Road to mitigate the risk of induced traffic and to enable an increase in walking, wheeling and cycling for local journeys within Bicester.	Local							Up to 5 years	Between £100,000 and £500,000	OCC Capital Funding, Parish / Town Councils, S106, UK Government Funding	OCC, National Highways, CDC, Parishes, Community Groups	In progress
		8.2	In support of our Vision Zero Strategy, using a Safe System approach, we will reduce vehicle speeds within Bicester and its surrounding villages to prioritise the safe movement of people.	Local							Up to 5 years	Between £500,000 and £1 Million		OCC, CDC, Parishes	In progress
		8.3	Work with partners to investigate opportunities to consolidate public parking within town centre and village locations and other public areas, to reduce the need to travel by car as per the LTCP, to prioritise sustainable travel.	Local							Ongoing	Between £500,000 and £1 Million		OCC, CDC, Parishes	Not started
		8.4	Ensure future employment sites adhere to OCC Parking Standards for New Developments and implement Travel Plans with sustainable travel measures, encourage a modal shift away from private car usage towards public and active travel.	County							Up to 5 years	Up to £100,000		OCC, CDC, Developers, Businesses	In progress
		8.5	Explore the viability of a Clean Air Zone and Zero Emission Zone identified in the CDC Air Quality Action Plan 2024.	Local							Ongoing	Between £100,000 and £500,000		OCC, CDC	Not started
		8.6	Explore opportunities to deliver a Workplace Parking Levy and Controlled Parking Zones.	Local							Up to 5 years	Between £100,000 and £500,000		OCC, CDC, Businesses	Not started
		8.7	Where applicable and in accordance with OCC parking standards ensure provision for motorcycle parking and bikes / e-bikes is delivered which caters for non-standard bikes and land is safeguarded to allow for future growth in usage.	County							Ongoing	Between £100,000 and £500,000		OCC, CDC, Developers, Businesses	In progress
			Infrastructure development												
BSV9	Deliver existing movement infrastructure schemes	9.1	We will deliver Objective BSV9 through the following actions: Progress the current ongoing schemes in the pipeline: a.A4095 realignment (strategic link road). b.Eastern Peripheral Movement Corridor (Charbridge Lane / Skimmingdish Lane). c.South East Peripheral Road (SEPR). d. Work with National Highways to secure improvements to Junction 10 of the M40, including Baynard's Green and the B4100 (north and south of the junction).	Local							Between 5 and 10 years	Over £1 Millon		OCC, CDC, Developers, National Highways, DfT Natural England, MOD, Environment Agency	In progress
BSV10	Deliver future movement infrastructure schemes	10.1	Work with partners and the local community to explore the following schemes (but not limited to): a.Place shaping improvements to the central corridor, Kings End to Queen Avenue and extending along Banbury Road and Buckingham Road (phased with delivery of other measures in the MAP Plan). b.SEPR complementary place shaping measures along relieved sections of the current A41 (e.g. bus lanes and cycling improvements). c.Work with National Highways to consider future improvements at Junction 9 of the M40. d.Develop junction capacity and safety improvements on priority highway routes with high quality walking, wheeling and cycling access and bus priority measures where space permits (but not limited to): •A41 / Vendee Drive •A4095 / B4030 (Howes Lane / Middleton Stoney Road) •A4095 / A4421 (Southwold Lane / Buckingham Road) •A41 / A4421 (Rodney House Roundabout / Seelscheid Way) e.Develop junction safety improvements for all users along radial routes into Bicester, for example, but not limited to: •Caversfield junction improvements (Junction of Aunt Ems Lane and B4100) •Blackthorn Rd (junctions) •Charlotte Avenue, explore signalisations to improve safety f.Explore junction safety improvements for all users along routes in the villages within the MAP Plan area. For example, but not limited to: •Ardley Roundabout •Middleton Stoney Crossroads •B4030/ Port Way •B4030 Lower Heyford Road/ Unnamed Road •A4260/ Somerton Road •Hopcrofts Holt •A4260/ B4027 •Ardley Road/ Station Road •Other village locations to be considered as appropriate g.Discourage use of unsuitable rural routes by through traffic, by working with communities to develop place shaping measures through villages in the MAP Plan area that slow traffic and provide a more inviting environment for local people. h.Work with developers and local communities, if large-scale speculative sites are given planning permission, to seek agreement for mitigation measures for movements to safeguard the fabric of the local community.	Local							Ongoing	Over £1 Millon	OCC Capital Funding, Active Travel England (ATE) Funding, Active Travel Fund, Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL), Housing Infrastructure Fund (HIF), Parish / Town Councils, UK Government Funding, S106	OCC, CDC, Parishes, Commuity Groups, Developers, ATE, National Highways, DfT Natural England, MOD, Environment Agency	In progress
			Freight, deliveries and servicing												
		11.1	Actively seek opportunities to identify further HGV restrictions in areas with high walking, wheeling and cycling movements, areas with limited footpath provision and consider enforcement across the Bicester and surrounding villages to protect villages' fabric, learning lessons from previous and/or emerging HGV studies (e.g. Henley-on-Thames and Windrush Valley) to develop bespoke mitigation schemes for this area.	District							Up to 5 years	Between £100,000 and £500,000		OCC, Freight Operators, CDC, Parishes, Community Groups, National Highways	Not started

BSV11	Work with freight and delivery operators to improve movement efficiency and provide zero emission deliveries	11.2	Work with partners to understand HGV concerns and find solutions for the area (e.g. as recommended in the 2023 Atkins freight study or utilising dedicated freight studies conducted by the council), conducting an audit of lay-by provision and to ensure HGVs are travelling on designated roads as per OCCs Freight Map. Also, consideration will be given of signage, physical measures, environmental weight restrictions and monitoring using ANPR cameras or other technology.	District							Up to 5 years	Between £100,000 and £500,000	OCC Capital Funding, , UK Government Funding, Parish / Town Councils, S106	OCC, CDC, Parishes, Community Groups, Freight Operators, Delivery Operators, Businesses, National Highways	Not started
		11.3	In support of OCC Vision Zero Strategy, we will actively seek to implement and use Direct Vision Standard for HGVs across the Plan area.	County							Up to 5 years	Between £100,000 and £500,000		OCC, Freight Operators, Delivery Operators	Not started
		11.4	Working with local community groups, stakeholder etc., conduct an area wide restriction study for this MAP Plan area, exploring the proposed and speculative development.	Local							Up to two years	Up to £100,000		OCC, CDC, Parishes, Community Groups,	Not started
		11.5	Collaborate with partners to develop feasibility of first and last mile delivery hubs using cargo bikes and e-cargo bikes at employment sites.	Local							Up to 5 years	Up to £100,000		OCC, CDC, Freight Operators, Businesses, E-Cargo Bike Operators	Not started
		11.6	Support the rollout of parcel / grocery lockers at key transport locations such as Bicester Village and Bicester North Rail Station's, Bicester Bus Interchange (Pioneer Square), Heyford Park, Bicester Park and Ride, Mobility Hubs, and local/ district centres to support integrated travel.	Hyper-Local							Ongoing	Between £500,000 and £1 Million		OCC, CDC, Parishes, Delivery Operators, Supermarkets	Not started
		11.7	Explore opportunities which support the transition of freight from road to rail.	County							Ongoing	Over £1 Millon		OCC, Freight Operators, Rail Operators, Network Rail, Businesses, Delivery Operators	Not started
		11.8	Identify EV charging locations for freight to support the transition towards low carbon freight travel.	County							Ongoing	Up to £100,000		OCC, CDC, Freight Operators, Delivery Operators, National Highways	Not started
		11.9	Working with partners to explore the potential impact of the proposed OxSRFI to minimise and mitigate the impact of HGVs needed for construction and ensure an HGV routing strategy is agreed before work commences.	District							Ongoing	Over £1 Millon		OCC, Freight Operators, Rail Operators, National Highways	Not started
	Climate resilience															
BSV12	Deliver infrastructure and placemaking schemes which are resilient to changing climate	12.1	Ensure development and highways schemes across the MAP Plan area protect and enhance existing green and blue infrastructure in line with Cherwell District Council Local Plan.	District							Ongoing	Over £1 Millon	OCC Capital Funding, Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL), Parish / Town Councils, UK Government Funding, S106, Private Investment, Active Travel England (ATE) Funding, Walk Wheel & Cycle Trust	OCC, CDC, Parishes, Developers, Natural England, Environment Agency, National Highways	In Progress
		12.2	Develop a strategy to provide greening of and placing solar panels on bus stops, car parks, train stations, signage, mobility hubs, etc.	Hyper-Local							Up to two years	Up to £100,000		OCC, CDC, Natural England, Rail Operators, Bus Operators, Developers, Network Rail	Not started
		12.3	Work with partners using nature-based solutions to ensure new green and blue infrastructure is created in new developments and highways schemes to protect and enhance biodiversity in line with OCC's Local Nature Recovery Strategy (LNRS) to deliver at least 20% biodiversity net gain.	County							Ongoing	Over £1 Millon		OCC, CDC, Developers, Walking Wheeling & Cycling Trust, Canal & Rivers Trust, Natural England	In progress
		12.4	To support the delivery of a net zero transport network by 2040 (a target of the LTCP), all infrastructure developments should aim to minimise whole life carbon emissions following PAS 2080 standard (in accordance with Policy 27 of LTCP).	County							Ongoing	Over £1 Millon		OCC, CDC, Developers	In progress
		12.5	Support wider use of SuDS and at new developments, where applicable.	County							Ongoing	Over £1 Millon		OCC, CDC, Developers	In progress
		12.6	Support schemes that achieve greening and re-wilding of places, contributing to the Local Nature Recovery Strategy.	District							Ongoing	Over £1 Millon		OCC, CDC, Developers, Natural England, Rail Operators, National Highways, Environment Agency	In progress
	Innovation and new technologies															
BSV13	Utilise emerging and future technologies to develop innovation in Bicester and support a vibrant and connected village community	13.1	13.1Working with partners, explore innovation opportunities to support the delivery of the following, but not limited to: a.Electric charging hubs for bus, car, e-bikes etc. b.Deliver full network coverage and access to WI-FI across the MAP area. c.East-West Rail 5G network Bicester and Bletchley (short term) and between Oxford and Bicester on to Milton Keynes (long term). d.Develop integrated SMART Infrastructure, such as smart lighting to support active travel and luminous lining. e.Work with partners to develop a zero-emission shared self-driving vehicles to link key employment sites. f.Deliver EV charging infrastructure at Bicester Park and Ride, across Plan Area to enable the transition to EV vehicles. g.Drone flights/air taxis at Bicester Motion. h.Explore innovative Mobility as a Service (MaaS) solutions within the Plan area. i.Utilising the growth in Bicester and across the Plan area to explore innovative ways to integrate new developments and existing communities. j.Utilise the opportunities to exploit and deliver new technologies at Heyford Park, subject to national government decision on the New Towns. k.Driverless bus/guided bus routes.	Regional							Ongoing	Over £1 Millon	OCC Capital Funding, UK Government Funding, S106, Private Investment	OCC, CDC, DfT, Businesses, Network Rail, Rail Operators, Bus Operators, Developers	In progress
		13.2	We will seek to: a.Facilitate forthcoming new technology to inform future movement and place networks. b.Pro-actively seek funding opportunities to deliver and support innovation. c.Facilitate forthcoming new technology on our transport network. d.Undertake monitoring and evaluation of schemes. e.Support the county and other LAs by providing data and insights (living lab).	Regional							Ongoing	Over £1 Millon		OCC, CDC, DfT, Businesses, Rail Operators, Bus Operators, Developers	In progress

Bicester and surrounding villages

Movement and Place Plan

Support 7,977 new homes in the area by 2042 *(and further 4,075 from 2042 onwards)* **and c. 150 hectares of new employment land**



Key

Schemes to:

- # Deliver
- # Progress
- # Explore

LCWIP area

SATN routes

Village connectivity

Note: This map is not to scale and is for illustration purposes only.
Area covered by LCWIP does not reflect Bicester's administrative boundary.

Bicester and surrounding villages

Movement and Place Plan

Work with partners to deliver the following

1 Middleton Stoney Road Active Travel Scheme
- A new two-way cycleway along the full length of Middleton Stoney Road, between Oxford Road and Howes Lane, together with new footway and zebra crossings.

2 London Road Active Travel Scheme
- A new two-way cycleway between the A41/Ploughley Road junction and London Road/Launton Road junction together with new footway and zebra crossings.

3 Active travel scheme - along the railway
- Off-line shared cycle pedestrrian route parallel to railway track between Bucknell Road and Banbury Road.

4 Howes Lane realignment
- Support access to new homes, promoting or enhancing bus and active travel infrastructure to NW bicester development including greening of existing Howes Lane.

5 Howes Lane / Bucknell Road junction improvements
- Promote and prioritise walking, wheeling and cycling movements.

6 Middleton Stoney Road / Kings End / Oxford Road roundabout improvements
- Deliver a seamless link between Kingsmere, Bicester Village and the Town Centre.
- Provide walking, wheeling and cycling infrastructure.

Work with partners to progress and shape the following

7 Bicester Central Corridor
- Make walking, wheeling and cycling natural first choice
- Encourage and enabling people to use public transport
- Improve road safety and make routes more attractive

8 A41 Active Travel Scheme (Rodney House Roundabout to Ploughly Road junction)
- Provide walking wheeling and cycling infrastructure.

9 Eastern Peripheral Movement Corridor
- Promoting walking wheeling and cycling infrastructure, balancing mode share, reliable and frequent bus services.

10 Bicester Market Square
- Enhancing pedestrian space to create a more inviting and accessible environment.
- Improving town centre connectivity to support footfall and local business vitality.
- Optimising traffic movement to ensure efficient flow through and around the area.

11 A41 cycle scheme (J9 to Vendee Drive Roundabout)
- A safe and suitable cycle and walking route between the Site and Bicester along either the A41 or via improvements along the national cycle network 51 (Wendlebury Road) or a combination of both.

12 J9 and J10 junction improvements
- Improvements to J9 and J10 to support impacts from planned growth in Bicester area.

13 South East Peripheral Road (SEPR)
- Removing strategic traffic away from the town centre, allowing for enhanced quality of place encouraging regeneration and development.
- Provide walking, wheeling and cycling infrastructure.
- Create the opportunity for transformative change along A41 including dedicated bus lanes and cycle lanes to support modal shift.

14 Vendee Drive Roundabout Improvements
- Vision Zero scheme to increase highway user safety, enhanced crossings and signalization of the roundabout, realignment of Park and Ride access arrangements.

Explore future opportunities for consideration

15 Bus priority measures

16 Village connectivity and mitigation measures

17 Bicester Park and Ride enhancements

18 Launton Road improvements

19 Potential railway station at Ardley

Area-wide measures

- Enhanced bus services and infrastructure through BSIP
- Walking, wheeling and cycling infrastructure
- Development of SATN routes
- Network of cycle parking
- Public realm improvements
- Implement Bicester LCWIP
- Network of mobility hubs at major interchanges
- Network of mini, linking, suburban and rural mobility hubs
- New car club and car share scheme
- New shared micromobility scheme
- Continue to develop the area as a hub for testing new and innovative technologies

How do communities in Bicester and Surrounding Villages benefit from the MAP Plan

Travel by public transport

The inclusive step free access at bus stops in Bicester means Aimee can access all bus stops in her wheelchair. Her mental health has improved as she has greater independence.

The frequent bus services to Bicester Eco Town from the town centre and Bicester Shopping Park have made it convenient for Oliver and his partner to complete errands and have removed anxiety from journey planning.

A new bus service from Lower Arncott has removed Freddie's social isolation. He and his wife now travel to Langford Village Community Centre and have enrolled in yoga classes to help his arthritis.

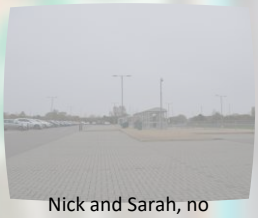
Economic prosperity

With the opening of East West Rail (EWR) , Zainab was able to accept a job opportunity in Milton Keynes and is very thankful for the opportunities EWR gives the residents of Bicester.

Journeys in your local area

Muhammad uses the e-bikes and e-scooters at the micromobility hub in Bicester Eco Town. The number of docking stations and wayfinding make this form of travel really simple and enjoyable.

The introduction of 20mph speed limits in Bicester has given Thea the confidence to cycle on the road, she now carries out many of her local journeys by bike, gaining health and wellbeing benefits.



Nick and Sarah, no children, commute via enhanced Heyford Station, have more flexibility on when to travel, also when accessing leisure and culture in Oxford & London. Sam works from home more, benefitting from Place Making in their village,

Connectivity to Local Places

The new cycle path on Middleton Stoney Road has provided a safe cycle route to his children's primary school, creating a joyous school run.

In the local community

Amirah takes her two young children to nursery by e-cargo bike and the new inclusive cycle parking in Bicester town centre means Amirah can safely lock her bike and continue the journey to work.

The new bike hangar outside Orla's flat enabled them to purchase a bike now that they have a safe place to secure it. Orla only uses the car now for longer journeys and weekly shop.

The new school zone has made the walk to school much safer for Isaac and his family. Isaac has noticed far more children are travelling actively to school now.

The new cycle/walking route from Ambrosden to Bicester has enabled Ayaan to cycle to school and visit friends. Ayaan has transport independence and is no longer reliant on lifts.

Bicester and Surrounding Villages

Movement and Place Plan

Bicester and Surrounding Villages benefits from the MAP Plan

Travel by public transport

Due to a disability Natala is unable to drive, the enhanced bus service has enabled Natala to feel confident about travelling to see friends in Heyford Park by bus.

Ciaran previously felt isolated in Wendlebury, but the new crossing facilities on A41 and access to bus priority routes has enabled Ciaran to travel into Bicester and gain part time employment.

Lakshmi cycles to the Bicester North Rail Station using the secure cycle parking and takes the train to High Wycombe where she works.

Connectivity to local places

When Kareem's family moved to Bicester Eco Town, they sold their car and use the EV car club for day trips and for the family shop. They enjoy having more disposable income.

Journeys in your local area

The new bus priority and cycle route along A41 means Olufemi has choice in how he gets to work at Tritax Park from Bicester Eco Town.

Sarah loves nature and enjoys the new walks they are able to do from Bure Park, the art trail enroute to green spaces at Bicester Eco Town make it a pleasurable and interactive journey.

The removal of street clutter and inclusive street design in Bicester means Arthur can now safely wheel to Bicester Bowls Club.

Sophia and her family now cycle from Graven Hill to Bicester Park Run in Bicester Fields using the new crossing facilities and London Road cycle path.

In the local community

Steve is self employed and the ease of access to EV charge points across Bicester and surrounding villages has enabled Steve to make the transition to an electric van.

Camille is a district nurse and needs her car to see patients in the community, now the roads are less congested Camille is able to see more patients.

Economic prosperity

Tiana now car shares from Fringford since her workplace introduced guaranteed taxi home for car sharers in emergencies. Her family has sold their second car and have more disposable income.

The public realm enhancements at Market Square encouraged Marco to open a new restaurant. Marco employs 12 staff, creating opportunities in the labour market.

Bicester and Surrounding Villages

Movement and Place Plan

Summary Document

You can contact us at

AreaMovementandPlaceStrategies@oxfordshire.gov.uk

OXFORDSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

Vision: Bicester and the Surrounding Villages

We envisage Bicester and the surrounding villages as sustainable, connected healthy places where communities thrive.

A people-first approach will be utilised, focusing on sustainable connectivity to new developments, prioritising walking, wheeling, cycling, and public transport to provide choice in how residents travel to schools, leisure facilities and local employment.

We will deliver streets that support sustainable growth, enhance biodiversity and connect people to nature, showcasing Bicester's Garden Town status and the beauty of the surrounding villages. To improve the public realm, creating places for people to meet, places to stop and rest, while ensuring this is sensitive to the character and needs of residential areas and the historic core of Bicester, improving the connectivity of villages whilst maintaining their rural nature making the surrounding villages and Bicester a more desirable place to live, work, and visit.

Area context

The MAP Plan area comprises Bicester and its surrounding villages, with a population of 58,570 as of the 2021 census. This area is characterised by strong interconnections between the town and villages, especially for education, employment, and leisure, which are expected to strengthen further over time. The Plan encompasses villages such as Ardley, Bucknell, Mixbury, Fringford, Stoke Lyne, Stratton Audley, Launton, Upper Arncott, Piddington, Wendlebury, Chesterton, Kirtlington, Duns Tew, The Astons, The Heyfords, and Somerton. Some villages are governed by neighbourhood plans, notably the Mid-Cherwell Neighbourhood Plan, which this MAP Plan complements and updates as needed. The Plan supports local and county-level transport and development policies and will supersede existing area strategies once adopted.

Bicester, as the plan's main focus, is a historic market town in north Oxfordshire, located northeast of Oxford with a population of 37,172. It has experienced considerable growth, being designated as a Garden Town in 2014, and boasts a wide array of amenities such as shops, supermarkets, restaurants, and a thriving market centred around Market Square. Major investments have improved the town centre, notably Pioneer Square and associated retail.

The MAP Plan considers the dynamic relationships between Bicester and its rural surroundings, assessing impacts of future developments up to 2050. This includes substantial potential growth at Heyford Park, which may become a new town with over 10,000 homes, subject to government decisions. Speculative developments also present pressures on infrastructure and amenities, requiring careful assessment of cumulative impacts.

Employment opportunities in Bicester are diverse, spanning distribution, retail, motorsports, offices, and defence, with proximity to Oxford, London, and Birmingham enhancing its appeal. Bicester is also recognised as an Eco Zone and Corporate HQ Hub, hosting innovative projects like the UK's first vertiport at Bicester Motion. Key employers include Bicester Village outlet, attracting around 6 million visitors annually and providing significant local employment, and Bicester Motion, focusing on historic vehicles and future mobility tech.

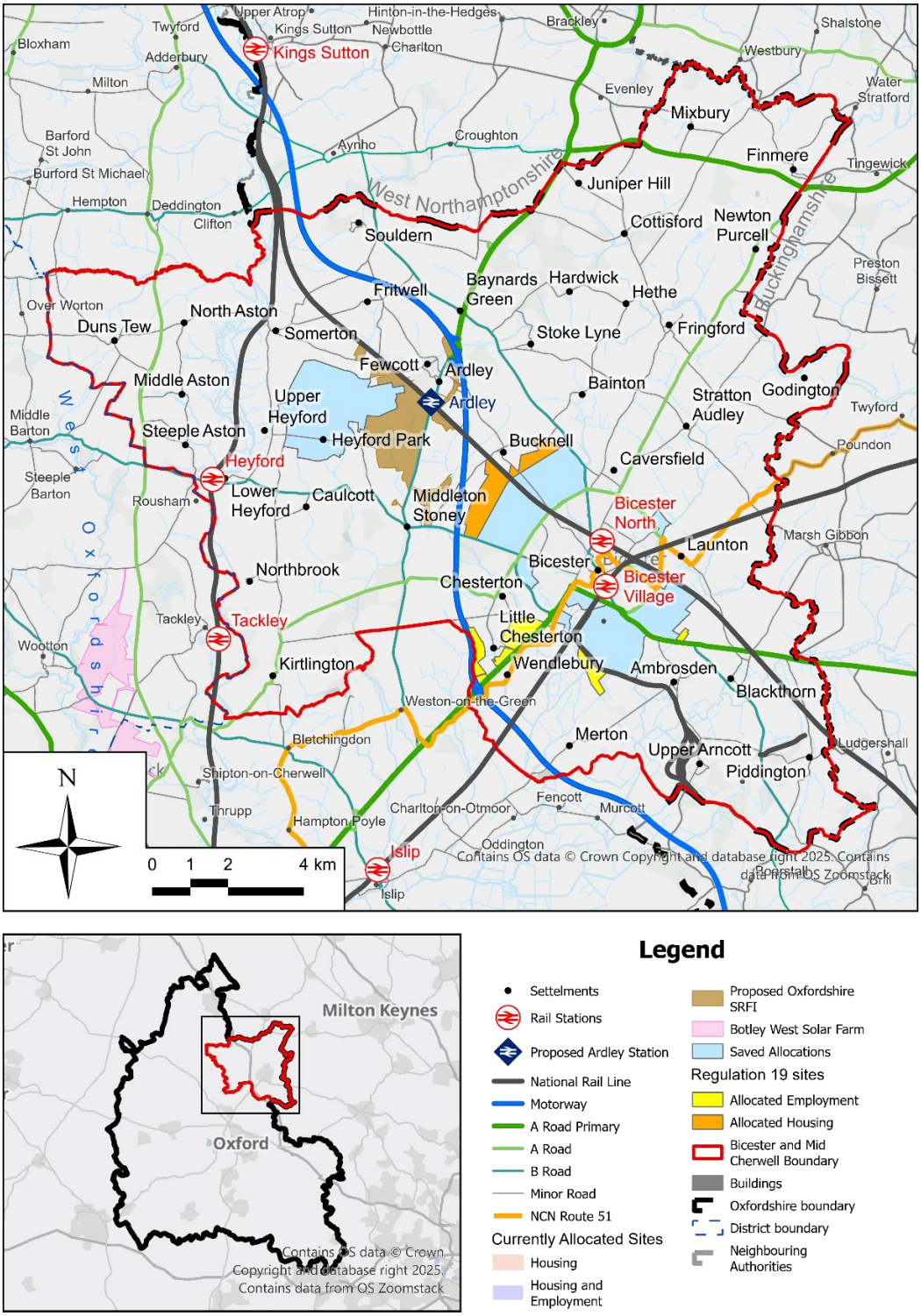
The area's rural landscape and open spaces, including parts of Oxford's Green Belt, support recreation and wellbeing. Bicester's flat topography and compact layout make walking, wheeling and cycling viable, supported by national cycle routes and a network

of footways and paths, though some residential streets lack permeability. The Plan aims to address barriers to sustainable mobility, especially for walking, wheeling, and cycling.

Villages are linked through a mix of walking, wheeling, cycling routes, and a comprehensive network of Public Rights of Way. Nationally recognised recreational routes further enhance leisure opportunities. Transport connectivity is robust, with two railway stations in Bicester and one at Heyford, extensive bus services, and proximity to major roads like the A41, M40, and A34. These connections make the area attractive for commuters and underpin future growth prospects.

Overall, the MAP Plan area is poised for significant expansion, with new homes and employment sites planned, particularly in Bicester and the North-West Bicester development. Strategic transport and infrastructure investments are key to supporting this growth and ensuring the area remains a desirable place to live, work, and visit.

Map of Bicester and the Surrounding Villages



Legend

- Settelments
- Rail Stations
- Proposed Ardley Station
- National Rail Line
- Motorway
- A Road Primary
- A Road
- B Road
- Minor Road
- NCN Route 51

Currently Allocated Sites

- Housing
- Housing and Employment
- Proposed Oxfordshire SRFI
- Botley West Solar Farm
- Saved Allocations

Regulation 19 sites

- Allocated Employment
- Allocated Housing
- Bicester and Mid Cherwell Boundary
- Buildings
- Oxfordshire boundary
- District boundary
- Neighbouring Authorities

Challenges and opportunities

The MAP Plan area, encompassing Bicester and surrounding villages, is undergoing significant development that will impact movement and connectivity. This growth presents both challenges and opportunities, with a key focus on maintaining the area's rural character and lifestyle while embracing sustainable development. The Cherwell Local Plan designates Bicester and Heyford Park as major growth areas, with thousands of new homes and extensive employment land planned. The government has also shortlisted Heyford Park as a potential New Town, aiming for a sustainable community centred on clean technology and improved infrastructure.

Future developments are expected to enhance transport infrastructure, public realm, and promote sustainable travel options such as walking, wheeling, cycling, and public transport. The aim is to encourage modal shift, reduce car dependency, and improve connectivity within Bicester and between villages. New developments will be required to submit Travel Plans and support integrated transport solutions, including micromobility hubs and improved public transport services. The provision of transport choice is intended to reduce car ownership, improve air quality, health outcomes, and support economic growth.

Improving connectivity will involve addressing gaps in the current network, making sustainable travel the preferred option for local journeys and linking new developments to key amenities. The plan also recognises the health and wellbeing benefits of increased active travel, such as lower rates of cardiovascular disease and obesity, and aims to reduce inequalities by ensuring equitable access to sustainable transport. Air quality improvements are highlighted, with potential health and economic savings if pollution levels are reduced to reach World Health Organisation guidelines.

Place-shaping is a central theme, building on Bicester's status as a Garden Town and the UK's first eco-town at North West Bicester. The plan promotes healthy living, resilient infrastructure, and nature-based solutions to improve environmental quality and community cohesion. It advocates a holistic approach to community needs, preserving cultural assets, and addressing gaps in leisure and retail provision, especially in villages.

Walking, wheeling, and cycling infrastructure will be expanded, leveraging the area's compact and flat topography. The plan seeks to improve connectivity, remove barriers, and incorporate e-bike innovations, especially in rural areas. Enhancements to Public

Rights of Way and recreational routes are proposed to increase accessibility and promote active lifestyles.

Public transport improvements are outlined, particularly for villages with limited services. The plan calls for better bus and rail integration, increased frequency, improved passenger amenities, and accessible pedestrian routes to bus stops. Rail improvements, including new stations and service enhancements, are necessary to support growth and regional connectivity.

Road safety measures are emphasised, following OCC's Vision Zero Strategy to eliminate fatalities and serious injuries. High vehicle flows and single occupancy trips are identified as issues, with interventions needed to promote sustainable travel, reduce congestion, and improve safety, especially in villages affected by traffic.

Addressing climate resilience and environmental challenges is integral, with commitments to decarbonise transport, manage flooding risks, and support ecological recovery. The plan aligns with Oxfordshire's climate and nature recovery strategies, aiming for a sustainable and resilient future.

In summary, the MAP Plan sets out a people-first approach for sustainable growth over the next 25 years. It aims to create inclusive, active, and healthy communities, improve urban and rural environments, and deliver a transport system that supports economic and environmental goals while preserving the unique character of Bicester and surrounding villages.

Delivered infrastructure and schemes

The transport strategy in Bicester over recent decades has concentrated on constructing peripheral routes to divert traffic away from the town centre, notably King's End and Queens Avenue, with developments such as Vendee Drive and traffic-calming measures on Banbury Road and Buckingham Road. In recent years, a range of infrastructure improvements have been introduced by the County Council, including upgraded junctions, new roundabouts, widened road corridors, and enhanced pedestrian and cycle facilities with Toucan crossings and segregated paths. Notable schemes include signalisation at Ploughley Road/A41 junction, conversion of Charbridge Lane level crossing to an overbridge, and the new Bicester Park & Ride facility.

Electric vehicle infrastructure has been expanded with new charging hubs and points at various sites in Bicester and the surrounding villages, alongside the introduction of a Car Club at Elmsbrook. Active travel has been promoted through improved pedestrian and cycle links, including new routes, crossings and wayfinding projects. Village mitigation measures have provided new traffic calming, signage, parking, and speed limit adjustments across multiple parishes.

Further countywide initiatives include the proposed Strategic Active Travel Network (SATN), and the Bicester Local Cycle and Walking Infrastructure Plan (LCWIP) ten-year plan to increase walking and cycling. Bus service improvements have restored and introduced new routes connecting Bicester with surrounding villages and key destinations such as hospitals and business parks, improving accessibility and connectivity for rural and urban communities alike.

Planned infrastructure delivery

Ongoing efforts to enhance transport and movement in Bicester include a range of active travel and infrastructure projects, prioritising schemes outlined in the Bicester LCWIP. Key initiatives underway are new two-way cycleways and improved pedestrian crossings along Middleton Stoney Road and London Road, both scheduled for delivery in Autumn 2026 following approved designs. The Middleton Stoney Road/Oxford Road junction will be redesigned to better support walking, wheeling, and cycling by Summer 2026. Pedestrian and cycle facilities are planned for the A41 (south and east), with completion expected between March 2026 and 2027. Improved active travel links are being developed between Graven Hill, Kingsmere, and surrounding countryside. The realignment of A4095 at Howes Lane/Lords Lane aims to alleviate congestion and enhance connectivity for new developments.

Oxfordshire's LEVI programme will introduce at least 1,200 new public EV charging points by the end of 2027, including 230 low-power chargers across Cherwell. Village mitigation measures such as gateway features, traffic calming, build-outs, vehicle activated signs, and speed limit adjustments are proposed for numerous local villages to enhance safety and accessibility. Notably, a new walking, wheeling, and cycle route is being investigated to connect Heyford Park with Heyford Station, along with improved bus connectivity to support sustainable growth and access to Oxford and Banbury.

Objective BSV1

Create a sense of place through implementing healthy place shaping interventions

The Place Shaping objective (BSV1) within the Bicester and Surrounding Villages Movement and Place Plan (MAP Plan) prioritises the transformation of streets and public spaces to foster vibrant, healthy, and liveable communities. Aligned directly with Policies 8 to 14 of the Local Transport and Connectivity Plan (LTCP), and supporting a broader range of LTCP policies, this objective emphasises the importance of streets as multifunctional spaces that go beyond transport, serving as hubs for social interaction, economic activity, and cultural engagement.

Recognising that Bicester's historic town centre and many surrounding villages are currently dominated by motor vehicle use, this objective seeks to rebalance priorities by creating environments that encourage walking, wheeling, cycling, and public transport use. The aim is to facilitate social engagement, strengthen local businesses, and support cultural and recreational activities, ultimately improving residents' and visitors' quality of life and supporting LTCP outcomes such as improved public health, reduced inequalities, and stronger local economies.

The approach leverages the Healthy Streets Toolkit and seeks community involvement to deliver tailored place shaping schemes. Key actions outlined include conducting audits to guide inclusive street improvements, developing strategies for enhanced public spaces across Bicester and its villages, implementing cohesive wayfinding schemes, introducing art and green spaces, creating play streets and school zones, and working with partners on regeneration and cumulative impact assessments for new developments. There is a strong focus on community ownership of placemaking assets and ensuring that new and existing amenities serve evolving needs and support social cohesion.

Through these interventions, the MAP Plan aims to ensure that Bicester and surrounding villages become better connected, environmentally sustainable, and welcoming for everyone, while safeguarding their unique heritage and character.

Objective BSV2

Deliver comprehensive and inclusive walking, wheeling and cycling network interventions

This objective seeks to make walking, wheeling, and cycling the natural choice for short journeys across Bicester and neighbouring villages. Central to the Local Transport and Connectivity Plan (LTCP), these modes are prioritised in the transport user hierarchy and supported by neighbourhood design improvements to enable safe, enjoyable, and extensive movement corridors. The ambition is to create liveable neighbourhoods where children can travel safely to school, residents can access local services easily, and all can enjoy healthy lives and greater transport choice.

Current data shows walking and cycling rates are relatively low, especially in Bicester, highlighting the need to shift travel habits. The council's Active Travel Strategy aims to increase cycle trips by 200% by 2031, with supporting measures outlined in the adopted LCWIP, and new county-wide infrastructure projects. Proposed actions include expanding networks, upgrading rural lanes and towpaths, developing green corridors, and introducing micro-mobility schemes such as e-bikes and e-scooters, particularly to improve connectivity between villages and transport hubs like Heyford Station.

To ensure inclusivity, the plan recommends removing access barriers, providing cycle parking for all types of cycles, and supporting behavioural change through initiatives like Bikeability training and community bike loans. Partnership work will underpin delivery, funding, and ongoing monitoring to measure the impact on active travel modal share. Ultimately, the objective supports health, wellbeing, climate, economic growth, and social cohesion for Bicester and surrounding communities.

Objective BSV3

Create a network of mobility hubs

Objectives BSV3 to BSV6 aim to increase public transport use in Bicester and surrounding villages, building on the policies outlined in the LTCP. Currently, fewer than 10% of commuting trips within Bicester are made using public transport, with over 60% by car. Key destinations for commuting include Oxford, Banbury, and London, all well-served by bus and train links, which presents opportunities for modal shift.

However, bus passenger satisfaction in Oxfordshire has declined significantly, highlighting the need to improve cost, frequency, travel time, and convenience.

Bicester benefits from two train stations connecting Bicester to a number of destinations including several major cities. Future rail services will further enhance connectivity. Rural stations like Heyford have less frequent train services, leading to greater car dependency. Efforts are underway to explore a new rail station near Ardley and Heyford Park New Town to improve sustainable travel options.

The integration of public transport with walking, cycling, and wheeling is vital for enabling multi-modal journeys and creating a sustainable network. Levels of travel by sustainable modes are currently low, with only 13.4% walking and 4.9% cycling to work. The OCC's Mobility Hub Strategy, adopted in 2023, guides the development of various types of mobility hubs tailored to local contexts.

Actions to deliver Objective BSV3 include exploring a network of mobility hubs at strategic sites such as at Bicester's railway stations, Park and Ride, and Pioneer Square, with potential enhancements at Heyford and Ardley. Improvements to hubs will focus on better waiting facilities, safety, digital connectivity, restrooms, cycle and EV parking, and links to leisure, education, and coach services. The plan also supports rural, suburban, and mini mobility hubs to foster greater travel choice, economic growth, and community benefits.

Objective BSV4

Interventions to enhance bus infrastructure

This objective highlights the importance of high-quality bus infrastructure to ensure efficient and inclusive public transport in Bicester and surrounding villages. It stresses the need for well-maintained roads, footpaths, and safe crossing points to enhance the user experience. Integrating walking and cycling with bus services is seen as essential for seamless 'door to door' connectivity. The current situation shows inconsistency in bus stop quality, limited real-time information, and accessibility challenges, especially in rural locations. The strategy proposes improvements such as better bus stops with shelters, seating, lighting, and real-time information, alongside mobile app solutions for rural users. It is recognised that there are limited bus priority measures in place and that many of the vehicles are dated and have high levels of emissions. However, there are plans to update these services to improve reliability, air quality, and journey times. Key actions include developing a bus route hierarchy, implementing smart

infrastructure, improving waiting facilities, and working with local communities, stakeholders, and developers. The overarching aim is to support economic growth, social inclusion, and environmental goals, aligning with relevant policies and encouraging a shift towards sustainable transport modes.

Objective BSV5

Interventions to enhance bus services

This objective explores interventions to enhance bus services in Bicester and surrounding villages. Multiple bus operators provide connections to key regional destinations such as Oxford, Banbury, and Milton Keynes, but there is a notable lack of high-frequency services. Most villages are served by buses running once per hour or less, with limited evening and weekend coverage. Only a handful of routes operate during these times, making access challenging for residents, particularly in rural areas. Coordination between the various operators is limited, despite the introduction of the MyBus Oxfordshire ticket, which covers most local buses.

Bus commuting rates are low, particularly in villages, where many residents work from home or are retired. To increase bus patronage, improvements to frequency, reliability, and passenger satisfaction are seen as vital. The strategy includes collaborating with operators and developers to fund and enhance services, especially for new developments using S106 funding, and connecting communities to key residential, leisure, and employment sites. Additional aims include developing new long-distance and orbital routes, enhancing community transport, and optimising existing services to improve coverage and reliability.

The plan also calls for digital and behavioural strategies to raise awareness of the bus network and its improvements, with the overall objective of reducing car dependency, supporting sustainable development, to align with wider county and national transport policies.

Objective BSV6

Work alongside partners to improve rail services and infrastructure

The rail network in the Bicester MAP Plan area comprises three stations: Bicester Village, Bicester North, and Heyford, with plans to explore reopening a fourth at Ardley. Bicester and surrounding villages will benefit from the East West Rail (EWR) project,

which aims to provide up to six trains per hour by the mid-2030s, improving connections to Milton Keynes, Bedford, Cambridge, and potentially further afield. Aspirations also exist to extend services to Didcot, Swindon, Bristol or Reading as part of the OxRail 2040 strategy.

Bicester Village and Bicester North are important regional stations, offering fast and direct services to key destinations including Oxford, Birmingham, High Wycombe, London, and more, with significant passenger numbers and high performance for punctuality. Both stations provide ample cycle parking and car parking, supporting access from surrounding villages and boosting local tourism. Heyford station, in contrast, has fewer services and limited facilities, future plans propose service improvements and facility upgrades.

The reopening of Ardley station is proposed to support new developments, with sustainable access links being a key consideration. Across the network, the aim is to improve rail service frequency, reliability, and station accessibility, as well as to integrate rail with other modes of transport (bus, cycling, walking). Recent enhancements include the first phase of East West Rail and the upgrade of Chiltern Railways rolling stock with new coaches.

Specific objectives include supporting and promoting additional services, upgrading facilities, enhancing integration with other transport modes, delivering electrification and 5G connectivity, and planning new stations and infrastructure to meet future population growth. These actions support a shift towards sustainable travel, reduce car dependency, and align with the council's transport policy goals.

Objective BSV7

Support the development of a car club network and car share schemes

Car clubs and car sharing, collectively referred to as shared mobility, offer significant benefits including reduced car ownership, improved air quality, and increased use of public transport and active travel. Policy 39 of the LTCP highlights car clubs as an appealing alternative to private car ownership, fostering greater use of sustainable transport options and providing access to vehicles when needed, thereby enhancing local air quality and reducing inequalities. Currently, Bicester and its surrounding villages lack car clubs, presenting an opportunity to develop a network of zero-emission vehicles situated at key locations such as employment sites and transport interchanges. With 85% of Bicester households owning at least one car, higher than the

national average. Car clubs could help shift reliance away from private vehicles, with evidence suggesting each car club vehicle replaces 14 to 32 private cars and encourages members to walk or cycle more frequently. Financial savings, particularly with EVs, are also noteworthy.

Car sharing involves multiple people sharing journeys, promoted locally through channels such as Cherwell District Council and platforms like Liftshare. Even occasional car sharing can reduce individual trips by around 20%, decreasing congestion, pollution, and travel costs, while also fostering social connections. The Eco Business Centre in Bicester exemplifies local car sharing promotion, though such schemes are less prevalent in surrounding villages, highlighting a disparity in travel options. The outlined objective BSV7 supports several LTCP policies and will be delivered through actions such as establishing a comprehensive network of car clubs with prioritised parking, encouraging zero-emission vehicles, collaborating with developers and businesses for EV charging and parking, and developing a car share awareness and expansion programme in partnership with local stakeholders.

Objective BSV8

Implement demand management

This objective outlines the strategic approach for managing transport demand and developing infrastructure in Bicester and surrounding villages. In accordance with LTCP Policy 34, the plan aims to discourage private car use through targeted demand management measures, particularly in areas with strong sustainable travel options. These measures are designed to improve air quality, reduce congestion, and promote healthier and more sustainable forms of travel.

Objective BSV8 addresses the challenges posed by high car ownership, through traffic, and projected growth in housing and employment. The impact on congestion, air quality, public health, and the reliability of public transport is highlighted, with special concern for rural roads not suited to increased traffic volumes. Actions include implementing parking restrictions, controlled zones, low emission and clean air zones; and promoting alternatives such as walking, wheeling, cycling and public transport. The objective also supports a range of LTCP policies, seeking to prioritise sustainable travel, improve safety, and encourage a modal shift away from private cars.

Infrastructure development, as described under Policy 36 of the LTCP, follows a ‘decide and provide’ approach, prioritising new or improved facilities for walking, cycling,

wheeling, and public transport before in the final instance, considering increased road capacity. Infrastructure schemes are intended to reduce physical barriers, tackle congestion and pollution, enhance connectivity, and support local economic and community wellbeing.

Objective BSV9

Deliver existing movement infrastructure schemes

Objective BSV9 will be achieved by progressing a series of ongoing infrastructure schemes designed to enhance travel and connectivity, improve health and wellbeing, and tackle climate and environmental change in the region. Key actions include realigning the A4095 to create a strategic link road, developing the Eastern Peripheral Movement Corridor (Charbridge Lane/Skimmingdish Lane), and constructing the South East Peripheral Road (SEPR). Additionally, collaboration with National Highways aims to secure improvements to Junction 10 of the M40, covering Baynard's Green and the B4100 on both sides of the junction.

Objective BSV10

Deliver future movement infrastructure schemes

The objectives outlined focus on improving Bicester's transport infrastructure to support sustainable travel and reduce reliance on cars. Key initiatives include diverting traffic away from central Bicester through the delivery of the South East Peripheral Road (SEPR), enhancing Vendee Drive and the A41 corridor, and exploring a bypass for Ardley and Middleton Stoney to protect village communities should the proposed OxSRFI come forward. Infrastructure upgrades will prioritise walking, wheeling, cycling and public transport, with junction improvements and place shaping measures across central corridors, radial routes, and villages. Collaborative efforts with partners, developers, and the local community will be essential for funding, planning, and implementing these schemes. The overarching goals are to improve road safety, air quality, and the overall attractiveness and connectivity of the area, adopting a Vision Zero Strategy to eliminate road fatalities and serious injuries, while also discouraging unsuitable rural traffic routes and safeguarding local communities.

Objective BSV11

Work with freight and delivery operators to improve movement efficiency and provide zero emission deliveries

The delivery of goods is crucial for supporting both residents and the local economy in Bicester and its neighbouring villages. The freight system, as outlined in Oxfordshire's Freight and Logistics Strategy, is complex and consists of long distance, local, and last-mile movements. A 2023 HGV report highlighted significant safety and network challenges in Bicester, necessitating targeted interventions.

Objective BSV11 aims to address these challenges using the Healthy Streets approach, prioritising the safety and wellbeing of people. There has been a notable increase in Light Goods Vehicles (LGVs) due to online shopping, and both LGVs and HGVs contribute to congestion and emissions. These vehicles also present risks to vulnerable road users, especially in rural areas with limited active travel infrastructure.

Proposed solutions include enforcing weight restrictions (potentially via ANPR technology), developing micro-consolidation and collection hubs, and promoting the use of e-cargo bikes for last-mile deliveries. Routing strategies for HGVs are planned, particularly in relation to new developments, to mitigate their impact.

Actions to deliver Objective BSV11 involve further restricting HGV movements in sensitive areas, collaborating with partners for dedicated studies and solutions, implementing Direct Vision Standards for safety, and supporting the transition to low-carbon freight through EV charging and shifting deliveries from road to rail. Additional measures include installing parcel lockers at key transport hubs and ensuring effective routing strategies for large construction projects.

These initiatives collectively support local connectivity, economic growth, health and wellbeing, and environmental objectives, and align with the county's policies for sustainable freight management.

Objective BSV12

Deliver infrastructure and placemaking schemes which are resilient to changing climate

The Climate Resilience section outlines the risks posed by increasingly frequent and severe weather events to Bicester and nearby villages, emphasising the importance of creating communities capable of withstanding climate change. It details actions to deliver transport and place-shaping schemes that are resilient, including enhancing green and blue infrastructure based on OCC's and CDC strategies. These efforts aim to contribute to a climate-positive transport network by 2050, improve biodiversity, air quality, and provide healthy spaces for residents.

Objective BSV12 focuses on minimising carbon emissions from the transport sector and ensuring schemes enhance and make nature more accessible. National policy highlights the role of green infrastructure, such as sustainable drainage, tree planting, green roofs, and rain gardens in delivering environmental and wellbeing benefits. The council recognises the economic and health value of investing in green infrastructure, with plans to protect existing spaces and create new ones in developments like North West Bicester.

Actions to achieve this objective include protecting and enhancing green and blue infrastructure, placing solar panels on transport facilities, using nature-based solutions for biodiversity, minimising whole life carbon emissions, promoting Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS), and supporting greening and re-wilding schemes aligned with local recovery strategies. These measures collectively support travel, connectivity, health, wellbeing, community, culture, local economies, and environmental goals.

Objective BSV13

Utilise emerging and future technologies to develop innovation in Bicester and support a vibrant and connected village community

Objective BSV13 focuses on promoting innovation and the adoption of new technologies within Bicester and its surroundings. Defined by the LTCP as the introduction or novel application of technologies, processes, or approaches, this objective aims to enhance traditional methods to support community growth and connectivity.

Bicester has a history of innovation, exemplified by developments such as Bicester Motion's partnership with Skyports Infrastructure, to create the UK's first vertiport testbed for air taxis. The town's role as a Living Labs Testbed, as identified in the Oxfordshire Local Industrial Strategy, enables large-scale smart living pilots and the integration of emerging technologies into housing developments.

Delivering Objective BSV13 involves collaborating with partners to implement initiatives such as electric charging hubs, comprehensive Wi-Fi coverage, East-West Rail 5G networks, integrated SMART infrastructure, zero-emission self-driving vehicles, expanded EV charging, drone flights and air taxis, Mobility as a Service solution, and driverless bus routes. These efforts support various LTCP policies and aim to maximise the town's growth potential while fostering inclusive, safe, and net-zero transport systems.

Additional actions include seeking funding, facilitating the adoption of new technologies in transport networks, monitoring and evaluating schemes, and providing data-driven support as a living lab. The objective supports broader themes of travel and connectivity, economic growth, social and community development, cultural assets, and climate and environment priorities.

Bicester & Surrounding Villages
Movement and Place Plan

Local Transport and Connectivity Plan – Consultation Summary Report

You can contact us at
AreaMovementandPlaceStrategies@oxfordshire.gov.uk

OXFORDSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

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Introduction

This report sets out the findings from the public consultation undertaken for the Bicester & Surrounding Villages (Formerly Bicester & Mid-Cherwell) Movement and Place (MAP) Plan through Oxfordshire County Council's Let's Talk consultation platform from 3rd November until 1st December.

The Public Consultation formed part of the development of the Bicester and Surrounding Villages Movement MAP Plan, which is a supporting strategy to the Local Transport and Connectivity Plan (LTCP). The previous stages have included engagement with Cherwell District Council, councillors from all levels of local government, town/ parish councils as well as key stakeholders. **Figure 1** outlines the process followed which was agreed by the portfolio holder.

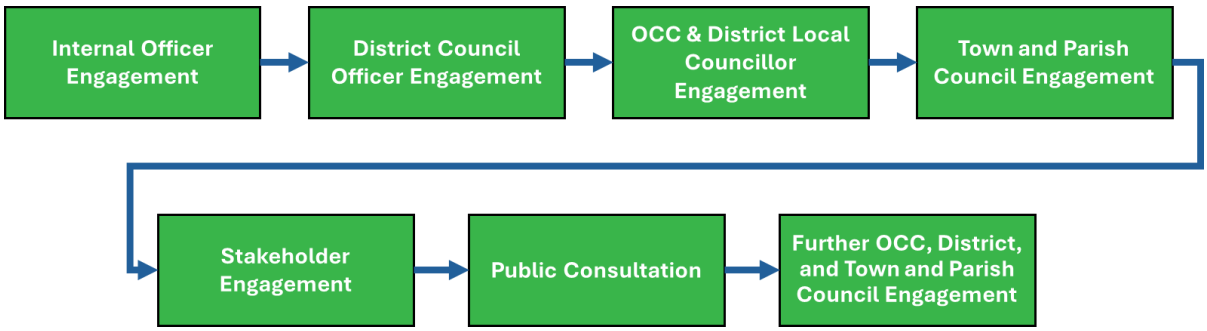

Figure 1 Engagement and Consultation Stages

The engagement process undertaken has ensured that all parties have had the opportunity to input and provide feedback on the Plan. In engaging with our communities and stakeholders we have used a variety of methods including through meetings, online presentations and via the Public Consultation.

This report summarises:

- Generic information regarding the consultation.
- Participation levels and response volumes.
- Key results from the consultation, including levels of support for the MAP Plan's vision, outcome and a summary of the levels of support for the MAP Plan's objectives, grouped into topic areas.
- Thematic analysis of comments, highlighting recurring themes such as active travel, public transport, rural connectivity, and delivery priorities.
- Feedback received outside the formal Let's Talk consultation, including correspondence from stakeholders and community groups.

Public consultation

The Public Consultation ran for four weeks from the **3rd November** to **1st December 2025** through Oxfordshire County Council's Let's Talk platform. As part of this process, residents, businesses and stakeholders were invited to share their views on the Plan through an online survey on the feedback on the MAP plan's vision, objectives, and its defined outcomes.

It should be noted that at the time of the consultation, the plan was referred to as the Bicester & Mid Cherwell MAP Plan. However, the name of this plan was changed post-public consultation to reflect comments raised during the consultation and is now because of the consultation, referred to as the Bicester and Surrounding Villages MAP Plan.

As part of the Let's Talk platform we sought feedback on the following documents:

- Movement and Place Plans: An Introduction
- Bicester & Mid Cherwell MAP Plan
- Bicester & Mid Cherwell – Proposals Map
- Bicester & Mid Cherwell – Summary
- Bicester & Mid Cherwell MAP Plan – Delivery Plan
- Bicester & Mid Cherwell MAP Plan – People Postcards

The Let's Talk platform provided respondents a series of questions these are listed as follows:

1. Please indicate to what extent you agree or disagree with our vision for Bicester & Mid Cherwell?
2. Please indicate to what extent you agree or disagree with the following the objectives of this plan? (each objective was listed in turn).
3. Please indicate to what extent you agree or disagree with the key outcomes?
4. Please tell us if you think there are any other ways this plan could help or affect the community that we should think about?
5. What is the most important transport infrastructure and service improvement you would like to be considered within your area?
6. Here is a list of our schemes. Is there anything else you feel is missing?
7. How often would you like to hear about how we are progressing against the MAP Plan?

Who Took Part?

In total, **114 responses** were received via the Let's Talk platform, supplemented by 4 written submissions and email feedback. The responses reflect a broad spectrum of views from residents, businesses, and community organisations across the area as in **Figure 2**.

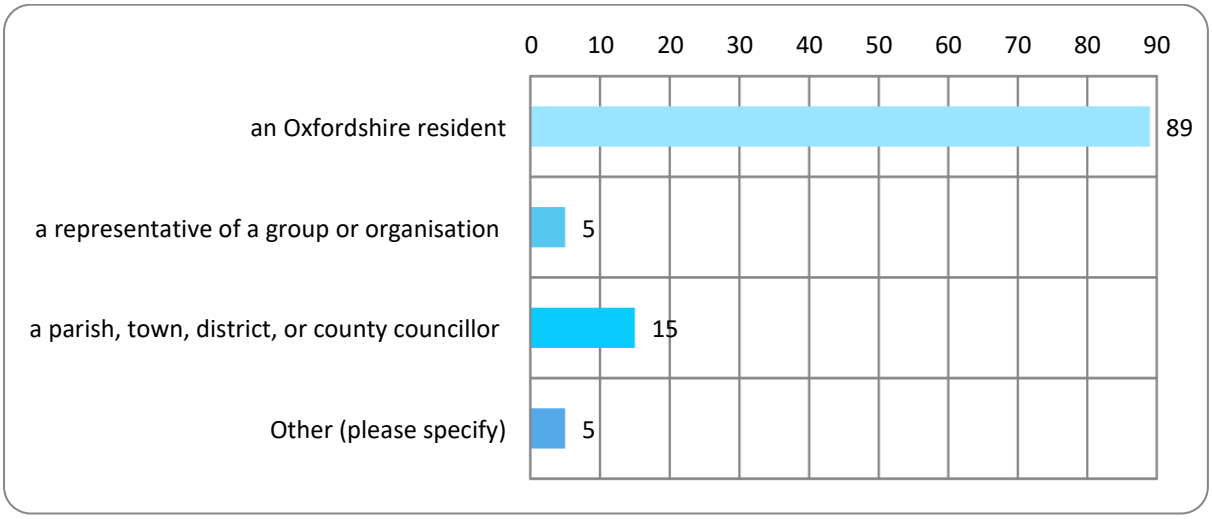

Figure 2 **Number of respondents from each group**

The responses to the consultation also reflect a mix of genders and broad spectrum of ages and health outcomes. The demographics of those who responded to the public consultation via the Lets Talk platform are outlined in **Table 1** below:

Table 1 **Survey Respondents: Demographic Summary**

Category	Results							
Gender	Male			Female			Prefer Not to Say	
	49%			39%			12%	
Age	16 – 24	25 – 34	35 – 44	45 – 54	55 – 64	65 – 74	75 – 84	Prefer not to say
	1%	8%	12%	22%	21%	24%	5%	6%
Long-term illness, health problem or disability	Yes - a lot		Yes – a little		No		Prefer not to say	
	2%		6%		83%		9%	
Ethnicity	White (British, Irish, or any other white background)			Prefer not to say			Other	
	76%			21%			3%	

The respondents to the public consultation have a broad mix of connections to Oxfordshire including residents, workers, visitors as well as those that commute through the area as shown in **Figure 3** below.

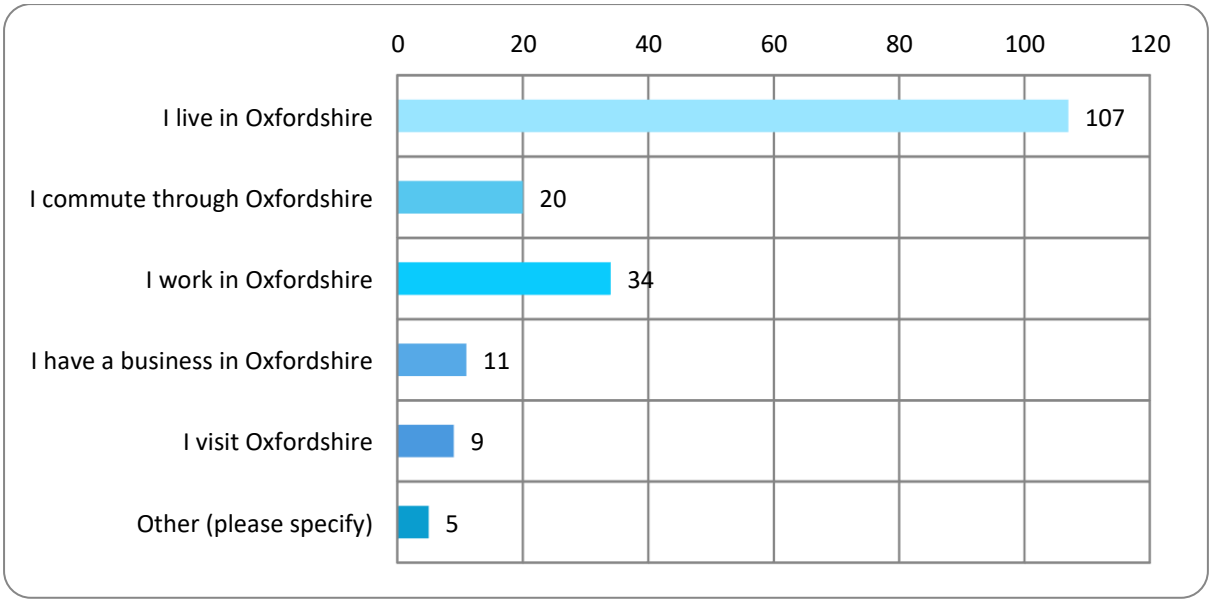

Figure 3 What is your connection to Oxfordshire?

