



Cabinet Tuesday, 24 January 2023

ADDENDA

4. Questions from County Councillors (Pages 1 - 4)

Responses attached

5. Petitions and Public Address (Pages 5 - 6)

List of speakers attached.

**7. Report from Scrutiny Committee on the Budget & Business
Planning Report (Pages 7 - 28)**

Report of the Performance and Corporate Services Overview & Scrutiny
Committee: Scrutiny of Post-Consultation Budget Proposals 2023/24 – 2025/26

Report of the Performance and Corporate Services Overview & Scrutiny
Committee: Scrutiny of the Council's Proposed Strategic Plan 2023-25

**8. Budget & Business Planning Report 2023-24 - January 2023
(Pages 29 - 52)**

Amendments to the documents:

Annex A: two lines amended as attached

Updated Section 4.2 attached: there were two rows inadvertently hidden. So
while budget increase 24CS33 and 24CCCS7 are included in the totals and
summaries (ie. the numbers are correct overall) it was not possible to see them.

10. Other Reports from Scrutiny Committees (Pages 53 - 60)

Report of the People Overview & Scrutiny Committee: Scrutiny of Send Finances

18. Forward Plan and Future Business (Pages 61 - 62)

Update attached

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CABINET – 24 JANUARY 2023

ITEM 4 – QUESTIONS FROM COUNTY COUNCILLORS

Questions	Cabinet Member
<p>1. COUNCILLOR JOHN HOWSON</p> <p>I welcome the resurfacing/patching of the Woodstock Road in North Oxford scheduled for March 2023. Does this mean a date has been set for plans to be consulted upon for the improvements for cyclists and pedestrians that were last consulted upon in 2021?</p>	<p>COUNCILLOR ANDREW GANT, CABINET MEMBER FOR HIGHWAY MANAGEMENT</p> <p>A revised date for progressing the Woodstock Road proposals, which were consulted upon in 2021, has not yet been finalised.</p> <p>Following the Future Oxfordshire Partnership decision in Sep '22 regarding the Infrastructure programme being delivered via the Housing & Growth Deal, a revised allocation of around £3m funding remains available for delivering a scheme on the Woodstock Road.</p> <p>As officers continue to develop a scheme that fits within this revised budget, this will be informed by the responses received through the 2021 consultation.</p> <p>The revised scheme will also take into consideration the planned traffic filter trial which is anticipated to impact on traffic levels on the cities radial routes.</p>
<p>2. COUNCILLOR LIAM WALKER</p> <p>Some parents in Hailey, West Oxfordshire have been informed the spare seats scheme will be ending despite the service being cost neutral and there being no consultation with parents. Can the cabinet member respond as to why this decision has</p>	<p>COUNCILLOR LIZ BRIGHOUSE, DEPUTY LEADER AND CABINET MEMBER FOR CHILDREN, EDUCATION & YOUNG PEOPLE'S SERVICES</p> <p>The bulk of home to school transport in Oxfordshire is provided because there is a statutory entitlement to free travel, for example because a child attends the nearest school and lives over the statutory walking distance (over 3 miles for those aged 8 to 16). There are also a few discretionary elements agreed in the Home to School Transport Policy. The costs of providing this statutory service have been increasing significantly with growing fuel and staffing costs.</p>

Questions	Cabinet Member
<p>been made and how this helps reduce car journeys as part of the administrations priorities to do so.</p>	<p>The Spare Seat Scheme applies across all home to school transport operated on behalf of the council. In common with most local authorities responsible for home to school transport, Oxfordshire allows parents of children who are not entitled to local authority funded travel to purchase spare seats. There is a distance related charge and when seats are sold it is made clear to parents that the service cannot be guaranteed in future years. We would not normally commission additional capacity to accommodate fare paying passengers. Where there is spare capacity, based on the number of eligible children and the vehicle that operates on the route, we make it available to parents to purchase.</p> <p>This arrangement helps defray the cost to the council of providing home to school transport and also helps a number of families in getting their children to school. The letter to parents referenced the scheme being 'cost neutral'. This is a reference to the contract that applies in the area being longstanding but for September 2023 the service in the area must be retendered. To ensure cost efficiency routes will be optimised (based on eligible children) and as a result there will be fewer spare seats than were achieved on the previous contract.</p> <p>Regarding Hailey, there is no requirement for the local authority to provide home to school transport to Wood Green School because there is a safe walking route between Hailey and Witney. This assessment was carried out by a professional road safety expert.</p> <p>The terms and conditions of the Spare Seat Scheme are clear that there is no requirement to consult with the parents of fare paying passengers prior to making a decision on whether a route should be discontinued or capacity reduced. This is because this is not a statutory requirement.</p>
<p>3. COUNCILLOR LIAM WALKER</p> <p>Residents have reported seeing adverts for the councils 20MPH policy</p>	<p>COUNCILLOR GLYNIS PHILLIPS, CABINET MEMBER FOR CORPORATE SERVICES</p> <p>The communications campaign around the 20mph speed limit has been running since February 2022 in three phases. Its aim is to raise awareness about the</p>

Questions	Cabinet Member
<p>on Sky, YouTube, the Daily Mail website and on a digital noticeboard in Buckinghamshire. Can the cabinet member outline how much money has been spent advertising the administrations 20MPH programme?</p>	<p>20mph speed limit among Oxfordshire residents and commuters into the county and to encourage and sustain long-term behaviour change.</p> <p>The campaign includes a mixture of PR and communications using the council's channels and partners' channels, which are at no cost, and paid advertising, which is detailed below.</p> <p>Phase 1 This was an initial awareness-raising campaign, primarily focused on building up understanding within communities that they could apply to become a 20mph zone.</p> <p>The campaign ran for a two-month period (February-March 2022) and a total of £13,032 was spent on external advertising and the production of materials. This included: digital and social media advertising, bus backs, radio advertising, and the production of an animation.</p> <p>Phase 2 This phase focused on raising awareness of the changes and encouraging behaviour change among Oxfordshire residents. The focus was targeted on areas where 20mph speed limits have or are being implemented or routes into those areas. A key aim of this phase was for the message to be seen in different places and in different situations (eg online, on the radio, outdoors) so that people began to recognise and remember it.</p> <p>The campaign ran for a three-month period (October – December 2022) and a total of £40,433 was spent on external advertising and the production of materials. This included digital signage in supermarkets and shopping centres across Oxfordshire, radio advertising, digital and social media advertising, and advertising on petrol pumps in service station forecourts.</p> <p>Phase 3 This phase built on phase 2 but targeted a much wider geographic area and broader demographics, including communities across Oxfordshire, communities</p>

Questions	Cabinet Member
	<p>across the border from Oxfordshire who regularly commute or travel into the county, and heavy road users such as delivery drivers. A greater volume of paid advertising was used in order to span a much wider geographic area and to reach people who were less likely to follow Oxfordshire County Council's communications channels.</p> <p>The campaign is running during January and February 2023 and a total of £98,211 has been planned on external advertising and the production of materials. This includes digital signage in supermarkets and shopping centres across Oxfordshire and along commuter routes into the county; advertising on Sky TV; radio advertising; online audio advertising; digital and social media advertising, petrol pump advertising; and advertising on bus backs.</p>

CABINET – 24 January 2023

ITEM 5 – PETITIONS AND PUBLIC ADDRESS

Item	Speakers
6 Proposal from Oxford United FC to OCC as Landowner	Paul Peros Cllr David Robey, Chair Kidlington PC Niall McWilliams Janine Bailey Garry Allen Richard Hague Susanne McIvor Ken Wroe Christopher Lowes Darren Male / Morgan Warner Katrina Jenkins Victoria Campbell Riva Casley Collette Thompson Martin Halstead Harry Hall Ollie Dare James Dunn Danielle Walker Cllr Nigel Simpson Cllr Ian Middleton Cllr Liam Walker
13 Consultations plans for water supply	Cllr Sally Povolotsky

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REPORT OF THE PERFORMANCE AND CORPORATE SERVICES OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE: SCRUTINY OF POST- CONSULTATION BUDGET PROPOSALS 2023/24 – 2025/26

Cllr Eddie Reeves

Chair of the Performance and Corporate Services Overview & Scrutiny Committee

January 2023

RECOMMENDATION

1. The Cabinet is **RECOMMENDED** to:
 - a) Note the observations contained in the body of this report and to respond to the recommendations with the proposed responses in Annex 1, 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. This report contains both observations and formal recommendations from the Scrutiny Committee. Under section 9FE of the Local Government Act 2000 the Cabinet has a duty to respond to the formal recommendations. It does not have to respond to the observations, though it may do so if it wishes.

INTRODUCTION AND OVERVIEW

3. At its meeting on 19 January 2023, the Performance and Corporate Services Overview and Scrutiny Committee considered the Council's post-consultation budget proposals for the period 2023/24 – 2025/26, reflecting amendments made in light of the Council's new financial pressures and levels of income, and responses received to the consultation exercise. This followed previous consideration of the consultation budget proposals for revenue spending, which resulted in a report detailing the Committee's initial reactions to those proposals. At that meeting capital budgets and fees and charges were not considered, but they were considered in the January meeting.
4. This report focuses solely on the Council's budget proposals and does not cover the Committee's views relating to the proposed Strategic Plan 2023-25, which are detailed in a separate report.
5. The Committee would like to thank the large number of Cabinet members and corporate directors who attended the meeting, and to recognise the hard work

put in to reflect the significant changes to the Council's funding position between the Committee's December and January meetings.

SUMMARY

6. Councillor Callum Miller, Cabinet Member for Finance, presented to the Committee on the main changes between the consultation and post-consultation budget proposals. Cllr Miller explained that the Council's funding position had been updated since the 09 December 2022 meeting of the Committee, based on information received following the Local Government Policy statement published on 12 December 2022, as well as changes to the budget proposals published as part of the report for the Committee on 09 December 2022. Changes also reflected feedback from the budget engagement and consultation and the Committee's observations following the previous meeting.
7. The Council's goals were threefold: repair finances and ensure preparedness for the future; ensure sufficient funding to deliver key frontline services; and take into account the consultation findings when planning areas of savings and investments.
8. The Cabinet Member reminded the Committee that the budget had been set within a period of significant financial pressure driven by inflation and demand. The political and economic situation was volatile and further pressures that emerged since the Autumn Statement totalled £19.4m. On top of the £8.7m budget gap (per the Committee's December report), the total budget gap before provision local governance finance settlement totalled £28.1m.
9. The Cabinet Member elaborated on the following key points:
 - a. Total funding changes for 2023/24 totalled £37.1m;
 - b. There was £9m remaining funding available to respond to the consultation outcomes, reduce savings or fund further pressures;
 - c. Total proposed changes to savings came to £5.1m;
 - d. Total proposed budget increases came to £3.8m;
 - e. In addition to the above revenue sums, the Council tax surplus notified was £10.1m more than expected and available one-off in 2023/24;
 - f. There was a further £0.8m available in the budget priorities reserve, totalling £8.5m. There was still £7.1m to be allocated, of which there were proposals to allocate £4.2m to fund capital investments;
 - g. £0.6m remained to support the implementation of further initiatives in the revenue priority fund; and
 - h. The balance in the investment pump-priming reserve was £2m which had been allocated to three main areas.
10. In response, the Committee focused its queries on a number of issues, particularly the current risk profile of capital spending and its alignment with the Council's strategic priorities, inflation expectations, fees and charges, and

issues surrounding proposed reversals to revenue-funded projects – in particular drainage, tree-planting and highway, cycleway and pavement improvements.

11. Having provided less-formal feedback to Cabinet on the consultation budget by way of submitting a number observations, this report responds to the greater certainty contained within the post-consultation budget and contains eight formal recommendations to Cabinet alongside three observations. The recommendations and observations cover, in updated fashion, many of the topics raised in the Committee's previous submission to Cabinet as well as issues relating to its consideration of capital expenditure, fees and charges, and the amendments to the budget proposals following the consultation. The Committee's areas of comment relate to i) future in-year budget monitoring ii) inflation expectations iii) spending priorities, iv) climate impacts of the budget, and v) the underpinning of the Council's fees and charges schedule.

OBSERVATIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

i) Future In-year Budget Monitoring

12. Although the sums involved in capital expenditure tend to be larger than in the revenue budget, the outturns tend to be more predictable and not as prone to significant swings as experienced when there are surges in demand for Council services. Historically, this lower risk has meant that capital expenditure has not been subject to the same regularity of scrutiny. However, within a high-inflation environment as is being experienced at present the risks associated with the capital programme are significantly increased, and with it the corresponding level of scrutiny should increase. The most direct risk is with the Council relying on borrowing to part-fund its capital programme, interest rates - the cost of that borrowing – become a far greater financial liability. It simply costs significantly more to borrow the money needed to deliver the capital projects and that exposes the Council to greater risk.
13. This increase in borrowing costs has a knock-on effect on the risk profile of the capital pipeline which also needs to be monitored. Whilst business cases are approved with a margin of safety built in, over the last year the Bank of England base rate has increased from 0.25% to 3.5%, a fourteen-fold increase, and the rise is expected to continue at least in the short term. Such a rapid increase in costs puts pressure on those margins, and it is important that the Council is availed promptly of changes to give the most time to decide how to react to any pressures on the business case. Furthermore, cost rises are not simply limited to borrowing costs; inflation is the measure of how goods and services become more expensive over time. All parts of the supply chain for capital projects will be increasing, leading to increased delivery costs. The typical mitigation strategy for managing cost-increases in capital project is through value-engineering or de-scoping of a project. However, there is a limit to which value-engineering can be responsible for managing cost increases and it is likely the current environment falls beyond that limit, and it is more

likely that scope-reductions will have to be employed. This is a threshold at which the Committee feels Scrutiny should be involved in discussions.

14. Finally, the more hostile financial environment increases counter-party risk. Complex projects rely on a large number of goods providers, and a failure to deliver goods or services at the required time can have ongoing knock-on effects on the timing (and therefore savings) on which the projects are predicated. The Council may be able to manage the additional burdens associated with the higher interest rate environment, but this is not to say that none of its suppliers are over-extended.
15. Owing to these increased risks, the Committee is keen that there should be a commensurate increase in oversight. As such, it suggests that the performance of major capital projects is regularly reported on to the Performance and Corporate Services Committee, as well as to the existing oversight provided by the Audit and Governance Committee.

Observation 1: That in an inflationary environment the capital programme carries with it increased risk.

Recommendation 1: That Cabinet report back to Performance and Corporate Services Scrutiny as large capital projects develop in addition to oversight by Audit & Governance.

16. Having specifically highlighted the elevated risk relating to capital projects, the point made previously by this Committee - that the overall financial environment is volatile and that therefore even predictions based on prudent assumptions may prove incorrect over time – remains true. On the basis of this threat, the Performance and Corporate Services Scrutiny Committee interprets its responsibility for budget monitoring to require closer engagement with relevant Cabinet members and senior officers in-year to ensure that responses to deviations from budget forecasts are given timely scrutiny.

Recommendation 2: That Cabinet members for Finance and Corporate Services maintain a close ongoing dialogue to ensure effective ongoing monitoring of both the revenue and capital sides of the budget, with said Cabinet members reporting proactively to the committee on any in-year areas of concern as soon as reasonably practicable.

ii) Inflation Expectations

17. As mentioned above, inflation has been a huge challenge to the setting of the budget, largely because the speed at which it has increased has led to the Council's existing medium-term estimates to be significantly underestimated. This rapid rise has left the Council needing to call on contingency funding to cover above-budgeted wage rises, and put a £37.9m pressure on the budget for 2023/24 alone. For scale, this is more than the Council spends on its Public Health and Community Safety directorate, and over half the budget for Environment and Place which services the counties' roads. It is important to note that the Committee recognises that the Council was not alone in being

caught out by this; for example, even the OBR's inflation expectations have almost doubled since their last update. Rather, the point is raised to underline the seriousness of the challenge that inflation poses both through the potential for overspend, and the difficulty in managing any overspend. To that end it wishes to make recommendations to ensure as that forecasts are robust as they can be.

18. The first point tallies with assurances provided to the Committee, that inflation estimates are produced based not solely on OBR forecasts, but service-specific data. The Committee would like to reiterate the importance of this. The sheer variety of the work that the Council is involved in – from education to roads to social care and all the sub-categories those headlines encompass – means that the contexts for the different areas of operation are varied, and not just financially. The markets in which the Council operates in are liable to heavy political intervention and regulation, respond to deep demographic and social changes, and can harness the benefits of technology at different rates. As such, their inflation rates are very individual. With inflation so strongly influencing the budget, the Committee is keen to stress the need for individualised inflation estimates at a service level which use best practice methods, and for those estimates then to be given a secondary level of challenge by others. The Committee also sees value in capturing and reporting on the accuracy of these estimates, not so much for the ability to read through into future budgets, but for the purposes of improving forecasting accuracy in the future.

Recommendation 3: That Council ensures a) that directorates' reported service pressures from inflation reflect specific service-level inflation where relevant rather than nation-wide OBR inflation, b) that directorates' estimates follow a best practice procedure and are checked at a central level, and c) that in the next budget the Council provides a table showing the inflation outturn versus budgeted estimates.

iii) Spending Priorities

19. In its last submission to Cabinet the Committee raised the point about the difficulty in tracing how and to what degree the Council's budget proposals reflect its strategic priorities. Notwithstanding the caveat noted at the time the point was made, that the need to allocate budgets to specific services which deliver against multiple strategic priorities makes budgets an imperfect vehicle to express this, the Committee stands by this comment. It remains of the view that it is difficult to determine whether the Council's spending priorities as expressed in the budget align with its strategic priorities.

Observation 2: The Committee finds it difficult to get a sense of how money has been spent and how or whether that relates to the Council's priorities.

20. One idea put forward by the Committee to ensure that revenue projects deliver against the Council's priorities is to apply a similar prioritisation framework as is used in selecting capital projects, where alignment with and contribution

towards the Council's strategic priorities forms part of the prioritisation process. Regrettably, positive surprises around the Council's funding position of the scale experienced this year are unlikely to occur very often, meaning the need for large-scale prioritisation of multiple projects in a short time frame is also likely to be rare. Nevertheless, the Committee feels that having an agreed framework through which to judge and rank potential areas of spend would be beneficial, providing a considered and (more) objective way of identifying which proposals should, when they are being compared, be funded and which should be put up as savings.

Recommendation 4: That the Council develops a revenue pipeline of projects whose order of priority is justified by agreed principles, including their contribution towards the Council's strategic aims.

21. The improvement of the Council's funding position between the launch of the consultation budget proposals and the release of the post-consultation budget proposals has allowed certain savings to be reversed and be re-included within the budget. The Committee welcomes the fact that these proposals, as stated in the report submitted to the committee, 'reflect feedback from the budget engagement and consultation as well as the observations on the proposals shared by the Performance and Corporate Services Overview and Scrutiny Committee.'

22. The issue that the Committee wishes to raise is the fact that having been identified as savings previously, these reinstated proposals are likely to be amongst the weakest within the overall budget. If greater spending is to be made elsewhere, additional income must be generated, or savings must be found. Those proposals which are of most marginal benefit are the suitable place to look for such savings. A key factor in making a rational decision as to whether to redirect spending from these marginal projects to other areas of Council activity is the degree of public support they command. Are some which were deemed unviable when the Council had less money actually popular with the public, or would they not have noticed or cared if these savings had been realised? On this basis, the Committee feels it would be valuable to members of the Council when they are debating the final terms of the budget to know more about the feedback from the public on each reinstated proposal, and suggests that a table is included as part of the report pack for the Budget Council meeting. This would both inform and significantly expedite any discussion on potential amendments.

Recommendation 5: That the Cabinet provides within the Budget Council meeting pack a table showing how savings proposals which were reversed after the consultation budget correspond to the feedback and level of support expressed by the consultation.

iv) Climate Impact

23. Prior to the Committee's consideration of the budget, it discussed the proposed Strategic Plan 2023-25. During questioning it was confirmed that

responding to the Climate Emergency through the Council's policy and influence was amongst the most important strategic priorities for the administration. The Committee supports the Council's policy of undertaking a Climate Impact Review of its budget proposals but suggests that at present this undertaking may not be as effective as it could be.

24. Paragraphs 8 and 15 of the budget's Climate Impact Review states that none of the revenue or capital 'proposals were identified as materially negatively impacting the council's overall ability to meet its climate action commitments'. However, the Committee was afforded little detail as to the rationale for such a conclusion. Some proposals appear complicated to reconcile with the Council's climate commitments, for example proposal 24CS32, which provides increased provision for home to school transport of children with SEND. The Scrutiny function is in the process of completing a review of home to school transport and so is aware of the complexities of working this out – whether bus usage would counter the extra miles covered by taxis getting to and from their base to a home, for example. On the other hand, proposal 24EP28, to extend lower prices for park and ride tickets is a far easier matter for which to make a climate-positive case. To be clear, the Committee is not suggesting that climate objective should override all other considerations, but when comparing proposed allocations with one another climate impacts, which are a key corporate priority, should form an important part of deciding what the Council funds and to what extent. At present, it is not possible to make anything but broad-brush comparisons between proposals which fall towards the outer edges of the spectrum because there is insufficiently granular information.
25. The Committee's view is that to address this the Council must further embed the consideration of climate impacts into the consideration of budget proposals, principally to ensure they are undertaken at an earlier stage. For instance, the Climate Impact Review states that 'Climate Impact Assessments of the proposals in Annex 4b [ie those proposed to be taken forward] will be carried out as full business cases are developed following our capital governance process. Potential climate impacts have been identified from the information available to us at the current time.' This suggests that investment decisions for capital projects are being made at a point when their consequences are hazy. Clearly, it is not reasonable to expect that fully-detailed climate impacts would be known prior to the development of a business case. However, it is also clear that it does not occupy as central a space in proposal design and evaluation as indicated by the importance accorded to it by the administration. The Committee suggests that budget suggestions in forthcoming years should provide an evidenced rationale of their expected climate impacts as part of their initial submissions, and that proposals adopted within the proposed budget should provide this as a key detail.

Recommendation 6: That the Council gives closer consideration in forthcoming financial years to mainstreaming tackling the climate crisis as a principle of budget design with proposals evaluated at the earliest opportunity according to their impact on the Council's climate targets. This decision

making should be able to be evidenced in the presentation of the budget and accompanying narrative.

26. One clearly climate-positive area discussed in detail was the Council's planned provision of £3m in capital funding to plant a minimum of 1,120 trees annually as a way of replacing felled trees. Given that over the last three years the Council felled 3942 more dead or dangerous trees than it has planted, and that the Council has identified a need to plant an additional 23,000 trees by 2050, the Committee queried whether the level of funding was truly sufficient. In response it was explained that out-sourced, contracted planting and tree management was extremely high and inefficient, particularly in the early stages when young trees require regular watering. The Council's intention was, however, to partner with parish and town councils, who would often take on responsibility for watering and looking after the young trees. This would significantly leverage the number of trees capable of being delivered from available funding. However, it was pointed out that even if it is more efficient and parishes want to participate, looking after young trees does still involve a cost, and many have set their budgets. Likewise, it would be necessary to make clear who had responsibility for a tree in the event that any liability arose from it; would parishes look after trees on behalf of the Council, or would they become owners and assume any subsequent liabilities for them?

27. The Committee is fully supportive of increased tree-planting and would welcome any steps which can be taken to leverage the effectiveness of funding to resource this. However, it feels that before the Council can move forward with this as a plan it needs to consult with potential partners to get a clearer understanding of the financial and legal issues involved, and that this clarity will ensure this good proposal is not stymied by complications further down the line. The Committee also encourages the Council to consider working with city and district councils also; these are bigger landowners and not all trees planted provide the same benefits. The greater the options available, the more tree planting can be optimised to provide maximum environmental, wildlife or social benefit.

Recommendation 7: That the Council works with parish, town, city and district councils to develop a clearer understanding over the financial and legal issues involved in joint working with regards to tree-planting.

28. Given the breadth of benefits tree-planting provides, the Committee suggests that the Council should be tracking and reporting on its success in planting trees and the net effect that has on the Council's progress towards its additional 23,000-tree goal.

