CABINET

MINUTES of the meeting held on Tuesday, 15 July 2025 commencing at 2.00 pm and finishing at 4.25 pm

Present:

Voting Members:

Councillor Liz Leffman – in the Chair
Councillor Neil Fawcett
Councillor Tim Bearder
Councillor Andrew Gant
Councillor Sean Gaul
Councillor Kate Gregory
Councillor Jenny Hannaby
Councillor Ben Higgins
Councillor Dan Levy
Councillor Judy Roberts

Other Members in Attendance: Councillors Thomas Ashby, Liz Brighouse OBE, Imade Edosomwan and Glynis Phillips

Officers:

Whole of meeting: Lorna Baxter (Executive Director of Resources & Section 151 Officer), Stephen Chandler (Executive Director of People, Transformation and Performance), Anita Bradley (Director of Law & Governance and Monitoring Officer), Robin Rogers (Director of Economy and Place) Chris Reynolds (Senior Democratic Services Officer)

The Cabinet considered the matters, reports and recommendations contained or referred to in the agenda for the meeting, together with a schedule of addenda tabled at the meeting, and decided as set out below. Except insofar as otherwise specified, the reasons for the decisions are contained in the agenda, reports and schedule, copies of which are attached to the signed Minutes.

92/25 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

(Agenda Item. 1)

There were none.

93/25 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

(Agenda Item. 2)

There were none.

94/25 MINUTES

(Agenda Item. 3)

The minutes of the meeting held on 17 June 2025 were approved as a correct record.

95/25 QUESTIONS FROM COUNTY COUNCILLORS

(Agenda Item. 4)

See annex.

96/25 PETITIONS AND PUBLIC ADDRESS

(Agenda Item. 5)

10 - Proposed response to the 2025 Oxfordshire Travel and Transport Citizens' Assembly

Ian Loader
Siobhann Mansel-Pleydell
Danny Yee

Cllr Liz Brighouse

16 – Fair Funding Review 2.0

Cllr Glynis Phillips

17 - Business Management & Monitoring Report - Revenue Update and Monitoring Report

Cllr Liz Brighouse

97/25 APPOINTMENTS

(Agenda Item. 6)

Cabinet approved the following appointments:-

a) Integrated Care Partnership.

   In addition to Councillor Tim Bearder appointed at the Cabinet meeting on 17 June:-
   Councillor Liz Leffman (as Chair of the Oxfordshire Health and Wellbeing Board) and
   District Councillor David Ruane (representing the district councils).

b) Oxford Health NHS Foundation Trust

   Cabinet Member for Public Health and Inequalities – Councillor Kate Gregory

c) Military Champions

Bicester Garrison: Councillor Matt Webb
RAF Benson: Councillor Gavin McLauchlan
RAF Brize Norton: Councillor Toyah Overton
Abingdon Station: Councillor Tom Greenaway
Vauxhall Barracks: Councillor Ian Snowdon
Shrivenham: Councillor Bethia Thomas

Mental Health and Wellbeing Champion

Councillor Robin Jones

98/25 REPORTS FROM SCRUTINY COMMITTEES

(Agenda Item. 7)

Cabinet received the following Scrutiny reports and will respond in due course:-

Education and Young People Overview and Scrutiny Committee reports on:-

a)	S.19 of the Education Act (to follow)
b)	EOTAS Policy
c)	Home to School Transport Policy

99/25 EOTAS POLICY (EDUCATION OTHER THAN AT SCHOOL)

(Agenda Item. 8)

Cabinet had before it a report regarding a policy for the delivery of Education Other Than At School (EOTAS). This was required to be implemented following the SEND inspection in 2023. The policy was crucial to ensure that all children and young people, particularly those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), received a suitable and effective education, even if they were unable to attend ‘traditional’ school settings. The EOTAS policy was designed to provide a structured framework for delivering personalised educational plans tailored to the unique needs of each child or young person.

Councillor Sean Gaul, Cabinet Member for Children and Young People, presented the report.

During discussion the following points were made:-

- The importance of the need for a transparent and thorough assessment process to ensure that all eligible students receive the support they need.

- Ensuring consistent quality of education across different EOTAS provisions was a significant concern.
- The availability and adequacy of support and resources for students and their families were highlighted as critical issues. Concerns were raised about the need for qualified teachers, appropriate educational materials, and additional support services such as counselling and therapy.
- The role of parents and guardians in supporting their child's education under the EOTAS Policy was discussed. Speakers stressed the importance of providing guidance and resources to help parents effectively support their children's learning.
- Concerns were raised about the need for increased funding, better training, and stronger collaboration between schools, local authorities, and other stakeholders.
- Speakers emphasised the importance of regularly reviewing the effectiveness of EOTAS provisions. There were concerns about the need for continuous improvement and adaptation of the policy to meet the evolving needs of students.