Encouraging participation

Pre-consultation

In advance of the public consultation, we held a number of pre-consultation events with councillors at both a county and district level as well as the parish and town councils within the MAP Plan area. These events were undertaken online via Microsoft Teams, with attendees given a briefing and a Q&A session. In addition, several in person presentations took place briefing councillors and key stakeholders. The events were undertaken on the following dates:

- Bicester Area Oversight Group – 10th July

- County and District Councillors – 2nd September 2025
- Bicester Locality Meeting – 15th September
- Parish and Town Councils – 22nd September 2025
- Bicester Town Council Meeting – 13th October 2025
- Bicester Area Oversight Group - 15th October 2025

These events were followed up by emails, which informed members of the upcoming public consultation, and provided links to the pre-consultation version of the MAP Plan document as well as other supporting documents. Key stakeholders were also emailed at the start of October as part of this process.

Active Travel Roundtable

On the 3rd November 2025 the Transport Policy & Strategy Team attended the November meeting of the Active Travel Roundtable between the hours of 1730 and 1900 to provide a briefing on the MAP Plan. The presentation covered the consultation process to raise awareness of the plans, how to take part in the consultation and the requesting of feedback.

Consultation Public Event

Bicester Vision Meeting – 12th November 2025

A public consultation event was planned at Bicester Market on 14th November 2025. However, due to an amber weather warning for rain and wind on that day, the event and the market itself were cancelled.

Consequently, officers held an online Question and Answer session with councillors and local stakeholders online on Friday 21st November and other meetings took place, at the request of key stakeholders or members.

To date in 2026, there have a been a number of further meetings with local members and other stakeholders to reflect and take on board all comments received. These meeting also provided a means to update Local Members and the other other Stakeholders.

Survey analysis

The responses received in the public consultation were analysed to understand public sentiment towards the MAP Plan. Analysis has been undertaken for every question, for the closed questions the results are showing in a chart including percentages. Meanwhile for the open questions we have used a thematic analysis, which is a research method used to identify and interpret patterns or themes in a data set, by using key words to organise response into categories based on their shared characteristics. Please note due to rounding, some percentages may not add up to 100% for each question. All data was processed and reported in accordance with GDPR, ensuring respondent anonymity and data protection throughout.

Q1: To what extent you agree or disagree with our vision for Bicester and Mid Cherwell MAP Plan

As shown in **Figure 4**, there is some support for the vison of the MAP Plan with 45% of respondents either strongly agreeing or agreeing. This compares to 38% who either strongly disagreed or disagreed.

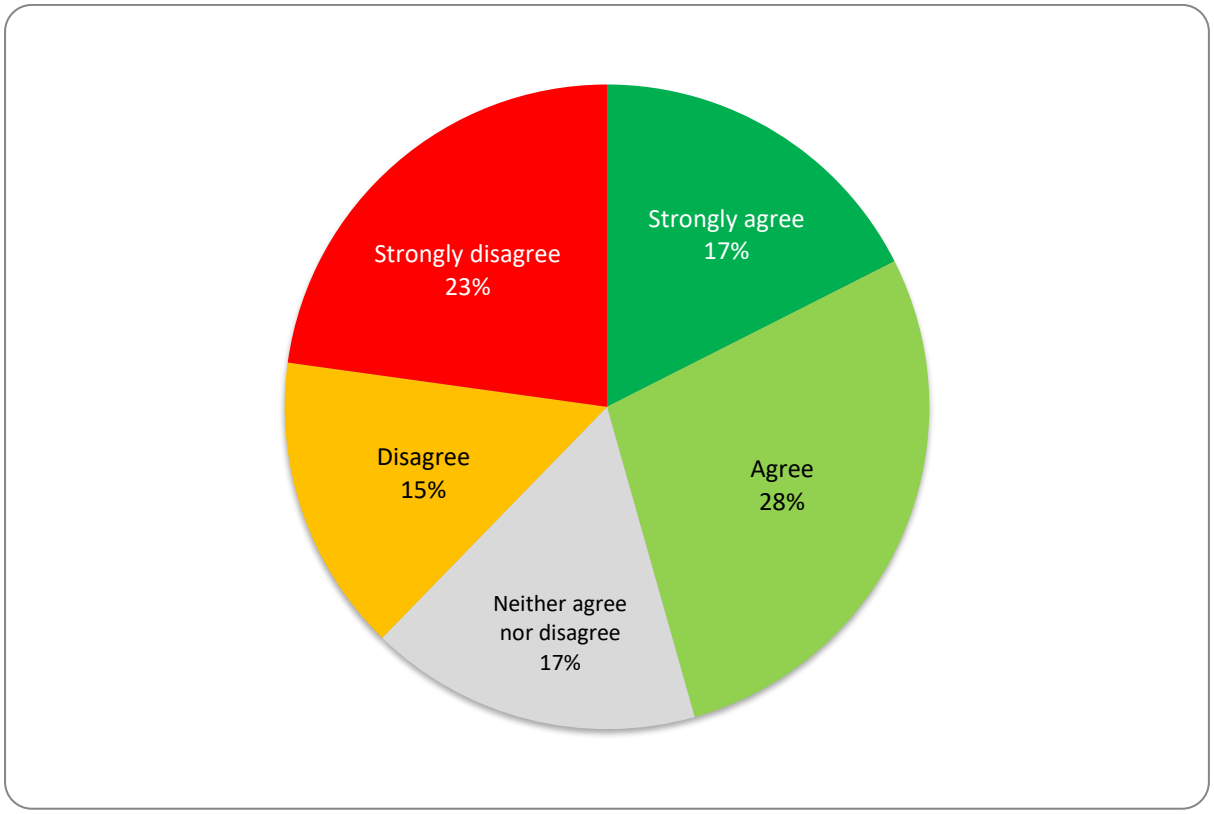

Figure 4 To what extent you agree or disagree with our vision for Bicester and Mid Cherwell

To help understand why respondents selected the answer they did, a second part of the question asked an open question about the reason they gave the answer they did. The responses received to this question are summarised below.

Many respondents stress that cars remain essential, especially in rural areas or for families. People feel proposals underestimate real-world mobility needs. Common points relating to this included:

- Rural residents must drive; limited alternatives
- Weather and distance make walking/cycling unrealistic
- Concerns that vision is “anti-motorist”
- Bicester Village, Bicester Motion and other attractions create car demand that can’t be avoided

- Car-related charges (parking, restrictions) deter local trips rather than supporting the town

A significant theme is frustration with poor public transport, especially for the villages. With common points including:

- Limited bus services, irregular and overpriced trains
- Makes reduction of car travel unrealistic
- Scepticism that infrastructure improvements will actually materialise

Many respondents value existing natural environments, raising concerns about:

- Warehouses and new development destroying biodiversity
- Urbanised green spaces replacing natural spaces
- Need to protect agricultural land and historic landscapes
- Desire for connected blue/green corridors, not manicured parks

Respondents note Bicester's tourist destinations, such as Bicester Village, Great Wolf, and Bicester Motion. These generate car travel, with risks of higher congestion unless integrated into transport plans. Some say tourism needs to link better to the town centre through active travel and public transport.

A practical theme that came from multiple respondents was the need to improve the safety and condition of local roads:

- Cycling is unsafe due to potholes, poor surface quality
- Cars cannot predict cyclists' movements when dodging defects
- Some argue enforcement, not road redesign, is needed for safety

The matter of protecting rural identity and preventing overdevelopment was highlighted by many respondents, including:

- Preserving villages
- Preventing rural areas being "swallowed" by towns
- Avoiding greenfield overdevelopment

Despite this, there is mixed but present support for the vision, with respondents particularly noting:

- Agree with the vision in principle
- Highlight sustainability, biodiversity, and historic sensitivity as positives
- See the vision as clear and well framed-framed
- BUT still worry about practicality, especially for families and schools

Q2. To what extent you agree or disagree with the following the objectives of this plan.

In this section each of the objectives will be grouped into topic areas to provide an overview of the level of support for each of the topic areas. It should be noted that in the final version of the MAP Plan, these objectives have different reference numbers. The original reference numbers as written in the draft versions that were consulted upon are included here for ease of reference.

Place Shaping (Objective BMC1)

Overall, 50% of respondents either strongly agreed or agreed with objective BMC1, as shown in **Figure 5**. This contrasts with only 23% of people disagreeing or strongly disagreeing.

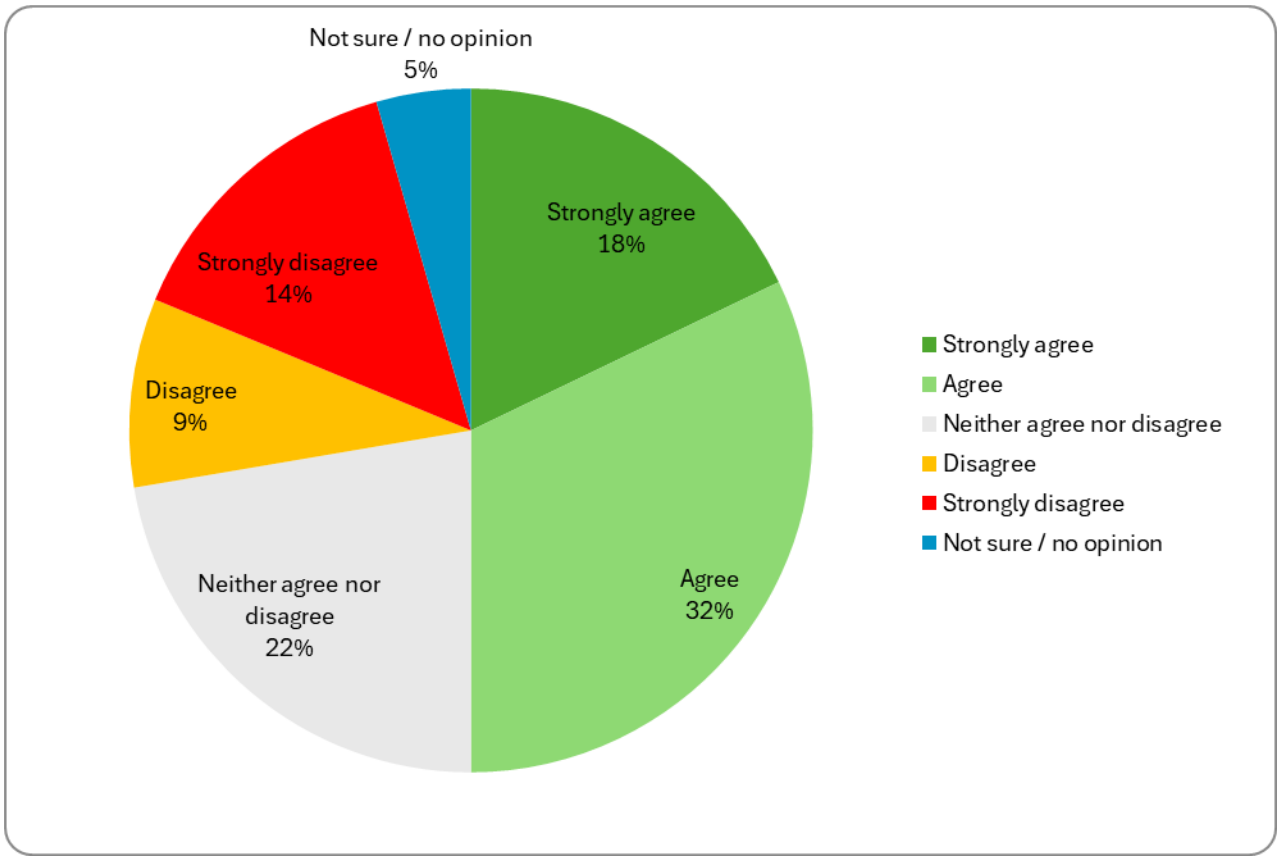

Figure 5 To what extent you agree or disagree with Objective BMC1

Walking, wheeling, cycling (Objective BMC2)

For this objective relating to walking wheeling and cycling 58% of the respondents either strongly agreed or agreed, as shown in **Figure 6**. This shows support for this objective. This is further highlighted by the fact that 25% disagreed or strongly disagreed, with a combine 17% saying either not sure or no opinion, or neither agree nor disagree.

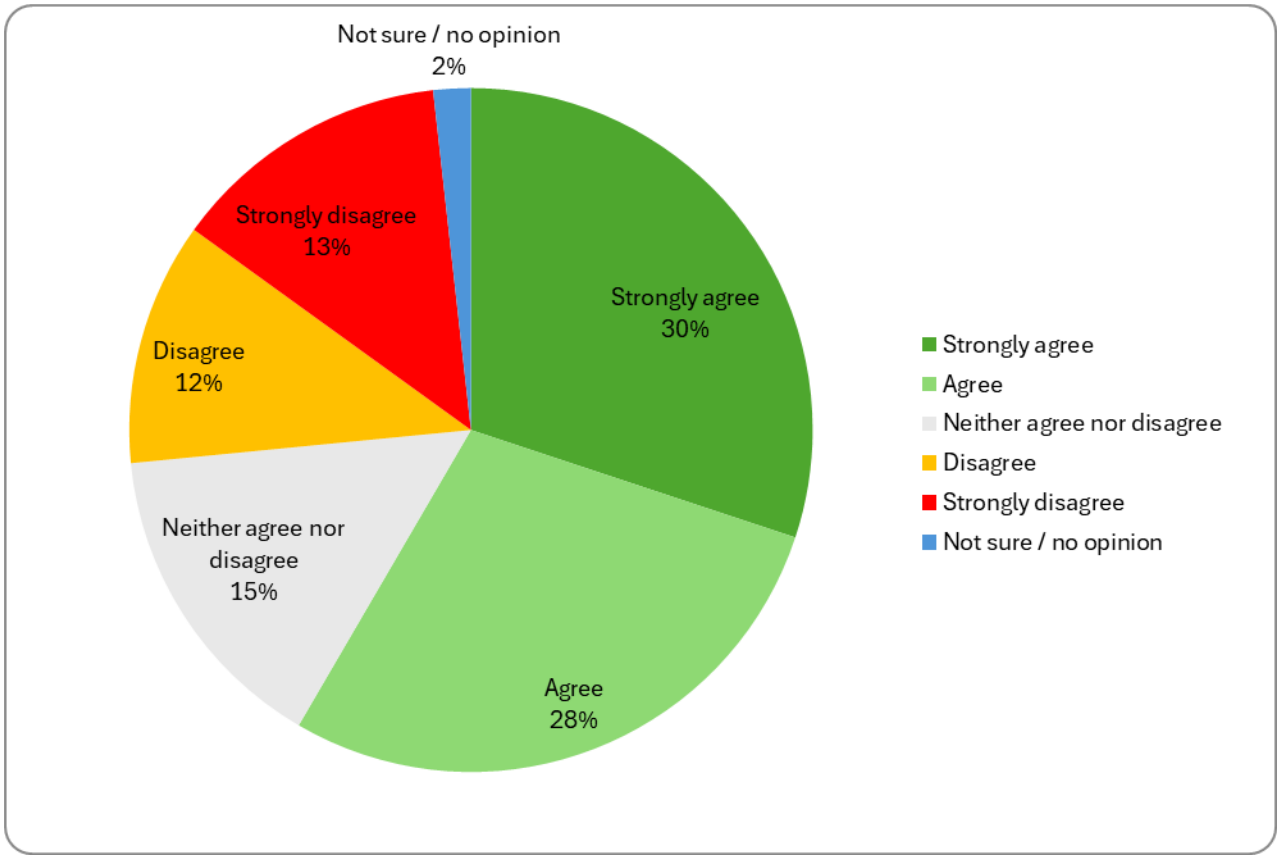

Figure 6 To what extent you agree or disagree with Objective BMC2

Public transport (Objectives BMC3 to BMC6)

In total three objectives focused on public transport; there was strong support for the proposed objectives. Objective BMC3 had 78% of respondents responding that they either agree or strongly agree, while 79% did the same for BMC4. While BMC5 only had 49% agree or strongly agree, only 17% disagreed or strongly disagreed. These figures are shown in **Figures 7 to 9**.

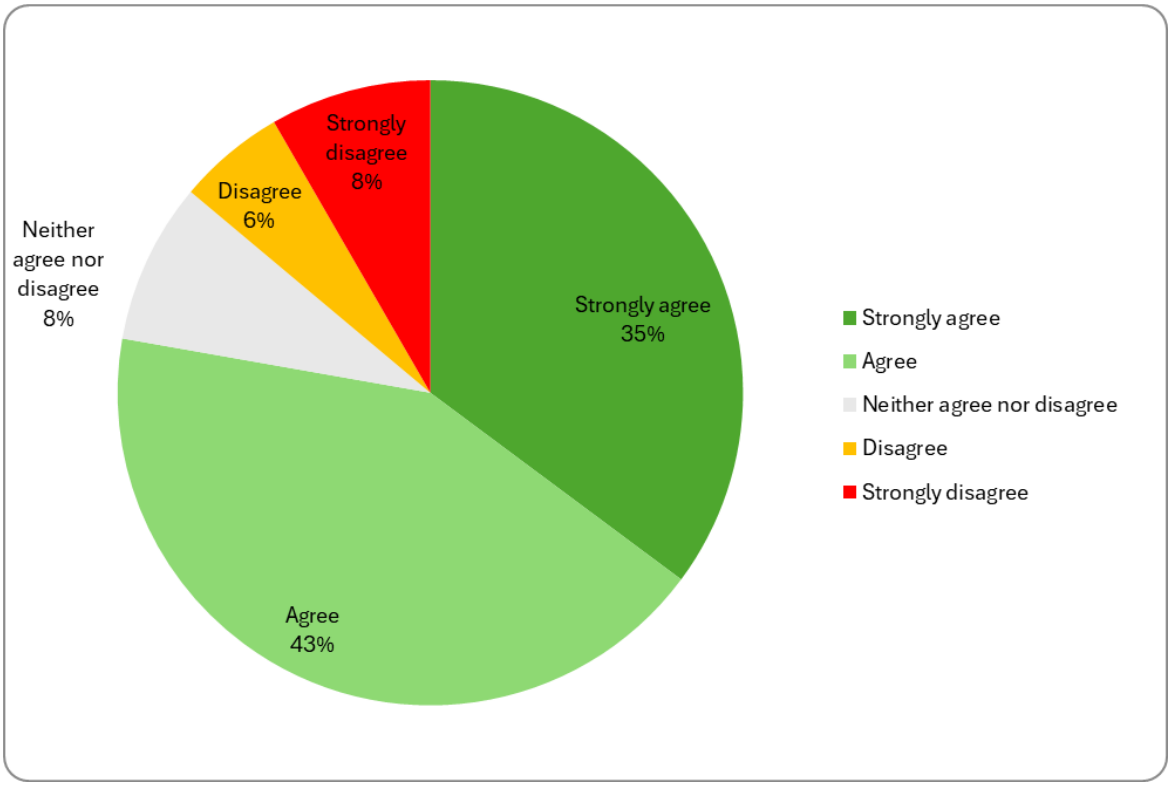

Figure 7 To what extent you agree or disagree with Objective BMC3

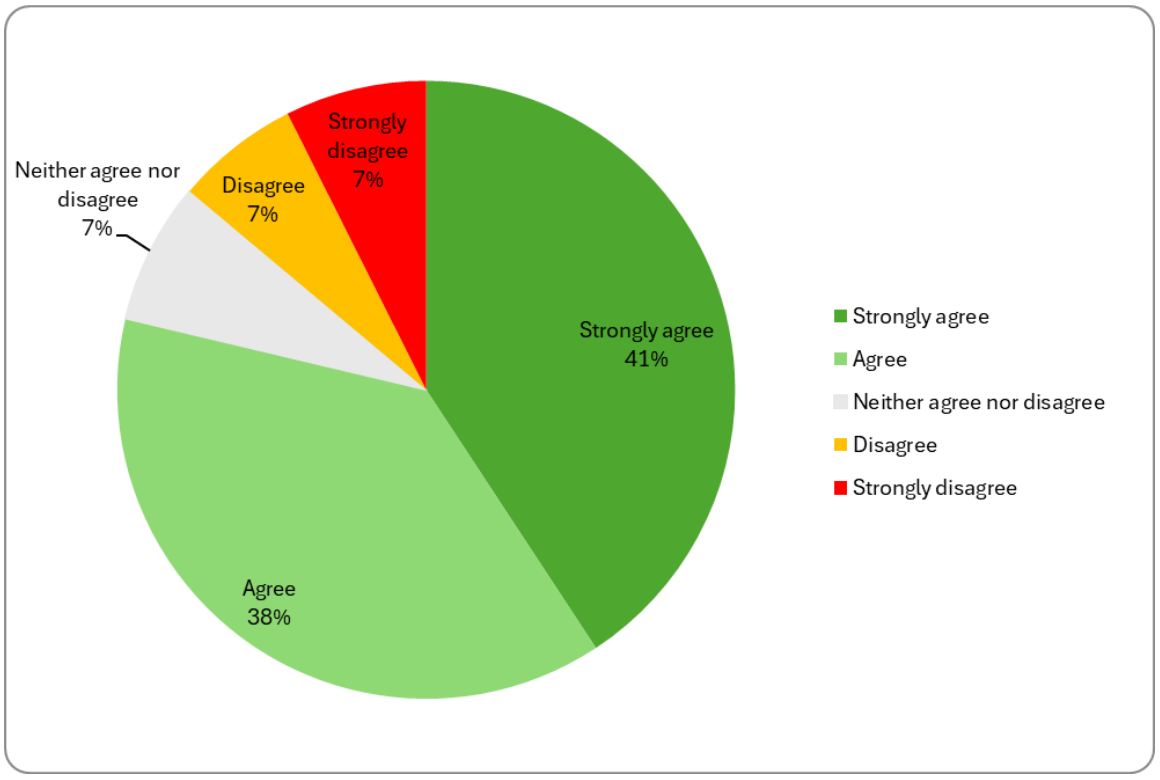

Figure 8 To what extent you agree or disagree with Objective BMC4

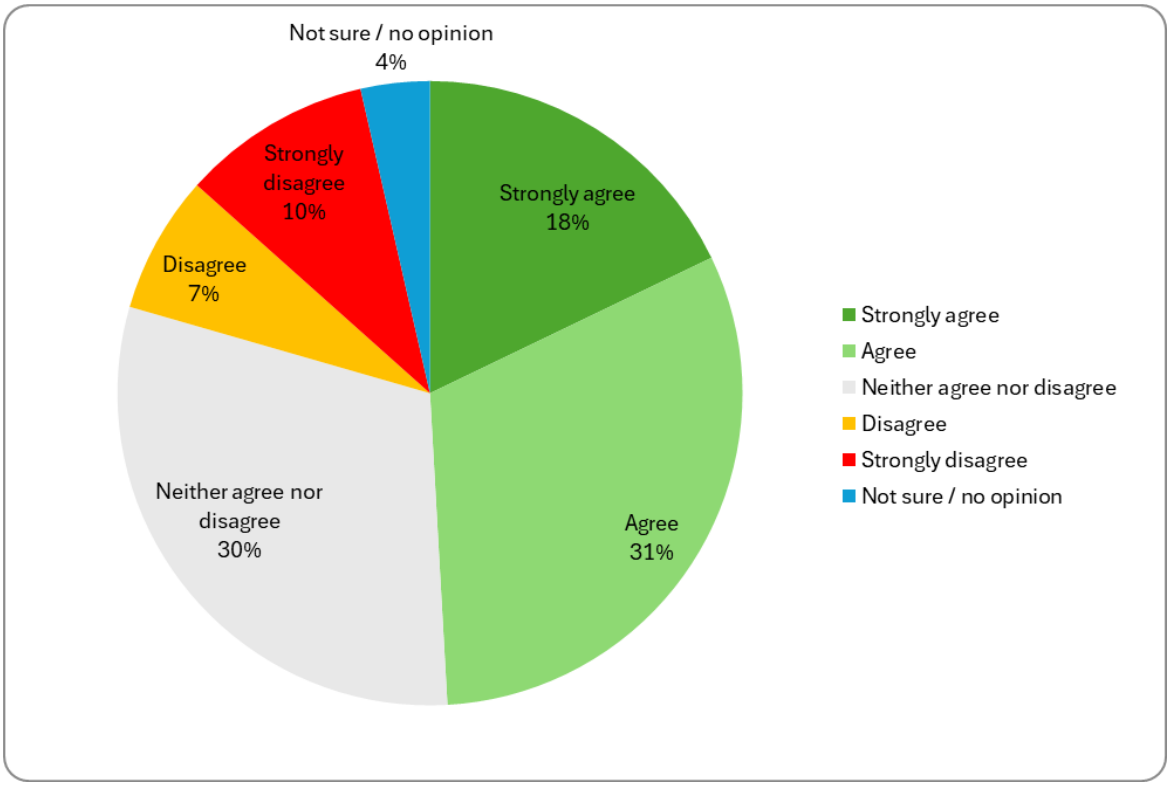

Figure 9 To what extent you agree or disagree with Objective BMC5

Roughly, **Figure 9**, shows, 50% of respondents support the induction of Mobility hubs within Bicester and its surrounding areas, with a large portion of respondents (30%) indicating a neutral viewpoint at this stage of how it would affect them.

In total 75% of respondents supported improvements to local rail services across the MAP area, as outlined in **Figure 10**. This would appear to indicate that plans to boost rail services enjoy a broad level of support, with 14% either disagreeing or strongly disagreeing, and a further 11% either not sure or no opinion, or neither agreeing nor disagreeing.

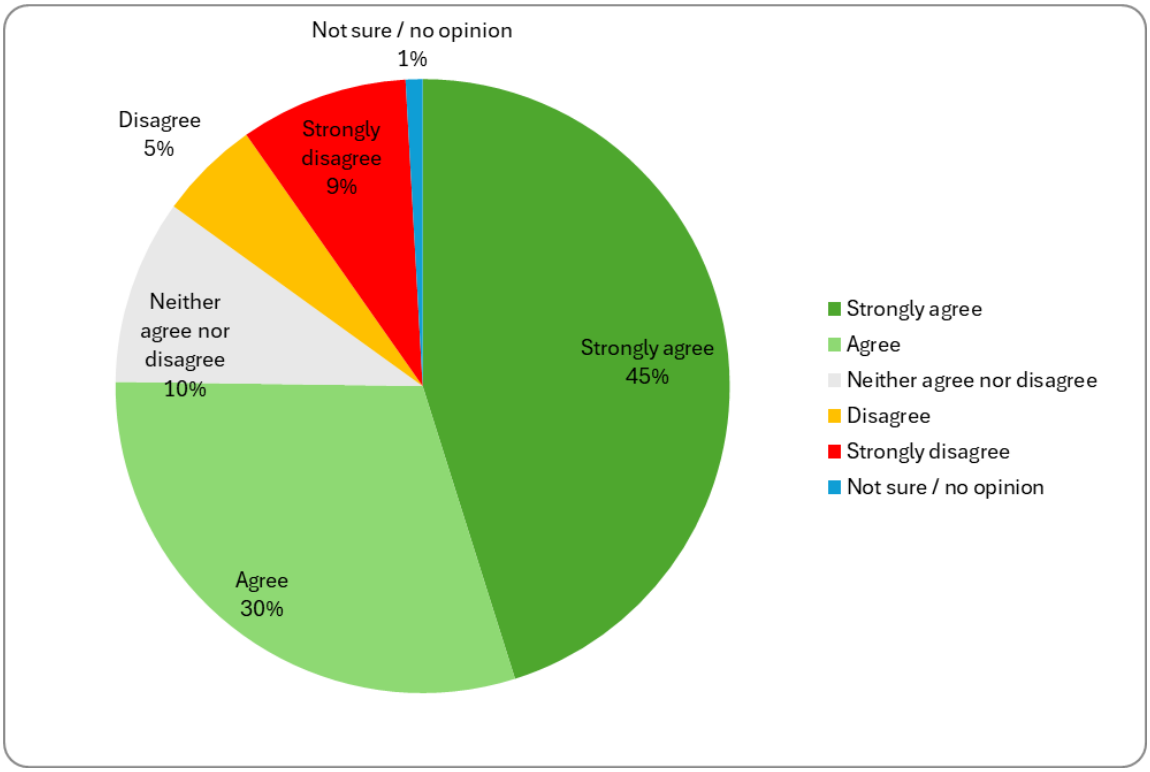

Figure 10 To what extent you agree or disagree with Objective BMC6

Car share and club (Objective BMC7)

In total 32% of respondents supported the car club and car share objective, with of the respondents either strongly agreeing or agreeing. With 41% of respondents responding either 'neither agree nor disagree' or 'not sure', indicating a degree of neutrality towards this objective, as outlined in **Figure 11**.

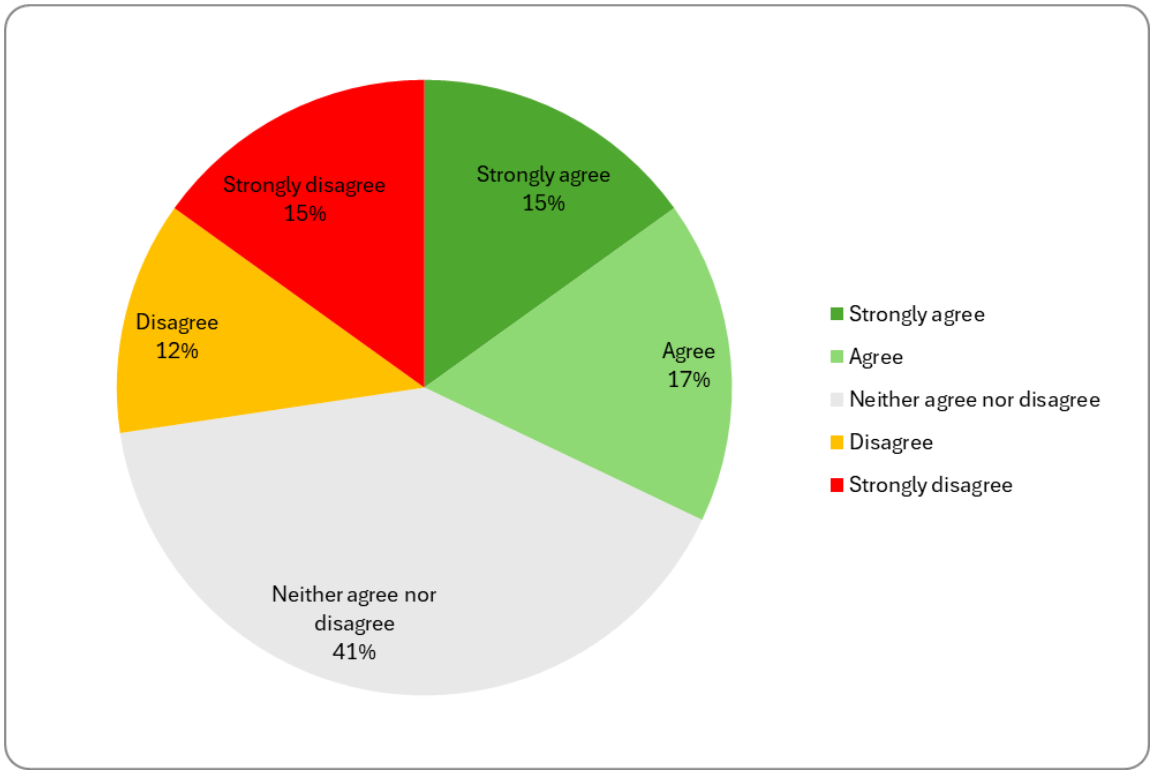

Figure 11 To what extent you agree or disagree with Objective BMC7

Demand management (Objective BMC8)

For the demand management objective, 41% of the respondents either strongly agreed or agreed to the objective. A significant percentage of respondents (35%) with neither agree nor disagree. A lower figure of 24% disagree or strongly disagree, as summarised in **Figure 12**. This means that efforts to more effectively manage traffic have a more even split of views compared to other measures in the MAP Plan.

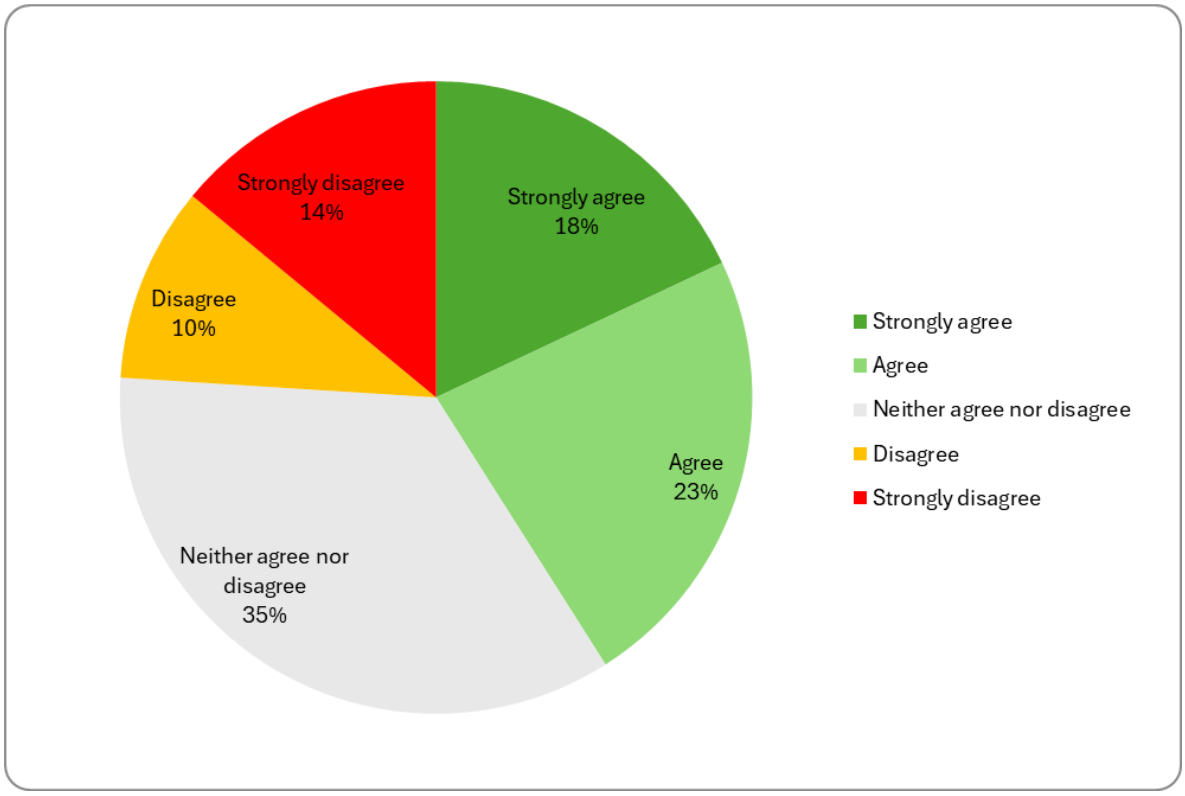

Figure 12 To what extent you agree or disagree with Objective BMC8

Infrastructure development (Objectives BMC9 and BMC10)

Across the two infrastructure development objectives there was more support than opposition. For Objective BMC9, 51% of respondents agreed or strongly agreed, with 55% of respondents BMC10 responding the same. As outlined in **Figures 13 and 14**. A further 26% of respondents neither agreed nor disagreed, while 23% either disagreed or strongly disagreed.

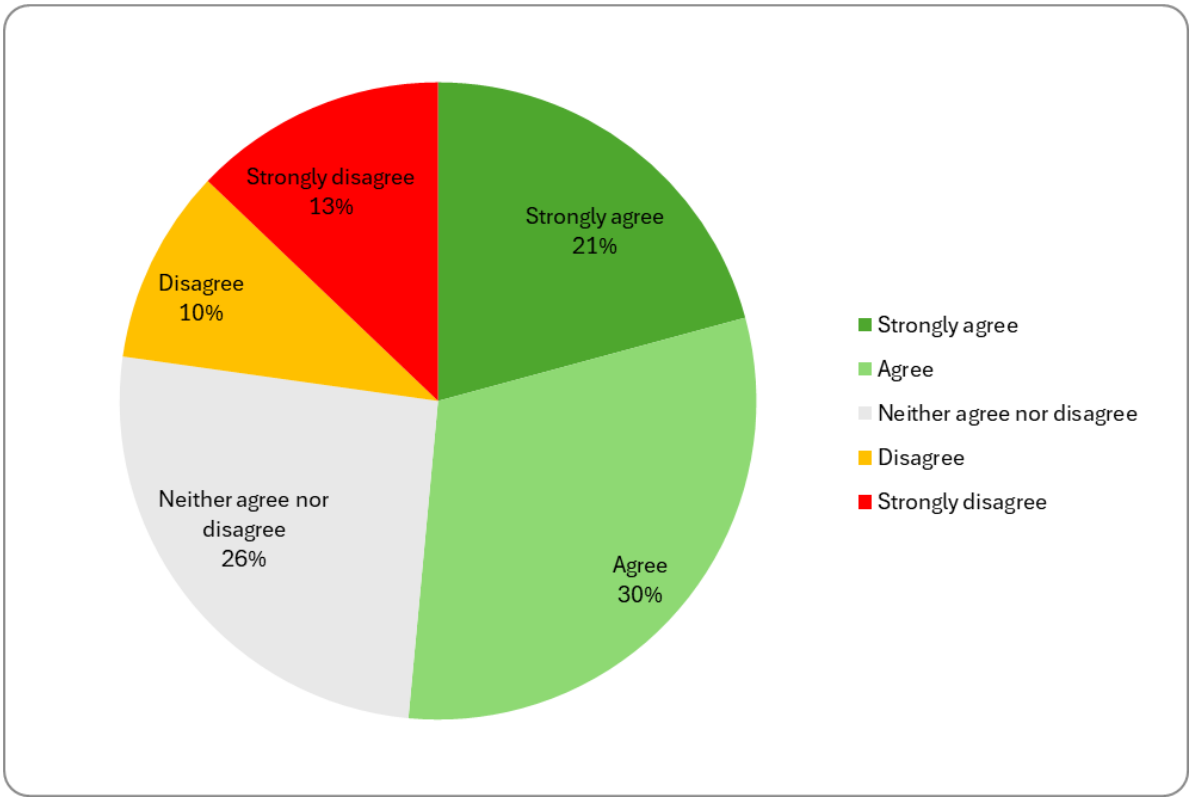

Figure 13 To what extent you agree or disagree with Objective BMC9

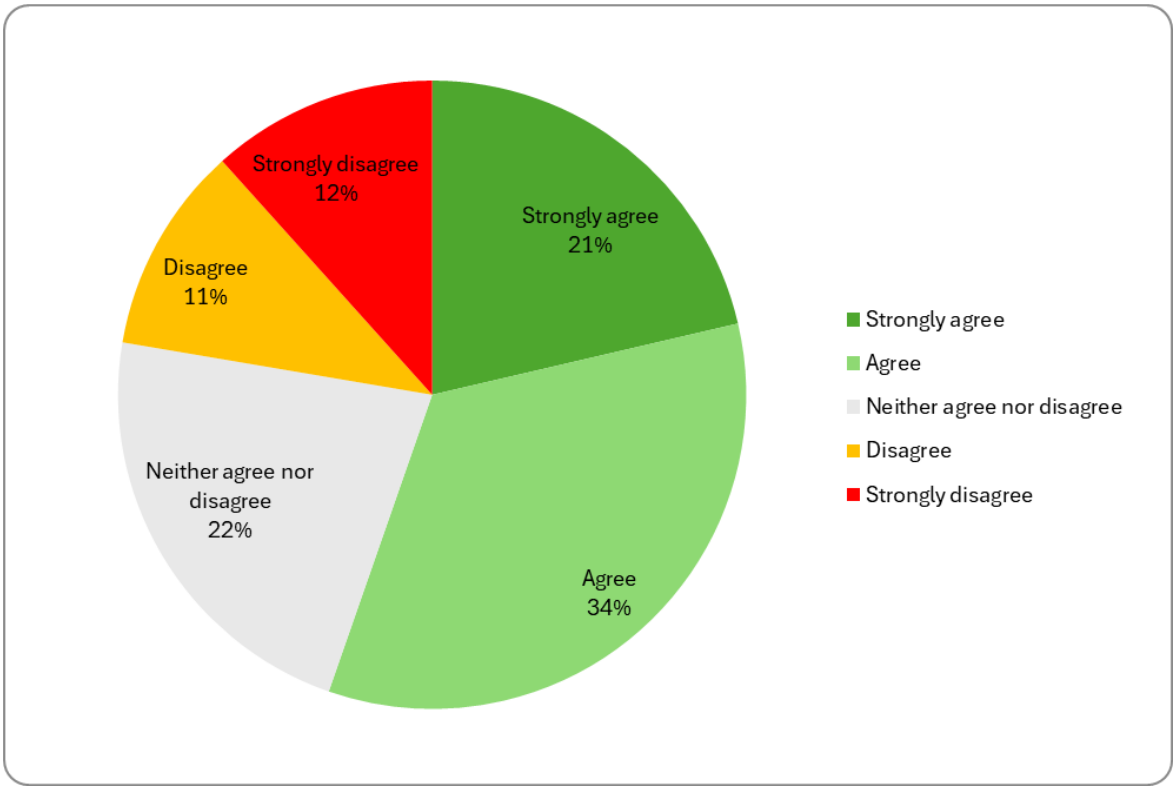

Figure 14 To what extent you agree or disagree with Objective BMC10

Freight, delivery and servicing (Objective BMC11)

In total 60% of respondents either strongly agreed or agreed with the freight, delivery and servicing objective indicating a strong level of support. Of the remaining respondents, 23% either disagreed or strongly disagreed, while 17% neither agreed nor disagreed as outlined in **Figure 15**.

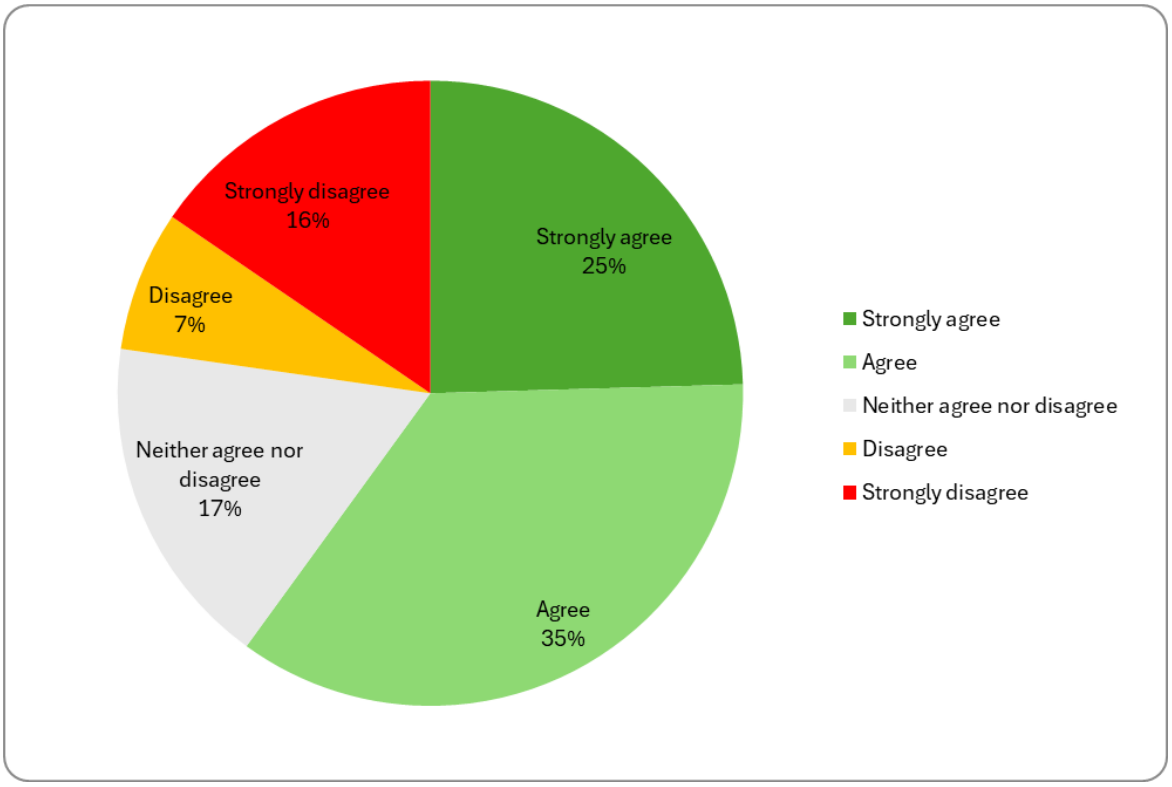

Figure 15 To what extent you agree or disagree with Objective BMC11

Climate resilience (Objective BMC12)

In relation to the single climate resilience objective a majority were in favour, with 62% of respondents either strongly agreeing or agreeing. Of the remaining respondents 23% either strongly disagreed or disagreed, while 15% neither agreed nor disagreed. The responses to this objective are summarised in **Figure 16.**

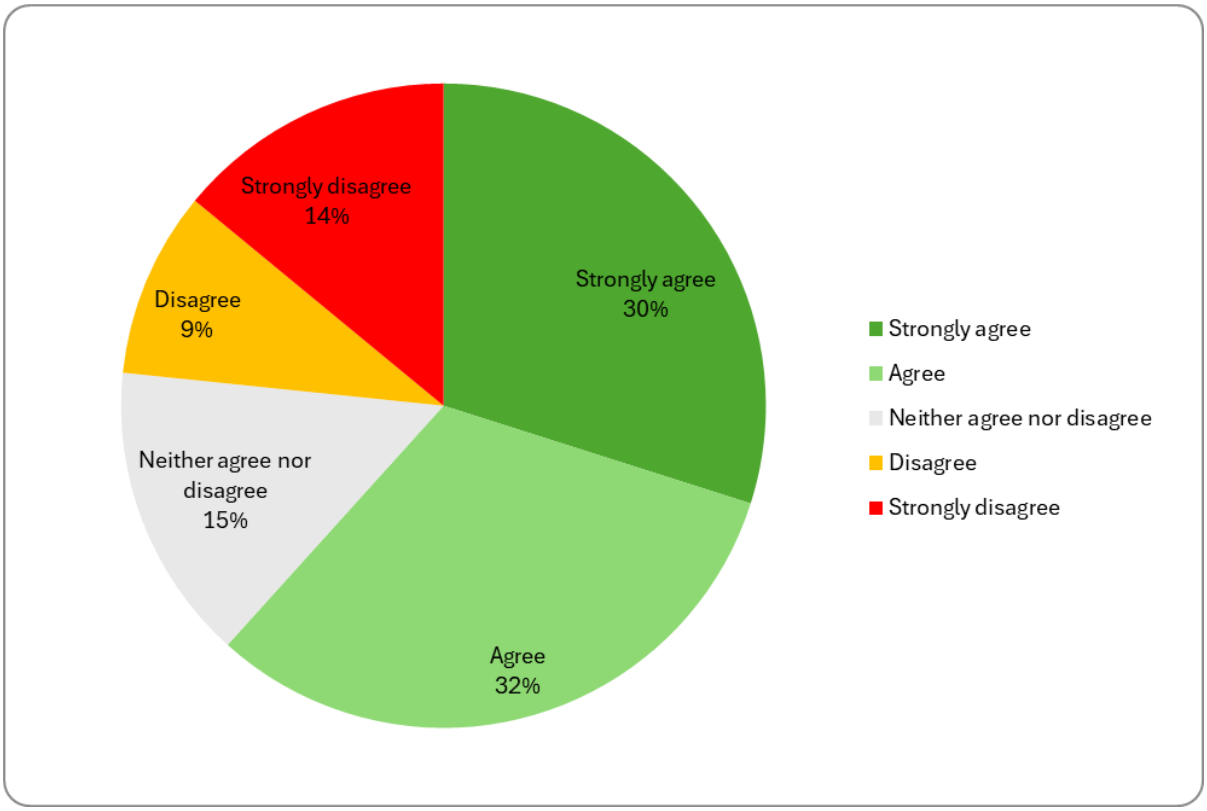

Figure 16 To what extent you agree or disagree with Objective BMC12

Innovation and new technologies (Objective BMC13)

There was strong support for the 'innovation and new technologies' objective with a total 69% of respondents either strongly agreeing or agreeing. Of the remaining respondents 14% either disagreed or strongly disagreed, and 17% responded as neither agreeing nor disagreeing, as outlined in **Figure 17**.

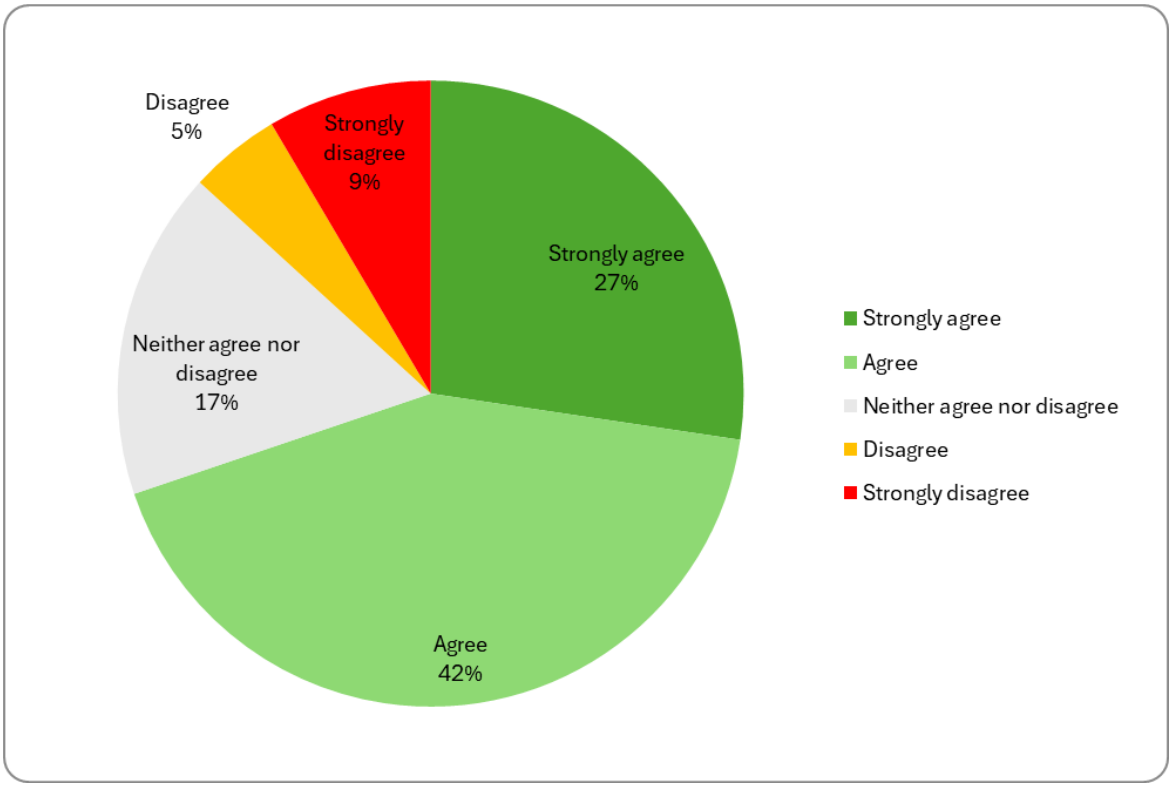

Figure 17 To what extent you agree or disagree with Objective BMC13

Q3. To what extent you agree or disagree with the MAP Plan outcomes?

As shown in **Figure 18**, there were mixed views on the MAP Plan outcomes. With 52% either agreeing or strongly agreeing. This contrasts with 40% either disagreeing or strongly disagreeing.

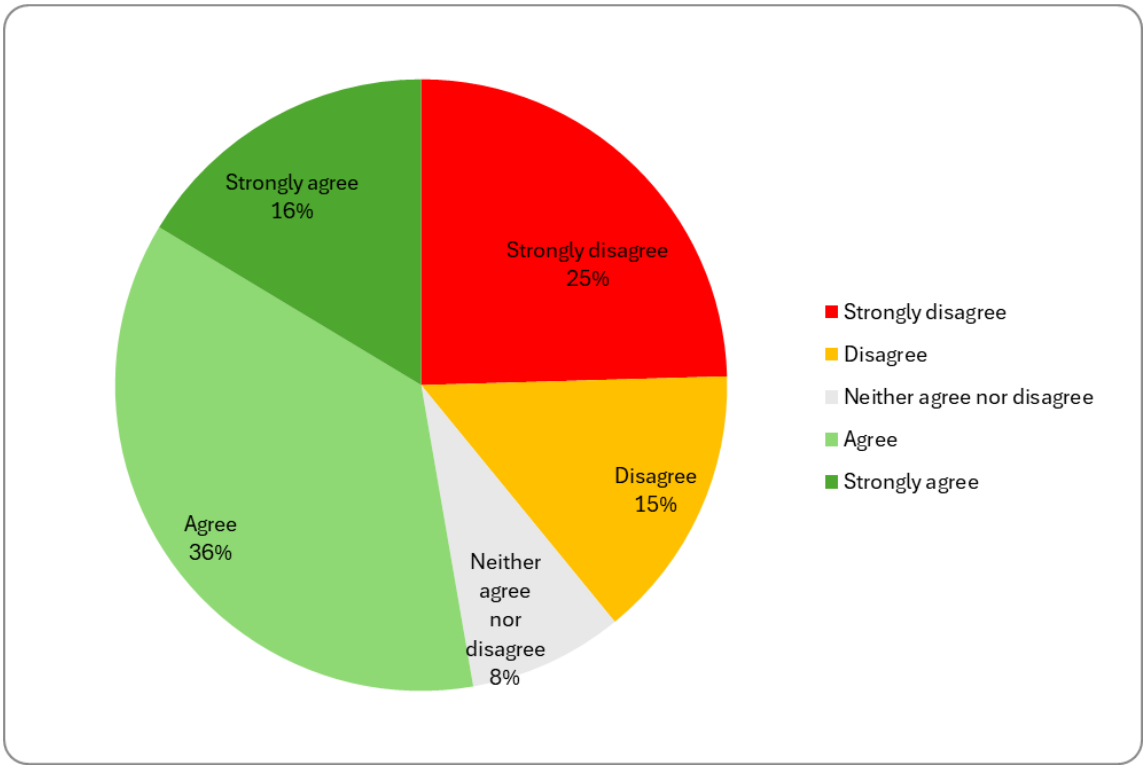

Figure 18 To what extent you agree or disagree with our defined outcomes

To help understand why respondents selected the answer they did, a second part of the question asked an open question about the reason they gave the answer they did; and their comments are set out in summarised commentary below.

Many respondents feel the vision is unrealistic, overly idealistic or disconnected from day-to-day life, particularly for rural communities and people who rely on cars because of distance, weather, mobility needs or childcare. Some go further and describe the plan as anti-motorist or socially controlling, often invoking “15minute cities.” Others, though fewer, express broad support for sustainability goals but doubt the deliverability of the proposals without major investment in public transport, cycling infrastructure and road maintenance. A frequent complaint is that the plan focuses heavily on Bicester while failing to address the distinct needs of Mid-Cherwell villages, whose narrow roads, lack of pavements and absence of safe cycling routes make the proposals feel urban centric and impractical. Respondents from rural parishes repeatedly criticise the lack of meaningful engagement and argue for a separate rural plan rather than being “forced fit” into a Bicester focused document. Today life, particularly for rural communities and people who rely on cars because of distance, weather, mobility needs or childcare. Some go further and describe the plan as anti-motorist or socially controlling, often invoking “15minute cities.” Others, though fewer, express broad support for sustainability goals but doubt the deliverability of the proposals without major investment in public transport, cycling infrastructure and road maintenance. A frequent complaint is that the plan focuses heavily on Bicester while failing to address the distinct needs of Mid Cherwell villages, whose narrow roads, lack of

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There is deep concern that the plan ignores the cumulative impact of major proposed developments nearby—including Puy du Fou, the Oxford Rail Freight Interchange, large warehouse schemes at Baynards Green and the 9,000plus homes proposed at Heyford Park. Many fear these will overwhelm rural roads, worsen congestion at M40 junctions 9 and 10, increase HGV movements and damage local environments and village character. Respondents emphasise declining or inadequate public transport, especially in villages with only one infrequent bus route, and call for better links, demand responsive options, realistic cycling and walking infrastructure, and strong environmental protections. There is anger about issues such as the London Road level crossing closure, the delayed Howes Lane tunnel, poor road conditions, antisocial behaviour in the town centre and the lack of coordination between OCC and Cherwell District Council. Some welcome the plan’s sustainability ambitions, but many argue it fails to reflect the scale of future growth, lacks credibility, overlooks logistics needs, and underestimates how dependent rural residents will remain on cars; plus, homes proposed at Heyford Park. Many fear these will overwhelm rural roads, worsen congestion at M40 junctions 9 and 10, increase HGV movements and damage local environments and village character. Respondents emphasise declining or inadequate public transport, especially in villages with only one infrequent bus route, and call for better links, demand responsive options, realistic cycling and walking infrastructure, and strong environmental protections. There is anger about issues such as the London Road level crossing closure, the delayed Howes Lane tunnel, poor road conditions, antisocial behaviour in the town centre and the lack of coordination between OCC and Cherwell District Council. Some welcome the plan’s sustainability ambitions, but many argue it fails to reflect the scale of future growth, lacks credibility, overlooks logistics needs, and underestimates how dependent rural residents will remain on cars. -plus homes proposed at Heyford Park. Many fear these will overwhelm rural roads, worsen congestion at M40 junctions 9 and 10, increase HGV movements and damage local environments and village

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Q4. What is the most important transport infrastructure and service improvement you would like to be considered within your area?

