



Notice of a Meeting

People Overview & Scrutiny Committee Thursday, 26 June 2025 at 10.00 am Room 2&3 - County Hall, New Road, Oxford OX1 1ND

These proceedings are open to the public

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

Membership

Chair: Councillor Ian Snowdon
Deputy Chair: Councillor Toyah Overton

Councillors:	James Barlow	Judith Edwards	Georgina Heritage
	Will Boucher-Giles	Lee Evans	
	Imade Edosomwan	Rebekah Fletcher	

Date of Next Meeting: 18 September 2025

For more information about this Committee please contact:

Committee Officer: *Ben Piper*
Email: scrutiny@oxfordshire.gov.uk

Martin Reeves
Chief Executive

June 2025

What does this Committee review or scrutinise?

The People Overview and Scrutiny Committee focuses on the following key areas: (a) all services and preventative activities/initiatives relating to adults in potential need of social care; (b) statutory functions in relation to, adult social care and safeguarding. Includes public health matters as they relate to adults where they are not covered by the Joint Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee. (c) Council educational support for adults with learning difficulties

How can I have my say?

We welcome the views of the community on any issues in relation to the responsibilities of this Committee. Members of the public may ask to speak on any item on the agenda or may suggest matters which they would like the Committee to look at. **Requests to speak must be submitted to the Committee Officer below no later than 9 am 4 working day before the date of the meeting.**

About the County Council

The Oxfordshire County Council is made up of 63 councillors who are democratically elected every four years. The Council provides a range of services to Oxfordshire's 678,000 residents. These include:

schools	social & health care	libraries and museums
the fire service	roads	trading standards
land use	transport planning	waste management

Each year the Council manages £0.9 billion of public money in providing these services. Most decisions are taken by a Cabinet of 9 Councillors, which makes decisions about service priorities and spending. Some decisions will now be delegated to individual members of the Cabinet.

About Scrutiny

Scrutiny is about:

- Providing a challenge to the Cabinet
- Examining how well the Cabinet and the Authority are performing
- Influencing the Cabinet on decisions that affect local people
- Helping the Cabinet to develop Council policies
- Representing the community in Council decision making
- Promoting joined up working across the authority's work and with partners

Scrutiny is NOT about:

- Making day to day service decisions
- Investigating individual complaints.

What does this Committee do?

The Committee meets up to 4 times a year or more. It develops a work programme, which lists the issues it plans to investigate. These investigations can include whole committee investigations undertaken during the meeting, or reviews by a panel of members doing research and talking to lots of people outside of the meeting. Once an investigation is completed the Committee provides its advice to the Cabinet, the full Council or other scrutiny committees. Meetings are open to the public and all reports are available to the public unless exempt or confidential, when the items would be considered in closed session.

If you have any special requirements (such as a large print version of these papers or special access facilities) please contact the officer named on the front page, giving as much notice as possible before the meeting

A hearing loop is available at County Hall.

AGENDA

1. **Apologies for Absence and Temporary Appointments**

To receive any apologies for absence and temporary appointments.

2. **Declaration of Interests**

See guidance note on the back page.

3. **Minutes (Pages 1 - 8)**

The Committee is recommended to **APPROVE** the minutes of the meetings held on 20th March 2025, and, 20th May 2025, and to receive information arising from them.

4. **Petitions and Public Address**

Members of the public who wish to speak on an item on the agenda at this meeting, or present a petition, can attend the meeting in person or 'virtually' through an online connection.

Requests to speak must be submitted no later than 9am three working days before the meeting, i.e. 23/06/2025.

Requests should be submitted to the Scrutiny Officer at scrutiny@oxfordshire.gov.uk.

If you are speaking 'virtually', you may submit a written statement of your presentation to ensure that if the technology fails, then your views can still be taken into account. A written copy of your statement can be provided no later than 9am on the day of the meeting. Written submissions should be no longer than 1 A4 sheet.

5. **Oxfordshire Employment Service Report (Pages 9 - 18)**

Karen Fuller, Director of Adult Social Services, Sam Harper, Head of Learning Disability Provision Services, and Will Gardner, Team Manager – Oxfordshire Employment and County Print Finishers, have been invited to present a report on the Oxfordshire Employment Service.

The Committee is asked to consider the report and raise any questions, and to **AGREE** any recommendations it wishes to make to Cabinet arising therefrom.

6. **Committee Forward Work Plan (Pages 19 - 22)**

The Committee is recommended to **AGREE** its work programme for forthcoming meetings, having heard any changes from previous iterations, and taking account of the Cabinet Forward Plan and of the Budget Management Monitoring Report.

The Cabinet Forward Plan can be found

here: <https://mycouncil.oxfordshire.gov.uk/mgListPlanItems.aspx?PlanId=433&RP=115>

The most recent BMMR, submitted to Cabinet in March 2025, can be found

here: <https://mycouncil.oxfordshire.gov.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=115&MId=7477&Ver=4>

7. Committee Action and Recommendation Tracker (Pages 23 - 26)

The Committee is recommended to **NOTE** the progress of previous recommendations and actions arising from previous meetings, having raised any questions on the contents.

