

# **County Council**

**9 September 2025**

## **Agenda**

To: **Members of the County COUNCIL**

***Notice of a Meeting of the County Council***

**Tuesday, 9 September 2025 at 10.30 am**

**Council Chamber - County Hall, New Road, Oxford OX1 1ND**

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



Martin Reeves  
Chief Executive

September 2025

Committee Officer: **Democratic Services**  
E-mail: [CommitteesDemocraticServices@Oxfordshire.gov.uk](mailto:CommitteesDemocraticServices@Oxfordshire.gov.uk)

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# AGENDA

## 1. Minutes (Pages 1 - 12)

To approve the minutes of the meeting held on 8 July 2025 (**CC1**) and to receive information arising from them.

## 2. Apologies for Absence

## 3. Declarations of Interest - see guidance note

Members are reminded that they must declare their interests orally at the meeting and specify (a) the nature of the interest and (b) which items on the agenda are the relevant items. This applies also to items where members have interests by virtue of their membership of a district council in Oxfordshire.

## 4. Official Communications

## 5. Appointments

To make any changes to the membership of scrutiny and other committees on the nomination of political groups and to note any changes to the Cabinet made by the Leader of the Council.

## 6. 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 must be submitted no later than 9am three working days before the meeting i.e., 9am on Thursday 4 September 2025. Requests to speak should be sent to [committeesdemocraticservices@oxfordshire.gov.uk](mailto:committeesdemocraticservices@oxfordshire.gov.uk)

If you are speaking 'virtually', you may submit a written statement of your presentation to ensure that 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.

## 7. Questions with Notice from Members of the Public

The deadline to submit questions is 9am, five working days before the meeting i.e. 9am Tuesday 2 September 2025.

## 8. Questions with Notice from Members of the Council

**9. Report of the Cabinet (Pages 13 - 18)**

Report from the Leader of the Council.

The report summarises the decisions from the Cabinet meeting on 15 July 2025.

**10. Treasury Management Annual Performance Report 2024/25 (Pages 19 - 34)**

Report by the Executive Director of Resources & Section 151 Officer

This report sets out the Treasury Management position at 31 March 2025. Throughout the report, the performance for the 2024/25 financial year is measured against the budget agreed by Council in February 2024.

**Council is RECOMMENDED to note the council's treasury management activity and outcomes in 2024/25.**

**11. Review of Outside Bodies (Pages 35 - 68)**

Report by the Director of Law and Governance and Monitoring Officer

The procedures and guidance around Council appointments to Outside Bodies have not been reviewed since 2013. This report summarises the procedures and proposes amendments to the way in which representatives are currently appointed to Category B (Non-strategic) and Category C (Local) Outside Bodies.

**The Council is RECOMMENDED to:**

- a) agree that appointments to Category B non-strategic Outside Bodies, useful to the Council's work, as they relate to Council functions, be made by the Audit and Governance Committee;**
- b) agree that appointments to Category C Outside Bodies that request Council representation or are of primary value to local councillors/the local community, as they relate to Council functions, be delegated to the Monitoring Officer;**
- c) approve the Constitutional Amendments in Annex 1 to reflect these changes;**
- d) approve the definition of a Strategic Outside Bodies in paragraph 14 of this report;**
- e) note the Guidance for Members who are appointed to Outside Bodies adopted by the Audit & Governance Committee on 16 July 2025 (attached at Annex 2);**
- f) endorse the list of 'Strategic' Category A Outside Bodies in Annex 3;**
- g) confirm the appointments to Category B Outside Bodies in Annex 4;**

**h) note the list of Category C Outside Bodies in Annex 5.**

**12. Members' Allowances - Opposition Groups and Parental Leave (Pages 69 - 76)**

Report by the Director of Law and Governance and Monitoring Officer

The Independent Remuneration Panel was asked by the Director of Law and Governance and Monitoring Officer to provide early recommendations on two specific matters:

- i) The payment of Special Responsibility Allowances (SRAs) to the Leaders and Shadow Cabinet Members of the two equally sized opposition groups recognised as the official opposition, following the May 2025 elections.
- ii) The application of allowances for councillors taking parental leave, following the adoption of a new policy on 8 July 2025.

**The Council is RECOMMENDED to consider the Interim Report of the Independent Remuneration Panel, and in so doing to consider the following options, either:**

- a) To adopt the recommendations of the Independent Remuneration Panel on the Special Responsibility Allowances for the recognised Opposition Group(s) as set out in Annex A to this report; OR**
- b) To agree alternative values for any of the allowances, as the Council may determine; OR**
- c) If the Council does not wish to accept the Panel's recommendations at this time, in whole or in part, or to substitute alternative amounts, to agree a status quo Scheme of Allowances for 2025/26 for any unchanged aspect;**
- d) To agree the Independent Remuneration Panel's recommendation that basic and any Special Responsibility Allowances (SRAs) should continue to be paid to any councillor taking parental leave in accordance with the Parental Leave Policy approved by Council on 8 July 2025.**

**MOTIONS WITH NOTICE FROM MEMBERS OF THE COUNCIL**

*WOULD MEMBERS PLEASE NOTE THAT ANY AMENDMENTS TO MOTIONS WITH NOTICE MUST BE PRESENTED TO THE PROPER OFFICER IN WRITING BY 9.00 AM ON THE FRIDAY BEFORE THE MEETING*

**13. Motion from Councillor Izzy Creed**

This Council welcomes:

- 1. The Government's announcement of a programme of new Best Start Family Hubs.

