



Notice of a Meeting

**Place Overview & Scrutiny Committee
Wednesday, 22 April 2026 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 Liam Walker
Deputy Chair: Councillor Bethia Thomas

Councillors: Thomas Ashby Emily Kerr Leigh Rawlins
Chris Brant Lesley McLean
Laura Gordon Susanna Pressel

Date of Next Meeting: *24 June 2026*

For more information about this Committee please contact:

Committee Officer: *Richard Doney*
Email: *Email: scrutiny@oxfordshire.gov.uk*

Martin Reeves
Chief Executive

April 2026

What does this Committee review or scrutinise?

Climate change, transport, highways, planning and place-based services. Including the delivery of regulatory services, fire and rescue, community safety and community services such as libraries. NB This Committee will act as the Council's 'Crime and Disorder Committee'.

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 69 councillors who are democratically elected every four years. The Council provides a range of services to Oxfordshire's 763,200 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 £1.2 billion of public money in providing these services. Most decisions are taken by a Cabinet of 10 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 at least 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 9 - 22)

The Committee is recommended to **APPROVE** the minutes of the meeting held on 4 February 2026 and to receive information arising from them.

4. Petitions and Public Addresses

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

Requests to speak must be submitted no later than 09.00 three working days before the meeting, i.e., Friday, 17 April, 2026.

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.

Where there are a number of requests from persons wishing to present similar views on the same issue, the Chair may require that the views be put by a single spokesperson. It is expected that only in exceptional circumstances will a person (or organisation) be allowed to address more than one meeting on a particular issue in any period of six months.

5. Committee Action and Recommendation Tracker (Pages 23 - 28)

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

6. Responses to Scrutiny Recommendations (Pages 29 - 32)

Attached are the Cabinet responses to the Place Overview and Scrutiny Committee reports on:

- Infrastructure Funding Statement and s.106
- Movement and Place Plans

The Committee is asked to **NOTE** the response.

7. Committee Forward Work Plan (Pages 33 - 34)

Recognising that its membership may change in the forthcoming municipal year, the Committee is recommended to **AGREE** a provisional work programme for forthcoming

meetings, taking account of the Cabinet Forward Plan and of the Budget Management Monitoring Report.

8. Minerals and Waste Planning (Pages 35 - 54)

The Committee has requested a report on minerals and waste planning in Oxfordshire.

Cllr Judy Roberts, Cabinet Member for Place, Environment and Climate Action, Robin Rogers, Director of Economy and Place, David Periam, Planning Development Manager, have been invited to present the report and answer the Committee's questions.

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.

9. School Streets (Pages 55 - 70)

The Committee has requested a report on school streets in Oxfordshire.

Cllr Andrew Gant, Cabinet Member for Transport Management, Paul Fermer, Director of Environment and Highways, Mark Gregory, Team Leader: Behavioural Change and Travel, Cathy Champion, Operations Manager: Civil Enforcement, and Melissa Goodacre, Sustainable Transport Manager, have been invited to present the report and answer the Committee's questions.

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.

10. Bus Services and Rural Transport including Mobility Hubs (Pages 71 - 88)

The Committee has requested a report on bus services and rural transport, including mobility hubs, in Oxfordshire.

Cllr Andrew Gant, Cabinet member for Transport Management, Cllr Judy Roberts, Cabinet member for Place, Environment, and Climate Change, Paul Fermer, Director of Environment and Highways, and Ben Smith, Strategic Transport Manager, Melissa Goodacre, Sustainable Transport Manager, Ashley Hayden, Team Leader: Area Travel Plans, Dave Harrison, Team Leader: Public Transport, Eric Manners: Technical Leader: Active Travel, have been invited to present the report.

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.

11. Temporary Congestion Charge Scheme Monitoring Report (Pages 89 - 92)

At the time it considered the implementation of the temporary congestion charge scheme in August 2025, the Committee agreed to receive a monitoring report in April 2026.

Cllr Andrew Gant, Cabinet member for Transport Management, Paul Fermer, Director of Environment and Highways, and Aron Wisdom, Programme Lead: Central, have been invited to present the report.

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.

At the conclusion of this item, the Committee will adjourn and will reconvene at 13.30.

12. Illegal Waste near Kidlington (Pages 93 - 114)

c. 13:30

The Committee has requested an interim report on the illegal waste site near Kidlington.

The Committee has invited Cllr Liz Leffman, the Leader of the Council, Cllr Judy Roberts, Cabinet member for Place, Environment, and Climate Change, Robin Rogers, Director of Economy and Place, Nicola Riley, Cherwell District Council's Assistant Director: Wellbeing and Housing Services, Simon Hawkins, the Environment Agency's Director of Operations for East and South East England, to attend as well as officers from the Council's regulatory planning and enforcement 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.

Councillors declaring interests

General duty

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

What is a disclosable pecuniary interest?

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

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

Declaring an interest

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

Members' Code of Conduct and public perception

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

Members Code – Other registrable interests

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

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

Other registrable interests include:

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

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

Members Code – Non-registrable interests

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

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

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

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

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

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

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PLACE OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

MINUTES of the meeting held on Wednesday, 4 February 2026 commencing at 10.00 am and finishing at 1.23 pm.

Present:

Voting Members:

Councillor Liam Walker - in the Chair
Councillor Bethia Thomas (Deputy Chair)
Councillor Thomas Ashby
Councillor Emily Kerr
Councillor Lesley McLean
Councillor Toyah Overton
Councillor Susanna Pressel
Councillor Leigh Rawlins

Other Members in Attendance:

Cllr Andrew Gant, Cabinet member for Transport Management

Officers:

Paul Fermer, Director of Environment and Highways
Sean Rooney, Head of Service – Highway Maintenance and Road Safety
Andrew Ford, Road Safety Education Team Manager at Oxfordshire Fire & Rescue Service
Andrew Vidovic, Team Leader – Inspections
Anthony Kirkwood, Team Leader – Vision Zero
Dale Stevens, Insurance Manager
Nigel Clark, Team Leader – Volunteer Coordination
Paul Wilson, Operational Manager (Operations)
Richard Lovewell, Business Director for MGroup Highways
Steven Fitzgerald, Operational Manager (Highways Maintenance)
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.

1/26 **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE AND TEMPORARY APPOINTMENTS** (Agenda No. 1)

Apologies were received from Cllr Brant, substituted by Cllr Overton, and Cllr Gordon. Cllr Thomas had sent apologies that she would arrive late.

2/26 DECLARATION OF INTERESTS

(Agenda No. 2)

Cllr Kerr declared that she was a Bike Ability instructor.

3/26 MINUTES

(Agenda No. 3)

The Committee **APPROVED** the minutes of the meeting held on 12 November 2015 as a true and accurate record.

4/26 PETITIONS AND PUBLIC ADDRESSES

(Agenda No. 4)

Danny Yee spoke on behalf of Oxfordshire Liverpool Street regarding the Vision Zero strategy. He emphasised the importance of addressing injury hotspots but argued that limited resources required cost-effective, area-wide measures. Mr Yee advocated for speed limit reductions and changes to motor traffic volumes and routing, highlighting the need to remove sources of danger through network design. He suggested shifting traffic from side streets to main roads and implementing low traffic neighbourhoods and bus gates. Mr Yee also noted that the strategy should focus more on equitable mobility, citing specific locations where lower speed limits would improve walking and cycling connectivity.

Peter Barnett addressed the Committee with key statistics from the Vision Zero reports, noting that Oxfordshire's killed or seriously injured (KSI) figures had risen by 11%, while the draft budget for Vision Zero had decreased by 6%. He highlighted that the projected fatality figures for 2024 and 2025 remained around 20, suggesting the budget should be increased rather than reduced. Mr Barnett referenced cost-benefit studies supporting greater investment in road safety. He also raised questions about the progress of direct vision standards and construction safety measures and pointed out the low rate of prevention of future deaths reports following inquests, advocating for improvement.

5/26 COMMITTEE ACTION AND RECOMMENDATION TRACKER

(Agenda No. 5)

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

The Committee discussed the proportion of recommendations accepted, partially accepted, or rejected over recent years, with data available in the scrutiny annual report. The Committee was informed their acceptance rate was among the highest.

Cllr Thomas joined the meeting at this stage.

6/26 RESPONSES TO SCRUTINY RECOMMENDATIONS

(Agenda No. 6)

The Committee **NOTED** the Cabinet responses to the Committee's reports on:

- Part Night Lighting
- Verge and Vegetation Management
- LGR – One Oxfordshire Proposal
- OxRail 2024

7/26 COMMITTEE FORWARD WORK PLAN

(Agenda No. 7)

The Committee reviewed its forward work plan and **AGREED** to upcoming topics including the illegal waste dump near Kidlington, with plans to invite the Environment Agency and District Council. The Committee confirmed that it wished to consider items on bus services and rural transport, and minerals and waste planning.

The Committee also **AGREED** to add school streets to the April agenda, partly as a result of concerns about poor signage and enforcement at a local school.

The Committee also discussed the need to monitor changes to Household Waste and Recycling Centre bookings and address verification, agreeing to include this as a future agenda item.

8/26 ROAD SAFETY INITIATIVES IN OXFORDSHIRE

(Agenda No. 8)

Cllr Andrew Gant, Cabinet member for Transport Management, Paul Fermer, Director of Environment and Highways, Sean Rooney, Head of Service – Highway Maintenance and Road Safety, Andrew Ford, Road Safety Education Team Manager at Oxfordshire Fire & Rescue Service, and Anthony Kirkwood, Team Leader – Vision Zero, were invited to present the report.

The Committee had also invited a representative of Thames Valley Police (TVP), who sent apologies and a short statement in response to questions raised in advance. The statement explained that a dedicated roads policing team would work within communities to engage, educate, and enforce in areas with high casualty rates, targeting persistent offenders and collaborating with other agencies to address road safety issues. Written questions were welcomed for the TVP to address.

The Cabinet member for Transport Management opened the item by emphasising that safety sat at the centre of all transport policy. Vision Zero had been presented as the overarching framework guiding the Council's decisions, with the ambition to eliminate all road deaths and serious injuries. The principle that deaths and serious injuries should not be seen as an acceptable cost of economic or environmental functioning had been reiterated throughout the discussion.

Recent and ongoing initiatives were highlighted, including the countywide 20mph programme, the expansion of school streets, and the delivery of segregated active-travel infrastructure. The Cabinet member stressed that safety should take precedence across the transport network.

The Head of Service – Highway Maintenance and Road Safety noted that maintenance and safety must be managed together and prioritised, with Vision Zero

at the forefront as a collaborative system involving multiple teams. The Head of Service highlighted the necessity for unified strategies across engineering, operations, and engagement.

The Road Safety Education Team Manager at Oxfordshire Fire & Rescue Service outlined how road safety education had moved into the Fire & Rescue Service's Prevention team, which already worked extensively with schools and communities. The longstanding "three Es" - Environment, Education and Enforcement - continued to shape the programme. Vision Zero had helped to bring these elements closer together operationally. Officers highlighted a range of successful education programmes, including pedestrian training and cycle training reaching more than 6,000 children each year. There was an ambition to reach all schools, although instructor capacity had remained a limiting factor. Work with young drivers included advocacy for graduated licensing, behavioural-change campaigns and advanced driver training opportunities. Officers had also delivered targeted engagement with motorcyclists and continued joint operations with TVP, offering equipment, safety advice and enforcement.

The Director of Environment and Highways acknowledged the recent publication of the national Road Safety Strategy and confirmed that Oxfordshire's Vision Zero strategy would be reviewed to ensure alignment with the revised national framework. This review was seen as an opportunity to update priorities, strengthen partnership work, and reflect emerging best practice.

The Committee considered the organisational structure of road safety functions and discussed why Bikeability delivery sat within Fire & Rescue rather than Highways. Officers explained that several years earlier, when national road safety funding had been reduced and many councils had disbanded their safety teams, Oxfordshire had transferred the educational element into Fire & Rescue to preserve staff capacity. This approach had enabled the Council to avoid losing expertise at a time of instability nationally. Members questioned whether the model remained the most effective arrangement, especially given performance pressures and recruitment challenges. Officers accepted the concerns and stated that the structure could be reviewed, particularly in the context of future local government reorganisation, although they emphasised that outcomes rather than organisational location should guide decisions.

The Committee discussed the ongoing national shortage of Bikeability instructors. Officers explained that Oxfordshire worked with five contracted providers and a small internal team, all of whom were operating at maximum capacity and struggling to recruit. To create a more resilient model, officers were developing a new recruitment pool of instructors directly contracted to the Council but available to all providers. This would give greater flexibility and help address peaks in demand. Further work was underway with neighbouring Councils, the Bikeability Trust and local institutions to broaden recruitment and build long-term stability for training providers, alongside strengthened engagement with schools to increase participation.

Members drew comparisons with Cambridgeshire, noting that its model appeared to provide greater stability for providers and more consistent instructor recruitment. Officers explained that Oxfordshire's multi-provider system had originally been

chosen as a lower-risk approach when national funding appeared uncertain. Although this approach had helped the county expand capacity, officers accepted that the Cambridgeshire model and other comparators should inform a future review, especially in light of ongoing recruitment challenges and the need for predictable long-term delivery.

The condition of cycle lanes and the risks posed by potholes and poor surfaces were raised. Members described cases where cyclists had been forced into the carriageway to avoid defects, particularly in poor weather or at night. Officers acknowledged these concerns and reiterated that safety and maintenance were closely connected. Data on collisions, road condition and cycling patterns informed maintenance programmes, and interventions such as surface dressing, structural patching and drainage improvements were used to extend the lifespan of key active-travel corridors. Officers emphasised that infrastructure improvements sat alongside education, behaviour change and design measures within a safe-system approach.

Concerns were also raised about cyclists' equipment and visibility. Officers confirmed that equipment formed a key part of education and enforcement. Roadside engagement events with TVP involved distributing lights, high-visibility equipment and reflective accessories, funded from road safety budgets. Seasonal campaigns promoted visibility and planned improvements to public information, including updated materials and a refreshed website, aimed to strengthen safety messaging.

Bus speeds on arterial routes were discussed, with members suggesting that high speeds created a hostile environment for cyclists and pedestrians. Officers explained that while 20mph limits had been implemented widely across the county, decisions on arterial routes in Oxford were linked to broader transport considerations. Improving bus reliability and reducing congestion were identified as safety measures in themselves, reducing conflict points for cyclists. Officers acknowledged that speed enforcement rested with the police but noted that ongoing reviews of speed limits and road design on A and B roads formed part of the wider Vision Zero programme.

The Committee explored the handling of post-collision information. A cited case involving a cyclist injured by a pothole on Botley Road highlighted inconsistent reporting from TVP to the Council. Officers acknowledged the issue and stated that while joint post-collision site visits already took place, the system needed strengthening to ensure timely intelligence reached highways teams.

Members questioned the long-term impact of the 20mph programme, noting that compliance varied between locations. Officers reaffirmed the programme's importance to Vision Zero, referencing early evidence from other areas indicating reductions in casualties. Behaviour change was expected to develop over time, with further work on reviewing A and B-road speeds underpinning wider safety objectives.

FixMyStreet was examined as a tool within Vision Zero. Officers explained that FixMyStreet formed a core element of the Council's intelligence-led safety approach, enabling real-time reporting of defects and helping identify patterns and clusters of risk. The transparency of the platform was seen as a strength, allowing the public to track how defects were triaged and repaired. Members raised concerns about delays

and the premature closure of some reports, and suggested stronger links between FixMyStreet data, Officer decision-making and post-collision information. Officers confirmed that improvements were underway, including system updates, clearer communication and improved engagement with members.

Members inquired about the methods used to identify future schemes and how they might access forward plans. Officers explained that a multi-year programme was published outlining resurfacing, maintenance, and safety-focused initiatives, all determined by casualty data, FixMyStreet reports, asset condition surveys, and predictive modelling. Particular emphasis was placed on active-travel corridors and bus routes to advance Vision Zero objectives. Locality meetings were described as valuable forums for members to contribute local insights prior to finalising programmes.

The Committee explored why A-roads and junctions were prominent in casualty statistics. Officers explained that turning movements, particularly at side roads and roundabouts, created points of conflict where pedestrians and cyclists were often injured. To address this, new funding had been secured for schemes on Banbury Road and Iffley Road, incorporating side-road entry treatments and measures to slow turning vehicles. These interventions formed part of the safe-system approach, alongside engineering, enforcement and behavioural measures designed to account for human error. Upcoming corridor studies would further identify locations needing safety improvements.

Members discussed leadership structures and questioned whether the Council had a single officer with clear responsibility for both highways and road safety. Officers confirmed that the Head of Highways Maintenance and Road Safety also held responsibility for road safety, a deliberate decision taken two years earlier to strengthen strategic oversight and align asset management, engineering and safety work. Members welcomed the clarity and sought reassurance that this alignment translated into delivery; officers stated that the combined role improved responsiveness and use of safety data, though conceded that member communication could be strengthened.

Concerns about road signage and infrastructure, particularly around schools, were raised. Officers acknowledged that signage at certain school-street locations, such as Windmill School, had led to non-compliance and confirmed that improvements had already been made or were planned, including backing boards, refreshed markings and improved carriageway signs. Broader discussions recognised the importance of consistent design and clear signage within the safe-system framework, with ongoing review of risks and compliance issues.

The Committee examined pedestrian casualty patterns, noting that some districts, especially Cherwell, showed high levels of pedestrian deaths and serious injuries. Officers confirmed that casualty data underwent detailed annual analysis and could be broken down to identify risks at junction or corridor level. They proposed using locality meetings to explore district-specific patterns and ensure future investment aligned with areas of greatest need. Pedestrian safety remained a core focus within Vision Zero, with future programmes shaped by the evidence.

The safety of larger vehicles, including Heavy Goods Vehicles (HGVs) connected with construction sites, was discussed. Members asked whether Oxfordshire should adopt standards similar to London's Direct Vision Standard (DVS) or expand the use of Fleet Operator Recognition Scheme (FORS) or Construction Logistics and Community Safety (CLOCS) type safety requirements. Officers explained that, whilst national requirements could not be mandated locally, the Council worked with developers through Construction Traffic Management Plans and acknowledged that references to DVS and CLOCS could be strengthened. Although national vehicle regulation would ultimately deliver the largest improvements, officers were exploring how procurement, contractual standards, and partnerships with universities and city partners might extend local safety expectations.

Members questioned how funding decisions were made and whether safety schemes were truly guided by evidence. Officers explained that some funding streams, such as the Safer Roads Fund, required spend on specific corridors, but other investment was wholly evidence-led. Collision analysis, condition surveys and modelling helped identify high-risk junctions and areas used frequently by vulnerable road users. Predictive tools and FixMyStreet trends also shaped priorities.

Finally, the Committee asked about the completion of 20mph signage updates, including Vehicle Activated Signs (VAS). Officers confirmed that the remaining conversions, around fifty units, were being funded from the final stages of the 20mph programme budget. Progress had taken longer than expected owing to the volume of signs, but a dedicated Officer was working nearly full-time on the remaining updates. Members stressed the importance of completing the conversions promptly to reinforce compliance and support wider safety outcomes.

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

- That Council should work to improve the post-collision responses in regard to communication and follow-up, particularly about serious incidents.
- That the Council should launch a campaign to recruit more Bikeability instructors and investigate the underlying limiting factors.
- That the Council should improve the road-safety website and marketing, ensuring clearer public information and better visibility of safety campaigns.
- That the Council should strengthen communication between officers and members, with clearer reporting routes and updates.
- That the Council should ensure Vision Zero / road-safety data is taken to locality meetings for more granular analysis.
- That the Council should develop a specific pedestrian-safety programme, focused on areas with high numbers of fatal and serious pedestrian casualties.
- That the Council should work with Thames Valley Police to encourage the increase of enforcement, including use of more speed cameras.

- That the Council should review the use and deployment of Vehicle Activated Signs (VAS) to assess effectiveness and improve the process.
- That the Council should update the Vision Zero Action Plan (Annex 1 and Annex A) so that actions marked as complete or overdue are properly recorded.
- That the Council should encourage primary schools to have leaders for road safety.
- The Council should advocate nationally for improved HGV safety standards (e.g., type-approval requirements).

The Committee adjourned at 11:28 and reconvened at 11:36.

9/26 REPAIRING OF DEFECTS AND SUPERUSER REPORT (Agenda No. 9)

Cllr Andrew Gant, Cabinet member for Transport Management, Paul Fermer, Director of Environment and Highways, and Sean Rooney, Head of Service – Highway Maintenance and Road Safety, were invited to present a report providing an overview of pothole repairs and superusers.

The Committee also invited Richard Lovewell, Business Director for MGroup Highways, Andrew Vidovic, Team Leader – Inspections, Nigel Clark, Team Leader – Volunteer Coordination, Paul Wilson, Operational Manager (Operations), Dale Stevens, Insurance Manager, Steven Fitzgerald, Operational Manager (Highways Maintenance).

The Committee **NOTED** the report of the Performance and Corporate Services Overview and Scrutiny Committee on FixMyStreet, submitted to Cabinet on 27 January 2026.

The Cabinet Member for Transport Management introduced the item and set out a strategic overview of the position on highway defects. He emphasised the standards expected of the contractor, MGroup, including responsibility for non-chargeable defects, and noted that although the transition to the new contract had been successful, it was not free of imperfections. The report deliberately presented an unvarnished picture of outstanding repairs; the date on the underlying data had been corrected for accuracy. He stressed that he and the team had been leading a process of continuous improvement and that the timing of the report was appropriate given the unprecedented operational challenges seen locally and nationally.