8. Responses to Scrutiny Recommendations

No Cabinet responses are expected for this meeting.

Councillors declaring interests

General duty

You must declare any disclosable pecuniary interests when the meeting reaches the item on the agenda headed 'Declarations of Interest' or as soon as it becomes apparent to you.

What is a disclosable pecuniary interest?

Disclosable pecuniary interests relate to your employment; sponsorship (i.e. payment for expenses incurred by you in carrying out your duties as a councillor or towards your election expenses); contracts; land in the Council's area; licenses for land in the Council's area; corporate tenancies; and securities. These declarations must be recorded in each councillor's Register of Interests which is publicly available on the Council's website.

Disclosable pecuniary interests that must be declared are not only those of the member her or himself but also those member's spouse, civil partner or person they are living with as husband or wife or as if they were civil partners.

Declaring an interest

Where any matter disclosed in your Register of Interests is being considered at a meeting, you must declare that you have an interest. You should also disclose the nature as well as the existence of the interest. If you have a disclosable pecuniary interest, after having declared it at the meeting you must not participate in discussion or voting on the item and must withdraw from the meeting whilst the matter is discussed.

Members' Code of Conduct and public perception

Even if you do not have a disclosable pecuniary interest in a matter, the Members' Code of Conduct says that a member 'must serve only the public interest and must never improperly confer an advantage or disadvantage on any person including yourself' and that 'you must not place yourself in situations where your honesty and integrity may be questioned'.

Members Code – Other registrable interests

Where a matter arises at a meeting which directly relates to the financial interest or wellbeing of one of your other registerable interests then you must declare an interest. You must not participate in discussion or voting on the item and you must withdraw from the meeting whilst the matter is discussed.

Wellbeing can be described as a condition of contentedness, healthiness and happiness; anything that could be said to affect a person's quality of life, either positively or negatively, is likely to affect their wellbeing.

Other registrable interests include:

- a) Any unpaid directorships
- b) Any body of which you are a member or are in a position of general control or management and to which you are nominated or appointed by your authority.

- a) Any body (i) exercising functions of a public nature (ii) directed to charitable purposes or (iii) one of whose principal purposes includes the influence of public opinion or policy (including any political party or trade union) of which you are a member or in a position of general control or management.

Members Code – Non-registrable interests

Where a matter arises at a meeting which directly relates to your financial interest or wellbeing (and does not fall under disclosable pecuniary interests), or the financial interest or wellbeing of a relative or close associate, you must declare the interest.

Where a matter arises at a meeting which affects your own financial interest or wellbeing, a financial interest or wellbeing of a relative or close associate or a financial interest or wellbeing of a body included under other registrable interests, then you must declare the interest.

In order to determine whether you can remain in the meeting after disclosing your interest the following test should be applied:

Where a matter affects the financial interest or well-being:

- a) to a greater extent than it affects the financial interests of the majority of inhabitants of the ward affected by the decision and;
- b) a reasonable member of the public knowing all the facts would believe that it would affect your view of the wider public interest.

You may speak on the matter only if members of the public are also allowed to speak at the meeting. Otherwise you must not take part in any discussion or vote on the matter and must not remain in the room unless you have been granted a dispensation.

Agenda Item 3

PEOPLE OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

MINUTES of the meeting held on Thursday, 20 March 2025 commencing at 10.00 am and finishing at 12.06 pm

Present:

Voting Members: Councillor Kieron Mallon - in the Chair
Councillor Imade Edosomwan - Deputy Chair
Councillor Trish Elphinstone
Councillor Andy Graham
Councillor Jenny Hannaby
Councillor Nick Leverton
Councillor Alison Rooke
Councillor Michael Waine

Officers: Stephen Chandler, Executive Director of People
Karen Fuller, Director of Adult Social Care
Fulya Markham, Strategy Lead (Age Well, Live Well)
Marc Borja, Commissioning Officer – Co-production
Megan De Cruz, Commissioning Support Officer – Co-production
Carole Stow, Engagement Consultation Manager
Richard Doney, Scrutiny Officer

The Council considered the matters, reports and recommendations contained or referred to in the agenda for the meeting and decided as set out below. Except insofar as otherwise specified, the reasons for the decisions are contained in the agenda and reports, copies of which are attached to the signed Minutes.

1/25 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE AND TEMPORARY APPOINTMENTS
(Agenda No. 1)

Cllr Bearder, Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care, sent his apologies.

2/25 DECLARATION OF INTERESTS
(Agenda No. 2)

There were none.

3/25 MINUTES
(Agenda No. 3)

The Committee **APPROVED** the minutes of the meeting on 4th December 2024 as a true and accurate record, subject to the correction of a typo in the attendance list.

4/25 PETITIONS AND PUBLIC ADDRESS

(Agenda No. 4)

There were none.

