

Public Document Pack



Tuesday, 25 November 2025

Tel: 01993 861000

e-mail: democratic.services@westoxon.gov.uk

COUNCIL

You are summoned to a meeting of the Council which will be held in Council Chamber, Council Offices, Woodgreen, Witney, Oxfordshire OX28 1NB on **Wednesday, 3 December 2025 at 2.00 pm.**

Giles Hughes
Chief Executive

To: Members of the Council

Councillors: Andrew Coles (Chair), Carl Rylett (Vice-Chair), Elizabeth Poskitt, Joy Aitman, Lidia Arciszewska, Thomas Ashby, Hugo Ashton, Mike Baggaley, Andrew Beaney, Michael Brooker, Adam Clements, David Cooper, Julian Cooper, Sandra Cosier, Steve Cosier, Rachel Crouch, Jane Doughty, Genny Early, Duncan Enright, Roger Faulkner, Phil Godfrey, Andy Goodwin, Andy Graham, David Jackson, Edward James, Natalie King, Liz Leffman, Nick Leverton, Dan Levy, Andrew Lyon, Paul Marsh, Martin McBride, Stuart McCarroll, Michele Mead, David Melvin, Rosie Pearson, Andrew Prosser, Nigel Ridpath, Geoff Saul, Sandra Simpson, Alaric Smith, Ruth Smith, Tim Sumner, Sarah Veasey, Liam Walker, Mark Walker, Adrian Walsh, Alex Wilson and Alistair Wray

Recording of Proceedings – The law allows the public proceedings of Council, Executive, and Committee Meetings to be recorded, which includes filming as well as audio-recording. Photography is also permitted. By participating in this meeting, you are consenting to be filmed.

As a matter of courtesy, if you intend to record any part of the proceedings please let the Democratic Services officers know prior to the start of the meeting.

AGENDA

1. **Apologies for Absence**
To receive any apologies for absence.
2. **Declarations of Interest**
To receive any declarations from Members of Council on any items to be considered at the meeting.
3. **Minutes of Previous Meeting (Pages 7 - 28)**
To approve the minutes of the ordinary meeting held on 1 October 2025 and the extraordinary meeting held on 12 November 2025.
4. **Receipt of Announcements**
To receive any announcements from the Chair, Leader, Members of the Executive, Head of Paid Service, Director of Finance or Director of Governance.
5. **Participation of the Public**
To receive any submissions from members of the public, in accordance with the Council's [Public Participation Rules](#).

The deadline for submission is 2.00pm, two clear working days before the meeting.

6. **Questions by Members**
The following questions have been submitted by Members of Council to Members of the Executive, in accordance with the Council Procedure Rules (Constitution Part 5A, Rule 12).

Written responses will be circulated to Members and published on the Council's website at least one working day prior to the meeting. A Member submitting a question is entitled to ask one supplementary question at the meeting which must arise directly from the question or the response to it.

The supplementary questions and answers will be detailed in the minutes of the meeting.

Question 1: From Councillor Julian Cooper to Councillor Alaric Smith, Executive Member for Finance:

How much income does the authority get from the Town Council relating to the Guildhall, Chipping Norton?

Question 2: From Councillor Liam Walker to Councillor Hugo Ashton, Executive Member for Planning:

Following a public petition signed by over 2000 people asking for the council to protect Woodford Way car park from being developed will the Executive Member now reconsider this site being developed as part of the new Local Plan?

Question 3: From Councillor Liam Walker to Councillor Andy Graham, Leader of the Council:

Given the decision by Liberal Democrats at the County Council to impose a congestion charge in Oxford can the Leader confirm if such a scheme could be imposed on towns like Witney?

Question 4: From Councillor Liam Walker to Councillor Lidia Arciszewska, Executive Member for Environment:

The County Council has announced changes to Household Waste Recycling Centres in Oxfordshire that will likely impact sites here in West Oxfordshire. There is a concern amongst residents that these changes could increase fly-tipping. Given that the clear up of fly-tipping is the responsibility of the District Council will there be extra resources for enforcement in West Oxfordshire?

Recommendations from the Executive

7. Council tax support 2026/27 (Pages 29 - 42)

Purpose

To consider and recommend to Full Council the revised Council Tax Support Scheme for the financial year 2026/2027

Recommendation

That Council resolves to:

1. Agree the increase to income bands from 1 April 2026 of 3.5% or the inflationary increase in welfare benefits, whichever is greater.
2. Agree that any surplus in the Hardship Fund is transferred over to 2026/2027.

Reports from Officers

8. Proposals for Devolution to a Mayoral Strategic Authority (Pages 43 - 56)

Purpose

This report provides information on the submission of an Expression of Interest (EOI) to Government. This is in response to the Government's devolution policy and seeks to position our region in the next round of devolution for the purpose of creating a Mayoral Strategic Authority (MSA).

Recommendation

That Council resolves to:

1. Note the benefits from the proposed devolution of powers and functions, and agree to continue building on the collaborative approach across the region to date;
2. Consider and present views to the Executive on the proposed Expression of Interest (EOI) to be submitted by Oxfordshire County Council (OCC) as the upper-tier authority to Government, noting that the EOI is designed to proactively position our region for early consideration in the next wave of the Devolution Programme;
3. Acknowledge the EOI as an initial invitation to Government, opening further dialogue and engagement, and not a decision to establish a Strategic Authority;
4. Note that a further report will be brought to Council prior to any final decision on the creation of a Strategic Authority;

5. Note the informal Devolution Board will oversee discussions with Government, ensuring robust governance and stakeholder engagement by elected members throughout this process.

9. **Appointment of Independent Member of the Audit and Governance Committee (Pages 57 - 60)**

Purpose

To appoint one appropriately skilled and experienced member of the public to be an “independent member” of the Audit & Governance Committee.

Recommendation

That Council resolves to:

1. Appoint Victoria Field to the Council’s Audit & Governance Committee as an Independent Member for the remainder of the 4-year term ending on 25 September 2028.

10. **Constitution Working Group Recommendations (Pages 61 - 100)**

Purpose

To consider the recommendations made by the Constitution Working Group on 19 November

Recommendations

That Council resolves to:

1. Agree the amendment (shown in Annex A) to Part 3C of the Constitution Audit and Governance terms of reference following a recommendation from the Council’s external auditor that the Council clarifies, within its Constitution, the responsibility for the assessment of the Council’s Capital, Investment and Treasury Management Strategies as part of the annual budget setting process.
2. Agree to remove Rule 5 of the Council Procedure Rules “Special meetings” as well as any other reference to special meetings.

11. **Programme of Meetings 2026/27 (Pages 101 - 112)**

Purpose

To invite Council to set a programme of Council and Committee meetings for the civic year 2026–2027.

Recommendation

That Council Resolves to:

1. Approve the Programme of Meetings for 2026/27, as detailed at Annex A and Annex B;
2. Delegate authority to the Director of Governance and Regulatory Services, in consultation with Group Leaders, to make changes to the programme of meetings, in the event that there is any future decision of the Council to change the committee structure, frequencies of committees or sub-committees, or committee remits that impacts the programme of meetings;
3. Delegate authority to the Democratic Services Business Manager to set meeting dates for committees and sub-committees that meet on an ad-hoc basis (Performance and Appointments Committee, Development Control Committee, Licensing Committee, Licensing Panel, Miscellaneous Licensing Sub-Committee, Standards Sub-Committee), member training, member briefing sessions, and any

further working groups established by the Council.

4. Note that rule 6 of the Council Procedure Rules (Part 5A of the Constitution) allows each committee to set its own start time.

Motions on Notice

12. Motion A: Protecting Fire Services in West Oxfordshire

Proposed by: Councillor Liam Walker

Seconded by: Councillor Nick Leverton

Council notes:

1. That Oxfordshire County Council is currently considering proposals that include the potential closure of *two* on-call fire stations within West Oxfordshire: Eynsham Fire Station and Woodstock Fire Station.
2. That both stations provide vital emergency response capability for their communities and surrounding areas, and their crews contribute significantly to safeguarding residents, businesses, heritage assets, and critical transport infrastructure.
3. That West Oxfordshire is a growing district, with new housing developments, increased traffic volumes, and expanding commercial activity—all of which place greater, not lesser, demand on local emergency response capacity.
4. That the loss of either station could risk slower response times, reduced local resilience, and diminished fire cover for incidents such as road traffic collisions, flooding, and property fires.

Council believes:

1. That maintaining strong, localised fire and rescue provision is essential for community safety and public confidence.
2. That any reduction in fire cover within West Oxfordshire is unacceptable and would represent a step backwards in protecting residents, especially in rural and semi-rural areas.
3. That decisions on fire station closures must prioritise public safety above financial or administrative considerations.

Council therefore resolves to:

1. Formally oppose the proposed closure of Eynsham and Woodstock Fire Stations.
2. Ask the Council Leader write to the Oxfordshire County Council Cabinet Member for Community Wellbeing and Safety urging her to withdraw the proposals and to commit to maintaining full operational status at both stations.
3. Support local firefighters and residents in campaigning to retain emergency fire cover in West Oxfordshire.

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WEST OXFORDSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

Minutes of the meeting of the Council

Held in the Council Chamber, Council Offices, Woodgreen, Witney, Oxfordshire OX28 1NB
at 2.00 pm on **Wednesday, 1 October 2025**

PRESENT

Councillors: Carl Rylett, Lidia Arciszewska, Hugo Ashton, Mike Baggaley, Andrew Beaney, Michael Brooker, Adam Clements, David Cooper, Julian Cooper, Sandra Cosier, Steve Cosier, Rachel Crouch, Jane Doughty, Genny Early, Duncan Enright, Roger Faulkner, Phil Godfrey, Andy Goodwin, Andy Graham, David Jackson, Edward James, Natalie King, Nick Leverton, Dan Levy, Andrew Lyon, Paul Marsh, Stuart McCarroll, Michele Mead, Rosie Pearson, Elizabeth Poskitt, Andrew Prosser, Nigel Ridpath, Geoff Saul, Sandra Simpson, Alaric Smith, Ruth Smith, Tim Sumner, Sarah Veasey, Liam Walker, Mark Walker and Alistair Wray

Officers: Giles Hughes (Chief Executive Officer), Madhu Richards (Director of Finance), Andrea McCaskie (Director of Governance and Regulatory Services), Phil Martin (Director of Place), Andrew Brown (Head of Democratic and Electoral Services), Anne Learmonth (Democratic Services Officer), Maria Harper (Democratic Services Assistant), Ana Prelici (Senior Democratic Services Officer) and Mathew Taylor (Democratic Services Officer)

Other Councillors in attendance:

CL.29 Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were received from Joy Aitman, Thomas Ashby, Andrew Coles, Liz Leffman, David Melvin, Martin McBride, Adrian Walsh, Alex Wilson.

