



Delegated Decisions by Cabinet Member for Finance, Property and Transformation

Friday, 11 July 2025 at 2.00 pm

Room 3 - County Hall, New Road, Oxford OX1 1ND

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

Items for Decision

The items for decision under individual Cabinet Members' delegated powers are listed overleaf, with indicative timings, and the related reports are attached. Decisions taken will become effective at the end of the working day on 16 July 2025 unless called in by that date for review by the appropriate Scrutiny Committee.

Copies of the reports are circulated (by e-mail) to all members of the County Council.

These proceedings are open to the public

Martin Reeves
Chief Executive

July 2025

Committee Officer:

Email:

committeesdemocraticservices@oxfordshire.gov.uk

Note: Date of next meeting: 12 September 2025

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, but please give as much notice as possible before the meeting.

Items for Decision

1. Declarations of Interest

See guidance below.

2. Questions from County Councillors

Any county councillor may, by giving notice to the Proper Officer by 9 am two working days before the meeting, ask a question on any matter in respect of the Cabinet Member's delegated powers.

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.

Questions submitted prior to the agenda being despatched are shown below and will be the subject of a response from the appropriate Cabinet Member or such other councillor or officer as is determined by the Cabinet Member, and shall not be the subject of further debate at this meeting. Questions received after the despatch of the agenda, but before the deadline, will be shown on the Schedule of Addenda circulated at the meeting, together with any written response which is available at that time.

3. 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.

4. Minutes of the Previous Meeting (Pages 1 - 2)

To confirm the minutes of the meeting held on 16 May 2025 as an accurate record of proceedings

EXEMPT ITEM

It is RECOMMENDED that the public be excluded for the duration of Item 5 since it is likely that if they were present during that item 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 ANNEX TO THE ITEM HAS 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.

5. Asset Rationalisation Programme (Pages 3 - 24)

Cabinet Member: Finance, Property and Transformation

Forward Plan Ref: 2025/045

Contact: Henry White – Operational Manager – Estates, Assets and Investment

Report by Director of Property and Assets

The information contained in the annex is exempt in that it falls within the following prescribed categories:

Paragraph 3 Information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person including the local authority

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, in that there is an expectation that consultation and negotiation should take place primarily away from the glare of publicity and public scrutiny in keeping with employment law.

The Cabinet Member is RECOMMENDED to:

- (a) approve the plan within the completed Initial Business Case for the vacation of a leased premises in Osney Mead to produce revenue savings, and the allocation of previously agreed funding to source replacement properties for the affected services; and**
- (b) delegate decision-making on the purchase of the replacement properties to the Director of Property and Assets in consultation with the Section 151 officer.**

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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DELEGATED DECISIONS BY CABINET MEMBER FOR FINANCE

MINUTES of the meeting held on Friday, 16 May 2025 commencing at 10.05am and finishing at 10.08am.

Present:

Voting Members: Councillor Liz Leffman – in the Chair

Officers: Jack Nicholson, Democratic Services
Dale Stevens, Financial & Commercial Services (Item 5)

The Scrutiny Committee 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/the following additional documents:] and agreed as set out below. Copies of the agenda and reports [agenda, reports and schedule/additional documents] are attached to the signed Minutes.

17/25 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST
(Agenda No. 1)

There were no declarations of interest.

18/25 QUESTIONS FROM COUNTY COUNCILLORS
(Agenda No. 2)

There were no questions from County Councillors.

19/25 PETITIONS AND PUBLIC ADDRESS
(Agenda No. 3)

There were none.

20/25 MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING
(Agenda No. 4)

The minutes of the meeting held on 11 April 2025 were approved as an accurate record of proceedings.

21/25 TENDER FOR INSURANCE COVERAGE AND ASSOCIATED SERVICE (NOT BROKERING SERVICES)
(Agenda No. 5)

The Chair approved the recommendations.