5/25 UPDATE ON CO-PRODUCTION IN ADULT SOCIAL CARE

(Agenda No. 5)

Karen Fuller, Director of Adult Social Care, Fulya Markham, Strategy Lead (Age Well, Live Well); Marc Borja, Commissioning Officer – Co-production; Megan De Cruz, Commissioning Support Officer – Co-production; and Carole Stow, Engagement Consultation Manager, were invited to present the update on Co-production in Adult Social Care and to answer the Committee's questions. Stephen Chandler, Executive Director (People), also attended to support Officers and answer the Committees questions.

The Director of Adult Social Care presented the update to Members, supported by the co-production team, highlighting the Oxfordshire definition of Co-production as a collaborative process where providers, professionals, and stakeholders equally share responsibility for creating and delivering services. Co-production was underpinned by principles of equality, diversity, access, and representativity.

The presentation covered the progress made since the Local Government Association peer review, including the development of a Co-production handbook, the establishment of a Co-production Advisory Board, and various engagement activities. The emphasis of co-production was on using the strengths and knowledge of individuals to improve service delivery and ensuring that co-production was embedded in everyday interactions and strategic planning.

Members emphasised the importance of plain English in reports to the Committee, given their public nature. The Committee was advised that officers were acutely aware of the need for clear language when engaging with residents and that they would seek to use simpler language in future reports.

Members asked how residents or clients expressed their needs to the Council and whether the process was consistent across the system. They also inquired about verifying commissioning documents for proper implementation. It was explained that different stakeholders engaged in various ways, such as in the short breaks redesign, and reviewing the process to meet service users' needs was essential. Monthly audits of paperwork conducted by managers and practice supervisors, reviewed by deputy directors and the statutory director, ensured a comprehensive feedback loop.

The importance of effective communication within the co-production process was raised by Members, emphasising that, without a robust communication strategy, the effectiveness of the programme could be compromised. Officers recognised that creating the right conditions for engagement involved understanding the needs of individuals and tailoring the approach accordingly.

The 'Purple Book' was mentioned as a co-production handbook developed in collaboration with an outside organisation in 2018. It was noted that this handbook

had been continuously built upon and was publicly available. The 'Purple Book' served as a resource for understanding and implementing co-production within adult social care.

The Committee explored how participants were approached for co-production, and how the value of their input was measured. It also asked about the criteria for selecting board members, how members were paid, and if the payment was equitable. The Committee suggested that elected members could be included on the board to provide insights from their casework and community interactions.

The Director of Adult Social Care outlined the criteria for selecting Co-Production Advisory Board members based on expertise and experiences related to council services. Organisations were consulted to identify suitable individuals who could contribute to co-production initiatives. Efforts ensured diverse representation, including seldom-heard groups. Participants received compensation, including travel expenses and additional support if needed, and these were made by direct bank transfer, vouchers, or donations to charity as preferred. If participants belonged to organisations already partnered with the Council, they did not necessarily receive separate payment for advisory board participation.

The Committee explored the co-production training which had been introduced and emphasised the need to assess the training's impact on professional development and service delivery. The Committee was advised that the training was available to everyone, including councillors, through both online and face-to-face sessions. Last year, 144 attendees were trained, including Oxfordshire County Council staff, parent carers, and NHSICB engagement consultation members. The goal was to train 450 posts, with 194 completed so far. New starters were recommended to have Level 1 training, progressing to Levels 2 and 3 as needed.

Members asked about tests to ensure genuine co-production. The Commissioning Officer outlined a six-point test:

1. Whole Life Involvement: Involve citizens throughout the project for equal power sharing.
2. Blurred Boundaries: Blend professional and experiential expertise.
3. Reciprocal Reward: Provide meaningful benefits beyond expenses.
4. Diverse Group Involvement: Engage a broad range of perspectives.
5. Equal Valuation of Assets: Value all contributions equally.
6. Shared Responsibility: Share accountability for successes and failures.

Members asked about the existence of key performance indicators (KPIs) to help Adult Social Care, and its system partners, determine the degree to which co-production was producing positive results. The Committee was advised that there were no specific KPIs for Co-production but, rather, it was expected to be part of 'business as usual' in projects and consultations. A mapping exercise was underway, to understand seldom heard groups better, and the Council had engaged with various communities during the development of the "including everyone" framework.

Cllr Rooke and Stephen Chandler left at this stage

The Committee explored the background to the 'Voice of the Person' training programme which the report set out had been undertaken by the directorate. This was primarily an internal initiative to improve frontline staff's engagement with residents. Although it included members from the Co-Production Advisory Board and external stakeholders, it had not been fully co-produced but did involve external expertise. The Committee was advised that it was not that the Council did not have the necessary expertise but, rather, that it was deemed most useful to have those from outside the organisation delivering the training.

The Committee asked about the potential impact of changes to the Integrated Care Board (ICB) on the way Co-production is conducted. They questioned whether the new operating modes of the ICB would affect Co-production practices and sought thoughts, expectations, and mitigation strategies for any potential challenges. The Director of Adult Social Care assured the committee that the delivery of outcomes would not be compromised due to changes around them. The Director of Adult Social Care emphasised the importance of the "one Oxfordshire pound" and constructive conversations across the system.

