

These notes indicate the decisions taken at this meeting and the officers responsible for taking the agreed action. For background documentation please refer to the agenda and supporting papers available on the Council's web site ([www.oxfordshire.gov.uk](http://www.oxfordshire.gov.uk).)

The decisions take effect at the time and date specified, unless before that time written notice is given in accordance with the Council's Scrutiny Procedure Rules requiring the decision to be called in for review by the relevant Scrutiny Committee.

If you have a query please contact Chris Reynolds (Tel: 07542 029441; E-Mail: [chris.reynolds@oxfordshire.gov.uk](mailto:chris.reynolds@oxfordshire.gov.uk))

## **CABINET - TUESDAY, 21 OCTOBER 2025**

<p><i>List published 21 October 2025</i>  <i>Decisions will (unless called in) become effective at 5.00pm on 27 October 2025</i></p>		
<b>RECOMMENDATIONS CONSIDERED</b>	<b>DECISIONS</b>	<b>ACTION</b>
<b>1. Apologies for Absence</b>	There were none received.	
<b>2. Declarations of Interest</b>	Councillor Levy declared an interest in Item 17 on the agenda – "Enterprise Zone Business Rates – Forecast and Update on Planned Use" – as a director of Enterprise Oxfordshire. Councillor Levy left the meeting during consideration of the item and did not vote thereon.	DLG (A Newman)
<b>3. Minutes</b>	The minutes of the meetings held on 10 and 16 September 2025 were approved as a correct record.	DLG (C Reynolds)
<b>4. Questions from County Councillors</b>	See annex.	
<b>5. Petitions and Public Address</b>	<p><u>8 - Update to the Street Lighting and Illuminated Assets Policy with respect to Part Night Lighting</u></p> <p>Councillor James Fry</p> <p><u>9 - Future Bus Regulation Options</u></p> <p>Councillor James Fry</p>	

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RECOMMENDATIONS CONSIDERED	DECISIONS	ACTION
	<p><u>13 - Oxfordshire County Council's Biodiversity Action Framework and Action Plan</u></p> <p>Councillor James Fry</p> <p><u>14 - Oxfordshire's Local Nature Recovery Strategy (LNRS)</u></p> <p>Councillor James Fry</p> <p><u>15 - Strategic Plan 2025-2028</u></p> <p>Councillor James Fry</p> <p><u>16 - S106 Project – Accelerated Delivery and Corporate Funding</u></p> <p>Councillor James Fry</p> <p><u>19 – Capital Programme Update and Monitoring Report</u></p> <p>Councillor James Fry</p>	
<b>6. Appointments</b>	There were no appointments to report to this meeting.	
<p><b>7. Reports from Scrutiny Committees</b></p> <p>Cabinet will receive the following Scrutiny reports:-</p> <p>Education and Young People Overview and Scrutiny Committee report on OSCP Safeguarding Annual Report</p> <p>Place Overview and Scrutiny Committee Report on Part-night Lighting</p> <p>Performance and Corporate Services Overview and Scrutiny Report on Strategic Plan 2025-28 (TO FOLLOW)</p>	Cabinet received the reports and will respond in due course.	

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RECOMMENDATIONS CONSIDERED	DECISIONS	ACTION
<p><b>8. Update to the Street Lighting and Illuminated Assets Policy with respect to Part Night Lighting</b></p> <p><i>Cabinet Member:</i> Deputy Leader with Responsibility for Climate Change, Environment and Future Generations  <i>Forward Plan Ref:</i> 2025/086  <i>Contact:</i> Caroline Coyne, Assistant Project Manager  Caroline.coyne@oxfordshire.gov.uk</p> <p>Report by Director of Economy and Place  <b>(CA8)</b></p> <p><b>The Cabinet is RECOMMENDED to</b></p> <p><b>A) APPROVE the updated Streetlighting and Illuminated Assets Policy and supporting Electrical Procedure (Annex A).</b></p> <p><b>B) APPROVE the adoption of the proposed Part-Night Lighting Implementation Framework (Annex B), following stakeholder engagement and public consultation feedback (Annexes E&amp;F).</b></p>	Recommendations approved.	DEP (C Coyne)
<p><b>9. Future Bus Regulation Options</b></p> <p><i>Cabinet Member:</i> Transport Management  <i>Forward Plan Ref:</i> 2025/091  <i>Contact:</i> Katherine Broomfield, Technical Lead  Katharine.broomfield@oxfordshire.gov.uk</p> <p>Report by Director of Environment and Highways  <b>(CA9)</b></p> <p><b>The Cabinet is RECOMMENDED to</b></p>	Recommendations approved.	DEH (K Broomfield)