The Head of Service – Highway Maintenance and Road Safety followed by confirming the report's purpose as a candid overview rather than a claim of perfection. He highlighted collaborative work with MGroup to pinpoint and address areas for improvement, describing an intelligence-led, data-rich approach to prioritising a significant volume of defects. He also paid tribute to the Superusers volunteer scheme, with around 230 volunteers had been signed up, though activity

varied seasonally, and reiterated the service's commitment to transparency and continual improvement.

Members of the Committee expressed strong concern on behalf of residents about recurring potholes, the perceived inadequacy of some repairs, and a compensation process seen as complex and slow. They felt a recent Council press release attributing problems to winter conditions failed to acknowledge that similar issues recurred annually and that the current backlog was unacceptable.

Officers recognised the frustration and set out how the service had been moving to an asset-management approach to break the cycle of winter-driven spikes: larger and more durable structural patches, an expanded surface-dressing and resurfacing programme, and greater investment in drainage to prevent water-related failures. They also described improved forward planning, including earlier publication of multi-year programmes so contractors could secure resources in advance. At the same time, they cautioned that resource constraints meant deterioration could not be eliminated entirely.

Councillors sought explanation for the contrast between stronger performance reported in 2023/24 and the sharp rise in potholes during 2024/25. Officers explained that the 2023/24 figures reflected the very large number of defects generated by a wet and cold winter, which allowed crews to plan and respond to a predictable, gradually rising pattern. In 2024/25, by contrast, there had been an unexpected and rapid 82% increase in reported defects in January alone, which placed severe strain on resources and made the picture appear markedly worse. Officers stressed that these variations primarily evidenced the impact of weather patterns rather than any decline in contractor performance.

Further questions were raised as to why winter preparations had not started earlier given the early-2025 surge. Officers said winter planning had been in place based on multi-year trends, but the specific combination of prolonged freezing temperatures and heavy rainfall that triggered the January spike could not reasonably have been predicted. They added that resources were constrained: the same crews deployed on preventative work were also needed for gritting, and the service did not hold spare capacity in reserve. Learning had been built in for future seasons, including earlier contractor mobilisation and better integration of drainage, asset-management data and risk-based prioritisation.

The Director of Environment and Highways reflected on the distinction between budgets for planned maintenance and the separate programme for defect repairs. He acknowledged the worsening condition of parts of the network and the growing volume of work, exacerbated by extreme weather. He accepted that the Council could have reacted more quickly to the most recent spike and identified this as a lesson learned. Saw-cut permanent repairs had become the preferred approach and were now used for most defects, though crews faced operational challenges in persistent wet and cold conditions.

Councillors raised concerns about oversight of temporary repairs in light of sweep-and-fill patches that failed within hours or days. Officers said both MGroup and the Council carried out checks: MGroup supervisors and supply-chain

supervisors reviewed daily completions, including before-and-after photos, while the Council undertook independent quality inspections, with about 1,700–1,800 since the start of the new contract. Early failures remained MGroup’s liability and defects were returned for permanent repair.

Officers explained that weather was the principal cause of early failure, with rain and freeze-thaw cycles preventing proper bonding, particularly on waterlogged or deteriorated surfaces. Temporary sweep-and-fill treatments were used only for immediate safety where full traffic management could not be arranged and were never intended to be durable; such cases were recorded for follow-up permanent works.

Recognising public dissatisfaction, officers accepted that communication with residents had not been strong enough. Work had begun with the Council’s communications team to provide clearer, more regular updates, including weekly social-media messaging and plainer explanations of winter pressures and scheduling constraints. A public-facing statistics dashboard had been devised to show defects reported and repaired, workforce deployment, and progress on backlogs, supporting both residents and Councillors in handling enquiries.

Councillors emphasised the importance of local knowledge in prioritising works, noting that risk-based models, FixMyStreet data and inspection results did not always capture lived realities such as rural pinch points, popular cut-throughs or bus-route stress. Officers acknowledged this and committed to clearer escalation routes, improved locality-based engagement and more consistent member responses via the Member Portal. They reiterated that the service would strengthen how local intelligence was combined with asset-management data to inform prioritisation.

Concern was expressed about the difficulty of contacting the Highways service during urgent incidents. The existing routes, FixMyStreet, the Member Portal, engagement Officers and out-of-hours lines, were described as confusing and sometimes ineffective. Officers accepted this and explained that frontline staff had been under severe pressure due to the surge in defects. The Head of Highways Maintenance said Councillors could contact him directly if necessary and committed to working with the Customer Service Centre to ensure a reliable escalation route to someone empowered to act on urgent matters.

The Insurance Manager highlighted a significant rise in pothole claims, with 903 received in January alone, exceeding previous annual averages and straining both investigation and administration. Additional staff were allocated, but response delays persisted. The Operational Manager noted that many claims required on-site checks by highways staff, further increasing workload amidst high volumes. Councillors requested data on outcomes and costs for these claims; officers explained that only early December cases were being processed, so January results were unavailable. However, for context, the Council had paid around £240,000 for just over 1,900 claims during 2025, illustrating the financial burden of pothole damage.

Councillors also sought clarification on liability in the period between an initial report and a pothole reaching the intervention threshold. Officers explained that liability depended on defect severity, the Council’s inspection regime and adherence to

response times. If a road had been inspected within the defined interval and the defect had not met the intervention threshold, the Council would generally not be liable. If a defect had been reported and not repaired within the set timeframe, liability could arise.

The importance of photographs when reporting defects was discussed. Many FixMyStreet reports lacked images, slowing assessment and repair. Officers agreed that photographs improved accuracy, and triage process, and confirmed that FixMyStreet was developing an enhancement to allow a photograph to be uploaded at the start of reporting, with geolocation to place the defect automatically. Better-quality reports would reduce avoidable site visits and speed network-wide repairs.

It was noted that some FixMyStreet cases appeared to be closed before any visible repair had taken place, damaging public confidence. Officers explained that closures could reflect temporary emergency works or scheduling into a wider programme, which automatically updated the case even though a permanent fix had not yet happened. They committed to improving the workflow and public messaging so residents could see whether a repair was temporary, permanent, or part of a larger scheme.

Councillors queried whether utility companies could be fined retrospectively for reinstatements that later failed. Officers explained that under the New Roads and Street Works Act, statutory undertakers - organisations that have a legal right to place, maintain, repair or remove apparatus in the public highway - guaranteed reinstatements for two years. Within that period, the Council could require companies to return and fix defects at their own cost. After two years, responsibility reverted to the Council. Tracking responsibility could be practically challenging where companies had left the area or contractors had changed, but the Council pursued remediation whenever a failed reinstatement within the guarantee period was identified.

The Cabinet Member left the meeting at this stage.

Councillors then highlighted repeated failures on bus routes, particularly those with heavy or electric buses, where temporary repairs rapidly collapsed. Officers acknowledged the issue and confirmed that, whilst emergency safety treatments were sometimes unavoidable, sweep-and-fills were not durable on high-stress corridors. Such failures remained MGroup's liability and were escalated to permanent structural repair. Analysis of repeat failures on bus routes was underway, assessing whether alternative materials, larger patches or revised scheduling were needed. Officers confirmed that bus routes were already scored more highly within the asset-management prioritisation system.

Concerns were raised regarding the out-of-hours contact system, including a reported instance of an inappropriate response to a Councillor seeking assistance with an emergency hazard. Officers agreed the response was unacceptable and would be investigated. They reiterated that an out-of-hours service existed and that serious hazards should be phoned in rather than logged online. The structure, staffing expectations and escalation routes of the service would be reviewed to improve reliability, particularly during severe weather and high-defect periods.

Cllr Ashby left the meeting at this stage.

Feedback was then received on the Superuser scheme. One Councillor, also a Superuser, reported a substantial increase in workload, having received 43 additional reports that same morning, but confirmed that officers generally responded quickly and effectively to high-risk escalations. Officers welcomed this positive feedback and acknowledged opportunities for improved communication. They agreed to explore additional training and support, including refresher material and clearer escalation processes.

Cllr McLean left this meeting at this stage.

Councillors asked whether more could be done to prevent HGVs using unsuitable C-roads. Officers acknowledged that heavy vehicles contributed significantly to road deterioration. Enforcement of weight restrictions rested primarily with TVP, but the Council continued working with them through road-safety partnerships. Officers emphasised that preventative measures, drainage improvements, structural patching and prioritised resurfacing on HGV and bus corridors, were essential and agreed to review additional tools to limit heavy-vehicle impacts.

Questions were raised about whether higher-specification materials such as graphene-enhanced mixes could be used universally. Officers explained that various materials and techniques were already used, chosen according to weather, defect characteristics and road type. Results from earlier trials at a Stevenson test site had been absorbed into practice. While permanent repairs were increasingly larger and more robust, using the highest-specification mix everywhere was not always cost-effective or technically suitable, especially in winter or for rapid-response safety works.

Councillors sought clarification on inspection routines and Government funding. Officers explained inspections included routine cycles, ad-hoc checks prompted by FixMyStreet reports, and joint quality assurance with MGroup. While inspections followed national practice, increasing capacity would be explored. Government funding was highlighted as vital but insufficient, with only £33 million allocated annually against the £49 million required for network maintenance. Funding remained short-term, limited, or ring-fenced, failing to meet longer-term needs. High defect volumes were linked to extreme weather and historic under-investment, rather than recent local maintenance shortcomings.

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

- That the Council should improve communications with residents, including clearer updates on ongoing works and challenges.
- That the Council should launch the new public-facing statistics dashboard to provide visibility of defect volumes and repair progress.
- That the Council should strengthen communication and escalation routes for Councillors, including reviewing the adequacy of the out-of-hours service.

- That the Council should increase visibility and clarity of programmed works, supported by earlier publication of multi-year plans.
- That the Council should improve integration of local knowledge, especially of elected members, into prioritisation of repairs and programmed works.
- That the Council should review the FixMyStreet process, ensuring cases are not closed prematurely and status updates are clearer.
- That the Council should enhance training and support for the Superuser scheme.
- That the Council should review approaches to temporary repairs, including failure patterns on bus routes.
- That the Council should explore further measures to limit the impact of HGVs on vulnerable roads.
- That the Council should consider whether additional inspection capacity is needed and strengthen inspection processes.
- That the Council should continue to embed learning from repair failures, including materials choices and method improvements.
- That the Council should undertake a review of the impact of cars being significantly heavier on average than previously and the resultant pressure on roads.

..... in the Chair

Date of signing

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**Recommendation Tracker
Place Overview & Scrutiny Committee**

Cllr Liam Walker, Chair | Richard Doney, Scrutiny Officer, richard.doney@oxfordshire.gov.uk

The action and recommendation tracker enables the Committee to monitor progress against agreed actions and recommendations. The tracker is updated with the actions and recommendations agreed at each meeting. Once an action or recommendation 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	In progress	Complete
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Recommendations:

Meeting date	Item	Recommendation	Lead	Update/response
12-Nov-25	IFS & S.106 Improvement Programme Update	1. That the Council should ensure that local members are engaged and involved with questions of funding and infrastructure in their divisions.	Robin Rogers; Ian Dyson	Accepted See agenda item 6
		2. That the Council should recognise the urgency of ensuring its processes are sufficient for timely spending of s.106 funds.		
12-Nov-25	Movement & Place Plans	1. That the Council should review the proposed geographical boundaries for the Place plans to ensure they pass the 'sense check'.	Paul Fermer; Ashley Hayden	Accepted See agenda item 6
		2. That the Council should engage proactively with local members to ensure that local needs are understood.		
		3. That the Council should engage proactively with parish and town councils to ensure that local needs are understood.		

KEY	Due to Cabinet	With Cabinet	Complete
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Meeting date	Item	Recommendation	Lead	Update/response
Page 24 Feb-26	Road Safety	1. That the Council should work to improve the post-collision responses, especially between the Council and TVP, in regard to communication and follow-up, particularly about serious incidents.	Paul Fermer; Sean Rooney	Went to Cabinet 17-Mar-26
		2. That the Council should strengthen communication between officers and members, with clearer reporting routes and updates.		
		3. That the Council should ensure Vision Zero/road safety data is taken to Locality meetings for more granular analysis.		
		4. That the Council should update the Vision Zero Action Plan (Annex 1 and Annex A) so that actions marked as complete or overdue are properly recorded.		
		5. That the Council should launch a campaign to recruit more Bikeability instructors and, also, investigate the underlying limiting factors.		
		6. That the Council should improve the road safety website and marketing, ensuring clearer public information and better visibility of safety campaigns.		
		7. That the Council should encourage primary schools to have local leads for road safety.		
		8. That the Council should develop a specific pedestrian safety programme, focussed on areas with high numbers of fatal and serious pedestrian casualties.		
		9. That the Council should work with Thames Valley Police to encourage the increase of enforcement, including use of more speed cameras.		

KEY	Due to Cabinet	With Cabinet	Complete
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Meeting date	Item	Recommendation	Lead	Update/response
		10. That the Council should review the use and deployment of Vehicle Activated Signs (VAS) to assess effectiveness and improve the process.		
		11. That the Council should advocate nationally for improved HGV safety standards (e.g., type-approval requirements).		
Page 25 04-Feb-26	Repairing of Defects and Superuser Report	1. That the Council should improve communications with residents, including clearer updates on ongoing works and challenges.	Paul Fermer; Sean Rooney	Went to Cabinet 17-Mar-26
		2. That the Council should launch the new public-facing statistics dashboard to provide visibility of defect volumes and repair progress.		
		3. That the Council should strengthen communication and escalation routes for elected members, including reviewing the adequacy of the out of hours service.		
		4. That the Council should increase visibility and clarity of programmed works, supported by earlier publication of multi-year plans.		
		5. That the Council should improve integration of local knowledge, especially of elected members, into prioritisation of repairs and programmed works.		
		6. That the Council should review the FixMyStreet process, ensuring cases are not closed prematurely and status updates are clearer.		
		7. That the Council should enhance training and support in relation to the Superuser scheme.		
		8. That the Council should review approaches to temporary repairs, including failure patterns on bus routes.		

KEY	Due to Cabinet	With Cabinet	Complete
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Meeting date	Item	Recommendation	Lead	Update/response
		9. That the Council should explore further measures to limit the impact of HGVs on vulnerable roads.		
		10. That the Council should undertake a review of the impact of cars being significantly heavier on average than previously and the resultant pressure on roads.		
		11. That the Council should consider whether additional inspection capacity is needed and strengthen inspection processes.		
		12. That the Council should continue to embed learning from repair failures, including materials choices and method improvements.		

**Action Tracker
Place Overview & Scrutiny Committee**

Cllr Liam Walker, Chair | Richard Doney, Scrutiny Officer, richard.doney@oxfordshire.gov.uk

KEY	Delayed	In progress	Complete
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Meeting date	Item	Action	Lead	Update/response
There are no outstanding action items				



OXFORDSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

Recommendation Update Tracker Place Overview & Scrutiny Committee

Cllr Liam Walker, Chair | Richard Doney, Scrutiny Officer, richard.doney@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	Lead	Update
25-Feb-25	Flood Event Response	Paul Fermer; Teresa Kirkham; Kerry Middleton	Progress updates to be provided
17-Jun-25	Network Coordination of Road and Street Works and Lane Rental for Oxfordshire	Paul Fermer; Keith Stenning	Progress updates to be provided
16-Sept-25	Transport Working Group	Paul Fermer; Robin Rogers; Hannah Battye	Progress updates to be provided
21-Oct-25	Oxford Temporary Congestion Charge Points	Paul Fermer; Hannah Battye	Update available in agenda item 11
18-Nov-25	Part Night Lighting Consultation	Paul Fermer, Sean Rooney	Progress updates to be provided
18-Nov-25	OxRail 20240	Robin Rogers, Pete Brunskill	Progress updates to be provided
16-Dec-25	Verge and Vegetation Management	Paul Fermer; Sean Rooney	Progress updates to be provided

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: **Infrastructure Funding Statement and s.106**

Lead Cabinet Member(s): **Cllr Judy Roberts, Cabinet member for Place, Environment and Climate Action**

Date response requested:² **16 December 2025**

Response to recommendations:

Recommendation	Accepted, rejected or partially accepted	Proposed action (if different to that recommended) and indicative timescale (unless rejected)
That the Council should ensure that local members are engaged and involved with questions of funding and infrastructure in their divisions.	Accepted	Locality teams will continue to engage members through Locality Meetings

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

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

Overview & Scrutiny Recommendation Response Pro forma

<p>That the Council should recognise the urgency of ensuring its processes are sufficient for timely spending of s.106 funds.</p>	<p>Accepted</p>	<p>The s106 Improvement Programme recognises the urgency of improving processes to ensure transparency and accelerate delivery. Future programme updates will</p>
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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: **Movement and Place Plans**

Lead Cabinet Member(s): **Cllr Judy Roberts, Cabinet member for Place, Environment and Climate Action**

Date response requested:² **12 November 2025**

Response to recommendations:

Recommendation	Accepted, rejected or partially accepted	Proposed action (if different to that recommended) and indicative timescale (unless rejected)
1. That the Council should review the proposed geographical boundaries for the Place plans to ensure they pass the 'sense check'.	Accepted	To ensure the geographic boundaries are coherent officers will attend locality meetings to discuss proposed geographic boundaries with councillors to gain feedback. This recommendation is already in progress, with officers having already attended some locality meetings in December to agree the most logical boundaries for some of the initial Movement & Place (MAP) Plans, including South of Oxfordshire where the initial

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

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

Overview & Scrutiny Recommendation Response Pro forma

		discussion was had. Nonetheless, for all areas where a plan is being developed this process will be followed.
2. That the Council should engage proactively with local members to ensure that local needs are understood.	Accepted	<p>Local members need to be at the heart of this process and we have recently amended programmes to ensure engagement from the outset at locality meetings. We recognise each area is different with some areas feed in through district officers' comments. Workshops and briefings have been undertaken and will be arranged as appropriate for the plans being developed.</p> <p>The MAP Plans set out what has been done, what is being progressed, and what needs to be developed. They identify challenges and commit to working proactively with the Local Cllrs both on potential solutions, but also how best to engage with the local community.</p>
3. That the Council should engage proactively with parish and town councils to ensure that local needs are understood.	Accepted	<p>As part of the engagement process explained to members at the scrutiny meeting (Nov 25), town and parish councils are, and will continue to be, part of the development of each MAP Plan before public consultation. Officers will provide a dedicated meeting (online) where parish and town council councillors can contribute towards the development of the plan before public consultation.</p> <p>It's also important to note that The MAP Plans set out what has been done, what is being progressed and what needs to be developed. They identify challenges and commit to working proactively with the local community on potential solutions, including co-production where appropriate. There are several engagement points, and the MAP Plans are essentially a live document, evolving as further work is completed with stakeholders and communities.</p>

**Provisional Work Programme
Place Overview and Scrutiny Committee**

Cllr Liam Walker, Chair | Richard Doney, Scrutiny Officer, richard.doney@oxfordshire.gov.uk

Topic	Relevant strategic priorities	Purpose	Type	Lead presenters
24 June 2026				
Bus Strategy	Put action to address the climate emergency at the heart of our work; tackle inequalities in Oxfordshire; prioritise the health and wellbeing of residents; support careers and the social care system; invest in an inclusive, integrated, and sustainable transport network; preserve and improve access to nature and green spaces	To consider the proposed Bus Strategy before the public consultation	Overview and Scrutiny	Paul Fermer, Katharine Broomfield
Enhanced Partnership Plus Proposals	Put action to address the climate emergency at the heart of our work; tackle inequalities in Oxfordshire; prioritise the health and wellbeing of residents; support careers and the social care system; invest in an inclusive, integrated, and sustainable transport network; preserve and improve access to nature and green spaces	To consider the proposed Enhanced Partnership Plus	Overview and Scrutiny	Paul Fermer, Katharine Broomfield
<i>tbc</i>				
23 September 2026				

Police and Crime Plan for Oxfordshire	Prioritise the health and wellbeing of residents; work with local businesses and partners for environmental, economic and social benefit.	As part of its Crime and Disorder Panel responsibilities, the Committee has invited the Police and Crime Commissioner and the Chief Constable of Thames Valley Police to report on progress against the Police and Crime Plan	Crime and Disorder Panel	Matthew Barber; Jason Hogg
25 November 2026				
03 February 2027				
21 April 2027				

Sub-groups/Working Groups				
Name	Relevant strategic priorities	Description	Outcomes	Members
None at present				

PLACE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE 22 APRIL 2026

Oxfordshire County Council's Minerals and Waste Responsibilities

Report by the Director of Economy and Place

RECOMMENDATION

1. **The Committee is RECOMMENDED to**

Note and comment on the content of this report.