As Councillor Coles had sent apologies for the meeting, the Vice-Chair, Councillor Carl Rylett, chaired the meeting in his absence.

CL.30 Declarations of Interest

Declarations of Interest were received as follows:

Councillor Dan Levy – Item 8, Options for Disposal Property in Witney, declared an interest as the site was vacant due to a County Council decision, which as the Cabinet Member for Finance at the County Council, he was responsible for. However, he stated he did not have a conflict of interest.

Councillor Ruth Smith – Motion C: Boosting Workplaces and Young People by Supporting Work Experience in the District – Declared that she proposed the motion but was also a teacher at Henry Box School. The motion would directly benefit the students she taught but she did not have a conflict of interest.

Councillor Steve Cosier also stated he was a teacher at a local school.

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Councillor Andrew Beaney stated he was also a teacher at a local school and would leave the room when Motion C was being decided.

Councillor Phil Godfrey stated that Zara Godfrey, one of the public speakers, was his daughter in law.

CL.31 Minutes of Previous Meeting

Councillor Andy Graham proposed accepting the minutes of the previous meeting, Councillor Duncan Enright seconded this.

Voting record - For 39, against 0, abstain 1

Council resolved to: Approve the minutes of the meeting held on 16 July as an accurate record of the meeting.

CL.32 Receipt of Announcements

The Vice-Chair, in the Chair made the following announcements;

On behalf of the Council, the Vice-Chair expressed condolences to Councillor Joy Aitman following the sudden passing of her husband, Mark Aitman.

The Vice-Chair made the following announcements on behalf of the Chair, who had sent apologies for the meeting. This was a summary of the events that the Chair attended and organised;

- The 80th anniversary of the VJ day commemoration
- Hosted a coffee morning and bake sale, raising £391.23.
- An upcoming Chair's Civic dinner at Curry Paradise in Witney on 20 November, to which all members of the Council had been invited.

The Vice-Chair also made the following announcements;

- Stated that there had been errors in earlier printed versions of the agenda, and that this had been corrected.
- Encouraged completion of the learning and development survey.
- Listed upcoming member briefings.
 - 9 October, 5.30pm - Local Plan Spatial Options (in person)
 - 16 October, 5.30pm - Net Zero (Teams)
 - 23 October, 5.30pm - Cyber Security (in person)

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- 6 November, 5.30pm - Community Wellbeing (Teams)
- 20 November, 5.30pm - Devolution and Mayoral Strategic Authorities (in person)
- 4 December, 5.30pm - Ubico (Teams)
- Gave an overview of his own civic engagements which included attending the Bicester Civic Service and Parade and the AGM of the West Oxfordshire Scouts.

Councillor Duncan Enright, Deputy Leader and Executive Member for Economic Development, made the following announcements;

- Promoted refreshed charter markets in Witney and Chipping Norton.
- Announced upcoming Food & Craft Fair and Christmas Market.
- Highlighted the new Chipping Norton town map and potential for wider distribution.

Councillor Alaric Smith, Executive Member for Finance, announced a new loan scheme in partnership with Lendology CIC to bring empty homes back into use.

Councillor Lidia Arciszewska Executive Member for Environment announced that a Waterways Fair would be taking place on 25 October 2025 at the Corn Exchange, Witney.

Councillor Rachel Crouch Executive Member for Health and Wellbeing, made the following announcements;

- Shared that a mental health services booklet titled *Be Kind to Your Mind* is now available on the Council website.
- Mentioned ongoing visits to local facilities with Councillor Wilson.

Councillor Tim Sumner, Executive Member for Leisure and Carterton Area Strategy, announced recruitment for an Economic Regeneration Lead for the Carterton area, for which the closing date was 6 October 2025.

Councillor Andrew Prosser, Executive Member for Climate Change, congratulated the Nature Recovery Network (Katrina Bass & Kevin Martin) for winning the Oxford Climate Award for Biodiversity and Ecology.

Councillor Hugo Ashton, Executive Member for Planning, announced a new planning enforcement process allowing public and councillors to track progress of reported breaches online.

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Three members of the public had registered to speak and address Council on Motion E: Israel – Palestine;

- Charlie Maynard MP spoke in support of the motion, as the MP for Witney and in a personal capacity. He highlighted his work on the Business and Trade Select Committee, which is responsible for scrutinising the UK's arms exports. He highlighted private meetings with the Defence Minister and Minister for Trade and argued that the UK was breaching Article 7 of the Arms Trade Treaty.
- Zara Godfrey spoke as someone who was from Gaza and had been directly affected by the war as well as a law graduate. She appealed to Councillors to support the motion on humanitarian grounds, highlighting the personal losses she had suffered as a consequence of the war. She further condemned the Israeli Government's refusal to allow independent journalists into Gaza.
- Sharone Parnes, a Councillor for Woodstock Town Council, who was not speaking in that capacity addressed the Council, stating that the motion was not in the Council's responsibilities and that it was timed on the eve of Yom Kippur, which made it difficult for Jewish residents to attend.

CL.34 Questions by Members

Questions by Members, as listed on the agenda, and the responses to those questions, which were circulated in advance, were taken as read.

The Chair invited the questioners to ask a supplementary question if they wished and then invited the relevant Executive Members to respond.

The Written Questions, Written Answers, Verbal Supplementary Questions and Verbal Supplementary Answers are detailed in a separate document appended to the Minutes of the Meeting.

CL.35 Community Infrastructure Levy Charging Schedule

Cllr Hugo Ashton, Executive Member for Planning, introduced the item. Cllr Ashton addressed the following points;

- That advantages of CIL were that the levy could be used on smaller developments and part of the levy could be transferred to the local Town or Parish Council.
- CIL would be introduced for all liable applications that were made after the introductory date of 31 January 2026.
- The Council was asked to delegate authority to the Head of Planning to further progress work on the draft CIL Implementation Plan, in consultation with the Executive Member for Planning.

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Members discussed the report. The following points and questions for clarification were raised;

- Whether stage payments would be possible. The Executive Member confirmed that it would be.
- That the monies would go to good community causes.
- There were some comments that the previous administration had also attempted to introduce CIL.

Cllr Alaric Smith seconded the proposal and stated that the adoption of CIL would be a significant step forward in securing funding for local infrastructure, by complementing Section 106 agreements to raise funding from smaller developments.

Resolved: That Council

1. Approved the Community Infrastructure Levy Charging Schedule attached at Annex B with an effective date of 31 January 2026 in accordance with Section 213 of the Planning Act 2008.
2. Delegated authority to the Head of Planning to further progress work on the draft CIL Implementation Plan, in consultation with the Executive Member for Planning.

Voting record – 40 for, 0 abstentions, 0 against.

CL.36 Options for Out of District Investment Property

Councillor Alaric Smith, the Executive Member for Finance, introduced the item and proposed approving the recommendation. He explained that the site was Knight's Court, which was previously occupied by Oxfordshire County Council. The property team had been working with the commercial real estate company CBRE but limited commercial viability had been identified. Oxford City Council had offered to purchase the site with the view to redeveloping it for affordable housing. The Council was therefore recommended to dispose of the site. The sale would reduce the Council's revenue costs and generate a capital receipt, which could be used for work such as purchasing temporary accommodation within the district.

Councillor Andy Graham, the Leader of the Council, seconded the recommendation.

Voting record – 40 for, 0 abstentions, 0 against.

Resolved: That Council

1. Approved the property disposal on the terms detailed in the report.
Delegated authority to the Director of Finance, in consultation with the Executive Member for Finance, to approve the final terms of sale including the sale price.

CL.37 Recommendations from the Constitution Working Group

Councillor Alaric Smith, the Executive Member for Finance and the Chair of the Constitution Working Group, introduced the report. The purpose of the item was to present technical updates to the Constitution, including:

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- Asset delegations
- Planning enforcement delegations
- New public speaking rules for planning committees

Councillor Smith stated that he considered the updates routine and noncontroversial.

Members asked the following question;

- The new rules required speakers to be registered objectors. Some members questioned whether by disqualifying some members of the public the change would open the Council up to legal challenge. The Director of Governance and Regulatory Services explained that there was no risk of this, as there was no right to speak for members of the public. It was also explained that members of the public would be able to make representations through late submissions and that this practice happened at other councils.

Councillor Michelle Mead seconded the proposal.

Voting record – For 40, against 0, abstentions 0

Resolved: That Council

1. Approved the updated Part 4G: Other Miscellaneous Functions (Annex A)
2. Approved the updated Part 4F: Functions in relation to Planning
3. Approved the updated rules for taking part in planning committees.

CL.38 Appointments to Working Groups

Councillor Andy Graham introduced the item and explained that a correction had been issued to the agenda. The correct version read “that Councillor David Melvin has replaced Councillor Lidia Arciszewska on the Local Government Reorganisation Working Group” (not vice versa).

Councillor Duncan Enright seconded the recommendation to note the appointments to working groups, which was agreed by Council.

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Voting record – For 40, against 0, abstentions 0

Resolved: That Council

1. Noted that Councillor Sarah Veasey has replaced Councillor Adrian Walsh on the Local Plan Working Group
2. Noted that Councillor David Melvin has replaced Councillor Lidia Arciszewska on the Local Government Reorganisation Working Group

CL.39 Motion E: Israel-Palestine - Proposed by Councillor Andy Goodwin, seconded by Councillor Rosie Pearson

The Chair proposed suspending the Council's standing orders in respect to Rule 13.2, in order to move the order of the motions and deal with Motion E first,

This was seconded and voted on.

Voting record - 34 for, 4 against, 2 abstentions.

Councillor Andy Goodwin proposed the motion. He thanked public speakers and stated that the motion was not about politics, but about the people affected. He stated that Hamas and the Israeli government had committed war crimes.

Councillor Goodwin read out his motion as follows;

Many residents and community groups of West Oxfordshire have raised concerns about the humanitarian crisis in Israel/Palestine. Some residents are directly affected by the situation with family there.

The situation in Israel / Palestine is appalling. The background is long and complex. Hamas's massacre of innocent Israeli people in October 2023 was heinous. Since 2001, the UK government has imposed comprehensive sanctions on Hamas and its leaders. The UK Government has been proscribed Hamas as a terrorist organisation, it is a crime to belong to or invite support of Hamas. The remaining Israeli hostages must be returned.

The current actions of the Israeli government are unacceptable:

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- The UN indicates that the IDF may have systematically violated the principles of distinction, proportionality and precautions in attack – fundamental principles of international humanitarian law.
- The UN Human rights office says that the establishment and expansion of Israeli settlements in the West Bank and east Jerusalem amount to a war crime.
- The IPC (Integrated Food Security phase classification) says more than 500,000 people in the Gaza Strip are facing starvation destitution and death.

