

Decision Maker:	Director of Environment & Highways
Decision Title:	Oxford congestion charge investment plan
Decision date:	23 March 2026
Source of delegation:	Express delegation under resolution (e) of the September 2025 <a href="#">Cabinet decision</a> on the temporary congestion charge
What decision was made?:	<p>Approved use of congestion charge surplus income for the following <b>initial elements</b>, pending a Cabinet decision on the wider investment plan in April 2026:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) extension of the “free P&amp;R return bus” offer until 31 May 2026, forecast cost £400,000 (for April and May)</li> <li>b) officer time and limited external fees to develop other investment options for implementation, to avoid delays if approved by Cabinet, forecast cost not exceeding £100,000</li> </ul>
Purpose:	The decision allows officers to spend income raised by the temporary congestion charge on schemes to facilitate the achievement of local transport policies, in line with the Transport Act 2000, pending a Cabinet decision on the full investment plan in April 2026.
Reasons:	<p>Officers are due to report to Cabinet on 21 April 2026 to seek approval of an investment plan for use of congestion charge surplus income. The report will include recommendations relating to the free P&amp;R bus offer and other schemes.</p> <p>The free P&amp;R bus offer has been in place since 29 October 2025; this decision retains the offer for a short period to allow time for Cabinet to consider it the investment plan.</p> <p>Some of the investment plan items will require preparatory work before they can be implemented (e.g. working with employers and bus operators, or initial planning or design work). This decision allows officers to do</p>



some of this preparatory work in advance of Cabinet's decision, to accelerate implementation if the plan is approved.

Other options considered:

The free P&R offer is helping to reduce traffic in the city and support the city's economy. An alternative option would have been to remove the scheme pending a Cabinet decision on its medium-term future, but changing the offer requires changes to bus and parking ticket machines, signage, the RingGo app and so on, which may then need to be changed again depending on Cabinet's April decision, resulting in abortive costs and customer confusion.

The spending on preparatory work will help inform officer advice to Cabinet and ensure prompt implementation of Cabinet's decisions. Omitting this was an option, but this would not save significant funds and would delay implementation.