Recommendation 8: That the Council tracks and reports on a) the number of trees it is responsible for planting over the next year, and b) the net impact once trees which have been cut down are also considered.

v) **Fees and Charges**

29. The Council's schedule of fees and charges operates to deliver on two overriding objectives. The first is income generation, either to cover the cost of providing a service or to generate a surplus which can be used to support other areas of the Council's activity. The second is to support behaviour change by providing an incentive towards pro-social activity or a disincentive towards anti-social activity. However, the Committee recognises that within this area there are many complexities; there may often be a trade-off between the two key objectives – encouraging certain behaviour via pecuniary means tends to indicate subsidy, which does not maximise income. Equally, fees and charges operate in very different commercial contexts. For some, the Council is one of few or the only provider of a service, whereas for others it is operating within a competitive market or it is operating in partnership and the impact of its choices go beyond the Council itself. In recognition of that, some of the Council's fee-levels are regulated, set in discussion with others or even determined by central government, whilst for others the Council has far greater flexibility.
30. The Committee notes that feedback from the public on the consultation shows that a net level of support of 11% for the Council increasing revenue through higher fees and charges. It is possible that this moderate rather than strong level of support may reflect recognition that fees and charges should support behavioural change too; this is certainly the view of the Committee. However, the Committee finds it difficult to explore whether these objectives are being maximised or balanced correctly owing to the variety of factors which influence each particular fee or charge-setting decision. For example, it was suspected that filming charges are low compared to what Oxford University colleges charge. Providing benchmarking data would give a better sense of whether the fees are indeed set at an appropriate level. Likewise, discussion was devoted to whether permits for on-street parking were set at the correct level to deter car use (and simultaneously increasing income), and whether there were any reasons why greater market segmentation could not be employed to allow steeper charges in wealthier areas and comparatively lower charges in poorer ones.
31. As referenced, the Committee is keen that the Council leverages as much as possible the benefits arising from its ability to levy fees and charges, but it does not feel it is able to scrutinise whether it is indeed doing that with the current information. Further, it should not be forgotten that fees and charges are one source of interaction residents and visitors have with the Council. It is important that the Council be able to justify the reasons why it charges what it does on the basis of public transparency. The Committee hopes in future years that that transparency will be provided.

Observation 3: It is difficult with the current schedule of fees and charges to unpick whether opportunities for income maximisation or positive behavioural change are being taken. The Committee would expect in future years fuller narrative to explain the basis by which proposed fees and charges levels are set.

NEXT STEPS

32. The Performance and Corporate Services Overview & Scrutiny Committee does not intend to revisit the budget once it has been passed by Council. However, as noted within the recommendations it hopes to engage in closer ongoing scrutiny of the Council's finances in the forthcoming civic year.

Contact Officer: Tom Hudson, Principal Scrutiny Officer
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Annex 1: Draft Cabinet Response to Recommendations

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 requested¹ and, if the report or recommendations in questions were published, the response also must be so. **NB Owing to interactions with other constitutional and meeting timeframes, these recommendations must be responded to on the day received.***

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: Post-Consultation Budget Proposals 23/24 – 25/26

Lead Cabinet Member(s): Cllr Callum Miller, Cabinet Member for Finance

Date response requested: 24 January 2023

Response to report:

Response to recommendations:

Recommendation	Accepted, rejected or partially accepted	Proposed action (if different to that recommended) and indicative timescale (unless rejected)
That the Council reports back to Performance and Corporate Services Scrutiny as large capital projects develop in addition to oversight by Audit & Governance.	Agreed	<i>Cabinet adopted a revised approach to capital governance in July 2022. The purpose is to exercise closer internal scrutiny of the capital portfolio and of high value programmes and projects within it. Cabinet undertook a capital prioritisation exercise in October</i>

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

Overview & Scrutiny Recommendation Response Pro forma

		<p><i>2022 which is reflected in the proposed changes to the capital programme (including two additional schemes into the firm programme for 23/24 and a number of high priority schemes in the pipeline) document submitted to Cabinet for decision on 24 January. The revised Capital and Investment Strategy now includes a prioritisation framework – this will be used to assess all future proposed schemes, and any proposed changes in costs/scope/time to existing schemes, before they can be considered in the firm capital programme. The Cabinet Member for Finance and officers would be glad to take part in a workshop with members of the PCSOSC to present these approaches and answer questions.</i></p> <p><i>The Capital Monitoring report is published quarterly and submitted to Cabinet. It is suggested that the PCSOSC considers whether it would like to review this document as a means to scrutinise in-year developments within the capital programme.</i></p> <p><i>To note: it was highlighted at the Committee that there was an omission in the capital prioritisation framework on page 4, the word ‘target’ should be added to the end of bullet point ‘f’. This has been amended.’</i></p>
<p>That Cabinet members for Finance and Corporate Services maintain a close ongoing dialogue to ensure effective ongoing monitoring of both the revenue and capital sides of the budget, with said Cabinet members reporting proactively to the committee on any in-year areas of concern as soon as reasonably practicable.</p>	<p>Agreed</p>	<p><i>The Cabinet members for Finance and Corporate Services will continue to collaborate closely over the monitoring of the Council’s performance and budgetary outturn. The key document for this activity is the Business Management and Monitoring report, which is reported to Cabinet on a regular basis. PCSOSC is invited to review this document as a means to scrutinise any areas of concern.</i></p>

Overview & Scrutiny Recommendation Response Pro forma

<p>That Council ensures a) that directorates' reported service pressures from inflation reflect specific service-level inflation where relevant rather than nation-wide OBR inflation b) that directorates' estimates follow a best practice procedure and are checked at a central level, and c) that in the next budget the Council provides a table showing the inflation outturn versus budgeted estimates.</p>	<p>Agreed</p>	<p><i>(a) Many contracts contain clauses that uprate prices annually in line with inflation; the Council will always seek to negotiate the best value from its contracts through procurement and active contract management. (b) Directorates build their future budget estimates using sector-specific estimates of inflation and their local knowledge of cost and demographic pressures. The Council believe this reflects best practice and will continue to seek any ways to improve estimates through peer review and dialogue with other authorities. (c) The next budget will include a table showing the relevant inflation rate used in budget setting and the latest in-year rate (the outturn will not be available until the end of the financial year in April 2024; the budget will be consulted upon in November 2023).</i></p>
<p>That the Council develops a revenue pipeline of projects whose order of priority is justified by agreed principles, including their contribution towards the Council's strategic aims.</p>	<p>Agreed</p>	<p><i>The Council will develop a set of potential revenue priorities as part of the budget process for 2024/25.</i></p>
<p>That the Cabinet provides within the Budget Council meeting pack a table showing how savings proposals which were reversed after the consultation budget correspond to the feedback and level of support expressed by the consultation.</p>	<p>Agreed</p>	
<p>That the Council gives closer consideration in forthcoming financial years to mainstreaming tackling the climate crisis as a principle of budget design with proposals evaluated at the earliest opportunity according to their impact on the Council's climate targets. This decision making should be able to be evidenced in the</p>	<p>Agreed</p>	<p><i>The Council is committed to tackling the climate crisis and is constantly seeking ways to mainstream this within its policies and procedures. The Council will seek to learn from best practice in other authorities to ensure that its budget decisions are informed by an understanding of their impact on climate targets and that this is evidenced in the next budget.</i></p>

Overview & Scrutiny Recommendation Response Pro forma

presentation of the budget and accompanying narrative.		
That the Council works with parish, town, city and district councils to develop a clearer understanding over the financial and legal issues involved in joint working with regards to tree-planting.	Agreed	
That the Council tracks and reports on a) the number of trees it is responsible for planting over the next year, and b) the net impact once trees which have been cut down are also considered.	Agreed	

REPORT OF THE PERFORMANCE AND CORPORATE SERVICES OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE: SCRUTINY OF THE COUNCIL'S PROPOSED STRATEGIC PLAN 2023-25

Cllr Eddie Reeves

Chair of the Performance and Corporate Services Overview & Scrutiny Committee

January 2023

RECOMMENDATION

1. The Cabinet is **RECOMMENDED** to:
 - a) Note the observations contained in the body of this report and to respond to the recommendation with the proposed response in Annex 1, 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. This report contains both observations and a formal recommendation from the Scrutiny Committee. Under section 9FE of the Local Government Act 2000 the Cabinet has a duty to respond to formal recommendations. It does not have to respond to the observations, though it may do so if it wishes.

INTRODUCTION AND OVERVIEW

3. At its meeting on 19 January 2023, the Performance and Corporate Services Overview and Scrutiny Committee considered the Council's proposed Strategic Plan covering the period 2023-2025. The Committee would like to thank all Cabinet members and senior officers for its development, and particularly Cllrs Leffman, Phillips and Enright, who fielded the majority of questions at Committee.
4. The details of the Strategic Plan were included within the Committee's budget papers, which is logical. However, the Committee has decided to write a separate report for reasons of clarity and ease of access for the public.

SUMMARY

5. Cllr Liz Leffman, Leader of the Council, provided an overview of the Council's proposed Strategic Plan for 2023/24 to 2025/26 to the Committee.

6. The 2023-2025 framework was built from nine strategic priorities, 25 commitments and 49 objectives, of which the latter were SMART and would be summarised in a report to Cabinet on a bimonthly basis. This draft Strategic Plan would be considered at Council following approval of the budget.
7. Cllr Glynis Phillips, the Cabinet Member for Corporate Services, added that the nine strategic priorities were grouped into three themes – ‘greener, fairer, healthier’ – and were linked to engagement and consultation feedback received from Oxfordshire Conversation, budget consultation and the resident satisfaction survey.
8. Whilst mainly a continuation of the previous Strategic Plan there were two new objectives which related to the cost of living crisis and the NHS and integrated care system.
9. An annual performance report would capture the achievement, success and challenges throughout the first year of the Strategic Plan. At the end of the fourth quarter, the underlying supporting performance measures across all nine priorities would be reviewed and updated. Targets enabling the delivery of the priorities would also be reviewed, updated and reported within a business management report that was considered at Cabinet on a bi-monthly basis.
10. In response, the Committee explored a number of issues, most notably around which priorities were felt to be the most crucial by the administration; monitoring and reporting arrangements; the benefits and challenges of partnership working; the links between the Strategic Plan and other Budget and Policy Framework documents; green growth and rural transport. The report makes a number of observations and one formal recommendation. These comments focus on i) the relationship between the Strategic Plan and other Budget and Policy Framework documents, and ii) – iv) issues arising from discussion on inequality, partnership working and overlooked commitments.

OBSERVATIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

i) Budget and Policy Framework

11. The most important policy documents the Council produces form what is known as the Budget and Policy Framework, those documents which are of such significance that they are not delegated to the Cabinet to agree but must be put before full Council for adoption and within the terms of which all Cabinet decisions must remain. Whilst a Strategic Plan summarises the Council’s high-level ambitions, much of the heavy lifting of seeing those ideals realised is actually achieved through the policies contained within the Budget and Policy Framework. As such, it would be good practice to ensure a clear consistency in approach between the Council’s overarching strategic direction and these policies. The Performance and Corporate Services Committee has provided its comment on the budget and the difficulties it, and therefore perhaps the public also, finds in determining whether the Council’s spending

apportionments reflect its strategic priorities. However, the same is true in relation to the recently-agreed Local Transport and Connectivity Plan, another Policy Framework document. The Committee suggests that they, and the public, should be able to be assured that the Council's stated aspirations are underpinned by a wider policy framework which also aligns with them. The Committee notes that alongside the Strategic Plan lie 49 objectives which will help in illustrating this, but it is of the view that there should be a more direct commentary on how the outline of what the Council has agreed to do in its Budget and Policy Framework aligns with the strategic priorities it has chosen to address.

Observation 1: That there is not a clear way to see how (or whether) the Council's proposed Strategic Plan corresponds to what it has already committed to do within its Budget and Policy Framework, and if this is a challenge for the Committee it is liable to be even more acute for members of the public.

ii) Partnership Working

12. The stated vision of the Council in its Strategic Plan is 'to lead positive change by working in partnership to make Oxfordshire a greener, fairer and healthier county'. Partnership working is clearly foundational to what the Council wishes to achieve, yet the Committee has two points it wishes to make about this in relation to the draft proposals.

13. The first is to recognise that working with others can act as a multiplier, that by partnering with those with particular skills, knowledge and capacity in a certain area – be they private sector, other areas of the public sector or members of the VCS, large or small – well-designed co-working can yield outsized benefits for the Council and for residents. However, for this to be the case it is necessary to have something to multiply in the first place, or you end up with nothing. This is to say that the Committee recognises the core requirement for partnership working, but to note that partnership working does not obviate the need for the Council to achieve certain things irrespective of whether its partners contribute as fully as anticipated. The Strategic Plan is, after all, a strategic plan for the Council, and not a partnership of all its stakeholders. The Committee would prefer to see greater focus on the Council committing to things which it can deliver, rather than being beholden to the performance of partners. If there is no clear dividing line as to what is the Council's responsibility and what is not there is little accountability if priority outcomes committed to are not delivered.

Observation 2: That the centrality of partnership working to the Council's Strategic Plan could lead to a blurring of responsibility for outcomes. It is important that the Council shows in its strategic plan what, within the areas for which it holds primary responsibility, it intends to achieve or else it will prove difficult to be held directly accountable for outcomes which have not been realised.