Executive Summary

2. This report provides an overview of Oxfordshire County Council's (the Council) statutory responsibilities as the Minerals and Waste Planning Authority, and the governance, performance and resourcing arrangements in place to deliver those functions. Minerals and waste planning is a specialist and legally defined role, distinct from district planning functions, and is fundamental to supporting economic activity, protecting the environment and enabling sustainable growth across the county.
3. Oxfordshire is one of the largest mineral producing counties in the South East of England and manages significant volumes of waste through a network of strategically important sites and infrastructure. Decisions taken through minerals and waste planning have long-term implications, often spanning decades, and require careful balancing of environmental protection, community impacts, infrastructure needs and national policy requirements. The Council's role extends beyond determining planning applications to include planmaking, safeguarding resources, monitoring complex operational sites, and enforcing compliance where breaches occur.
4. The Council delivers its Minerals and Waste Planning responsibilities through three inter-related functions:
 - a) Minerals and Waste Policy and Strategy,
 - b) Minerals and Waste Development Management, and
 - c) Minerals and Waste Monitoring and Enforcement.
5. Each function carries defined statutory duties and operates within a national framework of legislation, policy and performance expectations. Together, these functions provide the strategic framework, decision making and regulatory oversight necessary to ensure minerals and waste development is planned, controlled and managed in the public interest. This report highlights sustained high levels of demand and activity across all three functions.

6. Development Management activity extends well beyond the determination of planning applications, with a significant proportion of officer time devoted to post-permission casework, condition discharge, legal agreements and long-term site management.
7. Monitoring and enforcement activity is essential to maintaining environmental standards and public confidence, particularly given the scale, longevity and operational complexity of minerals and waste sites.
8. Policy and Strategy activity is entering a critical period, with the requirement to prepare a new Minerals and Waste Plan within a statutory 30-month timetable, alongside a number of large National Strategic Infrastructure Projects and District developments requiring technical liaison .
9. The report also identifies key risks facing the Council. These include the consequences of preparing a new Minerals and Waste Plan , the challenges of meeting new national plan-making timescales, limited service resilience arising from specialist and hard to fill roles, and the risk of mineral resource being made inaccessible by development ('sterilisation') or loss of waste infrastructure if effective safeguarding and liaison are not maintained.
10. This report does not require any decision but provides information on how the Council's statutory Minerals and Waste Planning functions are currently being undertaken. This includes establishing the resources available, defining team responsibilities, demonstrating how reporting is undertaken and decisions are made and monitored, alongside the risks that require ongoing management.

Introduction and Statutory Context

11. The Council is the Minerals and Waste Planning Authority for Oxfordshire and as such plan for, regulate and monitor all minerals and waste development and safeguard minerals and waste infrastructure impacted by all other developments. These powers are gained through various planning and environmental legislation which include (but are not limited to):
12.
 - [Town and Country Planning Act 1990](#)
 - [Environment Act 1995](#)
 - [Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004](#)
 - [Environment Act 2021](#)
 - [Levelling Up and Regeneration Act 2023](#)
 - [The Town and Country Planning \(Local Planning\) \(England\) Regulations 2012](#)
 - [The Waste \(England and Wales\) Regulations 2011](#)
 - [The Town and Country Planning General Regulations 1992](#)

13. The exercise of the planning functions of the Council are also subject to national planning policy and guidance set out in the following key documents:
 - [National Planning Policy Framework](#)
 - [National planning policy for waste - GOV.UK](#)
 - [Planning practice guidance - GOV.UK](#)
14. The Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (TCPA) Schedule 1 establishes which authorities are responsible for exercising planning functions and set the planning authority roles whilst the subsequent primary and secondary legislation and provides details of further statutory powers and responsibilities.
15. The Council has three distinct functions for minerals and waste planning:
 - (a) **Minerals and Waste Policy and Strategy** - Setting the strategic framework and policies for determining development
 - (b) **Minerals and Waste Development Management** – Determining planning application for minerals and waste (county matters) development and related matters
 - (c) **Minerals and Waste Monitoring and Enforcement** - Monitoring of compliance with planning permissions for consented minerals and waste management sites, investigation of breaches of minerals and waste planning control and the taking of enforcement action where expedient to do so to remedy such breaches (both permitted and unauthorised developments).

Minerals and Waste Policy and Strategy

16. The Council is responsible for preparing the Minerals and Waste Plan. This plan sets out how the Council will manage the supply of minerals and the treatment and disposal of waste over the long term, identifying what facilities are needed and identifying sites where they could be located. Setting the Policies that should be considered, the Minerals and Waste Plan sits alongside the District Councils' Local Plans and community-led Neighbourhood. Together with any emerging Spatial Development Strategy, these documents form the statutory development plan, which guides all planning decisions across the county.

Minerals and Waste Development Management Applications

17. Under this statutory backdrop, whilst District Councils are responsible for determining planning applications relating to most forms of development, including housing, commercial premises, retail spaces and similar uses, the Council is responsible for determining planning applications relating to minerals development, such as quarries and associated infrastructure including rail depots, as well as all forms of waste management facilities, including

composting sites, recycling centres, waste transfer stations, and energy recovery facilities.¹

Minerals and Waste Development Management Monitoring and Enforcement

18. Minerals and waste monitoring and enforcement form a key element of the Council's statutory Minerals and Waste Planning responsibilities. The Council is responsible for overseeing all permitted minerals and waste development sites, ensuring compliance with planning conditions, and investigating any allegations of unauthorised mineral and waste activity.
19. This function aims to maintain high standards of environmental protection and public safety by keeping sites operating within the law, addressing breaches of planning control, and supporting responsible operators. Through constructive engagement with landowners, operators, councillors and the public, the team works to remedy unauthorised development efficiently, uphold the credibility of the planning system, and enable appropriate, well-managed minerals and waste development across the county.

The Three Minerals and Waste Functions

20. The Minerals and Waste Planning function is undertaken by three teams, one for each function.
21. The teams are overseen by the Planning Development Manager.

Minerals and Waste Policy and Strategy Team

Team Resources

22. The Policy and Strategy Team are currently responsible for preparing the new Minerals and Waste Plan, monitoring the existing adopted Plan, and being statutory consultee for consultations impacting Oxfordshire's Minerals and Waste interests. It consists of:
 - a. 1 x Team Leader (Full Time)
 - b. 1 x Principal Planning Officer (Part Time)
 - c. 1 x Planning Officer (Full Time) (Vacant – Agency support currently provided for six months)
23. The Team also currently has a Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA)/Climate Impact Assessment (CIA) Officer, funded by a Ministry of

¹ Both the County Council and the District Councils share responsibility for Regulation 3 applications, which are planning applications for development carried out by the authority itself e.g. new roads, county-council run schools and council buildings such as offices and libraries. This report does not cover Regulation 3 applications although Household Waste Recycling Centres are both Regulation 3 and county matter developments.

Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG) and Public Practice Grants. This a part time, project-based role, for just under two years to specifically deliver the Minerals and Waste Plan's SEA/CIA.

24. Due to this team's level of responsibilities, and the requirement to prepare a new Plan within 30 months, additional resources are being explored to enable the Team to meet their statutory requirements.

Team Responsibilities

25. The responsibilities of the Minerals and Waste Policy and Strategy Team fall into two categories:
 - I. Minerals and Waste Plan
 - II. Statutory Consultee

Minerals and Waste Plan Responsibilities

26. The Minerals and Waste Policy and Strategy team provide the strategic planning framework that guides decision making across all minerals and waste development in Oxfordshire. This is delivered through the preparation and adoption of the Minerals and Waste Plan and its continuing monitoring and review through the annual Local Aggregate Assessment, Authority Monitoring reports and other supporting documents such as Waste Needs Assessment.
27. The work of this team supports the activities of the Development Management and Monitoring and Enforcement teams, ensuring alignment with national policy and legislation.
28. The Minerals and Waste Plan also provides the statutory mechanism of embedding the Authority's wider priorities into Oxfordshire's Development Plan. The preparation of a new Plan provides an opportunity to explore including the ambitions of the Authority's Local Nature Recovery Strategy, the Climate Action Framework, the Circular Economy principles and OXRail, for e.g. into statutory Policy.
29. The Oxfordshire Minerals and Waste Local Plan Part 1 - Core Strategy, was adopted in 2017. This remains in place as part of the development plan for Oxfordshire and contains the Minerals and Waste Plan policies against which all relevant planning applications will be considered until 2031 or when a new Plan is adopted. Following a review of policies and the Council's landbanks for sharp sand and gravel and crushed rock currently being below the NPPF requirements, it has been agreed that a new Plan is to be prepared.
30. In addition, in accordance with the Levelling Up and Regeneration Act, the Council is required to issue formal notice of the preparation of the new Minerals and Waste Plan by December 2026, with Gateway 1 scheduled for

completion by April 2027. Following this, the Authority has a 30-month period in which to assemble the necessary evidence base, prepare a draft Plan, and undertake the statutory stages of public engagement. This will include at least two rounds of public consultation, followed by Examination in Public and subsequent Adoption of the Plan.

31. Minerals and Waste are recognised as a strategic issue, and there is the possibility that the Team will also be required to liaise with the newly introduced Spatial Development Strategy preparation, to provide a sound evidence base and ensure a new Minerals and Waste Plan can be successfully delivered.

Reporting & Decision Making

32. Historically, Cabinet approved the commencement of Minerals and Waste Local Plan preparation and the documentation for all consultation stages, with Full Council responsible for agreeing Submission and Adoption.
33. Under the new 30 month plan-making timetable, revised governance arrangements are being considered to ensure decisions can be taken at pace and allow the Team to meet statutory deadlines.
34. The Team produces the Local Aggregate Assessment annually, which is now approved through Delegated Decision by the Cabinet Member for Place, Environment and Climate Action.
35. The Authority Monitoring Report (AMR) is also subject to Cabinet approval; although required annually, production has fallen significantly behind due to resource constraints.
36. The Minerals and Waste Policy and Strategy Team must also provide regular updates to the Planning Inspectorate on progress with Plan preparation.
37. The Council is additionally required to maintain an up-to-date timetable for the Minerals and Waste Plan on its website.

Monitoring

38. The Planning Inspectorate maintains national records showing the stage each Local Planning Authority has reached; publication, submission, examination hearings, and adoption, which provides an official measure of plan-making progress. The Minerals and Waste Policy and Strategy Team have to report on the latest position regularly to them.
39. In addition, Local Authorities are required to publish an Authority Monitoring Report (AMR), which measures:

- a) Whether Local Plan milestones are being met
 - b) Whether policies are delivering their intended outcomes
 - c) Whether a review of the Plan is needed
40. The annual Local Aggregate Assessment also measures and assesses whether the Council are enabling a “a steady and adequate” supply and maintaining landbanks of sharp sand and gravel, soft sand and crushed rock in accordance with the requirements of the NPPF.
41. The Minerals and Waste Local Plan and associated evidence risks are monitored on the Corporate Risk Register.
42. There are currently no KPIs for the Minerals and Waste Local Plan.

Risks

43. Whilst the Council does have an adopted Minerals and Waste Plan and LAA, we are now required to prepared a new Minerals and Waste Plan along with updating our AMR. Not preparing a new Minerals and Waste Plan and other evidence would potentially raise the following:
- Policy and decision making risks (greater weight to landbank, more appeals).
 - Legal and compliance risks (failure to meet national expectations).
 - Operational risks (lack of evidence, uncoordinated planning).
 - Reputational risks (poor performance against national monitoring).
 - Strategic risks (inability to plan minerals and waste capacity).
44. In addition, if Central Government believe that a Plan is unsatisfactory, is not progressing adequately or requires preparation, they have the power to intervene in the Plan themselves.

Statutory Consultee Responsibilities

45. The Minerals and Waste Policy and Strategy Team also act as statutory consultee for minerals and waste matters across Oxfordshire.
46. In this role, the team provides specialist technical advice on planning applications, District Local Plans, Neighbourhood Plans and Nationally Significant Infrastructure Projects (NSIPs), ensuring that mineral resources are safeguarded and not sterilised waste infrastructure is protected, and proposed development aligns with the Minerals and Waste Plan and national policy requirements.
47. This role also ensures that strategic minerals supply and waste management capacity is available to meet the proposals requirements, and associated

environmental considerations are fully accounted for in planning decisions made by other authorities within the county and the Planning Inspectorate.

48. The Minerals and Waste Team maintains regular liaison with other Minerals and Waste Planning Authorities and relevant bodies to address cross-boundary issues, shared resources and strategic infrastructure. Engagement takes place through direct discussions and regional forums, including the South East Waste Planning Advisory Group and the South East of England Aggregates Working Party. This collaboration supports the exchange of evidence and alignment on matters such as mineral supply, waste movements, restoration and environmental impacts. Outcomes are reflected in plan-making and decision taking, including through Statements of Common Ground and Memorandums of Understanding.
49. The Table below summarises the number of consultations managed by the Policy and Strategy Team for consideration and comment over the last three years.

Year	No. of consultations received
2025	264
2024	217
2023	222

Reporting & Decision Making

50. Officers have delegated responsibility to respond to the majority of consultation responses. Responses to NSIPs are collated by the Strategic Planning Team and provided to Members for information as a joint Oxfordshire County Council response, and agreed by the Head of Regulatory Planning and Enforcement.
51. Duty to Cooperate and Memorandums of Understanding require agreement of the Head of Regulatory Planning and Enforcement. In some instances, these will require agreement with the Director of Economy and Place and the Cabinet Member for Place, Environment and Climate Action, and possibly final approval by Cabinet.

Monitoring

52. The team record and monitor the responses to the Districts within the Authority Monitoring Report, ensuring that the District Councils are safeguarding both minerals resources and supporting infrastructure and waste management facilities.

53. Records of liaison with other Authorities and Key stakeholders on minerals and waste movements and cooperation is required to be demonstrated at Examination of the Minerals and Waste Plan.
54. The Team currently have 2 KPIs relating to response rates to both District consultations and other stakeholder consultations.

Risks

55. Without effective liaison, there is a significant risk that mineral safeguarding areas, associated infrastructure and waste management facilities, could be compromised or the mineral resource made inaccessible ('sterilised') by incompatible development.
56. Sterilising viable mineral resources would be inherently unsustainable, removing opportunities for future generations to access locally sourced aggregates and potentially forcing the county to rely on more environmentally and socially unsuitable sites.
57. This not only increases long-term operational impacts, such as extended haulage distances and higher carbon emissions but also undermines the Council's ability to plan responsibly for its strategic minerals and waste needs.
58. There is also the risk that if NSIPs require significant aggregate or waste management capacity in their delivery, this will impact the Council's capacity to provide its own mineral and manage its existing waste arrangements.
59. In addition, if liaison is not undertaken with other Authorities and Key Stakeholders, the future Minerals and Waste Plan is at significant risk of being found unsound at future Examination.

Minerals and Waste Development Management Applications Team

Team Resources

60. The Minerals and Waste Development Management Applications Team is responsible for determining planning applications for Minerals and Waste development and related matters and Regulation 3 development and consists of:
 - a) 1 x Team Leader (Full time) (Currently Senior Planning Officer on secondment for Maternity Cover)
 - b) 1 x Senior Planning Officer (Full Time) (Currently Agency support – substantive post-holder on secondment to Team Leader position)
 - c) 1 x Planning Officer (Full Time)
 - d) 1 x Planning Officer (Full Time) (*Vacant*)

- e) 1 x Senior Planning Officer (Full Time) (*Temporary post funded by Buckinghamshire Council – please see below*)
- f) 2 x Senior Planning Officers (Full Time) (*Temporary posts funded by the Council as developer for Regulation 3 major road schemes*)

61. Due to current vacancies and the quantity of planning applications received, the Planning Development Manager is currently also responsible for a number of large applications

Team Responsibilities

62. The Minerals and Waste Development Management Applications Team are responsible for validating, assessing and determining planning applications relating to mineral extraction and waste management and Regulation 3 developments. These applications are diverse in scale and complexity, from major proposals such as a three million tonne sharp sand and gravel quarry with high-quality restoration delivering Biodiversity Net Gain and supporting the Local Nature Recovery Strategy, to facilities such as aggregate recycling operations that promote a circular economy by reprocessing waste into reusable materials, and essential infrastructure like sewage treatment works that enable wider development across the County.

63. The core role is to ensure that planning applications are determined taking into consideration development plan policies including District Local Plans, the Minerals and Waste Local Plan, national planning policy and guidance, and other material planning considerations. This includes

- publicising applications through newspaper advertisements, site notices and notification letters to facilitate the views of local residents;
- consulting the District and Parish Councils;
- consulting statutory consultees for technical advice and input including the Environment Agency, Natural England, Historic England and the Council itself as Highway Authority and Lead Local Flood Authority; and
- consulting other expert county council technical advisors including the Council's archaeology, landscape, ecology and arboriculture officers.

64. Potential impacts from such factors as traffic, noise, dust on such as landscape, biodiversity, water environment and local amenity are assessed. In accordance with paragraph 39 of the NPPF, officers are required to approach decisions on proposed development in a positive and creative way and work proactively with applicants to secure developments that will improve the economic, social and environmental conditions of the area and approve applications for sustainable development where possible.

65. The Table below illustrates the workload of the team over the past five years, demonstrating both the volume of work and the diverse range of work undertaken. The data reflects sustained operational pressure and highlights the breadth of responsibilities managed by the service

	Total	Planning Applications	Section 73 planning applications	Scoping/ Screening Opinion	Prior Approval/ CLOPUD/ CLEUD/ ROMP	Non Material Amendment	Details Pursuant	Appeal
2025	59	15	5	3	2	5	28	1
2024	51	13	13	6	1	3	14	1
2023	93	23	16	9	4	6	35	
2022	76	14	16	16	0	5	24	1
2021	64	19	11	7	1	5	21	
2020	63	23	12	1	0	4	23	

66. As demonstrated, the Team's work does not stop at the determination of planning applications. The team also provides the following statutory functions:

- Section 73 planning applications for the modification of existing planning permissions
- Liaising with applicants and the Council's Legal Services Environment team with regard to the drafting of section 106 legal agreements for matters that cannot be required by planning conditions but which are necessary to make developments acceptable and vehicle Routing Agreements.
- Screening Opinions - a formal opinion of the Council as to whether Environmental Impact Assessment is required of a proposed development/application to inform an Environmental Statement.
- Scoping Opinions – a formal opinion of the Council as to what an Environmental Impact Assessment should include to inform an Environmental Statement.
- Prior approval applications for permitted development
- Certificates of Lawfulness for Existing (CLEUD) or proposed (CLOPUD) developments
- Determination of applications for the Review of Old Mineral Permissions i.e. new conditions to be attached to old mineral planning permissions to ensure that they are implemented in accordance with current planning requirements
- Non-material amendments to existing planning permission applications
- Applications for the discharge of conditions (Details pursuant to conditions attached to planning permissions)
- Preparation of evidence for and all other work associated with appeals made against refusals of planning permissions, conditions attached to planning permissions and for non-determination of applications within target dates. This includes meeting all statutory provisions with regard to notification and advertisement, finding and booking suitable local venues for hearings and public inquiries and presenting evidence a hearings and public inquiries.

67. Planning application fees in accordance with the [Town and Country Planning \(Fees for Applications, Deemed Applications, Requests and Site Visits\) \(England\) Regulations 2012](#) are charged. In addition to the statutory functions, a chargeable pre-application advice is also provided to potential applicants. In 2025/2025 these together totalled around £415,000. The Minerals and Waste Development Management team is also funded by Buckinghamshire Council to provide its statutory functions with regard to minerals and waste planning applications and related matters. In 2025/2025 this totalled £76,900.
68. The team also plays a key role post-permission by setting enforceable planning conditions, supporting effective handover to monitoring officers, and ensuring that permitted developments can be implemented responsibly and in accordance with policy

Reporting and Decision making

69. Officers either prepare reports on planning applications with Recommendations to the Planning & Regulation Committee to then make the decision or exercise delegated powers where appropriate, providing clear professional advice and justifications for planning application and other decisions taking into account the development plan and other material planning considerations. Most statutory planning functions are delegated from the Planning and Regulation Committee to the Director of Economy and Place and sub-delegated on from him to other officers principally the Planning Development Manager.

Monitoring

70. There are two national Key Performance Indicators that apply to the Minerals and Waste Development Management Applications team's functions on behalf of the Council. These relate to the speed of decision making (which is also a Council KPI) and the quality of decision making.
71. The speed of decision making is measured by the proportion of planning applications that are dealt with within the statutory time (13 weeks or 16 weeks for applications accompanied by an Environmental Statement) or agreed extended period. The current threshold is at least 60% determined as set out above. The Council's current performance over the measured period of January 2024 to December 2025 is 100% i.e. all planning applications were determined within the statutory time or agreed extended period.
72. The quality of decisions is measured by the proportion of decisions on applications that are subsequently overturned at appeal. The current threshold is that no more than 10% of total decisions are overturned. The Council's current performance over the measured period of January 2024 to December 2025 is 0% i.e. no application decisions were overturned on appeal.

Risks

73. If the Council were to fall below the measured criteria for either national performance indicator, then the Authority could be placed in special measures i.e. applicants would have the option of submitting planning applications direct to the Planning Inspectorate on behalf of the Secretary of State.

Minerals and Waste Development Management Monitoring and Enforcement Team

Team Resources

74. The Minerals and Waste Development Management Monitoring and Enforcement Team currently consists of:
- a) 1 x Team Leader,
 - b) 1 x Minerals and Waste Monitoring and Compliance Officer (Part Time),
 - c) 1 x Enforcement Officer (Part Time) and
 - d) 1 x Planning Assistant Apprentice (Currently in this team but shared on a rotating annual basis across the three teams).
75. The Council has an adopted [Local Monitoring and Enforcement Plan](#) which sets out the Council's strategy for pursuing planning compliance in Oxfordshire and the approach that the Council will take in investigating and remedying breaches of planning control.