The Committee **AGREED** to the following actions:

- The Director of Adult Social Care and Commissioning Officer would ensure the co-production Purple Book was circulated among the committee members and made available to all new councillors' post-election.

The committee **AGREED** to recommendations under the following headings:

- That the Council should produce a Co-Production Charter and, in the 2025/26 municipal year, require that appropriate staff should complete at least the Level 1 Co-Production training and that all elected members should be invited and encouraged to take part, as part of the Member Induction Programme;
- That the Council should arrange for the Chair of the People Overview and Scrutiny Committee, or the Deputy Chair where the Chair is unavailable, to sit as a member of the Co-Production Advisory Board;
- That the Council should ensure its definition of Co-production is understood and embedded across the organisation.

6/25 COMMITTEE FORWARD WORK PLAN (Agenda No. 6)

The Committee **AGREED** the proposed work programme.

7/25 COMMITTEE ACTION AND RECOMMENDATION TRACKER (Agenda No. 7)

The Committee **NOTED** the action and recommendation tracker.

8/25 RESPONSES TO SCRUTINY RECOMMENDATIONS
(Agenda No. 8)

The Committee **NOTED** that no responses were expected.

..... in the Chair

Date of signing

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PEOPLE OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

MINUTES of the meeting held on Tuesday, 20 May 2025 commencing at 12.06 pm and finishing at 12.08 pm.

Present:

Voting Members: Councillor James Barlow
Councillor Will Boucher-Giles
Councillor Imade Edosomwan
Councillor Judith Edwards
Councillor Lee Evans
Councillor Rebekah Fletcher
Councillor Georgina Heritage
Councillor Toyah Overton
Councillor Ian Snowdon

Officers: Anita Bradley, Director of Law & Governance and Monitoring Officer

The Council considered the matters, reports and recommendations contained or referred to in the agenda for the meeting and decided as set out below. Except insofar as otherwise specified, the reasons for the decisions are contained in the agenda and reports, copies of which are attached to the signed Minutes.

9/25 ELECTION OF CHAIR FOR THE 2025/26 COUNCIL YEAR (Agenda No. 1)

Cllr Snowdon was nominated by Cllr Evans and seconded by Cllr Edosomwan.

There being no other nominations, Cllr Snowdon was elected Chair for the 2025/2026 municipal year.

10/25 ELECTION OF DEPUTY CHAIR FOR THE 2025/26 COUNCIL YEAR (Agenda No. 2)

Cllr OVerton was nominated by Cllr Heritage and seconded by Cllr Boucher-Giles.

There being no other nominations, Cllr Overton was elected Deputy Chair for the 2025/2026 municipal year.

11/25 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE AND TEMPORARY APPOINTMENTS (Agenda No. 3)

There were none.

..... in the Chair

Date of signing

PEOPLE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

26th June 2025

OXFORDSHIRE EMPLOYMENT SERVICE

Report by Director of Adult Social Care

RECOMMENDATION

1. **The Committee is RECOMMENDED to**
 - i. Note the overview and achievements of Oxfordshire Employment Service, Oxfordshire's dedicated supported employment service for supporting people getting into sustainable work;
 - ii. Note Oxfordshire Employment's approach to delivering the Connect to Work programme with Enterprise Oxfordshire.

Executive Summary

2. Good quality work provides people with income, social interaction, a sense of fulfilment and purpose among many other benefits. Work supports people's wellbeing and aligns with the overarching strategy for delivering Adult Social Care in Oxfordshire, the Oxfordshire Way, which focuses on using strengths-based approaches and empowering people to be independent and live well in their community.
3. The strengths-based approach in adult social care is a person-centred model that focuses on individuals' abilities, resources, and aspirations rather than their deficits or limitations. It is about recognising and building upon the capabilities, relationships, and community assets that individuals and communities already possess. It also shifts the focus from "what's wrong" to "what's strong," aiming to empower people to live independently and meaningfully within their communities. In Oxfordshire, the strengths-based approach is embedded in the "Oxfordshire Way", our strategic vision for adult social care that prioritises prevention, independence, and community resilience. We work with people, their families and communities as partners and support them to take control of their lives and make informed decisions.
4. Oxfordshire Employment is Oxfordshire County Council's Supported Employment service, enabling people with long-term health needs or a disability to gain and sustain employment. Oxfordshire Employment also provides supported internship opportunities, which are highly successful in supporting young people to enter work.

5. In September 2024, Oxfordshire Employment was among the first 20 organisations to receive the Supported Employment Quality Framework (SEQF) Fidelity Award, rated 'Good,' having previously been one of the first holders of the local Authority Disability Employment Mark (Ladem).
6. Oxfordshire Employment has been chosen by the council to be the delivery partner for the Connect to Work Programme in Oxfordshire supporting disabled people, those with health conditions and people with complex barriers to employment. The programme will be delivered in collaboration with Enterprise Oxfordshire.