14. The second point is that in view of the centrality of partnership working, the page of the Strategic Plan dedicated to this topic is remarkably selective, focusing on tackling the cost of living crisis and housing Ukrainian refugees. The point is taken that partnership working is a thread which runs throughout the entire document, but in that case why is it necessary to have a dedicated page detailing two particular instances of partnership working? Particularly as there is a page (Local Businesses and Partners) which provides much broader detail on with whom the Council will work with and to what purpose. The specificity does not draw attention to the breadth of partnership working the Council intends to undertake, it narrows its scope. To the Committee, the exact purpose or intention of this page is not clear, and its contents undermine the strong messaging around partnerships elsewhere in the document. If the Committee is unclear, so too is likely to be this messaging for the public. As such, it suggests revisiting this page to reinforce the partnership working message rather than detract from or confuse it.

Observation 3: That the page on Working in Partnership is more specific than would be expected for presenting a cross-cutting approach. The consequence is to narrow the focus of the Council's partnership working, which the Committee does not believe to be the original intention.

iii) Inequality

15. When asked to identify to the Committee whether within the nine priorities put forward there were any particular overriding or core ones, two were identified: the response to climate change, and tackling inequality. The Committee supports these ambitions and has suggestions as to how both might be extended or better reflected within the Strategic Plan. Concerning inequality, the Committee's primary issue relates to what is written above – that notwithstanding the vital importance of partnership-working in addressing it as an issue, the Council must be assured that in and of itself it can move the dial regarding inequalities in those areas for which it has primary responsibility. The area of focus from the Committee, therefore, is not so much the priority itself but the infrastructure the Council has to support its delivery. As a point across the entire Strategic Plan priorities, but most particularly concerning that relating to tackling inequality, the Committee would like to see clear KPIs which can be used to measure the Council's impact in making progress against its strategic priorities. Measurement of performance, however, is not an end in itself; the Council must have the ability to deliver change, and with this issue being one of the Council's two core corporate priorities it must be assured that it has the organisational capacity to effect change. The Committee is keen that the Council has in place the tools to ensure that its skills, structure, knowledge and resourcing are sufficient to address the current and anticipated social problems and resultant inequalities.

Recommendation 1: That the Council demonstrates due regard to capacity building within the organisation to tackle social problems and resultant inequalities.

iv) Overlooked Issues

16. Although consideration of the Strategic Plan provides opportunity to explore some of the wider issues around the Council's priorities, more prosaically it also affords the Committee the opportunity to make a case for including issues which are not presently in the text. Of these, the Committee puts forward two.
17. The first concerns rural bus services, a topic which touches on multiple strategic priorities – 'put action to address the climate emergency at the heart of our work', 'invest in an inclusive, integrated and sustainable transport network', 'tackle inequalities in Oxfordshire' and 'work with local businesses and partners for environmental, economic and social benefit' most notably. Sufficient service levels, whether there is a bus at all, service standards, whether the bus can be relied upon to be run and keep to schedule, and affordable prices are all core issues for those in rural areas who may wish to use the bus to get to conurbations for employment or recreation, particularly those who are less wealthy. It is the view of the Committee the topic of rural bus services is a nexus where multiple strategic priorities intersect. The Committee would hope that the Council might devote greater space in its Strategic Plan to this issue accordingly owing to the opportunity it affords to make positive contributions to so many of the Council's strategic priorities.

Observation 4: That the topic of rural bus services acts as a nexus for multiple strategic priorities, meaning progress against which provides progress in many of the Council's priority areas. Accordingly, the Committee would expect greater clarity within the Strategic Plan of the importance of rural bus services.

18. The second concerns the relative importance of promoting green growth in the county. The Council recognises the urgency required in responding to the effects of climate change, making specific reference to the climate emergency. The challenge it faces is making its own transition to reduced carbon and supporting others in the county to do so in a time where resources are stretched and investment has become historically more expensive to secure. For this to happen, the additional costs involved must largely be covered from trading surpluses rather than subsidy. The Council's response in this regard is intelligent – to seek to facilitate steps which will enable the county to make money from the transition to low carbon by developing and providing the required goods and services. However, there are many steps on the journey, from ideas to objective change on the ground. Intelligent though it is, the Committee is unsure whether the Council's commitment to facilitating research and collaboration is sufficient a contribution, given the importance of this issue, and would suggest that the Council give further thought as to how it might support green growth in addition to its existing commitments.

Observation 5: That the Council's objective to facilitate research and collaboration to drive environmental innovation may not be sufficiently ambitious a response to Climate Emergency, and it may wish to give further thought as to what else it might do to support local green growth.

NEXT STEPS

19. The Performance and Corporate Services Overview & Scrutiny Committee does not intend to revisit the Strategic Plan until a future iteration is developed.

Contact Officer: Tom Hudson, Principal Scrutiny Officer
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Annex 1: Draft Cabinet Response to Recommendations

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 requested¹ and, if the report or recommendations in questions were published, the response also must be so. **NB Owing to interactions with other constitutional and meeting timeframes, these recommendations must be responded to on the day received.***

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: Strategic Plan

Lead Cabinet Member(s): Cllr Liz Leffman, Leader of the Council, Cllr Glynis Phillips, Cabinet Member for Corporate Services

Date response requested: 24 January 2023

Response to report:

Response to recommendations:

Recommendation	Accepted, rejected or partially accepted	Proposed action (if different to that recommended) and indicative timescale (unless rejected)
That the Council demonstrates due regard to capacity building within the organisation to tackle social problems and resultant inequalities.	Agreed	The council uses workforce planning, organisational development and learning and development activities to ensure it has the skills and capabilities it needs to deliver and design service functions and create new policies and initiatives in line with strategic priorities.

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

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Amendments to [Annex A](#), the Review of Charges: Customers, Culture & Corporate Services

Service Area	Charge	Unit	Current Charge £	Updated Charge 2023/24 £	Change %	Date effective from	Discretionary or Statutory	VAT Class	Comments
School Meals	Universal Infant Free School Meal, OCC maintained schools	Per Meal	2.34	2.40	3%	01/09/2022	Discretionary	SR	All UIFSM charged at £2.40 due to increase in funding to schools
School Meals	Universal Infant Free School Meal, Academies	Per Meal	2.34	2.40	3%	01/09/2022	Discretionary	SR	All UIFSM charged at £2.40 due to increase in funding to schools

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New and Previously Agreed Budget Changes Summary 2023/24 - 2025/26				
Directorate	2023/24 £000	2024/25 £000	2025/26 £000	Total £000
Previously Agreed Pressures & Investments				
Adult Services	10,766	10,388	9,450	30,604
Children's Services	5,125	6,906	7,593	19,624
Environment & Place	804	2,722	3,109	6,635
Community Safety and Public Health	244	456	466	1,166
Customers, Culture & Corporate Services	1,196	1,335	1,364	3,895
Total Previously Agreed Pressures & Investments	18,135	21,807	21,982	61,924
Previously Agreed Savings				
Adult Services	-250	-350	0	-600
Children's Services	233	0	0	233
Environment & Place	1,271	-1,028	-160	83
Community Safety and Public Health	107	0	0	107
Customers, Culture & Corporate Services	-249	249	0	0
Total Previously Agreed Savings	1,112	-1,129	-160	-177
Previously Agreed COVID-19 Funding				
Adult Services	-890	-890	0	-1,780
Children's Services	-362	-1,588	-1,017	-2,966
Environment & Place	-750	-400	0	-1,150
Community Safety and Public Health	0	0	0	0
Customers, Culture & Corporate Services	-91	-304	0	-395
Total Previously Agreed COVID-19 Funding	-2,093	-3,182	-1,017	-6,291
Total Existing Planned Changes	17,155	17,497	20,805	55,456
New Budget Increases				
Adult Services	21,926	12,382	2,470	36,778
Children's Services	16,813	3,468	2,353	22,634
Environment & Place	10,395	850	825	12,070
Community Safety and Public Health	0	0	0	0
Customers, Culture & Corporate Services	9,878	-2,052	425	8,251
Changes to be allocated if needed (additional 2% pay inflation)	5,200	2,861	800	8,861
Total New Budget Increases	64,212	17,509	6,873	88,594
New Pressures Funded From COVID-19 Reserve				
Adult Services	325	0	-325	0
Children's Services	312	-312	0	0
Environment & Place	0	0	0	0
Community Safety and Public Health	0	0	0	0
Customers, Culture & Corporate Services	401	-130	-96	175
Total New Pressures Funded From COVID-19 Reserve	1,038	-442	-421	175

Directorate	2023/24 £000	2024/25 £000	2025/26 £000	Total £000
New Budget Reductions				
Adult Services	-17,498	-580	-562	-18,640
Children's Services	-3,349	620	110	-2,619
Environment & Place	-2,555	-2,090	-150	-4,795
Community Safety and Public Health	-200	200	0	0
Customers, Culture & Corporate Services	-4,664	-2,552	0	-7,216
Changes to be allocated	-1,600	0	0	-1,600
Total New Budget Reductions	-29,866	-4,402	-602	-34,870
Total Directorate Changes	52,539	30,162	26,655	109,355

Adult Services - New and Previously Agreed Budget Increases and Reductions

Ref	Description	2023/24	2024/25	2025/26	Total
		£000	£000	£000	£000
	Previously Agreed Pressures & Investments				
	Demographic Growth	8,782	8,500	8,500	25,782
	Pay Inflation (2.5%)	789	808	826	2,423
	Contract Inflation	967	887	920	2,774
	Income Inflation (2.0%)	-771	-747	-796	-2,314
23AS2	Long term COVID-19 Infection Control Requirements after grant funding assumed to finish in 2021/22 - based on increased staffing recruitment and retention, cost of PPE as free issue is withdrawn and new testing requirements. Estimate of ongoing costs is based on taking 15% of the current Infection Control Grant provided in 2021/22. Pressure initially met from COVID-19 reserve in 2022/23 and 2023/24. Council funding will be added as the COVID-19 funding falls out (see COVID12 below).	890	890		1,780
23AS5	Employment & Wellbeing - Community Carers / Connectors - support clients with a learning disability, to enable them to take part in their communities more independently. Provide support to find volunteering roles, and/or leisure activities, according to their interests until they feel confident to continue on their own.	150	150		300
23CS2	Special Educational Needs & Disabilities (SEND) Commissioning and Brokerage Team - additional dedicated commissioning capacity for SEND placement spend of circa £25m per annum. Additional resources required, saving to be reversed, see new pressures	-41	-100		-141
	Total Previously Agreed Pressures & Investments	10,766	10,388	9,450	30,604
	New Budget Increases				
24AD1	Changes to the cost of care packages funded by the council	17,275	12,282	2,470	32,027
24AD2	Additional brokerage staffing capacity is needed as a result of increasing demand arising from hospital discharges and the need to reduce costs in Special Educational Needs & High Needs Block placements.	251	100		351
24AD17	In the context of heightened demand and complexity across health and social care sectors following the pandemic, and the introduction of the CQC Social Care Assurance framework from April 2023, it is proposed that this additional funding is made available to Adult Social Care to help manage the risk these challenges pose. Further work is required to identify exactly how the funding will be utilised, however it is clear that some targeted action will be required to address known areas of risk, ahead of CQC inspection. In addition there is a need to expand the permanent workforce both inside and outside of the council, and that financial risk is increasing with demand and complexity beyond that previously anticipated as part of the budget proposals	4,400			4,400
	New Budget Increases	21,926	12,382	2,470	36,778
	Pressures met from COVID-19 Reserve in 2023/24				
24COVID5	Funding for additional commissioning and contract activity for social care arising as a result of the on-going impact of COVID-19.	325		-325	0
	Total Pressures, Investments, Budget Increases	33,017	22,770	11,595	67,382