Team Responsibilities

76. The Minerals and Waste Development Management Monitoring and Enforcement Team has three key responsibilities:
- Carry out scheduled visits to consented minerals and waste management sites to monitor compliance with the planning conditions on their planning permissions and obligations under section 106 legal agreements and compliance with routing agreements.
 - Investigate complaints about alleged non-compliance at consented sites and alleged unauthorised mineral and waste management development.
 - Seek to resolve any identified breaches of minerals and waste management planning control through voluntary resolution e.g. cessation, removal and restoration of the land or submission of an amending planning application seeking to regularise the development, or by the taking of formal enforcement action where it is considered expedient to do so.
77. A large amount of work is post-permission. Post-permission casework ensures that minerals and waste developments are carried out as approved, with all mitigation, controls and community protections in place or that they are

otherwise amended through appropriate further planning applications to reflect changing situations over time. Much mineral and waste development is temporary due for example to the finite mineral resource available at any site and changes in waste management technology. Unlike most other forms of temporary development, minerals and waste management sites often operate for long periods of time, sometimes decades, involve ongoing extraction or waste-handling activities, and carry environmental impacts that require control relating to matters such as landscape and visual impact, traffic, noise, dust and biodiversity. Ultimately the Council seeks to see a high standard of restoration and this increasingly includes delivering new and varied habitats as part of securing biodiversity gains. This means that planning conditions and legal agreements are not one-off safeguards, they must be thoroughly checked and discharged through the life of a site. This ongoing scrutiny and intervention ensures long-term developments remain lawful, safe, and aligned with the policies and outcomes the Council has set.

Consented Minerals and Waste Site Monitoring Responsibilities

78. The Council has a statutory duty to ensure that appropriate periodic inspections of establishments or undertakings carrying out disposal or recovery of waste are made² and they also undertake monitoring of planning conditions at mineral extraction or landfill sites for which fees are chargeable under the provisions of [The Town and Country Planning \(Fees for Applications, Deemed Applications, Requests and Site Visits\) \(England\) Regulations 2012](#). However, there is no provision in law for fees to be charged for monitoring visits to non-landfill waste management developments.
79. The Council sets and agrees an annual monitoring schedule of site inspections with operators of consented minerals and waste management sites requiring monitoring depending on:
- The size and nature of the site;
 - The number and complexity of conditions attached to the consent;
 - The stage of operation reached at a particular site, and;
 - The history of compliance exhibited by the site operator over a period of time.
80. Site inspections are followed up with a written report which identifies any non-compliance issues. In 2024/2025 a total of 160 site monitoring visits were carried out. The total fees charged totalled around £25,000.

Enforcement Responsibilities

81. As well as investigating alleged breaches of planning control at consented minerals and waste management sites, the Council has a statutory duty to investigate alleged unauthorised minerals and waste management developments. Officers visit the sites in the first instance to make an initial assessment of whether there is a breach of planning control. If there is then they seek to identify the landowners which includes use of the national Land

² Regulation 19 of the Waste (England and Wales) Regulations 2011

Registry's records but can also include local knowledge. Each site is unique but whether there has been a breach of planning control is undertaken through various means including:

- assessing the development on the ground to establish whether any development has in fact been carried out, whether it is a minerals or waste development or alternatively whether it is a District Council matter e.g. an engineering operation;
- checking the Council's own historic records for evidence of the existence of planning permission or Certificate of Lawfulness;
- checking the planning registers held by the District Councils for evidence of existing planning permission and that there is no existing planning permission or Certificate of Lawfulness;
- checking that the development does not benefit from permitted development rights under the [Town and Country Planning \(General Permitted Development\) \(England\) Order 2015](#);
- Service of a Planning Contravention Notice (a legal notice requiring a truthful response on penalty of a fine) to establish facts on those believed to own the land or be otherwise responsible for the alleged unauthorised development.
- each report to establish the facts, determining whether unauthorised development has occurred, and deciding whether action is justified in the public interest. Most cases are resolved informally through engagement with landowners and operators to secure compliance.

82. A total of 86 new alleged breaches of planning control were investigated in 2025.

83. Where informal voluntary resolution is not possible and it is considered expedient to take action to resolve the harm caused by the breach of planning control, the Council may use formal enforcement tools which include:

- Breach of Condition Notices at consented sites which is a notice requiring compliance with a breached planning condition setting out a time period for compliance and for which a period of at least one month has to be provided for the notice to come into effect;
- Enforcement Notice which is a notice which can be used at either consented sites or against unauthorised developments usually requiring cessation of the unauthorised development within one day and other steps for the removal of the development and restoration of the land with time periods for compliance. An enforcement notice can also be used against a breach of a planning condition (Breach of Condition Enforcement Notice). Again a period of at least one month has to be provided for the notice to come into effect;
- Stop Notices which are either served with or subsequent to the service of an enforcement notice requiring cessation of the development where significant harm to the environment is being caused in advance of the time period elapsing for an enforcement notice to come into effect;
- Temporary Stop Notice where significant harm to the environment is being caused whilst the Council is still investigating the alleged breach of planning control;

- Application to the High Court for an injunction where there is continued failure to comply with the requirements of an Enforcement Notice that has come into effect or a Stop Notice.
84. An appeal against an enforcement notice would lead to officers having to prepare evidence in support of the Council's case and, for a Public Inquiry, presenting proofs of evidence.
 85. Where there is a failure to comply with the requirements of a notice served by the Council, officers may also be required to prepare and give evidence as prosecution witnesses in court proceedings.
 86. Nine Planning Contravention Notices and two Breach of Condition Notices were served in 2025.
 87. Although there is no right of appeal against the service of a Breach of Condition notice, there is a right of appeal against an enforcement notice which must be lodged with the Secretary of State before the notice comes into effect.

Reporting & Decision Making

88. All decisions pertaining to the authorisation of taking formal enforcement action are delegated by the Planning and Regulation Committee to the Director of Economy and Place who in turn sub-delegates them to officers, principally to the Planning Regulation Manager in consultation with the County Solicitor.
89. The Council's Planning and Regulation Committee can also directly authorise formal enforcement action.

Monitoring

90. There is no national performance indicator for site monitoring and the enforcement of planning control. Officers are working on the development of a KPI but the enforcement of planning control has historically proved a difficult area for which to establish a meaningful measure of performance. Each alleged breach of planning control has unique circumstances and harms to the environment. As set out above there are various ways that officers seek to resolve them, the majority being through voluntary compliance including the submission of applications seeking to regularise the development. Some are resolved over short time periods but others can take a long period to resolve including where enforcement notices are appealed and then subject to the control of the Secretary of State through the Planning Inspectorate. There is a current enforcement notice which was served in 2020 for which an appeal was lodged before the notice came into effect and which for various reasons (including covid lockdown) the appeal hearing has yet to be held.

Risks

91. The Minerals and Waste Development Management Monitoring and Enforcement team has less dedicated officer resource than it had a decade ago.

Councillors on behalf of their local communities rightly expect the Council to address breaches of minerals and waste management planning control expeditiously. The investigation of unauthorised development can be resource-intensive, particularly when there is significant harm to the environment being caused and a reluctant or recalcitrant landowner or operator involved. The investigation of unauthorised developments can also take officers away from the routine monitoring of consented minerals and waste management sites.

Corporate Policies and Priorities

92. The Council's Minerals and Waste Planning functions support the delivery of the Corporate Plan by enabling a thriving local economy, protecting the environment, and ensuring communities have access to essential infrastructure. Through the preparation of the Minerals and Waste Plan, the Council provides a strategic framework that supports responsible resource use, effective waste management and long-term planning for growth. Development management and monitoring and enforcement activity ensure that development is carried out safely, lawfully and with appropriate environmental safeguards, supporting the Council's priorities for climate action, place-based planning and resilient communities. This report provides assurance that these statutory functions are being delivered in line with the Council's corporate objectives and governance arrangements.

Financial Implications

93. This report is primarily descriptive and does not propose new policies, programmes or decisions with direct financial implications. The Council's Minerals and Waste Planning functions are delivered within existing approved revenue budgets. However, the preparation of a new Minerals and Waste Plan within the statutory 30-month timetable is resource-intensive and may require additional funding to deliver and ensure statutory milestones are met, although in the first instance we would look to fund any overspend in the work within the wider service functional budgets. Any future financial implications arising from plan preparation, staffing or evidence requirements would be subject to separate consideration and approval through the Council's established budget and governance processes.

Comments checked by:

Filipp Skiffins, Finance Business Partner, filipp.skiffins@oxfordshire.gov.uk

Legal Implications

The legal implications section should be completed by a member of the legal service

94. There are no new legal implications arising from this report. The operation of the Minerals and Waste planning function is a statutory duty of the Council

under the provisions of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 and other relevant planning legislation, much of which is detailed in paragraph 12 of this report. The Council is also responsible for determining its own planning applications as required by the Town and Country Planning General Regulations 1992. When operating its planning function, including making planning policy and making decisions on planning applications and enforcement matter the Council complies with the relevant law and policy.

Comments checked by:

Jennifer Crouch, Principal Solicitor (Regulatory)
jennifer.crouch@oxforshire.gov.uk(Legal)

Staff Implications

95. The Council's Minerals and Waste Planning responsibilities are delivered by a small, specialist service across policy, development management, and monitoring and enforcement functions, with a mix of permanent, part-time, temporary and vacant posts, and Agency staff.
96. There is limited resilience to accommodate peaks in workload, complex applications, appeals, or increased monitoring and enforcement activity.
97. Development Management resources are under sustained pressure from application volumes and significant post-permission casework, while monitoring and enforcement capacity is constrained by limited staff resources.
98. In addition, the statutory 30-month timetable for preparing a new Minerals and Waste Plan is resource-intensive and, without additional capacity, presents a risk of slippage against key milestones and reduced ability to maintain other statutory workstreams. The Policy and Strategy Team is therefore exploring options for securing additional resources to help manage delivery risk.

Equality & Inclusion Implications

99. Equality and inclusion considerations are embedded within plan-making, development management, and monitoring and enforcement processes through public consultation, statutory engagement, and transparent decision-making.
100. The preparation of the Minerals and Waste Plan and Development Management Planning Applications include requirements or early and ongoing engagement with communities, stakeholders and under-represented groups, ensuring that potential impacts are identified and considered. They both also have regard to accessibility, environmental effects and impacts on local communities. Whilst having no statutory requirement for public engagement, The Monitoring and Enforcement team similarly engage with councillors and local communities in

the investigation of alleged breaches of planning control and consequent actions taken.

101. No adverse equality or inclusion impacts are identified as arising directly from this report

Sustainability Implications

102. The Council's Minerals and Waste Planning functions support sustainable development by ensuring mineral extraction and waste management are planned, assessed and monitored in line with environmental and climate considerations. This report does not introduce new policies or proposals with direct sustainability impact.

Risk Management

103. Risks associated with Minerals and Waste Planning are managed within each service area and are set out throughout this report. Policy and Strategy risks focus on plan-making timescales, evidence and statutory compliance; Development Management risks relate to application performance, appeals and workload pressures; and Monitoring and Enforcement risks concern compliance, environmental harm and reputational impact.
104. These risks are managed through established governance, performance monitoring and statutory procedures, with escalation where risks become significant.

Consultations

105. No public consultations are required with this report.

Robin Rogers – Director of Economy and Place

Annex: Nil

Background papers: Nil

Other Documents: N/A

Contact Officer: David Periam, Planning Development Manager, 07824 545378, david.periam@oxfordshire.gov.uk

April 2026

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PLACE SCRUTINY & OVERVIEW COMMITTEE 22 APRIL 2026

Update on School Streets Enforcement

Report by Director of Environment and Highways

RECOMMENDATION

1. The Committee is RECOMMENDED to

Consider the report, raise any questions, and to AGREE any recommendations it wishes to make to Cabinet arising therefrom.

Executive Summary

2. The Place Overview and Scrutiny Committee has requested an item for its meeting on 22 April 2026, on school streets. The request is for a general overview of the project but there are also a number of key questions members are keen to have answered. This report answers those questions raised as well as giving an overview of the school streets project.
3. The school streets programme supports the ambitions of the 'Oxfordshire Strategic Plan 2025-2028' by contributing to its vision for a 'Greener, Fairer and Healthier Oxfordshire'.
4. The Local Transport and Connectivity Plan (LTCP) aims to reduce car journeys by a quarter by 2030, and by a third by 2040. School streets supports this aim by reducing the volume of car journeys taken by parents/carers to and from schools. The Oxfordshire County Council's School Streets policy is set out in the LTCP at Policy 11 - '*Travel to School and Work*', stating OCC will: *Work with schools to develop a programme of walking and cycling measures for travel to and from school. Work with employers and businesses in the county to improve promotion and education of travel choices.*

Background and Context

5. School streets have now been implemented at scale across the UK and internationally, with over 1,000 schemes operating nationally, including more than 500 across all London boroughs, as well as schemes in Birmingham, Bristol, Newcastle and Edinburgh. The evidence base is well-established and shows that school streets are effective in reducing motor traffic at school gates, improving road safety, and increasing walking, wheeling, cycling and "park and stride" travel. A large national study covering almost 500 schools found an average 6% increase in active travel and a 5% reduction in car use, with benefits observed across different geographies and levels of deprivation. Evaluations also demonstrate improvements in air quality during operating times, reduced

vehicle speeds, and high levels of community support once schemes are in place, with no evidence of significant traffic displacement. As a result, school streets are now endorsed by the Department for Transport, Active Travel England and Transport for London as a proportionate, low-cost intervention to create safer and healthier environments around schools.

6. In Oxfordshire, the air quality impact of the first phase of school streets is undergoing an evaluation. The draft report shows that there were reductions in air pollutant concentrations across all School Street sites including the control sites. However, two School Streets sites had larger reductions than those seen at control sites, providing preliminary evidence of the effectiveness of school street interventions in Oxfordshire.
7. The Phase 1 schools have shown a reduction in the numbers of pupils who are driven to school, with between 3% - 22% fewer car trips to school. Increases in cycling and park & stride have been seen alongside this. More detail is set out later in the report.
8. A parent from Manor School in Didcot, who also led the volunteer team during the school street's trial said: "It's made it a much calmer environment for the children – lots of children on scooters and bikes and we've had a lot of compliments from residents on the street as well saying how much they think it certainly has benefits. And the kids seem to love it as well!"
9. A school street is a timed restriction on the road or roads outside of a school which prevents entry by non-exempt vehicles during the school's 'drop -off period and 'pick-up' times. This encourages modal shift towards choosing active travel options, such as walking/wheeling, cycling, and kick-scooting, making the street safer for children, as well as improving air quality, and is one of the programmes of work contained within our Sustainable School Travel Strategy (SSTS).
10. A school street forms one part of a school's overall sustainable and active travel approach, which includes a wide range of different active travel schemes such as Walk once a Week (WoW) scheme, Walk to School Week, Footsteps road safety training, the BetterPoints app incentives, Park and Stride wayfinding, cycle training, and travel planning. This work is primarily delivered by the two school engagement officers in the Behaviour Change & Travel Plans team.
11. Oxfordshire school streets are developed in line with the Department for Transport Guidance document - [School Streets: how to set up and manage a scheme - GOV.UK](#)
12. The council has delivered two phases of school streets and is currently preparing to deliver a third phase.

Phase 1 Schools

- Abingdon – St Nicholas CofE Primary School
- Oxford – Larkrise Primary School
- Oxford – St Ebbe's CofE Primary School

- Oxford – Windmill Primary School

Phase 2 Schools

- Oxford – Sandhills Primary School
- Oxford – Tyndale Primary School
- Oxford – St Mary and St Johns CofE Primary School
- Oxford – New Hinksey Primary School
- Didcot – Manor Primary School

Phase 3 Schools (anticipated 'go live' summer term 2026)

- Didcot – St Birinus Secondary and Willowcroft Primary schools (Combined School Street)
- Carterton – Edith Morehouse Primary School and St Joseph's Catholic Primary School (Combined School Street)
- Banbury – Harriers Banbury Academy Primary School
- Oxford - expansion of phase 2 Sandhills Primary School scheme

13. The funding for the school streets programme is through a combination of council budget and Active Travel England grant. Funding for phases 4 and 5 has been secured.
14. The consultancy WSP have been commissioned to carry out a review of all schools in Oxfordshire to assess their suitability for a school street programme. This information will be used to develop a programme of future school streets. A key part of the delivery of the school streets is the school community working with the school engagement officers to develop and deliver a school travel plan; and embedding an active travel culture at the school.
15. The compliance with the restrictions is monitored and if certain trigger points are reached then the site's data is reviewed and consideration is given to options for increasing compliance, whether that be working with the school, or enhanced or different signage etc., with a view to try and increase adherence to the restrictions.

Questions from Scrutiny

The specific questions that the Place Overview and Scrutiny Committee have asked when commissioning the report are as follows, with officer responses provided underneath.

- 1. Why are so many fines being issued? Why are we seeing so many reports of residents telling us that there are multiple car drivers going through school streets?**

Please see **Appendix 1** for the school streets excel file that sets out the statistics for school streets since they were first introduced.

- 1.1. It should be noted that there are a number of exemptions, which means certain vehicles are allowed to drive within the school street during the restricted times. The exemptions are covered lower down in the report and it may be that these legitimate vehicles may make up a significant percentage of vehicles seen within the restriction which is what the residents report back to members.
- 1.2. If a vehicle is exempt then the cameras do not log that vehicle's movement through the restriction, it is detected by the ANPR camera and the data automatically deleted. Therefore, there is no way to accurately report on total number of vehicles travelling within a school street area, without undertaking a specific traffic count survey.
- 1.3. As shown in Appendix 1, the number of Penalty Charge Notices (PCNs) issued in 2023 varied across the different school streets and also included warning notices. Warning notices are issued to vehicles passing through the restriction within the first six months of the permanent school street going live / being implemented to warn them the restriction is being enforced by ANPR cameras and if they contravene it again then they will be issued a PCN. Once the six-month notice period is over, a PCN will be issued to any vehicle observed in contravention of the restriction. Officers expect to see a higher number of PCNs (including warning notices) issued in the first year following enforcement by ANPR camera.
- 1.4. The warning notices are usually a good deterrent to encourage compliance and officers would expect to see less PCNs issued in year 2 and so on. The data shows this for the first tranche of school streets, with the exception of Margaret Road/St Annes Road at Windmill School, which saw a minor increase, that then dropped significantly in year 3. It is too early to see tranche two trends.
- 1.5. Windmill School, unlike many of the other school streets, is on a through-route, near the hospitals, and it is thought that there are higher contraventions here due to vehicles routing off the main roads. Additional signage and lining will be introduced early in 2026/27 to try and further alert drivers to the restrictions in place.
- 1.6. The numbers of PCNs issued, based on 2025 figures across the year, (based on Oxfordshire County Council terms dates) are:
 - 58% of the school streets are issuing less than 2 PCNs per day
 - 17% are 2-3 per day
 - 8% are 3 – 4 per day and;
 - 17% are 5 – 6 PCNs per day

This is an average: so on some days no PCNs will be issued whereas on another there could be more (sometimes higher numbers can be seen at the start of a new term or when there is bad weather).

2. What are the regulations around Highways signs, can we put up more signs?

2.1. Local authorities are responsible for ensuring that restrictions are clearly, adequately and lawfully signed so that motorists can understand them. If existing signs are judged to be unclear, insufficient, or could benefit from reinforcement, the council is permitted to add extra signs, provided that:

- the additional signs comply with the Traffic Signs Regulations and General Directions (TSRGD); the placement is appropriate and does not cause confusion: they are used to improve clarity, not to alter the legal restriction.
- Adding supplementary signage is a normal and lawful step where it helps improve visibility, understanding or compliance, and as covered above the Council is starting to implement more advanced signage to school streets.

2.2. As seen in Appendix 1, there are some school streets, such as Windmill School, that have a higher rate of contraventions. In these cases, officers will work closely with the schools to better understand the causes and undertake a site visit to see what additional signage could be implemented to help alert highway users to the presence of the restriction. In the case of Windmill school this will include 'School Street' painted on the carriageway at the restriction point. There will be additional advance blue signage along with flashing signage that will operate at the time of the restrictions. It is hoped that these additional measures will drive better compliance.

2.3. The School Engagement Officers speak to the schools to ensure they are taking all the action they can to ensure compliance from the school community, parents and carers, as part of their on-going commitment to active travel'.

2.4. If people wish to challenge a PCN and don't agree with the council's decision on the formal representation, then they can take the appeal to the Traffic Penalty Tribunal (TPT), which is an independent adjudication service whereby the decision is made by an adjudicator and their findings are binding (for both the council and the appellant). For all school street TPT appeals where signage has been given as the reason for the contravention, all have been found in the council's favour, i.e. that the signage is adequate for the restriction and in line with TRSGD.

3. What's the split of fines by schools - is the majority coming from one school or several?

- 3.1. Appendix 1 sets out this information. It can be seen that from the first tranche of school streets, the Margaret Road/Wharton Road junction for Windmill School and Boundary Brook Road for Larkrise School had a higher proportion of warnings and PCNs issued.
- 3.2. As explained above, it is thought there is a higher percentage of fines issued at Windmill School due to it being on a through route, and people using it to avoid the main roads. Boundary Brook Road is a harder one to understand, given this is on a cul-de-sac, but it is the only vehicular access to the school and other streets in the cul-de-sac arrangement. There do appear to be a few repeat offenders as well as a number of vehicles where we are unable to locate the owner. For Tyndale Primary, officers will have a better idea in the next six months to see if the PCNs issued remain higher, now that we are six months beyond the notice period.

