

To: **Members of the Cabinet**

Notice of a Meeting of the Cabinet

Tuesday, 14 July 2026 at 2.00 pm

Room 2&3 - County Hall, New Road, Oxford OX1 1ND

If you wish to view proceedings online, please click on this [Live Stream Link](#).



Dr Martin Reeves OBE
Chief Executive

July 2026

Committee Officer: Democratic Services
E-Mail: committeesdemocraticservices@oxfordshire.gov.uk

Membership

Councillors

Tim Bearder	Leader of the Council
Neil Fawcett	Deputy Leader of the Council and Cabinet Member for Resources
Judith Edwards	Cabinet Member for Local Government Reorganisation and Human Resources
Gareth Epps	Cabinet Member for Transport
Rebekah Fletcher	Cabinet Member for Adults
Sean Gaul	Cabinet Member for Children and Young People
Laura Gordon	Cabinet Member for Environment and Economy
Kate Gregory	Cabinet Member for Public Health and Inequalities
Liz Leffman	Cabinet Member for Highways Construction and Repair
Dan Levy	Cabinet Member for Finance, Property and Transformation

*The Agenda is attached. Decisions taken at the meeting
will become effective at the end of the working day on 20 July 2026
unless called in by that date for review by the appropriate Scrutiny Committee.
Copies of this Notice, Agenda and supporting papers are circulated
to all Members of the County Council.*

Date of next meeting: 28 July 2026

AGENDA

1. Apologies for Absence

2. Declarations of Interest

- guidance note below

3. Minutes (Pages 17 - 24)

To approve the minutes of the meeting held on 16 June 2026 (**CA3**) and to receive information arising from them.

4. Questions from County Councillors

Any county councillor may, by giving notice to the Proper Officer by 9 am three working days before the meeting, ask a question on an item on the agenda.

The number of questions which may be asked by any councillor at any one meeting is limited to two (or one question with notice and a supplementary question at the meeting) and the time for questions will be limited to 30 minutes in total. As with questions at Council, any questions which remain unanswered at the end of this item will receive a written response.

5. Petitions and Public Address

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

Requests to present a petition must be submitted no later than 9am ten working days before the meeting.

Requests to speak must be submitted no later than 9am three working days before the meeting.

Requests should be submitted to committeesdemocraticservices@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.

6. Appointments

7. Reports from Scrutiny Committees (Pages 25 - 56)

Cabinet to receive the following reports from Scrutiny Committees:-

Education and Young People Overview and Scrutiny Committee report on Best Start in Life Family Hubs

Performance and Corporate Services Overview and Scrutiny Committee reports on:-

- a) Commercial Strategy
- b) Shaping Oxfordshire's Future Economy

Place Overview and Scrutiny Committee report on Protocol for Flag Flying

8. Best Start Family Hubs (Pages 57 - 96)

Cabinet Member: Children and Young People

Forward Plan Ref: 26/138

Contact: Shona Harris, Transformation Programme Manager

(Shona.Harris@oxfordshire.gov.uk)

Report by Director of Children's Services (**CAB8**)

This report sets out the proposed strategic direction for the development and implementation of Best Start Family Hubs in Oxfordshire, as a core delivery mechanism for the council's Best Start in Life Plan.

Cabinet is RECOMMENDED to

- a) **Approve the strategic direction of travel for Best Start Family Hubs in Oxfordshire and delegate authority to the Director of Children's Services for the delivery of the proposal, including the expenditure of the Department for Education (DfE) Grant and budget.**

9. Citizens' Assembly Update (Pages 97 - 236)

Cabinet Member: Leader

Forward Plan Ref: 2025/251

Contact: Joanne Fellows, Place Planning Manager – Central

(Joanne.Fellows@oxfordshire.gov.uk)

Report by Director of Environment and Highways & Director of Public Affairs, Policy and Partnerships (**CAB9**)

To provide an update on the progress of the recommendations from the 2025 Oxfordshire Travel and Transport Citizens' Assembly, as approved at Cabinet in July 2025.

The Cabinet is RECOMMENDED to

- a) Note the progress being made to deliver against recommendations from the Travel and Transport Citizens' Assembly since July 2025.
- b) Note the additional engagement that has taken place with assembly members over the past year, in support of deeper involvement of communities in transport policy development, and scheme design and delivery.

10. Thames Valley Spatial Development Strategy (SDS) Development and Governance (Pages 237 - 250)

Cabinet Member: Environment and Economy

Forward Plan Ref: 2026/111

Key decision

Contact: Hannah Battye, Head of Place Shaping (Hannah.Battye@oxfordshire.gov.uk)

Report by Director of Economy and Place **(CAB10)**

Seeking approval for Oxfordshire County Council to participate in, and help lead, a joint Thames Valley partnership (Oxfordshire, Berkshire unitary authorities and Swindon) to progress the pre-inception phase of work for a Thames Valley Spatial Development Strategy (SDS).