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RECOMMENDATIONS CONSIDERED	DECISIONS	ACTION
<p>(a) approve the development of an Enhanced Partnership Plus (EP+) approach.</p> <p>(b) delegate the development of the EP+ to the Director of Environment &amp; Highways, including defining the desired and achievable outputs of the EP+, informed by passenger and resident feedback.</p> <p>(c) delegate formal adoption of the EP+ agreement to the Cabinet Member for Transport Management through the Cabinet Member Delegated Decisions process.</p> <p>(d) elect not to undertake any further work on bus franchising or municipal operation at the current time.</p>		
<p><b>10. Get Oxfordshire Working Plan</b></p> <p><i>Cabinet Member:</i> Future Economy and Innovation  <i>Forward Plan Ref:</i> 2025/128  <i>Contact:</i> Conor O'Sullivan, Assistant Project Manager            (Conor.O'Sullivan@oxfordshire.gov.uk)</p> <p>Report by Director of Economy and Place (CA10).</p> <p><b>The Cabinet is RECOMMENDED to</b></p> <p>a. <b>APPROVE</b> the Get Oxfordshire Working Plan on behalf of Oxfordshire County Council.</p> <p>b. <b>NOTE</b> Other partner organisations (including the Jobcentre Plus and NHS Buckinghamshire, Oxfordshire and Berkshire West Integrated Care Board) will be taking the</p>	<p>Recommendations approved.</p>	<p>DEP (C O'Sullivan)</p>

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RECOMMENDATIONS CONSIDERED	DECISIONS	ACTION
<p>Plan through their own approval processes.</p> <p>c. DELEGATE authority to the Director of Economy &amp; Place, in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Future Economy &amp; Innovation, to make any amendments arising from the Cabinet discussion and to account for feedback from partner organisations, and sign off the final plan.</p> <p>d. DELEGATE authority to the Director of Economy &amp; Place, in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Future Economy &amp; Innovation, to refresh and/or make revisions to the Plan as appropriate during its lifetime.</p>		
<p><b>11. Oxfordshire Safeguarding Children Partnership (OSCP) Annual Report</b></p> <p><i>Cabinet Member:</i> Children, Education and Young People's Services  <i>Forward Plan Ref:</i> 2025/096  <i>Contact:</i> Laura Gajdus, Business Manager (OSCB)            Laura.gadjus@oxfordshire.gov.uk</p> <p>Report by Director of Children's Services (CA11)</p> <p><b>Cabinet is RECOMMENDED to note the annual report of the Oxfordshire Safeguarding Children Partnership senior safeguarding partners and to consider the key messages.</b></p>	<p>Recommendations approved.</p>	<p>DCS (L Gajdus)</p>

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RECOMMENDATIONS CONSIDERED	DECISIONS	ACTION
<p><b>12. Oxfordshire Safeguarding Adults Board Annual Report 2024-25</b></p> <p><i>Cabinet Member: Adults</i>  <i>Forward Plan Ref: 2025/097</i>  <i>Contact: Steven Turner, OSAB Business Manager</i></p> <p>Report by Director of Adult Social Services (CA12)</p> <p><b>CABINET is RECOMMENDED to</b></p> <p><b>Note the findings of the Oxfordshire Safeguarding Adults Board (OSAB) Annual Report 2024-25. It is a requirement of statutory guidance that this report is shared with the Local Authority hosting the Safeguarding Board in their area.</b></p>	Recommendations approved.	DASS (S Turner)
<p><b>13. Oxfordshire County Council's Biodiversity Action Framework and Action Plan</b></p> <p><i>Cabinet Member: Place, Environment and Climate Action</i>  <i>Forward Plan Ref: 2025/141</i>  <i>Contact: Beccy Micklem, Team Leader – Landscape and Nature Recovery</i>  <i>Beccy.micklem@oxfordshire.gov.uk</i></p> <p>Report by Director of Environment and Place (CA13)</p> <p><b>The Cabinet is RECOMMENDED to approve the Biodiversity Action Framework and Biodiversity Action Plan contained in Annexes 1 and 2.</b></p> <p><b>The Cabinet is RECOMMENDED to delegate authority for approval of an annual update to the Biodiversity</b></p>	Recommendations approved.	DEP (B Micklem)