Adult Services - New and Previously Agreed Budget Increases and Reductions					
Ref	Description	2023/24	2024/25	2025/26	Total
		£000	£000	£000	£000
	Previously Agreed Savings				
23AS13	Out of Area Placements - Bring people back to Oxfordshire to improve outcomes and increase the utilisation of supported accommodation.	-250	-350		-600
	Total Previously Agreed Savings	-250	-350	0	-600
	New Budget Reductions				
24AD3	Due to a national shortage of qualified social workers and occupational therapists, recruitment into operational social work teams can take time. Adult Services are launching a refreshed approach to recruitment, including investment in new professional leadership and development roles specifically the Principal Social Worker and Principal Occupational Therapist. As this approach is embedded there is expected to be a one-off saving in 2023/24 whilst vacancies are filled.	-1,000	1,000		0
24AD4	The council is committed to supporting people to live independent healthy lives in their own homes. Our programme of reviewing care packages will ensure that residents are supported to maximise all the opportunities that are available to them in the community to achieve better outcomes.	-3,510	-670	-385	-4,565
24AD5	Population changes: the impact of the "Oxfordshire Way" on improved outcomes for people means reductions in demand for services are expected to continue in 2023/24 and beyond.	-1,814	-500		-2,314
24AD6	Maximise the use of supported living accommodation within Oxfordshire so that people are able to remain close to home.		-65		-65
24AD7	Shared Lives - increase the number of people who can find a home through the shared lives scheme. Build further on the success of the service to provide options for respite for a wider range of individuals.	-148		-74	-222
24AD8	Review and adjust pooled budget arrangements to ensure increased health needs are accurately reflected in the funding for the pools following demographic change over recent years.	-5,500			-5,500
24AD9	Meet costs from an anticipated 5% uplift to the Better Care Fund in 2023/24	-1,395			-1,395
24AD10	Fund more prevention activities through the Better Care Fund to meet the shared priorities of the health and social care system.	-1,305			-1,305
24AD11	Ensure that residents in need of support are offered solutions that are proportionate to their needs and keep them at the heart of their community, by offering them opportunities in extra care housing instead of residential care.	-460			-460
24AD12	Work with residents, the voluntary sector, health partners, and community groups to deliver The Oxfordshire Way. This means that people will be enabled to live healthy lives in their own homes for as long as possible. We will ensure that people do not enter into residential care when there is a better outcome that they could achieve by accessing equipment, technology, or Extra Care Housing.	-1,753	-350	-175	-2,278
24AD13	The Oxfordshire health and social care system is dedicated to supporting people to return home to continue their recovery after a period of hospital based care. The Council will work with system partners to ensure that where people do require a period of bed based recovery in a nursing home or community hospital, they are supported to return home as quickly as possible by accessing the full range of statutory and voluntary services that can support people to remain independent and healthy in their own homes.		-495		-495
24AD14	Interim care pathway flats - pilot opportunity to use a small number of flats in new extra care schemes for hospital discharge.	-41			-41

Adult Services - New and Previously Agreed Budget Increases and Reductions					
Ref	Description	2023/24	2024/25	2025/26	Total
		£000	£000	£000	£000
24AD15	Reduction in the cost of social care assessments contribution due to public health (drug and alcohol provider) providing a more efficient, integrated, and holistic assessment	-72		72	0
24AD16	Fund eligible adult social care expenditure from the Public Health Reserve on a one-off basis in 2023/24	-500	500		0
	Total New Budget Reductions	-17,498	-580	-562	-18,640
	Total Savings and Budget Reductions	-17,748	-930	-562	-19,240
	Adjust funding for pressures met from COVID-19 Reserve in 2022/23				
COVID12	Long term COVID-19 Infection Control Requirements - based on increased staffing recruitment and retention, cost of PPE as free issue is withdrawn and on-going testing requirements. Funding of £1.780m in 2022/23 will reduce to £0.890m in 2023/24 and then be removed from 2024/25. Replaced by base budget funding in 23AS2.	-890	-890		-1,780
	Total Funding for COVID-19 Pressures	-890	-890	0	-1,780
	Total Adult Services	14,379	20,950	11,033	46,362

Children's Services - New and Previously Agreed Budget Increases and Reductions					
Ref	Description	2023/24	2024/25	2025/26	Total
		£000	£000	£000	£000
	Previously Agreed Pressures & Investments				
	Demographic Growth	4,550	5,726	5,494	15,770
	Pay Inflation (2.5%)	1,398	1,430	1,463	4,291
	Contract Inflation	289	252	255	796
21CS16	Final element of the phased fall out of a temporary £0.4m increase in funding in 2020/21 for social care staffing team pressures to meet additional demand.	-246			-246
21CS21	Family safeguarding model - this was an invest to save project which introduced a new model in children social care. This will provide support to the whole family and is a preventative model which has proven in other areas to both enhance outcomes for children and their families and manage demand. An initial investment of £2.2m was made in 2020/21 and the remaining budget falls out in 2023/24 and 2024/25.	-944	-945		-1,889
21CS26	Fostering project - this was an invest to save project to support a new offer to in-house foster carers in Oxfordshire with the aim to increase the percentage of children in care living with in-house foster carers, as opposed to independent fostering or private residential care. £0.6m was initially invested in 2020/21 and was expected to produce £1.0m of savings in total.	-230			-230
23CS1	Special Educational Needs (SEN) Casework Team - An annual 10-12% increase in demand for Education Health & Care Plans (EHCPs) and the number of approved EHCPs which require an annual review has created a pressure across the SEN service including case workers, educational psychologists, quality and advocacy support. Additional capacity is needed to ensure quality and timeliness are in line with expected standards. Efficiencies of £0.100m per annum are planned for 2023/24 and 2024/25 and included within these pressures. Some of the pressure is being funded by the COVID-19 reserve in 2022/23 and 2023/24.	388	343	281	1,012
23CS5	Children's Placement Demography and Price Inflation - increase to existing planned demography of £4.0m. COVID-19 has had an impact in this area due to more children being in placements than expected, for longer periods of time, along with an unusually large increase in the unit price for a placement. The demographic increases link to delays in courts and changes in individual circumstances resulting in children spending longer in care than they may have done. It is assumed the price inflation returns to usual rates from 2022/23. Demography is reviewed on an annual basis and adjustments will be made in future years to reflect any changes.	100	100	100	300
23CS8	Pause works with women who have experienced multiple removals of children from their care. Through intensive relationship-based programmes women take a pause in pregnancy and break destructive cycles that cause both them and their children deep trauma. As a result they experience improved mental and physical health, improved employment and housing outcomes and a reduction in domestic abuse and substance misuse, as well as improved relationships with children who have been removed from their care or the ability to experience a positive ending. To date this project has been grant funded (DfE and Troubled Families), however to continue beyond November 2022 council funding is required so this provides on-going council funding.	320			320
23CS17	Develop active travel plans & green travel	-500			-500

Children's Services - New and Previously Agreed Budget Increases and Reductions					
Ref	Description	2023/24	2024/25	2025/26	Total
		£000	£000	£000	£000
	Total Previously Agreed Pressures & Investments	5,125	6,906	7,593	19,624
	New Budget Increases				
24CS1	Continuation of £0.970m funding for adult facing services within family safeguarding (family solutions plus), relating to contracts supporting domestic abuse, adult mental health & substance misuse. The proposed increases are after taking account of the Supporting Families grant of £0.485m in 2023/4 and 2024/25 plus funding from the Public Health reserve of £0.300m in 2023/24 and £0.200m in 2024/25.	185	100	685	970
24CS2	Investment in Children's Social Worker Recruitment & Retention Strategy ("Grow your own") in order to provide a more resilient & effective service resulting in more manageable caseloads and reducing reliance on agency staff	615	0	0	615
24CS3	Short term growth to fund the difference in cost of agency and permanent social workers, until the Recruitment and Retention measures and investment take full effect.	1,100	-650	-450	0
24CS4	Reflecting national trends the number of children we care for has increased and placement costs are higher. Part of the increase arises from a higher number of children requiring very high cost support due to lack of suitable placements both locally and nationally.	8,300			8,300
24CS5	Strengthen the application of thresholds and develop new working practices to safely reduce the number of children the council cares for so activity is more consistent with similar authorities.	-2,000	-1,200	-1,200	-4,400
24CS6	Inflation: funding for estimated inflationary increases to the cost of care.	5,700	3,200	1,600	10,500
24CS30	The most recent mainstream bus tenders saw bids on average coming in at 32% greater than the medium term contracts previous run. These are deemed presentative of the rest of the market and the full impact will be seen over the medium term as cohorts of contracts are tendered. This pressure exceeds that of the 12% incorporated into the budget strategy process.	213	213	213	639
24CS31	As the DPS award system has no fixed contract inflation, there is pressure to upgrade the system in place to help support the SEND market stability and either incorporate a temporary fix, as well as to consider inflation as part of the routine contract estimated at 6% per annum. This pressure exceeds the one year inflation figure in the budget strategy for this area.		305	305	610
24CS32	Home to School Transport: Based on the demographic growth forecast from Newton, both SEN and Post 16 are seeing a significant increase in the number of students needing EHCPs. 33% of students with plans require transport and the student increases are estimated as follows (2022/23) 15%, (2023/24) 10%, (2024/25) 11% and (2025/26) 9%. This pressure is on top of the £1.3m demographic growth already in the MTFP.	2,200	1,500	1,200	4,900
24CS33	SEND: additional staffing to improve capacity for Education and Health Care Plan (EHCP) Reviews and assessments	500			500
	Total New Budget Increases	16,813	3,468	2,353	22,634
	Pressures met from COVID-19 Reserve in 2023/24				
24COVID1	Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub. One - off funding of £0.624m agreed for 2022/23 for additional activity linked to COVID-19 demand was originally expected to fall out in 2023/24 and 2024/25 (see COVID8 in Annex 1a). Demand remains high so continue funding in 2023/24	312	-312		0
	Total Pressures, Investments, Budget Increases	22,250	10,062	9,946	42,258

Children's Services - New and Previously Agreed Budget Increases and Reductions					
Ref	Description	2023/24	2024/25	2025/26	Total
		£000	£000	£000	£000
	Previously Agreed Savings				
23CS10	Troubled Families grant will continue for a further year in 2022/23 but is assumed to fall out from 2023/24.	83			83
23CS11	Temporary use of COVID-19 and Afghan Resettlement grant funding for employee costs in 2022/23 falls out from 2023/24.	50			50
23CS12	The academy and new school budget is expected to underspend on a one - off basis in 2022/23 due to the current lower number of academy conversions. The underspend will continue into 2023-24, but falls out in 2024/25.	100			100
	Total Previously Agreed Savings	233	0	0	233
	New Budget Reductions				
24CS7	Use one-off funding held in reserves to support expenditure in 2023/24.	-60	60		0
24CS8	Review costs and/or increase charges for traded services to ensure full cost recovery	-95			-95
24CS9	The academy and new school budgets are expected to underspend in 2023/24 due to fewer schools converting to academies. Increased activity is expected in 2024/25	-100	100		0
24CS10	Service efficiencies	-113			-113
24CS11	Early Help: service efficiencies	-67			-67
24CS12	Reduce expenditure on legal costs	-150			-150
24CS13	Children We Care For: reduction in staffing & support costs	-240			-240
24CS14	Possible reduction in costs of supporting unaccompanied children. This depends on the impact of the Home Office National Transfer Scheme which allocates unaccompanied children across Local Authorities.	-120			-120
24CS15	Leaving Care Service - staffing efficiencies	-80			-80
24CS16	Youth Justice & Exploitation agency - staffing reduction	-85			-85
24CS17	Adopt Thames Valley (regional adoption service) - reduced contribution based on placing more children with our own adopters (one-off) & review of recovery of the council's overheads as hosts of the regional adoption agency	-110	40		-70
24CS18	Reduction in recruitment and training spend	-50			-50
24CS19	Efficiencies in how the council manages the process of collecting data and administrating the Supporting Families grant process with central government	-120			-120
24CS20	The Supporting Families grant will continue for a further two years. Total budgeted grant expected to fall out in 2025/26	-83		110	27
24CS21	Children with Disability agency staff reduction	-135			-135
24CS22	Safeguarding/Quality Assurance team agency staffing reduction	-73			-73
24CS23	Reduction in funding for project work	-66			-66
24CS24	Reduction in ongoing pension payments to former employees. There is usually an annual reduction as numbers reduce, offset by any inflationary uplift.	-32			-32
24CS25	Administration efficiencies in Education & Social Care	-190			-190
24CS26	Supporting Families Grant - use one-off funding to offset overall pressures.	-200	200		0
24CS27	Release funding held in the Early Intervention reserve (one-off in 2023/24)	-200	200		0
24CS28	Release Youth Funding pump-priming reserve. This reserve was established to implement Youth Service initiatives. Funding can now be met from within the Youth Service revenue budget (one-off in 2023/24)	-500	500		0
24CS29	Service Reviews of non-statutory / non-case holding areas	-480	-480		-960
	Total New Budget Reductions	-3,349	620	110	-2,619
	Total Savings and Budget Reductions	-3,116	620	110	-2,386
	Adjust funding for pressures met from COVID-19 Reserve in 2022/23				