Councillor Gaul moved and Councillor Gregory seconded the following amended recommendations, and they were approved.

RESOLVED to

a) **approve the draft policy set out in the annex to the report ~~and draft parents' guide~~**

b) **request an annual review of the policy and that the findings of that review are presented to Cabinet in April 2026.**

100/25 CONNECT TO WORK: APPROVAL OF FINAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN

(Agenda Item. 9)

Cabinet had before it a report on Connect to Work (CtW), a nationally prescribed and locally commissioned supported employment programme, funded by the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) through grant funding.

The CtW programme aimed to support individuals outside the workforce and facing disadvantages to get into and to stay in work. Eligible target groups include disabled people, offender/ex-offenders, carers/ex-carers, homeless people, former members of HM Armed Forces or a partner of current or former Armed Forces personnel, people with an alcohol or drug dependency, care experienced young people/care.

The Council had been designated as one of the 43 Accountable Bodies across England which would be responsible for designing the local offer to support people to find and fulfil their potential to work in line with local services and priorities.

Councillor Tim Bearder, Cabinet Member for Adults, presented the report.

During discussion, members referred to the importance of the work outlined in the CtW programme and the collaboration with Enterprise Oxfordshire which would assist in providing access to employment opportunities in the County.

Councillor Bearder moved, and Councillor Higgins seconded the recommendations, and they were approved.

RESOLVED to :-

a) **authorise the Council to enter into grant funding agreement/s with the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) to develop and deliver the Connect to Work Programme for such period as the programme continues to be funded by DWP.**

b) **authorise the Council to take receipt of grant funding in its role as Accountable Body (and as determined by an approved DWP grant cost register and delivery plan).**

101/25 PROPOSED RESPONSE TO THE 2025 OXFORDSHIRE TRAVEL AND TRANSPORT CITIZENS' ASSEMBLY

(Agenda Item. 10)

Councillor Andrew Gant, Cabinet Member for Transport Management presented the report. He pointed out a correction to Annex B. Recommendation 4 should have been allocated to category 2 and not 3 as stated in the report.

A number of speakers addressed the Cabinet on this item:-

- They highlighted the need for a shift towards multi-modal transport, reduced reliance on private cars, and improved public and active transport infrastructure.
- They praised the Citizens Assembly for their recommendations, including support for a congestion charge and expanded park and ride, and called for clear communication of the Council's transport vision.

- Concerns were raised regarding the need for robust implementation of specific recommendations, such as mobility hubs, bus and cycling-only roads, and provisions for deliveries and blue badge holders in a car-free city centre.

During discussion Cabinet members expressed support for the Assembly's work and acknowledged its role in shaping bold, evidence-based policy.

Councillor Gant moved and Councillor Fawcett seconded the following mended recommendations, and they were approved:-

RESOLVED to

a) **approve the council's initial response to the 20 recommendations developed by the citizens' assembly.**

b) **support the development of a work programme, including an amended prioritisation matrix and further technical development and engagement work to properly assess whether each recommendation can be progressed (including policy, legal and financial considerations), as the next step to take forward the citizens' assembly recommendations.**

c) **support the deeper involvement of communities in transport policy development, and scheme design and delivery, including the ongoing involvement of citizens' assembly members.**

102/25 CLIMATE ACTION PROGRAMME UPDATE

(Agenda Item. 11)

Cabinet had before it a report which provided a six-monthly update on the delivery of the 2024/25 Climate Action Programme workstreams, including the development of a new Circular Economy Plan.

The Circular Economy Plan (Annex 1) expanded the council's approach to climate action by focussing additionally on the resources it used. The plan built on work which the council was already undertaking, such as the Carbon Management Plan, and sought to deliver a culture change which embedded circular economy at the heart of the Council's policy and practice.

Councillor Judy Roberts, Cabinet Member for Place, Environment and Climate Action, presented the report. She referred, in particular, to progress on carbon reduction, primary school home upgrade projects, and improved performance against climate targets. The Council had commended for being rated the best county for climate action by Climate Action UK.

Councillor Roberts moved and Councillor Higgins seconded the recommendations, and they were approved.