Oxfordshire Employment Service

7. Supporting people into employment is important to their wellbeing, independence and inclusion. This approach aligns with our vision for adult social care in Oxfordshire, the [Oxfordshire Way](#).
8. Oxfordshire Employment has provided employment support for over 75 years. High quality supported employment is provided utilising the fidelity accredited 5-stage supported employment model recognised across Europe.
9. Oxfordshire Employment's dedicated employment advisors and employment support workers located across the county are skilled in job matching, disability awareness, and supporting employers with reasonable adjustments. They provide high quality and personalised support for people to develop their work skills, look for employment, provide support along the way, get a job and sustain their role.
10. Employment advisors are encouraged to work towards the British Association for Supported Employment's Practitioner Award, which is a prestigious recognition given to individuals who demonstrate excellence in delivering supported employment services. It celebrates practitioners who go above and beyond in helping people with disabilities or health conditions secure and sustain meaningful employment. We are proud that the Oxfordshire Employment has one of the highest ratios of qualified staff in the country.
11. Oxfordshire Employment operates County Print Finishers (CPF) in central Oxford, which is a nationally recognised Supported Business where employee support is funded by the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP). CPF provides high quality print, digital post and fulfilment solutions for the Council as well as external customers, offering paid work placements to help develop work skills and experience to prepare people for external employment.
12. CPF was a founding member of the Supported Business Alliance, which is a national supported business network who meet regularly and share feedback directly with DWP. CPF have been involved since its creation and as a Steering Group member liaises directly with the DWP to define policy and funding models within the supported employment sector.

13. County Print Finishers has Disability Confidence leader status since 2017 and is a Royal National Institute of Blind People (RNIB) Visibility Confident accredited employer. This accreditation demonstrates that it is recognised as an inclusive employer for those who have any form of visual impairment.
14. County Print Finishers have also been working in partnership with White Brothers, which supply charity shops with new products, for eight years. In 2024/2025, County Print Finishers rebranded 472,650 items for the charity sector.

Supported Employment Model

15. The supported employment model supports individuals with significant disabilities into sustained employment through a structured, partnership-based approach. Oxfordshire Employment follows a five-stage model:
 1. **Customer Engagement** - understanding individual circumstances and barriers to work.
 2. **Vocational Profiling** – gathering key information to inform job matching.
 3. **Employer Engagement** – building relationships with employers to identify opportunities.
 4. **Job Matching** – analysing roles, identifying barriers, and recommending reasonable adjustments.
 5. **In-Work Support & Career Development** – providing tailored support during onboarding and progression, including Access to Work support where needed.
16. Oxfordshire Employment supports approximately 150 individuals annually, achieving more than 50% into paid employment and around 30% into outcomes other than paid employment (e.g. volunteering, further skills development)
17. Currently, Oxfordshire Employment is
 - providing paid supported employment (in CPF roles) for up to 23 people with disabilities or health conditions beyond reasonable workplace adjustments, enabling people furthest from traditional employment to remain economically active. CPF is proud to employ three staff members each with over 40 years local government service.
 - one of the first Local Authority employment teams to achieve the SEQF kitemark of quality assurance, having undertaken an extensive and robust accreditation process.
 - delivering a successful Supported Internship programme with the capacity to increase cohort size from 2026, consistently delivering outcomes exceeding national performance benchmarks (please see Supported Internship Programme section below for more details).

- One of 21 chosen local authorities currently delivering the DWP funded Connect to Work programme, a trailblazer for the national Connect to Work programme. A description of this programme is provided below.
- Developing the County Print Finishers' business to ensure both its status as a nationally leading Supported Business and its relevance to the council and the local economy. The social value and inclusive employment offer is widely recognised by customers, including the Royal Microscopical Society, Xerox and White Brothers Ltd, a leading supplier to the charity sector and holder of the Queens Award for Industry.

18. The work we do in Oxfordshire Employment and CPF makes a huge difference to people's lives, as can be seen from the two examples below:

J is in her 30's who has Aspergers Syndrome. She joined the employment scheme in December 2018 and was supported to harness and add to her employability skills. She subsequently started paid employment with CPF as a delivery driver and quality controller. J has thrived in this role and her close attention to detail made her a perfect fit for a role with CPF.

She takes great pride in the fact that her colleagues refer to her as 'Eagle-eyed J' and 'Hawkeye'. J has gradually increased her working hours over time and now works full-time five days a week.

J has said *'if I could sum up CPF in one word it would be 'opportunities'. Working at CPF means that disabilities of various forms are no barrier. Since I first started at CPF my self-confidence, mental health and ability to make friends and good colleagues have all improved'.*

T had not been able to sustain work for 10 years due to multiple physical health challenges which also negatively impacted his mental health. He has been involved with Oxfordshire Employment since 2019 and is now a fully employed member of staff who works full-time.