The UK government has been critical of recent events, restored funding to UNWRA, committed more aid to Gaza, suspended more arms licences to Israel, and added sanctions on several Israeli ministers and two “illegal settler outposts” in the West Bank.

We ask the Leader of WODC to write to local MPs and the secretary of state to draw their attention to the concerns raised by residents, asking:

- Call for Hamas to end all acts of terrorism and war crimes, to return all Israeli hostages immediately and unconditionally.
- Confirm the UK would execute ICC arrest warrants against those accused of crimes in the conflict if they visited the UK.
- Introduce an arms embargo on Israel, including component parts of military equipment delivered via third parties and apply economic sanctions on all leaders of the Israeli government.
- Stop trade with Israeli settlements in occupied territories, call for the Israeli government to protect citizens of the West Bank from the increased levels of violence and not allow new Israeli settlements in occupied territories.
- Call for the Israeli government to allow international journalists access to Gaza.
- Call for the Israeli government to end their war crimes against Palestinians including: disproportionate use of force in Gaza; planned military operations in Gaza city; restricting aid organisations in delivery of humanitarian aid into Gaza; and demolition of infrastructure in Gaza.
- Set up an evacuation scheme for the seriously injured and malnourished, similar to that instigated by the Italian government

This Council:

- Endorses the right of citizens to peaceful protest, including vigils, in the UK and welcomes the ability of communities to challenge and scrutinise decisions taken by elected representatives.
- Requests the Portfolio Holder for Finance to undertake a review of the Council’s Treasury Management Strategy and where no contrary legal requirement exists, to avoid investing in authorities, institutions or groups that participate in, enable, profit from or legitimise violations of human rights and international law.

Councillor Rosie Pearson seconded the motion and reserved her right to speak. Councillor Pearson stated that the Council was right to express an opinion on this, even if some members did not believe that it was an issue which affected the residents of West Oxfordshire. She stated that many in the District had written to express concern and some had families which were directly affected. Moreover, she stated that the Council's own financial investments were directly within the Council's remit.

- Members debated the motion and thanked the speakers for their emotive and important contributions.

The following points were raised for why the Council should support the motion;

- Members highlighted that the situation in Gaza was a humanitarian one, having met the threshold for famine, and criticised that aid was being blocked by Israel.
- One member made reference to family in Israel and stated that there had been displacement on both sides, and stated that many Jewish people did not agree with the Israeli Government's actions.
- Stated that Israel's actions in retaliation were out of proportion.
- Highlighted that 20,000 children had been killed and the arrests of 309 medical staff according to the UN and WHO.
- At the Labour conference there had been an successful motion accepting a UN finding that Israel was committing genocide in Gaza and urging the British Government to act to prevent it.
- Journalists had been denied entry into Gaza.

The following arguments against supporting the motion were raised;

- That the remit of the motion exceeded the Council's responsibilities. While the points raised, including by the speakers were considered valid, the motion itself was criticised for relevance.
- One member stated that they did not object to the letter itself but did not support it influencing the Council's treasury management strategy.

The motion was put to a vote as follows;

For 33, Against 2, Abstentions 5

Resolved: The Council

- 1) Endorsed the right of citizens to peaceful protest, including vigils, in the UK and welcomed the ability of communities to challenge and scrutinise decisions taken by elected representatives.
- 2) Requested the Portfolio Holder for Finance to undertake a review of the Council's Treasury Management Strategy and where no contrary legal requirement exists, to avoid investing in authorities, institutions or groups that participate in, enable, profit from or legitimise violations of human rights and international law.

CL.40 Motion B: Tackling the Illegal and Unsafe Use of E-Bikes in West Oxfordshire- Proposed by Councillor Liam Walker, Seconded by Councillor Jane Doughty

Councillor Liam Walker introduced the motion, and read it out as follows;

“West Oxfordshire District Council notes that the number of e-bikes and e-scooters being used illegally across Witney and the wider district has increased significantly in recent months. Residents, schools, businesses, and community groups have raised concerns about dangerous riding, use of e-bikes on pavements, the lack of helmets, and underage riders. Illegal and unsafe e-bike use poses risks to pedestrians, other road users, and to the riders themselves.

The Council also recognises that whilst some successful enforcement has already taken place by Thames Valley Police, local authorities have an important role to play in prevention, awareness, and partnership working to address this issue.

Council resolves to:

1. Work with Thames Valley Police and Oxfordshire County Council to explore options for joint enforcement and awareness campaigns targeting unsafe and illegal e-bike use.
2. Launch a district-wide public awareness campaign to inform residents—especially young people and parents—about the rules around e-bikes, the risks of illegal use, and safe cycling practices.
3. Request the Executive to explore opportunities for funding community safety initiatives such as cycle safety workshops, signage, and school engagement projects.
4. Ask the Leader to write to the Police and Crime Commissioner for the Thames Valley urging greater prioritisation of enforcement against dangerous and illegal e-bike use in West Oxfordshire.”

The motion was seconded by Councillor Jane Doughty.

An amendment was proposed by Councillor Geoff Saul. This was to amend the second recommendation to read “To ask the County Council and Thames Valley Police to launch public awareness campaign to inform residents—especially young people and parents—about the rules around e-bikes, the risks of illegal use, and safe cycling practices”

This was accepted by the proposer and seconder of the original motion.

The following points were raised in debate:

- Some councillors noted the need for more positive measures (like subsidised helmets, training, and education) and better data/statistics on incidents.
- There was emphasis that legal e-bikes were beneficial for sustainable transport, and the focus should be on illegal or modified e-bikes.
- Suggestions were made included involving schools, community groups, and using existing programmes (like Bikeability) to educate and improve safety.
- The amendment was welcomed as it emphasised the responsibility of the County Council and Thames Valley police.

The amended motion was voted on and agreed as follows;

For 38, Against 0, Abstentions 1

Council resolved to:

1. Work with Thames Valley Police and Oxfordshire County Council to explore options for joint enforcement and awareness campaigns targeting unsafe and illegal e-bike use.
2. Ask the County Council and Thames Valley Police to launch public awareness campaign to inform residents—especially young people and parents—about the rules around e-bikes, the risks of illegal use, and safe cycling practices.
3. Request the Executive to explore opportunities for funding community safety initiatives such as cycle safety workshops, signage, and school engagement projects.
4. Ask the Leader to write to the Police and Crime Commissioner for the Thames Valley urging greater prioritisation of enforcement against dangerous and illegal e-bike use in West Oxfordshire.

At this point, the meeting was due to extend past the three hour time limit, the Chair proposed extending the time by suspending Rule 10 in the Council Procedure Rules.

This was voted on as follows;

For 34, Against 4, Abstentions 2.

RESOLVED: To suspend Rule 10 of the Council's constitution in order to extend the meeting past the three hour time limit.

CL.41 Motion C: Boosting Workplaces and Young People by Supporting Work Experience in the District - Proposed by Councillor Ruth Smith, Seconded by Councillor Rachel Crouch

Councillors Andrew Beaney and David Cooper left the meeting at this point. Councillor Beaney left the Chamber as he had declared an interest in the motion.

Cllr Ruth Smith introduced the motion, and read it out as follows;

Council asks the Executive Committee to work with officers and members to develop a simple but effective system for West Oxfordshire employers to be kept aware of the work experience dates for schools in the district, and for employers to be able to indicate willingness to offer work experience places, so that the process is more equitable for young people.

This is an initiative that can outlast Local Government Reorganisation as a valuable piece of local implementation of goals that fall under a wider authority.

Work Experience forms part of careers education at Key Stages 4 and 5 (year 10-11 and 12-13).

Gatsby Benchmark 6, within Statutory Guidance updated in May 2025 [1], states:

Every learner should have first-hand experiences of workplaces to help their exploration of career opportunities and expand their networks [by the ages of 16 and 18].

In West Oxfordshire, this means that schools release their students for one week of work experience in Year 10 or 11 and in Year 12.

But despite the things the County Council and schools do, families and students still find it hard to know what local opportunities there are with employers.

Many school students find placements with friends and family. Whilst convenient, this is not a level playing field and doesn't necessarily match a student's interests. Schools use their contacts for students who seem to have the most trouble finding their own placement.

Schools have a lead member of staff, trained through the Oxfordshire Careers Hub, run by Oxfordshire Enterprise (Oxfordshire County Council). Each school does things its own way to build relationships with local companies.

West Oxfordshire has the West Oxfordshire Schools Careers Partnership, with well-trained staff at each school and attempts to publicise work experience dates for each school to employers. WOSCP has no web presence of its own; it is cited by schools on their own sites.

We can improve the situation in West Oxfordshire.

This motion seeks, as part of WODC's business-facing responsibilities, in line with its funding commitments to skills training (e.g. WODC's allocation of the UKSPF) and its investment in a Youth Development officer, to help residents find employers in West Oxfordshire employers that offer placements - with a web page that:

- Informs West Oxfordshire employers of all the schools' work experience dates
- Allows expression of interest or pledges of placements to be offered

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- Provides a way for employers to promote their participation and how to contact them appropriately
- Retains the autonomy of companies to select their own candidates, but from a platform that signals willingness to engage, and equal opportunity.
- Signposts to and integrates with the initiatives of Oxfordshire Enterprise and the Careers Hub without duplication

Success will be if a placements are found more easily and if employers report a boost to their community profile.

Officers may wish to work with schools, WOSCP and the Oxfordshire Careers Hub to shape the most effective format for this project.

Councillor Smith stated that the idea behind this was to have a simple platform that hooked employers and made it easier for students.

Councillor Rachel Crouch seconded the motion, stating that the existing system was too based on connections.

The motion was debated with the following points raised;

- It would make the system more equitable, for students being currently based on family and friend connections.
- It would help and encourage employers to find work experience students.
- The Local Skills Boards and Oxfordshire Local Enterprise Boards were also working in the area.

The Motion was voted on and agreed unanimously.

Council resolved that:

Council asked the Executive Committee to work with officers and members to develop a simple but effective system for West Oxfordshire employers to be kept aware of the work experience dates for schools in the district, and for employers to be able to indicate willingness to offer work experience places, so that the process is more equitable for young people.

CL.42 Motion D: The Impact of the Planning and Infrastructure Bill on Local Planning and Environmental Protection - Proposed by Councillor Genny Early, Seconded by Councillor Andrew Prosser

Councillor Liam Walker left the meeting before this item was discussed.