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RECOMMENDATIONS CONSIDERED	DECISIONS	ACTION
<p><b>Action Plan to the Director for Environment and Highways in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Place, Environment and Climate Action.</b></p>		
<p><b>14. Oxfordshire's Local Nature Recovery Strategy (LNRS)</b></p> <p><i>Cabinet Member:</i> Place, Environment and Climate Action  <i>Forward Plan Ref:</i> 2025/159  <i>Contact:</i> Chloe Edwards, LNRS Project Manager  Chloe.edwards@oxfordshire.gov.uk</p> <p>Report by Director of Environment and Highways <b>(CA14)</b></p> <p><b>Cabinet is RECOMMENDED to</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(a) <b>Approve the adoption of the Local Nature Recovery Strategy (LNRS)</b></li> <li>(b) <b>Support the County Council's commitment to deliver, monitor, and review the LNRS in future (post-adoption) in partnership with local people and organisations.</b></li> </ul>	<p>Recommendations approved.</p>	<p>DEH ( C Edwards)</p>
<p><b>15. Strategic Plan 2025-2028</b></p> <p><i>Cabinet Member:</i> Leader  <i>Forward Plan Ref:</i> 2025/167  <i>Contact:</i> Susannah Wintersgill, Director of Public Affairs, Policy and Partnerships  Susannah.wintersgill@oxfordshie.gov.uk</p> <p>Report by Director of Public Affairs, Policy and Partnerships <b>(CA15)</b></p>		

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RECOMMENDATIONS CONSIDERED	DECISIONS	ACTION
<p><b>The Cabinet is RECOMMENDED to:</b></p> <p>a) agree that the Strategic Plan 2025-2028 should be submitted to Council</p> <p>b) recommend the Council to approve and adopt the Strategic Plan 2025-2028.</p>	Recommendations approved.	DPAPP (S Wintersgill)
<p><b>16. S106 Project – Accelerated Delivery and Corporate Funding</b></p> <p><i>Cabinet Member:</i> Place, Environment and Climate Action  <i>Forward Plan Ref:</i> 2025/191  <i>Contact:</i> Hannah Battye, Head of Place Shaping  Hannah.battye@oxfordshire.gov.uk</p> <p>Report by Director of Economy and Place (CA16)</p> <p><b>The Cabinet is RECOMMENDED to:</b></p> <p>a) Note the approach to accelerated s106 developer agreement scheme delivery.</p> <p>b) Approve the programme of £27.5m investment as set out in Appendix A</p> <p>c) To delegate the approval of procurement, sign off and any detailed changes needed to be made to the programme of schemes to the Director for Economy and Place, in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Cabinet Member for Place, Environment and Climate Action</p>	Recommendations approved.	DEP (H Battye)



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RECOMMENDATIONS CONSIDERED	DECISIONS	ACTION
<p><b>17. Enterprise Zone Business Rates – Forecast and Update on Planned Use</b></p> <p><i>Cabinet Member:</i> Finance, Property and Transformation  <i>Forward Plan Ref:</i> 2025/183  <i>Contact:</i> Kathy Wilcox, Head of Corporate Finance  Kathy.wilcox@oxfordshire.gov.uk</p> <p>Report of the Executive Director of Resources and Section 151 Officer <b>(CA17)</b></p> <p><b>Cabinet is RECOMMENDED to:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) Note the intention to develop an Enterprise Zone Investment Plan.</li> <li>b) Consider and endorse the proposed Enterprise Zone investment priorities as set out at paragraph 41.</li> <li>c) Conditionally approve an allocation of up to £10m from the retained funding for Enterprise Zone 1 (Science Vale) to enable the delivery of priorities arising from the forthcoming OxRail strategy.</li> <li>d) Conditionally approve an allocation of up to £4m from Enterprise Zone 2 (Didcot Growth Accelerator) for infrastructure that directly enhances access to the Enterprise Zone itself.</li> <li>e) Conditionally approve an allocation of £0.700m in 2025/26 for additional economic strategy and delivery capacity and</li> </ul>	<p>Recommendations approved.</p>	<p>EDR (K Wilcox)</p>