The Cabinet is RECOMMENDED to:

- a) Approve the establishment of a partnership with the councils covering Oxfordshire and Berkshire, including Swindon in the initial pre-inception period of the statutory Spatial Development Strategy (SDS) for the Thames Valley area and pending agreement by Government on geography.
- b) Note the funding and resource allocations for the pre-inception programme.
- c) Agree that Bracknell Forest Council will act as the accountable body for funds held on behalf of the partnership and will host any staff appointed for the Thames Valley SDS programme.
- d) Agree the high-level interim governance and oversight, monitoring and assurance arrangements set out in this paper, covering the arrangements for the period before a statutory Strategic Planning Board (SPB) is established through secondary legislation.
- e) To delegate the detail agreements and working arrangements for pre-inception development of the SDS to the Director of Economy and Place in consultation with the Head of Legal and Governance and Deputy Monitoring Officer.

11. The Oxfordshire Infrastructure Strategy (OXiS) (Pages 251 - 352)

Cabinet Member: Environment and Economy

Forward Plan Ref: 2026/113

Key decision

Contact: Dawn Pettis, Strategic Planning & Infrastructure Manager
(Dawn.Pettis@oxfordshire.gov.uk)

Report by Director of Economy and Place (**CAB11**)

The purpose of OxIS is to provide a comprehensive understanding of the strategic infrastructure that is necessary to support future development to 2050.

The Cabinet is RECOMMENDED to

- a) **Endorse the Oxfordshire Infrastructure Strategy Stage 2 Prioritisation Report (provided at Annex 1)**

12. Cowley Branch Line - Enterprise Zone Funding (Pages 353 - 364)

Cabinet Member: Environment and Economy

Forward Plan Ref: 2026/104

Key decision

Contact: Hannah Battye, Head of Place Shaping
Hannah.battye@oxfordshire.gov.uk

Report by Director of Economy and Place (**CAB12**)

The report provides an update on the Cowley Branch Line scheme and seeks authorisation of funding contributions towards the project.

The Cabinet is RECOMMENDED to

- a) **Approve potential funding to meet up to £14.5m of local costs for the delivery of the Cowley Branch Line through the use of retained business rates funding from the two Oxfordshire Enterprise Zones as set out in paragraph 44 and subject to the provisions of paragraph 41.**
- b) **Note that the expectation is that this forward funding would be replaced by future S106 and Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) contributions but neither the amounts nor timing are certain at this stage.**
- c) **Note that any future shortfall in funding or additional borrowing costs remaining after these amounts are received would need a further decision to agree how to manage this.**

13. Oxfordshire County Council's Protocol for Flag Flying (Pages 365 - 378)

Cabinet Member: Resources and Deputy Leader

Forward Plan Ref: 2026/120

Non-key decision

Contact: Lauren Bond, Senior Policy Officer
Laurn.bond@oxfordshire.gov.uk

Report by Director of Public Affairs, Policy and Partnerships **(CAB13)**

This document sets out the policy for flying flags on the buildings and land owned or managed by Oxfordshire County Council. The policy aims to comply with the planning regulations, respect the national and local significance of certain dates and events, and accommodate the requests of organisations that wish to fly their own flags. It states the responsibilities and decision-making process for the flying of flags, and which flags are excluded. It does not refer to flags flown by citizens on highways or assets, which are treated separately under enforcement powers.

Cabinet is RECOMMENDED to:

- a) **Review and approve the Protocol for Flag Flying (Annex A). The Protocol incorporates recommendations made by the Place Overview and Scrutiny Committee.**

14. Procurement of a Strategic Partner to Support Local Government Reorganisation across Oxfordshire and West Berkshire (Pages 379 - 384)

Cabinet Member: Local Government Reorganisation and Human Resources

Forward Plan Ref: 26/151

Key decision

Contact: Lauren Diggett, Programme Manager – Local Government Reorganisation
(Lauren.Doggett@oxfordshire.gov.uk)

Report by the Deputy Chief Executive (Section 151 Officer) **(CAB14)**

This report seeks Cabinet approval to procure a Strategic Partner to support the delivery of Local Government Reorganisation across Oxfordshire. The proposed procurement is intended not only to enable a safe and legally compliant transition to new unitary arrangements, but to support a transformation-led approach that redesigns services, operating models and system working. The Strategic Partner will operate at system level, working across councils and partners to translate ambition into deliverable plans, develop future operating models, and support implementation before and after vesting. Cabinet approval is required as this constitutes a key decision, committing the Council to a significant procurement and enabling delegated authority to progress and award the contract.

