

Decision Maker:	Director of Economy & Place
Decision Title:	MoD/UK Defence Innovation Organisation grant to support Oxfordshire, Buckinghamshire and Chilterns Regional Defence and Security Cluster
Decision date:	22 January 2026
Source of delegation:	General delegation under the Council's Constitution – Executive Director (Economy and Place) authority to accept external grant funding and enter associated external funding arrangements within delegated limits and in consultation with relevant statutory officers as required.
What decision was made?:	<p>To accept the Ministry of Defence (MoD), acting through the UK Defence Innovation Organisation (UKDI), offer of grant funding (described as a “donation”) for a maximum of £109,932 for the period to 31 March 2027; and to authorise Oxfordshire County Council to act as the accountable authority / grant recipient on behalf of the Oxfordshire, Buckinghamshire and Chilterns RDSC, entering into the associated Grant Funding Agreement and complying with its terms, including reporting, audit and use-of-funds conditions.</p> <p>Financial details: maximum grant £109,932 comprised of up to £47,780 in FY2025/26 and up to £62,152 in FY2026/27. Funding is revenue and must be applied only to eligible expenditure for the funded activities (e.g., project management/support, events, website, communications, branded materials, heat map development, quarterly reporting and assurance/audit fees). No overspend will be funded; any ineligible expenditure, duplicate funding or unspent monies may be subject to clawback/repayment under the Agreement.</p>
Purpose:	To secure external grant funding to support the establishment and ongoing operational activities of the Oxfordshire, Buckinghamshire and Chilterns RDSC, including maintaining



	<p>free membership, delivering events and stakeholder engagement, maintaining an independent website, developing a regional capability “heat map”, and meeting MoD/UKDI reporting requirements through to 31 March 2027.</p>
<p>Reasons:</p>	<p>The grant will enable continuation and enhancement of RDSC operational support activities which otherwise rely on in-kind member contributions, and will strengthen regional defence and security collaboration and innovation. Acceptance is subject to conditions on eligible expenditure, governance, audit, reporting and fraud controls, which the Council can administer as accountable authority.</p>
<p>Other options considered:</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1) Do not accept the grant – would forgo external funding and risk reduced RDSC capacity/activities.</li><li>2) Seek an alternative accountable authority – would delay mobilisation and may not be feasible within MoD deadlines/requirements.</li><li>3) Accept funding but seek amendments – could jeopardise award and timing; the offer is on standard terms.</li></ol>