Possible issue: ANPR exemptions issued to taxis which are taking their own children, rather than looked after children to the school. Taxis aren't allowed to violate school streets if they are dropping their own children at schools. So could we be told for each of the schools how many taxis have driven through the school streets in a period of say, 6 months, and how many looked after children there are - as well as what mechanism is in place to stop this happening?

- 3.3. Taxis are only allowed through a council restriction, including school streets, when picking up/dropping off a fare. They cannot use their exemption to pick up/drop off their own children. However, it isn't something that officers can enforce due to the way the legislation is set out and the way the ANPR cameras capture data. Once a taxi driver gives the council proof that they are licenced to operate as a taxi (whether private hire or Hackney carriage) then they are added to the exemptions list. The council does not record the number of cars travelling through the ANPR camera that are on the exemption list. The camera will only capture vehicles not on the exemption list. Therefore, the onus is on the taxi driver to comply with the rules.
- 3.4. Regarding the question of how many taxis have driven through school streets in the last six months, this data is not held. Once a vehicle is on the exemption list the camera automatically discards them so no data on those is held.
- 3.5. The taxi companies will be contacted by officers to request that they remind their drivers that they are only exempt from a school street if they are in operation in accordance with their licence, and that if they are using their car for personal use they are not exempt.
- 3.6. A potential option would be in circumstances where the licencing authority (City and District Councils) are able to prove abuse of the restrictions by

certain licence holders, then officers could remove those specific vehicles from specific exemptions lists. If the licencing authority's team were to write to state that they have proof that the vehicle in question (providing the vehicle registration mark (VRM)) has been abusing the system, and ask council officers to remove that vehicle from the exemption list for a specific restriction, then that vehicle could be removed.

4. Possible issue: parents issued with temporary passes, e.g. for a broken leg, never get the exemption removed. Data on how many exemptions are removed.

4.1. Schools contact the school streets email address to request that a parent or carer be temporarily added to the exemption list. Their email will outline the reason for the request and specify how long the exemption is required. This may be for a defined period of time or, alternatively, until the end of the current school year. Once approved, officers add the vehicle to the exemption database. When the exemption period ends, the entry automatically expires and is removed. No data is retained on the number of exemption requests received.

5. Summary of reasons for exemptions and process for reviewing them

5.1. The following vehicles can generally apply for an exemption from a PCN/fine:

- A resident
- A resident's visitor
- Unregistered carer
- Registered carer
- Disabled Blue Badge holder (pupil, parent, carer school staff)
- Local businesses' staff within the school street area with a requirement to park
- User of private off-street parking accessed within a school street zone
- School staff and regular school visitors with a requirement to park onsite
- Emergency service vehicles and other public service vehicles such as waste collection
- Hackney carriages and public hire vehicles (taxis)
- Public buses
- School transport vehicles
- Dial-a-Ride
- Specialist public passenger transport services
- Branded/liveried delivery vans registered as commercial vehicles such as Royal Mail, UPS and DPD
- Road works and utility vehicles undertaking works (including inspection) i.e., street lighting, gas, electricity, water, drainage, and communication services in or adjoining that road.

5.2. The details included on the list set out the evidence required, and the officers processing these requests verify and validate the evidence provided. Further information on exemptions can be found [here on the council website](#).

5.3. The exemptions are written into the Traffic Regulation Order (TRO) that underpins the restriction and as such are not reviewed unless the TRO is being amended. The process of digitising all TROs is underway, and as part of that, the TROs for all the school streets will be looked at to ensure the exemptions are consistent across all school streets (unless a specific exemption is required for a particular school street).

6. What criteria are they using to prioritise schemes, and can there be some transparency about this? Otherwise schools and parents and campaigners are going to waste their time campaigning for schemes when they're not going to be considered.

6.1. Expressions of Interest (EOI) for schools who could potentially be suitable for a school street come from several sources including, councillors, parents, and directly from the schools themselves. This EOI list has been reviewed to shortlist which schools would be most suitable for a school street, using the following criteria:

- Is the school itself interested in going forward with a school street?
- Is the school working with the School Engagement Officers on any sustainable/active travel projects and developing a school travel plan?
- What is the schools' geographical positioning? Is it suitable for a school street? Are they on a main road, on a bus route etc.,? The information from the WSP report will be used to assess the school location.

If the school is not suitable for a school street, the School Engagement Officers can still work with the school on a range of other sustainable and active travel and behaviour change projects, such as those listed above. Not all schools will be suitable or want to pursue a school street.

7. What is the process for residents reporting taxis or vehicles who they believe are violating the school streets ANPR and what is the process which will be followed?

7.1 There is not a dedicated reporting system for this type of scenario. If it is believed an exemption is being used fraudulently, then an email should be sent to enquirieschoolstreets@oxfordshire.gov.uk. The matter will be investigated and contact will be made with the permit holder to confirm that the exemption is being used in line with the terms, conditions, and the Traffic Regulation Order (TRO). "Licenced / Private Hire Vehicle" means a vehicle constructed or adapted to seat fewer than 9 passengers (other than a taxi) for the purpose of carrying passengers for hire or reward". "Taxi" means a vehicle licensed under Section 37 of the Town Police Clauses Act 1847."

7.2 As previously stated, if the licencing authority obtains evidence of abuse happening then it is possible to remove a vehicle from a specific exemption, based on information from the licencing authority.

7.3 Due to data protection rules officers would only accept the request from the licensing authority rather than a member of the public or the school themselves.

8. What are the criteria for exemption permits for existing schools, and how is this managed centrally? There is resident concern that school staff are being pressured to give out exemptions and have no support in saying no.

8.1. As outlined in the link above, each school is required to provide the necessary information relating to school-based exemption requests. The school is responsible for confirming the details and supplying any supporting evidence required for the exemption to be processed.

9. For all of the above, what is best practice; what are other LAs doing; what are we learning from them?

9.1. Regular reviews and monitoring of all school streets sites takes place. Where evidence shows a high level of non-compliance, additional measures can be considered to improve adherence. This may include installing further signage.

9.2. School streets are developed in line with the Department for Transport Guidance document - <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/school-streets-how-to-set-up-and-manage-a-scheme/school-streets-how-to-set-up-and-manage-a-scheme>

9.3 The Behaviour Change & Travel Plans team is a member of the Walk Wheel Cycle Trust (formerly Sustrans) South East Region School Streets Network where best practice and issues regarding school streets are discussed. Membership of Modeshift also enables sharing of best practice with other members via the forum pages. The officers also regularly attend conferences and webinars where the delivery of school streets is discussed.

9.3. Oxfordshire County Council was an early adopter of ANPR enforcement for school streets and has advised on the drafting of the national guidance.

10. How are the trials going for the most recently implemented trials?

10.1 Data is collected pre- and post- scheme implementation, as well as one year post-delivery. The data collected is:

- Travel Mode – this is collected as part of the school travel plan via the Modeshift STARS platform
- Air Quality data – collected via Zephyr sensors, and by traffic counts - via tube counts on the entry point to the school street areas

The Phase 1 schools have shown a reduction in the numbers of pupils who are driven to school. The number of pupils travelling to Larkrise School by car reduced from 35% to 13%, whereas the number of pupils cycling to school increased from 23% to 44%. At Windmill School, car use decreased by 3% and park & stride increased by 3%. St Nicolas Primary School saw a 6% increase in cycling, alongside driving decreasing by 6%.

St Ebbe’s School also saw an increase in pupils cycling from 34% to 38% and saw driving to school reduce by 4%. St Ebbe's School had a slightly higher level of cycling than some other local schools already, with a parent having established a bike bus, and proactively working to help set up a bike library and improve access to cycling. That parent is now the school's Active Travel Champion. The data for post installation for phase 2 schools is not yet available.

Financial Implications

11. There are no new financial implications as part of this update report.
12. Funding for the school streets programme is from Active Travel England grant funding rounds and from OCC council funding. Funding for future phases is secured. An overview of capital and revenue funding is provided here:

Table 1: School Streets funding overview			
<i>*italics indicates revenue</i>			
	<u>Phase & year</u>	<u>Funding source</u>	<u>Amount</u>
	1 – 2023/24	ATE 3	£160,000
	2 – 2024/25	OCC Capital funding	£500,000
	3 – 2025/26	ATE4 Extension funding <i>OCC revenue funding</i>	£350,000 <i>£77,000</i>
	4 – 2026/27	OCC capital funding <i>OCC revenue funding</i>	£450,000 <i>£47,000</i>
	5 – 2027/28	ATE 5 <i>OCC revenue funding</i>	£168,000 <i>£47,000</i>

13. The ongoing cost for the management and operation of the school streets ANPR enforcement is currently fully funded by the income generation from management of all moving traffic offences by ANPR charges. If this is not enough, then income from the council’s related parking account will be used.

Comments checked by:

Filipp Skiffins, Finance Business Partner
Filipp.skiffins@oxfordshire.gov.uk (Finance)

Legal Implications

There are no new legal implications as part of this report.

16. School Streets are created using a Traffic Regulation Order (TRO), and often following an Experimental Traffic Regulation Order (ETRO) both of which require a public consultation before the TRO or ETRO can be made permanent. These consultations must comply with the consultation requirements for the various elements as required by law including under the Highways Act 1980, the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984 and any other relevant legislation.
17. The Council uses its powers under the Traffic Management Act 2004 to enforce the relevant ETRO and/or TRO and complies with its duties and responsibilities under the UK data monitoring and protection laws in respect of the operation of the scheme.

Comments checked by:

Jennifer Crouch, Principal Solicitor (Regulatory)
jennifer.crouch@oxfordshire.gov.uk (Legal)

Staff Implications

18. There are no known staff implications for this update. As further phases of school streets are developed or more ANPR cameras are introduced, the workload will increase, but this will be monitored going forward.
19. A Project Manager will be recruited to join the Travel Plans and Behaviour Change team as part of the implementation of the Phase 3 school streets and for future school street phases.

Equality & Inclusion Implications

20. There are no known equalities or inclusion implications resulting from this update report.
21. As part of the Cabinet Members Decision report prepared for each school street scheme, following the consultation on each school street, an Equalities Impact Assessment (EQIA) is undertaken to ensure that equalities implications of the scheme have been assessed in a fair and thorough manner.

Sustainability Implications

22. There are no known sustainability implications linked to this update report.

As part of the Cabinet Members Decision report prepared for each school street scheme, following the consultation on each school street, a Carbon Impact

Assessment is produced to ensure carbon implications of the scheme have been assessed in a thorough manner.

Risk Management

23. There are no known implications linked to this update.

PAUL FERMER

Director of Environment and Highways

Annex 1: Penalty Charge Notice statistics

Background papers:

Contact Officer:

Mark Gregory, Travel Plans & Behaviour Change Team Leader, mark.gregory@oxfordshire.gov.uk
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April 2026

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2023							
School name	Camera location	Enforcement commenced	PCNs issued*	Revenue	Annual cost of camera hosting/maintenance	Average daily PCN being issued	Notes
St Nicholas Primary, Abingdon	Boxhill Walk	Feb-23	321	£3,248.00	£7,113	1.80	This is an average of 178 school days
Larkrise Primary, Oxford	Boundary Brook Road	Feb-23	1,176	£7,029.00	£7,113	6.61	
St Ebbes Primary, Oxford	Whitehouse Road	Feb-23	751	£6,315.00	£7,113	4.22	
Windmill Primary	Margaret Road between junction with St Anne's Road	Feb-23	436	£5,768.00	£6,412	2.45	
	Margaret Road between junction with Wharton Road	Feb-23	3,143	£53,491.00	£7,113	17.66	
	York Road	Feb-23	681	£9,378.00	£6,412	3.83	
Total			6,508	£85,229.00	£41,276		

2024							
School name	Name	Enforcement commenced	PCNs issued	Revenue	Annual cost of camera hosting/maintenance	Average daily PCN being issued	Notes
St Nicholas Primary, Abingdon	Boxhill Walk	as above	243	£6,824.84	£7,113	1.25	This is an average of 194 school days
Larkrise Primary, Oxford	Boundary Brook Road	as above	778	£16,935.00	£7,113	4.01	
St Ebbes Primary, Oxford	Whitehouse Road	as above	370	£10,665.00	£7,113	1.91	
Windmill Primary, Oxford	Margaret Road between junction with St Anne's Road	as above	550	£16,075.00	£6,412	2.84	
	Margaret Road between junction with Wharton Road	as above	2,116	£73,097.00	£7,113	10.91	
	York Road	as above	40	£1,305.00	£6,412	0.21	
Total			4,097	£124,901.84	£41,276		

2025							
School name	Name	Enforcement commenced	PCNs issued*	Revenue	Annual cost of camera hosting/maintenance	Average daily PCN being issued	Notes
St Nicholas Primary, Abingdon	Boxhill Walk	as above	229	£4,240.00	£7,113	1.19	This is an average of 192 school days
Larkrise Primary, Oxford	Boundary Brook Road	as above	1,146	£28,943.86	£7,113	5.97	
St Ebbes Primary, Oxford	Whitehouse Road	as above	351	£7,775.00	£7,113	1.83	
Windmill Primary, Oxford	Margaret Road between junction with St Anne's Road	as above	166	£4,560.00	£6,412	0.86	
	Margaret Road between junction with Wharton Road	as above	702	£24,205.00	£7,113	3.66	
	York Road, Oxford	as above	139	£4,088.21	£6,412	0.72	
New Hinksey Primary, Oxford	Lake Street	Jan-25	573	£815.00	£6,782	2.98	
	Vicarage Road	Jan-25	389	£615.00	£6,782	2.03	
St Mary and St John Primary, Oxford	Bedford Street	Jan-25	286	£1,515.00	£6,782	1.49	
Manor Primary, Didcot	Lydalls Close	Jan-25	276	£1,290.00	£6,782	1.44	
Tyndale Primary, Oxford	Barracks Lane	Jan-25	1,262	£4,955.00	£6,782	6.57	
Sandhills Primary, Oxford	Terrett Avenue, Oxford	Jan-25	174	£420.00	£6,782	0.91	
Total			5,693	£83,422.07	£81,968		

* PCNs issued figure also includes warning notices issued in the first 6 months. These are logged as PCNs in the back office, but as they are warning notices there is no charge associated with them

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Divisions Affected – All

PLACE SCRUTINY & OVERVIEW COMMITTEE

22 APRIL 2026

Bus Services and Rural Transport (including Mobility Hubs)

Report by Director of Environment and Highways

RECOMMENDATION

1. The Committee is **RECOMMENDED** to consider the report, raise any questions, and to **AGREE** any recommendations it wishes to make to Cabinet arising there from.

Executive Summary

2. This report sets out the actions being taken to implement the Local Transport & Connectivity Plan's policies, plans and schemes relating to rural transport. This includes bus services, mobility hubs and transport interchanges, as well as active travel. An update on car clubs is also provided.
3. The report focuses on countywide policies and plans for improving connectivity to make sustainable and active travel (walking, wheeling and cycling) the 'natural first choice', and how they are being developed and brought forward in towns and more rural communities across Oxfordshire.
4. The Place Overview & Scrutiny Committee is recommended to consider the report, raise any questions, and to **AGREE** any recommendations it wishes to make to Cabinet arising there from.

Section 1 Rural bus services

Background

5. In 2016, the Council withdrew the budget for the financial support of local bus services. This led to the immediate removal of 49 routes and a significant reduction in rural connectivity.
6. Between 2016 and 2020, the only financial support provided by the County Council was through Section 106 agreements with developers to maintain and improve bus services on corridors linked to new residential and commercial schemes.

7. Since 2020, Government financial support through firstly Supported Bus Services Fund (SBSF) and later the Bus Service Improvement Plan (BSIP) has enabled the County Council to restore bus services in both urban and rural areas.

Current position – local bus and community transport

8. Many of the cuts to services that took place in 2016 have now been reversed, with in some cases a better service provided than was available previously - despite significant increases in cost over that period.
9. Overall, the Council now spends c.£10m per annum on 95 contracts which support local bus services, from a variety of sources. This is from five sources:
 - (1) Section 106 funding;
 - (2) Local Authority Bus Grant (LABG) funding from the Government, formerly known as Bus Service Improvement Fund;
 - (3) Local Authority Bus Service Operators Grant (LABSOG), which was an annual Government grant for the maintenance of supported bus services and infrastructure – absorbed by LABG from 2025/26;
 - (4) Surplus from the national concessionary fares scheme for older and disabled people; and
 - (5) the OCC budget for rural and community transport - £1.27m in 2025/26.
10. The dedicated OCC budget of £1.27m for rural and community transport is currently being used to support over 30 rural bus routes plus an annual community transport grant scheme.
11. The rural bus routes funded by this budget range from regular daily services, with both peak and off-peak elements, to once-a-week shopper services. Some of these services are operated by the Council's internal fleet service, increasing utilisation of those assets at times they would not otherwise be used.
12. Since July 2024 every parish in Oxfordshire with a population of 500 or more has been served by a scheduled bus service. Of the 126 parishes with a population of between 100 and 500, 81% have a scheduled bus service – with the vast majority of the remaining 19% having a population of less than 200.
13. A map of the current bus service provision in Oxfordshire can be found [here](#).
14. The network comprises links not only to/from Oxford, but also to/from and between the market towns. For example, hourly services run between Witney and Chipping Norton, Chipping Norton and Banbury, Banbury and Bicester, Abingdon and Witney, and between Abingdon, Didcot, Wallingford and

Henley-on-Thames – all of which are financially supported by the Council. Rural services also feed into the market towns – Witney, Chipping Norton and Banbury being examples of where a number of less frequent routes provide access to shopping, healthcare and leisure facilities.

15. In addition to bus services, community transport services also provide vital connectivity in rural areas. These can include:
 - car clubs;
 - community minibuses;
 - dial-a-ride;
 - lift share;
 - taxi share; and
 - voluntary car schemes.
16. The Council works proactively with the community transport sector to provide services where conventional bus services are not available. In the past three financial years, the grant scheme has offered nearly £650,000 to community transport operators in Oxfordshire to maintain and/or improve their service provision – including:
 - establishing new schemes;
 - expanding existing schemes; and
 - enabling existing schemes to invest in new vehicles.
17. The Council publishes an annual [Community Transport Directory](#) and has recently launched a new [map](#) whereby local residents can locate the schemes relevant to them (by selecting the ‘Layer List’ from the menu bar then “Community Travel Schemes”).
18. The Council operates its own community transport service, the [Comet](#). This service is available to registered users between 1000 and 1400 on Mondays to Fridays, and provides connections for those who do not have access to public transport.
19. Apart from this, the Council has not pursued demand responsive transport in the way that some other local authorities have done with specific Government grants. Officers consider that such services represent poor value for money, with long set-up times, higher costs and low utilisation; the Rural Mobility Fund Phase 1 Evaluation [report](#) published in December 2025 indicated that of the 18 schemes set up with the funding, only one managed to carry more than 4 passengers per vehicle hour on average. Should additional funds become available, officers are of the opinion that fixed routes with reliable, stable timetables are a more appropriate means of connecting rural communities by bus.

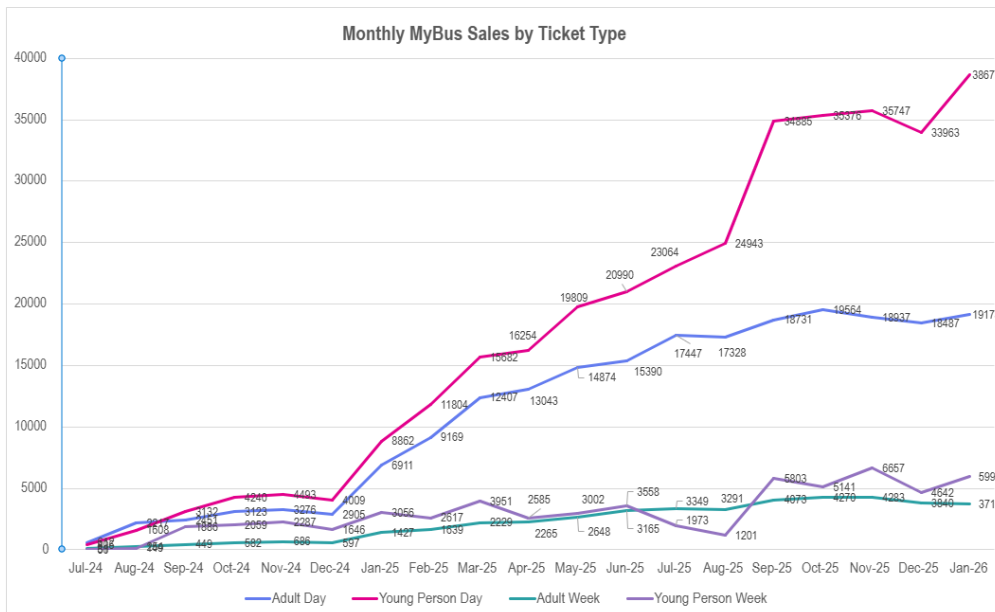
Shared vehicle schemes and Electric Vehicles

20. There is significant potential for shared public car club vehicles to provide sustainable transport solutions in rural areas and [market](#) towns in a similar way to how they do in cities across the UK. The introduction of 1,500 new public EV chargers across Oxfordshire under the LEVI programme presents a fantastic opportunity to introduce fully electric shared vehicles at scale. OCC's EV car club pilot, launched in October 2023, has proven that car clubs can reach a sustainable level of utilisation in places such as Eynsham and Wallingford, but pump priming funding would be required to deliver a rural car club network at scale. Hook Norton's community car club '[Hooky Car Club](#)' has achieved success in reducing private car dependency and increasing access to electric vehicles in very rural Oxfordshire. Local start up Zimbl have also achieved success in providing pay-per-hour EVs to rural parts of Banbury and other villages on a deliver to door model.
21. Where funding is not available, or there is not sufficient appetite from commercial car club operators, peer-to-peer car sharing could be encouraged between residents and enabled via sharing platforms such as [Hiyacar](#).