T says *'being employed at CPF has helped me recover my confidence and given me a renewed sense of purpose. At work it's so nice to be alongside people who care about me. It's given me a chance to smile more. I used to get moody a lot, but I'm not as bad as I was. I feel calmer in my body, I now know I will be fine. Everybody works as a team and I've never worked in such an environment before. Everyone here – my work colleagues and my managers – everyone helps you. I was made to feel welcome in the first week and that's not stopped. I don't feel like I'm a burden. I am well supported and enjoy the work. I like to help with everything, I don't like to sit around doing nothing. I didn't think this would ever be possible to be in a job where my health issues don't hold me back. The work means a lot more to me than just another paid job. It's no exaggeration to say that working here has transformed my life'.*

Supported Internship Programme

19. The supported internship model is a structured, work-based study programme designed for young people aged 16–24 with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND), working in collaboration with colleges in Oxfordshire and OCC Children's teams.
20. The Programme integrates real workplace experience with tailored learning and support, helping participants build employability skills, confidence, and independence. Delivered collaboratively by employers, education providers, and job coaches, the programme aims to transition interns into sustainable paid employment upon completion.
21. The Programme is delivered by weekly college-based learning tailored to individual needs and joint support provided by Oxfordshire Employment. The support framework includes
 - Assessing individual workplace needs
 - Matching interns to suitable placements with employment potential
 - Pre-employment preparation including travel training and employer engagement
 - Ongoing in-work coaching and support throughout the internship
 - Monitoring progress with colleges
 - Providing transition support into employment or further assistance.
22. In 2023–2024
 - 26 students enrolled on the programme in September 2023 and 23 completed the programme by July 2024.
 - 52% of completing interns received employment offers. This is higher than the national average of 36%. Projected employment outcomes for 2024-25 are 65%

Connect to Work Programme

23. Connect to Work (CtW) is a nationally prescribed and locally commissioned supported employment programme, funded by the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) through grant funding. It is delivered by the Accountable Bodies that will determine how the support is delivered locally, in line with local priorities.
24. Oxfordshire County Council has been designated as one of 43 Accountable Bodies across England. The Council will design the local offer, shaping it around local services and priorities, to support people find and fulfil their potential to work. The Programme will primarily be focused on supporting people with a disability and specified disadvantaged groups such as disabled people, offender/ex-offenders, carers/ex-carers, homeless people, former members of HM Armed Forces or a partner of current or former Armed Forces personnel, people with a alcohol or drug dependency, care experienced young person/

care leavers (full eligibility can be found in the published guidance [Connect to Work: Grant Guidance for England](#)).

25. The Connect to Work programme also links with the Council's emerging local Get Britain Working Strategy, which will deliver a whole system approach to tackling the supply and demand challenges within local labour markets, covering market issues such as participation, progression, earnings and job quality in the labour market.
26. The programme will drive two Supported Employment models: Individual Placement and Support (IPS) and Supported Employment Quality Framework (SEQF). Over the five years of the programme (2025 - 2030), there is an indicative target of 2,000 participants in Oxfordshire, split between the two models (70% for IPS and 30% for and SEQF pathways).
27. Indicative cost of the programme in Oxfordshire is approx. £8.4 million based on the DWP's current demand modelling. The programme will be funded in arrears by the DWP subject to a delivery plan and grant funding agreement.

Developing Connect to Work in Oxfordshire

28. Oxfordshire Employment has been selected by the council to design and deliver the SEQF pathway.
29. An extensive mapping exercise has been conducted to identify potential providers of the IPS pathway and a number of organisations that could be interested in delivering local Connect to Work programmes identified.
30. Market engagement has taken place to explore opportunities with potential organisations, including with Enterprise Oxfordshire (a Teckal company¹, previously known as OxLEP).
31. An options appraisal has been conducted to inform the choice of provider for the IPS pathway and ensure that Oxfordshire residents gain the most value from the Connect to Work programme. The options appraisal has taken into account the following criteria:
 - The ability to meet the ambitious DWP timescales for the delivery of the programme and the programme outcomes;
 - The capability to deliver a quality, fidelity model for IPS in Oxfordshire;
 - Opportunities to tap into the existing experience and knowledge of Oxfordshire's labour market;

¹ A Teckal company is a type of organisation that allows a local authority to award contracts directly to a company it owns, without needing to go through a competitive procurement process. This is legally permitted under what's known as the Teckal exemption, now referred to as the vertical exemption under the Procurement Act 2023. To qualify for this exemption, the company must be wholly owned by the public authorities, the public authority must exercise control over the company similar to that which it exercises over its own departments, and at least 80% of the company's activities must be carried out for the controlling public authority or authorities.

- Ability to focus on supporting local people into employment effectively in conjunction with Council's ambitions and existing programmes to support inclusive employment in Oxfordshire;
 - Achieving ambitions which reflect the strategic vision of the Oxfordshire Way and other local strategy across health, employment and communities;
 - Deliver social value including keeping investment and jobs local as well as building capacity of local organisations and Voluntary, Community and Social Enterprises (VCSE).
32. The appraisal concluded that Enterprise Oxfordshire delivering the IPS component of the Connect to Work programme would create the most effective delivery of the programme in Oxfordshire.