RESOLVED to:

a) **adopt the Circular Economy Plan (Annex 1).**

b) **note the climate outcomes dashboard (Annex 2).**

c) **note the update on the delivery of the Climate Action Programme 2024/25 and approve the proposed Climate Action Programme for 2025/26 (Annex 3).**

103/25 UPDATE ON PROCESS OF PRODUCING THE MINERALS AND WASTE LOCAL PLAN
(Agenda Item. 12)

Cabinet had before it a report which provided an update on progress with the production of a Minerals and Waste Development Scheme (MWDS) which contained the timetable for Minerals and Waste Local Plan production. The most recent MWDS was approved by Cabinet in December 2022.

The preparation process of the new Local Plan remained the same as set out with the timetable outlined in the December 2022 MWDS. However, progress through this process had been impacted by ongoing challenges in preparing the evidence required and acquiring the relevant expertise. These constraints had limited the County Council’s capacity to meet the milestones as set out within the MWDS; this despite continued efforts to address the issue.

Councillor Judy Roberts, Cabinet Member for Place, Environment and Climate Action, presented the report. She outlined the need to pause work on the current plan, pending national planning reforms under the Levelling Up and Regeneration Act 2023. The aim was to fast-track a compliant plan once new regulations were published, assuring community partners and the industry of the Council’s readiness.

Councillor Roberts moved and Councillor Hannaby seconded the recommendations, and they were approved.

RESOLVED to:-

a) **approve the cessation of the preparation of the new Minerals and Waste Local Plan under the current plan-making process and authorise the production of a new Minerals and Waste Local Plan under the new plan-making process in accordance with the Levelling Up and Regeneration Act 2023**

b) delegate to the Director of Economy and Place in consultation with the Director of Law and Governance and Monitoring Officer
   1) to put in place changes to the Minerals and Waste Development Scheme to reflect this and
   2) to carry out a review within 6 months if the provisions of the
   Levelling Up and Regeneration Act have not been brought into force by that time or earlier if necessary.

104/25 COMMUNITY BANKING HUBS MOTION

(Agenda Item. 13)

Cabinet had before it a report which set out the intended approach to take forward the Council Motion on community banking hubs resolved by Council on 1 April 2025. A summary of recent work was included in the report together with an analysis of areas currently lacking banking services.

Councillor Neil Fawcett, Cabinet Member for Resources and Deputy Leader, presented the report. He reported progress on engaging banks and building societies to provide community services in libraries and other suitable locations, particularly to support digitally excluded residents.

During discussion members highlighted local challenges with regard to banking facilities and welcomed continued efforts and collaboration with local councils.

Councillor Fawcett moved and Councillor Gregory seconded the recommendations, and they were approved.

RESOLVED to agree to the continuation of efforts to engage banks to provide community services within library facilities and other suitable locations in areas lacking banking services

105/25 FUTURE CIVIL ENFORCEMENT CONTRACT MODELS

(Agenda Item. 14)

Cabinet received a report on proposed models for Civil Enforcement contracts. Following Cabinet approval in February 2025 to procure enhanced multi contactor contracts for the civil enforcement and ZEZ operation, Civil Enforcement specialists were appointed alongside legal specialists to work with officers to develop new specifications, pricing schedules and contract terms.

After market engagement and discussion with other Local Authorities, the requirements had been packaged to compete via the most appropriate routes to market, and these were set out in the report.

Councillor Andrew Gant, Cabinet Member for Transport Management, presented the report. He referred to the objectives to improve enforcement against illegal and dangerous parking county-wide and commented on the key points included in the report which included

- Introducing more rigorous KPIs with penalty clauses in the new contracts.
- Addressing recruitment and flexibility challenges, and collaborating with neighbouring authorities where possible.

During discussion members raised concerns over the adequacy of fines, national policy limitations, and the merits of in-house versus outsourced service provision.

Councillor Gant moved and Councillor Roberts seconded the recommendations, and they were approved.

RESOLVED, 9 voting in favour and 1 against, to:-

a) **endorse the approach and proposals surrounding the civil enforcement at Oxfordshire County Council (the Council) contracts as set out in this paper.**
b) **authorise the Director of Financial and Commercial Services to prepare and commence the procurement of:**

1. **A new 5-year Civil Enforcement Service contract (Contract 1) to commence on 1 May 2026 (following a mobilisation period) with options for two 1-year extensions (7-year potential contract length).**

2. **A new 5-year Penalty Charge Notice (PCN) Software and Technology contract (Contract 2) to commence on 1 May 2026 (following a mobilisation period) with options for two 1-year extensions (7-year potential contract length).**

3. **A new Zero Emissions Zone (ZEZ) Checker contract (Contract 3) to commence on 1 April 2026 (following a mobilisation period) plus a maintenance period of 2 years.**