Council

01/October2025

Councillor Genny Early proposed the motion. The motion was read as follows;

Council Notes:

1. The Planning and Infrastructure Bill proposes new systems like Environmental Delivery Plans (EDPs) and a Nature Restoration Levy (NRL), which would affect how Local Planning Authorities (LPAs) handle development whilst protecting nature.
2. Under the Bill, Natural England will prepare EDPs , with decisions signed off by the Secretary of State for Housing rather than the SoS for the Environment. This takes away local council input , could ignore Local knowledge about wildlife /habitats, end the onsite mitigation and delivery of compensation within the district.
3. The Bill suggests EDPs could replace the need for on-site ecological surveys/ impact assessments, which ensure development doesn't harm protected species or habitats.
4. Since 2024, councils are responsible for ensuring new developments achieve Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG),which requires developers to carry out habitat surveys, improve biodiversity by > 10%, and manage those improvements for 30 years. The Bill does not replace/remove BNG, but introduces extra layers without explaining how they will work together, risking confusion, duplication, and extra workload for councils.
5. The Government says the Bill will make planning decisions faster for developers, but centralising key decisions, involving the Secretary of State and multiple national bodies like Natural England, and still needing to consult councils, could increase complexity and time.

Council Believes:

1. The Bill should specify how the mitigation hierarchy will be applied so avoidance of harm to nature is always the first priority, closing loopholes that could make compensation the default.
2. Local councils/ communities should continue to play a key role in planning for biodiversity, using local knowledge. Pre-applications enable Local Planning Authorities to work collaboratively with developers to make planning applications and BNG proposals better quality.
3. Removing local control of environmental planning, relying instead on national agencies, could lead to worse outcomes for wildlife, and less accountability. Whilst landscape-scale conservation is needed, the EDP/NRL approach could lead to localised declines in biodiversity.
4. Without on-site ecological surveys/impact assessments, which ensure new developments follow the law and protect nature , information about the loss of locally important populations would not be recorded and national declines in species may be missed or inadequately compensated.
5. Any new environmental systems must be joined up with existing BNG requirements. Councils must get resources to manage them.
6. Species are rarely "blockers" to development - few developments are refused for ecological reasons in West Oxfordshire. However, EDPs could be beneficial if applied to diffuse environmental impacts such as air and water quality, recreational pressure and nutrient neutrality.

Council

01/October2025

Council Resolves:

To request that the Leader of the Council writes to the relevant Ministers/local MPs, outlining the Council's concerns, calling for changes to better protect wildlife while enhancing local democracy and planning accountability:

- Adopt the amendment proposals from CIEEM;
- Keep on-site ecological surveys/impact assessment as a key part of planning;
- Ensure councils are involved in EDPs, to reflect local knowledge and Local Nature Recovery Strategies;
- Explain how EDPs, the NRL and BNG will work together;
- Provide councils with support/funding to do this well.

The motion was seconded by Councillor Prosser, who stated that there was still opportunity to influence the bill and that the local nature connection was important.

Members debated the motion and raised the following points;

- That the Council wished to see houses being built but this could not be at the expense of the natural environment. Some believed that the Planning and Infrastructure bill had many flaws.
- The Council had responded to many consultations on the Planning and Infrastructure Bill.
- The motion highlighted the loss of local input on the assessment of ecology loss, and that there were concerns over whether centrally developed environmental delivery plans would protect these.
- It was felt that the Bill undermined the work on developing a County Wide Nature Recovery Strategy.
- The Bill reduced the Council's voice on planning matters.
- Once they were gone, natural habitats would be irreplaceable, and that local knowledge was essential to protect these.
- Natural protection was one of the lowest reasons for planning applications being refused.
- Amendments to the Bill had also been put forward by MPs across all parties.
- However, others welcomed the motion but highlighted the need for the housing crisis to be addressed, and that there would be other ways of feeding back on the Bill so would not be supporting the motion.

Voting record - For 26, abstentions 9, against 0

Council resolved:

- I. To request that the Leader of the Council writes to the relevant Ministers/local MPs, outlining the Council's concerns, calling for changes to better protect wildlife while enhancing local democracy and planning accountability:
- Adopt the amendment proposals from CIEEM;
- Keep on-site ecological surveys/impact assessment as a key part of planning;
- Ensure councils are involved in EDPs, to reflect local knowledge and Local Nature Recovery Strategies;
- Explain how EDPs, the NRL and BNG will work together;
- Provide councils with support/funding to do this well.

CL.43 Motion A: Asylum Seeker Community and Council Support - Proposed by Councillor Andy Graham, Seconded by Councillor Duncan Enright

As Council had agreed to re-order the motions to take Motion E first, Motion A was taken last to maintain the rotation between political groups on the advice of the Director of Governance and Regulatory Services.

Cllr Graham introduced the motion, reading it out as follows;

West Oxfordshire District Council reaffirms

- a) its pride and appreciation in the way our local community has and have come together to support asylum seekers. Local organisations, voluntary groups and our officers have shown professionalism and empathy to the plight of the families staying in the hotel in Witney for short periods while their asylum applications are processed. It has been a good collaborative effort across public sector partners to support the hotel and make sure those staying there are supported as well as local communities. We have seen our communities donate clothes, bicycles and other items to help the predominantly families housed in the hotel. The empathy and compassion shown is a true testament to the strong, inclusive communities we have here in West Oxfordshire.

This Council reaffirms

- b) that there is no room for those who wish to divide our communities by raising fear through misinformation and heightened rhetoric. We believe hotels are not the best form of accommodation in the long term for those seeking asylum and we expect the government will continue to look at alternatives in a pragmatic and measured way to reduce their use. We will continue to work with partners to ensure the hotel is well managed while it remains in its current use.

This Council believes

- c) As it currently stands the Council have no intention of pursuing any planning enforcement against the hotel in Witney as we do not believe there are any planning or other grounds to take enforcement action

Councillor Graham introduced the motion, stating that people had fled their homes through no fault of their own and the Council stood to support them. He stated that the motion was about expressing community values and solidarity with people who had faced displacement. He also criticised those who he deemed sought to spread fear and dishonesty.

Councillor Duncan Enright seconded the motion.

The motion was debated, and the following points were raised;

- It was an emotive issue, particularly as many asylum seekers were children.
- Officers were thanked for their work
- It was important to spread compassion and tolerance
- Diversity was welcomed.
- Many stated that the asylum seekers housed in the hotel wished to integrate in the community and learn English, and that there had been a lot of community support within the broader community.
- Those seeking asylum had a right to be properly assessed on this, and criticised statements that asylum seekers should be deported without being assessed.
- Stated that refugees were welcome in West Oxfordshire.
- It was important to provide hope for refugees, as they had faced difficult circumstances.

In summing up, Councillor Graham expressed how welcome it was to have unanimous support across the chamber.

The motion was voted on and agreed as follows;

Voting record - For 31 for Against 0, Abstentions 0

Council resolved:

That the Council:

1. Reaffirmed its pride and appreciation in the way our local community has and have come together to support asylum seekers.

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2. Reaffirmed that there is no room for those who wish to divide our communities by raising fear through misinformation and heightened rhetoric. We believe hotels are not the best form of accommodation in the long term for those seeking asylum and we expect the government will continue to look at alternatives in a pragmatic and measured way to reduce their use. We will continue to work with partners to ensure the hotel is well managed while it remains in its current use.

3. Believed as it currently stands the it had no intention of pursuing any planning enforcement against the hotel in Witney and did not believe there are any planning or other grounds to take enforcement action

There was some further wording here but looks like we don't consider that to be part of the resolution as it was more explanation.

CL.44 Date of Next Meeting

The Chair stated that the following meetings would take place in order to discuss local government reorganisation (LGR), and this would mean moving the Extraordinary Council meeting scheduled for 5 November.

Tue 11 November – O&S, 5.30pm

Wed 12 November – full Council, 2.00pm

Wed 12 November – Executive, on the rising of full Council

This was seconded by Councillor Graham and put to a vote, it was agreed unanimously.

CL.45 Exclusion of Public and Press

The Council did not exclude the press and public.

CL.46 Exempt Annex C for item 8: Out of district investment property

This was not discussed.

The Meeting closed at Time Not Specified

CHAIR

WEST OXFORDSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

Minutes of the meeting of the Council

Held in the Council Chamber, Council Offices, Woodgreen, Witney, Oxfordshire OX28 1NB
at 2.00 pm on **Wednesday, 12 November 2025**

PRESENT

Councillors: Andrew Coles (Chair), Carl Rylett (Vice-Chair), Elizabeth Poskitt, Lidia Arciszewska, Hugo Ashton, Andrew Beaney, Michael Brooker, Julian Cooper, Sandra Cosier, Steve Cosier, Rachel Crouch, Genny Early, Duncan Enright, Roger Faulkner, Andy Goodwin, Andy Graham, Natalie King, Nick Leverton, Dan Levy, Andrew Lyon, Paul Marsh, Stuart McCarroll, Michele Mead, David Melvin, Rosie Pearson, Andrew Prosser, Nigel Ridpath, Geoff Saul, Sandra Simpson, Alaric Smith, Ruth Smith, Tim Sumner, Sarah Veasey, Mark Walker, Alex Wilson and Alistair Wray

Officers:

Other Councillors in attendance:

CL.47 Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were received from: Councillors Joy Aitman, Thomas Ashby, Adam Clements, David Cooper, Jane Doughty, David Jackson, Ed James, Liz Leffman, Martin McBride, Liam Walker and Adrian Walsh.

CL.48 Declarations of Interest

The Chair informed members that the Council's Monitoring Officer had provided the following advice:

In relation to 'double-hatted' members who also sit on Oxfordshire County Council or Town and Parish Councils, the Monitoring Officer advised that if members had already expressed a view on Local Government Reorganisation (LGR) proposals they could take part in the debate so long as they approached it with an open mind. Additionally, if a member had already declared their membership of another local authority in their register of interest, they did not need to make the declaration again at this meeting.

Declarations of Interest were received as follows:

Councillor Dan Levy explained that as well as being an Oxfordshire County Councillor, he was a Cabinet Member at that authority.

Councillor Michael Brooker explained that he was an employee of Oxfordshire County Council in its Fire and Rescue Service.

CL.49 Participation of the Public

There was no public participation.

CL.50 Local Government Reorganisation

The Chair introduced the item and explained that the purpose of the meeting was to consider and debate the three proposals for local government reorganisation in Oxfordshire. The Chair explained that the comments made would be captured and fed back to the Executive the following day.

The Director of Place, alongside the Head of Communications and Corporate Strategy, presented slides on devolution proposals. They presented each proposal based the original government criteria.

Members then debated each proposal, highlighting the following comments under each proposal.

One Unitary Authority Proposal

- Considered to be based on prestige.
- Was seen to pose more questions than provided answers – more so than the alternative proposals.
- There were concerns that District Councils would effectively be absorbed by the County Council.
- The timeline for producing a county-wide local plan within one year was considered unrealistic.
- Concerns were highlighted over local representation because Councillors would represent a very high number of electors.
- Similar proposals had been considered and rejected previously.