As shown in **Figure 19**, based on the results of the survey, public and shared transport are considered to be the most important infrastructure and service improvement that needs to be considered in the MAP Plan, with 53% selecting this option. The next most popular response was for private and single occupancy vehicles.

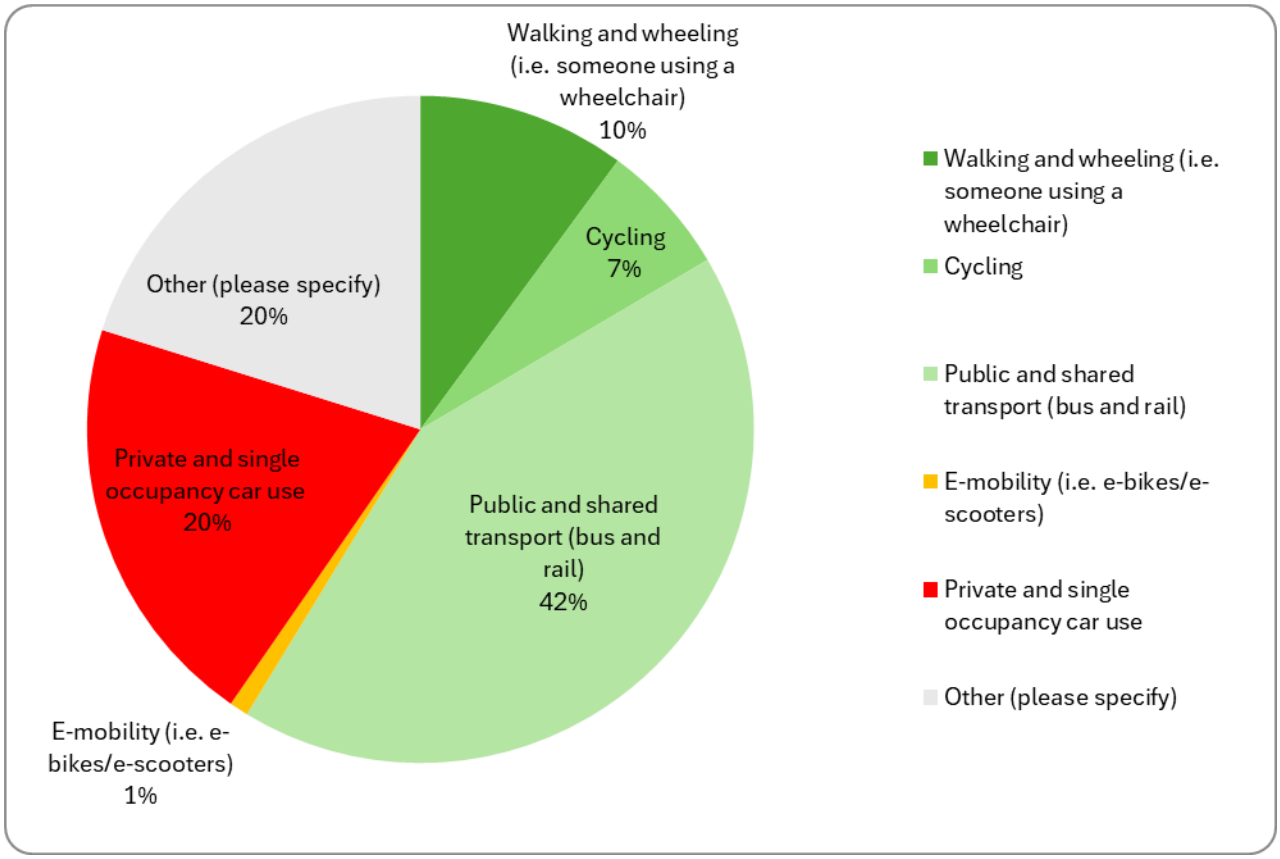

Figure 19 What is the most important transport infrastructure and service improvement you would like to be considered within your area?

The comments are summarised below.

Many respondents' express frustration that while national and local policy appears to discourage driving, everyday life in rural Oxfordshire still depends overwhelmingly on private cars. People point out that the country's climate, long travel distances, lack of lighting, icy roads in winter, and the absence of safe pavements or cycle routes make walking and cycling unrealistic for most journeys. Several describe rural roads as dangerous, poorly maintained, full of potholes and unsuitable for any form of active travel, especially at night. For many, cycling is simply impossible or unsafe, and even those who would prefer to walk or bike feel the infrastructure is not there. In rural villages in particular, residents say they have no choice but to drive because buses are infrequent, unreliable, expensive or non-existent. Parents describe the difficulty of reaching school, college, clubs or evening activities without a car. Elderly and nondrivers report being cut off from shops, healthcare and essential services. Across the board, there is a sense that despite encouragement to shift away from cars, public transport is nowhere near good enough to support such a change. People consistently say that better, faster, more reliable and affordable bus and rail services are essential if car use is to reduce. D-rivers report being cut off from shops, healthcare and essential services. Across the board, there is a sense that despite encouragement to shift away from cars, public transport is nowhere near good

enough to support such a change. People consistently say that better, faster, more reliable and affordable bus and rail services are essential if car use is to reduce.

Another major theme is deep concern about the scale of new developments around Bicester, Heyford Park and Mid Cherwell, with many arguing that the plan does not acknowledge the cumulative traffic impacts of thousands of new homes, major employment proposals, warehouses, a large theme park, and the Oxford rail freight interchange. Respondents believe this growth will overwhelm already overstretched roads, especially around M40 junctions 9 and 10, and increase HGV pressure on rural routes that are already struggling. Some fear villages will become rat runs with dangerous traffic levels, while community identity and rural character erode. There is scepticism that promised infrastructure will ever arrive in time, noting past delays such as the Howes Lane tunnel and the perceived failure to address core problems like speeding, road safety and crime. Many feel that the needs of villages have been overlooked in favour of a Bicester centric vision, and argue that walking, cycling and escooters may suit town residents but do not reflect the realities of rural life. There is repeated emphasis on the need for stronger rail connections, investment in stations such as Ardley or Heyford, improved first and last mile access, and more joined up planning that integrates bus, rail and safe active travel. Environmental considerations also matter to many, but people emphasise that protecting biodiversity and rural landscapes must begin at the site selection stage, rather than after development is already assumed. Overall, the document paints a picture of communities feeling overstretched, underserved by transport, and anxious that decisions are being made without realistic understanding of local conditions or meaningful engagement with the people most affected. Cherwell, with many arguing that the plan does not acknowledge the cumulative traffic impacts of thousands of new homes, major employment proposals, warehouses, a large theme park, and the Oxford rail freight interchange. Respondents believe this growth will overwhelm already overstretched roads, especially around M40 junctions 9 and 10, and increase HGV pressure on rural routes that are already struggling. Some fear villages will become rat runs with dangerous traffic levels, while community identity and rural character erode. There is scepticism that promised infrastructure will ever arrive in time, noting past delays such as the Howes Lane tunnel and the perceived failure to address core problems like speeding, road safety and crime. Many feel that the needs of villages have been overlooked in favour of a Bicester centric vision, and argue that walking, cycling and escooters may suit town residents but do not reflect the realities of rural life. There is repeated emphasis on the need for stronger rail connections, investment in stations such as Ardley or Heyford, improved first and last mile access, and more joined up planning that integrates bus, rail and safe active travel. Environmental considerations also matter to many, but people emphasise that protecting biodiversity and rural landscapes must begin at the site selection stage, rather than after development is already assumed. Overall, the document paints a picture of communities feeling overstretched, underserved by transport, and anxious that decisions are being made without realistic understanding of local

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Is there anything else you feel is missing?

The comments are summarised below. Cherwell area. Many respondents feel that bus and rail services must be more frequent, better integrated and properly coordinated—particularly between Bicester's two stations once East West Rail becomes operational, and between Heyford Park, Heyford Station and Oxford or Banbury. Several argue for reinstating Ardley Station or creating new stations to match planned growth, while others highlight the importance of safe, continuous and well maintained cycle routes, the role canals and towpaths could play in connecting settlements, and the need for rapid transit solutions for large developments such as NW Bicester and Heyford Park. Across these responses runs a clear concern that opportunities for rail based connectivity, active travel corridors, mobility hubs and rural demand responsive services must be pursued not only in Bicester but also in surrounding villages if sustainable transport is to be realistic rather than aspirational. -Cherwell area. Many respondents feel that bus and rail services must be more frequent, better integrated and properly coordinated—particularly between Bicester's two stations once East West Rail becomes operational, and between Heyford Park, Heyford Station and Oxford or Banbury. Several argue for reinstating Ardley Station or creating new stations to match planned growth, while others highlight the importance of safe, continuous and well-maintained cycle routes, the role canals and towpaths could play in connecting settlements, and the need for rapid transit solutions for large developments such as NW Bicester and Heyford Park. Across these responses runs a clear concern that opportunities for rail-based connectivity, active travel corridors, mobility hubs and rural demand-responsive services must be pursued not only in Bicester but also in surrounding villages if sustainable transport is to be realistic rather than aspirational.

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One of the strongest themes is the need for significantly better public and active travel infrastructure, both within Bicester and across the wider Mid-Cherwell area. Many respondents feel that bus and rail services must be more frequent, better integrated and properly coordinated—particularly between Bicester's two stations once East West Rail becomes operational, and between Heyford Park, Heyford Station and Oxford or Banbury. Several argue for reinstating Ardley Station or creating new stations to match planned growth, while others highlight the importance of safe, continuous and well maintained cycle routes, the role canals and towpaths could play in connecting settlements, and the need for rapid transit solutions for large developments such as NW Bicester and Heyford Park. Across these responses runs a clear concern that opportunities for rail-based connectivity, active travel corridors, mobility hubs and rural demand responsive services must be pursued not only in Bicester but also in surrounding villages if sustainable transport is to be realistic rather than aspirational.

Another dominant theme is the anxiety about cumulative development pressure. Respondents repeatedly state that the plan fails to account for large proposals such as the Puy du Fou theme park, the Oxford rail freight interchange, huge warehouse schemes at Baynards Green, and thousands of new homes at Heyford Park. Many say the omission of these schemes makes the plan incomplete and undermines trust, as the combined impact would dramatically worsen congestion, HGV movements, noise and light pollution, environmental degradation and rural character loss. There is strong concern about how rural roads—some narrow, historic and already strained—will cope with increased traffic, especially around M40 junctions 9 and 10 and in villages currently experiencing rat running. People consistently emphasise the need for bypasses, freight management, HGV restrictions and proper modelling of in combination impacts. Some argue that new developments, particularly the proposed New Town at Heyford Park, will draw resources away from Bicester, overstretch infrastructure, and create car dependent communities for decades unless major strategic transport investment is secured in advance. running. People consistently emphasise the need for bypasses, freight management, HGV restrictions and

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Highway maintenance, road safety and parking repeatedly arise, with residents frustrated by deteriorating road and pavement conditions, unsafe walking environments, lack of enforcement, and the ongoing uncertainty over the London Road level crossing. Many insist that a full vehicular underpass is essential to prevent Bicester being permanently divided and want this explicitly secured in the plan. Others call for improvements to Market Square, the high street, footpaths, lighting and public toilets, reflecting a desire for a more welcoming and accessible town centre. Some respondents also argue for pragmatic recognition that cars will remain important, especially for older residents, and say transport planning should accept and mitigate this reality rather than prioritising active travel at their expense.

Environmental concerns feature strongly too, with many urging serious consideration of flood risk, biodiversity, green and blue corridors and the integrity of farmland and rural landscapes. There is worry that new infrastructure could worsen flooding or damage streams and rivers. Others emphasise the need for meaningful conservation rather than tokenistic “green” spaces. Meanwhile, several stakeholders highlight that freight and logistics—economically vital to Cherwell and the M40 corridor—are almost entirely unacknowledged in the plan, despite significant national and regional guidance on how freight routes and lorry parking should be planned.

Finally, many respondents’ express frustration with the plan’s length, technical language and lack of clarity on delivery, funding and coordination across councils. Some fear that rural areas are being neglected or misunderstood and worry that the plan feels more like Bicester’s plan than Mid-Cherwell’s. While a number of people welcome aspects of the vision, they argue that without concrete commitments, proper engagement, and a realistic understanding of the magnitude of growth and its impacts, the plan risks being ineffective. Across all themes, there is a shared desire for a more honest, comprehensive and fully

integrated approach to transport and development in the area. Cherwell's. While -Cherwell's. While

Email responses

In addition to the 32 responses received via the "Lets Talk" platform, a total of **4 responses** to the public consultation were submitted via the MAP Plan email address. The four responses were received from the following stakeholders/organisations:

1. **Mid Cherwell Neighbourhood Planning Forum**
2. **Bicester Village**
3. **Oxford Bus Group (part of Go-Ahead Group comprising Oxford Bus Company, Thames Travel, Pulhams and Carousel Buses)**
4. **Coalition for Healthy Streets and Active Travel (CoSHAT)**

Most email feedback supported the Movement and Place Plan's vision and goals. Some people shared concerns or suggested changes to certain objectives. All comments, including disagreements and recommendations, have been noted for review.

The key summaries of the responses is outlined in the remainder of this section.

Mid Cherwell Neighbourhood Plan Forum

The Forum objects strongly to Oxfordshire County Council's use of the name "Mid-Cherwell" for an area in the draft Movement and Place Plan that is twice the size of the officially designated Mid-Cherwell Neighbourhood Plan (MCNP) area. They argue that this re-labelling will cause significant confusion because many of the additional villages included do not identify as part of Mid-Cherwell, and Heyford Park already has its own separate masterplan. They warn that attempting to merge Bicester, a proposed New Town, and numerous rural villages into a single plan is fundamentally flawed, as each has distinct needs that cannot be coherently addressed in one document.

The Forum urges the County Council to remove the term "Mid-Cherwell" entirely from the draft and instead develop a separate Movement and Place Plan specifically for the rural hinterland around Bicester and Heyford Park. They also note that the overarching Vision statement is inappropriate, as it is written from an urban Bicester-centric perspective and cannot be meaningfully adapted to reflect the very different contexts of Bicester, Heyford Park and the villages without splitting it into three parts. The Forum emphasises that their member parishes are willing to work with the Council to produce a dedicated rural plan but

maintain firmly that the current approach will create confusion, weaken effectiveness and generate unnecessary conflict.

Bicester Village

The response welcomes the Movement and Place Plan's ambition for sustainable, people-focused growth but stresses that the scale of planned and speculative development in and around Bicester—ranging from thousands of new homes to major employment sites and proposals such as Puy du Fou and OXSRFI—will create significant pressure on the transport network. They argue that modelling must assess cumulative impacts rather than individual schemes in isolation, particularly given the strain expected on the M40, A41 and local routes. They strongly support LTCP's "Decide and Provide" approach but warn that large speculative developments outside adopted plans will require substantial new infrastructure, delivered early and with clearly defined trigger points, if LTCP mode-shift and environmental objectives are to be met.

They call for greater transparency through the publication of modelling assumptions, infrastructure delivery timetables and mechanisms to secure funding and enforce obligations. On specific schemes, they highlight concerns about the deliverability of the 'Cattle Creep' walking and cycling link between Graven Hill and Bicester, citing drainage, safety, land ownership and construction constraints. Overall, they urge the County Council to ensure that infrastructure planning, monitoring and delivery keep pace with growth, and that promoters of major developments demonstrate robust, policy-aligned mitigation packages from the outset.

Oxford Bus Group

The Oxford Bus Group broadly supports the aims and direction of the Bicester and Mid-Cherwell Movement and Place Plan but stresses that successful delivery will require far more robust, frequent and reliable bus provision across the area. They highlight major growth pressures—including extensive new housing, large-scale employment sites, and the proposed Heyford Park New Town—which will significantly increase travel demand and make high-quality public transport essential. The Group emphasises that buses will remain critical even with improved rail services and sets out the need for major uplifts in frequency, better integration with rail, new and expanded routes, and significant investment in bus priority, infrastructure, mobility hubs and zero-emission fleet capability. They also warn that without a suitable local depot and clear strategic planning on bus routing, especially in

complex developments like North West Bicester and Heyford Park, the network risks becoming slow, unreliable and commercially unsustainable.

While supportive of the Plan's objectives, to the point where the Group commented on each objective, the Group raises concerns about insufficient operator involvement in key schemes such as Market Place redesign and the London Road level crossing replacement, the latter of which they argue may be incompatible with future zero-emission buses and could severely disrupt east-west connectivity. They strongly endorse demand-management measures, improved bus stop facilities, multimodal travel planning, and proactive engagement on development layouts to ensure buses can operate efficiently. They also call for early and substantial bus priority on the A41, B4100 and within Bicester town centre, and caution that innovation projects must be grounded in realistic risk and resource assessments. Overall, they urge the County to work more closely with operators to ensure that bus services can play a central role in achieving LTCP goals and meeting the mobility needs of a rapidly expanding Bicester.

CoHSAT

The response expressed strong support for the overall direction of the Bicester and Mid-Cherwell Movement and Place Plan but argues that it lacks the scale, ambition and specificity required to meet the Local Transport and Connectivity Plan (LTCP) targets for 2030 and beyond. CoHSAT highlights that while the plan includes many positive elements—particularly around active travel and public transport—none of the identified schemes meaningfully reduce private car use, which is essential for achieving required reductions in car miles, casualty rates and carbon emissions. They emphasise that major local developments and decisions, such as the London Road level crossing solution, will be critical in either enabling or undermining progress.

The response calls for much clearer and more ambitious measures, including specific demand-management tools (e.g., congestion charging, traffic filters, parking policies) and large-scale active travel and road safety schemes targeted where they will have the biggest impact. In terms of place-making, CoHSAT advocates for increasing local density and developing liveable neighbourhoods to reduce reliance on motorised travel. They also stress the need for greater detail and prioritisation in the plan's broader commitments, arguing that these Movement and Place Plans should give confidence in delivery of the LTCP goals despite funding challenges.

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Fryer, Ben - Oxfordshire County Council

From: Calum McGoff <cmcgoff@motion.co.uk>
Sent: 01 December 2025 13:38
To: Area Movement and Place Strategies
Cc: Richard Gough; Rob Monie
Subject: Movement and Place Plan: Bicester and Mid Cherwell - Consultation Response

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Flagged

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Dear Sir/Madam,

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the Bicester and Mid-Cherwell Movement and Place Plan. Motion provides highway and transport advice to Value Retail, the operators of Bicester Village. The following comments are provided in that capacity and on behalf of Value Retail.

We welcome the Plan's ambition to deliver sustainable growth and a people-first approach. However, we wish to emphasise the following key points:

Cumulative Impact Assessment

The Plan identifies significant growth across Bicester and Mid-Cherwell, including:

1. 7,977 new homes in Bicester (2020–2042),
2. 2,342 homes at Heyford Park,
3. 150 hectares of employment land along the A41 corridor,
4. Additional 4,075 homes at North-West Bicester beyond 2042.

It should further be noted that, in addition to the planned growth set out above, significant speculative development is currently under consideration including:

1. Puy du Fou
2. OXSRFI (rail freight interchange)
3. Further development at Heyford Park comprising up to 9,000 homes.

These developments will collectively place substantial pressure on the M40, A41 corridor, peripheral routes, and the central network within Bicester. It is essential that transport modelling fully accounts for cumulative impacts of all committed and planned developments, rather than assessing schemes in isolation. This aligns with the principles of Objective BIC8 (Demand Management) and BIC9/BIC10 (Infrastructure Delivery), which recognise the need to mitigate congestion and air quality impacts through proactive planning.

Need to Secure Infrastructure

We strongly support the principle of “Decide and Provide” set out in the Local Transport and Connectivity Plan (LTCP) and reflected in Policy 36 and Objectives BIC9 and BIC10. To achieve this, a range of infrastructure packages are identified, which would assist in the delivery of planned growth across Bicester and the surrounding area.

The introduction of large scale speculative development outside of the Local Plan process will likely require significant additional infrastructure beyond that already identified if it is to proceed. Without these measures in place, there is a risk of severe congestion, air quality deterioration, and failure to meet LTCP objectives. It is critical that the promoters of these schemes identify a comprehensive package of measures and demonstrate how these would meet the policy objectives set out above. Due to the inherent uncertainty associated with speculative developments, consideration also needs to be given to how these might come forwards both in isolation and cumulatively.

Careful consideration must also be given to the timing and trigger points for infrastructure delivery. The LTCP includes ambitious mode shift targets which, given the likely delivery timescales of the developments identified above, will only be achieved if appropriate infrastructure provision is made from the outset.

Transparency and Monitoring

We recommend clear publication of:

1. Modelling assumptions and cumulative impact scenarios,
2. Delivery timelines for strategic infrastructure,
3. Mechanisms to secure funding and enforce delivery through planning obligations.

These steps will ensure alignment with Objective BIC13 (Innovation and Monitoring) and support the LTCP’s “Decide and Provide” approach.

Cattle Creep Scheme

The ‘Cattle Creep’ scheme is listed as ‘in progress’. While the strategic role of this route in connecting Graven Hill to the centre of Bicester is recognised, our view is that alternatives may also need to be considered. There are real challenges associated with this scheme which include assumptions on what can be achieved with respect to adequate drainage, the safety of the route for users, works within the cattle creep itself and the use of third party land. Meaning there is a significant risk that this route is undeliverable in practice.

We trust these points will be considered in shaping the final Plan and associated policies. Please do not hesitate to contact us should you require further clarification.

Kind Regards,

Calum McGoff|Associate

***motion*|**Quadrant House, Broad Street Mall,Reading,RG1 7QE
t0118 467 4498|m07769 334279|ecmcgoff@motion.co.uk|wwww.motion.co.uk
LinkedIn|X

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Response to the Bicester and Mid-Cherwell Movement and Place Plan Consultation – November 2025

CoHSAT, the Coalition for Healthy Streets and Active Travel in Oxfordshire is a group of 25 voluntary and campaigning organisations working across Oxfordshire to create attractive, accessible and people-friendly streets.

We do this by encouraging efficient, active, low carbon and sustainable travel, which will reduce traffic, air pollution and noise, and enable healthy and thriving communities.

Summary response

The Movement and Place Plans are 'Part 2 of the LTCP' – as such they are the plans that must deliver each local area's part of the LTCP targets.

Overall we support the direction – there is much that is good within the plans. We support the direction and are mostly concerned that the plans are not ambitious enough or specific enough at this point to achieve the targets.

Major developments in this area: housing growth, EWR, Heyford Park, Ardley station and possibly rail freight terminal provide an opportunity to deliver these targets or put them out of reach. Achieving them will require making the right decisions on the London Road level crossing, and ensuring that policies for connecting new developments are adhered to in practice.

In detail

We appreciate the introduction, and the clear setting out of 'movement' and 'place' as the components of the plan.

Movement

The timescale of the MAP Plans is 15 years, and so the relevant targets are in the medium-term are:

By 2030:

- Replace or remove 1 out of every 4 current car trips in Oxfordshire
- Reduce car vehicle miles driven in Oxfordshire by 20%

- Increase the number of cycle trips in Oxfordshire from 600,000 to 1 million cycle trips per week
- Reduce road fatalities or serious injuries by 50%

By 2040:

- Deliver a net-zero transport network By 2050 our targets are to:
- Replace or remove an additional 1 out of 3 car trips in Oxfordshire

The Bicester MAP Plan has to deliver Bicester (and Mid-Cherwell)'s part of this. In the absence of a wider plan allocating targets to areas, this means it must reduce car miles in Bicester by 20%, increase cycling in Bicester by 67%, and reduce road fatalities and serious injuries in Bicester by 50% - all by 2030.

Of the 19 specific plans and 11 area-wide schemes shown on the map, none of them reduce private car journeys (with the possible exception of unspecific 'bus priority measures'. Several improve active travel or public transport, but there is good research[1] (and the examples of Stevenage[2] and Milton Keynes) to show that good provision of alternatives is not enough to shift people away from damaging private car transport.

There is description of 'Demand Management' on p33. But it is not at all specific, and there are only 5 years to the 2030 target. For context, it has been 10 years from the announcement of the plan for Oxford to have Traffic Filters, a Zero Emissions Zone and Workplace Parking Levy (Cabinet, 27 January 2015) to reach our current state of a tiny ZEZ and Temporary Congestion Charge). And meanwhile, plans like the A41, Vendee Drivee and large-scale housing growth will add capacity traffic, leading to greater traffic and congestion working against the targets of the LTCP. So, specific plans for car traffic reduction are needed – whether this is achieved through local congestion charges, road pricing, traffic filters, parking measures or some other means.

This is why the best option for replacing the level crossing on London Road is an active travel-only underpass. It is the only option that makes walking, wheeling and cycling *more easy*, while making private car use *slightly more difficult, but not being obstructive for those who need it* – thus making progress towards LTCP goals.

The same logic applies to the cycling schemes and the road casualty reduction schemes to be delivered by 2030. They need to be large-scale and targeted on the areas where they can make enough difference to change the numbers by sufficient magnitude. It's a big task and there is no indication that the plans are big enough and specific enough to be delivered in time and generate enough change to deliver the targets.

[1] Reducing traffic with "carrots": A review of the evidence - ScienceDirect
[2] Build it and they will come? Why Britain's 1960s cycling revolution flopped | The Guardian

Place

We support the healthy place-shaping objective (BIC1). In addition we propose two related ones, consistent with the LTCP. These would need to be delivered in conjunction with the District Council (until unitarisation) and Town/Parish Councils.

- **Increasing local density** – which can be both housing and mixed development. This is essential to reducing the need for motorised transport.
- **Developing liveable neighbourhoods** – Liveable neighbourhoods, are a features of the LTCP and improve access to services while reducing the need for travel. The MAP Plan should develop them in towns by identifying local centres for enhancement, plans for enhancing them, and gaps where they are missing.

Large new and extension developments in particular should build in these features. Create Streets' report on a development in Cippenham 'Stepping off the road to nowhere'[3] provides an excellent example.

Broader aspects

Other aspects of the plan would also benefit from being developed in specificity. For example where it describes 'Explore options to promote place shaping' or 'Work with partners to deliver the walking, wheeling and cycling schemes contained within adopted documents'. These are good concepts and we support them, but they should be more specific and prioritised for the next few years at least.

We understand that there will be questions about funding and other uncertainties, but the LTCP is set down, and these are the 2nd level of plans that aim to deliver it, the MAP Plans should be providing confidence in delivery.

Robin Tucker
Chair, CoHSAT

[3] New report: Stepping off the Road to Nowhere - Create Streets

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MidCherwell
Neighbourhood Plan Forum

CONSULTATION RESPONSE: MAPP FOR BICESTER AND MID-CHERWELL

Mid-Cherwell

The area defined as Mid-Cherwell on the plan on p.6 will cause considerable confusion. Mid-Cherwell is already defined by the Mid-Cherwell Neighbourhood Plan, adopted in 2019 and an official part of the formal Development Plan for Oxfordshire since that time. The area named as Mid-Cherwell for the MAPP is twice as large and includes numerous villages around Bicester that are not designated in the MCNP area. These parishes do not consider themselves to be part of the description of Mid-Cherwell that has been in use for over six years, and with which many of them are familiar.

The situation is further complicated by the inclusion of Heyford Park, for which a separate masterplan already exists, which includes elements of provision for sustainable transport and active travel. OCC are making matters very difficult for themselves and others by attempting to adapt a document originally written for Bicester alone, which makes perfect sense, to now include a large rural hinterland of many small villages, and a further major development which is separately planned to become a New Town. Each of these three components – existing town, New Town, and rural environment, has different needs and priorities. The attempt to embrace them all in one document will end up incoherent and much less effective than separate plans that treat them according to their dissimilar merits.

We therefore **require** OCC to remove the name 'Mid-Cherwell' from the document, and to substitute a more suitable and acceptable alternative.

We think instead that OCC should produce a separate MAPP for the rural areas, and we would be happy to co-operate in its production. We appreciate that this consultation will result in submissions from many of the parishes identified in the MAPP, and we recommend that instead of attempting to incorporate them into the Bicester document, that they form the basis for a new separate document. It is too important a topic for us in Mid-Cherwell and the other villages to be treated as an afterthought to an existing document.

So, to summarise:

- Adopting the pre-existing name 'Mid-Cherwell' for a new area twice as large will cause confusion, and **we object** to it being used in this document.
- There are already adopted planning documents for Mid-Cherwell and for Heyford Park which address some of the aims of the MAPP.
- Attempting to produce a single document that includes policies that embrace Bicester, Heyford Park and a large number of small villages will likely produce a result much less effective than one that recognises the unique qualities of each type of location.
- There should be a separate MAPP for the rural communities around Bicester and Heyford Park. We would be happy to participate in the production of that document.

Continued.....

Vision

The current text on p.2 does not work for the villages or for Heyford Park. It was clearly written for Bicester, and has a largely urban focus. It is inappropriate to attempt to draft a new Vision as if Bicester, Heyford Park and the villages are all one 'place'. They are not.

We initially attempted to revise the Vision statement so that it works for all, and found it impossible to produce a result that is clear and easily understood. It can only be done by dividing the Vision into three parts – separately addressing aims for Bicester, Heyford Park and the villages.

This confirms the point made above, that the misguided attempt to bring them all together in one document should be abandoned, and the strategy re-thought.

We urge you not to ignore this strongly-held view, which is fully supported by the Executive of MCNP Forum.

While individual parish council members of the Forum may have taken the opportunity of this consultation to submit their ideas and proposals, that does not diminish the argument presented here that the use of our name will lead to confusion and avoidable conflict. We reiterate that the Forum and its member parishes would be happy to work with OCC on a separate MAPP for the rural areas, and look forward to engaging with officers on this.

On behalf of **MCNP Forum**

1.12.25

Oxford Bus Company
Cowley House
Watlington Road
Oxford OX4 6GA

01865 785400

info@oxfordbus.co.uk

oxfordbus.co.uk

By email only: areamovementandplacestrategies@oxfordshire.gov.uk

1st December 2025

Attn: Tim Snazell

Movement and Place Strategies Technical Lead Officer
Oxfordshire County Council
County Hall
New Road
OXFORD
OX1 4ND

Dear Mr. Snazell,

Bicester and Mid-Cherwell Movement and Place Plan – Response of Oxford Bus Group

Oxford Bus Group is pleased to submit its comments and observations on the Science Vale Movement and Place Plan.

The Oxford Bus Group comprises the City of Oxford Motor Services Ltd. trading as Oxford Bus Company ("OBC"), Thames Travel (Wallingford) Ltd. ("Thames Travel"; "TTW") and two other companies operating within the plan area: Pulham and Sons (Coaches) Ltd. ("Pulhams") and Carousel Buses Ltd. ("Carousel"). The former mainly operates in West Oxfordshire, though does provide a large number of school services in Cherwell, in particular to the Warriner School, and the latter has a small presence in the Plan area, but mainly operates in Buckinghamshire.

These four companies are together run as part of Go-Ahead Group's UK Bus interests. Collectively, Oxford Bus Group is the largest provider of public bus services in Oxfordshire. Our businesses, principally Oxford Bus Company and Thames Travel, run the majority of all scheduled bus mileage in the City of Oxford. We also run an increasing number of bus services in Bicester, including town service 21, and the Bicester Village shuttle service.

We understand this is a daughter document to the adopted Local Transport and Connectivity Plan ("LTCP5"). Its principal purposes are not entirely explicit. However, the published draft sets out a locality specific portrait of transport challenges and policy objectives, and then outlines a series of committed, potential and possible areas of interventions to address these. This creates a single up-to-date synopsis of anticipated transport projects and studies.

It supersedes policy in the County Council's "Bicester Area Strategy" which sat within the Framework of "Connecting Oxfordshire" which represented Local Transport Plan 4 ("LTP4"). Bicester is a designated Garden Town, having previously been one of the only examples of the previous Labour administrations "Ecotowns" that was progressed to confirmation and some degree of implementation. This followed principles set out in then-current PPG1a (2010), that included a wide range of sustainable transport objectives. These principles and parameters have been directly translated into current Cherwell Local Plan Part 1 Policy for North West Bicester, Policy BIC1.

This document therefore replaces transport policy for Bicester and its environs currently set out in the Bicester Area Strategy, in the light of much more ambitious current transport policy set out in LTCP5.

The scope of the draft MaP plan extends to the rural hinterland of the town. This has itself seen considerable growth in almost all the significant villages, much brought forward outside the plan-led system. This has seen particularly substantial development in Ambrosden, Launton and Chesterton, though by no means restricted to these. Not all these villages have a good public transport choice, or especially attractive active travel links.

We also recognise that within the MaP Plan area, Upper Heyford is one of very few sites selected as part of the current national administration's New Towns programme. A planning application for a proposed 9000 dwellings on this site, in addition to substantial complete and committed development, has been lodged with the Local Planning Authority. This involves a form of high-density development, almost exclusively flatted, on a site that stands off significantly from both established rail and bus services, while also being extremely advantageously located for long-distance out-commuting using the M40. Meeting the mobility needs of this development, much of which will be for small younger households and held on private rental tenures, will represent a challenge that has never previously be attempted in the County or beyond. The Plan was apparently drafted just prior to the announcement of the selection of Heyford Park and as such we note that the County anticipates the need to review and revise the MaP Plan accordingly.

After decades during which rapid residential development took place, with much less market demand for employment development, this has markedly changed. Bicester is now a rapidly growing employment cluster across a wide range of sectors, including innovation and high value-added sectors, especially automotive. Extensive employment land allocations that stood vacant to the south of town are now rapidly being taken up. Major additional strategic employment allocations have additionally been consented at M40 junction 10, and at Junction 9, with the draft Cherwell Local Plan Review 2042 seeking to capitalise on the strategic advantages of the area by allocating an employment-led development corridor along the A41 between the town and the M40.

Most of the development committed and anticipated lies a significant distance from the rail stations at Bicester North and Bicester Village – increasingly, beyond the scope of easy active travel choices. This being the case, while the imminent opening of East West Rail and substantial enhancement of the rail frequency from Bicester Village to Oxford will transform the mode split on the main flow between Bicester and the City, it should not be assumed that bus is a mode that is being replaced or eclipsed by the railway.

First while it is noted that station-to-station, trips from Bicester Village to Oxford take just 17 minutes, this is a portion of the overall journey. To the extent true origin and destination involve

the need for connectivity to and from other modes, the overall generalised journey time will typically be considerably longer, especially from much of the committed new development at BIC1 North West Bicester. To destinations in North Oxford, for example, the existing S5 bus corridor is likely to remain quite competitive. It is notable that the opening of the initial Evergreen project with a 30 minute rail service saw only a 13-14% reduction in patronage. Most of that was believed to be associated with trips to the Bicester Village retail complex.

Secondly, much of the new and enhanced rail offer will not effectively duplicate or replace the existing bus or coach offer, but be complementary or indeed entirely additional to it. As one very topical example, should the Chiltern or East West Rail trains extend to use the Cowley Branch Line to terminate, then this represents a public transport offer from Bicester that bus today simply cannot credibly offer on a very competitive basis. This is more likely to re-mode current car-borne journeys To Oxford Science Park and ARC Oxford.

Indeed, far to the contrary, in the context of higher level policy in LTCP5, and in the context of the broad objectives of this MaP Plan, that seeks to greatly improve sustainable connectivity within the town and to its hinterland and wider region. Realistic transport choices for a lot of trips in the plan area have not been widely available to date.

The bus offer that historically has been heavily dominated by the link to Oxford City Centre offered by Stagecoach S5 and X5, will need to see an unprecedented uplift in frequency and connectivity in the Bicester and Mid-Cherwell area, including:

- To provide high quality rail connectivity for longer-distance journeys especially at Bicester Village, but also Bicester North and at Heyford for journeys to Banbury, and the Midlands.
- To provide for a much higher proportion of local trips in a much-expanded town, with development now expected to extend up to 4km from the Market Place to the north west, west and southwest. This includes the leisure development at Great Wolf Resort, and employment on the A41 near Wendlebury.
- To provide for staff and visitor journeys from the Bicester rail stations, residential areas and hotels to the major new leisure development at Puy De Fou, for which a planning application is currently under consideration.
- The need to maintain and substantially enhance direct public transport connectivity from many parts of Bicester to destinations that are not on the rail network, nor, credibly, ever will be. This includes much of the Oxford Eastern Arc around Headington, including the hospitals and Brookes University, and much of the University of Oxford's footprint north and east of Oxford City Centre. The H5 service funded by the County Council offers an important first step but frequency, journey times and hours of operation need to be substantially enhanced, and this has been identified as a priority for funding from the Workplace Parking Levy, once implemented.
- The need to transform connectivity between Bicester and Heyford Park, on a high frequency basis 7 days a week, continuing no doubt to Heyford Station and then, potentially to Banbury.
- The need to reinforce wider connectivity beyond the MaP plan area. This includes Brackley and Banbury; and Aylesbury, Existing regular bus links exist but are relatively slow, infrequent and commercially fragile. The links provided by Stagecoach X5 to Buckingham – which is not directly served by East West rail, and parts of Milton Keynes will remain relevant and should be seen as retaining an important strategic value,

especially given ongoing intense development in both places, including to the west of Milton Keynes. The absence of direct public transport connectivity from the area to Silverstone Park, Towcester and Northampton via the A43 trunk road is an egregious connectivity gap that should be addressed as soon as possible.

Local internalisation for journey to work in Bicester has been low – only 35%. The railway is likely to drive future trends that tend to maintain a very substantial commuting outflow, albeit not by car, and to a wider variety of destinations including London and Birmingham. However, the rapid rebalancing of economic against residential development – and the former has led for several years now – provides an important opportunity to look to increase internal trips and secure a much higher active travel and bus mode share in the town and immediate area, which historically has been highly car-dominated. We note the extensive commentary of the public health impacts of car dependence on the MaP Plan area, which are serious.

We note that 88% of households have access to a least one car and half more than 2. In fact, the failure to deliver nearly all the strategic housing allocations in Bicester since 2014 will have allowed the employment footprint to substantially expand, and we expect that this helpful employment-led trend is likely to persist until at least 2030, which will be very helpful in this regard.

Existing mainly residential allocations around Bicester reflect a relatively compact form of development. However new allocations are starting to extend somewhat beyond a convenient walk or cycle of the centre of town and the station, in many cases. The new proposed employment-led allocations along the A41 sit alongside the existing strategic inter-urban bus and coach corridor. Thus, in principle, active travel and public transport ought to credibly be able to offer a high-quality relevant choice, subject to urban design and rational phasing of infrastructure and service delivery. Where development takes place on this kind of scale, this can be quite problematic.

We can point to the effect of the combination of compact development strategy and effective high quality urban design at Kingsmere (South West Bicester) in suppressing the use of private cars, even when car ownership is high. The development is now all but complete. Sustainable modes account for well over 55% of all peak trips, based on detailed Travel Plan surveys done over the last few years by the developer. Proximity of the rail station and the immediately adjacent inter-urban bus corridor substantially assist. More recently the delivery of large-scale employment development on the far side of the A41 should be expected to further support use of active modes for journeys to work. Both primary and secondary education is available on the development.

Planned Infrastructure Delivery

The draft recognises that a considerable number of schemes in the Plan area have been implemented, or are close to implementation.

This includes – among other interventions listed:

Ploughley Road/ A41 junction improvements including signalisation and provision of active travel measures.

- A41 Oxford Road corridor: Widening of A41 for right and left turn lanes and new signalised pedestrian and cycle crossing.

- Highway capacity improvements to peripheral routes - western corridor: Improvements to Howes Lane / Bucknell Road Junction: North West Bicester Ecotown Phase 1.
- Highway capacity improvements to peripheral routes - western corridor: Provision of a new tunnel under the railway at Howes Lane / Bucknell Road (LGF funded)
- Pioneer Roundabout improvements
- Improvements to Middleton Stoney Road roundabout western end: Shakespeare Drive and Howes Lane roundabouts
- Charbridge Lane crossing: Conversion of former level crossing of A4144 Bicester eastern perimeter road with Oxford- Bletchley Railway line into grade separated overbridge (East-West Rail).
- Bus facilities at Bicester Village Station, including a bus turning head and new bus stops on London Road.
- North West Bicester Ecotown railway crossings (underpass) 2 crossings: One to support road realignment and another for pedestrians and cyclists
- Delivery of public transport from all Strategic Sites to Bicester Town Centre and Rail Stations: South West Bicester Phase 1/2 (operated today as Stagecoach 26) and North West Bicester Ecotown Phase 1 (Exemplar site) (Stagecoach 500) Gravenhill (currently operated as Stagecoach 29/H5)
- Improvements to A41 corridor: New southbound bus stops on A41, adjacent to Bicester Business Park and Holiday Inn Express.

Bus frequencies to the major residential developments are no greater than every 30 minutes. Evening and Sunday services are generally not provided. As such it cannot be legitimately said that the current offer is “high quality” as the document states – it is demonstrably of lower quality than services in the Science Vale, whose MaP Plan states that services there are “limited” and of “low frequency.” We would consider that current service levels are broadly adequate to provide for a reasonable baseline service offer, for those without access to a car.

OBC is of the strong view that broadly speaking, it remains vital to supporting the very high level of employment and population growth committed in the adopted Local Plan in Bicester Graden Town, and in the emergent Review to 2042, that these interventions are implemented as far a possible as envisaged.

Objectives and Actions

This section is clearly tied back to key policies in LTCP5. There are clear references to quantifiable LTCP5 objectives allowing clear and transparent monitoring and evaluation of effectiveness. This is **commendable and welcome**.

The explanatory text offers evidence and exemplars of how the approaches proposed can be expected to work. While the direct relevance and applicability of these might at times be challengeable, it underpins the basis for ambitious objectives and actions that tackle the roots of key problems effectively. We **strongly agree** that that perpetuating previous policy approaches is neither appropriate nor able to secure important national and local transport policy goals.

Objective BIC1 Creating a sense of place through implementing a healthy place-shaping interventions

We welcome and support the intention to reduce the dominance of private car use especially in and around Bicester town centre. This adversely affects the experience of the place, but importantly seriously frustrates efficient and reliable bus service delivery. Congestion-related delay is now widespread and chronic, especially west of the town centre, where most bus routes circulate.

We **support** the objective.

We are concerned that progress has been made on the proposed redesign of Bicester Market Place with little or no input from ourselves, and, we fear, the other major bus operator. The project is being managed by the District and Town Councils, rather than the Local Highways and Transport Authority which credibly explains this. We have tried to establish the detailed designs to ensure that they will accommodate bus movements as intended. To date we have been unsuccessful. However based on what is known publicly we are largely content that subject to a very substantial reduction of other vehicular traffic, the project will function well enough for bus.

In villages and local centres, the Objective ought to secure more attractive bus stop/stand facilities as far as possible. We urge the Council to note that bus stops at these locations are likely to be timing points where buses might need to wait time on occasion. This being the case, off-carriageway stands are often important to prevent stationary buses blocking traffic flow. It should not be assumed that lay-bys and pull-ins can or should be removed, without potentially material difficulties arising for the safe passage of traffic, including cycles.

Objective BIC2 Deliver a comprehensive and inclusive walking, wheeling and cycling network

This objective simply repeats higher level LTCP5 policy. As such, it really does little to advance or clarify actions, save to point to the development of LCWIP within the MaP Plan area, something already stated in LTCP5 and thus a higher level commitment.

We agree that the nature of Bicester, in terms of topography and urban structure, well lends itself to support a high level of walking and cycling. We also recognise significant barriers to making cycling an attractive choice. Equally the draft states that *"There is limited space on routes within Bicester to create the space where all modes of travel can coexist without conflicts. We will need to look at innovative ways such as reprioritising road space to enable and increase in walking, wheeling and cycling."*

It is important that measures to promote cycling, especially on key radial routes, do not serve to make bus operations slow, unsafe or in practical terms, impossible. We would highlight the approach to accommodating segregated cycling tracks adjoining bus stops that is subject to recent legislation in the Bus Services No.2 Act 2025, where new national design guidance is imminent.

Most bus journeys involve a walk at both the start and end of the trip. A significant and rising number can involve cycling. We **support** the objective, alongside other Objectives to improve bus stop infrastructure and local inter-modality.

We are not, however of the view that powered micro-mobility offers public benefits and relevance that exceed its quite considerable disamenities, including the effect of the behaviour of e-scooter riders on the experience of walking. Introducing a scheme will need legislative change, in any event. Nor is it clear that there would be a sufficiently strong commercial case to introduce such a scheme in Bicester. We by contrast would naturally be supportive of a shared

cycle scheme subject to its operation and management being effective, such as the Beryl cycle hire scheme in Hereford.

Objective BIC3 Enhance bus infrastructure

3.1. Working alongside public transport operators to develop a strategy and action plan for a bus route hierarchy and to implement bus prioritisation/SMART infrastructure along key movement corridors including as per Infrastructure Delivery Plan:

a. Bus priority on B4030 and Vendee Drive Roundabout improvements.

b. Improvements to A41 corridor; infrastructure improvements and bus priority to enable greater reliability on the A41 corridor to/from Junction 9 to Ploughley Lane.

c. B4100 between Baynard's Green roundabout and A4095 junction.

d. Bus only link, west of Howes Lane – link to the Howes Lane and Lords Lane realignment.

e. Through route for buses between the A4421 Charbridge Lane and A41 Aylesbury Road. (deliverable by the developer through Wretchwick Green)

We **welcome and support** this initiative and these specific interventions strongly.

The Vendee Drive Roundabout and the access to and from the Park and Ride site is especially important and needs urgent prioritisation. We note that this has emerged as an accident black spot for serious injuries.

3.2. Develop a strategy and action plan with local community and stakeholders to identify opportunities for the improvement of bus infrastructure/hubs (e.g. waiting facilities, location for new bus stops, Real Time Information, AI, raised kerbs, lighting, shelters, CCTV, onward travel maps and greening/solar.) including the following:

a. Town Centre interchange at Pioneer Square.

b. Bus routes into strategic employment and residential sites.

c. Bus routes through North West Bicester and Middleton Stoney Road.

We recognise that these are the priority areas for attention regarding bus routing, urban design and bus infrastructure provision. We **strongly welcome** the recognition that existing bus stop provision in the town is both highly inconsistent and across much of the installed sites, quite poor.

Where major new development is concerned, significant formal bus operator input has already been offered into the current application for the main EcoTown Site, as well as the reserved matters to the initial phases at Himley Village. The approach taken to bus penetration into the much-enlarged Heyford Park new town scheme is going to be important and likely to pose some unusually large challenges.

It is essential that County officers in Transport Development Management and Roads Adoptions pay due regard to this input, and where necessary engage with operators in technical dialogue. We again would emphasise the recently published second edition of *"Bus Services and New Residential Developments"* (April 2025) jointly produced by Stagecoach and Go-Ahead Group, that is aimed to give clear and consistent advice on these matters.

3.3. Work with stakeholders to investigate the opportunities to enhance bus stops and public realm at Pioneer Square and assess future needs.

This is likely to be essential not least if a larger number of services (such as to Heyford Park and the EcoTown) and higher frequency services are to be provided. Better turning arrangements at the eastern end of the Pioneer Square area on Manorsfield Road are likely to be needed, slightly increasing the inscribed circle of the existing mini-roundabout. Zero-emission buses also require uprated pavement buildup to cope with higher static and torque loads exerted on the carriageway surface.

We **strongly support** this initiative.

3.4. Explore solutions where there is conflict between public transport and other transport modes.

We **welcome** this. We commit to working collaboratively and constructively with the Council and other delivery partners and technical consultants to arrive at appropriate solutions that seek to best and most effectively manage conflicts between objectives, and secure the optimal balance between modes having regard to wider transport policy objectives.

3.5. Work with public transport operators to deliver a zero-emission bus fleet within Bicester and Mid-Cherwell.

OBC within the wider Go-Ahead UK bus business, are at the forefront of fleet decarbonisation. We have already deployed battery electric buses onto the Bicester Village contract, within the MaP Plan area, and these can also regularly be seen operating on the Bicester Village P&R services utilised on busier days.

We are actively considering how wider decarbonisation can be effected within the Country beyond the Oxford Smartzone, where we and Stagecoach have together replaced the entire bus fleet with 159 battery electric buses, one of the largest deployments outside London. On 27th November, we were pleased to learn that we had been successful in a bid to the County's inaugural Vehicle Improvement fund for £1.2m in match funding to support the deployment of 9 further zero-emission vehicles for our Oxfordshire fleet. This project will include the first smaller single deck zero-emission vehicles introduced in Oxfordshire, which are expected to be used on our 21 service on occasion.

However, one challenge to widespread adoption of zero-emission buses in the Bicester and Mid-Cherwell area currently is the lack of a suitable bus depot facility. Our services in the area operate from depot sites remote from the area, while Stagecoach maintains an outstation in the Murdock Road area which is little more than a parking yard. With the high levels of proposed growth in the plan area in the near future, it is essential that a site for a suitable bus operating centre is identified, along with the necessary power supply to support the charging of electric vehicles.

Objective BIC4 Enhance bus services.

The baseline position for bus use in Bicester is **agreed to be quite weak.** This reflects a historic focus on a single direct main route to Oxford, that only penetrates a single residential neighbourhood at Glory Farm. While the situation is evolving, including more S5 journeys that directly serve established neighbourhoods west of the town (and furthest from the rail station) substantial action is needed to improve bus network coverage and frequency if bus use is to

materially rise. Achieving this in the local context will involve a highly well-advised approach, and success will be highly sensitive to a number of parameters being met.

4.1 Develop a strategy and action plan with stakeholders and partners to identify opportunities to deliver and fund long distance coach services which link to regional and national locations.

Bicester is about to become a nationally significant rail hub, with direct rail services offered to all cardinal points of the compass on at least an hourly basis. As recently as 2016 it was a branch line offering about 9 trains a day to Oxford, with an hourly service calling between Birmingham and London. The level of service offered would very seriously truncate the demand for coach links.

As described earlier in the response, there is nevertheless a major strategic connectivity gap between Oxford, Bicester and Northampton on the A43 corridor. Recent significant service improvements have been made on this corridor between Brackley and Northampton within West Northamptonshire. However, this is a local bus offer and it unclear how relevant and effective this will be. It does not connect with services from Bicester. It is developer-funded and it unclear if the service will be self-sustaining, especially without the benefit of through traffic from Oxfordshire.

There has been a 20+ year history of trying to address this link, that has to date proven incapable or supporting a sustainable offer. This has been because one or all of the following compromises have been involved:

- Inadequate/irregular frequency: at least hourly is needed
- “one-ended” operation from Northampton, greatly constraining the first journeys from and last journeys back to Bicester/Oxford
- Little or no through service, lack of resilience with connections
- Insufficient hours of operation, and no Sunday service
- Indirectness and poor journey times due to multiple convoluted village diversions
- Poor quality vehicles not ideally suited to the length and nature of the service

All these need to be tackled to offer something closer to the former X5 Oxford-Bicester-MK offer, which since COVID-19 has been downgraded from high specification coaches to city -specified local buses.

4.2 Work with operators to provide new services to existing communities, new residential areas and existing/new employment, community and bus services linking to surrounding villages.

The committed growth in the Garden Town will extend considerably further from the town centre and station than current development, most of which lies within about 1800m, and is thus walkable or cyclable. The relevance and role of bus for local journeys is likely to substantially increase, and it must do to avoid perpetuating and even aggravating already exceptionally high levels of car use.

One major challenge is the very low level of internal self-containment for peak trips – about 35%. The competitiveness of bus against car rapidly declines in general terms, with distance, especially if a connection is needed from a local to a longer distance service. The same is

broadly true for bus-rail connections, though the prospect of frequent rail services at Bicester Village does make it possible to envisage a much greater role for bus from North West Bicester if a sufficient bus frequency can be sustained – see below.

a. NW Bicester bus service connecting to the town centre.

North West Bicester (the former EcoTown, current Local Plan Part 1 allocation BIC1) has always been treated as a unity. Practically speaking, and certainly in urban design terms, it is two discrete developments separated by the Chiltern Main Line railway. It has long been considered impossible to serve with a single efficient and effective bus route.

Furthermore, land control is divided across the railway.

Land to the east is largely in a single control, with an application for 3100 dwellings pending determination. This complements the existing "exemplar" site and a much more recent consent adjacent to that that together will provide about 950 dwellings. The "orphaned" nature of the 394 exemplar units meant that the local shuttle service provided as E1 for many years never came close to being sustainable. This part of the allocation is now served by a diversion of the Bicester-Brackley service running broadly hourly as Stagecoach 500 under contract to the County Council, but this frequency is insufficient to be a broadly relevant choice for local journeys. Ultimately, in principle approximately 4000 dwellings at a policy compliant level of affordable tenures ought to support a 2-bus operation; subject to urban design offering efficient operation that ought to allow a 15-minute frequency service to be achievable and broadly sustainable. This is crudely equivalent to the maximum frequency achieved on Banbury town services, though it should be stressed that Banbury has a greatly larger and more vibrant town centre offering.

Lesser capacity will be delivered west of the railway, spread over two land controls. Capacity is considered higher than assumed with the original BIC1 allocation. Himley Village is consented, and now under constructionfor up to 1700 dwellings, and adjoining land at Aldershot Farm is subject for a pending allocation for 1000 dwellings. A small amount of land nominally exists within the allocation beyond, but it is prudent to assume that about 2700 dwellings is deliverable.

There is some cause to suggest that any service might combine with Kingsmere, that would provide a link to the secondary school and also to substantial and growing levels of employment at London Road, as well as add about 2500 dwellings to the hinterland of a service. However, such a route would be more indirect. However, a tradeoff with higher sustainable frequency is likely to exist, and may be worth making, if it allows for a 15-minute frequency, which would demand very great attention to efficient and productive bus routing through all the residential areas served, especially on the EcoTown.

The delivery of any bus service will need very substantial financial support over what will be long delivery periods, each of at least 10 years and more likely a good deal longer. It will also demand rigorous attention to the phasing strategy and agreed triggers for delivery of bus routes within the developments – something that there is a poor track record for. Having been agreed, these milestones need to be observed and where necessary, subject to vigorous enforcement action.

The southern edge of the Himley site also lies on the Midleton Stoney Road and thus the route to Heyford Park. However, achieving a successful diversion of that service into Himley Village is likely to extend journey times from there to an unacceptable degree. Thus while initial occupations can no doubt depend on this for a while, it should not in our view be assumed that a great deal of synergy exists between the New Town and the EcoTown.

b. *Investigate the potential of providing a new bus service to strategic employment sites (developments to fund additional services).*

Two sets of sites exist: a pair of major sites for warehousing/distribution (B8) class uses at Baynards Green near M40 junction 10 (with a third subject to an appeal)either side of the B4100; and along the A41. Both sites thus benefit from a level of baseline access by bus.

To the extent that stops exist or are to be provided on the A41 London Road, a regular service to Bicester (including Glory Farm) Kidlington and Oxford will be available, 7 days a week, including early morning and late evening services from these strategic allocations. It may prove necessary to offer specialist shift change buses, but these are likely only to be needed if there are capacity problems or if substantial employment extends more than about 500m – 600m walk from the bus stops. The demand for any such services will be highly dependent on employment density and the source labour markets for the sites – which can only be determined in the light of experience. However, experience at Didcot suggests that operatives are not necessarily locally resident. We also note ambitious proposals for segregated cycling infrastructure along the A41.

Shift change reinforcement of the 500 to/past the B8 sites at Baynards Green will be necessary, and this needs to be specified in line with the operational requirements of occupiers.

Bicester Motion benefits from the hourly X5 at stops at Caversfield that have recently been improved. Significant but smaller scale employment development at BIC1 west of Howes Lane is directly served from Middleton Stoney Road, again only about every hour, with limited evening and weekend services.

c. *Heyford Park.*

Bus operators have long voiced serious concerns about the provision of a bus service to this site that will be sufficient to offer a relevant choice. The site is relatively remote from any higher-order settlement, while the M40 and the B430 link to the A34 is immediately accessible, understandably making car-borne commuting the default option.

Bicester is the nearest credible bus destination. Unhelpfully it is just a little too far distant to allow a single bus to offer a reliable hourly service, or two buses, a half-hourly service. Historically a direct link was operated to Oxford but the standard of local roads, as well as the distances involved, poses fundamental operational as well as commercial problems. OBC group businesses operated both these services as 25/25A, and 250, for several years and thus we have had direct and extended exposure to the issues involved. The County Council has subsequently struggled to procure operators for the existing service.

The site benefits from several permissions over and above the original which is essential complete for 1077 dwellings, and a supplementary site for 276 units (16/02446/F). The second

involves 1175 (18/00825/OUT), but has barely started. A further 230 dwellings are consented on third party land to the east (21/04289/OUT), and another discrete holding to the south east is under promotion for 225 dwellings.

The most recent proposal in part replaces the 2018 permission. It has a scope of about 9000 additional homes, employment and associated facilities. The urban form extends across the entire extensive former flying field and as such significant mileage will need to be operated on the site whereas today the service runs along Camp Road that the current development is neatly bisected by.

The entire scale of development potential is thus clearly in excess of 10,000 dwellings. Most of these will be multi-storey flats, and the whole urban form will most closely resemble an inner-city metropolitan regeneration, albeit vast expanses of open space along the current runway will be retained between two very high-density lobes of built form. Internal circulation is indicated on submitted plans, but the inordinately intricate circulation for vehicles including buses, offers great certainty that bus operation will be slow and the route will be complex and hard to understand, if this is how the development ultimately comes forward. Development south of the runway will all lie within about 750-800m of Camp Road, and it may prove most appropriate to retain the bus service here, with enhanced facilities for cycle parking etc. at the existing neighbourhood centre.

It remains to be seen how off-site mobility can be provided for most effectively. The distance of Heyford Park from a wide range of major potential destinations severely limits how far bus can provide direct links to destinations beyond Bicester. There is a clear aspiration on the part of the promoters of the New Town to rely on Heyford Station, where it is understood that "Project Churchward" involving new bi-mode rolling stock, will allow uplift of passenger frequencies south of Banbury serving Oxford and intermediate stations including Heyford to rise to every 30 minutes. However, providing a seamless shuttle bus offer will probably need to be free of charge at the point of use, and this begs innovative funding solutions from residents, likely to be tied to annual service charges/management fees. It would be hard, albeit probably not impossible, to incorporate this provision into a core Heyford Park-Bicester service.