4. **A new Automatic Number Plate Recognition (ANPR) Camera’s contract (Contract 4) for supply, maintenance and hosting of new cameras, to start as soon as possible, via further competition on the CCS**

framework for 4 years (longest length the framework will allow).

c) **delegate the decision to the award the contracts, and any potential future contract extensions, to the Director of Environment and Highways in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Transport Management.**

d) **endorse the Director of Financial and Commercial Services to explore collaboration with neighbouring authorities to enable Contracts 1 and 2 to be utilised by up to two other large authorities that the Council are currently considering procuring on behalf of. Once the exploration is complete, delegate the decision on the way forward to the Director of Environment and Highways in consultation with Cabinet Member for Transport Management, and the Cabinet Member for Finance, Property and Transformation.**

106/25 TREASURY MANAGEMENT 2024/25 OUTTURN

(Agenda Item. 15)

The Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy's (CIPFA's) 'Code of Practice on Treasury Management 2021' required that committee to which some treasury management responsibilities are delegated, will receive regular monitoring reports on treasury management activities and risks. Cabinet had before it the fourth and final update for the 2024/25 financial year which set out the position at 31 March 2025.

Councillor Dan Levy, Cabinet Member for Finance, Property, and Transformation, presented the report. He highlighted the main points which included prudent management, reduction in external debt, strong investment income, and operation within set indicators.

Councillor Levy moved and Councillor Roberts seconded the recommendations, and they were approved.

RESOLVED to note the report, and to RECOMMEND Council to note the council's treasury management activity and outcomes in 2024/25.

107/25 BUDGET & BUSINESS PLANNING 2026/27 - FAIR FUNDING REVIEW 2.0

(Agenda Item. 16)

Cabinet had before it a report which provided an overview of the proposals included in the "Fair Funding Review 2.0" consultation, which was published by the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG) on 20 June 2025.

Councillor Glynis Phillips requested more comprehensive engagement and briefings for councillors regarding the proposed changes to local government finance, especially for new members. The importance of good governance and awareness was highlighted.

Councillor Dan Levy, Cabinet Member for Finance, Property and Transformation, presented the report. He outlined the technical nature of the consultation and agreed to further member briefings when outcomes were clearer.

Councillor Levy moved and Councillor Higgins seconded the recommendations, and they were approved.

RESOLVED to

a) **note the report and annexes;**

b) **delegate the approval of the response to the Fair Funding Review 2.0 consultation to the Executive Director of Resources and Section 151 Officer in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Finance, Property and Transformation.**

108/25 BUSINESS MANAGEMENT & MONITORING REPORT - REVENUE UPDATE AND MONITORING REPORT

(Agenda Item. 17)

The budget for 2025/26 and Medium-Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) to 2027/28 was agreed by Council on 11 February 2025. Cabinet had before it a
report which set out the initial revenue forecast and expected outlook for the financial year and includes updates on:

- financial risks which are being managed in 2025/26;
- savings and investment position; and
- funding notified since the budget was agreed.

Councillor Dan Levy, Cabinet Member for Finance, Property and Transformation presented the report.

Councillor Liz Brighouse addressed the Cabinet and drew attention to the high needs block deficit, urging greater understanding and scrutiny of spending patterns. Councillor Levy noted the deficit was largely due to insufficient government funding, with the statutory override allowing temporary off-balance sheet treatment. Members discussed the exponential increase in EHCP (Education Health and Care Plans) and the potential forthcoming reforms which would aim to address the issues.

Councillor Levy moved and Councillor Leffman seconded the recommendations, and they were approved.

RESOLVED to

a) **note the report and annexes.**

b) **approve a £3.5m transfer from budgets held centrally to Adult Services to meet the financial pressure on contracted costs for the provision of social care (paragraph 24)**

c) **Approve the following virements relating to funding changes (paragraphs 27 – 31).**
   - **£3.6m transfer of grant funding from budgets held corporately to Children's Services.**
   - **£0.8m additional un-ringfenced grants transferred to the in-year contribution to General Balances.**
   - **£2.2m increase in the final notified Business Rates funding and Council Tax surpluses transferred to the Collection Fund Reserve.**

d) **approve the change to the Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) High Needs Block 2025/26 updated budgeted deficit (paragraphs 32 - 35).**

109/25 CAPITAL PROGRAMME MONITORING REPORT

(Agenda Item. 18)

Cabinet had before the first capital programme update and monitoring report for 2025/26 which set out the monitoring position based on activity to the end of May 2025.