Children's Services - New and Previously Agreed Budget Increases and Reductions					
Ref	Description	2023/24	2024/25	2025/26	Total
		£000	£000	£000	£000
	<u>Education</u>				
COVID1	Special Educational Needs (SEN) Casework Team - An annual 10-12% increase in demand for Education Health & Care Plans (EHCPs) and the number of approved EHCPs which require an annual review has created a pressure across the SEN service including case workers, educational psychologists, quality and advocacy support. Additional capacity is needed to ensure quality and timeliness are in line with expected standards. Efficiencies of £0.100m per annum are planned for 2023/24 and 2024/25 and included within these pressures. Some of the pressure will be funded by the COVID-19 reserve in 2022/23 and 2023/24. Half of this funding will be removed in 2023/24 and the remainder in 2024/25.	-134	-134		-267
COVID2	Reduction in management by combining Early Years Teams across Education. Existing saving (22CS19) not achievable until 2024/25 as a result of COVID-19 pressures.		-140		-140
	<u>COVID-19 Demand Pressures</u>				
COVID3	Elective Home Education - An increase in numbers of families choosing to home educate has required an short-term investment in this service to support this. The funding from the COVID-19 reserve will be removed in 2023/24.	-84			-84
COVID4	Additional capacity to track children missing education reflecting increased demand for services. The funding from the COVID-19 reserve will be removed in 2023/24.	-21			-21
	<u>Social Care</u>				
COVID5	Agency Staff - the proportion of permanent posts held by an agency social workers increased during 2021/22 because of COVID-19 demand and other factors impacting on the availability of experienced social workers.	-375	-375		-750
COVID6	Family Safeguarding Partnership Team Savings - higher demand due to the COVID-19 pandemic means that it isn't possible to reduce teams in line with the original plan without a significant impact on caseloads. At present it is estimated there will be a two year delay, but this will be reviewed as demand changes. (links to 21CS21)	444		-446	-2
COVID7	Family Safeguarding Associated Savings The reduction in activity as a result of Family Safeguarding was expected to reduce activity in other services, such as Children we Care For Teams and the QA services. These will now be delayed.	246	-140	-246	-140
	<u>COVID-19 - Additional Demand Pressures</u>				
COVID8	Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub - funding of £0.624m in 2022/23 for additional activity linked to COVID-19 demand falls out in 2023/24 and 2024/25.	-312	-312		-624
COVID9	Family Safeguarding Partnership Teams - funding of £0.350m for additional activity linked to COVID-19 demand falls out in 2023/24 and 2024/25.	-175	-175		-350
COVID10	Fostering Project Savings - reprofile of existing saving 21CS26. Recruitment of foster carers has been challenging nationally since the start of the pandemic for both local authorities and fostering agencies. £0.588m fundin in 2022/23 will increase to £0.637m in 2023/24 then fall out in 2024/25 and 2025/26.	49	-312	-325	-588
	<u>High Needs DSG</u>				

Children's Services - New and Previously Agreed Budget Increases and Reductions					
Ref	Description	2023/24	2024/25	2025/26	Total
		£000	£000	£000	£000
COVID11	The modelling approach to COVID-19 within Oxfordshire across all services has been to compare expected, annual growth patterns to growth seen through the pandemic. The excess growth is deemed to be as a result of the pandemic. Using this method there were an extra 74 plans issued, and applying costs based on the normal pattern of provisions, this results in an additional cost to High Needs. The planned contribution of £1.2m is planned to continue until 2025/26.				0
	Total Funding for COVID-19 Pressures	-362	-1,588	-1,017	-2,966
	Total Children's Services	18,773	9,095	9,039	36,906

Environment & Place - New and Previously Agreed Budget Increases and Reductions					
Ref	Description	2023/24	2024/25	2025/26	Total
		£000	£000	£000	£000
	Previously Agreed Pressures & Investments				
	Demographic Growth (growth in waste tonnages)	430	430	430	1,290
	Pay Inflation (2.5%)	522	534	546	1,602
	Contract Inflation	2,556	2,280	2,353	7,189
	Income Inflation (2.0%)	-135	-131	-140	-406
	Business Rates Inflation	19	16	16	51
21COM8	One off funding for the Digitalisation of the Development Management and Enforcement Service to enable more efficient, flexible working falls out in 2023/24.	-300			-300
21COM24	Changes to manage the staged fall out of a two year reduction to the drawdown from the Parking Account.	-450			-450
23EP1	Environment and Place redesign saving will be a staggered restructure (pressure in 2022/23 and matching saving in 2023/24) starting with the management team and working its way down the directorate structure to optimise the efficiency and effectiveness of the teams. Links to saving 22EP03.	-750			-750
23EP3	Reprofiling of the LED replacement streetlighting programme (from 2022/23) due to unavoidable supply chain disruption. Overall, the programme should now over-achieve energy and cost savings commitments. (Links to 18EE10/ 19COM4/ 19COM14/20COM12/ 21COM26)	-1,000	-600		-1,600
23EP4	Recycling and Gully treatment project savings at the Drayton Highways Depot are being removed as they are not now achievable (22EP26)	50	250		300
23EP5	Increased contribution to the Regional Flood Co-ordination Committee Levy	22	22	22	66
23EP6	Planning process digitisation project (21COM8) has been completed and savings of £0.150m have been achieved a year earlier than planned (2022/23). Increased volume of planning applications means on-going costs have increased. This project has been completed as far as it can be. However, due to the increasing volume of applications being received, although efficiently processed, service cannot progress the project to realise cashable savings only that they can do more withing the budget the service originally had. This means that the investment budget can be realised but the cashable saving cannot be achieved.	300			300
23EP10	Environmental and Community bids - additional funding supporting the expansion in capacity to prepare for the Environment Bill, develop the Nature Recovery Strategy and greater support for Community Action Groups falls out in 2024/25.		-50		-50
23EP11	£0.066m funding to increase capacity to develop pipeline and contract delivery of projects to support the Zero Carbon Infrastructure was added to the budget in 2022/23. This reduces to £0.064m from 2023/24 and falls out in 2025/26.	-2		-64	-66
23EP12	Delivery of Pathways to a Zero Carbon Oxfordshire - one - off capacity to develop roadmap and support partnership working. Removal of one - off funding in 2022/23 £0.090m	-70	-20		-90
23EP14	Provide capacity to ensure Oxfordshire is "Grid ready", developing Energy System planning and flexibility trails.	7	-9	-64	-66
23EP26	Full year effect of funding for investments (which ones) to reflect that some of these investments started part way through 2022/23.	200			200
23EP27	One off funding for resource needed to support the development of Oxfordshire Rail Feasibility Strategy falls out in 2023/24.	-250			-250

Environment & Place - New and Previously Agreed Budget Increases and Reductions					
Ref	Description	2023/24	2024/25	2025/26	Total
		£000	£000	£000	£000
23EP28	One off funding for Safe Crossings and Active Travel and additional capacity for workplace charging (assumes agency rates for 3 FTE for 1 year) falls out in 2023/24.	-350			-350
23EP29	COMET fares - amendment to previous planned changes needed to reflect the maintenance of fares at the same level as 2021/22 consistent with the Review of Charges agreed by Cabinet on 18 January 2022 -reverses 22EP13.	5		10	15
	Total Previously Agreed Pressures & Investments	804	2,722	3,109	6,635
	New Budget Increases				
24EP1	Increased energy costs for street lighting and illuminated signs	2,600			2,600
24EP2	Highways Maintenance - abnormal contract inflation. Increased contractor and materials costs due to inflation and supply issues.	1,712			1,712
24EP3	Additional temporary resources and expertise to support the exploration and delivery of a new highways maintenance contract from the end of March 2025	150	100	-250	0
24EP4	Home to School transport - increase in the cost of school transport (directly provided and contracted) due to increases in fuel and other costs.	650	350	350	1,350
24EP5	Remove fleet management savings as these will now be included in the council's "One Fleet" Strategy	100			100
24EP6	Increased cost of road markings and signage to support the enforcement of parking restrictions and controlled parking zones.	200			200
24EP7	Reversal of income target for Travel Planning service due to change in delivery model as a result of resourcing challenges	250			250
24EP8	Household Waste Recycling Centres - anticipated increase in the cost of new contracts.			625	625
24EP9	An anticipated change in the law means the council will stop charging for DIY waste leading to a reduction in income		400		400
24EP10	Impact of implementation of Controlled Waste Regulation			100	100
24EP11	Persistent Organic Pollutants - a change in the law means the council will need to fund the cost of storing, shredding, and burning soft furnishings, as an alternative to landfill.	200			200
24EP26	Waste Management - increased pressure on contract costs based on the Office for Budget Responsibility's updated RPI/CPI forecast	1,273			1,273
24EP27	Countywide Community Transport Initiatives	1,200			1,200
24EP28	The council's contribution to joint bus and park and ride ticketing at park and ride car parks within Oxford City would revert back to £2.00 from 1 April 2023 at the end of the trial period for joint ticketing. Pending the outcome of the review of the trial and agreement to continue, this funding would enable the extension of the joint ticketing arrangements on a permanent basis.	500			500
24EP29	Improve Children's Transport Options (Active Travel Animators). Expand the team in Supported Transport to work with young people and their families to develop Active Travel options.	300			300
24EP30	Transport Hubs (revenue funding for capital expenditure of £0.5m per year for three years in locations across Oxfordshire including e-bike hire, car club promotion etc). Funding will fall out in 2026/27.	500			500

Environment & Place - New and Previously Agreed Budget Increases and Reductions					
Ref	Description	2023/24	2024/25	2025/26	Total
		£000	£000	£000	£000
24EP31	Improvements to travel information	100			100
24EP32	Flooding and Drainage – tackling the worst areas prone to flooding – practical projects with Parish Councils and proactive ditch clearance. Build the team to support flood resilience across communities in Oxfordshire	600			600
24EP33	Resource to develop Freight Strategy (1 FTE)	60			60
	Total New Budget Increases	10,395	850	825	12,070
	Total Pressures, Investments, Budget Increases	11,199	3,572	3,934	18,705
	Previously Agreed Savings				
22EP06	Improved recycling facilities at Drayton Highways Depot for tar bound materials and gully waste reducing disposal costs	-50	-250		-300
22EP10	Fleet management – Reduced costs and effort by consolidating contracts and managing collectively across directorate		-100		-100
22EP11	Home to School contract management - Use of technology and improvements and automation of processes to reduce costs and effort required.	-250	-50	-150	-450
22EP13	COMET fares - Increase the cost of fares to better recover the cost of operating the service but still ensuring charges are affordable.	-5		-10	-15
22EP18	Additional anticipated income from charges to developers. Appropriate charges for services undertaken for developers that attract a relevant external fee (road agreements).	-274	-278		-552
23EP18	Moving Traffic New income introducing Part 6 powers relating to Civil Traffic Enforcement.	-200	-250		-450
23EP19	Increased Fees and Charges - Oxford Pay and Display and additional Bus Lane Enforcement	-150			-150
23EP20	Increase in Parking Bay Suspension income (22EP09)	-50			-50
23EP22	Extend and increase use of one-off use of Bus Service Operators Grant (one off funding in 2022/23 falls out in 2023/24)	250			250
23EP24	Removal of one - off contribution of £2.0m from commuted sums in 2022/23 in 2023/24.	2,000			2,000
23EP25	Supported Transport budget - rebasing of service operation and staffing costs		-100		-100
	Total Previously Agreed Savings	1,271	-1,028	-160	83
	New Budget Reductions				
24EP13	Reduction in the revenue investment needed for the mobilisation of 20mph Speed Limits. A three year implementation programme is included in the council's Capital Programme.	-200			-200
24EP14	Lane rental - introduce charges for all works on the busiest roads at the busiest times to minimise disruption.	35	-2,150		-2,115
24EP15	Anticipated increases in on street parking income.	-150	-150	-150	-450
24EP16	Increase in various licence fees for skips, scaffolds, hoardings, dropped kerbs	-100			-100
24EP17	One - off drawdown from accumulated funding held in the Parking Account reserve	-250	250		0
24EP18	One - off reduction in operational budgets	-50	50		0
24EP19	One - off reduction in operational budgets	-40	40		0

Environment & Place - New and Previously Agreed Budget Increases and Reductions					
Ref	Description	2023/24	2024/25	2025/26	Total
		£000	£000	£000	£000
24EP20	Prevention of unsorted waste at Household Waste Recycling Centres means recycling can be increased by reducing the amount of waste that is sent to the Energy Recovery Facility at Ardley.		-200		-200
24EP21	Funding for growth in waste tonnages built into the current MTFS is not expected to be required. This reflects the current year's downturn in growth relating to all waste stream tonnages.	-430			-430
24EP22	Adjust assumed waste tonnages to reflect anticipated activity	-800			-800
24EP23	One - off reduction in operational budgets	-30	30		0
24EP24	One - off reduction in operational budgets	-40	40		0
24EP25	Cross Directorate: Increase in savings expected through the redesign of the directorate (linked to 22EP03)	-500			-500
	Total New Budget Reductions	-2,555	-2,090	-150	-4,795
	Total Savings and Budget Reductions	-1,284	-3,118	-310	-4,712
	Adjust funding for pressures met from COVID-19 Reserve in 2022/23				
COVID13	Supported Transport digital contract management project (22EP11) has been delayed due to resources being diverted to support Home to School contract changes through the Pandemic. One - off funding in 2022/23 falls out in 2023/24.	-350			-350
COVID14	£0.800m funding in 2022/23 supporting an estimated reduction in the use of the Pay and Display (COVID-19) and reduction in level of drawdown from Parking Account as a result of reduction in income reduces to £0.400m in 2023/24 and falls out in 2024/25.	-400	-400		-800
	Total Funding for COVID-19 Pressures	-750	-400	0	-1,150
	Total Environment & Place	9,165	54	3,624	12,843