This rail offer at Heyford, if delivered, is likely to satisfy trip demands to Banbury town centre and Oxford, and beyond towards Didcot, sufficient that it is very hard to see why further direct bus services would be justified. Rather, as demand grew, it would be more advantageous to progressively reinforce the core Bicester (including Bicester Village Station) - Heyford Park-Upper Heyford – Heyford Station service, with a view to raising frequency to at least every 15 minutes – also making connection times in all directions at Heyford Station credibly achievable within reasonable wait times. This level of service ought to be able to penetrate the full development, subject to substantial review of the submitted master plan to ensure rational and efficient bus routing is provided.

d. Other areas across Mid-Cherwell.

The main additional areas for bus connectivity enhancement relate first to the direct link to Headington via Gravenhill and Ambrosden, currently operated as H5 by Stagecoach. This hourly service needs to be reinforced to every 30 minutes to start to provide a credibly relevant choice for employment – as is planned under the strategy for bus services put forward for the proposed

Oxford Workplace Parking Levy. Unfortunately, Arncott cannot realistically avoid being orphaned by this arrangement. Carriageway reinforcement across Otmoor is likely to be necessary. There may also be a case to consider demand management measures to reduce the effect of rat-running traffic on this route, as well as junction alterations at the Bayswater Road crossroads.

A new service west of Bicester to Chesterton and beyond to the consented Great Wolf Resort has been agreed as part of planning obligations. It is very unclear to us, however, that credibly foreseeable demand will ever reach a level that this will outlive a subsidy period, especially since a separate parallel free shuttle bus for staff and visitors is also required. We would suggest looking to combine these into a single service, as exists with the Bicester Village shuttle service.

The links through Launton towards Aylesbury have existed in a variety of forms with Council support for many years. The former commercially operated hourly extension to S5 has been subsumed into this arrangement. It now appears that an extension of the Chiltern line from Aylesbury Vale Parkway to meet East West Rail at Calvert is not to progress, which makes this link more important, especially given that both Bicester and Aylesbury are designated Garden Towns with very high levels of plan-led growth committed, and in the case of Aylesbury, underway on multiple development fronts.

Beyond this, and the existing X5 and potential A43 link towards Northampton, that we discuss at length elsewhere, it is hard to see what further potential exists.

4.3 Work with partners to provide faster bus services, with consideration given to increasing frequencies (including "turn up and go" services) and express, or limited stop services and the optimisation of existing services.

The essence of achieving a step change in bus speeds and ultimately, in frequency and patronage, will certainly involve ensuring buses are prioritised over general traffic across the MaP Plan area and beyond.

We and Stagecoach, the principal other operator, have long highlighted the areas of the most serious congestion on the network. Within the Plan area and outside it, serious chronic congestion remains, with no clarity on how it will be addressed in particular on the A34 between Pear Tree and M40 junction 9 at Wendlebury. This lies entirely under the purview of National Highways. We would hope that planned major alterations on the A41 under County control, between Bicester and the same junction can be effected to include comprehensive bus priority, especially southbound.

The objective of making buses consistently faster and more reliable along entire corridors would of itself serve to release current operating resource to increase frequency.

Bicester itself has a quite unusual history, with planned expansion at scale taking place since 1987 on large urban extensions at Southwold (from 1986) Langford Village (from 1989) and Bure Park (from 2000) before the more recent Kingsmere and current Local Plan allocations commenced since 2010. By virtue of location and urban design, most of these are impossible to penetrate with bus services, but they also “turn their backs” on the arterial routes of

Buckingham Road and Banbury Road, the latter of which has historically not had much if any bus provision in any case. These neighbourhoods have benefited from good local self-containment, and also are relatively close in to the town centre, which also has seriously truncated the development of services within easy reach.

Langford Village did benefit from an hourly bus service as an extension of the S5 from the town centre, for many years, operated commercially by Stagecoach. The indirect route to the town centre and relatively extended journey time to Oxford beyond hardly helped support a high level of use. However, the site also lies directly on the A41 and the A4421 Outer Ring Road and presents unusually attractive choices for car-borne travel including using the SRN. The very near proximity of high quality rail services at Bicester Village station is a relatively recent benefit that should serve to replace a large number of otherwise car-borne journeys, but makes it hard to see how bus will at any stage in future sustain a sufficient level of demand to support a relevant offer in the longer term.

Prior to 2016, a network of supported town services existed before the budget was removed, many of these having been operated by Thames Travel between 2013 and 2016. The lack of bus services and bus stops anywhere near most of these homes has strongly perpetuated car dependency.

We would also stress there is an inherent tension between fast and direct bus services, and running routes for extensive distances through new residential areas where bus speeds are intended by design to never exceed about 18 mph. This will be crucial in both portions of the North West Bicester Eco-town. 20mph limits on the bus routes will reduce the effective frequency that can be offered by at least 30% and possibly more compared with a 30mph limit, simply because so great a proportion of the operated mileage will be within the development. We have long emphasised that major development spine roads should be expected, generally speaking, to have a 30mph limit for this reason. As it is these streets generally now incorporate extensive off-carriageway cycling tracks.

A very significant proportion of the existing bus network between Bicester and surrounding towns runs direct and with few if any stops. This is not just limited to the express services running along the A34, such as Stagecoach S5 and X1. It also includes Stagecoach 500 between Bicester and Brackley along the B4100 and A43; and X5 on the A4421/A421 towards Buckingham, that runs virtually non-stop, alongside the almost non-stop link between Bicester Village and Oxford stopping only at West Parade for Summertown. It is thus quite unclear what is meant or anticipated by the Plan in this regard.

The Plan would benefit from a clear and evidenced view as to where the opportunities to advance these important objectives lie. One area of immediate interest needs to be substantially augmenting the H5 corridor between Bicester and the Headington Hospitals via Gravenhill and Ambrosden.

We agree that maximising cross-town connectivity will be very important to achieving this objective. Through working of Stagecoach 26 with 29/H5 from Kingsmere to Gravenhill and beyond is a good start towards effecting this.

In addition, development of existing strongly-performing local services such as route 21 to include more comprehensive evening and Sunday services should be a priority.

4.4 Work with bus operators and employers to ensure improved reliability, attractiveness and resilience of services.

Naturally we **strongly support** this objective. It is of foundational importance to achieving the kinds of uplift in public transport use necessary to support the achievement of wider LTCP5 goas to reduce single-occupancy car trips by half by 2040.

We point back to our comments above under Objective 4. Early action to deliver significant strategic bus priority measures need to feature strongly in early capital investment programmes, including in and around Bicester Town Centre on the B4100 and on the A41.

4.5 Work with partners to develop a digital strategy to support the bus network within Bicester and surrounding areas.

OBC has invested heavily for over a decade in digital customer facing and operational infrastructure. We are probably the UK leaders in this field, having pioneered among other things, tap-on-tap-off (TOTO) and daily and weekly fare-capping. App-based information and payment has been in place for years at this writing. Our digital information systems also carry the details of other operators' services.

Fulfilling this Objective is certain to require a multi-operator approach across the whole of Oxfordshire, and, potentially a more extensive Combined Authority area in due course. This theme is already a standing focus of the Oxfordshire Statutory Enhanced Partnership.

Objective BIC5: Create a network of mobility hubs

OBC and Stagecoach have long advocated for these, locally and nationally. OBC's parent, Go-Ahead, published a major technical advisory document alongside ARUP in 2021. This is viewable at https://www.go-ahead.com/mobilityhubs Therefore the principle is **strongly supported.**

We broadly agree with the four identified locations at the two Bicester stations, Pioneer Square and at the Bicester Park and Ride.

Beyond these and a clear need for a facility at the Heyford Park Local Centre in due course, the main candidate location is likely to be at the Caversfield stop on the X5 near Bicester Motion, also serving a much wider residential hinterland; and possibly at one of the stops on the Oxford Road serving Kingsmere and the Business Park.

This objective ought also to signal that the scale and function of these facilities will vary with context. The capital cost and upkeep of substantial facilities is something that it is not clear that the County can sustain on any material scale. A somewhat larger number of small suitably equipped facilities on key corridors, leveraging other amenities such as at neighbourhood centres, is likely to be more effective and more deliverable.

Objective BIC6: Work alongside partners to improve rail services and infrastructure

The future investment pipeline in the railway network, nationally and more locally, will sit entirely with the Secretary of State for Transport. The 2025 White Paper on Local Government Reform also sets a clear expectation that the new Combined Authority Tier, that would sit above Oxfordshire, will be that that is expected to have the responsibility for shaping rail services and investment strategy at a sub-national level.

Notwithstanding, the list of interventions here is clear and focused on areas where the Council and local stakeholders have much greater potential ability to influence, fund and on occasions directly support delivery of projects. This includes a high level of focus on facilitating inter-modality. All this is **welcome and supported**.

Objective BIC7 Support the development of a car club network and car share schemes.

Oxford Bus Group is well aware of the evidence that car clubs reduce the pressure on households to commit to the high fixed costs of personal car ownership, which then incentivises car use for most journeys. The avoidance of second car ownership releases individuals to take advantage of a wider range of choices depending on journey purpose. This includes active travel or public transport use.

The wide roll-out of car clubs also serves to reduce the density of car ownership and thus, on-street parking in residential areas. This is one of the biggest hindrances to efficient bus operation in residential areas, especially newer ones, as is discussed at length in the joint Go-Ahead-Stagecoach guidance on urban and street design for new residential development.

Car share is an even more powerful tool to reduce car mileage, and both congestion and parking pressure, and has relevance to a very wide range of trips for which public transport use is unlikely to ever provide a realistic choice by virtue of origin-destination and distance.

The available platforms are now multi-modal travel planning tools, most notably the transition of the Liftshare.com offer to a multi-modal "Mobilityways" product. This provides a direct means of accessing the full range of choices for any potential journey, regular or occasional. It is a particularly powerful behavioural change tool, when used by major employers or destinations such as hospitals or sporting venues. We have long recognised this potential and urged the Council to seek to support its broad roll-out, not least within the City of Oxford.

We thus strongly and unequivocally support the Objective.

We urge the County to go further, and faster, to support the uptake of tools including the Mobilityways platform, including in residential as well as employment travel plan strategies. Prioritising multi-modal personal travel planning, and requiring dedicated car-sharing parking as part of County Transport Development Management requirements where major trip-generating uses are proposed, should take place, to drive action. Objective 7.3 needs to be modified to this end.

Objective BIC8 Demand Management

We note and welcome the comprehensive background narrative and evidence set out under this theme heading. We agree that existing conditions demonstrate the need for and the potential positive impacts of this Objective.

We again note and commend the very clear and explicit tie-back of this policy area into the parent LTCP5 policy. Most demand management measures are politically contentious and a robust justification is accordingly both appropriate and necessary.

A number of areas are highlighted in the text. One is the oversupply of car parking in the town centre, much of it free of charge, at least for up to three hours. The severance impact of high level of car traffic on Buckingham Road/Kings End is also clearly an issue where achieving a shift to active travel modes is concerned, as well as presenting significant problems for the reliable and efficient operation of public transport.

National evidence is plentiful that restricting parking at residential origin has no impact on reducing car ownership or use. It merely increases parking pressure on the highway, including footways. This blocks footways, cycle provision – including flagrant abuse of segregated tracks – and hinders efficient bus movement. Demand management at major employment destinations be possible, however this would require a greater degree of engagement with asset owners / employers than is currently happening in the Plan area. There is no District General Hospital in the MaP Plan area to which such measures credibly might also be applied.

Naturally **we would broadly** support the removal of on-street parking along identified routes and high footfall areas, to facilitate the LCWIP schemes, DCC, SATN and priority bus routes and to support the delivery of cycleways, where appropriate. This will be especially appropriate in the inner area of Bicester. Care will need to be taken to retain appropriate levels of access for deliveries and servicing.

Consideration for the provision of new or extended Controlled Parking Zones is **supported in principle.** How far it is justifiable or necessary in the MaP Plan area is likely to be quite limited. Most of the built environment has been purpose designed to accommodate on-curtilage parking as it has been developed since 1980.

Objective BIC9: Deliver movement infrastructure schemes

We **agree strongly** that it is simply not credible, appropriate nor expedient to assume that all additional future mobility demand can be accommodated by active travel, supported by public transport, given the current baseline position and the scale of development already committed, which is likely to grow further, not least with the Heyford Park New Town.

We recognise and agree that to achieve the maximum scope to increase active travel and public transport use, principally within the inner area of Bicester, diversion of through traffic out of the area is necessary and justifiable, through the South East Peripheral Route. This route is also likely to greatly assist the future delivery of rational bus service connectivity between allocations east of the town employment on the A41, and Kidlington/Oxford, depending on alignment and design.

9.1. Support the delivery of:

a. A4095 realignment (NW Bicester).

This relates to the established requirements of the EcoTown and its approved framework plans, and is **supported**. This is also necessary to better distribute through traffic, including HGVs

away from the congested inner area and corridors, freeing up road space in this area for sustainable modes.

b. Highways and environmental improvements to the central corridor: Kings End to Queen Ave.

This should support substantial improvements for active travel and public transport on what is today a busy and congested link. Improvements to bus priority and bus stop infrastructure should be secured as part of this scheme. This ought to be facilitated by improvements to Vendee Drive and Howes Lane separately proposed. This is **strongly supported**.

c. Improvements to Middleton Stoney Road / Kings End / Oxford Road roundabout.

Most bus routes use this junction today, and there is no question that the future development of bus services, both local and longer distance, will make this even more frequently traversed. One consideration is the likely removal of any link for buses east from the market Place via the current level crossing on London Road, in which case, it is quite likely that at least one bus service heading towards the east will need to divert round via Oxford Road and the existing A41 link, through this area.

Given the adjacency of the Bicester Village retail destination, and an intersection with a key east west sustainable travel connection towards the Station through it, the improvement of active travel facilities through this area is no doubt another important priority.

Notwithstanding, we urge that the opportunity is fully taken up to secure bus priority between the Pingle Drive junction and Kings End through the substantial diversion of through traffic. In fact, there is a strong case to entirely remove general vehicular traffic between Middleton Stoney Road and Pingle Drive from the Oxford Road through introduction of a mode filter.

We **strongly support the principle,** subject to the opportunities to rebalance the transport offer towards sustainable modes and public transport in particular, being identified and fully taken up.

d. Caversfield junction improvements (Junction of Aunt Ems Lane and B4100).

This scheme relates, broadly, to the EcoTown (north). It is at an advanced stage. It is **supported.**

e. Western corridor Changes and improvements to Howes Lane/Bucknell Road Junction: North West Bicester all other phases.

As previously signalled this relates to the immediate access and movement requirements arising from both sides of the EcoTown, as well as a wider strategic need to de-emphasise vehicular traffic crossing the town's central area, and provide an alternative effective peripheral route. Accordingly, it is **strongly supported**, subject to its design facilitating efficient and direct bus access from the EcoTown to Bucknell Road. This is likely to be the main radial route for local bus services serving the EcoTown.

Objective BIC10: Deliver future movement infrastructure schemes

As stated previously we **strongly support** these in principle.

We note that **little or nothing is said in the Plan about** the approach to the **London Road Level Crossing.** Network Rail intend to close this shortly.

It is on a significant bus route, being the only direct link from the town centre to the east, including committed local plan strategic allocations at Gravel Hill and Wretchwick Green. Beyond that the H5 service continues to Headington and JR Hospital. In time we would expect the service to extend to the major employment cluster around Oxford Brookes University/Old Road/Churchill Hospital/Warneford College.

We note the very recent announcement on 22nd November 2025 that after years of controversy and pressure, Network Rail has now agreed to progress an underpass offering limited vehicular access to replace the level crossing. This involves a limited headroom (unclear currently) and single-track shuttle working. It is far from clear to us what the capacity of this arrangement would be to address current levels of traffic using the level crossing.

The probable dimensions **will not permit operation** by future zero-emissions buses, all of which are over 3m high. The Council and all other stakeholders need to be clear about this matter and the future impact on bus network connectivity.

There is also a very clear mutual dependency on the future approach taken to traffic and demand management in and around the town centre, including Market Place, Manorsfield Road and Kings End. If as seems likely all routes to the east need to take an alternative route, either to the west and south via Kings End/Oxford Road/A41; or to the north via Launton Road and A4421 Charbridge Lane/Wretchwick Way, then this will unavoidably reduce the attractiveness and relevance of certain services, especially for more local journeys. While routes to Aylesbury currently route via Launton, those towards Headington and Eastern Arc will be especially compromised.

We therefore urge the County and Network Rail to review the position urgently, and with a broader view as to what the investment in the level crossing replacement is intended to achieve, and what other mitigation strategies are necessary to maintain access by all sustainable modes towards the east.

10.1. Progress the current ongoing schemes in the pipeline:

a. Eastern Peripheral Movement Corridor.

We are not quite clear to what this refers.

10.2. Work with partners to develop the following previously identified schemes:

a. A41 Corridor / South East Peripheral Road.

As signalled above, we **strongly support** the principle of this for the reasons previously outlined.

Detailed alignment design and integration with the existing highways network must ensure that the opportunities to facilitate effective new public transport links are identified and delivered. This is essential to be in conformity with the wider policy goals set out in LTCP5.

b. Vendee Drive / A41 highway improvements.

This is another major scheme, needed to support anticipated further plan-led growth, mainly employment led. The character of the A41 between Bicester Village and the M40 has already substantially changed, north of Vendee Drive, and we understand that this scheme extends the broad thrust of the changes in character to the M40, pursuant to committed and planned major development in this area to the north of the A41 in the Cherwell Local Plan Review 2042. We **strongly support** this subject to the scheme properly facilitating high quality bus services and access to and from them.

It is essential that comprehensive bus priority is secured especially southbound towards the M40 junction 9.

Appropriate bus stop and crossing facilities should be provided at what we anticipate to be two new all-movement signalised junctions.

The opportunity should be taken to substantially rationalise and improve access to and from the Bicester Park and Ride site from both the A41 and Vendee Drive. The existing 5th arm arrangement set against traffic speeds on the circulatory carriageway is clearly as prone to serios delay, including for buses exiting, as it is hazardous. This substantially undermines the efficiency of the P+R operation and tends to undermine the case to maintain the current level of services entering the site. We suspect signalisation of at least some arms of the Vendee Drive roundabout is required.

Objective BIC12: Deliver infrastructure and placemaking schemes which are resilient to changing climate

This objective is broadly **supported.**

Objective BIC13: Utilise emerging and future technologies to develop innovation in Bicester

This Objective reflects long-standing political and policy aspirations. This Objective, is in principle easily laudable. Furthermore, the area, and wider Oxfordshire, has already been at the forefront on innovative demonstration projects. This includes including the autonomous bus trial undertaken at Milton Park with implementation in 2023-24, near Didcot.

Oxford Bus Group within Go-Ahead UK Bus, has its own ambitious programme to support innovation and roll-out of new technology of all kinds, customer facing, vehicle/drivetrain and in support functions.

We are looking to build on the successful electrification of the whole bus network within the city of Oxford and its environs. We have already extended the scope of electric bus operations beyond the area originally intended, to Abingdon, Thame and Bicester.

The Plan does not properly acknowledge that ambitious innovation comes both with costs and high levels of risk. The ability of the County to properly assess financial and technical risks is not demonstrated across all the areas set out in this draft policy. The role of specialist investors and partners is not acknowledged – and this will be crucial to achieve success. There are also

significant opportunity costs for the Council in pursuing some of these schemes, drawing political attention and organisational resource aside, when the benefits and costs are not clear, to the detriment of other important projects and initiatives that may well be more effective and present a much higher risk adjusted rate of return. The policy needs to be ready to acknowledge this as well.

The commitment of the Council to support and facilitate innovation in the round is **welcomed and supported**. We trust that we can rely on this commitment as we progress decarbonisation plans for our operations in the MaP Plan area.

Concluding Comments

We trust that the foregoing commentary and feedback suitably meets the Councils needs and expectations at this stage.

We trust that the point we made can be given due consideration and weight as the draft plan progresses.

There is, additionally, a wider need for our business to be included in wider stakeholder dialogue within Cherwell District on a more consistent basis. Accepting we are not the largest operator in the District or the Bicester locality, it is also clear that the bus market is relatively fragmented. Furthermore, our presence is significant and is likely to grow.

Please do not hesitate to contact the undersigned in the first instance if you wish to discuss this response further.

Yours sincerely

Nick Small

Head of Built Environment and Infrastructure

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Oxfordshire County Council

Equalities Impact Assessment

Movement and Place Plans – Bicester and Surrounding Villages

29th January 2026

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Section 1: Summary details

Directorate and Service Area	**Environment and Place** **Place Shaping**
What is being assessed (e.g. name of policy, procedure, project, service or proposed service change).	**Movement and Place Plan: Bicester and Surrounding Villages.**
Is this a new or existing function or policy?	Updating the existing area strategy that form part of the Local Transport Plan 4, since superseded by the Local Transport and Connectivity Plan (2022) (LTCP). These plans are a commitment by the council as part of LTCP.
Summary of assessment Briefly summarise the policy or proposed service change. Summarise possible impacts. Does the proposal bias, discriminate or unfairly disadvantage individuals or groups within the community? (following completion of the assessment).	**Role of the Movement and Place (MAP) Plans within the LTCP** The Movement and Place (MAP) Plans constitute "Part 2s" of the Local Transport and Connectivity Plan (LTCP). Their purpose is to directly address and support Policies 52 and 53 of the LTCP. Upon adoption, these MAP Plans will supersede the current "Area Strategies" that were adopted in 2016. They will remain as 'live' documents throughout the planning period extending up to 2050, ensuring ongoing alignment with the overarching LTCP. **Delivery and Partnership Approach** The MAP Plans provide a clear and structured delivery plan for the designated area. They outline which schemes the council intends to advance during the course of the planning period. In addition, the plans identify the key partners with whom collaboration will be essential to achieve the intended outcomes. It is acknowledged that, at this stage, the details of some specific schemes remain to be determined. Therefore, further co-production and engagement with stakeholders and the wider community will be necessary to refine and develop these elements.

	Addressing Imbalances and Reducing Inequalities A fundamental aim of the MAP Plan is to address any existing imbalance in movement and place across the MAP Plan area. The plan is designed to ensure that all communities within the area have equal opportunities, thereby actively working to reduce any inequalities that may currently exist.
Completed By	**Ashley Hayden**
Authorised By	
Date of Assessment	**29th January 2026**

Section 2: Detail of proposal

Context / Background Briefly summarise the background to the policy or proposed service change, including reasons for any changes from previous versions.	The Movement and Place Plans form Part 2 of the Local Transport and Connectivity Plan. Once adopted they will replace the previous area strategies, as they provide details of how the LTCP will be delivered in practice in different areas of Oxfordshire. Once adopted, these documents will remain live documents, meaning they will be subject to regular updates. This EIA refers specifically to the MAPP document produced for Bicester and the Surrounding Villages.

Proposals Explain the detail of the proposals, including why this has been decided as the best course of action.	The Bicester and Surrounding Villages MAPP contains schemes and initiatives that will be delivered in the Bicester and Surrounding Villages area to achieve the objectives of the LTCP. Such schemes include a mix of infrastructure to support planned housing growth, delivery of mobility hubs, improvements to walking, wheeling, cycling and micromobility infrastructure, improvements to bus and rail services, improvements to bus and rail infrastructure, supporting the role out of electric vehicle charging points, and demand management measures where appropriate. The area-based approach was chosen as it built upon the previous Area Strategies and struck a balance between providing the strategic case to support scheme development and developing an action plan of schemes to be delivered.
Evidence / Intelligence List and explain any data, consultation outcomes, research findings, feedback from service users and stakeholders etc, that supports your proposals and can help to inform the judgements you make about potential impact on different individuals, communities or groups and our ability to deliver our climate commitments.	Each MAPP built upon the evidence base provided by the LTCP, combined with specific data collection and consultation findings. It should be noted that a further public consultation on each MAPP is planned. The main evidence base was sourced from a mixture of the following: - Census 2011 and 2021 statistics - JSNA - Transport-related Social Exclusion - OCC own data such as traffic counts - Official statistics from the Department for Transport, the Office of Rail and Road, and National Highways - Academic journals and technical reports - Feedback from the public consultation on the MAPP document in November 2025 - Advice from council officers as part of the MAPP development process

	All of these are referenced in the MAPP document
Alternatives considered / rejected Summarise any other approaches that have been considered in developing the policy or proposed service change, and the reasons why these were not adopted. This could include reasons why doing nothing is not an option.	The majority of schemes identified are contained within other plans and strategies, notably Local Plans, LCWIPs, and the BSIP

Section 3: Impact Assessment - Protected Characteristics

Protected Characteristic	No Impact	Positive	Negative	Description of Impact	Any actions or mitigation to reduce negative impacts	Action owner* (*Job Title, Organisation)	Timescale and monitoring arrangements
Age	☐	☒	☐	Improving local public transport services will provide access to education and healthcare facilities for younger and older populations. Improvements to safe active travel networks will assist in reducing childhood obesity and help mitigate the impacts of poor health for elderly persons	For other age groups, the impacts of the measures are expected to be at least neutral. However, risks will be monitored through plan delivery. A plan will be developed for targeted engagement and data collection (e.g., focus groups, surveys, partnership with local advocacy groups) to build the evidence base for this group.	Team Leader (Transport and Strategy Lead), Oxfordshire County Council	Further public consultation on schemes and on the review of the strategy robust, inclusive, and specifically targets underrepresented and vulnerable groups.

Disability	☐	☒	☐	Improvements to local walking, wheeling and cycling routes will be expected to incorporate design elements to improve accessibility for those with disabilities. The plans also support similar improvements to public transport.	The impacts of different schemes on different types of disability will be considered at the individual scheme level. A plan will be developed for targeted engagement and data collection (e.g., focus groups, surveys, partnership with local advocacy groups) to build the evidence base for this group.	Team Leader (Transport and Strategy Lead), Oxfordshire County Council	Further public consultation on schemes and on the review of the strategy robust, inclusive, and specifically targets underrepresented and vulnerable groups.

Gender Reassignment	☒	☐	☐	The impact of these plans is uncertain, primarily due to a lack of data. The desire of this plan is to improve the safety and experience of all travellers. Whilst it is possible that those under this protected characteristic may experience more general benefits as those experienced by other groups (e.g. improved health), the evidence of the impact of transport schemes on those covered by this protected characteristic is relatively limited. Though some challenges are known, for example feelings of safety.	Recommendations will be given to those responsible for scheme delivery to undertake targeted engagement with groups with this protected characteristic. This may likely require developing a research programme for which the evidence of impact is collected as part of scheme development and delivery. A plan will be developed for targeted engagement and data collection (e.g., focus groups, surveys, partnership with local advocacy groups) to build the evidence base for this group.	Team Leader (Transport and Strategy Lead), Oxfordshire County Council	Further public consultation on schemes and on the review of the strategy robust, inclusive, and specifically targets underrepresented and vulnerable groups.

Marriage & Civil Partnership	☒	☐	☐	The impact of these plans is uncertain. Whilst we are seeking to improve the safety and experience of all travellers, it is possible that those under this protected characteristic may experience more general benefits as those experienced by other groups (e.g. improved health), the evidence of the impact of transport schemes on those covered by this protected characteristic is relatively limited.	Recommendations will be given to those responsible for scheme delivery to undertake targeted engagement with groups with this protected characteristic. This may likely require developing a research programme for which the evidence of impact is collected as part of scheme development and delivery. A plan will be developed for targeted engagement and data collection (e.g., focus groups, surveys, partnership with local advocacy groups) to build the evidence base for this group.	Team Leader (Transport and Strategy Lead), Oxfordshire County Council	Further public consultation on schemes and on the review of the strategy robust, inclusive, and specifically targets underrepresented and vulnerable groups.

Pregnancy & Maternity	☒	☐	☐	The impact of these plans is uncertain. Whilst it is possible that those under this protected characteristic may experience more general benefits as those experienced by other groups (e.g. improved health), the evidence of the impact of transport schemes on those covered by this protected characteristic is relatively limited. The MAPP does aim to improve walking routes for all to that it is comfortable, convenient, and secure. For example provision of street furniture and ensuring infrastructure and services.	Recommendations will be given to those responsible for scheme delivery to undertake targeted engagement with groups with this protected characteristic. This may likely require developing a research programme for which the evidence of impact is collected as part of scheme development and delivery. A plan will be developed for targeted engagement and data collection (e.g., focus groups, surveys, partnership with local advocacy groups) to build the evidence base for this group.	Team Leader (Transport and Strategy Lead), Oxfordshire County Council	Further public consultation on schemes and on the review of the strategy robust, inclusive, and specifically targets underrepresented and vulnerable groups.

Race	☐	☒	☐	The impact of the schemes identified in the MAPP documents on this protected characteristic will likely be indirect in terms of its benefits. For instance, in locations with higher concentrations of minority ethnic groups, improvements to active travel and public transport services may be planned, working with communities as required to reduce inequalities. Regardless, these will likely be beneficial in terms of improving access to services, infrastructure, and improving health.	The impacts of different schemes on this characteristic will be considered at the individual scheme level. A plan will be developed for targeted engagement and data collection (e.g., focus groups, surveys, partnership with local advocacy groups) to build the evidence base for this group.	Team Leader (Transport and Strategy Lead), Oxfordshire County Council	Further public consultation on schemes and on the review of the strategy robust, inclusive, and specifically targets underrepresented and vulnerable groups.

Sex	☐	☒	☐	While the MAPP plans do not refer to the experience of different sexes specifically, the actions contain plans that are likely to be somewhat beneficial to those of different sexes. For instance, making safety improvements at bus stops, and supporting wider national campaigns for the safety of women and girls (e.g. run by DfT). The degree of this impact will likely vary by scheme.	The impacts of different schemes on this characteristic will be considered at the individual scheme level. A plan will be developed for targeted engagement and data collection (e.g., focus groups, surveys, partnership with local advocacy groups) to build the evidence base for this group.	Team Leader (Transport and Strategy Lead), Oxfordshire County Council	Further public consultation on schemes and on the review of the strategy robust, inclusive, and specifically targets underrepresented and vulnerable groups.
Sexual Orientation	☐	☒	☐	While the MAPP plans do not refer to the experience of different sexes specifically, the actions contain plans that are likely to be somewhat beneficial to those of different genders. For instance, making safety improvements at bus stops. The degree of this impact will likely vary by scheme.	The impacts of different schemes on this characteristic will be considered at the individual scheme level. A plan will be developed for targeted engagement and data collection (e.g., focus groups, surveys, partnership with local advocacy groups) to build the evidence base for this group.	Team Leader (Transport and Strategy Lead), Oxfordshire County Council	Further public consultation on schemes and on the review of the strategy robust, inclusive, and specifically targets underrepresented and vulnerable groups.

Religion or Belief	☒	☐	☐	The impact of these plans is uncertain. Whilst it is possible that those under this protected characteristic may experience more general benefits as those experienced by other groups (e.g. improved health), the evidence of the impact of transport schemes on those covered by this protected characteristic is relatively limited.	Recommendations will be given to those responsible for scheme delivery to undertake targeted engagement with groups with this protected characteristic. This may likely require developing a research programme for which the evidence of impact is collected as part of scheme development and delivery. A plan will be developed for targeted engagement and data collection (e.g., focus groups, surveys, partnership with local advocacy groups) to build the evidence base for this group.	Team Leader (Transport and Strategy Lead), Oxfordshire County Council	Further public consultation on schemes and on the review of the strategy robust, inclusive, and specifically targets underrepresented and vulnerable groups.

Section 3: Impact Assessment - Additional Community Impacts

Additional community impacts	No Impact	Positive	Negative	Description of impact	Any actions or mitigation to reduce negative impacts	Action owner (*Job Title, Organisation)	Timescale and monitoring arrangements
Rural communities	☐	☒	☐	Each of these MAPPs cover significant rural areas. They contained plans for investment in public transport and walking and cycling links serving rural areas, improving access for rural communities to key local service centres. Consequently, reducing rural isolation.	Explore opportunities to develop and deliver a rural impact assessment as part of scheme development, to understand, monitor, and where applicable deliver against rural issues.	Team Leader (Transport and Strategy Lead), Oxfordshire County Council	To be monitored on an ongoing basis, with formal reporting through the LTCP.
Armed Forces	☐	☒	☐	The MAPP areas cover some current or historic armed forces sites, such as St Davids Barracks, RAF Bicester, C Site (C8). These plans include some schemes that seek to improve access to these areas by non-car modes of transport, notably through delivering walking and cycling schemes identified in the LCWIPs	Recommendations will be given to those responsible for scheme delivery to undertake targeted engagement with armed forces personnel. This may likely require developing a research programme for which the evidence of impact is collected as part of scheme development and delivery, depending on whether schemes are located	Team Leader (Transport and Strategy Lead), Oxfordshire County Council	To be monitored on an ongoing basis, with formal reporting through the LTCP.

Additional community impacts	No Impact	Positive	Negative	Description of impact	Any actions or mitigation to reduce negative impacts	Action owner (*Job Title, Organisation)	Timescale and monitoring arrangements
					in areas close to armed forces bases.		
Carers	☒	☐	☐	The impact of these plans is uncertain. Whilst it is possible that those in this group may experience more general benefits as those experienced by other groups (e.g. improved local public realm improving physical and mental health), the evidence of the impact of transport schemes on those covered by this protected characteristic is relatively limited.	Recommendations will be given to those responsible for scheme delivery to undertake targeted engagement with carers. This may likely require developing a research programme for which the evidence of impact is collected as part of scheme development and delivery.	Team Leader (Transport and Strategy Lead), Oxfordshire County Council	To be monitored on an ongoing basis, with formal reporting through the LTCP.
Areas of deprivation	☐	☒	☐	Each MAPP identifies a number of areas where the percentage of the population being at risk of Transport Related Social Exclusion is high. They identify schemes in these areas which could help to overcome these issues and	Monitor the impacts as part scheme delivery. Explore opportunities to develop and deliver a deprivation assessment as part of scheme development, to understand, monitor, and where applicable deliver against rural issues.	Team Leader (Transport and Strategy Lead), Oxfordshire County Council	To be monitored on an ongoing basis, with formal reporting through the LTCP.

Additional community impacts	No Impact	Positive	Negative	Description of impact	Any actions or mitigation to reduce negative impacts	Action owner (*Job Title, Organisation)	Timescale and monitoring arrangements
				improve access to services and employment.			

Section 3: Impact Assessment - Additional Wider Impacts

Additional Wider Impacts	No Impact	Positive	Negative	Description of Impact	Any actions or mitigation to reduce negative impacts	Action owner* (*Job Title, Organisation)	Timescale and monitoring arrangements
Staff	☐	☒	☐	Whilst there are no details of the numbers of OCC staff that will be affected by the MAPPs, it is likely that staff may benefit from the increase in investment in local transport infrastructure and services. This could be for travel to work, or to improve their wellbeing outside of work, depending on the nature of the scheme in question.	Make staff aware of improvements to local transport planned that may affect them through internal communications.	Team Leader (Transport and Strategy Lead), Oxfordshire County Council	To be monitored on an ongoing basis, with formal reporting through the LTCP.
Other Council Services	☒	☐	☐	It is likely that schemes in the MAPP will impact on council service delivery for services operated remotely or in the community. This includes social care trips and waste management. However, the impact of such schemes cannot be quantified at present.	Understand the degree of impact that is likely, before formulating an action plan to deliver.	Team Leader (Transport and Strategy Lead), Oxfordshire County Council	To be monitored on an ongoing basis, with formal reporting through the LTCP.

Additional Wider Impacts	No Impact	Positive	Negative	Description of Impact	Any actions or mitigation to reduce negative impacts	Action owner* (*Job Title, Organisation)	Timescale and monitoring arrangements
Providers	☒	☐	☐	It is likely that schemes in the MAPP will impact on providers delivering council services. However, the impact of such schemes cannot be quantified at present.	Understand the degree of impact that is likely, before formulating an action plan to deliver.	Team Leader (Transport and Strategy Lead), Oxfordshire County Council	To be monitored on an ongoing basis, with formal reporting through the LTCP.
Social Value [1]	☐	☒	☐	It is likely that MAPP schemes will deliver social value through additional benefits typically associated with scheme types. For instance, active travel schemes improve public health, community cohesion, and supporting community initiatives.	Look to develop a series of social value metrics to be included in the procurement of individual schemes. Communicate these required metrics to relevant staff and officers	Team Leader (Transport and Strategy Lead), Oxfordshire County Council	To be monitored on an ongoing basis, with formal reporting through the LTCP. Metrics will also be assessed through individual contracts for schemes

[1] If the Public Services (Social Value) Act 2012 applies to this proposal, please summarise here how you have considered how the contract might improve the economic, social, and environmental well-being of the relevant area

Section 4: Review

Where bias, negative impact or disadvantage is identified, the proposal and/or implementation can be adapted or changed; meaning there is a need for regular review. This review may also be needed to reflect additional data and evidence for a fuller assessment (proportionate to the decision in question). Please state the agreed review timescale for the identified impacts of the policy implementation or service change.

Review Date	**15th January**
Person Responsible for Review	**James Gleave**
Authorised By	

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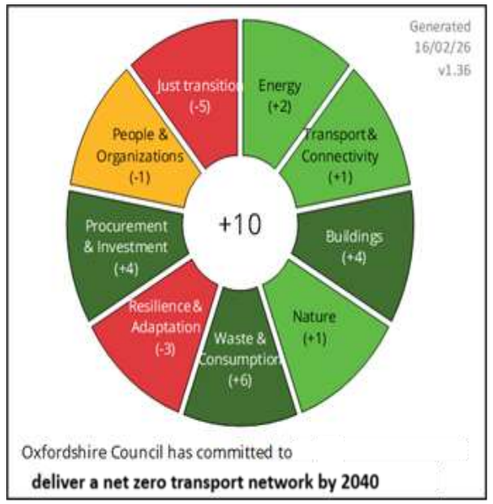
Climate Impact Assessment

Summary

Directorate and Service Area	Environment and Highways Place Shaping
What is being assessed	Movement and Place Plans for Bicester, which constitute part of the Local Transport and Connectivity
Is this a new or existing function or policy?	New
Summary of assessment	This Bicester plan provides details for specific areas of Oxfordshire for how the policies of the LTCP will be delivered. The plan makes reference to the LTCP target of achieving net zero transport network by 2040. Similarly it makes reference to take a whole
Completed by	Franco Gonzalez
Climate action sign off by	Franco Gonzalez
Director sign off by	
Assessment date	2/16/2026



Detail of proposal

Context / Background	The Movement and Place Plans form Part 2 of the Local Transport and Connectivity Plan. Once adopted they will replace the previous area strategies, as they provide details of how the LTCP will be delivered in practice in different areas of Oxfordshire. LIVE
Proposal	Each MAPP contains schemes and initiatives that will be delivered in each local area to achieve the objectives of the LTCP. Such schemes include a mix of infrastructure to support planned housing growth, delivery of mobility hubs, improvements to walking and cycling infrastructure, improvements to bus and rail services, improvements to bus and rail infrastructure, supporting the role out of electric vehicle charging points, and demand management measures where appropriate. The area-based approach was chosen as it built upon the previous Area Strategies, and struck a balance between providing the strategic case to support scheme development, and developing an action plan of schemes to be delivered.
Evidence / Intelligence	Each MAPP built upon the evidence base provided by the LTCP, combined with specific data collection and consultation findings. It should be noted that a further public consultation on each MAPP is planned. The main evidence base was sourced from a mixture of the following: - Census 2011 and 2021 statistics - JSNA - Transport-related Social Exclusion - OCC own data such as traffic counts - Official statistics from the Department for Transport, the Office of Rail and Road, and National Highways - Academic journals and technical reports All of these are referenced in each MAPP document
Alternatives considered / rejected	The majority of schemes identified are contained within other plans and strategies, notably Local Plans, LCWIPs, and the BSIP

Category	Impact criteria	Score (-3 to +3)	Description of impact	Actions or mitigations to reduce negative impacts	Action owner	Timeline and monitoring arrangements
Energy	Increases energy efficiency	1	Investment in electric vehicle charging infrastructure for local areas, combined with investment in non-fossil fuel operated vehicles to encourage sustainable travel	Accelerate delivery	Transport Strategy Team	LTCP Monitoring Timelines
Energy	Promotes a switch to low-carbon or renewable energy	1	Highly dependant on use of renewables to generate electricity for electric vehicle charging points	Procurement framework for EV charging points to identify sourcing renewables as a priority	Transport Strategy Team	LTCP Monitoring Timelines
Energy	Promotes resilient, local, smart energy systems	N/A	Unlikely to have any significant impacr on resilient and smart energy systems			
Transport & Connectivity	Reduces need to travel and/or the need for private car ownership	-3	Seeks to deliver significant improvements to walking, cycling, and public transport infrastucture and services. Contains committed schemes and ideas for potential new schemes. Yet it makes on reference to how to avoid/mitigate the risks of induced traffic. The plans does not have a focus on affordability	Explore risk and mitigation measures of induced traffic. Focus on affordability in BP+ negotiations with bus operators.	Transport Strategy Team	LTCP Monitoring Timelines
Transport & Connectivity	Supports active travel	3	Seeks to deliver significant improvements to walking, cycling, and public transport infrastucture and services. Contains committed schemes and ideas for potential new schemes	Accelerate delivery	Transport Strategy Team	LTCP Monitoring Timelines
Transport & Connectivity	Increases use of public transport	1	Seeks to deliver significant improvements to walking, cycling, and public transport infrastucture and services. Contains committed schemes and ideas for potential new schemes. Yet it makes no reference to the challenge of affordability. During the last review of Bus Delivery Models there was a point on working on translating efficiencies and savings to bus users including improved ticket arrangements through strenthening working relations with bus operators through EP+. See point 50/25 on Cabinet minutes: https://mycouncil.oxfordshire.gov.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=1173&MId=7850&Ver=4	Focus on affordability in BP+ negotiations with bus operators.	Transport Strategy Team	LTCP Monitoring Timelines
Transport & Connectivity	Accelerates electrification of transport	2	Supports the roll out of electric vehicle charging points in local areas. Encourages deployment of electric buses and freight vehicles where applicable	Accelerate delivery	Transport Strategy Team	LTCP Monitoring Timelines

Buildings	Promotes net zero new builds and developments	2	Policy 27 of the LTCP requires to "Take into account embodied, operational and user emissions when assessing a potential infrastructure project and its contribution to Oxfordshire's carbon budget and to a net-zero transport network by 2040" . For such purpose the same policy establishes the adoption of standard PAS2080 for achieving a net zero transport network by 2040. As a result of reviewing the performance of LTCP, a new task group has been defined to address the lack of actions to implement policy 27, a first step will be to define a methodology to translate national carbon budgets to OCC transport infrastructure portfolio. The Bicester MAPP has included explicit references to PAS2080 and additional wording of Policy 27, following a recomendation of PAS2080 Gaps report assessment conducted in 2024. Yet the LTCP does not have an offsetting strategy for its 2040 target.	Develop a carbon offsetting strategy for residual emissions in 2040.	Transport Strategy Team	LTCP Monitoring Timelines
Buildings	Accelerates retrofitting of existing buildings	N/A		None		
Nature	Protects, restores or enhances biodiversity, landscape and ecosystems	-3	Opportunities to boost biodiversity through new transport infrastructure links (either on site or off site), upgrading existing links (e.g. local rights of way), or improving roadside management will be explored on a project-by-project basis. Also contains specific reference to need to contribute towards Local Nature Recovery Plan. Not explicit about mandatory requirement to deliver 20% of Biodiversity Net Gain in each scheme. Whilst the plan promotes active travel and public transport it also entails the construction of new roads which may result in induced traffic emissions potentially cancelling any benefit from active travel/public transport. Biodiversity is most vulnerable to climate change.	Environmental Impact Assessments and SEAs for major transport schemes will likely identify the most significant issues. Identifying impacts and owners of tasks will be key.Explore risk and mitigation measures of induced traffic.		
Nature	Develops blue and green infrastructure	2	Opportunities to boost biodiversity through new transport infrastructure links (either on site or off site), upgrading existing links (e.g. local rights of way), or improving roadside management will be explored on a project-by-project basis. Also contains specific reference to need to contribute towards Local Nature Recovery Plan.	Environmental Impact Assessments and SEAs for major transport schemes will likely identify the most significant issues. Identifying impacts and owners of tasks		
Nature	Improves access to nature and green spaces	2	Delivery of improvements identified in LCWIPs to off-highway paths and bridleways provides the opportunity to develop green infrastructure. Plans can also identify transport improvements to and from key blue and green infrastructure sites	Environmental Impact Assessments and SEAs for major transport schemes will likely identify the most significant issues. Identifying impacts and owners of tasks		
Waste & Consumption	Reduces overall consumption	2	The adoption of PAS2080 as stipulated in policy 27 of LTCP contributes to reduce consumption of materials, it has been explicitly referenced in plan.			
Waste & Consumption	Supports waste prevention and drive reuse and recycling	2	The adoption of PAS2080 as stipulated in policy 27 of LTCP contributes to circular economy of materials, it is now referenced in plan.			
Resilience & Adaptation	Increases resilience to flooding	-3	Supports the delivery of climate-resistant infrastructure, and identifies the areas of the MAPP most at risk for specific types of climate events. MAPP now also reflects wider climate resilience issues such as flooding, extreme weather, and heat. Yet, one of the main schemes, the South East Peripheral Road Bicester, is proposed in flood risk zone.	Identify opportunities for boosting climate resilience as part of specific projects as they come forward		
Resilience & Adaptation	Increases resilience to other extreme weather events (e.g., storms, cold snaps, heatwaves,	-2	No references to resilience to other types of extreme weather events.			

Resilience & Adaptation	Increases resilience of council services, communities, energy systems, transport infrastructure and/or supply chains	2	Supports the delivery of climate-resistant infrastructure, and identifies the areas of the MAPP most at risk for specific types of climate events.	
Procurement & Investment	Procurement practices prioritise low-carbon options, circular economy and sustainability	2	The adoption of PAS2080 as stipulated in policy 27 of LTCP entails procurement practices that maximise carbon reduction, it is now referenced in plan.	
Procurement & Investment	Investment being considered supports climate action/ is consistent with path to net zero	1	Investment prioritises delivery of sustainable transport infrastructure and low carbon options, including supporting the delivery of LCWIP and BSIP schemes. Now there is reference in the document of the 2040 net zero transport network target estipulated in LTCP. Similarly it does reference the adoption of PAS2080 and taking in consideration whole life carbon emissions, including embodied carbon in its 2040 net zero transport network. Yet the risk of induced traffic remains and may cancel these benefits.	Explore risk and mitigation measures of induced traffic.
People & Organizations	Drives behavioural change to address the climate and ecological emergency	1	Prioritises investment in supporting transport infrastructure and services in a manner that makes walking, cycling, buses etc. a viable choice for more people. Thus enabling choices to shift modes of transport. Yet it not addresses the main barrier of adopting public transport , affordability.	
People & Organizations	Drives organizational and systemic change to address the climate and ecological emergency	-1	Whilst the plans outline actions to contribute for the adoption of active travel and public transport, it also promotes the construction of new transport infrastructure without addressing risks of induced traffic and not addressing affordability challenges of public transport. The combined effect of these actions may result in increased traffic emissions cancelling whatever improvements in active travel and public transport patronage may deliver.	Explore risk and mitigation measures of induced traffic. Also make reference to actions to improve affordability of public transport.
Just transition	Promotes green innovation and job creation	-2	A focus on traffic monitoring technologies would allow the monitoring of policies impact in real time. But this is not included in the scope of innovation areas.	
Just transition	Promotes health and wellbeing	-3	MAPPs significantly support investment in active travel, providing the opportunity to have knock-on benefits for health and wellbeing. However the scheme may reverse those benefits if induced traffic is not prevented.	Explore risk and mitigation measures of induced traffic.
Just transition	Reduces poverty and inequality	-2	Improvements to sustainable transport infrastructure provide the opportunity to enhance connectivity to local jobs and services for the more deprived areas of Oxfordshire. However the lack of attention to affordability of public transport may force most deprived areas to depend on car trips.	Focus on affordability in BP+ negotiations with bus operators.

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CABINET – 17 MARCH 2026

TREASURY MANAGEMENT QUARTER 3 PERFORMANCE REPORT 2025/26

Report by the Deputy Chief Executive (Section 151 Officer)

RECOMMENDATION

1. **Cabinet is RECOMMENDED to note the council's treasury management activity for the first three quarters of 2025/26.**

Executive Summary

1. Treasury management is defined as: "The management of the organisation's borrowing, investments and cash flows, including its banking, money market and capital market transactions, the effective control of the risks associated with those activities, and the pursuit of optimum performance consistent with those risks."

2. The Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy's (CIPFA's) 'Code of Practice on Treasury Management 2021' requires that committee to which some treasury management responsibilities are delegated, will receive regular monitoring reports on treasury management activities and risks. This report is the third for the 2025/26 financial year, following previous updates to Cabinet in September and November 2025 and sets out the position at 31 December 2025.

3. Throughout this report, the performance for the first three quarters of the year to December 2025 is measured against the budget agreed by Council in February 2025.

4. As at 31 December 2025, the council's outstanding debt totalled £265m and the average rate of interest paid on long-term debt during the 6 months was 4.41%. No new external borrowing was raised during the first half of the year, whilst £2m of maturing Public Works Loan Board (PWLB) and £5m of LOBO loans, were repaid. The council's forecast debt financing position for 2025/26 is shown in Annex 1.

5. The Treasury Management Strategy for 2025/26 agreed in February 2025 assumed an average base rate of 4.00%.

6. The average daily balance of temporary surplus cash invested in-house was expected to be £303m in 2025/26, with an average in-house return on new and existing deposits of 3.25%.

7. During the nine months to 31 December 2025 the council achieved an average in-house return of 4.51% on average cash balances of £419.276m, producing gross interest receivable of £14.248m. In relation to external funds, the return for the nine months was £3.108m, bringing total investment income to £17.356m. This compares to budgeted investment income of £10.351m, giving a net overachievement of £7.215m.

8. At 31 December 2025, the council's investment portfolio totalled £427.726m. This comprised £298.500m of fixed term deposits, £39.028m at short term notice in money market funds and £90.198m in pooled funds with a variable net asset value. Annex 4 provides an analysis of the investment portfolio at 31 December 2025.

Treasury Management Activity

Debt Financing & Maturing Debt

9. The strategy for long term borrowing agreed in February 2025 included the option to fund new or replacement borrowing up to the value of £300m through internal borrowing. The aim was to reduce the council's exposure to credit risk and reduce the long-term cost of carry (difference between borrowing costs and investment returns).

10. The council is able to borrow from the Public Works Loan Board (PWLB) or through the money markets. Because inflation has been higher than the Bank of England target bond yields, and therefore PWLB rates, remain high. Average CPI inflation for the first half of the year was 3.5%, which was above the target of 2%. The expectation is that as inflation falls, PWLB rates should reduce over the medium term. Given the forecast for borrowing rates, the strategy for 2025/26 assumes no new external borrowing during the year, with any increase in the capital financing requirement met through internal borrowing. The exception to this being the council actively considering raising further funding through a second community municipal investment.

11. As at 31 December 2025, the authority had 41 PWLB loans totalling £239.383m, five LOBO loans totalling £20m and two money market loans totalling £5.5m. The average rate of interest paid on PWLB debt was 4.47% and the average cost of LOBO debt for the first three quarters of 2025/26 was 3.84%. The cost of debt on the money market loan was 3.99%. The combined weighted average for interest paid on long-term debt was 4.41%. The council's debt portfolio as at 31 December 2025 is shown in Annex 1.

12. The council repaid £2m of maturing PWLB loans in the first half of the financial year, whilst a LOBO with the value of £5m was called and repaid without penalty in the third quarter of the year. The weighted average interest rate payable on the matured loans was 3.84%. The forecast outturn for interest payable in 2025/26 is £11.823m.

Investment Strategy

13. The council holds deposits and invested funds representing income received in advance of expenditure plus balances and reserves. The guidance on Local Government Investments in England gives priority to security and liquidity and the council's aim is to achieve a yield commensurate with these principles. The council continued to adopt a cautious approach to lending to financial institutions and continuously monitored credit quality information relating to counterparties.

14. During the first half of the financial year term fixed deposits have been placed with other local authorities as per the approved lending list, whilst Money Market Funds have been utilised for short-term liquidity. Inter local authority lending remains an attractive market to deposit funds from both a security and return view point.

15. The Treasury Management Strategy Statement and Annual Investment Strategy for 2025/26 included the use of external fund managers and pooled funds to diversify the investment portfolio through the use of different investment instruments, investment in different markets, and exposure to a range of counterparties. It is expected that these funds should outperform the council's in-house investment performance over a rolling three-year period. The strategy permitted up to 50% of the total portfolio to be invested with external fund managers and pooled funds (excluding Money Market Funds). The performance of the pooled funds will continue to be monitored by the Treasury Management Strategy Team (TMST) throughout the year against respective benchmarks and the in-house portfolio.

16. At the start of the year the UK Bank Rate was 4.50% which was in line with the forecast. The Bank of England cut rates by 0.25% in May 2025 to 4.25%, to 4.00% in August and again in December to 3.75%. The market is forecasting that the base rate will reduce further to 3.50% by the end of 2025/26.

The Council's Lending List

17. In-house cash balances are deposited with institutions that meet the council's approved credit rating criteria. The approved lending list, which sets out those institutions, is updated to reflect changes in bank and building society credit ratings. Changes are reported to Cabinet as part of the Business Management & Monitoring Report. The approved lending list may also be further restricted by officers, in response to changing conditions and perceived risk. There were no changes to the lending list during the first three quarters of 2025/26.

Investment Performance

18. Temporary surplus cash balances include: developer contributions; council reserves and balances; and various other funds to which the council pays interest at each financial year end. The budgeted annual return on these in-house balances for 2025/26 was 3.25% and assumed an average annual in-house cash balance of £303.534m.

19. The actual average daily balance of temporary surplus cash invested in-house was £419.277m for the first three quarters of 2025/26 and the average in-house return was 4.51%, producing gross interest receivable of £14.248m. Gross distributions from pooled funds totalling £3.108m were also realised in the quarter, bringing total investment income to £17.356m. This compares to budgeted investment income of £10.351m, giving a net overachievement of £7.215m. This over achievement is a combination of higher than forecast balances, base rate forecasts remaining higher than previous forecasts, and a decoupling of the local to local lending market from the remainder of the money market. The local to local lending market is more aligned to the gilt market, which remains elevated as a result of persistently high inflation.

20. As set out in the Business Management & Monitoring Report to Cabinet in January 2026, £2.0m of the forecast additional income has been included in the forecast revenue position for 2025/26 and is offsetting service overspends. The remaining funding will be held in a new Budget Reserve to help manage any difference in the timing of the delivery of savings and the funding reductions arising from the Local Government Finance Settlement over the three-year settlement period to 2028/29. This was estimated at £5.5m for budget purposes but will need to be adjusted depending on the year end position for interest receivable and distributions from pooled funds.

21. Cash balances for the year are forecast to be lower than they otherwise would be as a result of negative Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) balances relating to High Needs. As set out in the Business Management & Monitoring Report to Cabinet in January 2026, the cumulative negative DSG balance was forecast to be £163.2m as at 31 March 2026 and is expected to increase to at least £166.5m by 31 March 2026 Because this expenditure is currently unfunded it is suppressing the amount of cash balances held by the council. This would have an estimated opportunity cost of £6.66m in unearned interest during 2025/26.

22. The council operates a number of instant access call accounts and money market funds to deposit short-term cash surpluses. During the first three quarters of 2025/26 the average balance held on instant access was £84.994m, at an average rate of 4.19%.

23. During the third quarter, the council divested its allocation of shares in the Schroder Income Maximiser fund. Gross disposal proceeds were £12.96m against an original purchase price of £12.5m, realising a gain of £0.46m. At 31 December 2025 the total value of pooled fund investments was £90.198m, against an original purchase price of £88.06m.

24. At 31 December 2025, the council's investment portfolio totalled £427.726m. This comprised £298.500m of fixed term deposits, £39.028m at short term notice in money market funds and £90.198m in pooled funds with a variable net asset value. Annex 4 provides an analysis of the investment portfolio at 31 December 2025.

25. The council's Treasury Management Strategy Team regularly monitors the risk profile of the council's investment portfolio. An analysis of the credit and maturity position of the portfolio at 31 December 2025 is included at Annex 4.

Prudential Indicators for Treasury Management

26. During the first three quarters of the year, the council operated within the treasury limits and Prudential Indicators set out in the council's Treasury Management Strategy for 2025/26. The position for the Prudential Indicators as at 31 December 2025 is shown in Annex 3.

Financial Implications

27. This report is mostly concerned with finance and the implications are set out in the main body of the report. The impact of additional interest on cash balances and income from investments is reflected in the forecast position set out in the Business Management & Monitoring Reports to Cabinet. The use of further funding to support the council's capital programme will be considered through the budget process for 2026/27.

    Comments checked by:

    Kathy Wilcox, Head of Corporate Finance, kathy.wilcox@oxfordshire.gov.uk

Legal Implications

28. The report meets the requirements of both the Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy (CIPFA) Code of Practice on Treasury Management and the CIPFA Prudential Code for Capital Finance in Local Authorities. The Council is required to comply with both Codes through Regulations issued under the Local Government Act 2003. There are no other legal implications.

    Comments checked by:

    Jayne Pringle, Principal Solicitor (Contracts), jayne.pringle@oxfordshire.gov.uk

Staff Implications

29. There are no staffing implications arising from the updates set out in this report

Equality & Inclusion Implications

30. There are no equality or inclusion implications arising from the report.

Sustainability Implications

31. This report is not expected to have any negative impact with regards to the Council's zero carbon emissions commitment by 2030.