Fares support and affordability

22. The National Bus Fare Cap scheme, which is a direct arrangement between Government and bus operators, capped single fares at £2 from January 2023 and £3 from January 2025. This has particularly improved the value of longer-distance travel in rural areas, which otherwise would have been significantly more expensive over time.
23. In Oxfordshire, the Council introduced the MyBus Oxfordshire multi-operator ticket in July 2024, with day ticket prices of £6.50 for adults and £3.50 for young people aged 5-18 (weekly tickets priced at £25 and £14.50 respectively, although these were increased to £30 and £17 in February 2026).
24. The ticket is valid on over 150 bus routes provided by 12 operators, including some community transport providers. Most services are included, enabling connecting journeys from rural areas into the market towns and Oxford.
25. This is the first countywide, multi-operator ticket covering Oxfordshire and has been a huge success, with over 67,000 tickets sold in January 2026. However, the success has led to a significant additional spend by the Council and a review is currently being undertaken into how best to secure its longer-term financial sustainability.

Figure 1: MyBus sales July 2024-January 2026



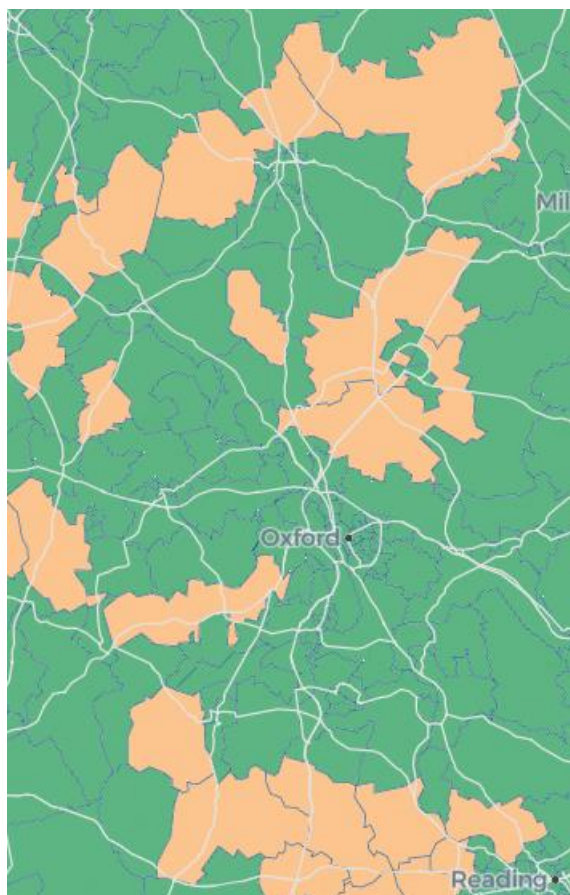
26. In a survey undertaken in 2025, 50% of respondents agreed or strongly agreed that the MyBus ticket had increased their bus use. Cost savings (56%), flexibility to use multiple operators (49%), and convenience (39%) were the main benefits cited.
27. The high level of bus use in Oxfordshire does make it more difficult to apply blanket fare caps or reductions, as a cost saving on each individual ticket – multiplied by 39 million annual users – quickly makes this unaffordable. Various scenarios modelled for the usage of congestion charge income have indicated that countywide fare reductions, blanket free travel for younger people and other similarly large-scale initiatives were not possible within the scope of the funds available.

Accessibility

28. The Council has commissioned a report from Innovate Oxfordshire which will particularly focus on rural accessibility and options for improvement of transport services in these areas. The aim of the work is to identify areas in Oxfordshire with significant transport needs due to lower levels of accessibility, limited routing options, and social demographic needs.
29. This approach is to identify areas of opportunity as part of Oxfordshire’s countywide transport strategy, as well as specific areas for that require deeper exploration and analysis. We expect this report to be complete in the next few months.
30. The Campaign for Better Transport is working on a data visualisation tool mapping bus service provision against population density and, later, walking distances to stops. Areas are categorised into ‘red’, ‘amber’ or ‘green’ depending on their level of connectivity, based on some metrics associated with % of population within a 10 minute walk of a bus stop and varying frequency levels depending on whether the area has a high, medium or low population density.

31. Whilst this has not yet been made publicly available, the emerging analysis for Oxfordshire indicates that there are no 'red' areas, although there are some 'amber' areas to the north and west of Banbury, and around Bicester.

Figure 2: Emerging CBT analysis of connectivity in Oxfordshire (please note some areas in the periphery of the map are outside the county)



32. Population growth in some of these areas will assist with provision of higher levels of bus service.
33. The Council has recently completed an audit of all 4,200 bus stops in the county, enabling a full view of the facilities available at each one and the prospects for improvement.

Future plans

34. The Council has received its future Bus Services Fund settlement from the Government which is assisting with maintenance of already-introduced services to rural areas across the county.
35. Maintaining the existing budget for rural and community transport will secure the future of bus routes and community transport, and there is a steady pipeline of Section 106 funding which can be used for specific purposes aligned to the developments providing the support.

36. The Council and bus operators are working on strengthening the existing Enhanced Partnership arrangements to promote deeper working relationships. Whilst the Council already has very good relationships with bus operators, there are still some areas where closer working would be beneficial for Oxfordshire – for example, simpler ticketing, more unified branding and information, and more transparency of route performance.
37. It is also important to note that it anticipated that forthcoming devolution proposals will transfer the responsibility for public transport provision, Enhanced Partnerships and Government funding for bus services to a future Combined Authority.

Section 2 Mobility Hubs (including Railway Stations, Park & Ride and Rural)

Background

38. Mobility hubs form part of Oxfordshire’s wider approach to integrated, low carbon transport, as set out in the Local Transport and Connectivity Plan (LTCP) and related strategies.
39. Mobility hubs aim to support modal shift, accessibility, and decarbonisation by connecting walking, wheeling, cycling, public transport, and shared mobility. Instead of a single programme, they are integrated across various transport initiatives, such as rail, bus, Park & Ride, and place-based planning.
40. After adopting the [Mobility Hubs Strategy \(July 2023\)](#), Innovate Oxfordshire compiled and scored a list of over 300 potential mobility hub sites. The strategy identifies four typologies. They are: Major Interchange Hubs, Linking Hubs, Suburban and Rural Hubs and Mini Hubs. It therefore looks to address urban, suburban and rural access to public transport/sustainable travel via the Mobility Hub concept.
41. To date, schemes at Benson and Carterton are the only two Mobility Hub demonstrator projects which have been explored via public consultation. Both are relatively small mobility hubs, but any new interchange or interchange identified for improvement will be applying Mobility Hub principles.
42. Mobility Hubs are an important element of active travel infrastructure for rural areas. A high-quality active travel network linking rural communities to nearby Mobility Hubs can significantly improve access for rural people, thereby reducing car use and promoting healthy lifestyles. Many current car users may not be willing to switch from a car to a bicycle or to walking if their journey to a town or employment centre is too far. But if a nearby Mobility Hub can be accessed via a safe and convenient active travel route, the shared public transport services on that route can be made more accessible to many rural residents without the need for a car. The benefits of Mobility Hubs along

strategic public transport corridors, such as Park and Rides, can provide a more diverse offer, but also come with challenges around available land to utilise.

Implementing into policy

43. The emerging [Movement and Place Plans](#) (MAP Plans) work to identify suitable locations for where Mobility Hubs should be focused within specific geographic areas across the county. This is based on the long list of identified sites and working collaboratively with local members, partners and key stakeholders. The phase of the work will be to actively consult and deliver coproduction at these identified locations.
44. By undertaking localised Movement and Place Plans this will also allow for localised reflection to take place, which will cover rural, suburban and urban needs of different communities. It will also address last mile delivery.
45. Further to this, the recently adopted [OxRail 2040: Plan for Rail](#) (November 2025) notes the aspirations for all of Oxfordshire's railway stations to become Mobility Hubs, complimenting the Mobility Hubs Strategy. The plan also notes the importance of an integrated transport approach – bring together Bus, Rail and Active Travel, and the Government is due to publish further details on the emerging Better Connected Transport Plan (formerly known as the Integrated National Transport Strategy), which officers are actively monitoring.

Rail

46. The Council are working with partners towards the development and delivery of four new railway stations.
 - Oxford Littlemore (Rail Plan P1.02) and Oxford Cowley (Rail Plan P1.02) – both on the reopened Cowley Branch Line (Rail Plan P1.01).
 - Begbroke (Rail Plan P2.01).
 - Wantage and Grove (Rail Plan P2.02).
47. Early development of a fifth station at Ardley (Rail Plan P3.02) is also being explored, recognising the need to consider the potential impacts of the proposed Strategic Rail Freight Interchange (SRFI), which is subject to the Nationally Significant Infrastructure Project (NSIP) process.
48. The Oxfordshire Station Action Plan (Rail Plan P1.13) is a new framework to be developed by the Council for improving all of Oxfordshire's existing railway stations as Mobility Hubs, with the focus being on accessibility, integration and sustainability.

Case Study: Supporting rural connectivity through the MAP Plans

49. Science Vale and The Bicester and the Surrounding Villages highlights the challenges delivering the same public transport services to rural areas when compared to suburban/urban areas – something also reinforced in the OxRAIL 2040: Plan for Rail.

Science Vale – Culham Railway Station

50. The MAP Plan outlines the aspiration to deliver a mobility hub at Culham Railway Station, a rural railway station co-located next to Culham Campus - home to over 45 commercial businesses from start-ups to major international businesses – making this an ideal location.



51. The Plan outlines the aspiration to deliver this by delivering a cycle hub facility, collaborating with partners to improve the accessibility and infrastructure facilities and to create new active travel links over the River Thames and Science Line (Cherwell Valley Line). This will support an increase in public transport and enhance local travel connections within the area and for onward travel, for example, connecting to Didcot Parkway or Oxford which provides regional and national travel connections and enhanced employment opportunities.

Park and Ride

52. A study has been undertaken to help identify requirements for new and improved Park & Rides (P&Rs), including locations of new sites, their likely car parking capacities, and improvements required at existing P&R sites.
53. The work focused on the [Central Oxfordshire Travel Plan](#) area and has considered the impact of housing and economic growth and likely behaviour change (as a result of planned schemes including traffic filters trial, zero emission zone and workplace parking levy) on future demand for P&R. The study recommendations are as follows:
- All of Oxford's existing (city-edge) P&R sites to remain in place, with better facilities provided at all sites including electric vehicle charging, more parking for cycles, e-scooters and e-bikes and improved customer waiting facilities. These improvements are particularly needed at Parkway, Thornhill, Redbridge and Pear Tree.
 - The P&R site at Eynsham begins operating in the short term.
 - Capacity at **Oxford Parkway** is maintained at the current level, so around 700 spaces (excluding car parking at Oxford Parkway railway station) with the option to increase car parking for P&R by regaining some of the leased capacity or promoting use of **Bicester Park & Ride**.
 - **A new P&R site on along the A4074 corridor at Land South of Grenoble Road (of around 600 spaces)** - potential for additional or alternative P&R capacity in the longer term at Berinsfield or Golden Balls. Additional discussion about this site will come forward in the Thame, Watlington &

Surrounding Villages MAP Plan. Furthermore, additional or alternative P&R capacity may also be considered at Lodge Hill on the A34 corridor, with discussion about this in the Abingdon-on-Thames and Eastern Vale MAP Plan.

- **Seacourt P&R** – retain and deliver an additional site at Cumnor Hill, with capacity for around 600 spaces. This is to accommodate additional demand for P&R and to mitigate the impact of any flooding at Seacourt.
- **Pear Tree P&R** - Reduce the footprint of the existing park & ride by decking some of the existing site, enabling it to be better integrated to the Oxford North development. Provide additional capacity via a new site (around 1100 spaces) at Oxford Airport.
- **Bicester P&R** - opened in November 2015 with 580 spaces, funded through an expansion of Bicester Village. It is served by the S5 service to Oxford, is used by Bicester Village staff and as overflow parking at weekends and on event days. The Bicester and Surrounding Villages MAP Plan notes its potential to transform the site into a Mobility Hub, improving connectivity locally and regionally.
- **Eynsham P&R** - The construction of the Eynsham P&R site was completed in 2024, as the first phase of the A40 Eynsham to Wolvercote scheme. The next phase will see the construction of the access junction to enable the site to become operational. The scheme is awaiting the outcome of the planning application. Upon planning approval, the scheme is ready to mobilise during 2026 with view to completion in 2028. Eynsham P&R is being planned to become operational before the end of the full works of the A40 Eynsham to Wolvercote scheme, as the P&R access junction works are part of the first construction phase. The Council is working with bus operators to operate the park and ride as soon as practicable and safe to do so.

Park and Ride Pricing Strategy

54. Historically the P&R Pricing Strategy has worked on the principles of:
- Highest parking charge at destination in Oxford i.e. using public/workplace car parking
 - Comparative cost for using P&R
 - Lowest cost if choose to make full journey by bus
55. It is expected therefore that any parking charges at planned and proposed outer P&R sites (Eynsham, A44, Cumnor and South of Grenoble Road), need to be set at a level (if charged at all) that makes them attractive compared to parking at inner P&R sites, whilst also ensuring bus from source is still competitive. At Oxford Parkway P&R there is also a need to consider the railway station, with currently very similar cost across the two sites.

Master Planning

56. The A44 Mobility Hub is identified in Cherwell Local Plan 2011-2031 Partial Review as direct mitigation for local development and included within Infrastructure Delivery Plan (IDP). Land is also safeguarded in Cherwell Local

Plan 2042 for a mobility hub under Policy KID 3. The evidence paper, 'A44 Mobility Hub: Justification for the Safeguarding of Land in the Cherwell Local Plan Review 2042' sets out the context and background for the proposal including the consideration of alternatives and justifies land safeguarding to secure its delivery.

57. The proposed A44 Mobility Hub site is located along the A44 adjacent to the Bladon roundabout on the edge of the London Oxford Airport site. It is within the Cherwell District Council administrative area, Oxford Green Belt and setting of the Blenheim Palace World Heritage Site.
58. The initial proposal includes 1,100 car parking bays including disabled, EV and car club bays in addition to cycle parking and hire. Bus access would be via lay-by on A44 with vehicular access for users from A4095 Upper Campsfield Road, options are being considered for buses/shuttles serving Woodstock/Blenheim.
59. [East West Rail](#) ^(O&D) is a significant project that will benefit the national economy by establishing a strategic railway connecting the Thames Valley with the South East Midlands and East Anglia. Initial details are set out below. Initial details are set out below.
 - **Oxford Parkway Master Planning** – £6bn East West Rail investment and future housing and employment growth in the location, including the Cherwell Local Plan sites, Oxford United Football Club, the Cowley Branch Line, the work of the Oxford Growth Commission and the opened Oxford North development.
60. Oxford Parkway needs to meet these future growth, movement and place shaping challenges to provide an exemplar modern Mobility Hub, fully integrated across modes and seamless in operation across multiple transport providers. To this end the council is commissioning a concept masterplan study, engaging all key stakeholders, to develop an investible future proposition and phased delivery plan, considering land requirements that would enable an efficient Mobility Hub. The study is expected to start in April with the appointment of consultants and run for 6 months, after which the outcomes will be shared.

Future Plans

61. Once site opportunities have been assessed and optioneered through further technical work and co-production, they will be prioritised for scheme development to secure funding. Further consultation will take place during the development stage.

Section 3 Rural Active Travel and Behaviour Change Activation

Active Travel Strategy & policy

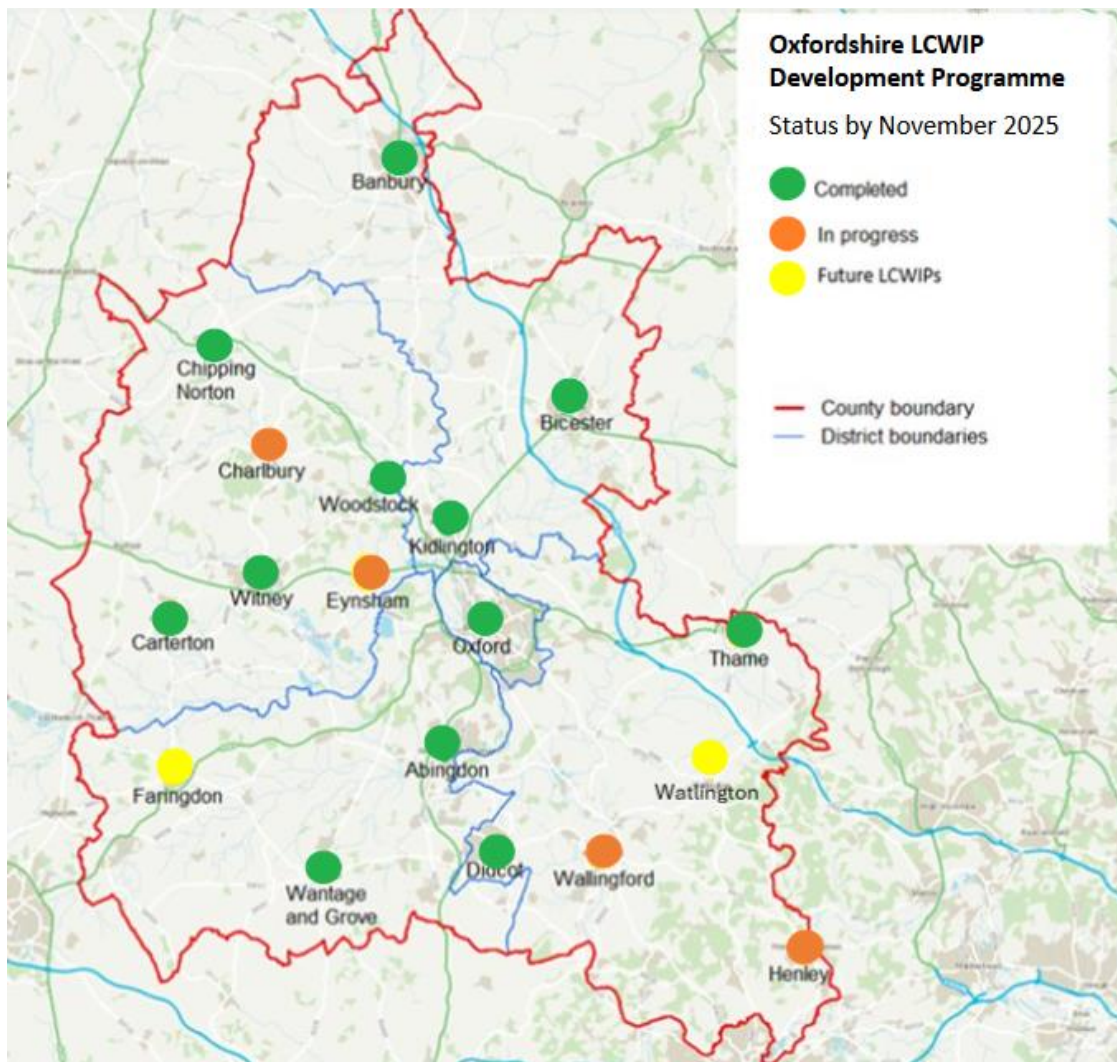
62. Oxfordshire County Council's 'Active Travel Strategy' (ATS) was published alongside the 'Local Transport and Connectivity Plan' (LTCP) as a supporting

strategy. Both were adopted by full council in July 2022. Together, these documents present a comprehensive plan for making walking, wheeling and cycling safer, and for increasing active travel uptake.

Local Cycling & Walking Infrastructure Plans (LCWIPs)

63. The County Council's activity on active travel largely centres around 'Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plans' (LCWIPs). Because shorter trips are more likely to be replaced by walking and cycling than longer trips, towns offer a significant opportunity to increase active travel uptake by investing in infrastructure improvements. For this reason, a programme of 18 LCWIPs was commenced setting out the intended active travel infrastructure improvements for all places (so the Oxford city and towns) with more than 10,000 residents.