Corporate Policies and Priorities

33. Oxfordshire Employment and the Connect to Work Programme will support the delivery of Council's corporate vision and priorities, in particular:
- Tackle inequalities in Oxfordshire – there will be a measurable impact on numbers of individuals achieving supported employment through this work.
 - Prioritise the health and wellbeing of residents – employment is considered a central part of health and wellbeing.
 - Support carers and the social care system – Connect to Work's eligible groups includes carers and care leavers.
 - Create opportunities for children and young people to reach their full potential – Connect to Work's eligible groups includes young people from the age of 16-years of age.
 - Play our part in a vibrant and participatory local democracy – the programme design will include co-production aspects to ensure the barriers to participation and job outcomes are removed.
 - Work with local businesses and partners for environmental, economic and social benefit – there will be significant work carried out with the local business base to identify and provide job opportunities. The pathway will encourage social value.

Financial Implications

34. The Connect to Work programme is fully funded against a five-year operational period by DWP subject to a delivery plan and grant funding agreement. We do not expect any exceptional expenditure.
35. Based on DWP modelling, 2,000 people are expected to access the programme. DWP estimated the lifetime cost to be £4,200 per participant indicating a programme budget of circa £8 million. The Council has been awarded £100,000.00 from the total project budget to fund development activities.
36. It is recommended that the proposed contract length is 5-years with review periods after 1 year, 3 years and 5 years, which will give the opportunity to

review the service provided. It is also recommended that there be an option to extend for 2-years, should further government funding be provided as has been the case in other programmes. This will give the Council flexibility should short-term funding be allocated before any further support programmes come in.

Comments checked by:

Emma Percival, Assistant Finance Business Partner,
emma.percival@oxfordshire.gov.uk

Legal Implications

37. The legal implications of the Connect to Work programme are as detailed in the Cabinet Member report dated 29th April 2025 and as further detailed below:
38. The delivery of the programme will require entering into and complying with the DWP grant agreement conditions and guidance which will need legal input and support.

Oxfordshire Local Enterprise Partnership Limited (OxLEP,) now trading as Enterprise Oxfordshire, is a limited company, wholly owned by the Council. It was formed as a 'Teckal' compliant company, in order that contracts for works, services and goods, awarded by the Council to it, are exempt from the requirement to carry out a competitive procurement exercise in accordance with regulation 12 of the Public Contracts Regulations 2015 (PCR). The PCR has recently been replaced by the Procurement Act 2023, however, the 'Teckal' exemption (now vertical exemption) still exists under the new Act (contained within Schedule 2, paragraph 2 of the Act).

The contract for the IPS can be directly awarded by the Council to OxLEP, without competition (relying on the 'Teckal' exemption within the Procurement Act) provided that the Teckal conditions continue to be satisfied i.e. more than 80% of OxLEP's activities are carried out for or on behalf of the Council, only public authorities must hold shares in OxLEP, and the Council controls OxLEP (with no person other than the Council exerting a decisive influence on the activities of OxLEP).

It is important that the Council operates OxLEP in accordance with the appropriate controls (i.e. the Council does not allow it to operate with wider freedoms than those in its Articles and any Member Agreement, but instead it is managed and controlled accordingly) and continues to monitor compliance with the above conditions to ensure OxLEP continues to satisfy the 'Teckal' exemption.

Appropriate contractual documentation should be formalised with OxLEP in relation to the service provision.

Comments checked by:

Staff Implications

39. Oxfordshire Employment is part of Council's Adult Social Care Service and has been delivering successful employment support to people who need extra support to find and stay in employment for nearly 75 years. For Connect to Work, Oxfordshire Employment will collaborate with Enterprise Oxfordshire.
40. There is programme support available to Accountable Bodies for delivering the Connect to Work programme. The Programme will be delivered by existing teams. However, as the fidelity model stipulates precise caseload numbers, the Oxfordshire Employment team currently expects to recruit four further employment advisors. These posts will be fully funded and new team members will be contracted for the duration of the programme.

Equality & Inclusion Implications

41. Equity in experiences and outcomes is a key priority for Adult Social Care arising from our statutory duties under Care Act 2014 and CQC Assurance Framework and underpins measurable best practice
42. Employment is key to supporting people's independence and wellbeing. Oxfordshire Employment has a strong track record of supporting people well to achieve sustainable employment.

Risk Management

43. Adult Social Care Directorate Leadership Team has oversight of the risks and maintains a risk register and reports to Senior Leadership Team and Informal Cabinet through monthly updates.

Report by: Karen Fuller, Director of Adult Social Care

Contact Officer: Will Gardner, Team Manager, Oxfordshire Employment and County Print Finishers
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07500227726

June 2025

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Work Programme People Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Cllr Ian Snowden, Chair | Ben Piper, Democratic Services Officer, ben.piper@oxfordshire.gov.uk

COMMITTEE BUSINESS

Topic	Relevant strategic priorities	Purpose	Type	Report Leads
18 September 2025				
CQC Feedback and Outcomes – <i>if available</i>	Prioritise the Health and Wellbeing of Residents.	To consider the report of the CQC Assurance inspection.	Overview and Scrutiny	Karen Fuller
Supported Living	Prioritise the health and wellbeing of residents; Work with local businesses and partners for environmental, economic and social benefit; support carers and the social care system.	To consider the support provided by the Council	Overview and Scrutiny	Karen Fuller; tbc
Oxfordshire Safeguarding Adults Board Annual Safeguarding Report	Prioritises the health and wellbeing of residents; work with local businesses and partners for environmental, economic, and social benefit; support carers and the social care system.	To understand trends in performance	Overview and Scrutiny	Karen Fuller; Steven Turner