Risk Management

32. The purpose of treasury management is the management of the council's borrowing, investments and cash flows, including its banking, money market and capital market transactions; the effective control of the risks associated with those activities; and the pursuit of optimum performance consistent with those risks". The Prudential Code

33. Prudential indicators and credit criteria are agreed by Council each year as part of the Treasury Management Strategy.

34. The credit quality of institutions, changes in the interest rate forecast, cash flow, and prudential indicators are monitored throughout the year and reported monthly to the TMST and quarterly to the council's Audit & Governance Committee, Cabinet and Council.

LORNA BAXTER
Deputy Chief Executive (Section 151 Officer)

Annex:	Annex 1 – Oxfordshire County Council Debt Financing 2024/25
	Annex 2 – Long Term Debt Maturing 2025/26
	Annex 3 – Prudential Indicator Monitoring to 31 December 2025
	Annex 4 – Oxfordshire County Council Investment Portfolio at 31 December 2025
Background papers:	Treasury Management Strategy for 2025/26
Contact Officer:	Tim Chapple, Treasury Manager, 07917 262935, tim.chapple@oxfordshire.gov.uk

February 2026

Annex 1

OXFORDSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL DEBT FINANCING 2025/26

Debt Profile		£m
1. PWLB	49%	241.38
2. Other Long Term Loans	6%	30.50
3. Sub-total External Debt		271.88
4. Internal Balances	45%	218.33
5. Actual Debt at 31 March 2025	**100%**	**490.21**
6. Prudential Borrowing		85.17
7. Borrowing in Advance		0.00
8. Minimum Revenue Provision		-16.38
9. Forecast Debt at 31 March 2026		**559.00**
Maturing Debt		
10. PWLB loans maturing during the year		-2.00
11. PWLB/LOBO Loans repaid prematurely		-5.00
12. Total Maturing Debt		**-7.00**
New External Borrowing		
13. PWLB Normal		0.00
14. PWLB loans raised in the course of debt restructuring		0.00
15. Money Market loans		0.00
16. Total New External Borrowing		**0.00**
Debt Profile Year End		
17. PWLB	43%	239.38
18. Money Market loans (incl £25m LOBOs)	5%	30.50
19. Forecast Sub-total External Debt		269.88
20. Forecast Internal Balances	52%	294.12
21. Forecast Debt at 31 March 2026	**100%**	**559.00**

Line Explanation

1 – 5 This is a breakdown of the Council's debt at the beginning of the financial year (1 April 2025. The PWLB is a government agency operating within the Debt Management Office. LOBO (Lender's Option/ Borrower's Option) loans are long-term loans, with a maturity of up to 60 years, which includes a re-pricing option for the bank at predetermined time intervals. Internal balances include provisions, reserves, revenue balances, capital receipts unapplied, and excess of creditors over debtors.

6 'Prudential Borrowing' is borrowing taken by the authority whereby the associated borrowing costs are met by savings in the revenue budget.

7 'Borrowing in Advance' is the amount the Council borrowed in advance to fund future capital finance costs.

8 The amount of debt to be repaid from revenue. The sum to be repaid annually is agreed at full Council each year, and is over the estimated useful life of the assets.

9 The Council's forecast total debt by the end of the financial year, after taking into account new borrowing, debt repayment and movement in funding by internal balances.

10 The Council's normal maturing PWLB debt.

11 PWLB/LOBO debt repaid early during the year.

12 Total debt repayable during the year.

13 The normal PWLB borrowing undertaken by the Council during 2025/26.

14 New PWLB loans to replace debt repaid early.

15 The Money Market borrowing undertaken by the Council during 2025/26

16 The total external borrowing undertaken.

18-22 The Council's forecast debt profile at the end of the year.

Annex 2

Long-Term Debt Maturing 2025/26

Public Works Loan Board: Loans maturing during 2025/26

Date	Amount £m	Rate %
30/04/2025	2.000	4.250%
Total	**2.000**	

LOBO Loans called & repaid during 2025/26

Date	Amount £m	Rate %
24/11/2025	5.000	3.68
Total	**5.000**	

Annex 3

Prudential Indicators Monitoring at 31 December 2025

The Local Government Act 2003 requires the Authority to have regard to CIPFA's Prudential Code for Capital Finance in Local Authorities (the Prudential Code) when determining how much money it can afford to borrow. To demonstrate that the Authority has fulfilled the requirements of the Prudential Code the following indicators must be set and monitored each year.

Authorised and Operational Limit for External Debt

Actual debt levels are monitored against the Operational Boundary and Authorised Limit for External Debt below. The Operational Boundary is based on the Authority's estimate of most likely, i.e. prudent, but not worst case scenario for external debt. The council confirms that the Operational Boundary has not been breached during the third quarter of 2025/26.

The Authorised Limit is the affordable borrowing limit determined in compliance with the Local Government Act 2003. It is the maximum debt that the Authority can legally owe. The authorised limit provides headroom over and above the operational boundary for unusual cash movements. The Authorised Limit was not breached in the in the third quarter of 2025/26 and is not expected to be breached by year end.

Authorised limit for External Debt	£610,000,000
Operational Limit for External Debt	£595,000,000
Capital Financing Requirement for year	£559,201,000

	Actual 31/03/2025	**Forecast 31/03/2026**
Borrowing	£271,882,618	£264,882,618
Other Long-Term Liabilities	£ 836,000	£ 836,000
Total	**£272,718,618**	**£265,718,618**

Interest Rate Exposures

These indicators are set to control the Authority's exposure to interest rate risk. The upper limits on fixed and variable rate interest exposures. Fixed rate investments are borrowings are those where the rate of interest is fixed for the whole financial year. Instruments that mature during the financial year are classed as variable rate.

Fixed Interest Rate Exposure	
Fixed Interest Net Borrowing limit	£350,000,000
Actual at 31 December 2025	-£53,617,382
Variable Interest Rate Exposure	
Variable Interest Net Borrowing limit	£0
Actual at 31 December 2025	-£108,390,014

Principal Sums Invested over 365 days

Total sums invested for more than 364 days limit	£150,000,000
Actual sums invested for more than 364 days	£ 25,000,000

Maturity Structure of Borrowing

This indicator is set to control the Authority's exposure to refinancing risk. The upper and lower limits on the maturity structure of fixed rate borrowing and the actual structure at December 2025, are shown below. Time periods start on the first day of each financial year. The maturity date of borrowing is the earliest date on which the lender can demand repayment.

	Limit %	**Actual %**
Under 12 months	0 - 20	12.08
12 – 24 months	0 - 25	8.68
24 months – 5 years	0 - 35	11.66
5 years to 10 years	5 - 40	24.54
10 years +	25 - 95	43.04

Annex 4

OXFORDSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL INVESTMENT PORTFOLIO 31/12/2025

Fixed term deposits held at 31/12/2025

Counterparty	Principal Deposited	Maturity Date
Aberdeen City Council	£5,000,000.00	06/01/2026
Police and Crime Commissioner for Merseyside	£5,000,000.00	07/01/2026
Leeds City Council	£10,000,000.00	12/01/2026
Wrexham County Borough Council	£5,000,000.00	14/01/2026
Surrey County Council	£5,000,000.00	23/01/2026
Aberdeen City Council	£5,000,000.00	29/01/2026
West Dunbartonshire Council	£10,000,000.00	26/02/2026
Wrexham County Borough Council	£5,000,000.00	27/02/2026
South Lanarkshire Council	£5,000,000.00	27/02/2026
Dundee City Council	£5,000,000.00	27/02/2026
London Borough of Newham Council	£5,000,000.00	11/03/2026
London Borough of Newham Council	£10,000,000.00	30/03/2026
Gravesham Borough Council	£7,500,000.00	01/04/2026
Police and Crime Commissioner for Lancashire	£5,000,000.00	02/04/2026
Great Yarmouth Borough Council	£5,000,000.00	22/04/2026
Eastleigh Borough Council	£6,000,000.00	22/04/2026
Plymouth City Council	£5,000,000.00	24/04/2026
Eastleigh Borough Council	£5,000,000.00	08/05/2026
Surrey County Council	£10,000,000.00	08/05/2026
Darlington Borough Council	£5,000,000.00	11/05/2026
Blackpool Council	£5,000,000.00	12/05/2026
Monmouthshire County Council	£5,000,000.00	12/05/2026
Central Bedfordshire Council	£5,000,000.00	12/05/2026
Isle of Wight Council	£5,000,000.00	18/05/2026
Central Bedfordshire Council	£5,000,000.00	20/05/2026
Sefton Metropolitan Borough Council	£5,000,000.00	27/05/2026
Ashford Borough Council	£5,000,000.00	28/05/2026
Rotherham Metropolitan Borough Council	£5,000,000.00	28/05/2026
Cheshire East Council	£5,000,000.00	29/05/2026
London Borough of Newham Council	£5,000,000.00	01/06/2026
London Borough of Haringey Council	£5,000,000.00	01/06/2026
Manchester City Council	£5,000,000.00	02/06/2026
Cheshire East Council	£5,000,000.00	02/06/2026
Manchester City Council	£5,000,000.00	10/06/2026
South Ayrshire Council	£5,000,000.00	17/06/2026
Plymouth City Council	£5,000,000.00	17/06/2026

Counterparty	Principal Deposited	Maturity Date
Isle of Wight Council	£5,000,000.00	24/06/2026
West Dunbartonshire Council	£5,000,000.00	01/07/2026
Plymouth City Council	£5,000,000.00	02/07/2026
Blackpool Council	£5,000,000.00	13/07/2026
Cheshire East Council	£10,000,000.00	13/07/2026
Bury Metropolitan Borough Council	£5,000,000.00	30/07/2026
Derbyshire County Council	£5,000,000.00	25/08/2026
Blaenau Gwent County Borough Council	£5,000,000.00	28/08/2026
Kingston Upon Hull City Council	£5,000,000.00	03/09/2026
Blaenau Gwent County Borough Council	£5,000,000.00	22/10/2026
Bury Metropolitan Borough Council	£5,000,000.00	30/10/2026
Moray Council	£5,000,000.00	27/11/2026
Dover District Council	£5,000,000.00	02/12/2026
Short Term Deposit Total	**£273,500,000.00**	
Counterparty	**Principal Deposited**	**Maturity Date**
Kirklees Council	£5,000,000.00	22/01/2027
Kirklees Council	£5,000,000.00	17/03/2027
Worcestershire County Council	£5,000,000.00	17/12/2027
Worcestershire County Council	£5,000,000.00	23/12/2027
Falkirk Council	£5,000,000.00	31/01/2028
Long Term Deposit Total	**£25,000,000.00**	
Total Deposits	**£298,500,000.00**	

Money Market Funds

Counterparty	Balance at 31/12/2025	Notice period
Aberdeen Liquidity Fund	£13,205,000.00	Same day
Goldman Sachs Sterling Liquid Fund	£0.00	Same day
Deutsche Sterling Liquid Fund	£28,170.44	Same day
Federated Sterling Liquidity Funds	£632,752.52	Same day
Legal & General Sterling Liquidity Fund	£25,078,068.40	Same day
CCLA Public Sector Deposit Fund	£7,897.67	Same day
Morgan Stanley Sterling Liquid Fund	£9,198.82	Same day
Insight GBP Liquidity Fund	£50,000.00	Same day
JP Morgan Sterling Liquidity Fund	£14,645.55	Same day
Total	**£39,025,733.40**	

Notice / Call Accounts

Counterparty	Balance at 31/12/2025 (£)	Notice period
Handlesbanken	£2,389.13	Same day
Total	**£2,389.13**	

Strategic Bond Funds

Fund	Balance at 31/12/2025	Notice period
Threadneedle strategic bond fund (income)	£12,708,942.37	4 days
Threadneedle Global Equity Income Fund	£18,913,210.91	4 days
Kames Diversified Income	£10,100,483.81	4 days
Ninety One Diversified Income	£9,128,796.54	4 days
M&G Strategic Corporate Bond Fund	£11,322,952.51	4 days
CCLA Better World Cautious Fund	£4,656,588.22	4 days
Total	**£66,830,974.35**	

Property Funds

Fund	Balance at 30/09/2025 (£)	Notice period
CCLA Local Authorities Property Fund	£23,366,977.77	6 Monthly
Total	**£23,366,977.77**	

Summary of Investments as at 31/12/2025

Term Deposits	£298,500,000.00
Money Market Funds	£39,025,733.40
Notice & Call Accounts	£2,329.13
Subtotal Short Term Notice	£337,528,062.53
Pooled Funds	£66,830,974.35
Property Funds	£23,366,977.78
Subtotal Pooled & Property Funds	£90,197,952.13
Total Investments	£427,726,014.66

CABINET

17 March 2026

BUSINESS MANAGEMENT AND MONITORING REPORT
PERFORMANCE & RISK
Quarter 3 2025/26

Report by the Deputy Chief Executive (Section 151 Officer)

RECOMMENDATION

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

   a) Note the report and annexes.
   b) Approve a supplementary estimate request of £0.9m relating to additional election costs and supplementary estimates of £0.5m for Bicester Motion and £2.2m relating to Woodeaton Manor Special School (Annex D paragraph 23).
   c) Approve the write off of 2 corporate debts totalling £50k (Annex D paragraph 26)
   d) Approve the write off of 12 Adult Social Care contribution debts totalling £270k (Annex D paragraph 29).
   e) Note the Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) High Needs Block 2025/26 forecast and accumulated deficit position ((Annex D paragraphs 36 - 40).
   f) Approve the updates to Fees & Charges for Environment & Highways (Annex D – Appendix 5)

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

3. This report sets out the Quarter 3 2025/26 performance and Strategic risk overview for the council. Further information is provided in the following annexes to the report:

   - Annex A – Performance.
   - Annex B – Performance analysis by strategic priority.
   - Annex C - Quarter 2 2025/26 Complaints, freedom of information access requests (FOI) and environmental information regulation requests (EIR) data.
   - Annex D – Revenue forecast update

4. Following the election in May 2025, officers have worked with the new administration to develop and finalise a strategic plan for 2025-28, focussing on our vision to make Oxfordshire a greener, fairer and healthier county. The finalised strategic plan 2025-28 Our strategic plan 2025 - 2028 | Oxfordshire County Council was agreed by Cabinet in November 2025.

Strategic Risk - Summary Position

5. The risk section of this report is focussed on the Oxfordshire County Council strategic risk register. Currently the register contains seven strategic risks.

SR01 Financial Resilience	**SR10** Climate Impact
SR03 Housing Infrastructure (HIF1)	**SR13** SEND Sufficiency
SR05 Special Educational needs and disabilities (SEND)	**SR19** Cybersecurity (escalated since previous reporting period
SR09 Delivering the future together (DTFT)	

Table 1: Strategic risks included in the strategic risk register as at 31 December 2025

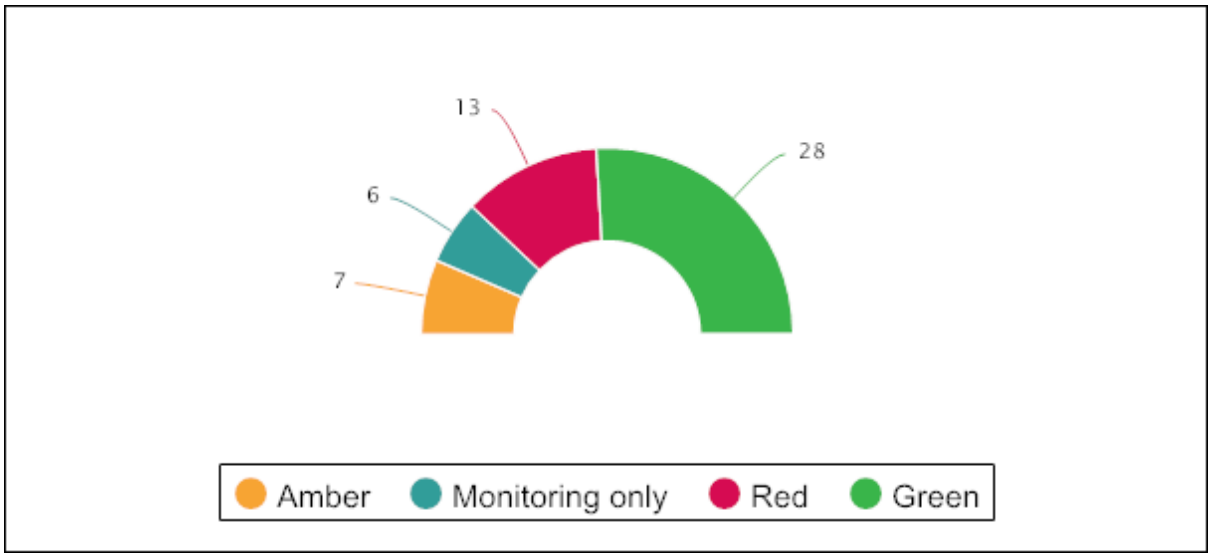
Strategic risk heatmap, as at 31 December 2025

Image 1: Shows the rating of our seven strategic risks as at 31 December 2025.

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

Performance Overview

Year to date performance by RAG rating (Quarter 3) 2025/26



Graph 1: Year to date performance by RAG rating for Quarter 3 2025/26

7. The performance section of this report concentrates on performance measures reporting Red (off target), or Amber, (slightly off target) for the year-to-date position. The full performance report is included in Annex A.

8. Throughout the reporting year, there are a variety of reporting periods, including monthly, bi-monthly, quarterly, and annual. Therefore, the number of measures reported can vary across the year. As of the end of Quarter 3 of 2025/26, 54 measures (18 monthly measures, 18 quarterly measures, 12 bi-monthly finance measures and 6 annual measures), were rated as follows:

- 28 (52%) measures rated as Green (meeting or exceeding target).
- 7 (13%) measures rated as Amber (narrowly missing target)
- 13 (24%) measures rated as Red (significantly off target)
- 6 (11%) measures rated as Monitoring only (Monitoring only with no target)

Complaints, FOI and EIR requests

Summary of Statutory and Corporate Complaints (Quarter 2 2025/26)

9. The customer service team have refined their data processes and are reporting a quarter in arrears. Therefore, the complaints and FOI / EIR performance data relates to Quarter 2 2025/26.

- A total of 181 complaints were logged during Quarter 2 2025/26, comprising of 142 (78.4%) stage 1 complaints, 39 (21.6%) stage 2 complaints and 0 stage 3 complaints. This represents a 6.7% (13 complaints) decrease compared to the last quarter.
- 181 cases were closed, 122 (67.4%) within timescale and 59 (32.6%) outside of timescale.
- Children's services received the most cases, with 94 (51.9%) of the 181 total cases. Of the 94 cases received 64 (68%) were closed within timescale and 30 (32%) outside of timescale.

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

- A total of 499 requests were logged as FOI/EIR during Quarter 2 2025/26; this represents a 10.6% (48) increase compared to Quarter 1 2025/26.
- 499 (100%) requests have been closed during Quarter 2, 483 (96.8%) within the 20 working days of receiving the initial request and 16 (3.2%) requests were closed outside of timescale.

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

Strategic Risk Management

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

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

Table 2: Strategic Risk Key for December 2025

Strategic Risk Overview

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

Table 3: Strategic Risk Overview December 2025

Strategic Risk Summary

11. SR19 Cyber Security risk, has been escalated from an Operational level to Strategic level since the previous reporting period in Quarter 2; the residual score has increased from 12 in Quarter 2 2025/26 to 15 in Quarter 3 2025/26, as a consequence of national and global events.

SEND strategic risk has de-creased to a residual score of 16, from 20, following effective action being undertaken across all previously identified priority areas.
The five remaining strategic risks remained static in their residual risk scores from Quarter 2 2025/26 to Quarter 3 2025/26.

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

Performance Measures in Development

12. The following performance measure remains in development with service colleagues.

KPI Name
OCC07.08 Percentage of children with an education, health, and care plan (EHCP) supported in mainstream education

Table 4: Measures in development for 2025/26

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

13. Table 5 shows all the measures that have a year to date (YTD) performance of Red or Amber. Annex B contains graphs and the accompanying commentary on each of these measures. There are 7 measures reporting as Amber and 13 measures reporting as Red for this Quarter.

KPI Name	Period RAG rating	YTD RAG rating
OCC01.03 Total % of household waste which is reused, recycled, or composted	Red	Red
OCC03.06 % of births that have received a face-to-face New Birth Visit, by the age of 12 months old	Amber	Amber
OCC04.01 % of people who received short-term services during 25/26 with no further support request	Red	Red
OCC04.04 Adults aged 65+ (per 100,000) admitted to residential and care homes	Red	Red
OCC05.07 Percentage of gullies cleaned against the annual cyclical gully programme	Red	Red
OCC05.08 Highways - Number of non-chargeable defects (NCD) identified (works not completed as instructed or failed due to workmanship)	Green	Amber
OCC05.09 Length of roads identified as in need of repair, restored to a good condition	Red	Red
OCC06.06 Management of Local Wildlife sites	Amber	Amber
OCC07.01 % of Education Health & Care Plans completed within 20 weeks (excluding exceptions)	Amber	Amber

OCC07.03 Percentage of children we care for living in county/within 20 miles	Amber	Amber
OCC07.05 Percentage of referrals to children's social care which are within 12 months of a previous referral	Red	Red
OCC07.07 Percentage of children we care for living with foster carers, friends or family	Amber	Amber
OCC07.11 Percentage of young people aged 16-18 who are in education, employment or training	Amber	Amber
OCC10.07 Children's Social care complaints completed outside of timeframe	Red	Red
OCC10.08 Corporate complaints completed outside of timeframe	Red	Red
OCC11.02 Achievement of planned savings	Red	Red
OCC11.06 Total Outturn variation for DSG funded services (high needs)	Red	Red
OCC11.09 Invoice collection rate - Corporate Debtors	Red	Red
OCC11.10 Debt requiring impairment - Corporate Debtors	Red	Red
OCC11.11 Debt requiring impairment - Adult Social Care contribution debtors	Red	Red

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

Revenue Forecast update summary

14. The budget for 2025/26 and Medium-Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) to 2027/28 was agreed by Council on 11 February 2025. £53.6m new funding to meet inflationary and demand pressures in 2025/26 was included as part of the budget along with £6.9m investments and £30.3m savings.

15. The financial annex (Annex D) sets out the current revenue forecast as at end of January 2026 and expected outlook for the financial year. It includes updates on:

    - Financial risks which continue to be managed in 2025/26.
    - The achievement of savings and investments in 2025/26; and
    - Forecast reserves and general balances as at 31 March 2026.

16. The council's financial position underpins the delivery of its priorities.

Key Messages – Revenue, Balances and Reserves

17. At the end of January 2026 (Financial Period Month 10), the council's services are forecasting a £14.1m overspend (a deterioration of £2.8m since the last report) as at 31 March 2026. This is offset by a forecast underspend of £13.8m within budgets held centrally (£0.5m improvement since last reported).

18. The overall forecast as at 31 March 2026 is an overspend of £0.4m (deterioration of £2.4m since last reported). The details are shown in Annex D Appendix 1 and summarised in Annex D Table 1 (Annex D, paragraph 6 below).

19. To aid financial resilience, the council is holding an on-going corporate contingency budget of £7.2m as well as one – off general balances based on an assessment of risk agreed as part of the budget. The forecast overspend is after taking account of the full use of the underspend against this contingency as well as additional interest on balances and an underspend against budget held to meet the estimated cost of pay inflation in 2025/26.

20. The in - year forecast deficit against Dedicated Schools Grant funding for High Needs has increased to £74.0m (this has deteriorated by £3.7m since the last report). This means that the forecast cumulative deficit is expected to be £166.5m by 31 March 2026. Further details on how the government will manage High Needs deficits up to the end of 2025/26 is outlined in a separate report elsewhere on the agenda.

Next Report

21. The Business Management Report to Cabinet in June 2026 will set out the organisation's performance, risk and an overview of the provisional revenue financial position at the end of 2025/26.

Financial Implications

22. The report provides an overview of the council's service performance and strategic risks which contribute to council's financial position and resilience. The assessed risk for SR05 Special Educational Needs and Disability has maintained as Red. There is also an increase in the deficit against High Needs Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) in performance measure OCC11.06 Total Outturn variation for DSG funded services.

23. The council continues to demonstrate financial resilience by managing forecast service pressures in 2025/26 through the use of one – off funding, contingency and additional interest on balances.

24. However, there are some significant financial risks relating to demand and funding that need to be managed over the medium term. In that context it is vital that there is continued emphasis and promotion of the importance of financial management, the delivery of planned savings and reductions in expenditure.

25. While the announcement about the treatment of the existing High Needs DSG deficit means there is more clarity about the impact on the council, there is now a requirement to fund the residual element. Funding of £41m in the High Needs DSG Risk Reserve is expected to be available for this purpose by 31 March 2028. Approximately £17m will be required to be funded by the council for the deficit to 31 March 2026. However, with the overspend escalating and expected to be £70.7m in 2025/26, and potentially higher in future years, further funding may be needed by 31 March 2028 to ensure there is sufficient in the reserve by the time the statutory override ends.

Comments checked by:
Kathy Wilcox, Head of Corporate Finance

Legal Implications

26. The Council's constitution at Part 3.2 (Budget and Policy Framework) sets out the obligations and responsibilities of both the Cabinet and the Council in approving, adopting, and implementing the council's budget and policy framework.

27. The Council has a fiduciary duty to council taxpayers, which means it must consider the prudent use of resources, including control of expenditure, financial prudence in the short and long term and the need to act in good faith in relation to compliance with statutory duties and exercising statutory powers. The report sets out the risk, performance and finance position for the Council as at 31 January 2026 as part of its fiduciary duty to implement budgetary controls and monitoring.

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

    Contact Officers:

    Louise Tustian, Head of Strategic Performance and Programme Management.
    Kathy Wilcox, Head of Corporate Finance

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Annex A - 25/26 Quarter 3 October-December

Oxfordshire County Council

Applied Filters
Date Select: From 01 Apr 2025 To 31 Dec 2025
Scorecard: 25/26 Quarter 1 April-June/ Quarter 3 October-December

riskonnect.

Print Date: 04-Feb-2026

SCORECARD: 25/26 Quarter 3 October-December

FROM 01-APR-2025 **TO** 31-DEC-2025

Linked Items	Unit	Period Performance			YTD Performance		
		Target	Actual	Indicator	Target	Actual	Indicator
OCC01.03 Total % of household waste which is reused, recycled or composted	%	61.50	54.40	RED	61.50	54.40	RED
Comments : Updated to usual one month in arrears. Very slight improvement on last reporting period. but continuing the trend of reduced performance compared to previous years. Overall likely to remain around this level during all of 2025/26. Oxfordshire residents consistently exceed the national average (44% 2023/24) for household waste recycling. In November 2024, the Central government made announcements around Simpler Recycling and Extended Producer Responsibility. It is anticipated that the implementation of national waste policy reforms expected in the next few years will improve performance.							
OCC02.01 Digital Inclusion through libraries (number of hours of use of library public computers)	#	5,500.00	6,004.90	GREEN	53,000.00	63,073.90	GREEN
Comments : This figure remains stable and above target, demonstrating both the ongoing demand for this part of the library offer, and the success of the recent project to replace all public computers.							
OCC02.03 Number of physical visits to Libraries	#	90,000.00	149,194.00	GREEN	1,095,000.00	1,512,322.00	GREEN
Comments : The number of physical visits to libraries remains well above target and came in at just over 2 million for 2024/25. This continuing success is partly a result of the high number of activities (including school visits) that library staff organise.							
OCC03.06 % of births that have received a face-to-face New Birth Visit, by the age of 12 months old	%	87.00	82.20	AMBER	87.00	82.20	AMBER
Comments : Period Q2-25 This universal review is offered to all children as they approach their first birthday. In the quarter the service completed 1509 reviews (against a target of 1597). Due to family commitments and parents working, families may choose to have their review after the child's first birthday up until 15 months. If a family declines or does not attend an appointment the service follows them up to offer another review and this may then be outside of the 12-month timescale. In this quarter 1679 babies or 88.6% have received a review by 15 months.							
OCC03.08 Average response time for attendance at an emergency incident in Oxfordshire by a fire service vehicle	#	563.00	548.00	GREEN	563.00	548.00	GREEN

Comments : This continues to show an improvement. The launch of the fire and rescue cover model has had a significant effect on a number of stations who are working hard to demonstrate they can ensure availability is maintained and incidents are responded to quickly and efficiently. Going forward into Q4 this measure will continue to be monitored in line with the outcome of the fire and rescue cover model recommendations.							
OCC03.10 Number of accidental fires in people's homes per 100,000 population	#	8.73	6.53	GREEN	8.73	6.53	GREEN
Comments : Q3 actual is below target both for the quarter and also for the year. We are also below the national average, based on this year and 10 years of data.							
OCC04.01 % of people who received short-term services during 25/26 with no further support request	%	79.40	73.90	RED	79.40	73.90	RED
Comments : Whilst the overall % to independence remains static for the last rolling 12 months, there are improvements that have been seen in the last 3 months following training of strategic providers, increased staffing levels and refinement of the discharge pathway available. Going forward our aim is to reflect these positive improvements in a way that is clear to all. Training continues to be delivered to zonal providers of reablement, prompt recording of outcomes is being actively worked on with the Home First multi-disciplinary team and recruitment to new posts.							
OCC04.02 % of residents 18-64 with Learning Disability support who live on their own or with family (Monitoring only)	%		91.63			91.63	
Comments : N/A							
OCC04.03 % Section 42 safeguarding enquiries where identified risk was reduced or removed	%	93.00	95.00	GREEN	93.00	95.00	GREEN
Comments : Oxfordshire County Council continue to work to reduce where risk is identified in safeguarding. The team continue to prioritise this ensuring that the risk to residents is reduced or removed where possible.							
OCC04.04 Adults aged 65+ (per 100,000) admitted to residential and care homes	#	527.00	541.34	RED	527.00	541.34	RED
Comments : Variance following Christmas period. To be monitored through Q4							
OCC04.05 Number of carers assessments completed (Monitoring only)	#		196.00			2,219.00	
Comments : No commentary provided							
OCC04.06 % of young people referred who have an ASC assessment in place by their 18th	%	90.00	96.00	GREEN	90.00	96.00	GREEN

birthday							
Comments : Good progress has been sustained which is particularly positive as there are some staffing challenges at the moment given vacancies and sickness. A current recruitment drive is taking place to address this to ensure progress is sustained wherever possible.							
OCC04.07 The number of people supported into employment (Monitoring only)	#		12.00			28.00	
Comments : The Connect to Work program has now launched in Oxfordshire and it is anticipated that there will be an increase in the number of people supported into employment over the next reporting period.							
OCC05.03 KM of footway / cycleway maintenance undertaken	km	15.20	33.89	GREEN	40.00	41.04	GREEN
Comments : Completed Footway Slurry works that were delayed from Quarter 2. The programme is now back on track.							
OCC05.07 Percentage of gullies cleaned against the annual cyclical gully programme	%	100.00	65.00	RED	100.00	65.00	RED
Comments : Still a bit behind programme, however still confident that programme will be completed by the end of the financial year. 108,000 assets completed to date.							
OCC05.08 Highways - Number of non-chargeable defects (NCD) identified (works not completed as instructed or failed due to workmanship)	#	25.00	9.00	GREEN	225.00	387.00	AMBER
Comments : Out of 1,889 instructions in December, and following inspection of 325 (17%), only 9 defects needed review through the non-compliant defect process. Improved defect repairs are being maintained, with NCD submissions staying below the trigger point for the fourth month in a row.							
OCC05.09 Length of roads identified as in need of repair, restored to a good condition	km	6.70	5.20	RED	24.20	21.60	RED
Comments : As part of our carriageways programme, we have restored 21.6 km of carriageway previously identified as being in poor condition. While a few schemes have been rescheduled to Quarter 4, we remain on track to meet or exceed our annual target.							
OCC05.11 % of the projected 1,400 tonnes of carbon savings achieved in the delivery of the highways service through the use of low-carbon techniques and materials	%	100.00	100.00	GREEN	100.00	100.00	GREEN
Comments : Cumulative total exceeded up to the end of Q3 (806t delivered out of a projected 700t of carbon savings), currently on track to meet savings by the end of financial year.							

OCC06.03 Volunteer hours on the public right of way (PRoW) network through established groups	#	1,750.00	1,977.00	GREEN	5,250.00	5,730.00	GREEN
Comments : A strong performance from all of our volunteer group work parties for this winter period.							
OCC07.01 % of Education Health & Care Plans completed within 20 weeks (excluding exceptions)	%	100.00	63.00	AMBER	100.00	63.00	AMBER
Comments : December saw our strongest performance this year, with 62.8% of plans issued on time – the highest monthly rate of 2025. This brings our provisional cumulative timeliness to 38.1%, which we expect to be broadly in line with the final 2024 figure (38.5%) once confirmed through the SEN2 return. We also issued more plans on time in December than in any other month, despite continuing to process a high volume overall. Only 9 plans exceeded 20 weeks, a significant improvement compared with 186 at this point last year, and none went beyond 30 or 52 weeks.							
OCC07.02 Number of families open to early help (including being supported by partners) (Monitoring only)	#		1,013.00			9,700.00	
Comments : The number of families open to Family Help is similar to last month, this number will likely increase slightly with the Families First pilot in January 2026, when Family Help will lead on a small number of Child in Need plans.							
OCC07.03 Percentage of children we care for living in county/within 20 miles	%	75.00	57.00	AMBER	75.00	57.00	AMBER
Comments : No commentary provided							
OCC07.04 Number of referrals to children's social care (Monitoring only)	#		614.00			5,425.00	
Comments : The number of referrals that lead to statutory interventions remains relatively consistent.							
OCC07.05 Percentage of referrals to children's social care which are within 12 months of a previous referral	%	22.00	36.00	RED	22.00	36.00	RED
Comments : Of all families referred to statutory children's social care in December 2025, 36% had been referred within the last year. Continued focused effort to address re-referrals.							
OCC07.06 Number of Oxfordshire children we care for (excludes unaccompanied asylum-seeking children) (Monitoring only)	#		712.00			712.00	

Comments : No commentary provided							
OCC07.07 Percentage of children we care for living with foster carers, friends or family	%		66.00	65.00	AMBER	66.00	65.00	AMBER
Comments : No commentary provided							
OCC07.08 Percentage of children with an education, health and care plan (EHCP) supported in mainstream education	%		0.00	0.00		0.00	0.00	
Comments : This KPI is still under discussion.							
OCC07.09 Percentage attendance of pupils in primary, secondary and special schools	%		0.00	93.50	GREEN	0.00	93.50	GREEN
Comments : Terms 1-2 (25/26)							
OCC07.10 Rate of permanent exclusions (cumulative through academic year)	#		0.01	0.01	GREEN	0.01	0.01	GREEN
Comments : Terms 1-2 (25/26)							
OCC07.11 Percentage of young people aged 16-18 who are in education, employment or training	%		91.70	88.53	AMBER	91.70	88.57	AMBER
Comments : We continue to reduce our NEET and Not Known figures. We remain below the average for the Southeast and England overall.							
OCC07.12 Percentage of 2 to 2½ year reviews using Age and Stages Questionnaire (ASQ-3 third edition of the developmental screening tool)	%		87.00	95.90	GREEN	87.00	95.90	GREEN
Comments : Period - Q2-25 The Health Visiting workforce completed 1815 reviews in this quarter to check the development of children. If children are not at the expected level the family are offered advice and support and referred on to specialist health services where needed. This supports children to be ready to learn and thrive when they start at school. The team are improving clinic accessibility and implementing measures to reduce missed appointments.							
OCC09.01 Percentage of businesses that were either compliant when visited or brought into	%		90.00	98.00	GREEN	90.00	98.00	GREEN

compliance during the period (Trading Standards)								
Comments : No commentary provided								
OCC09.02 Percentage of businesses that were either compliant when visited or brought into compliance during the period (Protection)	%	90.00	98.00	GREEN	90.00	98.00	GREEN
Comments : 108 audits completed, with 2 remaining non-compliant, receiving further advice and support								
OCC10.06 Adult social care complaints completed outside of timeframe	%	20.00	12.00	GREEN	20.00	12.00	GREEN
Comments : Reporting period Quarter 2. Of the 21 stage 1 complaints received, 21 closed during the quarter, 19 within timescale and 2 complaints were closed outside of the standard timescale. Of the 4 stage 2 complaints received, 4 were closed at the end of the quarter, 3 within timescale and 1 complaint was closed outside of timescale. Analysis: During Quarter 2, a total of 25 complaints were logged. The standard resolution timescale for Statutory Stage 1 complaints is 15 working days, and Statutory Stage 2 is 20 working days. The open complaints will be tracked and reported in Quarter 3 to ensure visibility and progress.								
OCC10.07 Children's Social care complaints completed outside of timeframe	%	20.00	53.00	RED	20.00	53.00	RED
Comments : Reporting period quarter 2. Of the 14 stage 1 complaints received, 14 closed during the quarter, 7 within timescale and 7 complaints were closed outside of the standard timescale. Of the 3 stage 2 complaints received, 2 were closed within timescale and 1 was closed outside of the standard timescale. Analysis: During Quarter 2, a total of 17 complaints were logged. The standard resolution timescale for Statutory Stage 1 complaints is 20 working days, Statutory Stage 2 is 65 working days and Statutory Stage 3 is 50 working days The open complaints will be tracked and reported in Quarter 3 to ensure visibility and progress.								
OCC10.08 Corporate complaints completed outside of timeframe	%	20.00	34.50	RED	20.00	34.50	RED
Comments : Reporting period Quarter 2.								

Of the 107 stage 1 complaints received, 107 were closed during the quarter, 63 within timescale and 44 complaints were closed outside of the standard timescale.

Of the 32 stage 2 complaints received, 32 were closed during the quarter, 28 were closed within timescale, 4 were closed outside of timescale,

Analysis:
During Quarter 2, a total of 139 complaints were logged. The standard resolution timescale for Corporate Stage 1 complaints is 10 working days and Corporate Stage 2 is 20 working days.

The open complaints will be tracked and reported in Quarter 3 to ensure visibility and progress.

OCC10.09 Number of FOI's/EIR's completed outside of timescale	%	10.00	3.00	GREEN	10.00	3.00	GREEN

Comments : Reporting period Quarter 2.
A total of 499 requests were logged as FOI/EIR during Q2-2025.

499 requests have been closed during Q2, 483 within the 20 working days of receiving the initial request and 16 requests were closed outside of timescale.

No requests remain open within 20 working days of receiving the initial requests
97% of requests were closed within timescale.

In Q2, the number of requests received increased by 10.6% compared to Q1. Following the announcement of the congestion charge in June 2025, 23 requests were received during Q2 regarding this proposal, and this number is continuing to rise.

Recent requests have required input from multiple officers/departments due to their complexity. The increase in requests occurred during the school summer holidays when several officers were on annual leave, resulting in 16 requests exceeding the statutory 20 working day deadline. Changes in staff within the services, particularly the People Directorate, also affected the statutory timeframe, as outgoing officers and the process of identifying new officers to assume responsibility for responses impacted response times.

OCC11.01 Overall forecast revenue variance across the Council	£	0.00	(2,000,000.00)	GREEN	0.00	(2,000,000.00)	GREEN

Comments : November position

OCC11.02 Achievement of planned savings	%	90.00	75.00	RED	90.00	75.00	RED

Comments : See finance update in business management and monitoring report.

OCC11.03 General balances are forecast to remain at or above the risk assessed level	%	85.00	121.00	GREEN	85.00	121.00	GREEN

Comments : See finance update in business management and monitoring report.

OCC11.04 Directorates deliver services and achieve planned performance within agreed budget	%	1.00	1.00	GREEN	1.00	1.00	GREEN
Comments : See finance update in business management and monitoring report.							
OCC11.05 Total Outturn variation for DSG funded services (schools/early years)	%	0.00	0.00	GREEN	0.00	0.00	GREEN
Comments : See finance update in business management and monitoring report.							
OCC11.06 Total Outturn variation for DSG funded services (high needs)	£	42,300,000.00	70,700,000.00	RED	42,300,000.00	70,700,000.00	RED
Comments : See finance update in business management and monitoring report.							
OCC11.07 Use of non-DSG revenue grant funding	%	95.00	100.00	GREEN	95.00	100.00	GREEN
Comments : See finance update in business management and monitoring report.							
OCC11.08 % of agreed invoices paid within 30 days	%	95.00	96.83	GREEN	95.00	96.83	GREEN
Comments : Performance is 96.83%, this is above the 95% target. Both Children's Social Care (99.60%) and Adult Social Care (99.35%) systems exceeded targets, purchase orders are also above target at 95.86%							
OCC11.09 Invoice collection rate - Corporate Debtors	%	97.00	95.78	RED	97.00	95.78	RED
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- September 2025. The collection rate was 95.78%, below the target of 97%. The number of invoices issued in August was unusually low. Historically this leads to a reduction in the collection rate.							
OCC11.10 Debt requiring impairment - Corporate Debtors	£	500,000.00	955,559.00	RED	500,000.00	955,559.00	RED
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 £0.956m. The top five cases account for 60% 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	£	4,300,000.00	4,440,000.00	RED	4,300,000.00	4,440,000.00	RED

Comments : The 2024-25 year-end adults care contribution impairment for bad debt was £4.51m. At the end of this period, it is £4.40m, a reduction of £0.11m.

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.

OCC11.12 Invoice Collection Rate - Adult Social Care contribution debtors	%	94.00	94.13	GREEN	94.00	94.13	GREEN

Comments : In this period, we measured invoices issued in August 2025. The 120-day invoice collection rate was 94.13% for this period, above the new stretch target of 94%.

OCC01.02 Publication of the Local Nature Recovery Strategy	#	1.00	1.00	GREEN	1.00	1.00	GREEN

Comments : Adopted at October cabinet and published and launched on 12th Nov 25.

OCC03.01 Proportion of opiate users in treatment who are making substantial progress to being drug-free or have sustained reduction in drug use	%	48.00	49.00	GREEN	48.00	49.00	GREEN

Comments : Period 2024-25
This performance is above the national average of 46% and is achieved through the provision of extensive community-based engagement, strong partnership and multi-agency working and high-quality community treatment that is flexible, holistic and person-centred, and supports people to reduce their drug use. This measure demonstrates a focus on quality treatment, which is in line with the local and national drug strategy, and is achieved alongside a focus on increasing the number of opiate users in treatment.

OCC03.03 Smoking prevalence in adults (18+) - self-reported current smokers (2025 definition)	%	12.90	7.50	GREEN	12.90	7.50	GREEN

Comments : Period 2024

Data note: The 2024 Annual Population Survey (APS) returned to using face-to-face interviews as its main method. Based on this new data, the ONS recalculated its adjustment factor and revised all smoking estimates from 2020 to 2023. As a result, single-year smoking indicators for those years were updated in the APS 2024 release.
The Oxfordshire Tobacco Control Alliance oversees works to reduce smoking in Oxfordshire. The Alliance has developed a new strategy and action plan for the next 5 years, working in partnership to build on the effective work of the last 5 years, with the aid of a comprehensive new Health Needs Assessment for smoking.
This action plan includes work by:
NHS trusts, Trading Standards

The Fire Service
Schools
New Local Stop Smoking Service, Smokefree Oxon provided by Solutions4Health.

The additional grant funding from government is helping to target work to priority groups whose prevalence rates are highest. This includes outreach work and alternative support option of Allen Carr Easyway, continued work with Swap to Stop in mental health settings and funding Trading Standards work to tackle illegal tobacco supply.

OCC03.07 Reduce the levels of children overweight and obese in year 6 (NCMP data)	%	31.00	30.50	GREEN	31.00	30.50	GREEN

Comments : Period 2024-25

Oxfordshire performs well against the England average (36.2%), but there are some areas in Oxfordshire where children have experienced excess weight over a long period.
A new all age healthy weight service launched in September 2024 with a focus on addressing inequalities associated with weight is in place although has struggled to see the number expected.
To increase referrals a new proactive follow up will start from January 2026. Beezee Oxfordshire will contact (text, call) families with children identified as overweight through the National Child Measurement Programme (NCMP). New NCMP Co-ordinator recruited to lead this work.
Another new option that has launched in October 2025 - Beezee Youth an online programme for children aged 13-17 years old.
Work to support more healthy environments continues; latest pilot includes healthier vending in leisure centres to launch Jan 2026.

OCC03.12 Numbers in treatment: Alcohol only during the financial year	#	794.00	1,002.00	GREEN	794.00	1,002.00	GREEN

Comments : Period 2024/25

In line with national strategic aims, extensive partnership work and outreach with those with health inequalities has supported the partnership to continue to increase the number of people in treatment over the last year. This demonstrates the impact of additional central government investment linked to the national strategy, with Oxfordshire now exceeding the national drug strategy ambition of achieving a 20% increase on the 2021 baseline.

OCC06.06 Management of Local Wildlife sites	#	50.00	47.00	AMBER	50.00	47.00	AMBER

Comments : The target has been set at 50% to keep us on track to achieve 70% by 2030, in line with the policy set out in the recently approved Biodiversity Action Framework. We are slightly short of achieving the target; we have put in a request through the 26/27 budget setting process for an increase in funding to the Local Wildlife Sites project, this would support an increase in the management advice provided to owners of Local Wildlife Sites and should enable improved performance against this KPI.

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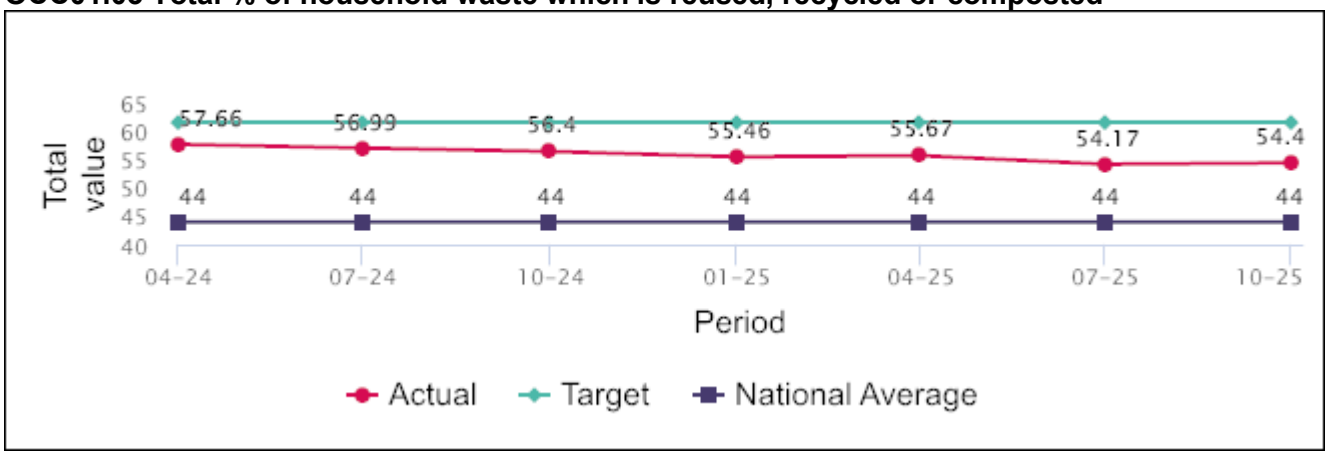
Annex B – Performance analysis by strategic priority Quarter 3 2025/26

Priority 01: Put action to address the climate emergency at the heart of our work

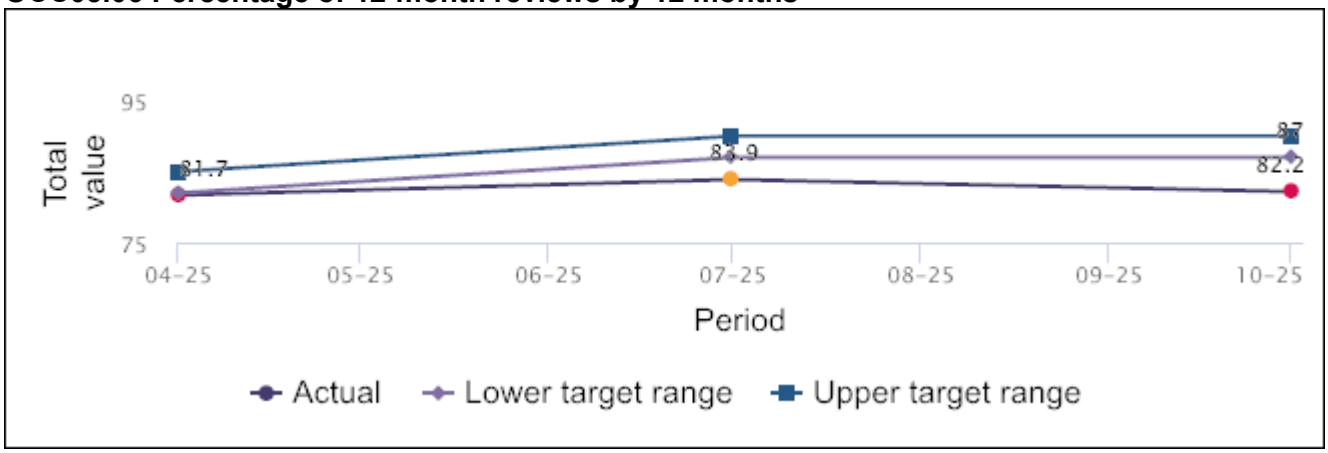
OCC01.03 Total % of household waste which is reused, recycled or composted



Commentary
Updated to usual one month in arrears. Very slight improvement on last reporting period. but continuing the trend of reduced performance compared to previous years. Overall likely to remain around this level during all of 2025/26. Oxfordshire residents consistently exceed the national average (44% 2023/24) for household waste recycling. In November 2024, the Central government made announcements around Simpler Recycling and Extended Producer Responsibility. It is anticipated that the implementation of national waste policy reforms expected in the next few years will improve performance.

Priority 3: Prioritise the health and wellbeing of residents

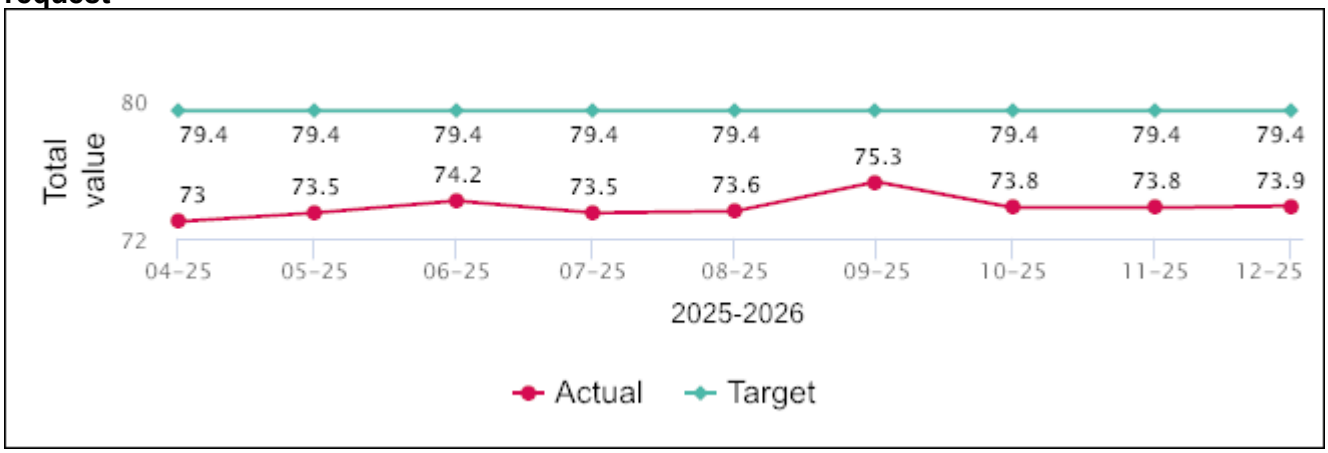
OCC03.06 Percentage of 12-month reviews by 12 months



Commentary
Period Q2-25 This universal review is offered to all children as they approach their first birthday. In the quarter the service completed 1509 reviews (against a target of 1597). Due to family commitments and parents working, families may choose to have their review after the child's first birthday up until 15 months. If a family declines or does not attend an appointment the service follows them up to offer another review and this may then be outside of the 12-month timescale. In this quarter 1679 babies or 88.6% have received a review by 15 months.

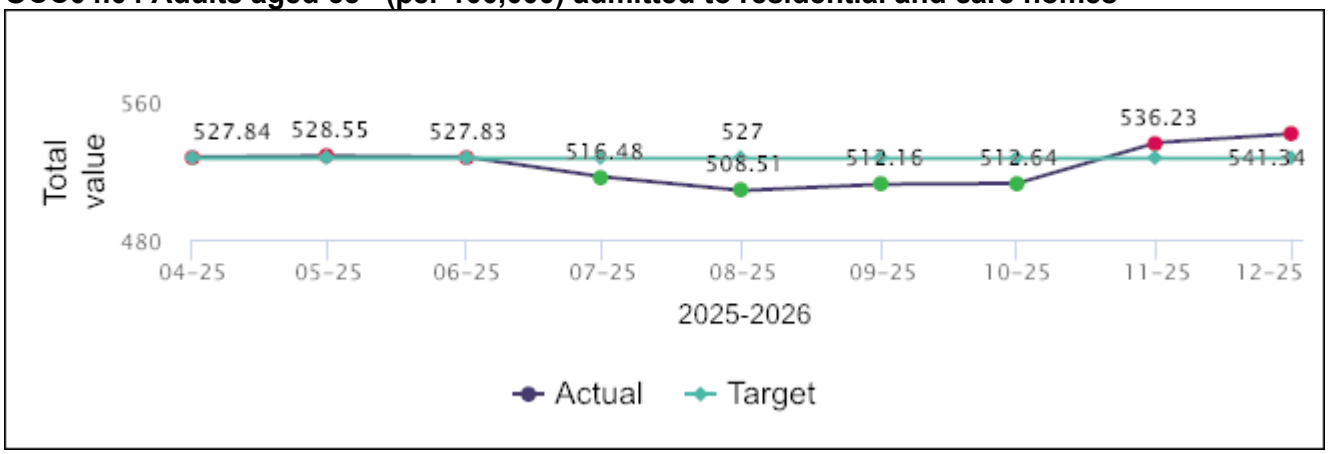
Priority 04: Support carers and the social care system

OCC04.01 % of people who received short-term services during 25/26 with no further support request



Commentary
Whilst the overall % to independence remains static for the last rolling 12 months, there are improvements that have been seen in the last 3 months following training of strategic providers, increased staffing levels and refinement of the discharge pathway available. Going forward our aim is to reflect these positive improvements in a way that is clear to all. Training continues to be delivered to zonal providers of reablement, prompt recording of outcomes is being actively worked on with the Home First multi-disciplinary team and recruitment to new posts.

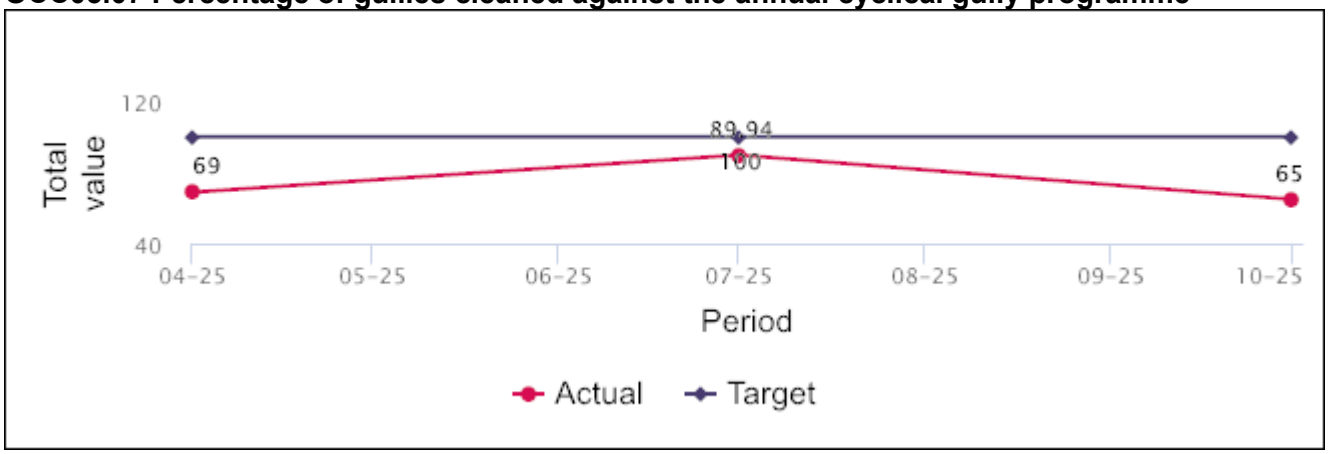
OCC04.04 Adults aged 65+ (per 100,000) admitted to residential and care homes



Commentary
Variance following Christmas period. To be monitored through Q4

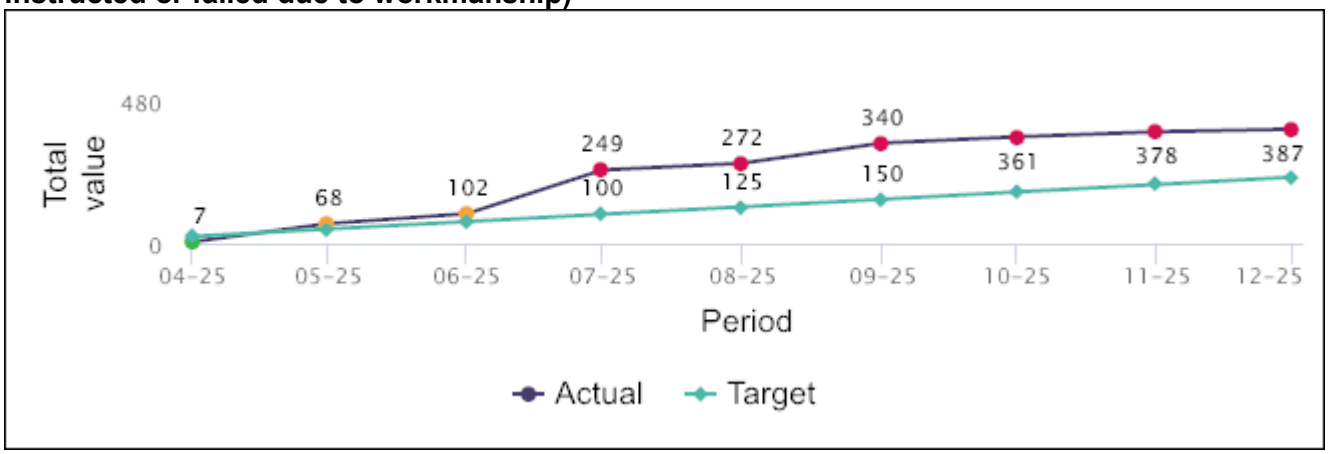
Priority 05: Invest in an inclusive, integrated and sustainable transport network

OCC05.07 Percentage of gullies cleaned against the annual cyclical gully programme



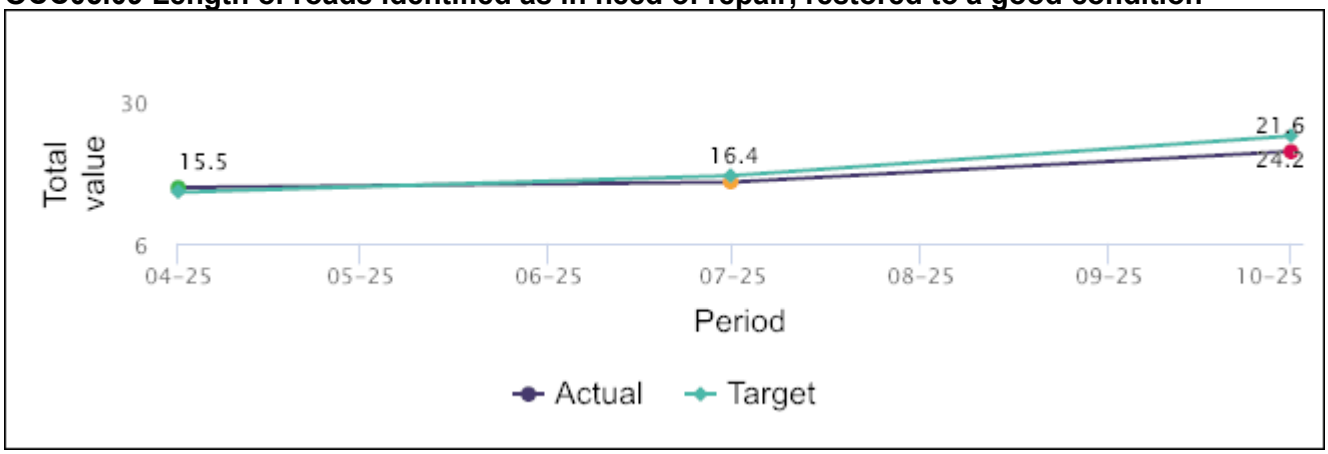
Commentary
Still a bit behind programme, however still confident that programme will be completed by the end of the financial year. 108,000 assets completed to date.