The Cabinet is RECOMMENDED to:

- a) **Approve the commencement of a procurement exercise to appoint a Strategic Partner to support the delivery of Local Government Reorganisation (LGR) across the Oxfordshire and West Berkshire councils involved in scope, supporting both the statutory transition to new unitary arrangements and wider transformation objectives across the system;**
- b) **Approve the commencement of procurement on the basis of an estimated contract value in the region of £3.0 million, with the contract expected to commence in September 2026 and run until March 2029 or 12 months following vesting day, whichever is later. The proposed costs will be tested and refined through the procurement process, with final costs confirmed**

prior to contract award. Costs will be shared in accordance with the agreed 80/20 Memorandum of Understanding, which is the cost-sharing agreement between the councils involved in the scope of Local Government Reorganisation for relevant LGR-related work, with 80% funded by Oxfordshire County Council and 20% funded collectively by the partner councils;

- c) Delegate authority to the Chief Executive (in his capacity as LGR Oxfordshire and West Berkshire System Implementation Team Leader), following completion of the procurement process and subject to all required approvals, to take all necessary steps to award and enter into the contract, provided that the final arrangement remains within the contract value and duration parameters set out in this report. Any proposed arrangement outside those parameters would be reported back to Cabinet for approval.**

15. Treasury Management Annual Performance Report (Pages 385 - 398)

Cabinet Member: Finance, Property and Transformation

Forward Plan Ref: 2026/093

Non-key decision

Contact: Tim Chapple, Treasury Manager

Tim.chapple@oxfordshire.gov.uk

Report by the Deputy Chief Executive (Section 151 Officer) **(CAB15)**

To note the Council's treasury management activity and outcomes in 2025/26

Cabinet is RECOMMENDED to:

- a) Note the council's treasury management activity and outcomes in 2025/26**

16. Business Management and Monitoring Report (Pages 399 - 416)

Cabinet Member: Finance, Property and Transformation

Forward Plan Ref: 2026/033

Key decision

Contact: Verity Royle, Planning and Reporting Manager

Verity.Royle@oxfordshire.gov.uk

Report by Deputy Chief Executive (Section 151 Officer) **(CAB16)**

To note the report and approve the recommendations. Update on Finance (August month end position), and Risk and Performance Quarter 1.

The Cabinet is RECOMMENDED to:

- a) Note the report and appendixes.**
b) Note the increases to funding following the final settlement (paragraph 21)
c) Approve the resulting contribution to general balances of £4m (para 36).

- d) Approve the creation of an earmarked reserve to manage fluctuations in commercial income (para 35).
- e) Approve the new Highways fees and charges commencing on 1 August 2026 (para 38 appendix 5)

17. Budget and Business Planning Report (Pages 417 - 450)

Cabinet Member: Finance, Property and Transformation

Forward Plan Ref: 2026/031

Key decision

Contact: Verity Royle, Planning and Reporting Manager

(Verity.Royle@oxfordshire.gov.uk)

Report by the Deputy Chief Executive (Section 151 Officer) **(CAB17)**

To provide background and context to the budget and business planning process for 2027/28.

The Cabinet is RECOMMENDED to:

- a) Note the report and the starting point for the 2027/28 budget;
- b) Approve a five-year period for the medium-term financial strategy to 2031/32 and ten-year period for the capital programme to 2036/37;
- c) Note the high-level timetable for the budget process.
- d) Note the requirement for the Council to set a sustainable balanced budget for 2027/28 which shows how income will equal spending plans.

18. Capital Programme Monitoring Report (Pages 451 - 474)

Cabinet Member: Finance, Property and Transformation

Forward Plan Ref: 2026/031

Key decision

Contact: Natalie Crawford, Capital Programme Manager

(Natalie.crawford@oxfordshire.gov.uk)

Report by the Deputy Chief Executive (Section 151 Officer) **(CAB18)**

Financial Report on capital spending against budget allocations, including any necessary capital programme approvals

The Cabinet is RECOMMENDED to:

Capital Programme

- a) Note the capital monitoring position for 2026/27 set out in this report and summarised in Annex 1.
- b) Approve the updated Capital Programme at Annex 2 incorporating the changes set out in this report.

Budget Changes / Budget Release

- c) Note the proposed release of £4.0m from corporate resources agreed by Council in February 2026 for drainage infrastructure improvements (para 69).
- d) Note the proposed inclusion of Didcot Valley Park SEND school into the capital programme with a development budget of £1.4m (para 70-71).

Funding Updates

- e) Agree the inclusion in the capital programme of the following grant funding updates and allocations:
 - Revise of the previous forecasted value of the School Condition Allocation 2026/27 to £4.645m (para 73).
 - Include the SEN High Needs Capital Allocation 2026/27 of £11.299m to earmarked reserves to address SEN reform requirements (para 74-77).
- f) Note the current over-programming of the capital programme is £10.365m as agreed by Council in February 2026. The impact on the review of corporate resources and the additional funding available through the DfT Transport consolidated funding settlement will be considered as part of the budget process for 2027/28.