6 November 2025

Inequalities in a Marmot County	Prioritises the health and wellbeing of residents; work with local businesses and partners for environmental, economic, and social benefit; support carers and the social care system.	To consider and review progress made on inequalities in adult social care since the launch of the Marmot County. To understand the demographics, lifestyles and social determinants across Oxfordshire driving inequalities.	Overview and Scrutiny	Karen Fuller; Ansaf Azhar
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15 January 2026

Community Grants report	Prioritises the health and wellbeing of residents; work with local businesses and partners for environmental, economic, and social benefit; support carers and the social care system	To consider the annual Community Grants report	Overview and Scrutiny	Karen Fuller
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19 March 2026

Communications and Customer Service	Prioritises the health and wellbeing of residents; work with local businesses and partners for environmental, economic, and social benefit; support carers and the social care system	To consider and review the Council's engagement with the public	Overview and Scrutiny	Karen Fuller
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WORKING GROUPS

Working Groups				
Name	Relevant strategic priorities	Description	Outcomes	Members
There are currently no working groups				

BRIEFINGS FOR MEMBER INFORMATION

Member Briefings				
Name	Relevant strategic priorities	Description	Outcomes	Members
There are currently no planned Member briefings				

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Recommendation Tracker

People Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Councillor Ian Snowden, Chair | Ben Piper, Democratic Services Officer, ben.piper@oxfordshire.gov.uk

The recommendation tracker enables the Committee to monitor progress against agreed recommendations. The tracker is updated with the recommendations agreed at each meeting. Once an action has been completed or fully implemented, it will be shaded green and reported into the next meeting of the Committee, after which it will be removed from the tracker.

KEY	Due to Cabinet	With Cabinet	Complete
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Recommendations:

Meeting Date	Item	Recommendation	Lead	Update/response
20-Mar-25	Co-Production in Adult Social Care	1. That the Council should, during the 2025/26 municipal year, require all staff within Children's Services and within Adult Social Care to complete the Level 1 Co-production training.	Karen Fuller; Fulya Markham	Presented to Cabinet on 22 nd April 2025
		2. That the Council should encourage all councillors to complete the Level 1 Coproduction training during the 2025/26 municipal year.		Presented to Cabinet on 22 nd April 2025
		3. That the Council should arrange for the Chair of the People Overview and Scrutiny Committee to sit as a member of the Co-production Advisory Board, with the Deputy Chair of the People Overview and Scrutiny Committee, being permitted as a substitute.		Presented to Cabinet on 22 nd April 2025
		4. That the Council should adopt a Coproduction Charter committing itself to systemic and whole-hearted coproduction across Children's Services and Adult		Presented to Cabinet on 22 nd April 2025

**Recommendation Tracker
People Overview and Scrutiny Committee**

KEY	Delayed	In Progress	Complete
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Meeting date	Item	Recommendation	Lead	Update/response
Page 24		Social Care and, as part of that, during the 2025/26 municipal year, the Council will, as a minimum: a) require all staff within Children's Services and within Adult Social Care to complete the Level 1 Co-production training, and b) encourage all councillors to complete the Level 1 Co-production training during the 2025/26 municipal year, and c) arrange for the Chair of the People Overview and Scrutiny Committee to sit as a member of the Co-production Advisory Board, with the Deputy Chair of the People Overview and Scrutiny Committee, being permitted as a substitute.		



Action Tracker

People Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Councillor Ian Snowden, Chair | Ben Piper, Democratic Services Officer, ben.piper@oxfordshire.gov.uk

The action tracker enables the Committee to monitor progress against agreed actions. The tracker is updated with the actions agreed at each meeting. Once an action has been completed or fully implemented, it will be shaded green and reported into the next meeting of the Committee, after which it will be removed from the tracker.

KEY	Due to Cabinet	With Cabinet	Complete
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Meeting date	Item	Action	Lead	Update/response
25				
		There are no outstanding Actions.		



Recommendation Update Tracker People Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Councillor Ian Snowden, Chair | Ben Piper, Democratic Services Officer, ben.piper@oxfordshire.gov.uk

The recommendation update tracker enables the Committee to monitor progress accepted recommendations. The tracker is updated with recommendations accepted by Cabinet. Once a recommendation has been updated, it will be shaded green and reported into the next meeting of the Committee, after which it will be removed from the tracker. If the recommendation will be update in the form of a separate item, it will be shaded yellow.

KEY	Update Pending	Update in Item	Updated
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Cabinet Response Date	Item	Recommendation	Lead	Update
17-Sep-24	ASC CQC Assurance Update	That the Council should publicise the successes of Adult Social Care more widely.	Karen Fuller	Update expected with CQC Report