OCC05.08 Number of non-chargeable defects (NCD) identified (works not completed as instructed or failed due to workmanship)



Commentary
Out of 1,889 instructions in December, and following inspection of 325 (17%), only 9 defects needed review through the non-compliant defect process. Improved defect repairs are being maintained, with NCD submissions staying below the trigger point for the fourth month in a row.

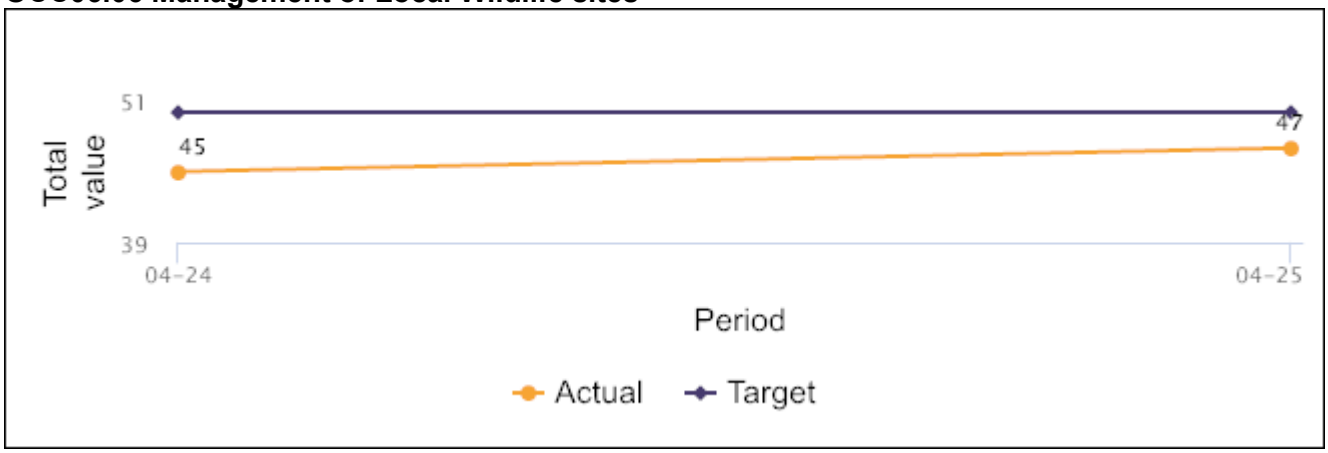
OCC05.09 Length of roads identified as in need of repair, restored to a good condition



Commentary
As part of our carriageways programme, we have restored 21.6 km of carriageway previously identified as being in poor condition. While a few schemes have been rescheduled to Quarter 4, we remain on track to meet or exceed our annual target.

Priority 6: Preserve and improve access to nature and green spaces

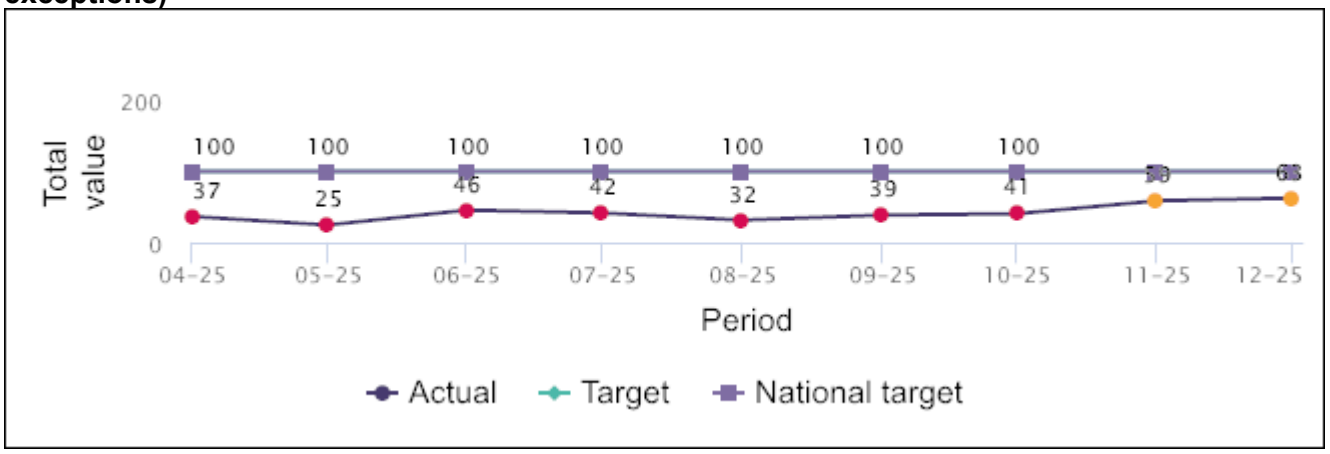
OCC06.06 Management of Local Wildlife sites



Commentary
The target has been set at 50% to keep us on track to achieve 70% by 2030, in line with the policy set out in the recently approved Biodiversity Action Framework. We are slightly short of achieving the target; we have put in a request through the 26/27 budget setting process for an increase in funding to the Local Wildlife Sites project, this would support an increase in the management advice provided to owners of Local Wildlife Sites and should enable improved performance against this KPI.

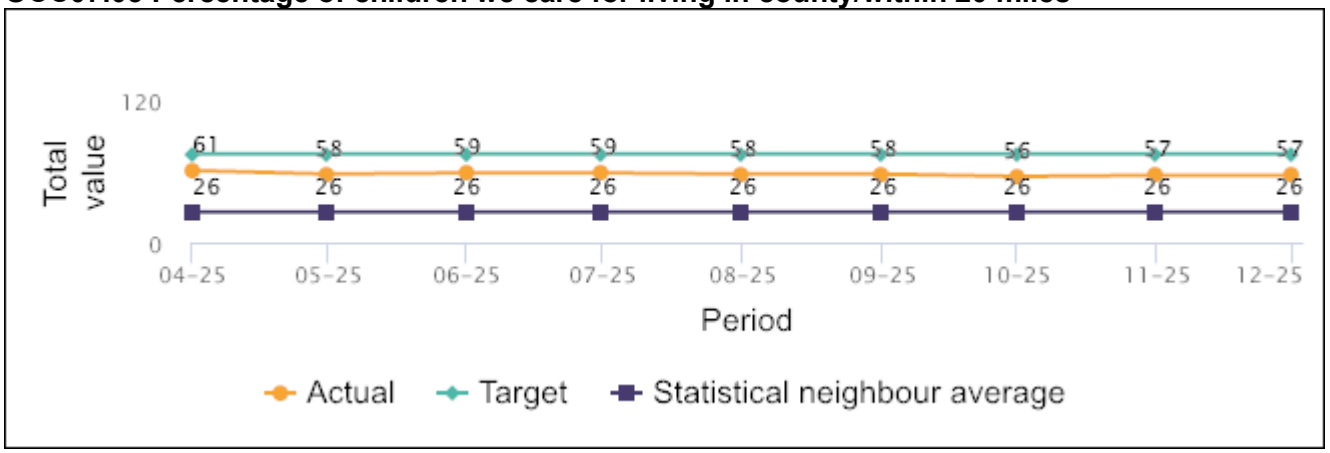
Priority 07: Create opportunities for children and young people to reach their full potential

OCC07.01 % of Education Health & Care Plans completed within 20 weeks (excluding exceptions)



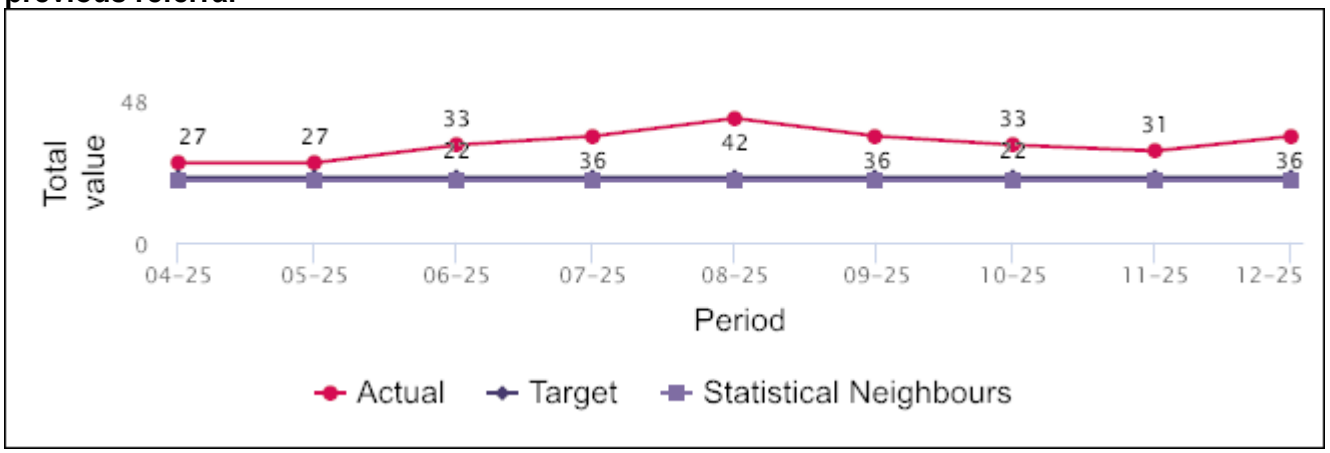
Commentary
December saw our strongest performance this year, with 62.8% of plans issued on time – the highest monthly rate of 2025. This brings our provisional cumulative timeliness to 38.1%, which we expect to be broadly in line with the final 2024 figure (38.5%) once confirmed through the SEN2 return. We also issued more plans on time in December than in any other month, despite continuing to process a high volume overall. Only 9 plans exceeded 20 weeks, a significant improvement compared with 186 at this point last year, and none went beyond 30 or 52 weeks.

OCC07.03 Percentage of children we care for living in county/within 20 miles



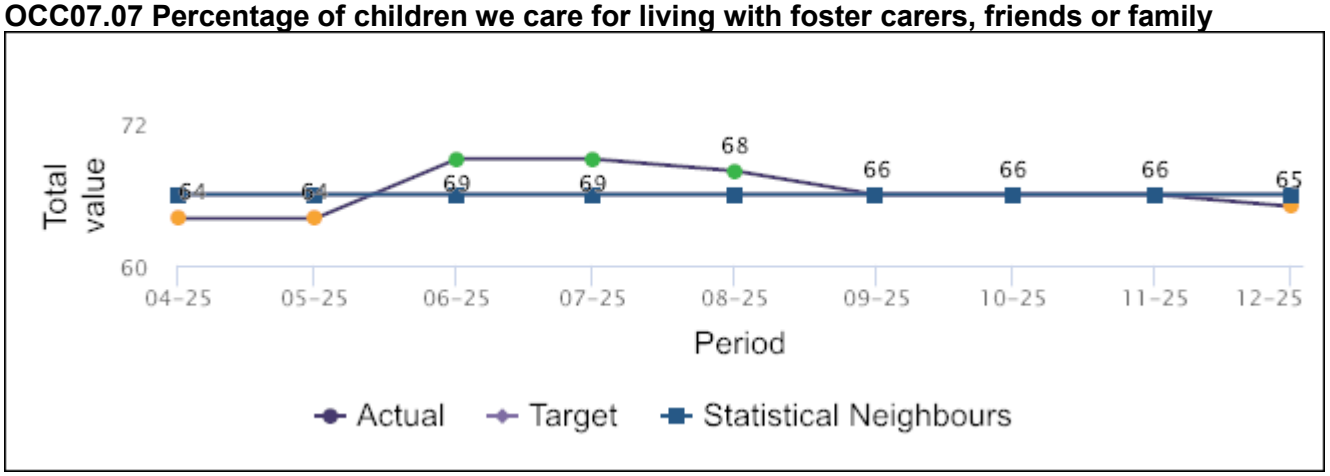
Commentary
No commentary provided

OCC07.05 Percentage of referrals to children's social care which are within 12 months of a previous referral



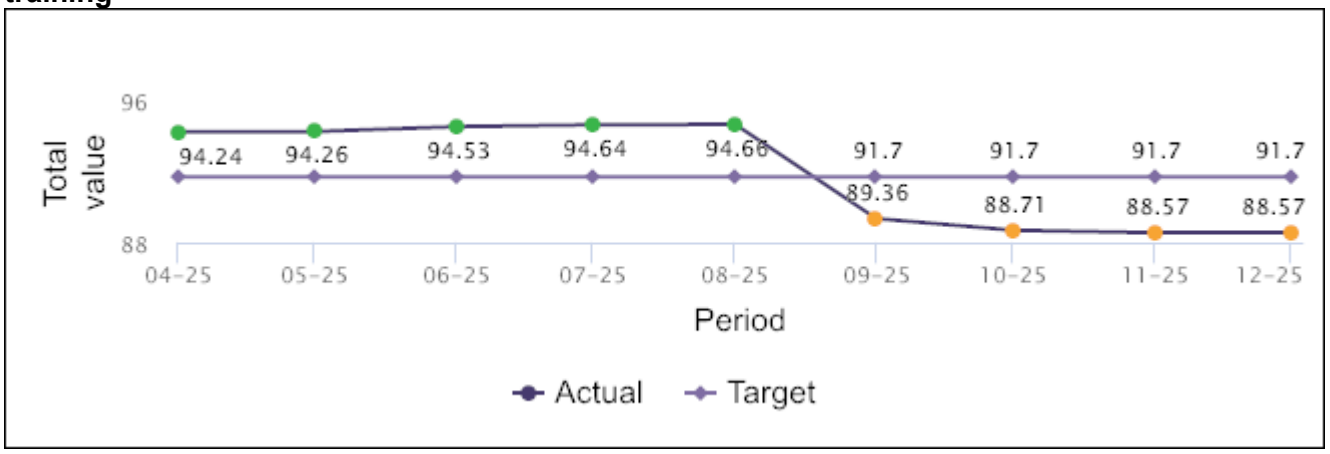
Commentary
Of all families referred to statutory children's social care in December 2025, 36% had been referred within the last year. Continued focused effort to address re-referrals.

OCC07.07 Percentage of children we care for living with foster carers, friends or family



Commentary
No commentary provided

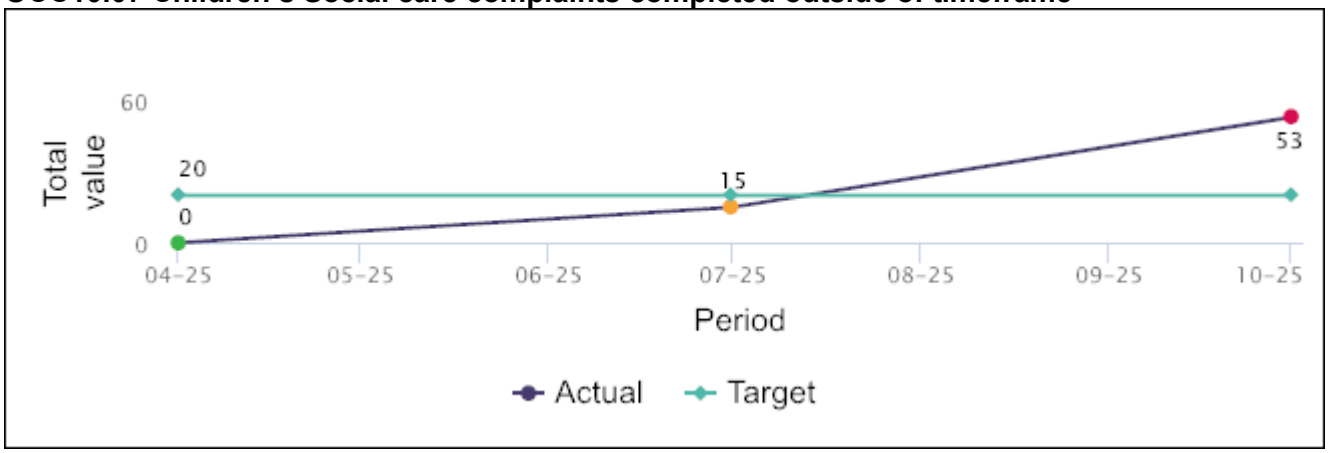
OCC07.11 Percentage of young people aged 16-18 who are in education, employment or training



Commentary
Please note this is the start of the new academic year and we are now waiting for schools, colleges, apprenticeship providers and out of county provision to send in their registers - hence why our figure is approximately 63%. Post-16 providers have until the end of October to submit their data.

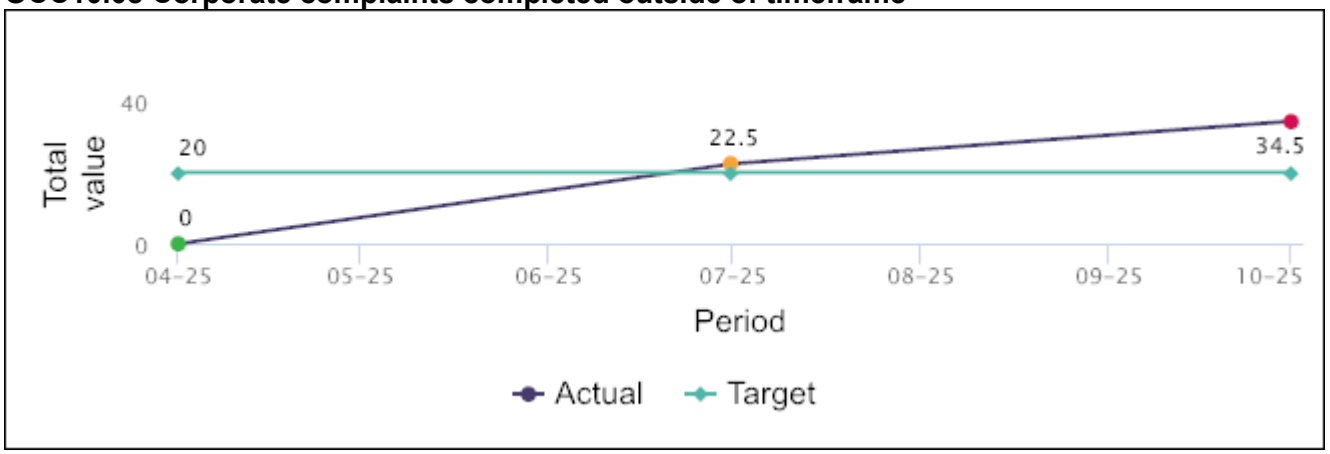
Priority 10: Running the business - Customer experience

OCC10.07 Children's Social care complaints completed outside of timeframe



Commentary
Reporting period quarter 2. Of the 14 stage 1 complaints received, 14 closed during the quarter, 7 within timescale and 7 complaints were closed outside of the standard timescale. Of the 3 stage 2 complaints received, 2 were closed within timescale and 1 was closed outside of the standard timescale. Analysis: During Quarter 2, a total of 17 complaints were logged. The standard resolution timescale for Statutory Stage 1 complaints is 20 working days, Statutory Stage 2 is 65 working days and Statutory Stage 3 is 50 working days The open complaints will be tracked and reported in Quarter 3 to ensure visibility and progress.

OCC10.08 Corporate complaints completed outside of timeframe

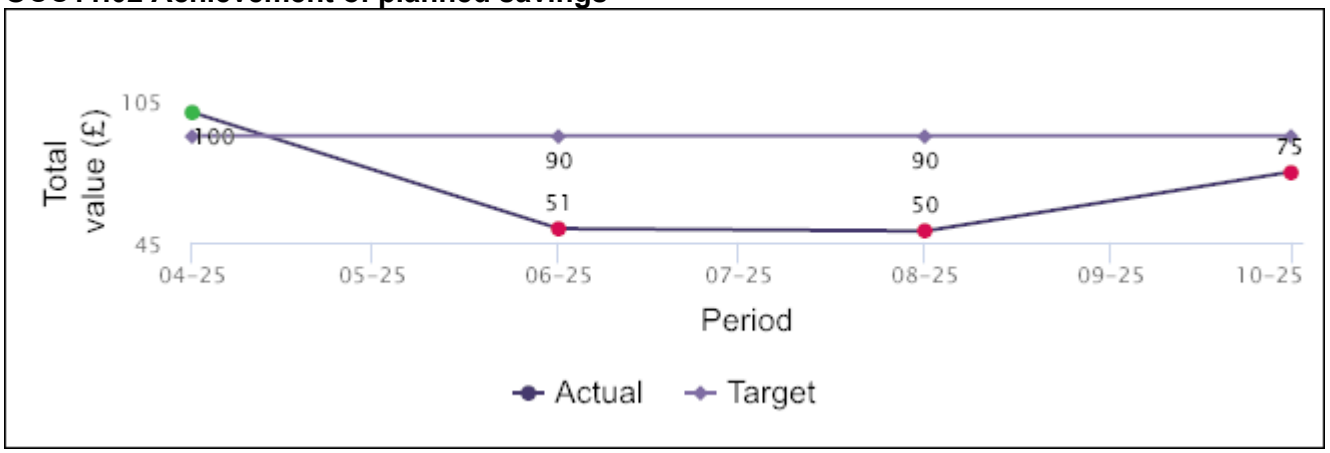


Commentary
Reporting period Quarter 2. Of the 107 stage 1 complaints received, 107 were closed during the quarter, 63 within timescale and 44 complaints were closed outside of the standard timescale. Of the 32 stage 2 complaints received, 32 were closed during the quarter, 28 were closed within

timescale, 4 were closed outside of timescale,
Analysis:
During Quarter 2, a total of 139 complaints were logged. The standard resolution timescale for Corporate Stage 1 complaints is 10 working days, and Corporate Stage 2 is 20 working days. The open complaints will be tracked and reported in Quarter 3 to ensure visibility and progress.

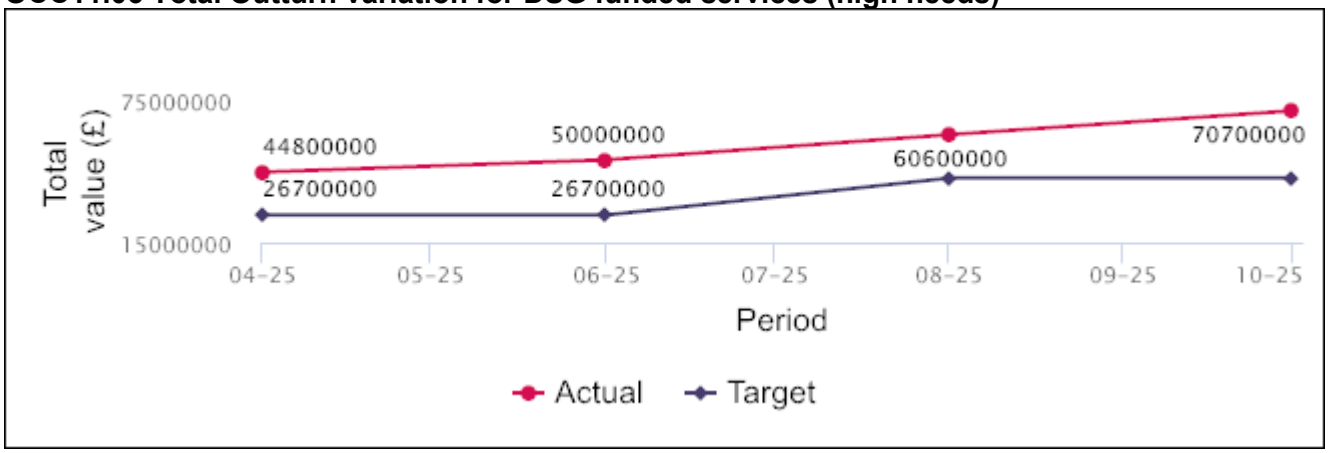
Priority 11: Running the business - Finance

OCC11.02 Achievement of planned savings



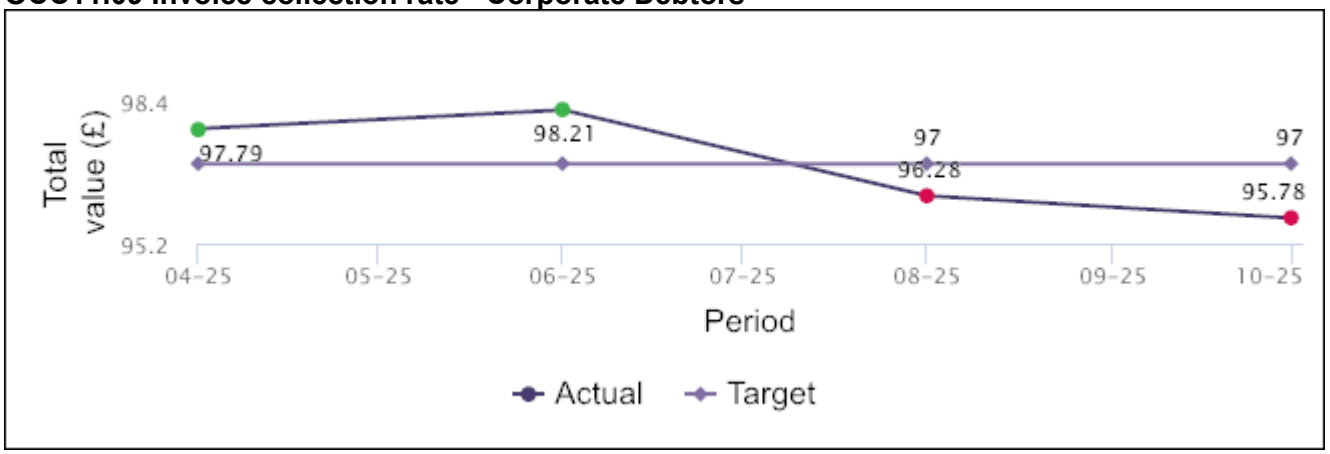
Commentary
See finance update in business management and monitoring report.

OCC11.06 Total Outturn variation for DSG funded services (high needs)



Commentary
See finance update in business management and monitoring report.

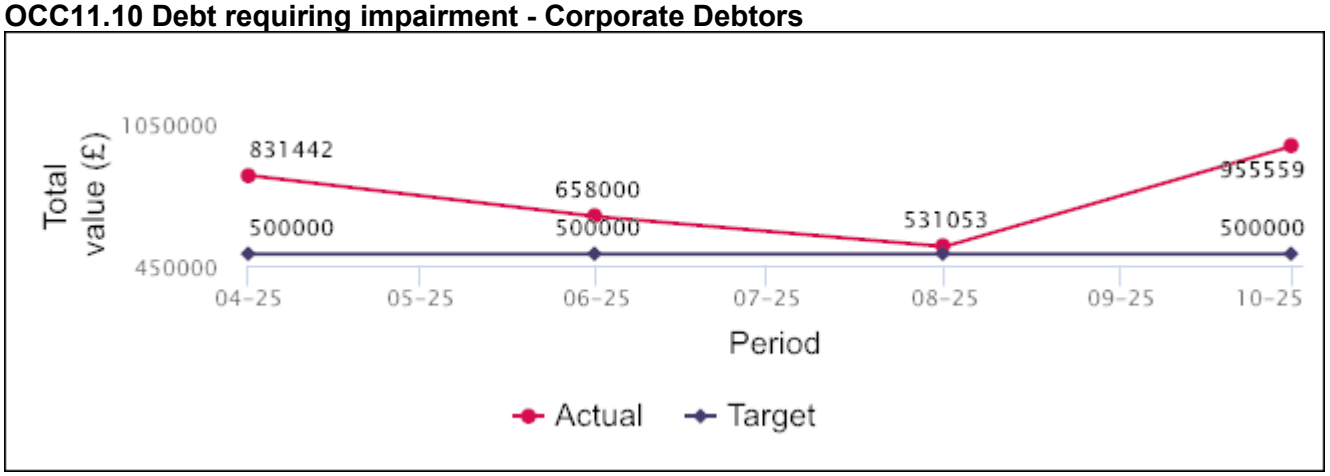
OCC11.09 Invoice collection rate - Corporate Debtors



Commentary

This measure identifies the percentage of invoices issued that have been paid within 120 days. In this period, we measured invoices issued in August- September 2025. The collection rate was 95.78%, below the target of 97%.
The number of invoices issued in August was unusually low. Historically this leads to a reduction in the collection rate.

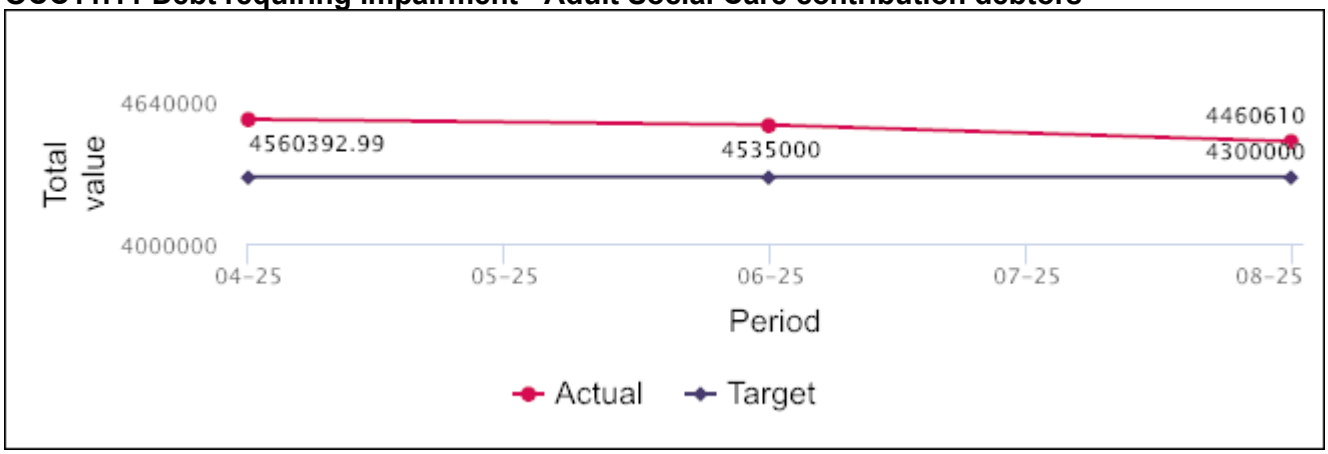
OCC11.10 Debt requiring impairment - Corporate Debtors



OCC11.10 Debt requiring impairment - Corporate Debtors Commentary and analysis

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 £0.956m. The top five cases account for 60% 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



Commentary
The 2024-25 year-end adults care contribution impairment for bad debt was £4.51m. At the end of this period, it is £4.40m, a reduction of £0.11m. 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.

Annex C – Complaints, Freedom of Information access requests (FOIs) and Environmental information regulations (EIRs)

Stage 1 Complaints											
Q2-2025											
	01. Number of complaints received	02. Complaints closed at the end of the quarter	03. Closed within timescale	04. Closed outside of timescale	05. Percent closed within timescale	06. Open within timescale	07. Percent open within timescale	08. Open outside of timescale	09. Percent open outside of timescale	10. Number upheld	11. Percent upheld
Adult Social Care Corporate Stage 1	6	6	6	0	100%	0	0%	0	0%	2	33%
Adult Social Care Statutory Stage 1	21	21	19	2	90%	0	0%	0	0%	11	52%
Children's Corporate Stage 1	55	55	34	21	62%	0	0%	0	0%	13	24%
Children's Statutory Stage 1	14	14	7	7	50%	0	0%	0	0%	1	7%
Community Safety Stage 1	0	0	0	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%
Economy & Place Stage 1	5	5	2	3	40%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%
Highways & Environment Stage 1	27	27	18	9	67%	0	0%	0	0%	4	15%
Law & Governance Stage 1	0	0	0	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%
Public Health Stage 1	0	0	0	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%
Resources Stage 1	12	12	1	11	8%	0	0%	0	0%	4	33%
Transformation Digital & Customer Experience Stage 1	2	2	2	0	100%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%
Stage 1 Complaints Total	**142**	**142**	**89**	**53**	**63%**	**0**	**0%**	**0**	**0%**	**35**	**25%**

Stage 2 Complaints											
Q2-2025											
	01. Number of complaints received	02. Complaints closed at the end of the quarter	03. Closed within timescale	04. Closed outside of timescale	05. Percent closed within timescale	06. Open within timescale	07. Percent open within timescale	08. Open outside of timescale	09. Percent open outside of timescale	10. Number upheld	11. Percent upheld
Adult Social Care Corporate Stage 2	0	0	0	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%
Adult Social Care Statutory Stage 2	4	4	3	1	75%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%
Children's Corporate Stage 2	22	22	22	0	100%	0	0%	0	0%	3	14%
Children's Statutory Stage 2	3	3	1	2	0%	0	100%	0	0%	0	0%
Community Safety Stage 2	0	0	0	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%
Economy & Place Stage 2	1	1	0	1	0%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%
Highways & Environment Stage 2	7	7	5	2	71%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%
Law & Governance Stage 2	0	0	0	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%
Public Health Stage 2	0	0	0	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%
Resources Stage 2	1	1	1	0	100%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%
Transformation Digital & Customer Experience Stage 2	1	1	1	0	100%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%
Stage 2 Complaints Total	**39**	**39**	**33**	**6**	**85%**	**0**	**0%**	**0**	**0%**	**3**	**8%**

Stage 3 Complaints											
Q2-2025											
	01. Number of complaints received	02. Complaints closed at the end of the quarter	03. Closed within timescale	04. Closed outside of timescale	05. Percent closed within timescale	06. Open within timescale	07.Percent open within timescale	08. Open outside of timescale	09. Percent open outside of timescale	10. Number upheld	11. Percent upheld
Children's Statutory Stage 3	0	0	0	0	0%	0	100%	0	0%	0	0%

Number of complaints by service (Direction of travel)				
Q2-2025				
		Previous Quarter 1 2025/26	Current Quarter 2 2025/26	Difference
Adult Social Care All Complaints	Adult Social Care	28	29	1
	Adult Social Care Corporate Housing	0	0	0
	Commissioning	5	2	-3
Children's Services All Complaints	Children's Education	68	55	-13
	Children's Social Care	49	39	-10
Environment and Place All Complaints	Highways and Operations	8	14	6
	Planning, Environment and Climate Change	25	25	0
	Transport and Infrastructure	3	13	10
Public Health and Community Safety All Complaints	Public Health and Community Safety	1	0	-1
Resources Directorate (CODR and L&G) All Complaints	Customer and Culture	4	3	-1
	Finance	3	0	-3
	HR and OD	0	1	1
Total All Complaints	**Total**	**194**	**181**	**-13**

FOIs									
Q2- 2025									
	01. Number of complaints received	02. Complaints closed at the end of the quarter	03. Closed within timescale	04. Closed outside of timescale	05. Percent closed within timescale	06. Open within timescale	07.Percent open within timescale	08. Open outside of timescale	09. Percent open outside of timescale
Adult Social Care FOIs	24	24	23	1	96%	0	0%	0	0%
Children's Services FOIs	78	77	70	8	91%	0	0%	0	0%
Community Safety FOIs	40	40	38	2	95%	0	0%	0	0%
Economy & Place FOIs	58	58	57	1	98%	0	0%	0	0%
Highways & Environment FOIs	166	166	162	4	98%	0	0%	0	0%
Law & Governance FOIs	10	10	10	0	100%	0	0%	0	0%
Public Health FOIs	13	13	13	0	100%	0	0%	0	0%
Resources FOIs	104	104	104	0	100%	0	0%	0	0%
Transformation Digital & Customer Experience FOIs	6	6	6	0	100%	0	0%	0	0%
All FOIs Total	**499**	**498**	**483**	**16**	**97%**	**0**	0%	**0**	0%

ANNEX D - REVENUE UPDATE AND MONITORING REPORT

Executive Summary

1. As of January 2026, there is a £14.1m service overspend forecast as at March 2026. This is offset by a £13.8m forecast underspend against contingency and other budgets held centrally, resulting in a net overspend of £0.4m.

2. The deficit against High Needs Dedicated Schools Grant is forecast to be £74.0m in 2025/26, increasing the cumulative deficit to £166.5m by March 2026.

Forecast Revenue position as at 31 January 2026

3. At Month 10, the council is forecasting a £0.3m overspend against the revenue budget as at 31 March 2026. Table 1 below shows the revenue budget, forecast expenditure and variation for the year by Service Area (further details are set out in Appendix 1):

Table 1 - Summary revenue budget forecast variances as at 31 January 2026

Service	Net Budget	Current Forecast	Forecast Variance	November Forecast	Movement
Adult Services	£259.9m	£267.4m	£7.5m	£4.5m	-£3.0m
Children's Services	£214.9m	£215.0m	£0.1m	£1.3m	£1.2m
Public Health & Communities	£14.1m	£14.1m	£0.0m	£0.0m	£0.0m
Environment & Highways	£55.1m	£56.0m	£0.9m	£0.9m	-£0.0m
Economy & Place	£21.8m	£21.8m	£0.0m	-£0.2m	-£0.2m
Fire & Rescue and Community Safety	£32.1m	£32.7m	£0.6m	£0.8m	£0.2m
Resources and Law & Governance	£71.2m	£70.6m	-£0.5m	-£0.5m	£0.0m
Cross Cutting savings	-£6.7m	-£1.1m	£5.6m	£4.5m	-£1.1m
Service Areas position	**£662.3m**	**£676.5m**	**£14.1m**	**£11.3m**	**-£2.8m**
Budgets held centrally	-£21.1m	-£27.7m	-£6.6m	-£6.1m	£0.5m
Contingency	£7.2m	£0.0m	-£7.2m	-£7.2m	-£0.0m
Corporate Funding	-£648.4m	-£648.4m	£0.0m	£0.0m	£0.0m
Overall	**£0.0m**	**£0.4m**	**£0.4m**	**-£2.0m**	**-£2.4m**

4. In 2025/26, monitoring updates have been provided on an exception basis highlighting any pressures, risks, in-year mitigations and opportunities. The position for each Service Area has been approved by the relevant director.

5. **Adult Services – £7.5m forecast overspend (increase of £3.0m since last reported to Cabinet)**. Increased demand within the Home First/Discharge to Assess service has created a £1.8m pressure; mitigations have been put in place to reduce this in the remaining two months of the year. In 2026/27 the on-going impact will be managed through the Better Care Fund. The number of packages of care for service users under 65 has increased during 2025/26 and this is currently forecast to create a pressure of £3.5m in 2025/26 - the on-going effect will need to be managed in 2026/27. Pressures within the transport and external day service areas are the main reason for a forecast pressure of £1.7m within

learning disabilities. The forecast also includes a £0.5m on-going pressure linked to the cost of equipment and the re-procurement of the equipment contract – the on-going impact of the new contract was considered through the 2026/27 budget process.

6. **Children's Services – £0.1m forecast overspend (decrease of £1.2m since last reported)** The overall position includes a £3.6m forecast pressure within Children's Social Care placements, which has reduced by £1.2m since the previous report. This pressure is expected to be managed through one-off mitigations in 2025/26, resulting in a broadly break-even position for Social Care. The ongoing impact of the underlying pressure has been addressed through the budget for 2026/27. Education Services are forecasting a £0.1m overspend, which is £0.2m reduced since the previous report due to review of expenditure to be funded by grants.

7. **Environment & Highways (E&H) – £0.9m forecast overspend (no net change since the last report to Cabinet) –** there is a forecast pressure of £1.1m in Network Management arising from a delay receiving Department of Transport approval to implement the lane rental scheme in Oxfordshire, plus a small forecast pressure in Highways Maintenance of £0.1m. These are offset by a forecast underspend of -£0.3m, due to an increased recharge income in Transport Infrastructure.

   The following risks are being monitored and managed and if necessary, in-year mitigations will be required:
   - Waste Management – there could be further pressure related to market prices and volumes remaining high for dry mixed recyclables.
   - Highway Maintenance - the weather year and overall condition of the roads and gullies could impact on the level of expenditure by the end of the financial year. Robust plans and programmes are in place based on the assumed condition of the gullies and roads.

8. **Fire & Rescue and Community Safety - £0.6m forecast overspend (improvement of £0.2m since last reported).** The On-Call firefighter budget is forecasting an overspend of £0.3m as result of higher demands. Pressures arising from full time firefighters' sickness, ill-health and cover, one-off training are contributing to other overspends. The cost of the Bicester Motion fire incident investigation is recommended to be met by a supplementary estimate request.

9. **Resources - Law & Governance Services - £0.5m forecast underspend (no change since last reported).**

   The Service area was reconfigured in January 2026 to amalgamate Transformation, Digital and Customer Experience (TDCE) with Resources, Law and Governance. The previous reported position was a £1.1m underspend for TDCE and £0.5m overspend for Resources, Law and Governance.

   The Legal Service continues to experience issues relating to retention & recruitment and an increase in the volume of appeals. The issues are expected to cause a forecast overspend of £1.0m due to the need for locum cover. This is offset by £0.4m underspend from contracts and team investments due to the Finance and Commercial Service redesign. The estimated on-going impact of

the pressure in Legal Services was considered through the Budget and Business Planning Process for 2026/27.

10. The final cost of the County Council elections in May 2025 was £1.8m. Unlike most years, there were no concurrent Police & Crime Commissioner or district elections, so the Council had to meet the full cost. As well as the increased postage prices, there has been an increased uptake in postal votes that result in higher than expected postage costs for the election. The budgeted funding assumed shared costs and a lower level of postal voting, so as a result there is a £0.9m overspend. Cabinet is recommended to approve a supplementary estimate request so that this is funded from general balances.

11. **Cross Cutting savings - -£5.6m shortfall arising from planned delivery timelines (deterioration of £1.1m since last reported).** Based on delivery timelines £2.0m savings relating to the organisational re-organisation and £3.4m related to contract and income optimisation savings are forecast to be undelivered in 2025/26.

12. **Budgets held centrally - £6.6m forecast underspend (increase of £0.5m since last report).**

    Additional forecast interest on balances of £7.5m is built into the forecast because interest rates have remained higher than expected during the financial year. £5.5m has been approved to be transferred to a new Budget Reserve to be used to support future budget processes. . The remaining £2.0m is offsetting service pressures.

    Following the approval of the Green Book pay award, a £4.3m underspend against the budget for pay inflation **(increase of £0.5m since last report)** has been released and is being used to manage the delay in the achievement of cross cutting savings relating to the redesign of services.

    The full £7.2m underspend against the contingency budget is also included in the forecast. .

Savings & Investments update

13. The presentation of savings and investments has been adjusted to focus on the savings and investments that need to be achieved in 2025/26. Any adjustments relating to savings and investments that were time bound and finished in 2024/25 have been removed from the targets and realigned into net pressures (£1.8m reversal of savings, and £7.0m investments). Children's Services budget movements include a further on-going savings risk adjustment of £4.7m in 2025/26. This is being treated as an offsetting negative saving so that the related savings can be tracked and monitored.

14. The savings target has been realigned, during the year, to include £1.3m prior year re-organisation savings. These savings were initially built into the 2024/25 budget but still need to the achieved. The revised overall target is amended to £28.7m.

15. Within the Provisional Outturn Report for 2024/25 considered by Cabinet in June 2025, one – off funding for £1.8m of investments was agreed to be carried forward to future years (currently phased as £1.6m for use in 2025/26 and £0.2m in future years). After taking account of new and 2024/25 carried over funding, there is funding for investments totalling £15.8m in 2025/26. £1.2m of the £2.0m one – off investment in proactive flood activity and rail development is expected to be held in the Budget Priorities reserve at year end for use in 2026/27.

16. Savings relating to contracts and staffing have currently been recentralised and will be moved back to services once they are achieved to align with the actual reductions in planned expenditure.

17. The achievement of the savings and investments will be reflected within the overall forecast. The current forecast is:

    £28.7m Savings: £6.8m undelivered. £5.6m cross cutting savings have been evaluated and £3.2m savings relating to service redesign and £2.5m related to contract and income optimisation savings are forecast to be undelivered in 2025/26. £2.3m of Children savings are expected to be unachieved due to the service capacity and demands. £1.0m Additional reductions in expenditure in Adults and Economy & Place relate to the use of grant funding and case reviews.

    £14.5m Investments: There are investments totalling £3.4m that are not being delivered. The underspends against this funding are built into the forecast to mitigate service area overspends.

Budget Updates

18. Appendix 2 highlights where service area budgets have moved since the budget was for 2025/26 was agreed by Council in February 2025. This mainly reflects the agreement of the 2025/26 pay awards, grant changes, plus service area updates and realignments. The organisation realignment has also been reflected along with the aggregation of the organisation redesign and contract cross cutting savings. All other virements are below £1m and have received delegated approval in accordance with the Virement Rules for 2025/26.

19. Supplementary estimate requests (which will increase the budget on a one – off basis funded by general balances) are recommended to be approved as follows:
    - £0.5m Bicester Motion fire incident investigation costs (paragraph 12)
    - £0.9m County Council elections in May 2025 (paragraph 14)
    - £2.2m deficit balance relating to Woodeaton Manor Special School which converted to academy status on 1 October 2025 (paragraph 32).

Debt Management

Corporate Debtors

20. The collection rate, based on invoice volumes up to 31 January 2026, met the target of 97%. The collection rate based on the value of invoices for the same period was 96.6%.

21. Debt requiring impairment is currently forecast to be £0.9m, £0.4m above the year-end target of £0.5m. The top five debt cases account for 60% of all bad debt. Disputed developer contributions with two developers equate to £0.3m, counsel advice is being sought. The remaining four cases are being progressed by the corporate income recovery team working with the services and legal.

22. Cabinet is recommended to write off two debtor balances totaling £0.05m where the debtors have entered liquidation.

Adult Social Care Debtors

23. The collection rate, based on invoice volumes up to 31 January 2026, met the target of 94%.

24. Debt requiring impairment is currently forecast to be £4.15m, £0.36m below the 2024/25 year-end balance of £4.51m.

25. Cabinet is recommended to write off 12 Adult Social Care contribution debts totaling £0.27m. Ten cases involve arrears that remained unpaid at the time of death, and the estates have since been confirmed as insolvent or having no assets. One case is under a debt relief order, and arrears cannot be recovered. One case involved an instalment plan that covered only part of the debt, with the remaining balance written off due to affordability.

Academy Conversion Deficit Balances

26. If a maintained school is forced to convert to academy status and has a revenue deficit balance, the deficit remains with the local authority.

27. Under Section 4.3.4 of the Financial Regulations, a request may be made for one – off funding from General Balances to manage any such deficits.

28. It is estimated that c£2.2m of general funding will required to offset the deficit balance relating to Woodeaton Manor Special School which converted to academy status on 1 October 2025. The finalised academy conversion statements are being completed and Cabinet is recommended to approve a supplementary estimate to support the cost of the estimated deficit. Any final adjustments will be set out in with the Provisional Outturn Report in June 2026.

Dedicated Schools Grant – High Needs Block

29. The statutory reporting requirements for the 2025/26 accounts require the closing deficit balance on Dedicated Schools Grant to be held within an unusable reserve. The existing statutory override was due to end on 31 March 2026 but the Government has now extended this until 31 March 2028.

30. The forecast overspend against High Needs DSG funding is a deficit of £74.0m This has increased by £3.3m since the last report and there is a risk this could increase further by the end of the year.

Summary of DSG Funding	2025/26 Budget £m	2025/26 Projected outturn £m	Variance at period 8 £m
Schools block	128.8	128.8	0.0
Central block	5.8	5.5	0.0
High Needs block	96.6	170.6	74.0
Early Years block	111.2	111.2	0.0
Total	342.4	416.4	74.0

31. Independent Non-Maintained Special School (INMSS) placements continue to be the main driver for the overspend. The service is continuing to meet the 2023 SEND Ofsted recommendations to reduce waiting time for Education, Health and Care Needs assessments but this causes more demand in a market with scarcity of supply of sufficient places. Special Schools and Academy places do not have sufficient capacity to meet need so if a pupil's needs can no longer be met by their mainstream setting, this requires either an Alternative Provision or INMSS placement.

32. 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 £92.3m as at 31 March 2025, to £166.5m at 31 March 2026.

33. Further information on how High Needs deficits up to the end of 2025/26 will be funded was set out in the Local Government Finance Settlement for 2026/27 and is explained further in a report elsewhere on the agenda. Grant funding will be provided for 90% of cumulative deficits up to 31 March 2026 subject to approval of a local SEND Reform Plan by the Department for Education (DfE). There is no information at this stage about what the arrangements are for 2026/27 and 2027/28.

Appendices:

Appendix 1 - 2025/26 Revenue Forecast as at 31 January 2026
Appendix 2 - Summary of 2025/26 Service Area budgets from the Budget Book to current reporting
Appendix 3 - Outline of Confirmed Government Grants and Business Rates funding update.
Appendix 4 - Reserves & General Balances
Appendix 5 Updates to Fees & Charges

Appendix 1 – Service Area forecast

Service	Cabinet Member	Director	Net Budget	Forecast	Forecast Variance	Last Reported (period 8)	Change
Adult Social Care	T Beard	K Fuller	£37.4m	£37.4m	£0.0m	£0.0m	£0.0m
Pooled Budgets (Adults Social Care and NHS)	T Beard	K Fuller	£222.5m	£230.0m	£7.5m	£4.5m	-£3.0m
Adult Services			£259.9m	£267.4m	£7.5m	£4.5m	-£3.0m
Education Services	S Gaul	L Lyons	£58.4m	£58.5m	£0.1m	£0.3m	£0.2m
Children's Social Care	S Gaul	L Lyons	£138.2m	£140.2m	£2.0m	£1.5m	-£0.5m
Safeguarding, Quality Assurance, Partnerships and Improvement	S Gaul	L Lyons	£6.6m	£5.5m	-£1.1m	-£0.6m	£0.5m
Children's Services Central Costs	S Gaul	L Lyons	£11.5m	£10.5m	-£0.9m	£0.1m	£1.0m
Schools	S Gaul	L Lyons	£0.2m	£0.2m	£0.0m	£0.0m	£0.0m
Adopt Thames Valley			£0.1m	£0.1m	£0.0m	£0.0m	£0.0m
Children's Services			£214.9m	£215.0m	£0.1m	£1.3m	£1.2m
Public Health	K Gregory	A Azher	£42.2m	£41.4m	-£0.9m	-£0.4m	£0.5m
Public Health Grant Income &	K Gregory	A Azher	-£37.1m	-£36.2m	£0.9m	£0.4m	-£0.5m
Libraries & Heritage	N Fawcett	A Azher	£8.9m	£8.9m	£0.0m	£0.0m	£0.0m
Total Public Health & Communities			£14.1m	£14.1m	-£0.0m	£0.0m	£0.0m
Transport & Property	A Gant	P Fermer	£1.8m	£1.5m	-£0.3m	-£0.3m	£0.0m
Countryside & Waste	J Roberts	P Fermer	£37.4m	£37.4m	£0.0m	£0.0m	£0.0m
Highways & Maintenance	A Gant	P Fermer	£20.2m	£20.3m	£0.1m	£0.1m	-£0.0m
Network Management	A Gant	P Fermer	-£5.2m	-£4.1m	£1.1m	£1.1m	-£0.0m
E&H Central Costs	A Gant	P Fermer	£1.0m	£1.0m	£0.0m	£0.0m	£0.0m
Total Environment & Highways			£55.1m	£56.0m	£0.9m	£0.9m	-£0.0m
Place Shaping & Future Economy	J Roberts	R Rogers	£18.4m	£18.6m	£0.2m	£0.0m	-£0.2m
Climate Action	J Roberts	R Rogers	£1.3m	£1.2m	-£0.1m	-£0.1m	-£0.0m
Innovate & Enterprise Oxfordshire	B Higgins	R Rogers	£0.5m	£0.5m	£0.0m	£0.0m	£0.0m
E&P Central Costs	J Roberts	R Rogers	£1.6m	£1.5m	-£0.1m	-£0.1m	-£0.0m
Total Economy & Place			£21.8m	£21.8m	-£0.0m	-£0.2m	-£0.2m
Fire & Rescue	J Hannaby	R	£30.2m	£30.9m	£0.7m	£0.8m	£0.1m
Emergency Planning	J Hannaby	R	£0.3m	£0.3m	£0.0m	£0.0m	£0.0m
Trading Standards	J Hannaby	R	£1.5m	£1.4m	-£0.1m	£0.0m	£0.1m
Total Fire & Rescue and Community Safety			£32.1m	£32.7m	£0.6m	£0.8m	£0.2m
HR & Cultural Change	N Fawcett	C	£5.6m	£5.5m	-£0.1m	£0.0m	£0.1m
Financial & Commercial Services	D Levy	I Dyson	£12.4m	£11.0m	-£1.3m	-£0.4m	£0.9m
Property & Assets	D Levy	V Kurzeja	£21.7m	£21.7m	£0.0m	£0.0m	£0.0m
Public Affairs, Policy &	L Leffman	S Wintergill	£6.4m	£6.4m	£0.0m	£0.0m	-£0.0m
Law & Governance	N Fawcett	A Bradley	£10.2m	£11.4m	£1.2m	£1.0m	-£0.2m
Corporate Services	L Leffman	L Baxter	£0.9m	£0.8m	-£0.1m	£0.0m	£0.1m
Transformation & Digital	D Levy /	L Tustian	£14.0m	£13.8m	-£0.2m	-£1.1m	-£0.9m
Total Resources and Law &			£71.2m	£70.6m	-£0.5m	-£0.5m	£0.0m
Corporate Savings	L Leffman	L Baxter	-£6.7m	-£1.1m	£5.6m	£4.5m	-£1.1m
Service Areas position			**£662.3m**	**£676.5m**	**£14.1m**	**£11.3m**	**-£2.8m**
Budgets held centrally	D Levy	L Baxter	-£13.9m	-£27.7m	-£13.7m	-£13.3m	£0.4m
Corporate Funding	D Levy	L Baxter	-£648.4m	-£648.4m	£0.0m	£0.0m	£0.0m
Overall			**-£0.0m**	**£0.4m**	**£0.4m**	**-£2.0m**	**-£2.4m**

Appendix 2 - Summary of 2025/26 Service Area budgets from the Budget Book to current reporting

Budgeted		Original Budget (Council Feb 2025)	From Feb – May 2025	Jun – Aug	Sept - Nov	Dec - Jan	Movements	Reported Budget
Adult Services	**AS**	**£254.6m**	-£1.3m	£6.8m	-£0.3m	£0.0m	£5.3m	£259.9m
Children's Services	**CS**	**£216.8m**	-£6.0m	£1.7m	£1.9m	£0.4m	-£1.9m	£214.9m
Public Health & Communities	**PH**	**£12.9m**	£0.6m	£0.1m	£0.3m	£0.1m	£1.2m	£14.1m
Environment & Highways	**E&H**	**£53.1m**	-£0.3m	£1.7m	£0.5m	£0.0m	£2.0m	£55.1m
Economy and Place	**E&P**	**£20.9m**	£0.1m	£0.3m	£0.5m	£0.0m	£0.9m	£21.8m
Fire & Rescue Service and Community Safety	**FRS**	**£31.0m**	-£0.5m	£0.5m	£1.1m	£0.0m	£1.1m	£32.1m
Resources and Law & Governance	**RLG**	**£64.9m**	-£3.9m	-£7.5m	£3.6m	£7.2m	-£0.4m	£64.5m
Transformation, Digital & Customer	**TDCE**	**£3.8m**	£3.4m	£0.0m	£0.2m	-£7.2m	-£3.8m	£0.0m
Total service areas	**SA**	**£658.0m**	-£7.9m	£3.7m	£8.0m	£0.5m	£4.4m	£662.4m
Budgets held centrally	**BC**	**-£11.7m**	£7.9m	-£1.6m	-£8.0m	-£0.5m	-£2.2m	-£13.9m
Corporate Funding		**-£646.3m**	£0.0m	-£2.2m	£0.0m	£0.0m	-£2.2m	-£648.4m
Overall		**£0.0m**	£0.0m	£0.0m	£0.0m	£0.0m	£0.0m	£0.0m

	AS	CS	E&H	E&P	PH	FRS	RLG	TDCE	SA	SM	Total
Pay Virement											
Pay inflation remove initial estimate and await agreement	-£0.9m	-£1.9m	-£0.3m	-£0.3m	£0.0m	-£1.0m	-£1.2m	-£0.1m	-£5.7m	£5.7m	£0.0m
Reverse NI Estimate	-£0.8m	-£1.2m	-£0.4m	£0.0m	-£0.1m	-£0.5m	-£0.8m	-£0.1m	-£3.9m	£3.9m	£0.0m
NI Uplift	£0.9m	£1.1m	£0.3m	£0.2m	£0.2m	£0.1m	£0.9m	£0.1m	£3.8m	-£3.8m	£0.0m
NI uplifts Social Care	£3.5m	£0.0m	£0.0m	£0.0m	£0.0m	£0.0m	£0.0m	£0.0m	£3.5m	-£3.5m	£0.0m
Grey Book Pay award	£0.0m	£0.0m	£0.0m	£0.0m	£0.0m	£0.7m	£0.0m	£0.0m	£0.7m	-£0.7m	£0.0m
Soulbury Pay award	£0.0m	£0.0m	£0.0m	£0.0m	£0.0m	£0.0m	£0.0m	£0.0m	£0.0m	-£0.0m	£0.0m
Gold Book Pay Award	£0.0m	£0.0m	£0.0m	£0.0m	£0.0m	£0.0m	£0.0m	£0.0m	£0.0m	-£0.0m	£0.0m
Green Book Pay Award	£1.4m	£2.4m	£0.5m	£0.4m	£0.3m	£0.2m	£2.0m	£0.0m	£7.3m	-£7.3m	£0.0m
Member Allowance increase due to election	£0.0m	£0.0m	£0.0m	£0.0m	£0.0m	£0.0m	£0.2m	£0.0m	£0.2m	-£0.2m	£0.0m
On-call Firefighters T&C changes staff retainer scheme	£0.0m	£0.0m	£0.0m	£0.0m	£0.0m	£0.9m	£0.0m	£0.0m	£0.9m	-£0.9m	£0.0m

	AS	CS	E&H	E&P	PH	FRS	RLG	TDCE	SA	SM	Total

Responsibilities alignment to current structure											
Realignment of Budget holders	-£0.0m	£0.8m	-£0.1m	£0.4m	£0.1m	£0.0m	-£3.1m	£1.9m	£0.0m	-£0.0m	£0.0m
Clarification of responsibilities	-£0.1m	-£0.0m	£0.0m	-£0.6m	£0.0m	-£0.0m	-£0.1m	£0.0m	-£0.7m	£0.7m	£0.0m
Transfer Tree budget from Property to Highways £207k	£0.0m	£0.0m	£0.2m	£0.0m	£0.0m	£0.0m	-£0.2m	£0.0m	£0.0m	£0.0m	£0.0m
Align Savings to correct cost centres	-£0.4m	-£0.3m	£0.0m	£0.0m	£0.6m	£0.0m	£0.1m	£0.0m	-£0.0m	£0.0m	£0.0m
Senior Leadership restructure	£0.0m	£0.0m	£0.0m	£0.0m	£0.0m	£0.0m	£7.2m	-£7.2m	£0.0m	£0.0m	£0.0m
Saving & Investment updates											
Distribution of 2024/25 reorganisation savings	-£0.1m	-£0.9m	-£0.3m	£0.1m	£0.0m	£0.0m	-£0.3m	£1.5m	-£0.0m	£0.0m	£0.0m
Corp IT Savings to Transformation Reserve	£0.0m	£0.0m	£0.0m	£0.0m	£0.0m	£0.0m	£0.0m	£0.0m	£0.0m	£0.0m	£0.0m
2024/25 Investments carry forward	£0.5m	£0.0m	£0.0m	£0.5m	£0.1m	£0.0m	£0.0m	£0.0m	£1.1m	-£1.1m	£0.0m
Cross cutting saving consolidation	£1.3m	£1.3m	£2.0m	£0.1m	£0.0m	£0.5m	-£5.3m	£0.0m	£0.0m	£0.0m	£0.0m
Other adjustments											
Accumulation of small adjustments	£0.0m	£0.0m	£0.0m	-£0.0m	£0.0m	£0.0m	-£0.0m	£0.0m	£0.0m	-£0.0m	£0.0m
Funding updates											
Update Government Grant Funding	£0.1m	£0.0m	£0.0m	£0.1m	£0.0m	£0.0m	£0.0m	£0.0m	£0.2m	-£0.2m	£0.0m
Removing unringfenced grant treatment to align to new Children's grants	£0.0m	-£3.6m	£0.0m	£0.0m	£0.0m	£0.0m	£0.0m	£0.0m	-£3.6m	£3.6m	£0.0m
Removal of the Fire funding	£0.0m	£0.0m	£0.0m	£0.0m	£0.0m	£0.0m	£0.0m	£0.0m	£0.0m	-£0.0m	£0.0m
Drawdown of Reserves	£0.0m	£0.4m	£0.0m	£0.0m	£0.0m	£0.0m	£0.0m	£0.0m	£0.4m	-£0.4m	£0.0m
Update on Corporate Funding	£0.0m	£0.0m	£0.0m	£0.0m	£0.0m	£0.0m	£0.0m	£0.0m	£0.0m	£0.0m	£0.0m
Total Movements	£5.2m	-£1.8m	£2.0m	£0.9m	£1.2m	£1.1m	-£0.4m	-£3.8m	£4.4m	-£4.4m	£0.0m

Further details of specific virements are available on request.