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RECOMMENDATIONS CONSIDERED	DECISIONS	ACTION
<p>capability at Oxfordshire County Council and Enterprise Oxfordshire from the Enterprise Zone 1 retained business rate funding.</p> <p>f) Conditionally approve an on-going allocation of up to £1.254m each year for additional economic capacity and capability at Oxfordshire County Council and Enterprise Oxfordshire from 2026/27 – 2027/28, from the Enterprise Zone 1 retained business rate funding.</p> <p>g) Note that, regarding Enterprise Oxfordshire, the acceptance of those funds will be subject to agreement of the Enterprise Oxfordshire Board and Shareholder Committee and will be considered in light of both a revised business plan for 2025/26, and a business plan for 2026 plus.</p> <p>h) Delegate authority to the Director for Economy &amp; Place in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Future Economy &amp; Innovation, to oversee the preparation of business cases for recommendations e) and f).</p> <p>i) Note that the Cabinet Member for Future Economy &amp; Innovation, in conjunction with the Director for Economy &amp; Place, will undertake engagement with district councils regarding the Investment Plan and pipeline of investible propositions.</p> <p>j) Approve switching the use of remaining funding of £15.7m from</p>		

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RECOMMENDATIONS CONSIDERED	DECISIONS	ACTION
<p><b>supporting on-going borrowing costs to a direct contribution to finance the capital investment allocated towards the City Deals &amp; Pinch Point Programme.</b></p>		
<p><b>18. Business Management &amp; Monitoring Report – Revenue Update and Monitoring Report (August 2025).</b></p> <p><i>Cabinet Member:</i> Finance, Property and Transformation  <i>Forward Plan Ref:</i> 2025/181  <i>Contact:</i> Kathy Wilcox, Head of Corporate Finance  Kathy.wilcox@oxfordshire.gov.uk</p> <p>Report by the Executive Director of Resources and Section 151 Officer <b>(CA18)</b></p> <p><b>Cabinet is RECOMMENDED to</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) Note the report and annexes.</li> <li>b) Note that c£6.6m funding for pay inflation added to service area budgets is included in the virements relating to funding changes (paragraphs 27).</li> <li>c) Approve the following debt write offs as detailed in paragraph 28</li> <li>d) Approve the change to the Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) High Needs Block 2025/26 updated budgeted deficit (paragraphs 33 - 37).</li> </ul>	<p>Recommendations approved.</p>	<p>EDR (K Wilcox)</p>
<p><b>19. Capital Programme Update and Monitoring Report</b></p> <p><i>Cabinet Member:</i> Finance  <i>Forward Plan Ref:</i> 2025/013  <i>Contact:</i> Natalie Crawford, Capital Programme Manager</p>		

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RECOMMENDATIONS CONSIDERED	DECISIONS	ACTION
<p><a href="mailto:Natalie.crawford@oxfordshire.gov.uk">Natalie.crawford@oxfordshire.gov.uk</a></p> <p>Report by Executive Director of Resources and Section 151 Officer (<b>CA19</b>)</p> <p><b>The Cabinet is RECOMMENDED to:</b></p> <p><b>Capital Programme</b></p> <p>a. Note the capital monitoring position for 2025/26 set out in this report and summarised in Annex 1.</p> <p>b. Approve the updated Capital Programme at Annex 2 incorporating the changes set out in this report.</p> <p><b>Budget Changes / Budget Release</b></p> <p>c. Approve the inclusion of the Section 106 Accelerated Delivery Programme, into the capital programme, with a budget of £27.575m to be funded by S106 developer contributions and from £4m corporate resources agreed in February 2025 (para 67-68).</p> <p>d. To note the inclusion of several projects to deliver high-quality specialist supported housing with a total value of £2.8m, to be funded from the £5.9m allocation agreed by Council in February 2025 (para 56-57).</p>	<p>Recommendations approved.</p>	<p>EDR (N Crawford)</p>

