



Notice of a Meeting

Place Overview & Scrutiny Committee Wednesday, 23 April 2025 at 10.00 am Room 2&3 - County Hall, New Road, Oxford OX1 1ND

These proceedings are open to the public

If you wish to view proceedings, please click on this [Live Stream Link](#).
However, that will not allow you to participate in the meeting.

Membership

Chair - Councillor Liam Walker
Deputy Chair - Councillor Robin Bennett

<i>Councillors:</i>	Felix Bloomfield	Charlie Hicks	Nigel Simpson
	Duncan Enright	Susanna Pressel	Bethia Thomas

Notes: ***Date of next meeting: 25 June 2025***

For more information about this Committee please contact:

Committee Officer	-	Scrutiny Team
		<i>Email: scrutiny@oxfordshire.gov.uk</i>

Martin Reeves
Chief Executive

April 2025

What does this Committee review or scrutinise?

Climate change, transport, highways, planning and place-based services. Including the delivery of regulatory services, fire and rescue, community safety and community services such as libraries. NB This Committee will act as the Council's 'Crime and Disorder Committee'.

How can I have my say?

We welcome the views of the community on any issues in relation to the responsibilities of this Committee. Members of the public may ask to speak on any item on the agenda or may suggest matters which they would like the Committee to look at. **Requests to speak must be submitted to the Committee Officer below no later than 9 am 4 working day before the date of the meeting.**

About the County Council

The Oxfordshire County Council is made up of 63 councillors who are democratically elected every four years. The Council provides a range of services to Oxfordshire's 678,000 residents. These include:

schools	social & health care	libraries and museums
the fire service	roads	trading standards
land use	transport planning	waste management

Each year the Council manages £0.9 billion of public money in providing these services. Most decisions are taken by a Cabinet of 9 Councillors, which makes decisions about service priorities and spending. Some decisions will now be delegated to individual members of the Cabinet.

About Scrutiny

Scrutiny is about:

- Providing a challenge to the Cabinet
- Examining how well the Cabinet and the Authority are performing
- Influencing the Cabinet on decisions that affect local people
- Helping the Cabinet to develop Council policies
- Representing the community in Council decision making
- Promoting joined up working across the authority's work and with partners

Scrutiny is NOT about:

- Making day to day service decisions
- Investigating individual complaints.

What does this Committee do?

The Committee meets up to 4 times a year or more. It develops a work programme, which lists the issues it plans to investigate. These investigations can include whole committee investigations undertaken during the meeting, or reviews by a panel of members doing research and talking to lots of people outside of the meeting. Once an investigation is completed the Committee provides its advice to the Cabinet, the full Council or other scrutiny committees. Meetings are open to the public and all reports are available to the public unless exempt or confidential, when the items would be considered in closed session.

If you have any special requirements (such as a large print version of these papers or special access facilities) please contact the officer named on the front page, giving as much notice as possible before the meeting

A hearing loop is available at County Hall.

AGENDA

1. **Apologies for Absence and Temporary Appointments**

To receive any apologies for absence and temporary appointments.

2. **Declaration of Interests - see guidance note on the back page**

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

The Committee is recommended to **APPROVE** the minutes of the meeting held on 5 February 2025 and to receive information arising from them.

4. **Petitions and Public Address**

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

To facilitate 'hybrid' meetings we are asking that requests to speak or present a petition are submitted by no later than 9.00 a.m. four working days before the meeting, i.e., 9.00 a.m. on 14th April 2025. Requests to speak should be sent to the Scrutiny Officer at scrutiny@oxfordshire.gov.uk.

If you are speaking 'virtually', you are asked to submit a written statement of your presentation to ensure that your views are taken into account. A written copy of your statement can be provided no later than 9.00 a.m. two working days before the meeting. Written submissions should be no longer than one A4 sheet.

5. **Committee Action and Recommendation Tracker (Pages 11 - 20)**

The Committee is recommended to **NOTE** the progress of previous recommendations and actions arising from previous meetings, having raised any questions on the contents.

6. **Responses to Scrutiny Recommendations (Pages 21 - 30)**

Attached are the Cabinet responses to the Place Overview and Scrutiny Committee reports on:

- Local Nature Recovery Strategy
- City Centre Accommodation Strategy – Disposal of Old and New County Hall
- Infrastructure Funding Statement and s.106 Funding Review Report

The Committee is asked to **NOTE** the response.

7. **Committee Forward Work Plan (Pages 31 - 34)**

The Committee is recommended to **AGREE** its work programme for forthcoming meetings, having heard any changes from previous iterations, and taking account of the Cabinet Forward Plan and of the Budget Management Monitoring Report.

The Cabinet Forward Plan can be found

here: <https://mycouncil.oxfordshire.gov.uk/mgListPlanItems.aspx?PlanId=433&RP=115>

The most recent BMMR, submitted to Cabinet in March 2025, can be found

here: <https://mycouncil.oxfordshire.gov.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=115&MId=7477&>

8. Section 106 Improvement Programme Update (Pages 35 - 46)

The Committee has requested an update on the section 106 a report on Section 106 Improvement Programme.

Cllr Judy Roberts, Cabinet member for Infrastructure and Development Strategy, and Robin Rogers, Director of Economy and Place, have been invited to present the report and to answer the Committee's questions. Invitations have also been extended to officers in Finance and in Information Technology.

The Committee is asked to consider the report and raise any questions, and to **AGREE** any recommendations it wishes to make to Cabinet arising therefrom.

9. Rail Strategy (Pages 47 - 54)

The Committee has requested an update on the development of the Council's Rail Strategy. Cllr Judy Roberts, Cabinet member for Infrastructure and Development Strategy, and Robin Rogers, Director of Economy and Place, have been invited to present the report and to answer the Committee's questions.

The Committee is asked to consider the report and raise any questions, and to **AGREE** any recommendations it wishes to make to Cabinet arising therefrom.

Slides attached but cover report to follow.

10. Transport Working Group Report

The Committee's Transport Working Group has completed its work and submits its report to the Committee for its approval.

The Committee is asked to consider the report and raise any questions, and to **ENDORSE** the recommendations contained it in the report and to **SUBMIT** the report to Cabinet.

Report to follow.

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.