Two Unitary Authority Proposal

- Was considered low risk, high resilience and provided value for money.
- There was concern about urban interests overriding rural interests in Oxford and Shires.
- It was stated that the City would bring opportunities, assets and influence to Oxford and Shires e.g. potential improvements to the A40, trading company, housing company, housing revenue account, acceleration of affordable housing delivery.
- There was an opportunity to build on what worked well at the different councils and improve services.
- Districts understood town and parish councils and how to progress those relationships.

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- The proposals would be better for growth and development e.g. in areas like Carterton.
- Had costs but minimised disruption to services which was considered more important.
- Oxford and Shires had a good balance of urban areas, towns, villages and rural areas; bringing different communities together.
- Right size to protect and improve services to residents.
- Supported by multiple authorities and built on close partnership working.
- Fewer unanswered questions than alternative proposals.
- Better of the three options.

Three Unitary Authority Proposal

- There was a risk to the green belt.
- The proposals were deemed Oxford-centric in nature.
- The proposed growth was considered unbalanced and unrealistic.

The Leader proposed accepting the recommendations in the report. In summing up he stated he was happy that there was broad agreement in the Chamber. He stated the two unitary proposal would bring an end to working in “silos”, and allow smaller authorities to be able to compete with larger ones. He also welcomed that rural communities and urban ones would be brought together by the proposals and highlighted that the Government should consider their approach to consultation to ensure it would be meaningful.

Councillor Duncan Enright seconded the proposal to accept the recommendations, thanking the officers for their work. Councillor Enright stated that the two unitary proposal respected the existing structure, and that the One Oxfordshire proposal had been considered and not put in place in the past. He also highlighted that Town and Parish Councils would be crucial and that it was important to work with them.

The recommendations were put to a vote.

Voting record - For 35, Against 0, Abstentions 1

RESOLVED that Council:

1. Noted that since the statutory invitation to all councils in two tier areas, significant work has been undertaken by all Oxfordshire Councils and that West Oxfordshire and Cherwell District Councils’ officers have engaged with officers across Oxfordshire and West Berkshire.


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2. Agreed to present views to the Executive on the submission of a full proposal for a two unitary model based on one new unitary council covering the entire existing boundaries of West Oxfordshire and Cherwell District Councils and Oxford City Council, with a working title of 'Oxford & Shires' and a second new unitary covering the entire existing boundaries of South Oxfordshire and Vale of White Horse District Councils and West Berkshire Council, with the working title of 'Ridgeway'.
3. Noted that two other proposals will be submitted, one proposed by Oxfordshire County Council covering the Oxfordshire area and one from Oxford City Council covering the Oxfordshire and West Berkshire area.
4. Noted that Cherwell District Council, South Oxfordshire District Council, Vale of White Horse District Council and West Oxfordshire District Council will jointly submit the full proposal directly to Government in line with the Oxfordshire invitation letter.

The Meeting closed at 3.10 pm

CHAIR

 <p>WEST OXFORDSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL</p>	<p>WEST OXFORDSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL</p>
<p>Name and date of Committee</p>	<p>FULL COUNCIL – 3 DECEMBER 2025</p>
<p>Subject</p>	<p>COUNCIL TAX SUPPORT SCHEME 2026/27</p>
<p>Wards affected</p>	<p>All</p>
<p>Accountable member</p>	<p>Cllr Alaric Smith – Executive for Finance Email: alaric.smith@westoxon.gov.uk</p>
<p>Accountable officer</p>	<p>Jon Dearing – Interim Executive Director Email: democratic.services@westoxon.gov.uk</p>
<p>Report author</p>	<p>Mandy Fathers – Business Manager for Environment, Welfare and Revenues Email: democratic.services@westoxon.gov.uk</p>
<p>Summary/Purpose</p>	<p>To consider and recommend to Full Council the revised Council Tax Support Scheme for the financial year 2026/2027</p>
<p>Annexes</p>	<p>Annex A – Financial Modelling Annex B – Equality Impact Assessment</p>
<p>Recommendation(s)</p>	<p>That Council resolves to:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Agree the increase to income bands from 1 April 2026 of 3.5% or the inflationary increase in welfare benefits, whichever is greater. 2. Agree that any surplus in the Hardship Fund is transferred over to 2026/2027.
<p>Corporate priorities</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Working Together for West Oxfordshire • Putting Residents First
<p>Key Decision</p>	<p>NO</p>
<p>Exempt</p>	<p>NO</p>
<p>Consultees/ Consultation</p>	<p>Chief Executive, Director of Finance, Director of Governance and Regulatory, Director of Place, Head of Legal, Executive Member, Interim Managing Director (Publica Ltd), Interim Executive Director (Publica Ltd),</p>

	Executive Member for Finance, Head of Finance.
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1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 1.1** Council Tax Support is a scheme to reduce Council Tax bills for people on low income and/or who receive benefits. This report brings forward proposals to amend the scheme for 2026 in order to give more support to those on low incomes.

2. BACKGROUND

- 2.1** Councils are required to review their Council Tax Support (CTS) schemes each year for those people of working age and decide if they want to make any changes.

3. MAIN POINTS

- 3.1** The Council implemented its own local CTS scheme of support to help those people on low incomes pay their Council Tax in April 2013. Further changes were made in April 2020 introducing the income banded scheme.
- 3.2** Annual wage growth is expected to be between 3% and 4% in Q4 of 2025 and remaining at a similar level during 2026. Without changes to the CTS scheme, this would result in more households being moved into a high-income band and therefore having to pay a higher share of the full Council Tax for their property.
- 3.3** To continue to give support to households during the ongoing cost of living crisis, proposals are being made to increase income bands by 3.5% or in line with the inflationary increase in welfare benefits. Based on a 3.5% increase the bands would increase as follows:

(Household income per week)

3.50%	Single	Couple	Lone Parent	Lone Parent + 2	Lone Parent + 3	Lone Parent + 4	Couple + 1	Couple + 2	Couple + 3	Couple + 4	
Band 1	0-142.62	0-159.74	0-199.67	0-222.49	0-245.32	0-290.95	0-256.72	0-279.54	0-302.36	0-348.00	100
Band 2	142.63-202.62	159.75-219.74	199.68-234.67	222.50-257.49	245.33-280.32	290.96-325.95	256.73-316.72	279.55-339.54	302.37-362.36	348.01-408.00	80
Band 3	202.63-257.62	219.75-274.74	234.68-289.67	277.50-332.49	280.33-335.32	325.96-380.95	316.73-371.72	339.55-394.54	362.37-417.36	408.01-463.00	60
Band 4	257.63-312.62	274.75-329.74	289.68-344.67	332.50-387.49	335.33-390.32	380.96-435.95	371.73-426.72	394.55-449.54	417.37-472.36	463.01-518.00	40
Band 5	312.63-367.62	329.75-384.74	344.68-399.67	387.50-442.49	390.33-445.32	435.96-490.95	426.73-481.72	449.55-504.54	472.37-527.36	518.01-573.00	20
Band 6	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0

- 3.4** Based on the current CTS caseload used for remodelling the scheme, there is no impact, either negative or positive on CTS claimants as all retain their initial modelling bands.
- 3.5** In 2022/2023 the Council implemented a Hardship Fund to support those residents who were struggling financially and provided the Council with evidence of financial hardship. This fund was created with financial support from Oxfordshire County Council, and West Oxfordshire District Council. The fund was originally set at £100,000. To date there remains in excess of £78,000.

- 3.6** Recommendations are being made to transfer any funding surplus into the financial year 2026/2027 to ensure that the Council continues to support those residents in financial hardship.
- 3.7** The Council's client support officers continue to reach and offer additional support to who apply for this funding to ensure any long-term hardship is minimised. This might be through negotiating better details with utility companies, maximising benefit take-up, addressing expenditure or sign posting to another organisation for support,

3. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 3.1.** The Council administers a CTS scheme with an annual expenditure of approximately £6.4 million. From 2013/2014, the Government reduced the level of funding for the local scheme effectively creating a grant reduction of 10% a year across all of the precepting authorities.
- 3.2** Any increase in the take-up of CTS will lead to a reduced tax-base and therefore reduced income to precepting bodies.
- 33** The proposed changes increase the estimated cost of the CTS scheme by approximately £47,304. This will be reflected in a decrease in the Council Tax base and Council Tax income recognised in the Collection Fund. The decrease in income will be spread proportionately across the major precepting authorities (Oxfordshire County Council, Thames Valley Policy, and West Oxfordshire District Council as well as the Town and Parish Councils). Making these proposed changes will decrease the total tax base by the equivalent of 19 band D properties and a loss of income as follows:

Financial Year	OCC	Police	Town/Parish	WODC	Total
2026/2027	£36,997.26	£5,483.20	£2,319.24	£2,504.30	£47,304

- 3.4** The reduction in Council Tax income retained by the Council of £2,504.30 will be taken into account as part of the 2026/2027 budget setting process.

4. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1.** The Welfare Reform Act 2012 abolished Council Tax Benefit and instead requires each authority to design a scheme specifying the reductions, are to apply to amounts of Council Tax.
- 4.2** The CTS scheme is required under Section 13A of the Local Government Finance Act 1992 ("the Act"), as amended. The Act states that for each financial year, billing authorities must consider whether to revise their CTS scheme or replace it with another.

- 4.3** The deadline for making decisions is 11 March in the financial year preceding that for which the revision or replacement scheme is to take effect (under paragraph 5, schedule 1A of the Act). If the Council does not make/revise a CTS scheme by 11 March 2026 a default scheme will be imposed on the Council, which will be effective from April 2026.

5. RISK ASSESSMENT

5.1 There are two risks to consider:

- That the benefit caseload increases significantly, resulting in expenditure exceeding the levels estimated within this report. To mitigate this risk monthly monitoring is conducted and any significant increase in caseload would be referred to the Director of Finance.
- If the income bands are not increased in line with inflation, CTS for vulnerable households could reduce. This could cause reputational damage to the Council.

6. EQUALITIES IMPACT

- 6.1.** To ensure compliance with the Equality Act 2010 an equality impact assessment has been completed and attached to this report under Annex B.

7. CLIMATE CHANGE IMPLICATIONS

- 7.1.** The Climate Team have reviewed this report, and the SIA was not applicable as there are no environmental impacts on the decision.

8. ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS

- 8.1.** None.

9. BACKGROUND PAPERS

- 9.1.** None.