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RECOMMENDATIONS CONSIDERED	DECISIONS	ACTION
<p><b>Funding Updates</b></p> <p>e. To note the following grant funding updates and allocations into the capital programme:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>£2.050m Consolidated Active Travel Funding (CATF) from Active Travel England (ATE), (para 70).</li> </ul>		
<p><b>20. Delegated Powers Report for July to September 2025</b></p> <p><i>Cabinet Member:</i> Leader  <i>Forward Plan Ref:</i> 2025/163  <i>Contact:</i> Colm Ó Caomhánaigh, Democratic Services Manager  <a href="mailto:colm.o'caomhanaigh@oxfordshire.gov.uk">colm.o'caomhanaigh@oxfordshire.gov.uk</a></p> <p>Report by Director of Law and Governance  <b>(CA20)</b></p> <p>There has been no use of delegated powers during this period to report to the Cabinet.</p>	<p>There was no use of delegated powers during the period July to September 2025.</p>	
<p><b>21. Forward Plan and Future Business</b></p> <p><i>Cabinet Member:</i> All  <i>Contact Officer:</i> Chris Reynolds, Senior Democratic Services Officer,  <a href="mailto:chris.reynolds@oxfordshire.gov.uk">chris.reynolds@oxfordshire.gov.uk</a></p> <p>The Cabinet Procedure Rules provide that the business of each meeting at the Cabinet is to include “updating of the</p>	<p>The Cabinet considered a list of items (CA) for the immediately forthcoming meetings of the Cabinet together with changes and additions set out in the schedule of addenda.</p> <p><b>RESOLVED to note the items currently identified for forthcoming meetings.</b></p>	

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<p>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 <b>CA</b>. 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.</p> <p>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.</p> <p><b><i>The Cabinet is RECOMMENDED to note the items currently identified for forthcoming meetings.</i></b></p>		
<p><b>22. Report on urgent decision by Chief Executive re supply of community equipment</b></p> <p><i>Cabinet Member: Adults</i>  <i>Forward Plan Ref: 2025/199</i>  <i>Contact: Izzie Rockingham, Commissioning Manager</i>  <a href="mailto:izzie.rockingham@oxfordshire.gov.uk">izzie.rockingham@oxfordshire.gov.uk</a></p> <p>Report by Director of Adult Social Care (CA22)</p> <p><b>The Cabinet is RECOMMENDED to note the report</b></p>	Noted.	
<p><b>23. Report on urgent decision by Chief Executive re Telecare Monitoring and Response Service</b></p> <p><i>Cabinet Member: Adults</i>  <i>Forward Plan Ref: 2025/200</i>  <i>Contact: Izzie Rockingham,</i></p>	Noted.	

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<i>RECOMMENDATIONS CONSIDERED</i>	<i>DECISIONS</i>	<i>ACTION</i>
<p>Commissioning Manager  <a href="mailto:lzzie.rockingham@oxfordshire.gov.uk">lzzie.rockingham@oxfordshire.gov.uk</a></p> <p>Report by Director of Adult Social Care  <b>(CA23)</b></p> <p><b>The Cabinet is RECOMMENDED to note the report</b></p>		
<p><b>24. For information only: Cabinet response to Scrutiny items (TO FOLLOW)</b></p> <p>Oxford temporary congestion charge  Strategic Plan 2025-28</p>	Noted.	
<p><b>25. Fire and Rescue Cover Model</b></p> <p><i>Cabinet Member:</i> Community Wellbeing and Safety  <i>Forward Plan Ref:</i> 2025/152  <i>Contact:</i> Jason Crapper, Area Manager  <a href="mailto:Jason.crapper@oxfordshire.gov.uk">Jason.crapper@oxfordshire.gov.uk</a></p> <p>Report by the Chief Fire Officer and Director of Community Safety <b>(CA25)</b></p> <p>The information contained in this report is exempt in that it falls within the following prescribed categories</p> <p>Paragraph 4 – Information relating to any consultations, negotiations, or contemplated consultations or negotiations, in connection with any labour relations matter arising between the authority or a Minister of the Crown and employees of, or office holders under, the authority</p> <p>and since it is considered that, in all the circumstances of the case, the public</p>		

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<p>interest in maintaining the exemption outweighs the public interest in disclosing the information.</p> <p><b>Cabinet are RECOMMENDED to Support the Fire and Rescue Cover Model being taken forward to public consultation with a view to authority being delegated to the Chief Fire Officer and Director for Community Safety Services (CSS) to undertake a 12-week employee, stakeholder and public consultation on the proposals and to report back to Cabinet thereafter.</b></p>	Recommendations approved.	CFODCS (J Crapper)



## **CABINET – 21 OCTOBER 2025**

### **ITEM 4 – QUESTIONS FROM COUNTY COUNCILLORS**

Questions are listed in the order in which they were received. Should any questioner not have received an answer in that time, a written answer will be provided.