64. Progress on the LCWIP programme to date is as follows:
- 12 LCWIPs completed (green dots in the map below)
 - 4 LCWIPs in progress (amber dots in the map below)
 - 2 LCWIPs yet to be developed (yellow dots in the map below)

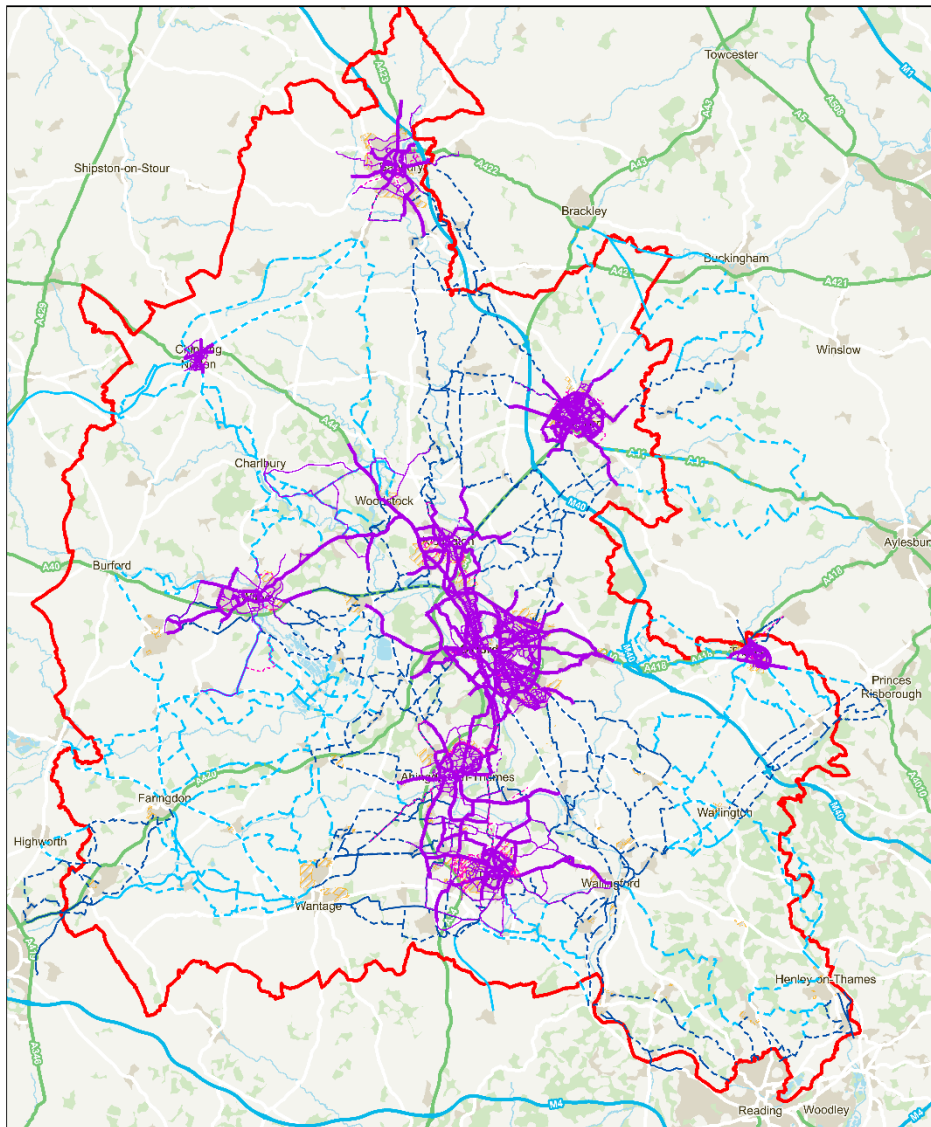


65. Implementation of each of these LCWIPs will require significant investment over the coming decades. Over 1500 improvements are identified. Key funding sources include the Department for Transport via Active Travel England annual grant funding, and council capital funding when available. In 2025/26, the following council funding allocations were made for rural active travel schemes:
- Aston Zebra Crossing (£78k)
 - Science Vale Active Travel Network Route 4 (£150k)
 - Harwell Toucan Crossing (£250k)
 - Ambrosen to Bicester Active Travel Scheme (£1.3m)
 - Shepherd's Pit Lane (£65k)
66. A further £1.7m of council capital funding has been made available in the 2026/27 budget for 'LCWIP schemes', but it has not yet been confirmed which schemes will be delivered with these funds or whether they will be in areas that could be considered 'rural'.

Strategic Active Travel Network (SATN)

67. It was recognised that even full implementation of all 18 LCWIPs would leave huge gaps in the county's active travel network – the areas between built-up towns. In order to help identify and develop potential schemes to complete these gaps, the County Council agreed a 'Strategic Active Travel Network' (SATN) which was co-produced with stakeholders and Member Active Travel and District Cycling Champions, to help prioritise the infrastructure improvements needed in rural parts of the county. The map below shows the 'strategic' (dark blue) and 'complementary' (light blue) links and corridors that have been identified for the SATN, linking the LCWIP routes (purple). The solid lines are confirmed routes, while the dashed lines represent 'desire lines' – corridors where active travel improvements are sought but the exact proposed route alignment is yet to be determined.

OCC Strategic Active Travel Routes



26/01/2026, 13:02:33

LCWIP Network

- Primary
- Secondary
- Restricted
- Future

Alignments - Complementary, Proposed

Alignments - Complementary, Confirmed

Alignments - Strategic, Proposed

Alignments - Strategic, Confirmed

Housing

1:240,000

0 2.75 5.5 11 mi
0 4.5 9 18 km

Oxfordshire County Council
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68. The ATS states (page 20) that the following links will be prioritised:

- to rural train stations, particularly from towns not served by a train station, such as Witney and Abingdon
- between urban areas and employment and nearby villages identified in LCWIPs
- to larger settlements where there are more potential cyclists
- to and from the National Cycle Network routes

The ATS also lists the following types of SATN routes that are being identified:

- *routes alongside rural main roads by off-road cycle tracks*
- *routes (mostly on road) along rural minor roads made attractive by low traffic volumes and low traffic speeds*
- *routes along upgraded public rights of way and other permissive paths*

Greenways

69. The Oxford Greenways Project aims to deliver a network of high-quality walking, cycling and wheeling routes connecting Oxford to nearby settlements, employment centres and tourist attractions. It builds on the Strategic Active Travel Network (SATN), approved by the council in 2024, and is a key element of our Local Transport and Connectivity Plan (LTCP).
70. Phase 1 of the project started in 2024 as part of a joint funding commitment between Oxfordshire County Council, Oxford City Council and the University of Oxford. The emerging concept masterplan proposed 6 new "greenways" to be designed alongside a longer list of routes already committed or in planning. A [public consultation](#) in February/March 2025 showed strong support across residents and stakeholders, but also a clear request to further integrate all proposed rural active travel routes around Oxford into a single masterplan.
71. Oxfordshire County Council then allocated priority funds for progression into Phase 2 of the Oxford Greenways Project, which will be shortly completed. This has focused on reviewing proposed routes alongside public feedback and on-the-ground audits and assessments. The revised masterplan and associated report are expected to be published in late Spring / early Summer. The council's funding will further allow us to progress into Phase 3 over 2026/27, which will prioritise the development of those specific routes with highest chances of being upgraded or constructed in subsequent years.

Quiet Lanes

72. In response to increases in requests from Parish Councils for further measures aimed at improving the safety of walking, cycling, and horse-riding in rural areas, the council is now seeking to formalise its approach for delivering Quiet Lanes.
73. Following an initial County Council revenue allocation, the council will now develop a consistent framework for assessing, prioritising and delivering such proposals, helping to move away from the historic piecemeal approach. Schemes will typically be brought forward where there are road safety concerns, primarily arising from rat running and speeding, and there is clear local support and demand, for example from Parish Councils, local Members and key affected residents.
74. A paper is currently being drafted for Cabinet in May to approve the draft countywide policy and endorse a programme of pilot schemes (up to 10) to further test and refine the policy. Following this decision, engagement with Parish Councils will be undertaken to identify suitable pilot schemes for

delivery through 2026/27 using £250k of council capital funding allocated for Quiet Lane schemes.

Behaviour Change Activation for Rural Areas

75. In addition to infrastructure improvements to support sustainable and active travel in rural areas, the County Council has a strong programme of travel behaviour change activation supporting people in rural areas to take up or increase their use of sustainable and active travel. This includes the following initiatives:

- working with rural schools to deliver the objectives of the Sustainable School Travel Strategy, through initiatives such as Walk Once a Week (WoW), Park-and-Stride, Bikeability cycle training and Footsteps training
- offering the '[BetterPoints](#)' reward scheme to allow all Oxfordshire residents (including those in rural areas) to obtain rewards for walking, cycling, running or wheeling
- requiring travel plans for all developments that meet the thresholds set out in the "Oxfordshire Guidance Document – Transport for New Developments, Transport Assessments and Travel Plans" (March 2014), and monitoring delivery of these
- occasional support for Community Action Groups in villages (e.g. Eynsham and Woodstock) to deliver activation projects promoting active travel
- partnership with British Cycling employing 2x Community Developers to help build access to, and confidence in, cycling

Future Plans

76. The Council has received its Active Travel settlement from the Government as part of the Local Transport Consolidated Funding Settlement, as approved at Cabinet on 17th March 2026. This is enabling the funding of active travel revenue and capital resource and schemes over the next four years.

Corporate Policies and Priorities

77. [In addition to any relevant plans and policies specific to the service area concerned, the report should explain how any proposals in the report support the Vision, Values, Objectives and Strategic Priorities in the County Council's Corporate Plan (see [Corporate Plan](#)), identifying the outcomes that are intended for the benefit of service users and the wider community.]

Financial Implications

78. There are no new financial implications as part of this update report.

79. The budgets that are available for improving sustainable and active travel in Oxfordshire's towns and rural areas, is set out in the report. This has been

agreed and published – through Council budget setting processes and the 17th of March 2026 [Local Transport Consolidated Funding Settlement – Transport Delivery Plan](#).

Comments checked by:

Filipp Skiffins, Finance Business Partner
Filipp.skiffins@oxfordshire.gov.uk (Finance)

Legal Implications

80. There are no new legal implications as part of this update report.
81. The actions proposed in the report are within the powers and responsibilities of the Council as Highway Authority, Local Transport Authority and the Traffic Authority under the Highways Act 1980, the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984, the Transport Act 2000 and the Traffic Management Act 2004 and related legislation. The Council also has power to do anything that individuals may do under the general power of competence under the Localism Act 2011 and so may take such lawful action that it considers appropriate to deliver the actions set out in the report. Delivery of some actions may require statutory consultation, which will take place as and when any proposals are promoted, in compliance with any relevant statutory duty applicable at the time.
82. The promotion and delivery of any new development such as the A44 Mobility Hub and/or at Oxford Parkway must be carried out in accordance with planning law including the Town and Country Planning Act 1990, Town and Country Planning General Regulations 1992 (where applicable) taking into account all relevant policy and procedures, and following appropriate consultation. Where actions impact on the making or the review of a Local Plan, the requirements of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 and all relevant legislation, regulation and guidance must also met.

Comments checked by:

Jennifer Crouch, Principal Solicitor (Regulatory)
Jennifer.crouch@oxfordshire.gov.uk (Legal)

Staff Implications

83. There are no known staff implications for this update. Staffing has been accounted for in project and programme planning processes.

Equality & Inclusion Implications

84. There are no known equalities or inclusion implications linked to this update.
85. As part of the Cabinet and Cabinet Members Decision reports prepared for individual schemes and policies, an Equalities Impact Assessment (EQIA) is undertaken to ensure that equalities implications of the scheme have been assessed in a fair and thorough manner.

Sustainability Implications

86. There are no known sustainability implications linked to this update.
87. As part of the Cabinet and Cabinet Members Decision reports prepared for individual schemes and policies, a Carbon Impact Assessment (CIA) is undertaken to ensure that carbon implications of the policy or scheme have been assessed in a fair and thorough manner.

Risk Management

88. There are no known implications linked to this update.

Paul Fermer
Director of Environment and Highways

Annex: Nil

Background papers: Nil

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Mark Gregory, Behaviour Change & Travel Plans Team Leader
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April 2026

PLACE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

– 22 April 2026

Temporary Congestion Charging Scheme Monitoring

Report by the Director of Environment and Highways

RECOMMENDATION

Executive Summary

1. The temporary congestion charge scheme was approved by Cabinet on 10 September 2025 and started operating on 29 October 2025. It is designed to reduce traffic in the city while Botley Road remains closed, helping buses to be quicker and more reliable and walking and cycling safer and more attractive. The previously approved traffic filter trial will take over from the congestion charge when the Botley Road reopens.
2. The impacts of the temporary congestion charge are being monitored closely and reports are published monthly on the council's website here:

<https://www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/transport-and-travel/oxfords-temporary-congestion-charge-cars/temporary-congestion-charge-monitoring-data>
3. So far, the data indicates that the temporary congestion charge has resulted in faster journeys by bus, increased park and ride use and reduced congestion in many parts of the city. There have also been increases in traffic and journey times, mostly on outer roads, including parts of the ring road. This is largely as predicted in the modelling and forecasting report produced as part of the suite of evidence documents. Overall, it is still too early to draw any firm conclusions about the scheme impacts. Detailed monitoring will continue.

Data Monitoring

4. Data about the impact of the temporary congestion charge has been published on a monthly basis since the start of the scheme. Amongst other things, the monitoring data covers changes in traffic volumes, vehicle journey times, bus journey times, Park & Ride usage, footfall, income received from the payment of daily charges and Penalty Charge Notices (PCNs) and the number of permits issued for cars to drive for free through charging points.

Traffic flows, journey times (including bus journey times)

5. The latest published data (February 2026 compared to February 2025) shows reductions in traffic flows and journey times on a number of inner routes but some increases elsewhere, mainly on certain outer roads and parts of the ring road. The scale of the decreases and increases varies according to time and location. The biggest decreases in traffic flows and journey times are on roads with charging points or on roads leading to charging points, for example, Abingdon Road, Hollow Way, St Clements, Hythe Bridge Street, Marston Ferry Road and Cowley Road. See the [monitoring pages of the council's website](#) for all the detail.
6. Bus journey times have improved most notably on Abingdon Road, St Clements Street, Morrell Avenue and Iffley Road. Places where bus journeys are taking longer include London Road, Windmill Road, Woodstock Road and Banbury Road. In certain areas where there has been more traffic following the start of the congestion charge, for example on Banbury Road, there has been a steady improvement, with bus journey times improving compared to the early months of the scheme and with reductions in overall journey times in morning peak journeys.

Income from the scheme

7. The data also covers how much income is being generated by the scheme and the number of permits for cars that have been approved. At the time of writing, from 29 October to 28 February the total income generated by the scheme before operating costs was £2,551,571 (£1,234,046 from congestion charge payments and £1,317,525 from penalty charge notices).
8. At the time of writing, the income from the temporary congestion charge is being spent on the free park and ride bus journey offer in addition to scheme implementation and administration. This offer is until the end of May this year; on 21 April 2026, Cabinet will decide how to spend net income from the start of June 2026.

Permits issued

9. As of 17 March, a total of 110,565 temporary congestion charge permits had been issued. Of these, 32,916 were for Oxford residents and 54,465 were for Oxfordshire residents living outside of the city. More than 10,600 permits had been issued to Blue Badge holders and 4,074 to community health or care workers. Full details of all the various permits issued allowing cars to drive through the charging points for free are on the monitoring webpages.

Footfall and spend data

10. Currently, footfall data is only available for Queen Street, which shows that footfall has increased slightly over the period to the end of February 2026. Officers are currently exploring opportunities to obtain data across a wider area. Footfall and spend data across the city will be published once it has

been checked and validated. More detail about this is available in the [press release](#).

Cycle data

11. There is currently no data available that captures reliable information from consecutive years for comparison. The data available to the council needs to be validated prior to being published.

Park and ride and bus use

12. Monitoring shows that the congestion charge is supporting motorists to use park and ride sites. Bus company data shows that overall, year-on-year passenger numbers on all types of services are approximately 8% up since the introduction of the congestion charge. A third of this increase is on park and ride services and the remaining two-thirds on non-park and ride services, with significant growth on routes serving the city from areas like Didcot, Abingdon and Wallingford. The monitoring webpages give details of the daily maximum occupancy for each park and ride site compared to the same month in the previous year. In most cases, maximum occupancy is higher after the start of the temporary congestion charge.
13. A number of bus routes in and into Oxford have been enhanced as a result of the introduction of the temporary congestion charge and other complementary measures.

Customer Engagement

14. The council has received a significant number of customer enquiries about this scheme. Since the launch of the temporary congestion charge, the customer services team has responded to 25,246 emails, 13,587 phone calls (of which 2,231 were payments) and made 994 outbound calls.
15. In response to the high volume of enquiries, the council has implemented an automated chat function on the public website. This has been created using only information from the council's website and so is wholly accurate. Within the past month, it has responded to 2,643 enquiries, only 4% of which required escalation to a member of staff for further information.

Other Updates

16. To support the congestion charge, officers have been working with private schools to allow private school shuttle buses to pick up and drop off children at park and ride sites. This will help parents make more sustainable travel choices to further tackle congestion at peak times. Officers have also been working with a state school that has requested more scooter and cycle parking, as they have reported a rise in children walking and wheeling to school since the start of the congestion charge.

Financial Implications

17. There are no finance implications raised by this report as it summarises the data monitoring that has been carried out since the Congestion Charge was introduced.

Comments checked by:

Matthew Kocak, Finance Business Partner Manager

Legal Implications

18. There are no legal implications raised by this report as it summarises the data monitoring that has been carried out since the Congestion Charge was introduced.

Comments checked by:

Jennifer Crouch, Principal Solicitor

Paul Fermer
Director of Environment and Highways

Contact Officer:

Aron Wisdom
Programme Lead (Central)
April 2026

PLACE OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

22 April 2026

Unauthorised Kidlington Waste Disposal Site: Interim Report

Report by Director of Economy & Place

RECOMMENDATION

1. **The Committee is RECOMMENDED to**

Note and comment on the contents of this report that outlines events associated with the unauthorised waste incident in Kidlington, explain roles and responsibilities of key actors, and updates members on the current status of the site and the national picture on unauthorised / illegal waste sites.

Executive Summary

2. This report provides an account of, and background to, the unauthorised waste disposal at a large-scale illegal site near Kidlington. It sets out the respective statutory roles and responsibilities of the Environment Agency and of Oxfordshire County Council (the Council), as the minerals and waste planning authority, in relation to unauthorised and illegal waste sites. The report explains how the relevant authorities worked together to respond to the unauthorised development / illegal waste site, including how the Council's wider functions, including as Highways Authority and Fire Authority were involved. It clarifies the regulatory mechanisms used, and summarises the key actions taken to protect public safety and the environment. It also provides an update on the removal/remediation works being undertaken by the Environment Agency. Alongside this, an update is provided on the measures the government has introduced with regard to a strengthened national programme, including the Waste Crime Action Plan and a new 10-point plan for tackling Waste Crime.
3. The matters relating to the Kidlington site remain subject to a live criminal investigation led by the Environment Agency. This report has been written so as not to prejudice those investigations or any future enforcement or legal proceedings.
4. This report comes while the issue is still live. Partnership review of the Thames Valley Local Resilience Forum led response is pending as is full review of local and regional arrangements in the light of the government's recent announcements. Full plans for the future of the site also remain under review, not least given the ongoing nature of the criminal enquiry. This report is therefore necessarily interim.

Unauthorised & Illegal Waste Disposal: Background & National Picture

6. Across England, illegal waste activity has increased in both scale and sophistication, with a growing number of large-scale illegal waste sites linked to organised criminal activity rather than isolated incidents of fly-tipping. The Kidlington case highlights that such sites are often established rapidly, involve the unlawful deposit of substantial volumes of waste, and exploit regulatory, land ownership and enforcement complexities to avoid early detection. This trend has been recognised nationally as a serious form of environmental and economic crime, sometimes with significant risks to public safety, infrastructure and sensitive environmental receptors, including watercourses. A BBC report from January 2026 highlighted that more than 500 illegal sites were in operation in England including 11 so-called “super sites” of over 20,000 tonnes. Six of the largest uncleared sites are at Northwich, Cheshire (280,000 tonnes); Camborne, Cornwall (50,000 tonnes); Burnley, Lancashire (25,000 and 50,000 tonnes); Sittingbourne, Kent (36,000 tonnes); and Fakenham, Norfolk (35,000 tonnes).
7. In response, in March 2026, UK government set out a strengthened national approach to tackling waste crime, with the Environment Agency playing a central role.
8. Firstly, the Government’s Waste Crime Action Plan for England was published by the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs on 20 March 2026. The plan sets out a framework for addressing waste crime based on three stated objectives: prevention, enforcement and remediation. Measures announced include changes to the regulatory regime for waste carriers, brokers and dealers; reform of waste permit exemptions; and the introduction of a digital waste tracking system, which is intended to replace paper-based transfer documentation and improve traceability of waste movements. The plan also provides for additional funding and expanded enforcement powers for regulators, enhanced data-sharing between agencies, and revised arrangements for addressing large-scale illegal waste sites where impacts are assessed to be significant.
9. Alongside this announcement, the Environment Agency announced a 10 Point Action Plan. This sets out how the Agency intends to implement the national approach within its regulatory role. The plan identifies operational measures including changes to how intelligence on waste crime is handled, earlier regulatory intervention at suspected illegal sites, increased use of restriction notices and permit suspensions, and closer joint working with the police, HMRC and local authorities. The Action Plan is supported by additional government

funding announced at the same time, allocated to enforcement activity over a three-year period.