19. Governance Arrangements for Oxford Castle Apartments Limited (OCAL) (Pages 475 - 480)

Cabinet Member: Finance, Property and Transformation

Forward Plan Ref: 2026/127

Non-Key decision

Contact: Ian Dyson, Director of Finance and Commercial Services

Ian.Dyson@oxfordshire.gov.uk

Report by Director of Finance and Commercial Services (**CAB19**)

This report seeks approval of the governance arrangements for Oxford Castle Apartments Limited (OCAL), that will become a wholly owned company of Oxfordshire County Council, as part of the Castle Quarter acquisition.

The Cabinet is RECOMMENDED to:

- a) Note that the acquisition of the Oxford Castle Quarter site has now completed and that the related acquisition of Oxford Castle Apartments Limited (OCAL) for the nominal consideration of £1 will be concluded, subject to final due diligence, in August 2026.
- b) Agree that the Council will exercise its shareholder function through the Shareholder Committee, consistent with existing arrangements for council-owned companies.
- c) Delegate authority to the Deputy Chief Executive (S151 Officer), in consultation with the Director of Law and Governance and Monitoring Officer, and the Cabinet Member for Finance, Property and Transformation, to:
- approve the Articles of Association; and
 - appoint the initial Company Directors,

with these decisions to be ratified by the Shareholder Committee at its earliest available meeting.

20. Forward Plan and Future Business (Pages 481 - 488)

Cabinet Member: All

Contact Officer: Chris Reynolds, Senior Democratic Services Officer,
chris.reynolds@oxfordshire.gov.uk

The Cabinet Procedure Rules provide that the business of each meeting at the Cabinet is to include “updating of the Forward Plan and proposals for business to be conducted at the following meeting”. Items from the Forward Plan for the immediately forthcoming meetings of the Cabinet appear in the Schedule at **CA**. This includes any updated information relating to the business for those meetings that has already been identified for inclusion in the next Forward Plan update.

The Schedule is for noting, but Cabinet Members may also wish to take this opportunity to identify any further changes they would wish to be incorporated in the next Forward Plan update.

The Cabinet is RECOMMENDED to note the items currently identified for forthcoming meetings.

21. For information only: Cabinet responses to Scrutiny items (Pages 489 - 500)

Minerals and Waste Planning
Protocol for Flag Flying

Road Safety
Unauthorised Waste Disposal Site near Kidlington

EXEMPT ITEM

It is **RECOMMENDED** that the public be excluded for the duration of item 22 since it is likely that if they were present during that item there would be disclosure of exempt information as defined in Part I of Schedule 12A to the Local Government Act 1972 (as amended) and specified below in relation to those items and since it is considered that, in all the circumstances of the case, the public interest in maintaining the exemption outweighs the public interest in disclosing the information.

THE ANNEX TO THE ITEM HAS NOT BEEN MADE PUBLIC AND SHOULD BE REGARDED AS 'CONFIDENTIAL' BY MEMBERS AND OFFICERS ENTITLED TO RECEIVE THEM.

THIS ALSO MEANS THAT THE CONTENTS SHOULD NOT BE DISCUSSED WITH OTHERS AND NO COPIES SHOULD BE MADE

22. Acquisition of Solar Farm in Oxfordshire (Pages 501 - 516)

Cabinet Member: Finance, Property and Transformation

Forward Plan Ref: 2026/149

Key decision

Contact: Ian Dyson, Director of Finance and Commercial Services
(Ian.Dyson@oxfordshire.gov.uk)

Report by Director of Finance and Commercial Services (**CAB22**)

The information contained in this report is exempt in that it falls within the following prescribed categories

Paragraph 3 – Information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information)

and since it is considered that, in all the circumstances of the case, the public interest in maintaining the exemption outweighs the public interest in disclosing the information.

To consider proposals for a potential investment in renewable energy infrastructure, including approval to progress acquisition subject to undertaking further investigation and due diligence.

The Cabinet is RECOMMENDED to

- a) **Agree to the acquisition of the solar farm, on the terms set out in exempt Annex 1.**

- b) Delegate authority to the Deputy Chief Executive and Section 151 Officer, in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Environment and Economy and the Cabinet Member for Finance, Property and Transformation to negotiate and agree the final acquisition terms which will be substantially in accordance with the details set out in exempt Annex 1.**

- c) Delegate authority to the Deputy Chief Executive and Section 151 Officer, in consultation with the Director of Property & Assets and the Director of Law and Governance and Monitoring Officer, to conclude negotiations and complete all necessary legal documentation (subject to the completion of all due diligence exercises) to implement the acquisition.**

- d) Note that the outcome of the due diligence and contract terms will be shared with Performance Scrutiny and Cabinet ahead of confirming the contract terms.**

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.