2. The adoption of a national target of 75% of five-year-olds having a good level of development by 2028.

Council notes:

1. The preceding Sure Start programme was developed under the last Labour Government to provide holistic support to families with children under the age of 5. By 2010 a network of over 3,000 centres had been established.
2. A recent report by the Institute of Fiscal Studies has found that Sure Start had significant positive impacts on children's educational attainment as well as physical and mental health.

Council further notes:

1. That cuts by the Coalition Government to Local Government funding resulted in the closure of 1,168 of these valuable council-run children's centres.
2. In Oxfordshire, many children's centres were saved by being taken over by local charities and community groups. These centres continue to pay rent to the County Council and face significant financial pressures.

This Council requests:

1. The Cabinet considers how it may support existing community-operated children's centres in Oxfordshire to continue to operate, providing specialist and financial support where possible.
2. The Cabinet considers the development of a strategy to increase the range of services offered by existing children's centres in line with Government plans for new Best Start Family Hubs – prioritising those areas of greatest need.
3. The Cabinet considers if existing children's centres can help extend the reach of the County's re-established youth service.

#### **14. Motion from Councillor James Plumb**

Council notes the increasing pressures on Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) services across Oxfordshire, with rising demand, complex needs, and a need for stronger local support.

Previously, Oxfordshire County Council had a dedicated Cabinet Member for SEND Improvement, reflecting the importance of this area.

This role was recently removed, diluting specific leadership and focus on one of the most challenging areas of Council responsibility.

Council believes that:

1. Children and young people with SEND deserve a dedicated champion at the highest political level within the Council.
2. A single Cabinet Member with clear and focused responsibility for SEND would enhance decision-making, oversight, and transparency.
3. Reinstating this post would demonstrate a renewed commitment to improving outcomes for families who rely on these vital services.

Council therefore resolves to ask the Leader of the Council to:

- a) reinstate the Cabinet Member for SEND Improvement as a standalone portfolio within the Cabinet.
- b) ensure this role has clear responsibility for SEND policy, provision, and engagement with parents, carers, and stakeholders.
- c) provide a written response to this motion, setting out the steps being taken to strengthen leadership and accountability within SEND services.

## **15. Motion from Councillor Ian Middleton**

Oxfordshire hosts military air bases and training facilities, some of which are used by international forces.

Media reports have suggested that Oxfordshire air bases have been used to support Israeli Air Force actions in Gaza and that Israeli military personnel may have received training at the Defence Academy in Shrivenham.

Oxfordshire residents, faith groups and humanitarian organisations have expressed concern about the UK's potential complicity in war crimes in Gaza and the West Bank and this has already attracted demonstrations by protest groups around some Oxfordshire military bases.

Residents deserve transparency about the use of such facilities within the County and the local resources required to protect and police them given the likelihood of further protests in response to increasing evidence of war crimes and potential genocide in Gaza.

We therefore ask the Leader of the Council to write to the Police and Crime Commissioner requesting information on any increased costs and resource requirements for protecting facilities in Oxfordshire that are being accessed by the Israeli military.

## **16. Motion from Councillor Jane Hanna**

Council notes with concern that Oxfordshire Healthwatch and local Councils of Governors of Oxfordshire hospitals are to be abolished within a new Health and Social Care Act, and integrated into existing local departments, with queries diverted to the NHS App.

The Council endorses the work of Healthwatch Oxfordshire for listening and helping thousands of patients each year, recognising that many vulnerable residents do not use the NHS App. Their team shared patient and carer experiences in thirty eight reports influencing local improvements through the Health and Wellbeing Board, the Place Based Partnership and contributions to the Joint Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

As part of the ten year NHS plan, Health and Wellbeing Boards are required to develop neighbourhood plans with NHS partners to shift more resource to prevention and from hospitals to a neighbourhood health service model. The financial, workforce and integration challenges are significant. Patients and the public will need

- A trusted and credible local body, to speak for patients, offering constructive

- challenge and supporting communities' engagement
- their elected members and lower tier councils with relevant local knowledge engaged
- Safe public spaces, including scrutiny, to speak up

Council calls on the Leader and Cabinet to urgently consider how the Council working with NHS partners can safeguard and develop the Healthwatch function and engage and meaningfully consult with all local stakeholders to ensure the local delivery of national reforms at neighbourhood level best meet patient and community need.



## **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.

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.