<b>1. COUNCILLOR ANDREW CRICHTON</b>	<b>COUNCILLOR BEN HIGGINS, CABINET MEMBER FOR FUTURE ECONOMY AND INNOVATION</b>
<p>Item 10 – Get Oxfordshire Working Plan</p> <p>One of the issues mentioned in the report is limited connectivity and public transport. I see nothing in this plan that will help. How is this issue going to be addressed by the County Council?</p>	<p>The "Oxfordshire Works" Plan has been developed in accordance with the Department for Work &amp; Pensions guidance and provides an appraisal of the Oxfordshire labour market, its key barriers and challenges, and opportunities to make changes to the health &amp; wellbeing and employment &amp; skills systems to deliver better outcomes for residents and communities.</p> <p>One of the key structural challenges the Plan highlights is that, across the Oxfordshire labour market, the places people live are not always well-connected to economic opportunity. While it is beyond the scope of the Oxfordshire Works Plan to address public transport connectivity directly, the adoption of the Plan will ensure that the need to connect residents and communities to economic opportunity is a clear priority going forward.</p> <p>With regards to bus franchising, the rationale and benefits of pursuing an Enhanced Partnership Plus model are set out in the report before Cabinet. At this stage, Cabinet is being asked to approve the <u>development</u> of such a model and therefore there is no detail on what this may consist of.</p> <p>The key issue is funding – whatever model is pursued, provision of additional services (particularly in rural areas) costs money. The Council awaits a Government decision on our bus funding allocation for the next three years, which should be made by the end of 2025.</p> <p>Beyond this, the Council has extensive plans to enhance connectivity through the implementation of our Local Transport &amp; Connectivity Plan, including investment in mobility hubs, in active travel options, and plans to reduce congestion. Two great examples are our prioritisation of active travel and rail for Enterprise Zone funding which Cabinet has before it on 21 September, and the ambitious and deliverable rail plan which will be coming to Cabinet in November following an extensive consultation.</p>



**2. COUNCILLOR  
SUSANNA PRESSEL**

Item 19 – Capital Programme and Monitoring Report

Please can the Cabinet Member tell us why the essential work on the Kennington Railway Bridge (on the A423 section of the ring road) was not started long ago? Why have we waited until the condition of the bridge has worsened considerably and the cost has doubled?!

**COUNCILLOR ANDREW GANT, CABINET MEMBER FOR  
TRANSPORT MANAGEMENT**

It is not a case of waiting, this is a very complex and hugely important project which has to be coordinated with the Environment Agency's Oxford flood alleviation scheme, and needs careful planning, permissions and full funding before it can begin. When complete it will provide improved active travel experiences, help protect homes from flooding and retain a key road link currently used by 50,000 vehicles per day.

Work to apply for planning permission had to be undertaken and planning approval was granted in October 2024. Since then, officers have been working to finalise the detailed design, construction methodologies and plan utility diversions along with other preparatory work. There is a lot to navigate and work through – including the need for complex temporary work to ensure the existing structure remains stable and the road can stay open while we replace the bridge. We've also identified the need for complicated utility diversions while work takes place that have had to be worked through and require agreement with utility providers.

Officers are now focused on securing the extra £71 million needed for the project so that work can begin as soon as possible. The Department for Transport's anticipated structures fund is a strong fit and we have already made contact with the relevant government contacts in advance of the fund becoming available.

You have pointed out the worsening condition of the bridge and I agree that it is imperative that we move towards construction as soon as possible. In the meantime, the bridge remains safe to use and is regularly surveyed and monitored.