(END)

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Annex A

Current	Single	Couple	Lone Parent	Lone Parent + 2	Lone Parent + 3	Lone Parent + 4	Couple + 1	Couple + 2	Couple + 3	Couple + 4	
Band 1	0-137.80	0-154.34	0-192.92	0-214.97	0-237.02	0-281.11	0-248.04	0-270.09	0-292.14	0-336.23	100
Band 2	137.81-197.80	154.35-214.34	192.93-227.92	214.98-249.97	237.03-272.02	281.12-316.11	248.05-308.04	270.10-330.09	292.15-352.14	336.24-396.23	80
Band 3	197.81-252.80	214.35-269.34	227.93-282.92	249.98-304.97	272.03-327.02	316.12-371.11	308.05-363.04	330.10-385.09	352.15-407.14	396.24-451.23	60
Band 4	252.81-307.80	269.35-324.34	282.93-337.92	304.98-359.97	327.03-382.02	371.12-426.11	363.05-418.04	385.10-440.09	407.15-462.14	451.24-506.23	40
Band 5	307.81-362.80	324.35-379.34	337.93-392.92	359.98-414.97	382.03-437.02	426.12-481.11	418.05-473.04	440.10-495.09	462.15-517.14	506.24-561.23	20
Band 6	362.81+	379.35+	392.93+	414.98+	437.03+	481.12+	473.05+	495.10+	517.15+	561.24+	0

3.50%	Single	Couple	Lone Parent	Lone Parent + 2	Lone Parent + 3	Lone Parent + 4	Couple + 1	Couple + 2	Couple + 3	Couple + 4	
Band 1	0-142.62	0-159.74	0-199.67	0-222.49	0-245.32	0-290.95	0-256.72	0-279.54	0-302.36	0-348.00	100
Band 2	142.63-202.62	159.75-219.74	199.68-234.67	222.50-257.49	245.33-280.32	290.96-325.95	256.73-316.72	279.55-339.54	302.37-362.36	348.01-408.00	80
Band 3	202.63-257.62	219.75-274.74	234.68-289.67	277.50-332.49	280.33-335.32	325.96-380.95	316.73-371.72	339.55-394.54	362.37-417.36	408.01-463.00	60
Band 4	257.63-312.62	274.75-329.74	289.68-344.67	332.50-387.49	335.33-390.32	380.96-435.95	371.73-426.72	394.55-449.54	417.37-472.36	463.01-518.00	40
Band 5	312.63-367.62	329.75-384.74	344.68-399.67	387.50-442.49	390.33-445.32	435.96-490.95	426.73-481.72	449.55-504.54	472.37-527.36	518.01-573.00	20
Band 6	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0

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Equality and Ruralty Impact Assessment Form

When completing this form you will need to provide evidence that you have considered how the ‘protected characteristics’ may be impacted upon by this decision. In line with the General Equality Duty the Council must, in the exercise of its functions, have due regard for the need to:

- a) Eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by or under the Equality Act 2010;
- b) Advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it;
- c) Foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.

This form should be completed in conjunction with the guidance document available on the Intranet

Once completed a copy should be emailed to cheryl.sloan@publicagroup.uk to be signed off by an equalities officer before being published.

1. Persons responsible for this assessment:

Names: Mandy Fathers

Date of assessment: 014/10/2025

Telephone: 01285 623571

Email: mandy.fathers@cotswold.gov.uk

2. Name of the policy, service, strategy, procedure or function:

Existing – Council Tax Support Scheme 2026/2027

3. Briefly describe it aims and objectives

To make slight amendments to the Banding in the scheme

4. Are there any external considerations? (e.g. Legislation/government directives)

Section 13A of the Local Government Finance Act 1992 states a CTS scheme is required and Section 40 of the Local Government Finance Act 1992 states that the council must consult. Under paragraph 5, schedule 1A of the same Act, the Council is required to have a scheme approved by 11 March 2024.

5. What evidence has helped to inform this assessment?

Source	✓	If ticked please explain what
Demographic data and other statistics, including census findings	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Demographic data was used when modelling the scheme
Recent research findings including studies of deprivation	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Results of recent consultations and surveys	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Results of ethnic monitoring data and any equalities data	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Anecdotal information from groups and agencies within Gloucestershire	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	A valued third sector support advocate for the district has been consulted with
Comparisons between similar functions / policies elsewhere	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Comparisons with previous schemes and those of neighbouring LA's has been considered
Analysis of audit reports and reviews	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Other:	<input type="checkbox"/>	

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6. Please specify how intend to gather evidence to fill any gaps identified above:

N/A

7. Has any consultation been carried out?

No

If NO please outline any planned activities

N/A

8. What level of impact either directly or indirectly will the proposal have upon the general public / staff? (Please quantify where possible)

Level of impact	Response
NO IMPACT – The proposal has no impact upon the general public/staff	<input type="checkbox"/>
LOW – Few members of the general public/staff will be affected by this proposal	✓
MEDIUM – A large group of the general public/staff will be affected by this proposal	<input type="checkbox"/>
HIGH – The proposal will have an impact upon the whole community/all staff	<input type="checkbox"/>
Comments: e.g. Who will this specifically impact?	

9. Considering the available evidence, what type of impact could this function have on any of the protected characteristics?

Negative – it could disadvantage and therefore potentially not meet the General Equality duty;

Positive – it could benefit and help meet the General Equality duty;

Neutral – neither positive nor negative impact / Not sure

	Potential Negative	Potential Positive	Neutral	Reasons	Options for mitigating adverse impacts
Age – Young People			✓	The proposal is inclusive to people of different age groups, but it is not specific to age	
Age – Old People			✓	The scheme is for working age people only – Pensioners have a different CTS scheme which is mandated by Central Government	
Disability			✓	The proposal is inclusive to people with disabilities but is not specific to disability	
Sex – Male			✓	The proposal is inclusive to all gender groups, but it is not specific to gender	
Sex – Female			✓	The proposal is inclusive to all gender groups, but it is not specific to gender	
Race including Gypsy and Travellers			✓	The proposal is inclusive to people of all races, but it is not specific to race	
Religion or Belief			✓	The proposal is inclusive to people of all religions, but it is not specific to religion	

Sexual Orientation			✓	This proposal is inclusive to all types of sexual orientation, but it is not specific to sexual orientation	
Gender Reassignment			✓	The proposal is inclusive to all gender groups, but it is not specific to gender	
Pregnancy and maternity			✓	The proposal is inclusive to people who are pregnant and/or on maternity, but it is not specific to this group	
Geographical impacts on one area			✓	The proposal is inclusive to the whole of the West Oxfordshire district	
Other Groups			✓	This proposal is inclusive to all other groups that are not mentioned	
Rural considerations: ie Access to services; leisure facilities, transport; education; employment; broadband.			✓	The proposal is inclusive to the whole of the West Oxfordshire district	

10. Action plan (add additional lines if necessary)

Action(s)	Lead Officer	Resource	Timescale
Change Policy when approved	Mandy Fathers	Craig Fisher	Following full Council approval in early 2026

11. Is there is anything else that you wish to add?


n/a

Declaration

I/We are satisfied that an equality impact assessment has been carried out on this policy, service, strategy, procedure or function and where an negative impact has been identified actions have been developed to lessen or negate this impact. We understand that the Equality Impact Assessment is required by the District Council and that we take responsibility for the completion and quality of this assessment.

Completed By:	Mandy Fathers	Date:	14.10.25
Line Manager:	Jon Dearing	Date:	
Reviewed by Corporate Equality Officer:	Cheryl Sloan	Date:	27/10/25

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 <p>WEST OXFORDSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL</p>	<p>WEST OXFORDSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL</p>
<p>Name and date of Committee</p>	<p>FULL COUNCIL – 3 DECEMBER 2025</p>
<p>Subject</p>	<p>DEVOLUTION FOR OXFORDSHIRE</p>
<p>Wards affected</p>	<p>All,</p>
<p>Accountable member</p>	<p>Councillor Andy Graham - Leader of the Council Email: andy.graham@westoxon.gov.uk</p>
<p>Accountable officer</p>	<p>Giles Hughes – Chief Executive of the Council Email: giles.hughes@westoxon.gov.uk</p>
<p>Report author</p>	<p>Phil Martin – Director of Place Email: phil.martin@westoxon.gov.uk</p>
<p>Summary/Purpose</p>	<p>This report provides information on the submission of an Expression of Interest (EOI) to Government. This is in response to the Government's devolution policy and seeks to position our region in the next round of devolution for the purpose of creating a Mayoral Strategic Authority (MSA).</p>
<p>Annexes</p>	<p>Annex A – Expression of Interest (EOI)</p>
<p>Recommendation(s)</p>	<p>That Council resolves to:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Note the benefits from the proposed devolution of powers and functions, and agree to continue building on the collaborative approach across the region to date; 2. Consider and present views to the Executive on the proposed Expression of Interest (EOI) to be submitted by Oxfordshire County Council (OCC) as the upper-tier authority to Government, noting that the EOI is designed to proactively position our region for early consideration in the next wave of the Devolution Programme; 3. Acknowledge the EOI as an initial invitation to Government, opening further dialogue and engagement, and not a decision to establish a Strategic Authority; 4. Note that a further report will be brought to Council prior to any

	<p>final decision on the creation of a Strategic Authority;</p> <p>5. Note the informal Devolution Board will oversee discussions with Government, ensuring robust governance and stakeholder engagement by elected members throughout this process.</p>
Corporate priorities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Putting Residents First • A Good Quality of Life for All • A Better Environment for People and Wildlife • Responding to the Climate and Ecological Emergency • Working Together for West Oxfordshire
Key Decision	YES
Exempt	NO
Consultees/ Consultation	<p>EOI was developed collaboratively, with input from local authority Leaders and Chief Executives.</p> <p>The EOI is a strategic step to initiate formal discussions with Government, with public and stakeholder engagement planned should the Government accept the Council onto the devolution programme.</p> <p>Devolution is a collaborative process which will require continuous engagement and collaboration between local authorities and with residents, public sector institutions including the NHS, Police and Fire Authorities, businesses, and further and high education providers and other key local organisations and businesses.</p> <p>It is also vital that residents are involved at the earliest opportunity to inform and shape the process. It will not be possible to carry out resident engagement prior to submitting an EOI but it is expected that resident engagement would begin after Government agrees to further discussions.</p>

1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 1.1** This report provides information to Full Council on the submission of an Expression of Interest (EOI) to Government. This is in response to the Government's devolution policy and seeks to position our region in the next round of devolution for the purpose of creating a Mayoral Strategic Authority (MSA).
- 1.2** By submitting the EOI (Annex A) Oxfordshire Councils are requesting the Secretary of State to engage with us on devolution of powers and functions. Our region aims to enter dialogue with Government to target economic growth working within a strategic partnership that focuses on promoting innovation, sustainability and prosperity. By providing collaborative regional governance this Council can provide a framework to promote inclusive growth for our area for the benefit and wellbeing of our residents.