Appendix 3 - Confirmed Government Grants and Business Rates funding update

Ringfenced	Issued By	Service Areas	Budget Book 2025/26	Updates from Grant letters	Transfers (unring to ring)	In year adjustments / Updated allocations	Latest Allocation
			£000	£000	£000	£000	£000
R	DHSC	Improved Better Care Fund	13,207				13,207
R	DHSC	Adult Social Care Market Sustainability and Improvement Fund	10,026				10,026
R	DHSC	SE ADASS			26		26
		Adult Services	**23,233**	**0**	**26**	**0**	**23,259**
R	DfE	Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) - Schools Block	128,827	0			128,827
R	DfE	Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) - Central Block	5,821	-42			5,779
R	DfE	Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) - Early Years	108,620	2,571			111,190
R	DfE	Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) - High Needs	98,158	-1,505			96,653
		Subtotal DSG Grants	**341,426**	**1,024**	**0**		**342,449**
R	DfE	Pupil Premium	8,194	94			8,288
R	DfE	Sixth Form Funding and Threshold	371	0			371
R	DfE	PE and Sport Grant	2,217	0			2,217
R	DfE	Universal Infant Free School Meals	4,047	0			4,047
R	DfE	Teacher's Pension Grant	10	0			10
		Subtotal School Grants	**14,839**	**94**	**0**		**14,933**
R	AC	Music Service	844	0			844
R	YJB	Youth Justice Grant	0	12			725
R	HO	Asylum (UASC and Post 18)	713	0			4,636
R	YJB	Remand Framework	4,636	0			68
R	DfE	Holiday Activities and Food Programme	71	0		-3	1,558
R	DfE	Adoption Support Fund	0	1,226		1,558	899
R	DfE	Family Group Conferences	0	124		-327	124
R	YJB	Turnaround Programme	0	115			115
R	HO	Child Decision Making Pilots (NRM)	0	45			45
R	MHCLG	Children's Social Care Prevention Grant	0	1,530			1,530
R	MHCLG	Children & Families Grant	0	3,324			3,324
		Subtotal Other Children's Services Grants	**6,264**	**6,374**	**0**	**1,228**	**13,867**
		TOTAL CHILDREN'S SERVICES	**362,529**	**7,492**	**0**	**1,228**	**371,249**
R	DHSC	Public Health Grant	34,413	2,685			37,098
R	DHSC	Local Stop Smoking Grant	795	-17			778
R	MHCLG	Homes for Ukraine	0	0			0
		TOTAL PUBLIC HEALTH & COMMUNITIES	**35,208**	**2,668**	**0**	**0**	**37,876**

Ringfenced	Issued By	Service Areas	Budget Book 2025/26	Updates from Grant letters	Transfers (unring to ring)	In year adjustments / Updated allocations	Latest Allocation
			£000	£000	£000	£000	£000
R	DEFRA	Natural England	227				227
R	H&GD	PMO	58				58
		TOTAL ENVIRONMENT & HIGHWAYS	**284**	**0**	**0**		**284**
R	MHCLG	LEP	615				615
R	DBT	Oxford Innovation Business Support	205				205
R	ATE	Capability & Ambition Fund	125				125
R	DfT	Future Economy				100	100
R	DfT	Bus Service Improvement Grant	795				795
R	DfT	Bus Service Improvement Plan	3,785				3,785
		TOTAL ECONOMY & PLACE	**5,525**	**0**	**0**	**100**	**5,625**
R	MHCLG	Fire Fighter's Pension Fund Grant	1,061	-48			1,014
R	MHCLG	Fire Fighter's Pension Fund Admin Grant	75	-75			0
R	MHCLG	Fire Protection Uplift Grant	252	0			252
R	MHCLG	Fire Fighter's New Dimensions Grant	39	0			39
		TOTAL FIRE & RESCUE and COMMUNITY SAFETY	**1,427**	**-122**	**0**	**0**	**1,305**
U	MHCLG	New Homes Bonus	1,127	0			1,127
U	DfE	Local Reform & Community Voices Grant	328	0			328
U	DfE	Social Care in Prisons Grant	183	0			183
U	DfE	War Pensions Disregard Grant	4	108			112
U	MHCLG	Social Care Support Grant (including Independent Living Fund)	48,596	52			48,648
U	HO	Firelink	44	-44			0
U	OHID	Drug & Alcohol Treatment, Recovery & Improvement Grant (note 2)	2,978	-61			2,917
U	MHCLG	Domestic Abuse Duty Grant	1,482	0			1,482
U	OHID	Individual Placement and Support in community drug and alcohol treatment	228	11			239
U	DfE	Supporting Families - previously Troubled Families	1,141	-1,119			22
U	DfE	Implementation of Supported Accommodation Reforms	990	-990			0
U	MHCLG	Children's Social Care Prevention Grant	1,530	-1,530			0
U	MHCLG	Employers National Insurance compensation	3,721				4,428
U	DfE	Rough Sleeper Grant	0	95			95
	RSG	Extended Travel transferred to RSG	-707	708			0
		Transfer to General balance contribution					0
		Subtotal Un-ringfenced grants	**61,643**	**-2,768**	**0**	**0**	**59,582**

Ringfenced	Issued By	Service Areas	Budget Book 2025/26	Updates from Grant letters	Transfers (unring to ring)	In year adjustments / Updated allocations	Latest Allocation
			£000	£000	£000	£000	£000
U	MHCLG	Revenue Support Grant (RSG)	2,489	0			2,489
		Business Rates					
B		Business Rates (Direct share)	39,349	705			40,054
B		Business Rates S31 Grant Top-Up	42,971	-311			42,660
B		Section 31 Grant for Business Rate Compensation	18,900	1,503			20,403
		Council Tax					
C		2025/26 Council Tax	533,328				533,328
C		Prior year Collection fund & Carer Leavers discount	9,220	264			9,484
		Subtotal Corporate Funding	**646,257**	**2,161**	**0**	**0**	**648,418**
		TOTAL Budget held centrally	**707,900**	**-607**	**0**	**0**	**708,000**
		Total All Funding	**1,136,106**	**9,430**	**0**	**1,254**	**1,147,598**
Comprising of:							
R		Ringfenced	428,206	10,037	0	1,254	439,598
U		Un-ringfenced	64,839	-3,476	0	0	62,071
		Government Grants	493,045	6,562	0	1,254	501,669
B		Business Rates	101,220	1,897	0	0	103,117
C		Council Tax	542,548	264	0	0	542,812
issued by:							
	DfE	Department for Education	358,911	562	0	1,231	360,703
	MHCLG	Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government	60,987	3,254	0	0	64,948
	DHSC	Department of Health & Social Care	58,441	2,668	0	26	61,135
	YJB	Youth Justice Board	4,636	126	0	-3	907
	DfT	Department for Transport	4,580	0	0	0	4,680
	OHID	Office for Health Improvement and Disparities	3,205	-49	0	0	3,156
	AC	Arts Council	844	0	0	0	844
	HO	Home Office	757	1	0	0	4,681
	DEFRA	Department of Environment, Food and Rural Affairs	227	0	0	0	227
	DBT	Department for Business and Trade	205	0	0	0	205
	ATE	Active Travel England	125	0	0	0	125
	H&GD	Housing & Growth Deal	58	0	0	0	58
		Total All Grants by issuer	493,852	6,562	0	1,254	501,669

Annex 4 – Reserves & General Balances

Reserves	Actual Balance at 31 March 2025	Movement	Forecast Balance at 31 March 2026
Revenue Grants Unapplied			
Grants and Contributions reserve	£30.3m	-£4.6m	£25.7m
COVID-19 reserve	£3.8m	-£3.8m	£0.0m
Government Initiatives reserve	£6.6m	-£1.2m	£5.3m
Subtotal	**£40.7m**	**-£9.6m**	**£31.0m**
Corporate Priorities			
Budget Priorities reserve	£12.5m	-£6.4m	£6.1m
Local Government Reorganisation reserve	£10.0m	-£1.3m	£8.7m
Transformation reserve	£7.5m	£2.9m	£10.3m
Commercial Pump Priming reserve	£2.0m	-£0.2m	£1.8m
Zero Emissions Zone	£1.4m	£0.1m	£1.5m
Green Financing reserve	£0.9m	£0.0m	£0.9m
Subtotal	**£34.2m**	**-£4.9m**	**£29.3m**
Funding for Risk			
Demographic Risk Reserve/ High Needs DSG Deficit Risk Reserve	£21.0m	£4.0m	£25.0m
Insurance reserve	£10.6m	£0.0m	£10.6m
Collection Fund Risk reserve	£8.1m	-£2.1m	£6.0m
Budget Reserve	£0.0m	£5.5m	£5.5m
IFRS 9 (Value of Treasury Management Pooled Funds)	£4.0m	£0.0m	£4.0m
Redundancy reserve	£4.1m	£1.2m	£5.3m
Council Elections	£0.7m	-£0.7m	£0.0m
Trading Accounts	£0.2m	-£0.0m	£0.1m
Subtotal	**£48.6m**	**£8.8m**	**£57.5m**
Capital & Equipment			
Capital & Prudential Borrowing reserves	£109.6m	-£6.5m	£103.2m
Vehicle and Equipment reserve	£3.2m	-£0.2m	£3.0m
Investment Pump Priming reserve	£0.1m	-£2.2m	-£2.1m
Subtotal	**£113.0m**	**-£8.9m**	**£104.1m**
Other reserves			
Partnership reserves	£1.7m	-£0.1m	£1.6m
On Street Car Parking reserve	£5.3m	-£2.0m	£3.4m
Subtotal	**£7.1m**	**-£2.1m**	**£5.0m**
Unusable			
Schools' reserves	£10.7m	-£0.9m	£9.8m
Total Earmarked reserves	**£254.4m**	**-£17.6m**	**£236.7m**

Reserves	Balance at 31 March 2025	Movement	Balance at 31 March 2026
by Service:			
Adult Services	£6.1m	-£5.9m	£0.7m
Children's Services	£20.4m	-£3.6m	£16.8m
Public Health & Communities	£14.7m	-£4.3m	£10.4m
Environment & Highways	£9.3m	£1.3m	£10.6m
Economy & Place	£8.6m	-£0.3m	£8.4m
Fire & Rescue and Community Safety	£3.6m	-£0.6m	£3.0m
Resources and Law & Governance	£2.1m	£1.1m	£13.0m
Transformation, Digital & Customer Experience	£8.3m	£0.0m	£0.0m
Service Total	£73.1m	-£12.3m	£62.8m
Budgets held Centrally	£181.3m	-£5.3m	£173.9m
Total Earmarked reserves	£254.4m	-£17.6m	£236.7m

Note: Recommendation for new budget equalisation reserve not included.

General Balances		
General Balances as at 31 March 2025 (Statement of Accounts)	£45.3m	
Less budgeted use to increase funding for transformation and redundancy costs included as part of the Reserves and General Balances Policy Statement for 2025/26	-£10.8m	
Add: Planned contributions (February 2025)	£2.7m	
Less approved as part of 2024/25 Provisional Outturn Report:		
- 2025/26 revenue costs - Innovate and BIPC	-£0.7m	
General Balances as 31 March 2025		**£36.5m**
Add/less:		
Add additional un-ringfenced grant	£0.8m	
Less Supplementary Estimate Requests:		
- Woodeaton Manor School	-£2.2m	
- Bicester Motion	-£0.5m	
- Additional County Council election costs	-£0.9m	
Less 2025/26 forecast overspend	-£0.4m	£3.2m
General Balances forecast as at 31 January 2026		**£33.3m**
Risk assessed level of balances for 2025/26		£30.2m
Surplus balances compared to risk assessed level for 2025/26		£3.1m

Appendix 5 – Fees & Charges updates

The proposed amendments to the fees below are to ensure that there is alignment, within all the city edge Park & Rides (P&D), of fees being charged by both Oxford City Council and Oxfordshire County Council. The Henley on-street Pay and Display (P&D) charge is also proposed to be aligned with the Abingdon P&D charge. Finally, the Parking Permit fees have been round to the nearest £1, to ease customer administration.

All changes should be from 1 April 2026.

			Approved by Cabinet on 27.01.26		Revised Proposed		
Service area	Charge description	Unit	Charge **excl** VAT 26/27	Charge **incl** VAT 26/27	Charge **excl** VAT 26/27	Charge **incl** VAT 26/27	Reason for the proposed revision
On-Street Parking - Pay and Display	Henley 8am-6pm (excl. Sundays, B Hols.)	2 hours (the maximum)	£2.60	£2.60	£2.80	£2.80	This is in line with changes in the Abingdon P&D price changes.
Park and Ride	Park and Ride Car Park charges - Thornhill & Water Eaton only	16-24 hours	£5.00	£5.00	£4.50	£4.50	To align with Oxford City charges – so same price for all standard parking at all edge of city P&Rs
Park and Ride	Park and Ride Car Park charges - Thornhill & Water Eaton only	24-48 hours	£9.00	£9.00	£8.50	£8.50	
Park and Ride	Park and Ride Car Park charges - Thornhill & Water Eaton only	48 – 72 hours	£13.00	£13.00	£12.50	£12.50	

			Approved by Cabinet on 27.01.26		Revised Proposed		
Service area	Charge description	Unit	Charge **excl** VAT 26/27	Charge **incl** VAT 26/27	Charge **excl** VAT 26/27	Charge **incl** VAT 26/27	Reason for the proposed revision
Park and Ride	Park and Ride Car Park charges - Thornhill & Water Eaton only	Annual	£400.00	£400.00	£380.00	£380.00	To align with Oxford City charges – so same price for all standard parking at all edge of city P&Rs. This is for daily parking within a given month and not for longer stay parking. 72-hour max parking period would be retained.
Park and Ride	Park and Ride Car Park charges - Thornhill & Water Eaton only	Monthly	£40.00	£40.00	£45.00	£45.00	
Park and Ride	Park and Ride Car Park charges - Thornhill & Water Eaton only	Quarterly	£110.00	£110.00	£115.00	£115.00	
Parking Permits	Oxford (per annum)	Oxford residents (excl. Kassam stadium)1st & 2nd car	£83.70	£83.70	£84.00	£84.00	Rounded to the nearest £1.
Parking Permits	Oxford (per annum)	Oxford residents (excl. Kassam stadium) 3rd car	£168.25	£161.00	£168.00	£168.00	
Parking Permits	Oxford (per annum)	Oxford residents (excl. Kassam stadium) 4th car	£287.38	£275.00	£287.00	£287.00	

CABINET – 17 MARCH 2026

Update on High Needs Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) Funding and Deficits

Report by the Deputy Chief Executive (S151 Officer)

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Cabinet is RECOMMENDED to:

a) Note the update on the treatment of High Needs DSG Deficits up to 31 March 2026 set out in the Final Local Government Finance Settlement for 2026/27.
b) Note the changes to High Needs Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) funding and approve the mid and worst case forecast deficits for 2026/27 (paragraph 21 and Table 1).
c) Note the funding that is planned to be available to meet the residual element that the council will need to fund following the end of the statutory override.

Executive Summary

2. This report explains the arrangements for funding High Needs Dedicated Schools Grant deficits up to the end of 2025/26 as set out by the Government as part of the Final Local Government Finance Settlement for 2026/27.

3. It provides an update on the estimated share of the 2025/26 deficit that will need to be funded by Oxfordshire County Council, or relevant council(s), subject to Local Government Reform, when the statutory over-ride ends on 1 April 2028. While the government has not provided information about funding beyond 2025/26 at this time, the report sets out scenarios showing the estimated share of forecast deficits for 2026/27 and 2027/28 that may need to be funded locally and how those compare to existing planned funding.

4. The report also sets out a range of forecast deficits that will be used as the basis for monitoring in the Business Management & Monitoring Reports in 2026/27.

Background

5. In line with the CIPFA Code of Practice, and the statutory over-ride, which is in place until 31 March 2028, deficits on High Needs on Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) have been held in an unusable reserve since 2020/21. The forecast deficit of £74.0m in 2025/26 will increase the total accumulated negative balance for High Needs held in this reserve to £166.4m at 31 March 2026.

6. Currently the Local Authorities (Capital Finance and Accounting) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2020, formalise the accounting treatment of the High Needs deficit into an unusable reserve, and explicitly state that 'Local authorities must not charge DSG deficits to a revenue account'.

7. Cash balances for the year are forecast to be lower than they otherwise would be because of negative Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) balances relating to High Needs. Because this expenditure is currently unfunded it is suppressing the amount of cash balances held by the council. This will have an estimated opportunity cost of £6.66m in unearned interest during 2025/26.

8. The consultation response to the Provisional Settlement sets out that the Government recognises that the current SEND system is not working for children or families, nor is it working for local authorities who continue to face significant financial pressures. The Schools White Paper "Every Child Achieving" published on 23 February 2026 outlines the government's vision for reforming the special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) system. The consultation is open until 18 May 2026.

Approach to Funding Deficits up to 31 March 2026

9. As part of the Final Local Government Finance Settlement for 2026/27, published on 9 February 2026, the Government set out that they will: [1]

   "**resolve 90% of local authorities' DSG High Needs deficits accrued to the end of 2025/26**".

10. All local authorities with a SEND deficit will be eligible to receive grant funding subject to submitting and securing the Department for Education's (DfE) approval of a **local SEND reform plan**.

11. Phase one of the support will address historic deficits up to the end of 2025/26. In 2026/27 all local authorities with a SEND Deficit will be eligible to receive a High Needs Stability Grant (HNSG) covering 90% of their DSG deficit accrued up until March 2026.

12. Grant allocations will be paid by DfE as a Section 31 grant from autumn 2026. Exact payment timings will depend on local authorities meeting local SEND reform plans conditions, but subject to meeting conditions, all payments will be made in the 2026/27 financial year. The remaining 10% will need to be met by the council.

13. To determine the allocation of the High Needs Stability Grant (HNSG) that an individual local authority will receive, DfE and MHCLG will look at the full range of sources available on local authority expenditure to determine the total Dedicated Schools Grant deficit that is eligible for a grant.

[1] Explanatory note on the government's approach Dedicated Schools Grant deficits - GOV.UK

14. This will include comparing data that the council has submitted in the Section 251 return to the DfE that sets out spending on education and young people's services[2], draft and published Dedicated Schools Grant notes, DSG S151 assurance sign off, Revenue Outturn data and published accounts. Where these accounts differ, DfE will engage with local authorities directly to determine the reasoning, but if a satisfactory explanation is not provided the lowest total DSG deficit figure will be used to calculate the allocation.

15. The HNSG must be used to "extinguish" DSG deficits. Payments will only be paid once the local authority has developed, submitted and agreed a local SEND reform plan with the DfE. These plans are expected to be developed collaboratively with schools, health, early years settings and post-16 providers. Local authorities will be expected to set out a clear pathway towards an inclusive system in line with the wider vision for SEND reform. The Department for Education will commission local area partnerships to develop these plans. Timeframes for this work are yet to be communicated.

16. Best practice from previous programmes— including Safety Valve and Delivering Better Value— will be shared to support local authorities to develop local plans. Additionally, the government will provide each local area with advisers to help ensure that spending is effective, efficient, and focused on improving outcomes for children and young people.

17. Where the Statutory Override prevents immediate application of the grant to the DSG deficit, the authority will need to:

- hold the grant in an appropriate reserve; and
- apply the grant only to reduce the DSG deficit recognised as at 31 March 2026 when the Statutory Override ceases to have effect.

18. Assuming the HNSG funding was received in autumn 2026 it is estimated that interest on cash balances would be £1.5m - £3.0m higher in 2026/27 depending on the interest rate on Treasury Management activities achievable at that time.

Government Approach to Funding Deficits After 31 March 2026

19. There are currently no further details provided on the second or third phases of the scheme to deal with deficits which accumulate in 2026/27 and 2027/28, other than to say that the Government will confirm the detail on further support before the end of the statutory override in March 2028.

20. From 2028/29, SEND spending will be covered by the overall government DEL budget, meaning local authorities will not be expected to fund future SEND costs from general funds, once the Statutory Override ends at the end of

[2] Local authorities are required, under section 251 of the Apprenticeships, Skills, Children and Learning Act 2009, to prepare and submit an education and children and young people's services budget statement to the Secretary of State for Education.

2027/28. At this stage there is no information about how this will operate in practice.

Dedicated Schools Grant and High Needs Forecast

21. On 17 December 2025, the Department for Education (DfE) confirmed the 2026/27 High Needs Block Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) allocation for Oxfordshire will be £125.5m before recoupment and £102.0m after recoupment.

22. Expenditure on High Needs DSG funded services has been higher than the available funding since 2020/21 with deficits continuing to grow mainly because of multiple years of demand growth rates higher than available funding rates.

23. During 2025/26 exponential growth in the number of EHCPs, and their cost, in comparison to the grant funding allocated by Government, means the forecast deficit has continued to grow despite action taken through the Deficit Management Plan agreed with the Department for Education (DfE).

24. The material mitigations within the Deficit Management Plan are mainly in relation to statutory sufficiency duties, with planned new special schools and expansion of places scheduled 2026/27 to 2029/30 and new Special Educational Needs (SEN) Units/ Resource Bases. Other mitigations include ensuring equity of funding based on pupils needs and reviewing general efficiencies through service reviews.

25. The forecast as at the end of January 2026 is for a deficit of £74.0m in 2025/26. This would increase the cumulative negative High Needs DSG balance held in reserves to £166.4m at 31 March 2026.

26. Continued increases in demand and inflationary pressures are proving to be considerably more significant than achievable reductions in expenditure which can be achieved through efficiencies and demand management. There is a significant risk that deficits will continue to increase in 2026/27. Table 1 sets out estimated mid and worst case forecast deficits for 2026/27 and 2027/28 and the cumulative deficit at the end of each year for each of those scenarios.

Table 1: Estimated mid and worst Case forecast High Needs DSG in year and cumulative deficits

	2026/27 £m	2027/28 £m
Mid case forecast in year deficit	83.7	106.0
Worst case forecast in year deficit	96.1	142.7
Mid case cumulative deficit	250.2	356.2
Worst case cumulative deficit	262.5	405.2

27. Cabinet are recommended to approve the mid and worst case in year deficits as the basis for monitoring in 2026/27.

Planned Funding for the Residual 10% Element for Phase 1 and Potential Scenarios for Phase 2 and 3

28. The Provisional Local Government Finance Settlement for 2026/27 set out an expectation that local authorities would be required to meet in part some of the historic deficit. On that basis the 2026/27 budget includes an increase in the contribution to the High Needs DSG Deficit Risk Reserve from £4m in 2025/26 to £8m per annum from 2026/27 onwards. Based on these budgeted contributions there would be £41.0m available in the reserve by 31 March 2028.

29. The £25.0m funding that will be held in the reserve as at 31 March 2026 will be sufficient to meet the estimated £16.6m residual element of the Phase 1 deficit up to 31 March 2026. A further £8.0m will be added to the reserve in each of 2026/27 and 2027/28 based on the budget and Medium Term Financial Strategy agreed in February 2026. This will increase the estimated total planned funding for Phase 2 and 3 to £24.4m by 31 March 2028.

30. Table 2, on the next page, combines different assumptions for indicative levels of grant funding with the mid and worst case deficits in Table 1 and compares the residual element that might need to be funded to the estimated planned funding.

31. If the council needed to fund 10% of the deficit in both of those years the current planned funding of £24.4m would be sufficient to meet the mid case (£19.0m) or worst case (£23.9m) residual element. The indicative amount that the council would need to fund assuming a higher residual element in both years is likely to be higher than the existing planned funding. The impact of a requirement to fund 20%, say, is also shown in the table for illustrative purposes.

Table 2: Phase 2 and 3: Indicative Residual Amounts Requiring Funding

	2026/27 £m	2027/28 £m	Total £m	Variation to Planned Funding £m
Mid case forecast in year deficit	83.7	106.0	189.7	
Worst case forecast in year deficit	96.1	142.7	238.8	
Mid case forecast assuming 10% needs to be funded by the council			19.0	-5.4
Worst case forecast assuming 10% needs to be funded by the council			23.9	-0.5
Mid case forecast assuming 20% needs to be funded by the council			38.0	13.6
Worst case forecast assuming 20% needs to be funded by the council			47.8	23.4

32. The level of funding planned to be held in the reserve by 31 March 2028 to meet the residual share will need to be considered through the Budget & Business Planning process for 2027/28, taking account of the actual level of expenditure in 2026/27.

Equality and Inclusion Implications

33. The Equality Act 2010 imposes a duty on local authorities that, when making decisions of a strategic nature, decision makers must exercise 'due regard to the need to eliminate unlawful discrimination… advance equality of opportunity… and foster good relations.'

34. The Equality Act 2010 requires the Council, when making strategic financial decisions, to give due regard to the need to eliminate discrimination, advance equality of opportunity, and foster good relations. High Needs Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) funding is directed towards children and young people with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND), for whom disability is a protected characteristic. The financial position outlined in this report therefore has inherent equality relevance.

35. This report does not propose specific changes to services or provision; however, the scale of the High Needs deficit and the requirement for future actions to secure sustainability create a context where decisions may indirectly affect disabled children, young people, and their families. Any future proposals arising from deficit management, SEND reform planning, or changes to provision must be subject to robust Equality Impact Assessments (EIAs), including consideration of cumulative impacts and intersectional vulnerabilities.

36. The Government's requirement for a local SEND reform plan offers opportunities to improve inclusion and outcomes, but financial constraints may also limit flexibility and pose risks to equitable access if not carefully managed. Monitoring of impacts on protected groups will therefore need to be ongoing, with mitigating actions embedded in programme design and implementation.

37. At this stage, noting the updated funding arrangements and associated financial risks does not in itself create direct equality impacts. However, the context set out in this report reinforces the importance of maintaining strong governance around EIAs for any subsequent decisions affecting SEND services, resource allocation, or provision.

Sustainability Implications

38. The Climate Action Framework sets the council's commitment to tackling the climate emergency which is underpinned by the Council's priority to put action to address the climate emergency at the heart of our work.

39. This report does not impact on climate sustainability.

Staff Implications

40. There are no staffing implications arising from this report.

Financial Implications

41. While the announcement about the arrangements for funding the existing deficit means there is more clarity about the impact on the council, there is now a requirement to fund the residual element of the deficit.

42. Funding of £41m in the High Needs DSG Risk Reserve is expected to be available for this purpose by 31 March 2028. Approximately £17m will be required to be funded by the council for the deficit to 31 March 2026. However, with the overspend escalating and expected to be £70.7m in 2025/26, and potentially higher in future years, further funding may be needed by 31 March 2028 to ensure there is sufficient in the reserve by the time the statutory override ends and/or to fund investments needed to help support future service provision.

Comments checked by:

Kathy Wilcox, Head of Corporate Finance

Legal Implications

43. There are no legal implications arising directly from the report. However, the Cabinet is requested to note various aspects of the report in the context that

High needs funding is provided to the council through the high needs block of the dedicated schools grant (DSG), enabling it to meet its statutory duties under the Children and Families Act 2014 and the Education Act 1996. The Council must spend that funding in line with the associated DSG: conditions of grant and The School and Early Years Finance (England) Regulations 2026. The Department for Education updated the High needs funding: 2026 to 2027 operational guide on 11 February 2026.

Comments checked by:

Anita Bradley, Director of Law & Governance and Monitoring Officer

Lorna Baxter, Deputy Chief Executive (S151 Officer)

Contact Officers: Kathy Wilcox, Head of Corporate Finance
Jane Billington, Strategic Finance Business Partner

March 2026

CABINET – 17 MARCH 2026

CAPITAL PROGRAMME UPDATE AND MONITORING REPORT

Report by the Deputy Chief Executive (Section 151 Officer)

Recommendations

1. **Cabinet is RECOMMENDED to:**

   a. Note the capital monitoring position for 2025/26 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.

Additions to the Capital Programme

   c. Approve the inclusion of Milton Heights Bridge into the capital programme, with a budget of £8.608m, to be funded from a variety of funding sources. (see paragraph 65-66)

Executive Summary

2. The Strategic Plan sets out how the council will lead positive change by working in partnership to make Oxfordshire a greener, fairer, and healthier county.

3. The Capital and Investment Strategy agreed by Council in February 2026 articulates how capital investment will help achieve this vision and the council's nine priorities. In addition, the capital programme also supports statutory functions such as school placements and urgent health and safety capital maintenance works.

4. The ten-year Capital Programme sets out how the council will use capital expenditure to deliver these priorities. The Capital Programme is updated quarterly and fully refreshed annually as part of the Budget and Business Planning Process to ensure that it remains aligned to the latest priorities, reflects the latest cost projections and profile for delivery, and incorporates the current funding position.

5. This is the fourth capital programme update and monitoring report for 2025/26 and sets out the monitoring position based on activity to the end of January 2026.

6. The report also updates the Capital Programme approved by Council in February 2026 taking into account additional funding, new budget priorities and new schemes. The updated programme also incorporates

changes agreed through the Capital Programme Approval Reports to Cabinet during the year as well as new funding.

7. The forecast programme expenditure for 2025/26 is £267.5m (excluding earmarked reserves). This has decreased by £10.6m compared to the previous capital programme for 2025/26 approved by Council in February 2025. The updated programme reflects the spend profile from the latest delivery timeframes as well as the inclusion of new grants received by the Council.

8. The total ten-year capital programme (2025/26 to 2035/36) is £1,534.9m. The updated capital programme summary is set out in Annex 2. The main changes since the report to Council in February 2026 are set out in this report.

Introduction

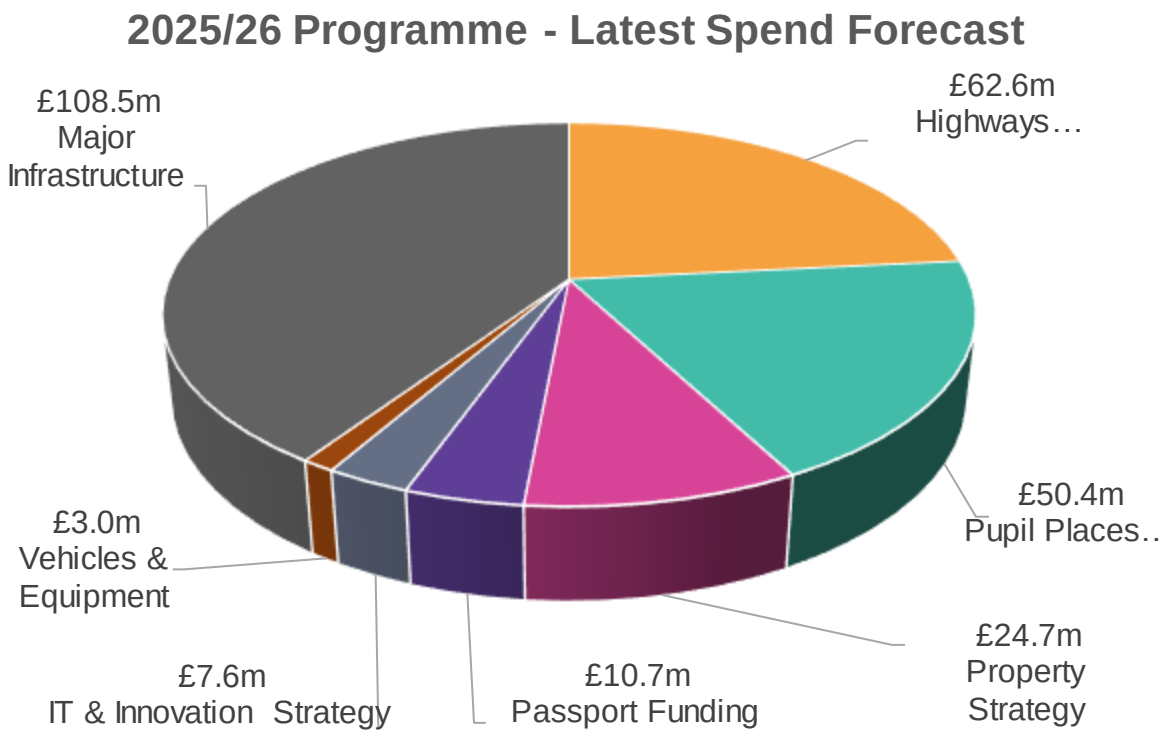
9. Capital expenditure is defined as spending that creates an asset for the council (e.g. buildings, vehicles, and equipment) as well as spending which meets the definition in regulations specified under the Local Government Act 2003. This includes spend on non-current assets that are not owned by the council such as academies and the award of capital grants and funding agreements.

10. The capital programme supports the delivery of the council's vision and priorities as set out in the Strategic Plan. The programme is updated quarterly and fully refreshed annually as part of the Budget and Business Planning Process to ensure that it remains aligned with the latest priorities, reflects the latest cost projections and profile for delivery, and incorporates the current funding position.

11. The programme comprises the following strategy areas:

- **Pupil Place Plan:** including basic need (new schools and expansion), maintenance, health and safety and improvements
- **Major Infrastructure:** including Growth Deal Infrastructure programme
- **Highways and structural maintenance:** including street lighting, and bridges
- **Property Strategy:** including health & safety, maintenance, improvements, the Investment Strategy and climate change measures,
- **IT, Digital & Innovation Strategy:** including broadband and equipment
- **Passported Funds:** including Disabled Facilities Grant and Devolved Schools Capital
- **Vehicles and Equipment:** including fire and rescue vehicles and equipment

12. The investment profile for the 2025/26 Capital Programme is shown below:



13. This is the fourth capital programme update and monitoring report for the financial year and focuses on the delivery of the 2025/26 capital programme based on projections at the end of January 2026 and new inclusions within the overall ten-year capital programme.

14. The following annexes are attached:

Annex 1	Capital Programme Monitoring 2025/26 (Summary)
Annex 2	Updated Capital Programme 2025/26 – 2035/36 (Summary)

2025/26 Capital Monitoring

15. The capital monitoring position set out in Annex 1, shows forecast expenditure for 2025/26 of £267.5m (excluding earmarked reserves). This has decreased by £10.6m compared to the latest capital programme approved by Council in February 2026. The updated programme reflects the forecasted year end position for 2025/26 and the impact of re-profiling expenditure in 2025/26 where necessary to reflect anticipated scheme delivery.

The table below summarises the latest in-year changes in 2025/26 by strategy area:

Strategy Area	Last Approved Programme 2025/26 * £m	Latest Forecast Expenditure 2025/26 £m	Variation £m
Pupil Places Plan	52.3	50.4	-1.9
Major Infrastructure	111.4	108.5	-2.9

Highways Asset Management Plan	64.5	62.6	-1.9
Property Strategy	27.5	24.7	-2.8
IT, Digital & Innovation Strategy	8.2	7.6	-0.6
Passported Funding	10.1	10.7	+0.6
Vehicles & Equipment	4.1	3.0	-1.1
Total Strategy Programmes	**278.1**	**267.5**	**-10.6**
Earmarked Reserves / Pipeline Schemes	0.0	0.0	+0.0
Total Capital Programme	**278.1**	**267.5**	**-10.6**

* Approved by Council 10 February 2026

16. Actual capital expenditure at the end of January 2026 was £154.4m**.** The combined spend to date and current forecasted in-year commitments for the Capital Programme are £217.6m or 81% of the revised estimate for the year.

Pupil Place Plan

17. There is forecast spend of £50.4m on the Pupil Place Plan in 2025/26 compared to the latest forecast of £52.3m, a decrease of £1.9m. The Plan includes three main programmes:

- School Expansions Places - these are usually school expansion projects at existing schools that are funded by central government grant and/or Section 106 developer funding / Community Infrastructure Levy funding to ensure there are enough school places for children within Oxfordshire.

- New Schools Places – these are usually new school projects within large housing sites allocated in local plans that are funded from contributions sought from developers via a Section 106 agreement towards the costs of providing community and social infrastructure.

- Schools Annual Programmes – this includes the School Structural Maintenance Programme funded from the School Condition Allocation, which addresses the highest condition-based priorities within the school estate enhancing the school stock condition and reducing the backlog maintenance, and the School Access Programme which ensure that mainstream buildings are accessible for pupils with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities.

18. Projects in the School Expansions and New Schools programmes are either delivered directly by the council, delivered by a housing developer or by a third party (usually an Academy Trust or Diocese) via a funding agreement. Regardless of how they are delivered, each project brings benefits to residents living in Oxfordshire by improving the quality and facilities at existing schools; providing additional pupil places allowing greater parental choice and ensuring that housing developments have the infrastructure necessary for them to become thriving communities.

School Expansions Programme

19. The Basic Need Programme anticipates spend of £12.3m in 2025/26 compared to the previous forecast of £12.3m. This reflects the latest delivery timeframe with anticipated phasing changes. Currently, five projects are either in construction or have completed this financial year and are creating the following additional pupil places and improved facilities:

- Witney, Woodgreen School (150 additional pupil places)
- Woodstock, Marlborough CE School (150 additional pupil places)
- Langtree School, Woodcote (Refurbishment of 2 science labs)
- Fir Tree, Wallingford (expand from Junior to Primary)
- Oxford, Orchard Meadow Primary School, (Foundation Stage Accommodation)

In addition, there are 10 projects in the pre-construction phase, some of which will commence on site this financial year:

- Heyford Park School (150 additional pupil places)
- Faringdon Community College (replacement of temporary accommodation)
- Oxford, Mabel Prichard Special School (23 additional SEND places)
- Sonning Common, Bishopswood SEN (relocation of accommodation and expansion of secondary base within Chiltern Edge School)
- Grove CE Primary School (105 additional pupil places)
- Tetsworth Primary School (new School Hall)
- North Hinksey CE Primary School (replacement of temporary accommodation)
- Yarnton, William Fletcher Primary School (105 additional pupil places)
- Mill Lane Chinnor (Replacement Temporary Classrooms)
- St Josephs, Thame (new nursery 30 places)

<u>New Schools Programme</u>

20. The New Schools programme is forecasting to spend £30m in 2025/26. This has decreased by £1.9m to reflect the latest spend profiles for 2025/26 based on the current phasing profile. Currently there are two new school projects in construction:

- St Nicholas, Wallingford (315 new pupils + nursery)
- Didcot Valley Park Primary School (630 place new Primary)

Two projects are in the pre-construction phase.

- Didcot, Great Western Park SEND School (120 additional SEND pupil places)
- Upper Heyford Primary School (315 place new primary + 65 place nursery)

Two further schools are being delivered by the Education and Skills Funding Agency (ESFA) and financial contributions towards the schools are included within the capital programme:

- SEND Free School, Faringdon (118 additional SEND pupil places).

- Grove Airfield – Secondary phase of a new all-through School (600 additional pupil places).

Schools Annual Programmes

21. The School Access Initiative, which will ensure that mainstream school buildings are accessible for pupils with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities, is forecasting spend of £0.250m. Projects at primary and secondary schools are being carried out throughout this financial year.

22. The School Structural Maintenance Programme for 2025/26 includes 86 projects that will be completed over a rolling two-year programme. The latest spend forecast is £7.4m in 2025/26 increase of £0.1m from the previous forecast. Some of the larger projects included in the programme are:

- Great Tew Primary School – replace failed roof
- Clifton Hampden C of E Primary School – Overhaul and repair entire pitched roof (programmed for 2026)
- Cumnor Primary School – replace flat roof
- Queensway Primary School – Replace felt roof covered flat roof Phase 2
- RAF Benson Community Primary School – Replace felt covered flat roof – Phase 3
- St Leonards C of E Primary School – Roof repairs (scheduled 2026)
- Five Acres Primary School – Replace failed flat roof (programmed for 2026)
- John Hampden Primary School – Replace failed flat roof (programmed for 2026)
- Barley Hill Primary School – Boiler replacement & roof structural works (programmed for 2026)
- Dry Sandford Primary School – Replace obsolete heating system (programmed for 2026)
- Orchard Fields Primary School – Boiler Replacement
- Windmill Primary School – Rusting lintels replacement (programmed for 2026)

Major Infrastructure

23. The latest capital expenditure forecast for 2025/26 is £108.5m. While there are increases relating to HIF1 and HIF2, there are reductions elsewhere which mean that this has decreased by £2.9m from the previous reported position. The programme is divided into sub-programme areas as shown in the table below.

Major Infrastructure	Latest Budget	Latest Forecast	Variation
	£'000	£'000	£'000
Housing Infrastructure Fund 1 (HIF1)	40,200	40,900	+700
Housing Infrastructure Fund 2 (HIF2) & A40	19,450	21,900	+2,450
A423 Improvement Programme	700	450	-250
Active Travel Phase 3 & Mobility Hubs	3,376	2,200	-1,176

Oxford Locality	4,887	4,271	-616
Countywide Locality	29,650	26,175	-3,475
Major Infrastructure Delivery Sub-total	**98,263**	**95,896**	**-2,367**
Major Infrastructure Placemaking Sub-total	**8,152**	**8,022**	**-130**
Transport Policy Sub-total	**4,984**	**4,584**	**-400**
Major Infrastructure –Total	**111,399**	**108,502**	**-2,897**

Major Infrastructure- Delivery

24. Forecast capital spend of £95.9m is £2.4m less than the previous capital forecast of £98.3m.

HIF1 Programme

25. In December 2025 Homes England approved the use of £46m of the £79.6m contingency funding that they agreed to allocate to the programme in April 2024. This includes an additional £10.0m towards the Clifton Hampden Bypass scheme, increasing the budget to £66.7m, and an additional £6.1m towards the Didcot Science Bridge scheme, taking the budget to £109.1m. A further £29.9m contingency funding that Homes England have approved to be used is expected to be used to support the Culham River Crossing scheme.

26. The HIF1 programme is now forecasting to spend £40.9m during this financial year, slightly more than the latest budget. Although the latest forecasts are realistic, there is a risk of delay as the projects move from the detailed design stage to early enabling works that are planned in the last quarter of the financial year. Because of this the latest forecasts for 2025/26 are sensitive to change.

- Clifton Hampden Bypass - the discharge of pre-commencement planning conditions is progressing and the start date of the construction phase is now planned for the beginning of the new financial year.

- Culham River Crossing – extended enabling works are now planned for this financial year. This again will potentially impact further on the exact start date of the construction phase, planned for the next financial year.

- Didcot Science Bridge - enabling works are now planned to start before the end of February, with the main construction phase planned to start in May 2026.

HIF2 & A40

27. Overall, the in-year forecast for the programme has increased to £21.9m, which is £2.5m more than the latest budget. This mainly relates to the A40 Eynsham to Wolvercote project, due to upfront payments for statutory utility works.

Countywide programmes

28. The overall in-year forecast for this combined programme is £26.2m, a reduction of £3.5m compared to the latest budget of £29.7m. This is due mainly to the A34 Lodge Hill slips project that is progressing through the construction stage, programme delays mean that the planned phase expected to be undertaken this year has slipped into 2026/27. The Benson Lane BSIP scheme may also slip into 2026/27, due to it taking longer than expected.

Other programmes

29. The Active Travel & Mobility Hubs programmes are now forecasting to spend £2.2m, which is a reduction of £1.2m from the latest budget. This is due mainly to a small number of scheme programmes slipping into 2026/27.

30. The Oxford programme is forecasting spend of £4.3m, which is £0.6m less than the latest budget of £4.9m.

Major Infrastructure – Placemaking

31. The programme is forecasting to spend £8.0m this year a slight reduction when compared to the previous reported position. This includes a part payment of £6.5m towards the Oxford Railway Station Development (£10m total contribution), which is funded through a previous Enterprise Oxfordshire (previously OxLEP) City Deal Programme.

Transport Policy

32. The programme is forecasting spend of £4.6m mainly relating to the last phase of the grant payments to the bus companies (contribution towards the purchase of electric buses under the Zero Emission Bus Regional Area programme).

Highways Asset Management Plan (HAMP)

33. The expectation is that the HAMP will enable the council to maintain the 4,656km of network that it is responsible for, in as close as possible to a 'steady state' within the funding available.

34. The total in-year forecast capital expenditure for 2025/26 is estimated to be £62.6m and has decreased by £1.9m compared to the previous forecast. The net change is attributable to slight reduction across all sub-programmes within the HAMP. The programme is divided into sub-programme areas as shown in the table below:

Highways Asset Management Plan	Latest Budget	Forecast	Variation
	£'000	£'000	£'000
Structural Maintenance Annual Programme	45,050	44,800	-250
Improvement Programme	3,200	2,830	-370
Major Schemes & Other Programmes	6,155	5,950	-205
Network Management Programme	9,038	8,210	-828
Other	1,000	800	-200
Highways Asset Management Plan – Total	**64,443**	**62,590**	**-1,853**

35. The planned activities for the main programmes are summarised below:

Project	Planned Schemes	Delivered Schemes	Progress Update
Surface Treatments (schemes)	138	140	Schemes to restore the condition or prolonging the life of existing carriageways. Surface Dressing and Micro-Asphalt programme completed. Pre-patching SD programme currently underway.
Carriageways (schemes)	9	8	Surfacing/reconstruction/strengthening of roads. One scheme left to deliver towards the end of the year.
Structural Highways Improvements (schemes)	59	38	Surface inlay and minor patching schemes across the county. Slight delay in this programme due to schemes changing from patching to full surfacing - programmed Feb – March.
Footways (schemes)	76	60	Repair/construction of footways and cycleways. Footway slurry programme completed with some footway reconstruction schemes left to deliver.
Drainage (schemes)	37	20	Repair/renewal of existing drainage infrastructure and provision of new infrastructure to resolve known drainage issues. Delay in this programme due to extended investigation works.
Bridges (schemes)	13	6	Strengthening/replacement/imposition of management measures on weak structures. Delay in commencing schemes on site due to extended design works required, intention is to reprofile into future years.
Electrical	1,800 2,700	824 2,867	Additional LED Replacement units being installed this year. Column Replacement.
20mph Speed limit (schemes)	9	5	The last remaining schemes of this programme, following consultations that have taken place schemes expected to be implemented by year end as planned. Any remaining schemes will be delivered during 2026/27.
Section 42 contributions (schemes)	45	45	Programme delivered by the City Council and covers all the unclassified roads and footways within the city. On track.

36. The Structural Maintenance Annual Programme is forecasting to spend £44.8m.

37. The annual Improvement Programme is forecasting to spend £2.8m in 2025/26. This will be primarily spent on the Vision Zero Programme, covering projects on speed management, junction incident hot spots, cycle safety and connectively etc.

38. Major Schemes & Other Programme is forecast to spend £6.0m in 2025/26. This includes the LED streetlighting upgrade programme and highway bridges recovery programme.

39. The Highway Network Management Programme is forecasted to spend £8.2m. This includes improvements to Oxford and Bicester Park & Rides, countywide traffic signals, Bus Services Improvement Programme schemes and implementation of Part 6 moving vehicle cameras.

Property Strategy

40. The Property Strategy is forecasting expenditure of £24.7m in 2025/26, a decrease of £2.8m compared to the previous forecast of £27.5m. This is mainly due to revised expenditure plans across the Corporate Estate Programme including the Carterton Community Safety Centre, Speedwell House Redevelopment, Fire Remedial Programme and the Office Rationalisation Programme.

Estate Decarbonisation Programme

41. The council's property accounts for approximately 35% of the emissions within the2030 target (based on 2023/24 data). While there is a long-term plan for decarbonisation of the UK electricity grid, this target is in line with the UK government commitment of net zero by 2050.

42. As such the council's strategic approach to reaching the decarbonisation targets is to stop fossil fuelled activities within the council's properties, which is predominantly heating, via the electrification of these components.

43. This programme supports both the key objectives within the Climate Action Framework and Carbon Management Plan, but also the Property Strategy.

44. Work has completed or is nearing completion on 23 sites included in the 2024/25 decarbonisation programme, with heat on at all of these sites. The remaining four sites are now expected to complete in 2026/27 due to the timing of electricity grid upgrades, subcontractor insolvency or delays caused by other programmes of work. All eligible grant has been claimed for and additional works were completed with remaining Salix funding (9 sites). The budget is £10.3m in total.

45. For the 2025/26 decarbonisation programme, design work has started on all sites where suitable with outputs ongoing from November 2025. Construction works have started at 4 sites and are expected to complete

this financial year, 1 site has been paused due to operational reorganisation, the remainder are expected to be into contract by the end of March 2026. The total value is £10.4m, including £0.4m of Public Sector Decarbonisation Scheme funding).

46. The combined spend forecast over the two programmes in 2025/26 is £7.4m with no change from the previous forecasted programme.

Office Rationalisation & Co-location

47. The office rationalisation & co-location programme continues following the completion of the relocation from Nash Court, Knights Court and Abbey House, with the revenue savings now starting to be realised.

48. Most of the enabling works to other council owned properties have been completed, with the final two elements being Union Street refurbishment and works to Oxford Community Support Service in delivery.

49. The planned spend for 2025/26 has been re-profiled into 2026/27 in line with the timeline for the County Hall relocation, a decrease of £1.8m compared to the previous forecast.

Children's Homes Programme

50. The Council is currently forecasting £3.8m of expenditure in 2025/26 against the £10.450m programme for the delivery of four new children's homes (providing 12 additional beds) within Oxfordshire. One of the homes is open and registered, and two others are ready to be registered with Ofsted. The fourth home is structurally complete; however, registration cannot take place until the planning process for the change of use has been approved. This approval has been delayed due to actions required to mitigate the environmental impact of the build and is now expected to be completed by the end of March 2026.

Warm Homes: Local Grant Capital Retrofit Programme

51. The capital retrofit programme, Warm Homes: Local Grant, is expected to install approximately 130 energy efficiency measures across at least 60 low-income properties with poor energy performance in 2025/26. The total value of the baseline award from the Department for Energy Security & Net Zero is £3.75m for a 3-year programme running between 2025/26 to 2027/28. Owing to an extension in grant funding an additional £0.250m is now forecast to be spent in 2025/26, assisting 15 additional properties to reduce bills, decarbonise and have increased health/comfort for residents.

School Energy Loans

52. The council has allocated over £1.8m between 2023/24 and 2026/27 as loan financing available to maintained schools to install retrofit measures (LED lighting, solar photovoltaics and battery storage). Because of the need for schools to schedule work largely in school holidays, £0.4m is forecast to be spent by the end of this financial year. The pipeline for next year is forecast to include 18 schools, with a total estimated value of approximately £0.6m.

Speedwell House Redevelopment

53. Following a detailed options appraisal for the revised Speedwell House redevelopment a change request has been submitted which provides for reduced accommodation utilising the existing Speedwell House footprint. Reflecting this change request, forecast spend for 2025/26 has been reprofiled to £1.3m. The overall budget for the scheme has been reduced to reflect the revised plans.

Residential Accommodation Programme

54. This programme will deliver much-needed, bespoke, and high-quality specialist supported housing in Oxfordshire for adults who may currently be in hospital or secure units. It marks a vital step forward in improving quality of life and long-term outcomes by enabling people to live more independently within their communities. The initiative is designed to ensure accommodation is provided in a way that is both financially sustainable and socially impactful. In the absence of private sector investment in these essential services, council-led intervention is crucial. Without it, individuals would remain in inappropriate or high-cost settings that do not support autonomy or integration.

55. Forecast expenditure for 2025/26 is £2.1m. This will be funded from the £5.9m funding for residential accommodation approved in February 2025.

IT, Innovation & Digital Strategy

56. The total forecast expenditure for 2025/26 is £7.6m, a decrease of £0.6m compared to the previous forecast.

Digital Infrastructure

57. Projects to implement new IT applications during 2025/26 include:

- Data Centre Hardware – replacement of ageing data centre equipment and transfer to a new site, to ensure ongoing stable and secure infrastructure to run Council services.
- Public Services Telephone Network Withdrawal – working with suppliers to reduce risks and impacts of the withdrawal of the copper telephony network.
- End User and network equipment – continued investment in planned regular refresh of hardware so that staff are able to work effectively from multiple locations with secure access and performant devices.
- Further capital business cases are being prepared for projects to implement simple, stable and secure technology as set out in the council's Technology Strategy.

Broadband

58. The 5GIR programme budget for 2025/26 of £3.0m is forecasted to be spent this year, with the cost met by grant funding from the Department for

Science, Innovation and Technology to increase adoption of 5G connectivity. The programme is a regional partnership, known as England's Connected Heartland (ECH) which comprises local bodies from Berkshire, Buckinghamshire, Bedfordshire and Cambridgeshire with Oxfordshire as the lead authority.