Functions and Powers of County Council Mineral & Waste Planning, Monitoring & Enforcement

10. County Councils (as Waste Planning Authorities) operate within a complex legal framework primarily defined by the Town and Country Planning Act 1990. This legislation categorises waste-related land use as "county matters", granting the Council specific powers to manage and enforce planning controls over waste developments.
11. Planning breaches are not crimes, so there is no immediate criminal sanction/punishment. However, formal enforcement action under the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 can be taken, and ultimately, in most circumstances, ignoring a formal notice is a criminal offence.
12. As with planning permissions, planning enforcement notices run with the land, and at the sale/transfer of the land, those responsibilities pass to the new owner. The serving of a planning enforcement notice must include the landowner and all those with an interest in the land to be valid. Planning enforcement is a discretionary activity, and planning enforcement notices must always be remedial (not punitive) in nature. They should endeavour to remedy the harm of the unauthorised development, but they cannot demand actions over and above 'undoing' the unauthorised development enforced against.
13. Planning enforcement notices are subject to a right of appeal to 'The Planning Inspectorate', and upon appeal, the effect of the notice is suspended pending the outcome of the Planning Inspectors decision. At appeal, Enforcement notices can be upheld in full or in part, varied or quashed.
14. The primary planning legislation governing County planning enforcement is as follows:

Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended): The central statute defining what constitutes a "breach of planning control" (Section 171A) and providing the legal basis for all formal enforcement actions.

Town and Country Planning (Prescription of County Matters) (England) Regulations 2003: Defines the specific classes of waste operations—such as metal recycling, landfill, and incineration—that fall under the County Council's jurisdiction rather than District Councils.

Waste (England and Wales) Regulations 2011: Imposes a statutory duty (Regulation 19) on planning authorities to carry out regular inspections of waste management facilities to ensure they meet environmental standards.
15. There is sometimes overlap in enforcing waste development. This involves the Council, the Environment Agency and the relevant District Council (Planning

Enforcement and Environmental Health officers). If unauthorised activity causes or could cause pollution, the Environment Agency will usually lead. If it involves a statutory nuisance, the District may be involved. Smaller scale fly tipping (for example at the side of the highway) is ordinarily actioned by the District Council in accordance with their powers as waste collection authority under the Environmental Protection Act 1990.

16. In accordance with the Town and Country Planning (Prescription of County Matters) (England) Regulations 2003, the following classes of operations and uses of land are prescribed as 'County Matters':—
 - (a)
 - (i) *the use of land;*
 - (ii) *the carrying out of building, engineering or other operations; or*
 - (iii) *the erection of plant or machinery used or proposed to be used, wholly or mainly for the purposes of recovering, treating, storing, processing, sorting, transferring or depositing of waste;*
 - (b) *the use of land or the carrying out of operations for any purposes ancillary to any use or operations specified in paragraph (a) above, including the formation, laying out, construction or alteration of a vehicular access to any public highway.*
17. In the case of the unauthorised Kidlington site, this involved development representing an unauthorised material change of use of the land to waste deposit / disposal. The Council is therefore the appropriate planning authority and not the District Council.

The Environment Agency Function/Powers

18. Alongside other relevant agencies, the Environment Agency is the principal regulator for waste activities and has responsibility for investigating and enforcing against illegal waste operations. This includes leading criminal investigations, where relevant taking enforcement action, and managing environmental risks. The Environment Agency (EA) operates within a comprehensive framework of UK legislation to regulate waste in England, focusing on the protection of human health and the environment, ensuring proper waste management, and tackling waste crime.
19. The key legislation and regulations the Environment Agency operates within include:

Core Legislation

- **Environmental Protection Act 1990 (EPA):** The central statute for waste management.
 - **Section 33:** Prohibits the unauthorised or harmful deposit, treatment, or disposal of waste (including fly-tipping).

- **Section 34:** Establishes the "Duty of Care," which requires anyone who produces, imports, carries, keeps, treats, or disposes of controlled waste to manage it safely and responsibly.
- **Environment Act 1995:** Established the Environment Agency and defines its core responsibilities, powers of entry, and enforcement duties.
- **Environment Act 2021:** Updated regulations to strengthen waste tracking, improve enforcement powers against waste crime, and promote the circular economy.

Regulatory Frameworks and Regulations

19. These include:
- **Environmental Permitting (England and Wales) Regulations 2016 (as amended):** The main mechanism for regulating waste facilities. It requires operators to hold an environmental permit or register an exemption to manage, store, treat, or dispose of waste.
 - **Waste (England and Wales) Regulations 2011:** Implements the EU Waste Framework Directive, requiring businesses to apply the "waste hierarchy" (reduce, reuse, recycle) and ensuring separate collection of dry recyclables (paper, plastic, glass, metal).
 - **Hazardous Waste (England and Wales) Regulations 2005:** Enforces strict controls on the storage, movement, and disposal of hazardous waste, requiring consignment notes.
 - **Controlled Waste (England and Wales) Regulations 2012:** Defines what constitutes controlled waste (household, industrial, and commercial).
 - **Waste Enforcement (England and Wales) Regulations 2018:** Provides the EA with enhanced powers to lock down illegal waste sites and compel landowners to remove abandoned waste.

The Environment Agency – Functions, Responsibilities and Powers in Respect of Waste and Illegal Waste Sites

20. The Environment Agency is the principal regulator for waste activities in England and is the lead authority responsible for regulating, investigating and enforcing against serious waste crime, including the operation of illegal waste sites. Its role is distinct from, but complementary to, the planning enforcement functions exercised by the County planning authority. In cases involving large-scale, organised or environmentally high-risk waste activity, the Environment Agency typically acts as the lead enforcement body.

Regulation and Investigation of Illegal Waste Activity

21. The Environment Agency has responsibility for regulating waste activities under environmental legislation and for investigating criminal offences relating to the unlawful deposit, treatment or storage of waste. This includes illegal waste sites, serious fly-tipping incidents, breaches of environmental permits or exemptions, and related organised criminal activity.

22. In such cases, the Environment Agency leads criminal investigations, gathers and secures evidence, and determines appropriate enforcement action. This may involve the Environment Agency's specialist and national environmental crime teams, working alongside the police, HM Revenue & Customs and other national partners where relevant. Local authorities do not hold equivalent criminal investigation powers in relation to waste offences.

Statutory Enforcement Powers and Site Control

23. The Environment Agency has access to statutory powers that are unique to it as the environmental regulator. These include the ability to apply to the courts for Restriction Orders under the Environment Act 1995. A Restriction Order can prohibit access to land and prevent further waste from being deposited, with any breach constituting an immediate criminal offence. Crucially therefore, a breaching a Restriction Order can be a police matter as an immediate criminal offence. These powers are more immediate and far-reaching than planning enforcement and are particularly important where there is an ongoing risk of further illegal activity or environmental harm.

Environmental Risk Management and Safeguarding

24. In addition to enforcement, the Environment Agency may in relevant circumstances assess, monitor and / or manage the environmental risks posed by illegal waste sites. This includes risks to land, surface water, groundwater and air quality, and risks arising from fire, flooding or pollution incidents. This work is carried out in coordination with other agencies, including local authorities, emergency services, highways authorities and utilities, through established multi-agency arrangements.

Approach to Managing Illegal Waste Sites

25. The Environment Agency has stated that its approach to illegal waste sites is to "triage and characterise, secure, investigate, manage impacts and, where necessary, escalate". This reflects the need to prioritise sites according to risk, take rapid action where harm is likely, and escalate enforcement activity where criminal behaviour is identified.
26. While responsibility for clearing illegally deposited waste normally rests with the landowner or those who deposited the waste, the Environment Agency plays a central role in determining when further intervention is necessary to protect the environment. This includes advising on remediation options, overseeing any waste removal operations, and ensuring that any removal, transport and disposal of waste is undertaken lawfully and to an appropriate environmental standard.

Remediation and Waste Removal Operations

27. In complex cases of removal and remediation, significant time and resources may be required, particularly where sites are also active crime scenes and where evidence must be preserved. Decisions relating to the timing and method of waste removal must therefore take account of environmental risk, public safety and the integrity of criminal investigations. In such circumstances, the Environment Agency plays a regulatory role alongside other relevant agencies.

Partnership Working and Interface with Local Authorities

28. The Environment Agency exercises its responsibilities alongside local authorities and other partners, each acting within their own statutory powers. Minerals and waste planning authorities, District Councils and highways authorities provide separate but complementary support, which can include planning enforcement action. Clear delineation of responsibilities and close partnership working are essential to avoid duplication, ensure proportionate action and deliver an effective response to illegal waste activity.

Kidlington Key Events & Timeline

29. The detail of events associated with the Kidlington site are subject to an ongoing criminal investigation. This report therefore contains only a summary version of events.
30. Concerns regarding activity on land near Kidlington were first raised in June 2025, following reports to Cherwell District Council of possible unauthorised engineering works, including the creation of soil bunds and the presence of a caravan on site. Initial investigations focused on whether the activity constituted an engineering or waste operation. A joint approach between Cherwell District Council and the Council was agreed, with a further joint site visit scheduled for early July 2025.
30. Ahead of this visit, the Environment Agency received a separate report from a member of the public alleging the deposit of waste on land close to the River Cherwell and the A34. This intelligence was shared with the Council and Cherwell District Council, and a joint site visit involving all three authorities took place in very early July 2025. During this visit, significant quantities of mechanically treated waste were identified, confirming the presence of a large-scale illegal waste operation rather than fly-tipping. From this point, it was clear that the matter fell primarily within the Environment Agency's remit as the lead regulator for waste crime and the County Council as the appropriate planning enforcement authority. Highways England were informed due to the proximity of the A34. Spot check monitoring of the site to ensure importation had ceased was undertaken.

31. Following confirmation of illegal waste activity, the Environment Agency commenced a criminal investigation. The Environment Agency were supported by the Council and Cherwell District Council within their respective statutory roles. Given the scale of the waste and the suspected involvement of organised criminal activity, the Environment Agency escalated the matter to specialist and national environmental crime teams. In parallel, under its planning enforcement powers, the Council, as minerals and waste planning authority, sequentially issued a series of Planning Contravention Notices (PCNs) to establish land ownership and gather information necessary to support regulatory and planning enforcement action. The first PCN was served on 17 July 2025, with a second on 29 July 2025 and a third on 4 August 2025, taking account of information received in response to earlier notices. On 31 July 2025 the Environment Agency served a cease-and-desist letter advising that the waste activity was illegal and must stop.
32. Information obtained through the sequential Planning Contravention Notices highlighted that the land had been sold multiple times in a short period, with Land Registry records not reflecting up-to-date ownership. This significantly complicated efforts to identify a definitive landowner and was considered consistent with tactics used to obfuscate and frustrate formal action. Nevertheless, the information gathered through the PCN process assisted in triangulating ownership and control sufficiently to support further regulatory action. It also safeguards and enhances the position on any future planning enforcement action at the site.
33. At the date of writing this report, the Land Registry title details have only been updated to reflect the second of the three transactions revealed through the PCNs.
34. In early September 2025, further spot check site monitoring by the Council found evidence of recent activity which was communicated to the Environment Agency. Given the ongoing risk of further waste being deposited and the proximity of the site to sensitive receptors, including the River Cherwell and the A34, the Environment Agency applied to the court for a Restriction Order, which was granted on 23 October 2025. The Order prohibited access to the land and any further importation of waste, with breach constituting an immediate criminal offence, and marked a significant escalation in enforcement action.
35. The Restriction Order obtained by the Environment Agency, is a far reaching measure (unique to their powers) under the Environment Act 1995. The Restriction Order was granted under Section 109D of the Environment Act 1995. The Restriction Order is a more powerful mechanism than an injunction as it is a criminal offence to breach it and so the police have the power of arrest against anyone breaching the Restriction Order.
36. The Environment Agency have stated that *“Civil sanctions are generally not appropriate where the offending is deliberate. Due to the nature of how the waste has been deposited it appears to have been a deliberate act... Investigations potentially involving a network of offenders can be complex and take time. We have specialist resources assigned to the investigation, both from*

the EA and partner organisations. We must follow all lines of enquiry to present a strong case to court, who make decisions based on the evidence, to get the best outcome for the taxpayer.” (Environment Agency Online Blog 27 November 2025).

37. With the Restriction Order in place, with the winter period approaching and with increased public awareness of the site and consequent risk of public access onto the site, a full multi-agency response was triggered through the Thames Valley Local Resilience Forum¹ (TVLRF), following an earlier alert to TVLRF members. The Environment Agency took the lead position and worked closely with the Council, Oxfordshire Fire and Rescue Service, Cherwell District Council, National Highways, Thames Valley Police, health and health protection agencies, Scottish & Southern Electricity Network, Thames Water and other agencies. The focus shifted from stopping further illegal activity to managing short-term risks, safeguarding public safety and planning for remediation, while ensuring that all actions remain compatible with the ongoing criminal investigation.
38. Specific activity included:
- Full revised risk assessment of the waste pile
 - Detailed mitigation plans for the identified risks including those of pollution, public access and fire including:
 - Temporary closures put in place on a public right of way across the site
 - 24 hr security established
 - Full fencing off of the site and subsequent temporary closure of the adjoining A34 lay-by
 - Physical barriers erected to prevent waste entering the river
 - Fire risk and pollution monitoring regimes implemented
 - Warnings to the public on the risks of entering the site
 - Early identification of the strategic priority for the site, that of removal of the waste, and development of detailed feasibility and procurement plans
 - Joint communications and stakeholder engagement initiated
39. No public body has the legal duty to remove illegal waste nor are they funded to do so. However, the partnership identified early on that removal of the waste was the only effective route to mitigate the risks identified, especially the risks of fire on site, which could have widespread impacts on the community, including closing the A34, a critical national trunk-route, would impact on electrical supplies and on local air quality. The Council, Environment Agency and Cherwell District Council, advised by Oxfordshire Fire and Rescue, National

¹ The Thames Valley Local Resilience Forum is a multi-agency partnership established under the Civil Contingencies Act 2004 to plan for, respond to, and recover from emergencies in the Thames Valley Police area. It brings together emergency services, local authorities, health services and national bodies including the Environment Agency, alongside other critical actors, including utility providers.

Highways and local authority and industry specialists, therefore worked on detailed logistical and procurement plans to effect the removal of the waste while the financial and policy issues were addressed at a local level.

40. On 11 December 2025, the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs along with the Environment Agency announced that, whilst supporting the principle that the criminals responsible should cover the costs of clearance, the exceptional circumstances meant that in this instance the Environment Agency should act and would fund the removal of the waste at Kidlington. A direct contract award was made to Acumen Waste Services Limited from 19 January 2026 contracted through the Environment Agency.
41. The mixed shredded waste is estimated to be in the region of 10,000 tonnes with a reasonable worst case of 20,000 tonnes. Ensuring this scale of waste removal is conducted properly and to an appropriate environmental standard has required significant time and resources. Furthermore, the site is classified as a crime scene with physical evidence having needed to be meticulously collected. Since taking control over the site through the Restriction Order, efforts were concentrated on avoiding environmental harm through pollution control measures, collecting evidence to aid the criminal investigation, and conducting sampling and categorising the waste to identify the appropriate removal and disposal route.
42. It should be noted that the Council, Cherwell District Council and other key partners provided and continue to provide extensive resources and input into the safeguarding, security, assessment and scenario planning and preparedness for the removal of the materials alongside the Environment Agency and other organisations. Security services deployed using the Council supply chain, Fire & Rescue expertise provided, and a Public Footpath closed by order. Internal waste, contract, property, planning, legal and ecological expertise have inputted extensively throughout, with the Council and Cherwell District Council each having an ongoing presence on the project boards that have been established to oversee the project.

Current Status/Where we are now

43. The activities at this site are subject to a major ongoing criminal investigation being led by the Environment Agency's National Environmental Crime Unit. A suspect was arrested on 25 November 2025 with additional separate arrests made 30 January and 2 February 2026, making a total of four arrests.
44. Following exceptional rainfall in January and February the site became flooded slowing initial mobilisation. The erected barriers (see images in Annex 2) prevented waste from entering the River Cherwell.
45. The appointed contractor began site mobilisation on 2 March 2026. Significant 'enabling works' such as tree felling, creation of ballast hardstanding/trackway to create an access track suitable for heavy plant vehicles and to mitigate the saturated ground have taken place. A traffic management plan has been

implemented to minimise impact to local roads. Some trees and vegetation have been removed from the site entrance to make it safer for vehicles to access and exit.

46. At the time of writing this report, waste removal is expected to begin mid-April 2026 and an update will be provided to the committee.

Key Insights/ Lessons Learnt

47. The Kidlington case epitomizes the large scale illegal and unauthorised tipping that has seen an increasing frequency nationally. Waste crime costs the English economy £1 billion every year ([Government cracks down on waste crime to clean up streets and restore pride in communities - GOV.UK](#)) with an estimated 20% of all waste illegally managed. The criminal networks behind this are becoming increasingly sophisticated, causing serious harm to communities and the environment, undercutting legitimate businesses and depriving the public purse of millions in lost tax revenue.
48. The case highlights the importance of early joint working, clear delineation of regulatory responsibilities, and effective partnership approaches when responding to complex unauthorised and illegal waste activity.
49. The Government has committed to increase funding and resources for Environment Agency waste enforcement, and has set out its 'Waste Crime Action Plan' published 20 March 2026.
50. This report comes during the live waste removal period with effort focused on that project and is therefore necessarily interim. A debriefing exercise for the TVLRF organised response has been arranged to develop lessons learnt for partnership working in the response period. Local authorities will also need to consider their response to the Waste Crime Action Plan and their roles and resources going forward particularly with regard to prevention, including in the design of new councils through Local Government Reorganisation. During March 2026, and working with the Local Government Association, the Council and the Environment Agency organized a round-table event attended by the Environment Agency and County Council Chief Executives, Cherwell District Council and affected councils nationally to review the issues in the wider national context and consider the role of local partners. This session identified that working with government and the Environment Agency there are significant opportunities for data and intelligence sharing, monitoring, including through drone and satellite technologies, and target identification and hardening.
51. The committee is referred also to the separate report presented on this agenda which sets out the Council's wider minerals and waste responsibilities as Planning Authority and how officers carry out the investigation of alleged unauthorised minerals and waste developments and seek their resolution. Whilst the investigation of other unauthorised waste developments is ongoing and action taken as appropriate, officers are not aware of any development of such scale or magnitude with the associated environmental impacts arising from it elsewhere in the county. Planning enforcement is a reactive function and any

suspected unauthorised minerals or waste developments can be reported to Tellplanning@Oxfordshire.gov.uk. The Environment Agency also has a hotline which the public can call if they suspect illegal waste activity anywhere, on 0800 807060. The public can also report information to call crime stoppers via their website [Independent UK charity taking crime information anonymously | Crimestoppers](#).

Corporate Policies and Priorities

52. The Council's functions referenced in this report support the delivery of the Corporate Plan by protecting the community and environment. Monitoring and enforcement activity ensures that unauthorised waste development is investigated and addressed appropriately taken into account the need for environmental safeguards, supporting the Council's priorities for climate action, place-based planning and resilient communities.

Financial Implications

53. County Planning Enforcement is funded from within Oxfordshire County Council existing budgets.
54. There are no financial implications for this report.

Comments checked by:

Filipp Skiffins, Finance Business Partner, filipp.skiffins@oxfordshire.gov.uk
(Finance)

Legal Implications

55. The Council's interest in relation to this unauthorised development arise from its powers and duties as local planning authority for waste development and it may take enforcement action where it is considered expedient to do so. As highway authority the Council has powers and duties in respect of the highway network including asserting and protecting the highway for the public, and even though it is not the highway authority with responsibility for the A34, the unauthorised development would not only affect the A34, but the surrounding highway network.
56. The unauthorised development raised risks to land, surface water, groundwater and air quality, risks arising from fire, flooding or pollution incidents. The Council is the fire and rescue authority for the area and also the lead local flood authority and so its duties in respect of these roles can also be engaged by this unauthorised development. The Council also has power to do anything that individuals may do under the general power of competence under the Localism

Act 2011 and so may take such lawful action that it considers appropriate in dealing with a development of this nature.

Jennifer Crouch, Principal Solicitor (Regulatory),
Jennifer.crouch@oxfordshire.gov.uk (Legal)

Staff Implications

57. The investigation of the unauthorised development the subject of this report has required a considerable amount of staff time across the services referenced. These have been funded within programme allocations already agreed.

Equality & Inclusion Implications

58. No adverse equality or inclusion impacts are identified as arising directly from this report.

Sustainability Implications

59. The Council's functions referenced in this report support sustainable development by ensuring the investigation and remediation of unauthorised waste development. This report does not introduce new policies or proposals with direct sustainability impact.

Risk Management

60. Risks associated with the investigation of this unauthorised waste development are set out throughout this report. Enforcement risks concern compliance, environmental harm and reputational impact.

Consultations

61. No public consultations are required with this report.

Robin Rogers:- Director of Economy and Place

Annex: Annex 1. Kidlington Unauthorised/Illegal Waste Site Location Plan.
 Annex 2. Photographs of the Kidlington Unauthorised / Illegal Waste site.

Background papers: /

Other Documents: These documents are available to view via the links provided.

[How we're tackling illegal waste dumping and protecting our environment – Creating a better place](#)

[Update: Progress on managing the Kidlington illegal waste site – Creating a better place](#)

[Agencies discuss Kidlington clearance - GOV.UK](#)
[Clearance work to begin at Kidlington waste dump - GOV.UK](#)

[Waste Crime Action Plan - GOV.UK](#)

Contact Officer: Neal Richmond, Team Leader Enforcement, 0771 865 6922

April 2026

Annex 2 Images of the site

Drone Photo of the Site



The Site in early July 2025



Securing of the Site November 2025



Oxfordshire County Council Fire & Rescue Drone Thermal Imaging Monitoring



Photograph taken from the end of the waste looking toward the river Cherwell showing the sandbag barriers and fencing November 2025.



Waste sampling



Site in preparation for waste removal, April 2026



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