**3. COUNCILLOR BRAD  
BAINES**

Item 19 - Capital Programme Update and Monitoring Report:

To ask the Cabinet Member for Finance, Property and Transformation, why the Cabinet decided to move forward with the sale of County Hall prior to securing planning permission for the required increase in floorspace at Speedwell House?

**COUNCILLOR DAN LEVY, CABINET MEMBER FOR  
FINANCE, PROPERTY AND TRANSFORMATION**

The Property and Assets Strategy, agreed in 2022, outlined several priorities, including creating a roadmap for Oxford city accommodation, rationalising the operational portfolio countywide, developing a costed business case, utilising or disposing of underutilised properties, and advancing our decarbonisation programme. PwC was appointed to advise on available options. Working with the cross-party CAG group, they concluded that a decision on the future of the Council's city centre office accommodation was urgent. They recognised a market opportunity to maximise the Council's assets to support financial sustainability and boost the city's economic development.



	<p>It was noted that no decision on County Hall and Speedwell House had been made in over a decade, delaying significant investments. Retaining offices that are only 35% occupied at peak times was deemed unsustainable. The move to Agile working necessitates a responsive and collaborative workplace to meet long-term workforce needs and DTFT objectives.</p> <p>The Council had deferred decisions on County Hall, making current investment needs unaffordable. The mechanical and electrical systems are at the end of their life, posing operational failures. Additionally, County Hall's current configuration severely limits its contribution to the Net Zero Carbon target. The report highlighted that inaction was not an option due to the scale of investment required.</p> <p>The recommendation to consolidate in Speedwell House and dispose of County Hall was approved aftermarket engagement. This decision was to be progressed through the Council's capital governance processes, considering the financial position and market interest in the County Hall properties.</p> <p><b>Please note that our position and agreed actions remain firm.</b> We have consistently maintained that the entire programme, including the transition from County Hall to Speedwell House, will be fully funded by the sale of County Hall. This objective is steadfast and will be achieved as planned.</p>
<p><b>4. COUNCILLOR BRAD BAINES</b></p> <p>Item 19 - Capital Programme Update and Monitoring Report:</p> <p>To ask the Cabinet Member for Finance, Property and Transformation, what the financial implications are anticipated to be of (a) delays to the granting of planning permission for the expansion of Speedwell House or alternatively (b) of the inability of the Council to increase the floorplan of Speedwell House as previously envisaged?</p>	<p><b>COUNCILLOR DAN LEVY, CABINET MEMBER FOR FINANCE, PROPERTY AND TRANSFORMATION</b></p> <p>With the delays caused by the archaeological finds we have carefully reviewed our options available and have decided to proceed with redeveloping Speedwell House as our city centre hub, maintaining its current footprint rather than expanding it as initially intended. We believe this decision not only benefits us but also adds value to our residents, which is always in front of mind. The transformed Speedwell House will offer a high-quality modern, flexible space for staff and councilors to work, meet, and with our residents to attend meetings, events, and use our facilities. It will also significantly contribute to the regeneration of the southern end of the city. Which is so desperately needed.</p> <p>A smaller building and a less complicated construction project will mean that the overall cost of Speedwell House will be reduced.</p> <p>It should be remembered that the original design for Speedwell House reflected the space required of OCC prior to</p>



the knowledge of Local Government reorganisation and Devolution. As a result, the future requirements for Speedwell needed to be reconsidered. The anticipated LGR decision in the spring or early summer of 2026 has been taken into consideration and final building designs. More details will be provided as our plans evolve and finalise.

Our revised proposal contains key elements and meets all our base requirements from the original plan, including office space and touch down points and collaboration areas, meeting rooms, council chamber/conference facilities, the coroner's court, and inviting public to indoor and outdoor spaces. The primary change involves a reduction of desk space, positioning Speedwell as a city centre hub that complements our other properties within our portfolio in serving our residents.

The redeveloped Speedwell House is set to open in April 2028. As we plan to vacate County Hall by the end of 2026, we have already identified sufficient accommodation within our existing portfolio. If necessary, we will collaborate with our sister organisations to meet the needs of our staff and councillors across the county. This approach minimises interim costs while ensuring a seamless transition. We will share further details as we finalise our plans in the coming months, our focus remains on supporting our staff and councillors' well-being, fostering collaboration, and delivering uninterrupted services to our residents during this period.