Public Health & Community Safety - New and Previously Agreed Budget Increases and Reductions					
Ref	Description	2023/24	2024/25	2025/26	Total
		£000	£000	£000	£000
	Public Health				
	Previously Agreed Pressures & Investments				
21PH3	Estimated Public Health funded staff salary inflation (to be met from Public Health grant funding)	48			48
23PH1	Sexual Health - one off funding in 2022/23 to clear the backlog of Long Acting Reversible Contraception and to meet additional demand outside of Primary Care settings specifically targeted to targeted areas of deprivation falls out in 2023/24.	-140			-140
23PH2	NHS Health Checks - one off funding in 2022/23 to clear the backlog of health checks and provide health checks through alternative service providers outside of Primary Care settings specifically targeted to areas of deprivation and specific patient groups who are more at risk of CVD or who have been traditionally less likely to access services falls out in 2023/24.	-110			-110
	Total Previously Agreed Pressures & Investments	-202	0	0	-202
	Previously Agreed Savings				
21PH16 & 22PH11	Use the Public Health reserve to manage the overall impact of pressures and savings for Public Health within the ringfenced grant funding.	-33			-33
21PH8	Jubilee House - review and halve hot desk provision for council staff when current arrangements end in November 2022. Retain 8 desks.	-15			-15
23PH5	Sexual Health. A one-off underspend in 2021/22 will be used to support additional activity 2022/23 on a one-off basis. This funding falls out in 2023/24.	140			140
23PH6	NHS Health Checks - A one-off underspend in 2021/22 will be used to support additional activity 2022/23 on a one-off basis. This funding falls out in 2023/24.	110			110
	Total Previously Agreed Savings	202	0	0	202
	New Budget Reductions				
24PHCS1	Additional external grant funding for services supporting victims of Domestic Abuse expected in 2023/24 means council funded budget can be released on a one-off basis	-200	200	0	0
	Total New Reductions	-200	200	0	0
	Total Public Health	-200	200	0	0

Public Health & Community Safety - New and Previously Agreed Budget Increases and Reductions					
Ref	Description	2023/24	2024/25	2025/26	Total
		£000	£000	£000	£000
	Community Safety				
	Previously Agreed Pressures & Investments				
	Pay Inflation (2.5%)	446	456	466	1,368
	Total Previously Agreed Pressures & Investments	446	456	466	1,368
	Previously Agreed Savings				
22CDAI5	Review of Mid-Level and Supervisory Leadership Level within the Fire & Rescue Service	-50			-50
22CDAI6	Review of Wholetime Firefighter activity (prevention and protection)	-45			-45
	Total Previously Agreed Savings	-95	0	0	-95
	Total Community Safety	351	456	466	1,273
	Total Public Health & Community Safety	151	656	466	1,273

Customers, Culture & Corporate Services - New and Previously Agreed Budget Increases and Reductions					
Ref		2023/24	2024/25	2025/26	Total
	Description	£000	£000	£000	£000
	Previously Agreed Pressures & Investments				
	Pay Inflation (2.5%)	1,146	1,173	1,200	3,519
	Contract Inflation (RPIX - 4.2%; RPI - 4.1%; CPI - 2.5%)	157	135	139	431
	Income Inflation (2.0%)	-45	-44	-47	-136
	Business Rates Inflation	63	52	53	168
20COM6/ 20CDAI11	Ongoing impact of changes to Property utility costs.	-150			-150
21CDAI5	Fall out of funding for a review of Hard Facilities Management Services.	-100			-100
21CDAI12	Remaining phased fall out of £0.7m of investment in 2021/22 to bring the Council's Assets to a satisfactory operating level.	-200			-200
21CDAI13	Remaining phased fall out of the investment made in 2020/21 relating to work on Climate Action - a key part of the reduction in carbon relates to the Council's property portfolio.	-60			-60
23CDAI1	On-going pressure related to joint use sports agreements with leisure. Pressure in 2022/23 has been funded from reserves on a one - off basis.	500			500
23CDAI2	New Green Deal - Support the procurement team and services to work major suppliers to set and report on science based nature and climate targets (2 FTE reflecting scale of supply chain and potential impact)	35			35
23CDAI18	Community Buildings - implementation of rent holiday in 2022/23 and funding for repairs and maintenance. The one - off funding falls out but the policy will be reviewed during 2022/23 so that permanent arrangements can be put in place from 2023/24.	-300			-300
23CODR5	Banbury Library - running costs for new library	150			150
23CODR9	Performance Management Business Systems		19	19	38
	Total Previously Agreed Pressures & Investments	1,196	1,335	1,364	3,895
	New Budget Increases				
24CCCS1	Increases in utility costs for the council's buildings	1,927	350	55	2,332
24CCCS2	Cost of specialist consultant advice to support property valuations and statutory requirements.	102			102
24CCCS3	Decarbonisation Manager - existing funding (21CDAI13) ends in 2022/23 but there is on-going requirement to support the council's priority to be carbon neutral by 2030. 50% of the cost of this post is assumed to be met from specific schemes in the capital programme from 2024/25.	72	-36		36
24CCCS4	Adjustments to staffing budgets reflecting current service needs and anticipated future reductions to the number of council buildings.	109	-59		50
24CCCS5	A £0.5m reduction in the cost of cleaning council buildings was expected from 2022/23. Staff shortages mean there is increased dependency on agency staff which has increased costs. Action will be taken to reduce the cost of the service in 2024/25 and 2025/26.	200	-100	-100	0
24CCCS6	Property tree survey, service & maintenance to ensure that the council can meet the statutory requirement for certification of all trees on the council's property every 5 years.	207			207
24CCCS7	Programme Director - Partnership & Delivery. On-going need for capacity to support partnership activity and delivery including on-going support for Oxfordshire's response to Homes for Ukraine and support for households through the cost of living crisis. This will be funded by COVID-19 funding on one - off basis in 2023/24 (see Annex 1c)		130		130
24CCCS8	Governance - funding for the additional capacity needed to support the council's democratic processes and information governance.	343			343
24CCCS9	Legal Services - increase in establishment to respond to increased demand.	532	207		739

Customers, Culture & Corporate Services - New and Previously Agreed Budget Increases and Reductions					
Ref		2023/24	2024/25	2025/26	Total
	Description	£000	£000	£000	£000
24CCCS10	Staffing pressures related to the loss of grant funding for data analysis, income from Cherwell District Council and investment in resources to undertake consultative activities and an inhouse digital design and graphics services. These staffing pressures will be reviewed in full during 2023/24 alongside income targets and managing external expenditure reflecting the new delivery model.	129	161		290
24CCCS11	Library Service: Reduce historic income target due to decreased demand for services and changes in consumer behaviour.	400	40		440
24CCCS12	There are issues with staffing capacity and the ability to recruit and retain staff across the council. The cost of the proposed Resourcing Team includes media and marketing associated with resourcing and the cost of a Programme Manager and a Project Officer to manage the transformation programme to deliver the council's resourcing strategy.	410			410
24CCCS13	Additional business partnering capacity needed to support the council's activities and decision making.	150			150
24CCCS14	Increase in external audit fees from 2023/24 as notified to councils nationally following a procurement by the Public Sector Audit Appointments Ltd.	50			50
24CCCS31	Property Facilities Management - additional contract inflation of 11% based on the OBR inflation projection set out in the Autumn Statement.	100	100	50	250
24CCCS32	Property Cleaning - in-year contract inflation pressure (£140k) plus additional contract inflation of 11% in 2023/24 following the OBR projection set out in the Autumn Statement	280	0	0	280
24CCCS33	Property Catering - additional food and utilities inflation resulting in an increase cost for school meal which can't be recovered due to restriction on price increase on school meal. This follows the increased inflation projection set out by the OBR in the Autumn Statement	250	100	50	400
24CCCS34	Landlord & Tenant - additional contract inflation of 11% in 2023/24 and 10% for the following 2 years based on the OBR inflation projection set out in the Autumn Statement	537	370	370	1,277
24CCCS35	Coroners - increase rates	75			75
24CCCS36	Core infrastructure support for the Voluntary & Community Sector	75			75
24CCCS37	Councillor Priority Fund (£15,000 per councillor to be used over two years) and two year administration cost	1,015	-1,015		0
24CCCS38	Council Tax Support Schemes/Cost of Living Measures.	2,300	-2,300		0
24CC2	Following the termination of the Section 113 shared services agreement with Cherwell District Council there are costs related to the Senior Leadership Team that now need to be met by the council as the previous joint working arrangements have ended.	276			276
24CC3	The Apprenticeship Levy is an amount paid at a rate of 0.5% of an employer's annual pay bill. The Corporate Services contribution has increased due to organisational changes and there was an overspend in 2021/22 of £0.030m and current year budget pressure of £0.030m.	30			30
24CC4	The council is a member of the Hampshire IBC Partnership who provide the council's management information system and transactional processing for payments, income and payroll for example. Reflecting inflation, the council's contribution to the partnership will increase by 6.3% from 2023/24.	225			225
24CC5	Strategic Fleet Manager - additional staffing capacity to review and improve the the use of vehicles across the council through the council's "One Fleet" Strategy.	84			84
Total New Budget Increases		9,878	-2,052	425	8,251

Customers, Culture & Corporate Services - New and Previously Agreed Budget Increases and Reductions					
Ref		2023/24	2024/25	2025/26	Total
	Description	£000	£000	£000	£000
	Pressures met from COVID-19 Reserve in 2023/24				
24COVID2	Programme Director - Partnership & Delivery. One off funding in 2023/24. On-going funding from 2024/25 included in 24CCCS7	130	-130		0
24COVID3	Coroners - fund additional activity in 2023/24 and 2024/25	96		-96	0
24COVID4	Additional resource for the Social & Health Care Team in the council's Customer Service Centre from 2023/24 to 2025/26	175			175
	Total Pressure met from COVI-19 Reserve 2023/24	401	-130	-96	175
	Total Pressures, Investments, Budget Increases	11,475	-847	1,693	12,321
	Previously Agreed Savings				
21CDAI9	Review of Catering Services - enhancing the service to enable it to develop a more commercially enhanced operating model with the introduction of a commercial manager and teams to provide a service to external organisations e.g. school academies / other authorities.	-150			-150
23CODR11	Pause Recruitment (removal of one - off saving in 2022/23).	36			36
23CODR15	Temporary reduction in operational budget of the Performance & Insight team (removal of saving in 2022/23 and 2023/24).		10		10
23CODR22	Proposed one - off increase in Income generating services - Registration Services - falls out in 2023/24	15			15
23CODR24	Removal of temporary savings in supplies & contracts from 2022/23		239		239
23CODR25	Reprofile part of previously agreed saving of £0.250m in 2022/23 to 2023/24.	-150			-150
	Total Previously Savings	-249	249	0	0
	New Budget Reductions				
24CCCS15	Temporary recruitment freeze for posts in Estates, Strategy and Major Projects	-79	79		0
24CCCS16	Reduce the council's property costs through moving out of an office building that is leased until April 2023.	-611			-611
24CCCS18	Hard Facilities Management: delay planned one - off maintenance work until 2024/25 and on-going reduction in maintenance of corporate buildings due to reduced utilisation.	0	-30		-30
24CCCS20	Minor Works; Increased capitalisation of staff .	-30			-30
24CCCS21	Rationalise team structure and reduce cleaning services at the council's buildings	-256			-256
24CCCS22	Increase in income from design and marketing services provided to external organisations	-20			-20
24CCCS23	Customer Service Centre - vacancy management.	-48			-48
24CCCS24	Cultural Services (Heritage) - vacancy management (£0.1m) and increased income.	-118			-118
24CCCS25	Cultural Services (Registration) - operational efficiencies in non staffing expenditure.	-43			-43
24CCCS26	Cultural Services (Libraries) - reduction in supplies & services expenditure, plus vacancy management.	-153	-153		-306
24CCCS27	Cultural Services (Leadership team) - temporary recruitment freeze	-80	80		0
24CCCS28	Cultural Services (Registration) - increase in Service income	-10			-10
24CCCS29	IT Service efficiency savings	-239			-239
24CCCS30	The licence for Microsoft Premier support which provides 24/7 support and proactive training sessions will not be renewed.	-110			-110
24CC7	Savings on vehicles used by council services expected to be achieved through the "One Fleet" Strategy (links to 24CC5). Further savings expected if the fleet replacement programme included in the capital proposals in Annex 1b progresses.	-233			-233
24CC8	Digital Transformation: savings as a result of optimising the use of shared mailboxes	-250			-250