The report also updated the Capital Programme approved by Council on 11 February 2025 taking into account additional funding and new schemes. The updated programme also incorporated changes agreed through the Capital Programme Approval Reports to Cabinet during the year as well as new funding.

Councillor Dan Levy, Cabinet Member for Finance, Property and Transformation presented the report. He referred to a small increase in capital expenditure, additional government grants, and continued investment in projects aligning with Council objectives.

RECOMMENDED to:

Capital Programme

a. Note the capital monitoring position for 2025/26 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. Approve the inclusion of St Joseph's, Thame into the capital programme with an indicative budget of £1.500m (para 62-63).

d. Approve the inclusion of Safe Space into the capital programme with a budget of £1.795m (para 64-66).

e. Approve the inclusion of Redbridge Redevelopment into the capital programme with an indicative budget of £6.545m (para 67-69).

f. Approve the inclusion of Cinder Track improvements, Route 2 of the South and Vale Active Travel Network (SVATN), into the capital programme (para 70-71).

g. Approve the inclusion of the A420 (Oxford) Safer Roads Fund into the capital programme with a budget of £2.225m (para 72-73)

h. Approve an increase in budget of the A34 Lodge Hill Interchange Scheme from £34.660m to £36.090m, an increase of £1.430m (para 74-75).

i. Approve the inclusion of the Bus Service Improvement Delivery Plan 2025/26 into the capital programme with a budget of £5.441m (para 76-78).

j. Approve the inclusion of the Data Centre Hardware Refresh into the capital programme with an indicative budget of £1.600m (para 78-80).

Funding Updates

k. Agree the inclusion in the capital programme of the following grant funding updates and allocations:

- Revise the previous forecasted value of the School Condition Allocation 2025/26 to £4.647m (para 82).

- Add the Basic Need Capital Allocations for 2026/27 & 2027/28 of £7.732m and £4.904m to the basic need programme to address pupil places (para 83).

- Add the SEN High Needs Capital Allocation 2025/26 of £7.936m to the basic need programme to address SEN provision (para 84-85).

- Add the Integrated Transport Block 2025/26 of £3.717m into the capital programme and replace existing council funded transport schemes (para 86).

l. Note the reduction in the over-programming of the ten – year capital programme from £14.082m as agreed by Council in February 2025 by £3.717m to an over-programme of £10.365m.

110/25 FORWARD PLAN AND FUTURE BUSINESS

(Agenda Item. 19)

The Cabinet considered a list of items for the immediately forthcoming meetings of the Cabinet together with changes and additions set out in the schedule of addenda.

RESOLVED to note the items currently identified for forthcoming meetings.

111/25 FINANCIAL AND LAND AGREEMENTS RELATING TO THE CONVERSION OF WOODEATON MANOR SCHOOL TO AN ACADEMY

(Agenda Item. 20)

RESOLVED: that the public be excluded for the duration of item 20 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.

Councillor Sean Gaul, Cabinet Member for Children and Young People, presented the report.

Councillor Gaul moved and Councillor Hannaby seconded the following amended recommendations which were approved.

RESOLVED to:-

a) approve the proposal for Oxfordshire County Council to retain maintenance and repairs of Woodeaton manor school building after it converts to academy status and until the lease is terminated, at an annual cap of up to £0.2m per annum, for a period of between 2-4 years until the school can be relocated to new accommodation. ~~the maximum cost to the general fund is £0.4m to £0.8m.~~

b) approve the proposed funding, subject to conditions, as detailed in the annex, to support the trust with adaptations to the building to meet the special educational needs and disabilities (send) requirements of current students.

c) approve an enhanced level of revenue funding for Woodeaton manor school, as detailed in the annex, starting on the date of academy conversion (scheduled for 1 October 2025) and being reviewed on an annual basis, with any changes taking effect from 1 april each year.

d) note the options relating to the land transfer set out in this report and to approve the delegation of authority to the Director of Children's Services, in consultation with the Director of Law & Governance and the Director of Property & Assets as appropriate, to finalise and execute the necessary documentation to meet the Department for Education timescales for academisation. this includes the final decision relating to the transference of insurance excess costs in the case of negligence by the trust employees, and the final processes relating to freehold transfer.

112/25 FOR INFORMATION ONLY: CABINET RESPONSES TO SCRUTINY ITEMS

(Agenda Item. 21)

Cabinet noted the following responses to Scrutiny items:-

Report on the Virtual School
Co-production in Adult Social Care
s.106 Improvement Programme Update
Rail Strategy
Local Economic Partnership Integration
Business Management and Monitoring Report

…………………………………………………in the Chair

Date of signing ……………………………………………..