RESOLVED to:

- a) approve, as a key decision, the commencement of the procurement of insurance cover for the Council; and

- b) delegate authority to the Executive Director of Resources & Section 151 Officer to approve the award of contracts following completion of the procurement.**

..... in the Chair

Date of signing 2025

Delegated Decision by the Cabinet Member for Finance, Property and Transformation

11 July 2025

Asset Rationalisation – West Oxford

Report by: Director of Property and Assets

RECOMMENDATION

1. **The Cabinet Member is RECOMMENDED to:**
 - (a) **approve the plan within the completed Initial Business Case for the vacation of a leased in premises in Osney Mead to produce revenue savings, and the allocation of previously agreed funding to source replacement properties for the affected services; and**
 - (b) **delegate decision-making on the purchase of the replacement properties to the Director of Property and Assets in consultation with the Section 151 officer.**

The Proposal

2. One of the key aims of the Property Strategy is to release our leased in estate to make revenue savings and optimise the use of Oxfordshire County Council's (OCC) own freehold estate.
3. Of the remaining leased in premises still occupied by OCC, the largest is a property in west Oxford that is home to two frontline operational OCC services. The rent is over £100,000 per annum with a further £142,000 per annum of property costs (service charge, utilities etc). The lease expires in 2030 with a tenant break clause in 2027.
4. The property extends to just over 15,000 sq ft and comprises light industrial space with ancillary office and storage areas.
5. The two services needs have been assessed, and the actual need is closer to 10,000 sq ft in one building, or 7,000 sq ft and 3,000 sq ft across two buildings.
6. The proposal is to vacate the expensive leased in property and either refurbish existing Council held property, if appropriate, or invest in freehold acquisitions that will add to the capital value of the Councils portfolio. The benefit will be rental and property savings as well as a new capital asset which should increase

in value. The saving is expected to be in the region of £186,000 per annum as well as future pressure savings of £30,000 per annum and a capital saving of £213,000 from the current decarbonisation programme.

7. The budget is currently held within the Asset Rationalisation Programme. An Initial Business Case was approved in March 2025. An OBC will be produced when the recommended options are found and approved so that we can move forward with an acquisition without delay.
8. The key decision is required to allocate the funding to the capital programme as the proposed solution is over £2.0 million.

Corporate Policies and Priorities

9. This proposed course of action aligns with the Property Strategy and the objectives of the Asset Rationlisation Programme.

Financial Implications

10. The capital funding for this project has obtained Capital Governance approval at the first stage by way of an Initial Business Case that has been through Property Capital Board and Strategic Capital Board.
11. The project is fully funded from the Asset Rationalisation Programme budget.
12. There are revenue savings generated from the project in the form of rent and property running costs.

Comments checked by:

Drew Hodgson,
Strategic Finance Business Partner
Email: drew.hodgson@oxfordshire.gov.uk

Legal Implications

13. The potential break date for the lease of the subject property is 28 February 2027 and notice needs to be served at least 6 months before that (if the break clause is to be exercised effectively). This means notice needs to be served on the landlord before the end of August 2026. For the break to be exercised, OCC will have to have vacated the property by 28 February 2027.
14. The landlord of the subject property may pursue a claim for damages against OCC alleging that OCC has failed to keep the property in the standard of repair required by the lease (a “dilapidations claim”). Funds should be set aside for this.

15. The acquisition of any new property will give rise to a Stamp Duty Land Tax liability and this needs to be taken into account in any cost/benefit analysis.

Comments checked by:

Richard Hodby

Solicitor

Email: Richard.Hodby@oxfordshire.gov.uk

Staff Implications

16. The course of action will result in further staff costs for OCC Property and Legal, which will be recharged against the project budget, as previous staff costs have been.
17. The two Heads of Service for the teams using the property have been fully consulted to date and as the project moves through governance, the wider teams will be consulted.

Equality & Inclusion Implications

18. Any specific accessibility requirements have been built into the needs assessment already carried out with the affected service lines.
19. The project does not have any further equality and inclusion implications with no change to current operations except for the location.

Sustainability Implications

20. The current property is a 1970/80 light industrial building that is not carbon neutral. Any new building either refurbished or purchased and fitted out will have de-carbonisation works built in as part of the required works.



Vic Kurzeja, Director of Property & Assets

Annex 1 Approved Initial Business Case

Contact Officer: Henry White, Operational Manager - Property
henry.white@oxfordshire.gov.uk

19 June 2025

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By virtue of paragraph(s) 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A
of the Local Government Act 1972.

Document is Restricted

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