Passported Funding

59. Expenditure for 2025/26 is forecasted to be £10.7m. This has increased by £0.6m compared to the previous forecast, following notification of an additional £0.6m Disabled Facilities Grant.

60. The Disabled Facilities Grant for 2025/26 is now £8.8m. This funding, which is part of the Better Care Fund, is issued to the County Council but is required to be passed on to the City and District Councils in accordance with the grant determination.

Vehicles and Equipment

61. Expenditure for 2025/26 is forecasted to be £3m, a decrease of £1.1m compared with the previous forecast.

Vehicle Management Services (VMS)

62. The endorsed Business Case for EV chargers have enabled VMS to continue to swap out the old SWARCO chargers. There are now 53 new Compleo chargers and 24 SWARCO units (the latter to be swapped out during 2025/26). New locations have been identified and are being investigated in line with service operational needs; however, the overall National Grid power availability is proving challenging, as not all sites have the extra power required available.

63. The Key2 Vehicle management software is now providing information for all compliance requirements across the whole fleet.

64. The forecasted acquisitions for 2025/26 have now been revised to £1.2m against the budgeted £2m, plus a phasing in EV charger installation.

CAPITAL GOVERNANCE APPROVALS

Major Infrastructure

Milton Heights Bridge

65. This project will provide a pedestrian and cycle bridge over the A34 to connect a strategic housing site at Milton Heights with enterprise zones 1 & 2 (including Milton Park) as well as Didcot, its schools station and services. It is a key active travel link and will encourage local trips by sustainable modes of transport, offering a more attractive alternative than the current route via Milton Interchange which currently suffers from significant traffic congestion.

66. Approval is required to enter this scheme into the capital programme with a budget of £8.608m. The project is proposed to be funded from a variety

of funding sources, including £0.238m Growth Deal funds, £2.604m S106 developer contributions and £1.766m from OCC resources agreed by Council in February 2025. In October 2025 Cabinet also conditionally approved an allocation of up to £4.000m from Enterprise Zone 2 Retained Business Rates towards Infrastructure that directly enhances access to the Enterprise Zone itself, which this scheme delivers. Approval for the use of this funding for this purpose will be formalised ahead of any construction work taking place.

Ten Year Capital Programme Update

67. The total ten-year capital programme (2025/26 to 2034/35) is now £1,350.3m (excluding earmarked reserves) an increase of £7.2m when compared to the latest capital programme approved by Council in February 2026. A summary of the updated capital programme is set out in Annex 2.

Strategy Area	Last Approved Total Programme (2025/26 to 2034/35) *	Latest Updated Total Programme (2025/26 to 2034/35)	Variation
	£m	£m	£m
Pupil Places Plan	229.0	229.1	+0.1
Major Infrastructure	663.2	669.8	+6.6
Highways Asset Management Plan	270.4	270.3	-0.1
Property Strategy	119.7	119.7	+0.0
IT, Digital & Innovation Strategy	11.0	11.0	+0.0
Passported Funding	23.7	24.3	+0.6
Vehicles & Equipment	26.1	26.1	+0.0
Total Strategy Programmes	**1,343.1**	**1,350.3**	**+7.2**
Earmarked Reserves	188.6	184.7	-3.9
Total Capital Programme	**1,531.7**	**1,535.0**	**+3.3**

* Approved by Council 10 February 2026

Capital Funding Update

Prudential Borrowing

68. The ten-year Capital Programme includes a requirement to fund £210.6m through prudential borrowing. The latest borrowing expected to be taken in 2025/26 is £57.1m. The borrowing in 2025/26 is expected to include the last £2.5m from the £120.0m agreed in 2018 and £31.4m from the £88.4m agreed in 2022. The remaining borrowing provision is held towards the HIF 1 programme and Kennington Bridge schemes. The remaining £4.3m drawdown of the £40.8m supporting the Street Lighting LED replacement programme is also expected to be taken in 2025/26. To support the delivery of the Highways Structural Maintenance programme in 2025/26 a further £12m of borrowing is planned to be undertaken.

69. The use of prudential borrowing will increase the council's Capital Financing Requirement. The council is required under statute to set aside a Minimum Revenue Provision to pay down the Capital Financing

Requirement. Prudential borrowing is generally paid over 25 years. The Medium-Term Financial Strategy takes account of this cost. As the Capital programme includes the Enterprise Oxfordshire (previously OxLEP) City Deal Programme, the borrowing costs relating to this scheme will be fully funded through Enterprise Zone 1 retained business rates.

Earmarked Reserves

70. The level of earmarked reserves is £184.7m, reduction of £3.9m from the previous reported position of £188.6m, due to the inclusion of £4m funding towards Milton Heights Bridge. The reserves include £70.3m of budget provisions approved through the capital Budget & Business Planning process in February 2026 and previous years. A further £118.3m is held as provisions and these include the capital programme contingency for the delivery of the current ten-year capital programme plus other identified provisions. This includes the £55.3m as part of the Local Transport Consolidated Funding period 2026/27 to 2029/30 and includes Local Transport Grant, Local Bus Grant and Active Travel Grant.

Capital Reserves

71. The current overall balance of the capital programme is over-programmed by £10.4m, as agreed by Council in February 2026.

72. The current level of capital reserves (including capital receipts and capital grants reserves) is approximately £219m. This is expected to reduce to approximately £154m at the end of 2026/27 and reduce further to only £8m by the end of 2029/30. Reserves can be used to temporarily fund schemes to delay the need for prudential borrowing or to help manage timing difference between the delivery of schemes and the receipt of Section 106 funding. The level of reserves impacts on the cashflow of the capital programme and overall council cash balances and is already factored into the funding of the overall capital programme.

73. When necessary and where funding is available, the Capital Programme can fund schemes in advance of receiving specific funding by utilising other resources within the wider programme on an interim basis. Any advancements would need to be considered and agreed by the Section 151 officer. At present, the Capital Programme includes approximately £35m of forward funded schemes, as identified to Council in February 2026. The actual total that is forward funded is expected to be lower than the approved total as it is forecasted that some of the income is expected to be received before all the expenditure associated with the forward funded schemes is incurred. It is estimated to be £24m at the end of 2025/26 financial year. The forward funding excludes any cashflow implications arising from the Speedwell and Oxford Rewley Road Fire Station developments.

Risk Management

74. A range of factors will impact on the deliverability and cost of capital schemes. Where schemes are grant funded, there is a risk that slippage could impact on the availability of grant funding as it is not possible to complete the scheme by the funding deadline. Inflationary pressures may

also mean that costs increase further by the point the scheme reaches the construction phase eroding the value of the grant funding so that is insufficient to meet the revised scheme costs.

75. These risks are managed through the council's capital governance process at both project and programme level and through the Strategic Capital and Commercial Board. Where necessary action is taken to adjust scheme deliverables and to use value engineering to maintain spend within the available funding.

76. A strategic risk is a risk to the council's strategic priorities or long-term outcomes; or a risk with a significance that has an impact at the corporate level. The council is assessing and tracking 6 strategic risks in 2025/26. One of these risks is that either HIF1 or HIF2 programmes become undeliverable and/or a potential financial risk to the council. Updates on this risk are being reported through the Business Management & Monitoring Reports to Cabinet.

Sustainability Implications

77. The Climate Action Framework sets the council's commitment to tackling the climate emergency which is underpinned by the Council's priority to put action to address the climate emergency at the heart of our work.

78. This report includes updates on the decarbonisation of the council's assets as well as funding for improvements to energy efficiency in maintained school buildings

Financial Implications

79. The report sets out the planned investment and available funding for the ten-year Capital programme including the risks associated with the delivery of the programme.

80. The following risks are inherent within the expenditure and funding within the capital programme:

- Certainty over the timing and value of future capital receipts and Section 106 Contributions.
- Certainty over the receipt and security of future grant funding.
- Risk of cost increases through inflation or other factors outside of the council's control.

81. If capital receipts or section 106 contributions are not received within the planned timeframe it may be necessary (although this is unlikely) for the Council to temporarily fund capital expenditure through prudential borrowing. The council has a prudential borrowing reserve to help manage the revenue impact of additional prudential borrowing.

82. Where additional funding is required to fund schemes on a permanent basis this will need to be addressed by reducing investment elsewhere within the programme (reprioritisation) or by permanently funding through prudential borrowing. This would require the identification of long-term

revenue funding as the Prudential Borrowing is usually repaid over 25 years through the Minimum Revenue Provision. Since the level of planned borrowing was maximised as part of the 2025/26 budget process, with no further additions to this in the 2026/27 budget process, it is important that action is taken to manage spend in line with the agreed programme.

Comments checked by:

Kathy Wilcox, Head of Corporate Finance

Staff Implications

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

Equality & Inclusion Implications

84. There are no equality and inclusion implications arising directly from this report.

Legal Implications

85. In year changes to the capital programme must be approved by Cabinet in accordance with the Council's Financial Regulations. In particular paragraph 5.1.1 at the fourth bullet point sets out that where the total estimated resource allocation is above £2,000,000, then Cabinet can agree its inclusion into the Capital Programme, via the periodic Capital Report to Cabinet, based on the recommendations by Strategic Capital Board and the Section 151 Officer.

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

LORNA BAXTER
Deputy Chief Executive (Section 151 Officer)

Background papers:

Contact Officers: Kathy Wilcox, Head of Corporate Finance
Natalie Crawford, Capital Programme Manager

March 2026

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Annex 1

Capital Programme Monitoring 2025/26

Strategy / Programme	Capital Programme (Council February 2025)			Latest Forecast (Cabinet March 2026)			Variation			Current Year Expenditure Monitoring (2025/26)				Performance Compared to Original Programme (Council February 2025)		
	Current Year 2025/26	Future Years	Total	Current Year 2025/26	Future Years	Total	Current Year	Future Years	Total	Actual expenditure to date	Commit-ments	Expenditure Realisation Rate	Actuals & Commitments	Current Year	Variation	Use of Resources Variation
	£'000s	£'000s	£'000s	£'000s	£'000s	£'000s	£'000s	£'000s	£'000s	£'000s	£'000s	%	%	£'000s	£'000s	%
Pupil Places Plan	52,341	176,606	228,947	50,419	178,732	229,151	-1,922	2,126	204	28,729	21,219	57%	99%	54,510	-4,091	-8%
Major Infrastructure	111,399	551,794	663,193	108,502	561,267	669,769	-2,897	9,473	6,576	56,250	17,025	52%	68%	152,484	-43,982	-29%
Highways Asset Management Plan	64,443	205,991	270,434	62,590	207,697	270,287	-1,853	1,706	-147	38,750	15,971	62%	87%	63,638	-1,048	-2%
Property Strategy	27,523	92,201	119,724	24,690	95,034	119,724	-2,833	2,833	0	17,881	6,071	72%	97%	37,852	-13,162	-35%
IT, Digital & Innovation Strategy	8,154	2,796	10,950	7,599	3,351	10,950	-555	555	0	3,758	2,321	49%	80%	3,427	4,172	122%
Passport Funding	10,111	13,622	23,733	10,693	13,622	24,315	582	0	582	8,268	119	77%	78%	8,562	2,131	25%
Vehicles & Equipment	4,092	21,986	26,078	3,032	23,046	26,078	-1,060	1,060	0	753	526	25%	42%	3,257	-225	-7%
Total Capital Programme Expenditure	**278,063**	**1,064,996**	**1,343,059**	**267,525**	**1,082,749**	**1,350,274**	**-10,538**	**17,753**	**7,215**	**154,390**	**63,252**	**58%**	**81%**	**323,730**	**-56,205**	**-17%**
Pipeline Schemes (Indicative funding subject to initial business case)	0	70,357	70,357	0	70,357	70,357	0	0	0					17,500	-17,500	0%
Earmarked Reserves	0	118,298	118,298	0	114,298	114,298	0	-4,000	-4,000					2,400	-2,400	0%
OVERALL TOTAL	**278,063**	**1,253,651**	**1,531,714**	**267,525**	**1,267,404**	**1,534,929**	**-10,538**	**13,753**	**3,215**	**154,390**	**63,252**	**58%**	**81%**	**343,630**	**-76,105**	**-22%**

Annex 2

Updated Capital Programme 2025/26 to 2035/36

Strategy/Programme		Capital Investment Programme (latest forecast) Current Year 2025 / 26 £'000s	Firm Programme 2026 / 27 £'000s	2027 / 28 £'000s	Provisional Programme 2028 / 29 £'000s	2029 / 30 £'000s	up to 2035 / 36 £'000s	CAPITAL INVESTMENT TOTAL £'000s
Pupil Places Plan		50,419	43,000	38,619	28,911	15,231	52,971	229,151
Major Infrastructure		108,502	281,543	187,005	39,205	46,055	7,459	669,769
Highways Asset Management Plan		62,590	56,885	51,670	50,478	47,456	1,208	270,287
Property Strategy		24,690	35,510	39,077	16,308	3,386	753	119,724
Digital & Innovation Strategy		7,599	2,711	640	0	0	0	10,950
Passport Funding		10,693	10,207	815	700	700	1,200	24,315
Vehicles & Equipment		3,032	4,765	7,800	5,450	800	4,231	26,078
TOTAL ESTIMATED CAPITAL PROGRAMME EXPENDITURE		267,525	434,621	325,626	141,052	113,628	67,822	1,350,274
Pipeline Schemes (Indicative funding subject to initial business case)		0	20,000	30,000	15,000	5,357	0	70,357
Earmarked Reserves		0	16,000	29,000	25,000	23,000	21,298	114,298
TOTAL ESTIMATED CAPITAL PROGRAMME		267,525	470,621	384,626	181,052	141,985	89,120	1,534,929
TOTAL ESTIMATED PROGRAMME IN-YEAR RESOURCES		267,943	405,719	317,874	136,595	106,636	70,709	1,305,476
In-Year Shortfall (-) /Surplus (+)		418	-64,902	-66,752	-44,457	-35,349	-18,411	-229,453
Cumulative Shortfall (-) / Surplus (+)	219,088	219,506	154,604	87,852	43,395	8,046	-10,365	-10,365

SOURCES OF FUNDING		2025 / 26	2026 / 27	2027 / 28	2028 / 29	2029 / 30	up to 2035 / 36	CAPITAL RESOURCES TOTAL
		£'000s	£'000s	£'000s	£'000s	£'000s	£'000s	£'000s
SCE(C) Formulaic Capital Allocations - Un-ringfenced Grant		71,146	127,329	85,074	61,822	70,048	7,590	423,009
Devolved Formula Capital- Grant		650	650	650	650	650	650	3,900
Prudential Borrowing		57,104	46,945	64,076	15,079	27,185	275	210,664
Grants		82,736	208,737	91,098	3,877	0	693	387,141
Developer Contributions		53,059	63,068	55,897	24,373	3,153	27,229	226,779
Other External Funding Contributions		370	21,352	7,054	2,446	0	0	31,222
Revenue Contributions		2,432	2,540	4,987	2,958	800	4,000	17,717
Schools Contributions		28	0	0	0	0	0	28
Use of Capital Receipts		0	0	75,726	25,390	4,800	30,272	136,188
Use of Capital Reserves		0	0	64	44,457	35,349	8,046	87,916
TOTAL ESTIMATED PROGRAMME RESOURCES UTILISED		267,525	470,621	384,626	181,052	141,985	78,755	1,524,564
TOTAL ESTIMATED IN YEAR RESOURCES AVAILABLE		267,943	405,719	317,874	136,595	106,636	70,709	1,305,476
Capital Grants Reserve C/Fwd	104,167	91,381	23,599	0	0	0	0	0
Usable Capital Receipts C/Fwd	37,329	40,209	43,089	0	0	0	0	0
Capital Reserve C/Fwd	77,592	87,916	87,916	87,852	43,395	8,046	0	0

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CABINET

17 March 2026

Household Waste Recycling Centres (HWRC) Management Reprovision

Report by Director of Environment & Highways

RECOMMENDATION

1. **Cabinet is RECOMMENDED to**

   a) Approve the preferred approach to the reprovision of the Household Waste Recycling Centre (HWRC) management as set out in paragraphs 5 and 31.

   b) Authorise Officers to prepare and commence the procurement of a new 8-year HWRC management contract to start on 1 October 2027 (following a mobilisation period) with options to support flexibility in Local Government Reorganisation (LGR).

   c) Endorse exploration and feasibility of the capital purchase of HWRC plant and equipment during the tender bidding, with a view to having an agreed final revenue and capital cost of the contract at the final tender stage.

   d) Delegate the decision to award the contract, and any extension to that contract to the Director of Environment and Highways in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Place, Environment and Climate Action.

Executive Summary

2. Under section 51 of the Environmental Protection Act 1990, the council has a statutory duty to provide HWRCs for Oxfordshire residents to dispose of their household waste. For Oxfordshire the minimum requirement is 2 and in line with the council's policy it currently provides 7. The current contract for the management of 6 of the 7 HWRCs terminates on 30 September 2027. The 7th site, Dix Pit, is managed via a legacy landfill contract which is anticipated to end by late 2027.

3. Following Cabinet approval in February 2025 to commence work evaluating the options for the HWRC management reprovision, waste specialists Eunomia were appointed to work with officers to determine the most appropriate approach to reprovision of the service.

4. The current known timetable, risks and opportunities of LGR have been fully considered as part of the evaluation of options.

5. The outcome of this work has identified that the appointment of a single provider via a long-term 8-year management contract with early in-contract options centred around flexibility post LGR to be the most appropriate HWRC management model for the council. This need has been tested with the market and is accepted.

6. The final contract costs will be established through a "Competitive Flexible Procedure procurement process", with the final costs agreed through the most advantageous tender scoring the highest against tender evaluation criteria.

7. To ensure the most suitable bidder is appointed, and the tender is compliant, detailed evaluation themes are currently being developed and designed to support a Competitive Flexible Procedure, allowing dialogue and negotiation to take place to ensure the successful bidder will provide a cost effective and high quality HWRC management service, supporting the council in delivering of its key priorities.

Background

8. There is a network of 7 HWRCs within the county in the following locations and shown on the plan in Annex 1.
   - Alkerton HWRC, near Banbury
   - Ardley Fields HWRC, Bicester
   - Redbridge HWRC, Oxford
   - Drayton HWRC, Vale of White Horse
   - Oakley Wood HWRC, South Oxfordshire
   - Stanford in the Vale HWRC, Vale of White Horse
   - Dix Pit HWRC, West Oxfordshire district

9. These facilities receive around 1 million customer visits and manage approximately 50,000 tonnes of waste per annum. A series of service changes were implemented on 14 January 2026 including a requirement to make a booking before visiting, charges for out of county customers and the requirement to sort waste into recyclable waste streams before or on arrival. There are currently 2 contracts in place for the management of HWRCs.

10. In 2016 following an open tender procedure a 10-year contract (7-year main term plus up to 3-year extension) commencing on 1 October 2017 was awarded to sole trader Geoffrey David Thompson trading as Weymouth and Sherborne Recycling (W&S) for the management of 6 HWRCs and materials management at Dix Pit.

11. This contract includes the provision of HWRC capital assets such as plant, equipment and bins, the provision and management of site personnel, the transport of materials to disposal sites, the management and marketing of recyclable waste and compliance with health, safety and environmental requirements. The 3-year extension was taken up in October 2024, and the contract will expire on 30 September 2027.

12. The management of Dix Pit HWRC is provided as part of the Dix Pit Landfill Contract with FCC Environment Ltd. Dix Pit is different due to a legacy landfill contract and is intrinsically linked to the waste transfer station on the same site. This means it will be priced differently as an option.

13. In 2023, WSP E&I UK Limited were commissioned to undertake a future service model appraisal of the HWRC services. This evaluated outsourcing, in-sourcing, joint working, and Local Authority Trading Company (LATCo) approaches (both to join an existing or set up a new LATCo). This concluded outsourcing as the favourable approach when balancing service cost against risk.

14. Throughout 2024, soft market testing was undertaken, which included engaging with 9 companies interested in providing HWRC services to the council, including both incumbent suppliers. This indicated that there was significant interest within the market to provide these services within Oxfordshire specifically, and intelligence was gathered to help understand where the market stood on a range of relevant areas.

Context

15. Over the 10-year period since the last tendering of the management contract there have been significant changes which impact upon the service. Within Oxfordshire, housing and population growth of 13% and 14.8% respectively has meant that more households are served by the HWRCs and that there are more potential customer visits to the sites. Since 2016 the amount of waste received has increased from 45,834 to 50,007 tonnes per annum, and the number of customer visits has increased from 1,009,649 to 1,111,323 per annum.

16. There have been various changes to waste legislation requiring additional waste streams to be separated such as materials containing Persistent Organic Pollutants which are now banned from landfill, limits on the charges that can be made for DIY type waste and all neighbouring authorities either prohibiting Oxfordshire residents from using their facilities or introducing charges.

17. Since the current contract was procured, there has been the introduction of The Procurement Act 2023, which now allows for a more flexible approach within procurement dialogue phases which will help drive innovation and value for money as well as allowing for exploration and negotiation.

18. The cost of the HWRC management contracts combined has increased from £2.2m in 2017 to £3.7m in 2024. This has been driven in part by inflation applicable to the contracts over the 10-year period, which has included some peaks, and changes to the service. These cost increases have been factored into the future management reprovision.

Local Government Reorganisation (LGR)

19. In February 2025 the government announced LGR and in November 2025, 3 proposals were submitted to government by the Oxfordshire councils. The proposals are;

- A single county unitary for Oxfordshire

- Two unitary proposal –
  (1) Oxford & Shires Council (Cherwell, Oxford and West Oxfordshire) and
  (2) Ridgeway Council (South and Vale District Councils and West Berkshire Council)

- Three unitary proposal –
  (1) Greater Oxford Council,
  (2) Northern Oxfordshire Council (Cherwell and West Oxfordshire) and
  (3) Ridgeway Council (South and Vale District Councils and West Berkshire)

20. A Government decision on the geography of the unitary(ies) is expected later in 2026 with the new council(s) coming into being on 1 April 2028. As a result, under current LGR timetables, the new management reprovision must take this into account. There is at least one HWRC in each district, with no ability to extend the existing contract, it is not possible to delay this decision until after the LGR. Suitable disaggregation and break clauses within any new contract can (and will) be included though. As the "minded to" decision from the Secretary of State in respect of LGR is expected early on in the procurement process changes could be made ahead of any contract award.

Unitary proposal	**Number of HWRCs**
One unitary proposal	7 HWRCs
Two unitary proposal	4 HWRCs in Oxford & the Shires Council 3 HWRCs in Ridgeway Council
Three unitary proposal	1 HWRC in Greater Oxford 3 HWRCs in Northern Oxfordshire Council 3 HWRCs in Ridgeway Council

Table 1. LGR proposals

21. Residual waste from all 7 HWRCs will have to continue to be transported to Ardley Energy Recovery Facility (ERF) until that contract ends in 2039 due to exclusivity clauses within the ERF contract regardless of the outcome of LGR.

22. There will be opportunities if the new council(s) so choose, to work in partnership across boundaries for this HWRC service, and also for a regional approach via the strategic authority.

23. Both the Oxfordshire Resources and Waste Partnership (ORWP) which is a collaboration between Oxfordshire County Council and the five district councils,

and Waste and Environment Services Programme (WESP) (a collaboration of County, City, Cherwell and West Oxfordshire district councils) are aware the W&S contract ending and this proposal for the HWRC management provision going forward.

Options Appraisal

24. Cabinet approval was secured on 25 February 2025 to commence the evaluation of options for the HWRC management reprovision. This evaluation has sought the views of suppliers, other local authorities, senior management, Elected Members and legal, procurement and finance partners within the council. Waste industry experts Eunomia were appointed in June 2025 to assist with the evaluation, bringing their experience and expertise in developing HWRC services.

25. Like most local authorities the Council has historically outsourced the HWRC service. However, given the changing nature of the waste industry, and other external drivers and council priorities, the need to evaluate all commercial options was recognised. As such alternative approaches to delivering the HWRCs were explored. This also included both short term and long-term options within that due to the uncertainty of LGR outcomes.

26. Working with Eunomia, 7 options were identified and developed (see below). A detailed list of the option definitions can be found in Annex 2.

1 **Procurement**
Procure a contractor to deliver the service through a tendering process.

2 In-House
Bring the service in house and use council staff and resources to deliver the service.

3 Local Authority Trading Company[1] (LATCo) (Own)
The council sets up its own LATCo; an independent legal entity with the ability to trade commercially that is run by the council.

4 Local Authority Trading Company (Joint)
The council joins an existing LATCo; a joint venture between multiple local authorities (as a shareholder) for example Ubico who deliver services for West Oxfordshire District Council or ODS who deliver services for Oxford City Council.

[1] A LATCO - Local Authority Trading Company - a wholly owned by a local authority (or multiple authorities) but operates as a separate legal entity. Set up to deliver services such as waste management, leisure, housing maintenance, or facilities management.

5 Local Authority delegation (s101 Delegation (To Oxford City Council – delivery via ODS)**)**

The council discharges the HWRC function to Oxford City Council using section 101 of the Local Government Act 2003 and Oxford Direct Services (ODS) operate the service.

6 Joint Venture (Public / Public)

Set up a legally incorporated service delivered via collaboration between two councils to jointly deliver a service.

7 Joint Venture (Public / Private)

Set up a legally incorporated service delivered via a collaboration between a local authority and a private provider.

27. To accommodate the key issue of LGR, options were also considered on a short-term basis (4 years) and a long term (8 years) basis, see Table 2 below. Eight years is considered the optimal contract length for HWRC services, noting the amortisation of vehicles, plant, and other equipment required to provide the services. Four years is considered sufficient time to allow LGR to conclude, the new unitary(ies) to be established, and to secure the future service in line with the strategic vision of the new authority(ies). Soft market testing with suppliers also indicated that short contract terms would not be of interest to potential bidders.

Term	Option	Description
Short Term	A	Procurement
	B	In-House
	C	LATCo (Own)
	D(i)	LATCo (Joint)
	D(ii)	S101 delegation (to Oxford City Council delivery via ODS)
Long Term	E	Procurement
	F	In-House
	G	LATCo (Own)
	H(i)	LATCo (Joint)
	H(ii)	s101 Delegation (To Oxford City Council – delivery via ODS)
	I	JV- Public/Public
	J	JV- Public/Private

Table 2. Short and/or long-term Options List

28. To support the option review work, an officer led working group, and an officer steering group were established which included Eunomia, and officers from the waste, finance, commercial, procurement and legal teams. Both groups have met regularly to guide the process, and Eunomia have also separately led a range of option analysis workshops with the project group to ensure all aspects of the various options were considered.

29. The current HWRC management contract was evaluated and baselined to determine which elements work well, and which elements of the proposed options would facilitate service quality improvements. Engagement with other local authorities and waste industry suppliers also took place, with the learning and intelligence gathered used help to inform the option review.

30. The approach to assessing the options balanced costs and qualitative risks. This was delivered by measuring each option against a range of cost and qualitative risk criteria. Each criterion was weighted, providing a scoring system which ranked the options in order of their risk and best value levels. A summary of results is set out in Annex 4 with the financial summary on each option set out in Annex 5.

Outcome and preferred option

31. The option which scored the highest in terms of quality, with the lowest costs is the procurement of a long-term 8-year contract This option also has the ability to build in LGR flexibility with disaggregation and contract break-clauses, allowing the new authority or authorities the flexibility to exit the contract if required from year 3 or 4 to be confirmed through the negotiation with bidders, and to put their own arrangements in place. If there is more than one authority, each authority can also manage the contract independently, or they can choose to stay together as single contract to benefit from the economies of scale.

32. In addition, the options evaluation also evidenced that increased revenue, and potentially, capital funding is required to deliver the service. As the incumbent, W&S currently own the capital assets, new assets will likely be required for the new service, so investing in the capital equipment should be considered. The council purchasing the capital assets will afford more service delivery flexibility when setting the contract duration, and the council can potentially use a suppliers greater capital buying power. The council investing in capital assets would also enable more flexibility over the timing of an LGR-specific break clause as bidders will not need to consider the cost of these assets themselves when pricing against a short-term break option for LGR. If an LGR break option were to be triggered, they could be used within the new service(s) that may follow the break clause period. These benefits, and the contracts costs, will be explored during the competitive flexible procedures dialogue and negotiation phase with bidders.

33. The final contract costs will be negotiated and then presented to Director of Environment and Highways in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Place Environment and Climate Action.

Proposed next steps

34. If the recommendations are approved, then the key dates are set out below. The Procurement Strategy will be in development; however, it is expected the opportunity will launch in April 2026, with the Procurement Specific Questionnaire stage lasting until June 2026. It is anticipated there will then be an initial tender stage until September 2026 and the final tender stage running until February 2027.

35. The final tender evaluation stage will take place in early March 2027 and will come back to Director of Environment and Highways in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Place Environment and Climate Action for contract award approval in late March 2027. This will allow for a new contract mobilisation period to take place before the new contract start date on 1 October 2027. The contract mobilisation period will also allow for the incumbent contact to demobilise.

36. As detailed above, LGR will be factored into the dialogue and negotiation phases of the procurement, with allowances for LGR outcomes within the final contract. Currently known LGR dates are provided in the table below within the key dates to show their position within the procurement timetable. Allowances for risk and challenge have been factored in providing confidence that the contract start date of 1 October 2027 is achievable.

Key Dates

Activity	**Indicative Timeframe**
Approval of model by Cabinet	17 March 2026
LGR – Statutory Consultation ends	**26 March 2026**
Launch of Competitive Flexible Procedure (CFP) Procurement	April 2026
Procurement Specific Questionnaire Stage completed	June 2026
LGR – Government Decision on preferred LGR proposal	**Summer 2026**
Initial Tender Stage completed	September 2026
Final Tender Stage completed	Early March 2027
Director approval on contract award	Late March 2027
Contract award	Late March 2027
Mobilisation of new contract	Late March 2027
LGR – Elections for Shadow authority (or authorities)	**6 May 2027**
Contract start date	1 October 2027
LGR – New authority (or authorities) come into effect	**1 April 2028**

Proposed contract break clause	**October 2030 or 2031**

Table 3. Key Dates including LGR dates

Corporate Polices and Priorities

37. Provision of the service and operating model chosen aligns with the Council's priorities, with a particular focus on the following:

(a) **Greener Oxfordshire** – helping Oxfordshire respond and adapt to a changing climate.

- The council has been named the top preforming county council for recycling for the eleventh year in a row.

38. The HWRC Strategy supports the overarching countywide Joint Municipal Waste Management Strategy that aims to keep waste growth to zero percent per head, increase reuse and recycling rates, and reduce waste sent to landfill or for energy recovery.

Financial Implications (Exempted Annex 3)

Procurement Implications

39. A Procurement Strategy will be developed by the service and the Commercial Delivery lead. The procurement will be in line with the Council's policies and national legislation, using the competitive flexible procedure with multiple stages, to take advantage of the opportunities that the Procurement Act presents in terms of dialogue and discussion, particularly those raised at market engagement.

40. Evaluation weighting will be placed on ensuring contracts deliver the Council's Social Value Policy. These could include measures aimed at boosting local employment, use of SMEs in the wider supply chain and climate change targeted actions.

41. Any procurement exercise to appoint professional services to support the project and to procure the new HWRC Management contract, including any associated contracts, will be completed in line with all relevant legislation and guidelines. Due to the scale and value of the contract being procured a member of the legal team has been appointed to the project team and is working alongside and externally appointed legal advisors.

Comments checked by: Katherine Booker
Strategic Commercial Partner Place, katherine.booker@oxfordshire.gov.uk

Legal Implications

42. As set out in the report under section 51 of the Environmental Protection Act 1990, the council has a statutory duty to provide HWRCs for Oxfordshire residents to dispose of their household waste. This decision is required pursuant to the Council's Contract Procedure Rules Chapter 2 – Steps Prior to Procurement (Pre- Tender Authorisations), Rule 3.1 which requires Officers to ensure the Constitution is complied with and appropriate level of Authority is obtained prior to commencing the procurement process.

43. The procurement of a Service Provider for the operation and management of the HWRC sites in Oxfordshire proposed above is, due to its overall contract value, subject to a competitive tendering exercise conducted pursuant to the Procurement Act 2023 (PA 2023). The Council is a Contracting Authority for the purposes of the PA 2023 procurement regime. Chapter One of the Contract Procedure Rules prescribe that all Contracts entered into by the Council must comply with the Contract Procedure Rules ("CPRs").

44. The opportunity to tender for the operation and management of 6 of the 7 sites referred to above, will be subject to a full procurement and tendering process. (CPRs 1.7 and 1.8 to be complied with). For the avoidance of doubt, this proposed opportunity does not fall within the definition of 'Exempt Contract' for the purpose of Rules 1.9 and 1.10 of the CPRs and so is subject to the full Procurement regime of the PA 2023. The 7th site will be considered as part of a variant bid option

45. Due to complex and specific expertise of a waste services project as well as constraints on in-house legal capacity external specialist lawyers will be required to support the in-house legal lead to advise on procurement processes and tender documents (as required), to develop the Services Contract, and related Schedules (that will set out Specification, Scope, Finance & Pricing, Performance mechanisms and others) and any post tender clarifications or negotiations.

Comments checked by: Fiona Harte
Senior Solicitor and Team Leader, Law & Governance.
Fiona.harte@oxfordshire.gov.uk

Staff Implications

46. Due to scale and complexity of the project there was need to appoint additional and dedicated subject matter expertise on a consultancy basis to advise on the type, scale and scope of the new service model provision that we wish to procure.

47. In the case of a change of provider, the preferred model will require the TUPE of staff who currently undertake the service on behalf of the council. Staff may transfer from W&S (the current provider) to any new provider. Ideally a minimum 6-month mobilisation period will be allowed for between service providers. The management of the facilities requires not only the staff to be able to TUPE, but

also plant and equipment to be sourced, and waste commodity contracts to be placed.

48. The wider project team is internally resourced from both within the directorate and corporate centre.

49. To support the management of the new contract, there is dedicated contract management resource within the service.

Equality & Inclusion Implications

50. It is not anticipated the procurement of the new HWRC management contract will negatively impact on any protected characteristics groups, nor the armed forces, carers, staff or any other council services or providers. There is an opportunity through the procurement to positively impact rural communities and areas of deprivation through local employment and social value initiatives.

51. As part of the procurement processes, the provider submissions will be assessed for social value, and this will form a key part of the new contract award assessment. An equalities impact assessment on the procurement of a long-term contract has been completed and is included in Annex 6.

Sustainability Implications

52. A new service contract will provide opportunities to improve the sustainability position of the council within its waste service and support the target of a zero-carbon Oxfordshire by 2050. The future provision will look to adopt the latest innovations and technologies and reduce carbon use and emissions within the HWRCs.

53. A new contract will also support the councils recycling targets by enabling residents access to waste and recycling facilities and encouraging re-use to support Oxfordshire's circular economy ambitions.

54. A climate impact assessment has been completed for the procurement of a long-term contract and can be found at Annex 7.

Risk Management

55. The procurement of a long-term household waste recycling centre contract with disaggregation and a 'break clause' opportunities due to the uncertainty offers the balance between short and the longer-term stability with enough flexibility for future local government reorganisation.

56. The procurement of a long-term contract has been assessed as the strongest option because it provides the best balance of risk transfer, commercial opportunity and market interest, with the best opportunity to negotiate risk through the competitive flexible procurement process.

57. Failure to award a new contract/s or other service model is a significant risk for the council as failure to do so by March 2027 will leave the Council without a household waste recycling centre service to fulfil the statutory obligations. To minimise this risk the project has been established well in advance of this date to enable a robust assessment and appropriate procurement process to take place.

58. There is a project risk register in place, as previously submitted, which is monitored through the project steering group.

Annex:

- Annex 1 – Map of HWRC Locations
- Annex 2 – Model Type definitions
- Annex 3 – (Exempt Annex – Para.6 and Financial Implementation Section)
- Annex 4 – (Exempt Annex – Eunomia Report)
- Annex 5 – (Exempt Annex – Eunomia financial summary)
- Annex 6 – Equality Impact Assessment
- Annex 7 - Climate Impact Assessment

Paul Fermer, Director for Environment and Highways.

Contact Officers: Teresa Kirkham (Head of Countryside and Waste)
Roger Seed (Operational Manager Waste and Circular Economy)

March 2026

ANNEX 1 - Map of HWRC Locations

Oxfordshire Household Waste Recycling Centres:

1. Alkerton - Stratford Road, Alkerton, Near Banbury, OX15 6HZ
2. Ardley Fields - Brackley Road, Ardley, OX27 7PH
3. Dix - Linch Hill, Stanton Harcourt, OX29 5BB
4. Drayton - Steventon Road, Drayton, Nr Abingdon, OX14 4LA
5. Oakley Wood - Old Icknield Way, Crowmarsh, Nr Wallingford, OX10 6PW
6. Redbridge - Old Abingdon Road, Oxford, OX1 4XG
7. Stanford in the Vale - Faringdon Road, Stanford in the Vale, Faringdon, SN7 8LD

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ANNEX 2 – HWRC Management Reprovision - Service Model Type Definitions

Procurement
A procurement option refers to the process where the council would tender its HWRC services to the market after the current contract expires. This means the council invites external providers (such as private companies) to bid for the contract to manage and operate the HWRCs, rather than bringing the service in-house or using other models like a Local Authority Trading Company (LATCo). Procurement is the council's way of continuing to outsource HWRC services by selecting a new provider through a formal tender process, aiming to balance cost, quality, and risk while adapting to future changes in local government structure.
In-House
An in-house option means that the council would directly manage and operate the HWRCs itself, rather than outsourcing the service to an external contractor or using a trading company. The council would bring the HWRC service under its direct control, managing all aspects internally. This provides maximum control and flexibility but also means the council takes on all associated risks and costs, especially related to staffing and pensions.
Local Authority Trading Company (LATCo) (Own)
A LATCo (Own) option means the council would set up a new, wholly-owned company (the LATCo) to manage and operate the HWRCs. The council creates and owns the new company to run the HWRC service, aiming for a balance of public control and commercial efficiency, with the potential for cost savings and flexibility compared to in-house or outsourced models.
Local Authority Trading Company (LATCo) (Joint)
A LATCo (Joint) option means the council would join an existing Local Authority Trading Company (LATCo) that is already owned by one or more other councils, rather than setting up a new LATCo on its own. The council joins forces with other councils by becoming a co-owner of an existing trading company to run the HWRC service, aiming for shared expertise, operational efficiencies, and risk-sharing, but with added complexity in governance and decision-making.
Joint Venture (Public / Public)
A Joint Venture (Public / Public) option involves the council partnering with one or more other public sector organisations (such as other councils or government bodies) to jointly deliver the HWRC services. The council would team up with the other public bodies to jointly run the HWRC service, aiming for shared expertise and efficiency, but with added complexity and the need for strong, aligned partnerships.
Joint Venture (Public / Private)
A Joint Venture (Public / Private) option involves the council forming a legally incorporated partnership with a private sector company (such as a construction or facilities management firm) to jointly deliver the HWRC service. The council partners with a private company to jointly run HWRC services, aiming to combine public oversight with private sector efficiency and investment, but with added complexity and the need for strong alignment between partners.

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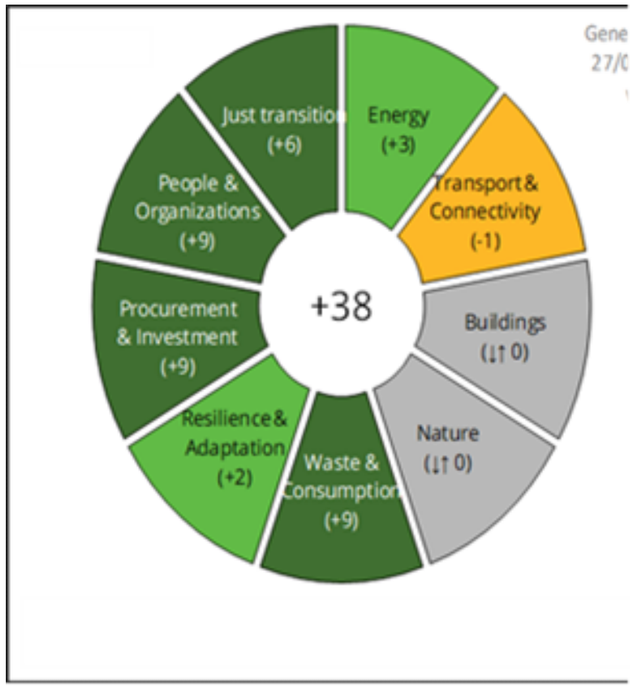
Climate Impact Assessment

Summary

Directorate and Service Area	Highways & Environment Directorate Countryside and Waste Services
What is being assessed	HWRC Management Reprovision. Under Section 51 of the Environmental Protection Act 1990, Oxfordshire County Council (OCC) has a legal duty to provide HWRCs for Oxfordshire residents and currently provides 7 across the county. On 1 October 2017, a 10-year contract (7-year main term plus up to 3-year extension) commenced with W&S Recycling Ltd (W&S) for the management of 6 of the 7 HWRCs. (The 7th Dix Pit is contracted to FCC). The W&S contract expires on 30 September 2027, with no ability to extend, and a new HRWC management model / contract needs to put in place. An optioneering process has provided an assessment and ranked scoring of 12 different potential new HWRC service models. The highest ranked model is the procurement of a long-term contract with a break clause to support LGR. This EIA assesses this option as the preferred new HWRC service model going forward. This option will go to Cabinet on 17.03.26 for cabinet decision. If approved, it will go through competitive flexible procedure procurement with a contract mobilsation period (6 months) with a start date of 1 October 2027.
Is this a new or existing function or policy?	The HWRC service is an existing function.
Summary of assessment	The HWRC Management Reprovision allows for negotiations and discussions with potential new providers during the competitive procurement processes that will detail how, and what actions the provider will undertake to achieve the council's recycling, energy reduction and carbon aims. HWRC are key for the council to continue its achievement of its recycling and waste management targets; and these will be maintained within the new contract via contracted Service quality KPI's during the contract delivery. The HWRC's support reducing energy use through their role in the waste cycle, and support the transition to a circular economy through supporting re-use, which is a key element of the circular economy .
Completed by	Caroline Coyne
Climate action sign off by	Franco Gonzalez
Director sign off by	
Assessment date	27/01/2026



Detail of proposal

Context / Background	The W&S HWRC Management contract is an outsourced contract, providing on-site HWRC service delivery management, including all the staffing, vehicles and equipment required to deliver the service. Although this contract has supported the council in achieving one of the highest recycling rates in the country, significantly exceeding the national average, the contract is limiting in that it doesn't allow OCC to harness commercial opportunities like re-use, embed new technology or introduce new innovative ways of working. And whilst the outsourced model is traditionally a preferred choice for councils, given the rapidly changing nature of the waste industry, it is recognised that new and different models of HWRC service delivery must be considered for the future. This provides OCC with an opportunity to review how different HWRC service model could work in the future, considering the changing nature of the waste
Proposal	Why a long term contract is the preferred option The procurement of a long term contract (Option E) emerged as the highest scoring and lowest cost option across the evaluation process. Key advantages include: •Strong market interest: Waste operators indicated clear preference for an 8 year contract, making the option more competitive and attractive, which supports pricing reductions and innovation. Long term contracted services will limit service delivery disruptions. •Lower risk profile: It carries minimal financial, operational, and commercial risk to OCC due to the transfer of operational responsibility to an experienced contractor. HWRC contractors assessed through a competitive flexible procurement procedure will be contracted to deliver the HWRC service in accordance the council's recycling targets and zero carbon aims. •Operational skills and experience: Contractors will have the necessary operational skills and experience to provide trained staff that can provide a reliable public facing service to ensure that the councils recycling, waste disposal and zero carbon aims are supported. •A longer 8 year contract supports social value, service quality and access improvements: Longer terms enable contractors to invest in staff training and
Evidence / Intelligence	The HWRC service model optioneering reviewed 12 short-term and long-term service model options. Table 1 – 12 Service Model Options Each option was risk assessed against a range of qualitative and costing criteria (table 2 below). Each criteria was weighted using a percentage % adding up to 100%. This methodology approach provided an evidence-based evaluation, that ensured both the council's strategic aims and the services delivery priorities could be equally captured and applied for each option.
Alternatives considered / rejected	The optioneering process considered all the options and all the models were reviewed in detail, but many fell short due to cost, complexity, or risk. Short Term Options (A–D) Short term approaches provide flexibility during LGR but bring significant drawbacks: •Poor market appetite, reducing competitiveness and weakening price outcomes. •Implementation costs must be repeated after four years, offering no financial advantage. •Minimal measurable benefit compared with long term options. In House Delivery (B & F) - Not viable due to: •Highest revenue costs, driven largely by LGPS pension liabilities. •Risks around a two tier workforce and recruitment of specialist management. •Substantial operational, financial, and staff transfer risks under LGR. LATCo Models (C, D(i), D(ii), G, H(i), H(ii)) - These options presented: •High commercial and financial risk, as most risk transfers back to OCC. •Complex governance arrangements and lengthy negotiation processes.

Category	Impact criteria	Score (-3 to +3)	Description of impact	Actions or mitigations to reduce negative impacts	Action owner	Timeline and monitoring arrangements
Energy	Increases energy efficiency	1	The new contractor will support the aims for energy efficiency	Negotiations and discussions during the competitive procurement processes; Via Service quality KPI's during contract delivery.	Jeffrey Farrell, HWRC Manager	Throughout the procurement processes and contract delivery
Energy	Promotes a switch to low-carbon or renewable energy	1	The new contractor will support the councils switch to low carbon and renewable energy	Negotiations and discussions during the competitive procurement processes; Via Service quality KPI's during contract delivery.	Jeffrey Farrell, HWRC Manager	As above
Energy	Promotes resilient, local, smart energy systems	1	The new contractor will promote resilient, local and smart energy systems	Negotiations and discussions during the competitive procurement processes; Via Service quality KPI's daring contract delivery.	Jeffrey Farrell, HWRC Manager	As above
Transport & Connectivity	Reduces need to travel and/or the need for private car ownership	-1	Residents will have to travel in cars to visit HWRC's	Ongoing communication with residents.	As above	As above
Transport & Connectivity	Supports active travel	N/A				
Transport & Connectivity	Increases use of public transport	N/A				
Transport & Connectivity	Accelerates electrification of transport	1	The HWRC sites will be updated to support EV charging	Negotiations and discussions during the competitive procurement processes; Via Service quality KPI's during contract delivery.	As above	As above
Buildings	Promotes net zero new builds and developments	N/A				
Buildings	Accelerates retrofitting of existing buildings	N/A				
Nature	Protects, restores or enhances biodiversity, landscape and ecosystems	N/A				
Nature	Develops blue and green infrastructure	N/A				
Nature	Improves access to nature and green spaces	N/A				
Waste & Consumption	Reduces overall consumption	3	The HWRC are key in supporting recycling, re-use and the circular economy in Oxfordshire and support reducing overall consumption.	Negotiations and discussions during the competitive procurement processes; Via Service quality KPI's during contract delivery.	As above	As above
Waste & Consumption	Supports waste prevention and drive reuse and recycling	3	The HWRC are key in supporting recycling, re-use and the circular economy in Oxfordshire and support reducing overall consumption.	Negotiations and discussions during the competitive procurement processes; Via Service quality KPI's during contract delivery.	As above	As above
Resilience & Adaptation	Increases resilience to flooding	N/A				
Resilience & Adaptation	Increases resilience to other extreme weather events (e.g., storms, cold snaps, heatwaves, droughts)	N/A				
Resilience & Adaptation	Increases resilience of council services, communities, energy systems, transport infrastructure and/or supply chains	2	The HWRC's increase resilience of council services, communities, energy systems.	Negotiations and discussions during the competitive procurement processes; Via Service quality KPI's during contract delivery.	As above	As above
Procurement & Investment	Procurement practices prioritise low-carbon options, circular economy and sustainability	3	The competitive flexible tender procurement processes for the new contractor following OCC's Ethical Procurement Policy will prioritise contractors who support low-carbon options, circular economy and	Negotiations and discussions during the competitive procurement processes; Via Service quality KPI's during contract delivery.	As above	As above

Procurement & Investment	Investment being considered supports climate action/ is consistent with path to net zero	3	The competitive flexible tender procurement processes for the new contractor following OCC's Ethical Procurement Policy will prioritise contractors who bring investment to the service that supports climate action/ is consistent with path to net	Negotiations and discussions during the competitive procurement processes; Via Service quality KPI's during contract delivery.	As above	As above
People & Organizations	Drives behavioural change to address the climate and ecological emergency	3	The new HWRC Contractor is key in driving behavioural change to address the climate and ecological emergency	Negotiations and discussions during the competitive procurement processes; Via Service quality KPI's during contract delivery.	As above	As above
People & Organizations	Drives organizational and systemic change to address the climate and ecological emergency	3	The new HWRC Contractor is key in driving organizational and systemic change to address the climate and ecological emergency	Negotiations and discussions during the competitive procurement processes; Via Service quality KPI's during contract delivery.	As above	As above
Just transition	Promotes green innovation and job creation	3	The new HWRC Contractor will promotes green innovation and job creation	Negotiations and discussions during the competitive procurement processes; Via Service quality KPI's during contract delivery.	As above	As above
Just transition	Promotes health and wellbeing	1	The new HWRC Contractor will promote health and wellbeing	Negotiations and discussions during the competitive procurement processes; Via Service quality KPI's during contract delivery.	As above	
Just transition	Reduces poverty and inequality	2	The new HWRC Contractor will undertake social value elements that reduce poverty and inequality	Negotiations and discussions during the competitive procurement processes; Via Service quality KPI's during contract delivery.	As above	As above

Division(s): N/A

CABINET – 17 MARCH 2026

FORWARD PLAN AND FUTURE BUSINESS

Items identified from the Forward Plan for Forthcoming Decision

Topic/Decision **Portfolio/Ref**

Cabinet, 21 April 2026

▪ **Delegated Powers Report for January to March 2026** To report on a quarterly basis any executive decisions taken under the specific powers and functions delegated under the terms of Part 7.1 (Scheme of Delegation to Officers) of the Council's Constitution – Paragraph 6.3(c)(i). It is not for Scrutiny call-in.	Cabinet, 2025/165 - Leader
▪ **Cost of Living Programme 2026-29** To agree an expenditure programme following the government's announcement of allocations from the new Crisis & Resilience Fund for the three year period from 1 April 2026	Cabinet, 25/256 - Cabinet Member for Public Health and Inequalities
▪ **Economic Development Strategy** A new economic strategy for Oxfordshire is currently in development. This item is to approve the strategy, make funding decisions, and delegate authority as necessary.	Cabinet, 26/017 - Cabinet Member for Future Economy and Innovation
▪ **Community Asset Transfer and Community Leasing Policies** Update to the Community Asset Transfer policy, as well as introducing a Community Leasing policy. These policies define how, where appropriate, the Council can devolve assets to local VCS groups at less than best consideration in recognition of the social value generated by those groups.	Cabinet, 26/008 - Cabinet Member for Finance, Property and Transformation
▪ **Capital Programme Approvals - April 2026** Report on variation to the capital programme for approval (as required).	Cabinet, - Cabinet Member for Finance, Property and Transformation
▪ **Community Cohesion Action Plan** Following the motion approved at Council in December 2025, a community cohesion action plan is being developed in partnership with councillors, stakeholders, and communities to strengthen cohesion across Oxfordshire. This report will provide an update on the development of the action plan and the work	Cabinet, 26/045 - Cabinet Member for Public Health and Inequalities

in train.	
▪ **Re-Negotiation of Project Agreement with Oxfordshire Care Partnership** The Oxfordshire Care Partnership is a joint venture between Order of St Johns Care Trust and BPHA, operating under a Project Agreement to maintain council-owned care homes and provide care services. The contract began in 2001 and was extended in 2013 to 2032. Options for service delivery and home management will apply from April 2027. Approval is sought to complete negotiations and vary the existing contract.	Cabinet, 26/061 - Cabinet Member for Adults, Cabinet Member for Finance, Property and Transformation

Delegated Decisions by Cabinet Member for Transport Management, 23 April 2026

▪ **Proposed Disabled Persons Parking Places (DPPP's) - Cherwell and West Oxfordshire Summer 2025)** Proposed disabled parking places in response to requests from residents requiring a dedicated disabled bay	Delegated Decisions by Cabinet Member for Transport Management, 25/158 - Cabinet Member for Transport Management
▪ **Extension of 20mph limit - Land South of Green Lane, Chesterton** Extension of existing 20mph limit, required as part of a development	Delegated Decisions by Cabinet Member for Transport Management, 25/269 - Cabinet Member for Transport Management
▪ **Proposed puffin crossing - A329 Reading Road, Cholsey** The proposal is to introduce a new signalised crossing on A329 Reading Road, Cholsey junction Ferry Lane. The proposal will improve road safety by providing a safer crossing point for pedestrian crossing the road at this location.	Delegated Decisions by Cabinet Member for Transport Management, 26/023 - Cabinet Member for Transport Management
▪ **Proposed Parking Permit Eligibility Changes - Oxford City** Amendments to parking permit eligibility as part of planning conditions through change of use.	Delegated Decisions by Cabinet Member for Transport Management, 26/020 - Cabinet

	Member for Transport Management
▪ **Proposed One Way Streets - Spring Meadow, Witney** Formalisation of a one way system to improve highway safety. The Development is completely built out but is not yet adopted. It is the intention of OCC to progress a s38 legal agreement to adopt the highway assets	Delegated Decisions by Cabinet Member for Transport Management, 26/019 - Cabinet Member for Transport Management
▪ **Proposed Bus Stops - Ladygrove, Didcot** Bus stop provision was agreed as part of outline planning application. Final locations agreed as part of S278 technical approval process.	Delegated Decisions by Cabinet Member for Transport Management, 26/018 - Cabinet Member for Transport Management
▪ **Copenhagen Drive, Abingdon - Proposed Toucan Crossing and Shared Use Path** As part of a section 278 agreement for a nearby development there is a requirement to introduce a toucan crossing and cycle facilities	Delegated Decisions by Cabinet Member for Transport Management, 26/016 - Cabinet Member for Transport Management
▪ **Wallingford Area LCWIP** The Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan (LCWIP) for the Wallingford area, including the town of Wallingford and the surrounding villages of Crowmarsh Gifford, Benson, Ewelme, Shillingford, Warborough, Cholsey and Brightwell-cum-Sotwell.	Delegated Decisions by Cabinet Member for Transport Management, 26/012 - Cabinet Member for Transport Management
▪ **A4130, Steventon Lights - Proposed Traffic Management Measures** Proposals include changes to speed limits, bus lanes and banned turns, which are being promoted to increase road safety and improve public transport	Delegated Decisions by Cabinet Member for Transport Management, 26/011 - Cabinet Member for Transport Management

▪ **Proposed 20mph Speed Limit - Holton** Proposed 20mph speed limit as part of vision zero project	Delegated Decisions by Cabinet Member for Transport Management, 26/010 - Cabinet Member for Transport Management
▪ **Proposed 20mph Speed Limits - Old Road, Woodcote/Hardwick** Promoted as part of vision zero	Delegated Decisions by Cabinet Member for Transport Management, 26/003 - Cabinet Member for Transport Management
▪ **Proposed 20mph Speed Limits - Brightwell Baldwin** Proposed 20mph as part of the vision zero project	Delegated Decisions by Cabinet Member for Transport Management, 26/004 - Cabinet Member for Transport Management
▪ **Proposed Changes to the MyBus Ticketing Scheme (2026/27)** Proposed changes to the MyBus multi operator ticketing scheme, for 2026/27 and beyond, to ensure its long term financial sustainability.	Delegated Decisions by Cabinet Member for Transport Management, 26/053 - Cabinet Member for Transport Management

Delegated Decisions by Cabinet Member for Place, Environment and Climate Action, 23 April 2026

▪ **Approval to Sign Space Clipper Sub-Contract** A small contract covering the council's role in an innovation project funded by Innovate UK. The contract covers the council's role in testing the development of 3D visualisation of GIS data for local area energy planning and the EV charge point programme. Space Clipper seek our feedback in the development of their software tool given our expertise in the use cases they wish to investigate.	Delegated Decisions by Cabinet Member for Place, Environment and Climate Action, 26/044 - Cabinet Member for

	Place, Environment and Climate Action

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Overview & Scrutiny Recommendation Response Pro forma

Under section 9FE of the Local Government Act 2000, Overview and Scrutiny Committees must require the Cabinet or local authority to respond to a report or recommendations made thereto by an Overview and Scrutiny Committee. Such a response must be provided within two months from the date on which it is requested[1] and, if the report or recommendations in questions were published, the response also must be so.

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

Issue: **The Virtual School**

Lead Cabinet Member(s): **Cllr Sean Gaul, Cabinet member for Children and Young People**

Date response requested:[2] **27 January 2026**

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 continue to work on improving attendance of those who are part of the Virtual School.	Accepted	The Council will continue targeted attendance interventions and resource the Virtual School accordingly. The Virtual School will continue to deliver attendance support, which includes daily monitoring, swift follow-up on alerts, targeted interventions for pupils and schools, multi-agency oversight, strengthened partnership work with children's homes and ongoing training to

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

Overview & Scrutiny Recommendation Response Pro forma

		address barriers to engagement. Progress on these activities will continue to be reported through the Virtual School's quarterly updates to the Corporate Parenting Board, with the full Annual Report presented each October. Scrutiny will have the opportunity to revisit and review progress and impact, should the Virtual School Head be invited to return for further consideration.
2. That the Council should continue to highlight the work of the Virtual school with governing boards and social workers to ensure they are well informed and engaged in supporting the education of children in care.	Accepted	The Council will strengthen communication with governing boards and social workers. The Virtual School will action this through established internal channels, including newsletters, targeted communications, training opportunities and the annual Virtual School conference. The Virtual School is also delivering dedicated training for school governors on Wednesday 4th March, which will become a standing element of its annual outreach and engagement work. Progress on these activities will continue to be reported through the Virtual School's quarterly updates to the Corporate Parenting Board, with the full Annual Report presented each October. Scrutiny will have the opportunity to revisit and review progress and impact, should the Virtual School Head be invited to return for further consideration.