Customers, Culture & Corporate Services - New and Previously Agreed Budget Increases and Reductions					
Ref		2023/24	2024/25	2025/26	Total
	Description	£000	£000	£000	£000
24CC9	Savings expected as a result of the implementation of the outcomes from efficiency reviews of council services	-250			-250
24CC10	Replace public library PCs to improve energy efficiency	-84	-28		-112
24CC11	Rationalise the use of IT applications in use by services	-400			-400
24CC12	Transformation of the council's customer service & operating model releases savings across services.	-150			-150
24CC13	Reduction in the need for agency staff across the council as a result of the Resourcing Strategy (see 24CCCS12)	-1,500	-2,500		-4,000
	Total New Budget Reductions	-4,664	-2,552	0	-7,216
	Total Savings and Budget Reductions	-4,913	-2,303	0	-7,216
	Adjust funding for pressures met from COVID-19 Reserve in 2022/23				
	<u>Finance</u>				
COVID15	Funding for capacity pressures as a result of the on-going response to COVID-19 falls out in 2023/24.	-91			-91
	<u>Legal Services</u>				
COVID16	Funding for COVID-19 Compliance Pressures falls out in 2024/25		-25		-25
COVID17	Funding for additional Childcare Solicitor Provision falls out in 2024/25		-279		-279
COVID18	<u>Local Council Tax Support Scheme</u>				
	Anticipation of future emergency welfare demand – proposals to follow.				0
	Total Funding for COVID-19 Pressures	-91	-304	0	-395
	Total Customers, Culture & Corporate Services	6,471	-3,454	1,693	4,710

Proposals affecting all Directorates that will be allocated later

Reference	Description	2023/24 £000	2024/25 £000	2025/26 £000	Total £000
	Proposed Budget Increases				
24CC1	Additional pay inflation (assumes a 4.5% increase in 2023/24 and then 2.5% in each of 2024/25 and 2025/26). Increases of 2.5% each year are assumed in the MTFS so these amounts are the increases over and above the existing plan. These amounts will be allocated to directorate budgets if the pay award is over the 2.5% built into the current plan.	5,200	800	800	6,800
	Additional Demography/Inflation		2,061		2,061
	Total Proposed Budget Increases	5,200	2,861	800	8,861
	Proposed Budget Reductions				
	National Changes				
24CC14	In September 2022 the Government announced that the Health & Social Care Levy tax that was to have been implemented from April 2023 has been cancelled. Funding for the levy that is built into the council's budget can be released.	-1,600			-1,600
	Total Proposed Budget Reductions	-1,600	0	0	-1,600
	Total Inflation and Other Adjustments	3,600	2,861	800	7,261

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REPORT OF THE PEOPLE OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE: SCRUTINY OF SEND FINANCES

Cllr Nigel Simpson
Chair of the People Overview & Scrutiny Committee
January 2023

RECOMMENDATION

1. The Cabinet is **RECOMMENDED** to —
 - a) Agree to respond to the recommendations contained in the body of this report, 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 People Overview & Scrutiny Committee hereby requires that, within two months of the consideration of this report, the Cabinet publish a response to this report and its recommendations.

INTRODUCTION AND OVERVIEW

3. At its meeting on 12 January 2023, the People Overview and Scrutiny Committee considered a briefing on the funding arrangements and constraints for SEND and the impact that this has upon services delivered.
4. The Committee received the input of Cabinet member Councillor Brighthouse, the Corporate Director for Children's Services, Kevin Gordon, Deputy Director for Children's Services and Education, Hayley Good, Head of SEND, Kate Bradley, Finance Business Partner (Children), Sarah Fogden, and the Director of Finance, Lorna Baxter.

SUMMARY

5. The report was introduced by Cllr Liz Brighthouse, Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Children, Education and Young People's Services and Kevin Gordon, Director for Children's Services. They advised that the issues relating to SEND were complex and needed to be understood in the national context. It

was a critical point for SEND finances across the country and it required Central Government to intervene.

6. Hayley Good, Deputy Director of Education, Kate Bradley, Head of SEND and Sarah Fogden, Finance Business Partner, Children, were in attendance to provide a presentation and respond to questions and points raised by the Committee. From a local perspective, there had been a significant increase in requests for Education and Health Care Needs Assessments and subsequently for Plans. The number of Plans had increased from 2,233 in 2014/15 to 5,025 in 2021/22. This was an increase of 125%. The allocation of funding from Central Government had increased by 49% during this time. Changes were needed to prevent the deficit becoming wider.
7. It was explained that the High Needs Block (HNB) via Central Government was intended to enable local authorities to meet their statutory duties for Children and Young People with SEND up to the age of 25. The HNB was based on a formula including historical spending patterns plus local factors including population and levels of deprivation. Oxfordshire had a relatively high number of 'floor funded schools' and were funded at the minimum amount. The formula meant that if needs varied from year to year they were not fully reflected in local budgets. Oxfordshire was the 22nd lowest funded out of 151 local authorities.
8. It was confirmed that the High Needs Funding grant received by the Council was £74.5m and the demand for services via the HNB was expected to cost £92m in the current year. The forecast overspend was therefore £17.5m. In Oxfordshire, 16.3% of the children in special schools were in independent provision compared to 12.3% nationally.
9. The Committee was advised that there had been a detailed public consultation on the local area SEND strategy which covered education, social care and health and included proposals to make SEND system reforms locally. Work was now proceeding on the implementation plan and this was due to be shared in the coming weeks.
10. In terms of seeking to respond to the fact that there were not sufficient places in Oxfordshire's maintained special schools, which was a key reason as to why children had to travel to school outside the county, the Council was not able to unilaterally open new special schools. There were two new special school builds in progress at Bloxham Grove and Faringdon and bids for a further two special free schools had been submitted to the Department for Education (DfE). The Council had put itself forward to be part of DfE's Delivering Better Value programme, one of twenty local authorities involved.
11. Officers confirmed that significant levels of lobbying had taken place to improve the funding formula for Oxfordshire. This included the Council being part of the F40 Group, consisting of the lowest funded local authorities, which lobbied Parliament and the Secretary of State for Education. There had been an uptick in the national funding formula of 5% in the current year but the position relative to other local authorities had not changed. It was considered that the funding

formula was out of date taking into account high population growths and changes to the areas of deprivation and need.

12. It was clarified for a place in a special school, DfE funded the first £6k. At independent special schools there was no additional funding from the high needs grant. Transport costs for children travelling to independent special schools out of county impacted on the Council, being from the revenue budget rather than the HNB. Officers emphasised that the costs of the children's places were not directly proportionate to the outcomes. Often outcomes were better for the children in Oxfordshire's maintained special schools and academies.
13. The ability to obtain more SEND school places was considered. It was noted that all schools were opened as free schools and were academies by default. They all had a resource base planned at the premises as requested by DfE. The Council had to wait for wave funding to become available from Central Government and then submit an application for a new special school. It was agreed that officers would provide the Committee with a breakdown of the funding model for the bids for the two special free schools. It was agreed that officers would also come back to the Committee with information as to whether there was the capacity with S106 funding to expand existing special schools in order to increase places.
14. The Committee noted that the emphasis was on funding directly from DfE rather than via Community Infrastructure Levy pooled funding. Members also noted that there were expansion projects across the county to increase special school places within existing schools in addition to plans for new schools.
15. The Committee examined whether there was the scope to have a policy of working with organisations who were non-profit. Members were advised that there were children who needed very specialist provision and in some cases this was provided by the for profit sector.
16. The Committee considered that progress needed to be made on a national level following the Green Paper and the issue of Councils carrying deficits addressed. There was a need to explore further with neighbouring authorities how councils could meet the more specific needs of children in the higher cost independent sector.

RECOMMENDATIONS

17. The demand for SEND in Oxfordshire continues to grow and deficits are forecast to rise in the coming years because of this and the lack of sufficient funding from central government. From 2014/15 to 2021/22, the number of Education Health Care Plans (EHC Plans) in Oxfordshire has increased 125% while the allocation of funding for SEND from central government has increased by only 49%. This has led to an estimated overspend of £17.5m in the current financial year, an increase from £11.7m last year, and is estimated to exceed £20m per annum over the coming years, resulting in a cumulative deficit of £122m by 2025/26.

18. The greatest pressure on SEND finances locally is due to the proportionally high number of placements in the independent and non-maintained school sector (current spend is c.£25m on 450 children/young people). These schools are significantly more expensive than maintained schools of similar type and do not consistently deliver outcomes. There are two key drivers to placements in the independent sector, parental preference and the proportionate lack of maintained special school places in Oxfordshire compared to statistical neighbours. Based on current data, it has been established that up to 700 new special school places will be required (ages 4-19) by 2026.
19. The Committee notes that to improve this situation two new special school builds are in progress at Bloxham Grove and Faringdon and bids for a further two special free schools (one in Didcot of 116 places, one in South-East Oxfordshire of 150 places) have been submitted to the Department for Education (DfE). OCC is also one of the first 20 councils to work with DfE as part of the Delivering Better Value Programme to identify sustainable changes that can drive high quality outcomes for children and young people with SEND, and an evidence-based grant application to assist the implementation of those changes will be submitted in late January.
20. Notwithstanding the actions above, the Committee notes that there will remain a shortfall in provision of local special school places relative to the anticipated demand. Of course, it is not feasible that all children will be able to be provided for locally, but many could and it would be preferable both financially and in terms of improved outcomes if they were to do so. Given that SEND overspends are a national issue, the Council's neighbours are likely also to be experiencing similar challenges, which could create economies of scale locally and semi-locally sufficient to justify the provision of services where currently the Council and neighbouring Councils must seek external placements instead. It is the Committee's view that in-sourcing or partnership working is likely to prove cheaper than relying on the for-profit sector, and if there are ways to cultivate this through joint working the Council should be investigating this.

Recommendation One: That the Council investigate the possibility of working with neighbouring Local Authorities to increase local provision of SEND placements and services.

NEXT STEPS

21. The People Overview & Scrutiny Committee will review the published Cabinet response to this report and its recommendations at the meeting of the Committee after Cabinet's response in accordance with part 6.2, 13(f), of the Constitution of the Council.
22. The Committee intends to examine the provision of SEND in more detail at a meeting later in the year.

Contact Officer:

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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 requested¹ 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: SEND Finances

Lead Cabinet Member(s): Cllr Liz Brighthouse, Deputy Leader of the Council and Cabinet Member for Children, Education and Young People's Services

Date response requested:² 24 January 2023

Response to report:

Enter text here.

Response to recommendations:

Recommendation	Accepted, rejected or partially accepted	Proposed action (if different to that recommended) and indicative timescale (unless rejected)
That the Council investigate the possibility of working with neighbouring Local Authorities to increase local provision of SEND placements and services.		

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

² Date of the meeting at which report/recommendations were received⁹

Overview & Scrutiny Recommendation Response Pro forma

CABINET – 24 January 2023

ITEM 18 – FORWARD PLAN AND FUTURE BUSINESS

Members are asked to note the following change to the Forward Plan:

Addition to items in the present Plan

Portfolio/ Decision maker	Topic (Ref)/Decision	Present Timing	Change
<i>Leader</i> Cabinet	Pan Regional Partnership for the Oxford-Cambridge Area <i>(Ref: 2023/027)</i> To formally commit the County Council to participate in the pan regional partnership.	21 February 2023	Additional item

Amendments to the Forward Plan

<i>Travel & Development Strategy</i> Cabinet	A40 Access to Witney - Compulsory Purchase Order and Side Road Orders <i>(Ref: 2022/012)</i> To seek approval of the Statement of Reasons and Orders Plans and approval to make the Compulsory Purchase and Side Road Orders.	21 March 2023	Deferred from 21 February 2023
<i>Travel & Development Strategy</i> <i>Travel & Development Strategy</i>	North Oxford Corridor - Kidlington Roundabout <i>(Ref: 2022/093)</i> To approve i) the proposed 30mph speed limit on Kidlington Roundabout and all approaches (A4260/A4165), including the full length of the A4165 where a 40mph speed limit currently applies ii) the introduction of a bus lane on Bicester Road and revised bus lane extents on A4165 Oxford Road (north), iii) introduction of signalised crossings for pedestrians and cyclists.	2 February 2023	Deferred from 26 January 2023

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