2. DEVOLUTION TOWARDS EVOLUTION OF REGIONAL ECONOMIC GROWTH

- 2.1** The principle of devolution is well-established, with Government aiming to redistribute political, social and economic power across England. With ambition now focused on universal coverage of Strategic Authorities across England following the English Devolution White Paper and the English Devolution and Community Empowerment Bill, Leaders have been meeting across our region to explore the opportunity for devolution.
- 2.2** The Government's vision, as set out in the English Devolution White Paper, is for all parts of England to be part of regional Strategic Authorities led by a regional Mayor. These authorities will drive growth, shape public services, and deliver strategic leadership in areas such as economic growth and sustainability, planning, skills, employment, and transport.
- 2.3** This move to devolving power to regions signals a significant step change in how UK economic growth will be delivered. It places significant shift in how local government needs to develop and deliver its economic growth strategies. This will shift relations from central government to local regional strategic partnerships, working with an elected Mayor within a Strategic Authority. It will require council Leaders, supported by their Chief Executives, to form new strategic regional partnerships to drive our ambitions for place based all-inclusive growth.

3. A THAMES VALLEY MSA FOR COLLECTIVE REGIONAL GROWTH

- 3.1** Becoming a Mayoral Strategic Authority ('MSA') represents a significant opportunity for regions in England to drive inclusive growth and prosperity for communities and businesses. With new powers and investment, MSA's can address strategic economic challenges and opportunities, in collaboration with local Leaders, business leaders and investors, with Government and increasingly, with other Strategic Authorities as part of the Council of regions. This is a new and exciting platform in our regional and local government landscape, creating systems based on collaboration and collective action that can work at scale to make connections, drive innovation and support growth.
- 3.2** However, failing to pursue this opportunity carries real risks. Areas that do not secure an MSA risk missing out on funding, influence, the ability to set their own strategic direction,

and deliver against regional priorities. In an increasingly devolved landscape, inaction could result in diminished competitiveness, slower growth, and reduced leverage in regional and national decision-making around investment.

4. REGIONAL ECONOMY

- 4.1** Thames Valley economy is one of the most dynamic and globally connected in the United Kingdom contributing billions in Gross Value Added to the national economy each year. On a per-person basis, it ranks second only to London, a reflection of the area's powerful concentration of high-value industries and skilled workforce.
- 4.2** The Thames Valley Region prosperity has its roots in knowledge and innovation, driven by digital technology, communications, life sciences, biotech, and health including creative and professional service sectors that have flourished thanks to the regions connectivity and proximity to London and Heathrow Airport. Global companies have long chosen to locate in the region with recognised hubs for technology and business services. This includes fast growing sectors in pharmaceuticals, manufacturing, and digital.
- 4.3** This region's economy has a critical mass of science, learning, talent, intellect and inspiration. The region also has a culture of pushing boundaries, redefining leading edge, pioneering and entrepreneurship. The universities are powerhouses of knowledge and beacons of experimental excellence as indeed are many of the businesses located across the county.
- 4.4** The intellectual capacity of the region and talent emerging from the universities is driving the establishment of spin out businesses and the scale up of growing ones, contributing to an environment that promotes and nurtures commercialisation; a driving force for a new, science and knowledge led industrial revolution.

Regional Risk of Economic Decline

- 4.5** Despite a track record of success, the Thames Valley economy has not been immune to the decline in productivity across the UK in recent years, suffering from underinvestment and increased global competition. In addition, continued prosperity brings challenges, including housing affordability, infrastructure constraints, and uneven growth across localities.
- 4.6** There are considerable challenges for residents and businesses in generating a future proof transport infrastructure that supports the region's economic growth is showing signs of struggling to cope with increased demand. Education and skill need to be developed on a regional collaborative basis to power capacity for economic growth.
- 4.7** This means this region needs to take a lead in ensuring sustainable housing and transport, promoting green technology, repowering the economy, developing the regional connectively and attracting inward investment. The region could do much more to benefit from the advantages generated through strategic growth planning and collaboration at a much greater scale that can be currently delivered by individual councils.
- 4.8** This places the Thames Valley under threat of seeing economic decline as businesses and inward investment risks diverting to regions that have clear joined up regional Growth Plans

and unfragmented governance arrangements, selling the regions benefits to sectors and investors.

- 4.9** Areas that can deliver regional transportation connectivity, housing growth and other business support infrastructure such as skills training and wellbeing are better placed to secure investment.

The Opportunity

- 4.10** There are substantial benefits in seeking devolution of powers. Devolved control over adult education and skills budgets allows authorities to better align training provision with the needs of local industries from digital technology and life sciences to creative industries, helping retain talent and businesses whilst ensuring inclusive access to opportunities.
- 4.11** Devolved powers and responsibility over strategic transport, strategic housing and spatial planning will support planning at a wider regional level enabling authorities to better target investment in deprived or underperforming areas, address housing affordability, promote green infrastructure and ensuring growth benefits reach all communities. A regional transport strategy would future proof the regions rail links, while improving access to Heathrow and London. Coordinated investment in rail, bus, and sustainable transport would reduce travel times, improve productivity and support the net zero agenda.
- 4.12** An enhanced ability to attract private investment and innovation partnerships would support the development of the innovation ecosystem and key sectors such as IT to stem the current exodus of UK innovation overseas and help to attract more overseas investment to the region. A science partnership could form a knowledge-intensive growth region with a stronger national and international identity capable of competing with major European economic clusters.
- 4.13** As a key driver of the UK economy, an MSA has the potential to scale up rapidly and deliver significant regional and national economic growth. Establishing an MSA will function as catalyst for growth to target funding and skills programmes where they are needed most, helping to reverse productivity decline and remove barriers to economic development.
- 4.14** Stronger coordination through an agreed MSA regional growth plan, influenced and led by local authorities, will stimulate a larger, integrated economy that can carry more weight in negotiations with Government, securing devolved funding and national infrastructure investment. It would also present a more compelling 'investment ready' proposition to global investors seeking a region that combines cutting-edge research with commercial capability.

5. EXPRESSION OF INTEREST THAMES VALLEY VISION

- 5.1** The EOI emphasises the region's strengths in innovation and productivity and its readiness to enter discussions with Government for a possible MSA. Devolution will drive inclusive growth and unlock significant opportunities for local communities and the UK more broadly.
- 5.2** The Thames Valley EOI highlights:
- Economic rationale: The region has national excellence and/or international excellence in at least 5 of the 8 key business sectors highlighted in the Modern

Industrial Strategy. The MSA would provide the framework that allows businesses to leverage those sectors across a wider geography and create jobs. Our intent is to restore growth to pre-Covid levels of prosperity.

- Collaborative governance: There is a commitment to partnership working across constituent councils, with clear terms of reference and for the EOI to mark the start of wider stakeholder engagement across the region.
- Strategic powers and funding: Powers over transport, skills, housing, and economic development and the ability to provide these within a business eco-system will lead to greater investment.
- Place-based leadership: Greater local control to deliver national policy objectives at local level has been shown to be successful in other established Strategic Authority areas. Adapting powers and functions to meet local needs strengthens local identity, accountability, and the ability to deliver tailored solutions for residents.

5.3 The EOI is the first stage towards devolution. Whilst it does not bind any Council to an MSA at this stage, it does indicate our readiness to engage further.

5.4 Oversight of the proposals will be through a Devolution Board made up of elected representatives from each participating Council.

6. NEXT STEPS

- Submission of the EOI (subject to approval) to Government by 19 December 2025, followed by further engagement and refinement based on feedback from Leaders, Chief Executives, and stakeholders.
- Ongoing governance and oversight via the Devolution Board, with regular updates to Executive and public consultation as the process evolves.
- Build the proposal through regular engagement, agreeing our geography and the size and scale of the MSA based upon criteria set out in the Devolution White Paper as follows:
 - Scale: Strategic Authorities should be of comparable size to existing institutions. The default assumption is for them to have a combined population of 1.5 million or above.
 - Economies: Strategic Authorities must cover sensible economic geographies with a particular focus on functional economic areas, reflecting current and potential travel-to-work patterns and local labour markets. It is likely that where travel to work areas are small and fragmented, Strategic Authorities will cover multiple travel to work areas.
 - Contiguity: Any proposed geography must be contiguous across its constituent councils (either now or with a clear plan to ensure continuity in the future through agreed local government reorganisation).

- No ‘devolution islands’: Geographies must not create devolution ‘islands’ by leaving areas which are too small to go it alone or which do not have natural partners.
- Delivery: Geographies should ensure the effective delivery of key functions including Spatial Development Strategies, Local Transport Plans and Get Britain Working Plans.
- Alignment: The Government will seek to promote alignment between devolution boundaries and other public sector boundaries.
- Identity: A vital element of successful devolution is the ability for local residents to engage with and hold their devolved institutions to account – and local identity plays a key role in this.
- Stakeholder engagement with residents, businesses and public sector partners to explore devolution for our region.
- Finalise proposal with further decisions made at key points by Executive and Scrutiny.

7. ANALYSIS AND CONSIDERATION OF ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS

- 7.1** The White Paper is clear that the Government intends that all of England be devolved by default and is committed to ending the deals-based approach. The Government will also legislate for a ministerial directive, which will enable it to directly create Strategic Authorities in any places where local leaders in that region have not been able to agree how to access devolved powers. Therefore the “do nothing” option could mean Government legislating on our behalf for devolution.
- 7.2** Opting to begin further discussions with Government on devolution would allow the Council to lead the definition of the MSA for our region. This will provide choice over the geography and the ability to determine the key priorities for our area.
- 7.3** Should this Council consent to an MSA at a future meeting, it would have a seat at the Council of Nations and the Regions influencing government policy and ensuring local community voice is heard.

8. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 8.1** During the Budget setting process for 2025/26 the Council set aside earmarked reserves to cover the costs of LGR and devolution. To date the costs of devolution have been limited to the costs of the Programme Director role and consultants advising on the economic and finance analysis. These costs are shared amongst the Councils participating in discussions on devolution.
- 8.2** There are no direct financial implications arising from the submission of the EOI. As discussions with Government proceed the opportunity will arise to explore how growth in our economy could create significant social and economic uplift for our area and indeed, for the whole country. The Thames Valley is a positive contributor to Treasury.
- 8.3** Devolution and Local Government Reorganisation offer an opportunity to reset local government finances. In this context, the EOI submission seeks discussions with

Government on developing innovative fiscal solutions to support investment into the Thames Valley Region. This reference to investment funding will also look to develop a more self-sufficient strategic authority that is not reliant on revenue gainshare and seeks inward investment through the private sector and funding institutions, as part of any regional investment strategy.

9. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 9.1** The submission of an EOI to open discussions with Government on devolution is an executive decision of Oxfordshire County Council as the upper-tier authority. The Levelling Up and Regeneration Act 2023 allows for areas to collaborate to create new strategic authorities. The Act requires constituent councils to consent to devolution, which is defined in the Act as including only upper-tier councils. This Council has participated in all discussions regarding devolution for Oxfordshire and the wider region.
- 9.2** The Executive has the authority to formulate the Council's overall policy objectives and priorities, which permits it to make this decision.
- 9.3** The English Devolution White Paper sets out the Government's intention that where the geographies of new MSA's align with Police and Crime Commissioner and Fire and Rescue Authorities, Mayors will, by default, be responsible for those services. Where those boundaries do not currently align Government has said that it will look to align public sector boundaries to strategic authority boundaries.
- 9.4** Through the English Devolution Bill, the Government will introduce a new bespoke duty for Strategic Authorities in relation to health improvement and health inequalities. Strategic Authorities will support partners in driving public service reform and the new devolution framework will set clearer expectations for Mayors' roles in local health systems and in improving population health.

10. RISK ASSESSMENT

- 10.1** Risks are considered in the report.

11. EQUALITIES IMPACT

- 11.1** There are no immediate equalities implications arising from this report. However, the purpose of forming an MSA is to bring an all-inclusive growth strategy to the Thames Valley Region. A strategy that ensures no one is left behind in the ambition to bring economic growth.
- 11.2** The expected benefits of devolution are to drive growth, enabling local leaders place more focus on inequality and living standards. An Equalities Impact Assessment will be developed against the different elements of devolution, as proposals progress.

12. SUSTAINABILITY IMPLICATIONS

- 12.1** There are no immediate sustainability implications arising from these decisions. Government has indicated it will give strategic authorities a meaningful role in planning for

our future energy system, establishing heat network zoning in England and leading on local nature recovery. The detail of these various policies are to follow as the English Devolution and Community Empowerment Bill proceeds through Parliament.

12.2 As agreed with the climate team, the use of the Sustainability Impact Assessment Tool is not appropriate for the Expression of Interest set out in this report.

13. BACKGROUND PAPERS

13.1 None
(END)

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Thames Valley Devolution EOI Letter

Dear Secretary of State,

We, the Leaders of the local authorities in the Thames Valley, are writing to you in your capacity as Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government regarding our desire for devolution and our inclusion on a future Devolution Programme.

We have carefully considered our rationale and case for devolution to this region and see a significant opportunity to drive growth and prosperity as a Mayoral Strategic Authority. Our £97 billion economy is already a core contributor to the national economy and will continue to add economic value through our highly productive and innovative businesses, constituting the sectors prioritised in the Modern Industrial Strategy and a large part of the Ox-Cam Corridor, a key national growth proposition. However, the region's post-pandemic recovery has been slower than the national trajectory, and our globally recognised clusters face increasingly strong competition. We will use the powers, investment and platform as an MSA to unlock constraints on growth, with the potential for the Thames Valley economy to be up to £18.7 billion a year larger by 2040, which corresponds to a £7 billion annual uplift in tax revenue contributions to the exchequer.

We have come together as strong local Leaders to pursue the significant opportunities of devolution for our communities. Whilst we acknowledge and respect our differing political and local priorities, together we recognise and collectively support the core economic rationale and strategic intention for delivering inclusive growth within a Thames Valley MSA. We stand ready with the strength of relationships, trust, track record, collective governance and ways of working required to work with Government and implement a successful MSA. We would like to work towards a first mayoral election in May 2027, in line with the current timeline for local government reorganisation.

Importance of the Thames Valley for the UK Economy

The Thames Valley serves as an innovation-driven and export-focused catalyst for UK economic growth, accounting for approximately 5% of England's total economy while comprising just 3.4% of its population. Our economy comprises world-renowned universities, respected research centres, and leading science parks filled with forward-thinking companies, driving innovation ecosystems that spur new ideas and growth across UK supply chains. Oxford University is a jewel in the UK's global research offer, and our partnerships with Reading University creates value for residents, businesses, and investors through key assets such as the Thames Valley Science Park, which hosts research facilities and archives for the Natural History Museum, British Museum and Kew Gardens. Our region is a globally compelling investment case, with major global companies such as Microsoft, Oracle, Redwood Technologies, Virgin, Vodafone, and Hewlett-Packard located in the UK's Silicon Valley along the M4 corridor, with direct links to London and Heathrow Airport. From the region that gave the world the Oxford–AstraZeneca COVID-19 vaccine, the Ellison Institute of Technology in Oxford is now investing over £10 billion in research and development to facilitate further globally significant advancements in artificial intelligence, robotics, and life

sciences. Major investment in AI infrastructure has been secured across the region, with the second largest concentration of data centres in the world in Slough and the first AI Growth Zone in Culham. We have high-performance manufacturing capabilities along the M40 corridor, exemplified by Plant Oxford, home to BMW Mini, extending into Banbury and the UK Motorsports Valley into the Midlands. We are home to world-famous tourist attractions, from Windsor to the Cotswolds, Oxford, Blenheim Palace and Bicester Village. We are known world-over as a great place to visit, live, innovate and invest. Our investment proposition is already backed by Government, with continued global promotion of the Oxford-Cambridge corridor, of which we are a core part, investment in East-West Rail, high-profile support through the Oxford Growth Commission and recent investment in the Cowley branch line.

The industrial composition of the Thames Valley directly aligns with almost all the sector strengths outlined in the Industrial Strategy – our economy is anchored by professional and business services, with notable capabilities in digital technologies, life sciences, advanced manufacturing and a prominent finance sector. The strength of the region's visitor economy not only supports our foundational sectors but also positively impacts our creative industries, especially our growing film and television cluster around Shinfield Studios. Proposed visitor economy investments, including the Puy du Fou Bicester, together with significant heritage landmarks would remain substantial contributors to export growth. Importantly, the Thames Valley demonstrates a strong orientation towards export activities: approximately 48% of the workforce is employed in exporting industries, and 40% hold positions within tradable sectors, both figures exceeding national averages. Exceptional productivity and economic complexity facilitate the dissemination of innovation across key sectors and strengthen supply chains nationwide. Furthermore, growth in GVA and household income in the Thames Valley has surpassed national rates, thereby improving local living standards and contributing positively to Exchequer revenues.

Signs of risk and stagnation

Despite the Thames Valley's underlying strength, the region has not re-established its pre-pandemic growth path. Post-Covid productivity indicators show mixed fortunes, even as the UK aggregate edged up through 2023, evidence that recovery here has been shallower than the national trend. If the region were to return to the pre-pandemic growth trajectory from 2027 onwards the Thames Valley economy would be up to £18.7bn a year larger by 2040. This matters for residents: a weaker trajectory means fewer high-value job opportunities and slower wage progression than would otherwise have been the case. Slower growth in the Thames Valley reverberates through national supply chains and weakens spillovers to other regions, putting at risk delivery of the Industrial Strategy's IS-8 ambitions on productivity, exports and business investment. It limits the pace at which discoveries are commercialised, dampens the pipeline of high-value FDI into the UK, and slows diffusion of technologies across the wider economy. Crucially, restoring the Thames Valley's growth trajectory would result in an estimated £7 billion increase in tax revenue contributions from residents and

businesses, directly strengthening the Government's ability to fund essential services and invest in long-term national priorities.¹

Scale and agglomeration to drive growth

To address these risks and realise our full economic potential, we need to leverage our potential for scale and agglomeration across our economic geographies. While each authorities' economy is individually strong, travel-to-work analysis reveals largely self-contained labour markets with currently limited cross-boundary matching and knowledge transfer across the region. In this current fragmentation lies a clear opportunity: given the region's complementary sector strengths the absence of integrated governance and coordinated connectivity means the Thames Valley is under-leveraging innovation adoption and diffusion and the opportunity to create a more unified labour market to scale economic growth.

Establishing an MSA with a growth mission at its core

We propose the establishment of a Thames Valley Mayoral Strategic Authority (MSA) as a decisive step towards realising inclusive growth across our region. By harnessing devolved powers, the MSA will transform thriving yet separate labour markets into a unified innovation economy, ensuring that prosperity is accessible to all communities. Through the implementation of a Local Growth Plan, we can extend and enhance the efforts of the Oxford Growth Commission to systematically address housing quantity, quality, and affordability across the Thames Valley, one of the key constraints on inclusive growth and a key driver of deprivation. MSA powers would enable accelerated delivery of affordable and social homes, around employment hubs. Integrated multi-modal, low carbon transport solutions could be expanded and expedited along the M4/M40 corridors, into Heathrow and across the Ox-Cam corridor, and critical investment in digital, water and energy infrastructure facilitated, strengthening connections between urban and rural residents and key economic growth nodes, and beyond. This infrastructure delivery would align with targeted skills and employment initiatives, developed with spatial awareness of our IS-8 strengths and a commitment to tackling deprivation and untapped potential within our communities. Enhanced collaboration and coordination enabled by the MSA would also position the region to more effectively address environmental priorities, including climate change and biodiversity.

Collectively, these measures would result in improved job opportunities, reduced commute times, and provide greater access to affordable housing for residents, supported by an aligned skills programme and transport system that matches talent to opportunity. For the UK, it means the Thames Valley driving national growth through faster innovation, stronger exports, and a bigger boost to the public purse.

We recognise the highly interconnected nature of the Thames Valley, with London, across the Ox-Cam Corridor and into the Midlands. A Thames Valley MSA will be a strategic


¹ This estimate is based off the ratio of GDP to national taxation (UK taxation as 37% of GDP) established by [Institute for Fiscal Studies](#) research

platform from which to go further and faster on pan-regional collaboration with our neighbours, including working on joint projects, spatial development and investment to drive wider economic growth. We are determined to use our Thames Valley partnership to further capitalise on economic scale and complementarity and compete across the globe.

If granted MSA status, the Thames Valley would be a fundamentally different kind of strategic authority – the largest by GVA outside of London, the MSA will be focused on unlocking constraints on an already high-performing economy so that all areas of the Thames Valley, and indeed beyond, benefit. We are therefore actively exploring innovative approaches to securing private investment and financing. Work is already underway to develop robust and viable propositions that match the scale and ambition for a Thames Valley MSA, and we look forward to working with Government to shape this more sustainable growth financing model.

Next steps

A Thames Valley MSA would unlock constrained, high-value growth, accelerate innovation diffusion across IS-8 sectors, and strengthen national fiscal headroom. We therefore ask that the Thames Valley be considered for inclusion in the next Devolution Programme, and we would welcome an early meeting to discuss this opportunity. We are ready to work in open dialogue with MHCLG and your officials to implement a new phase of devolution and make the best impact for our businesses, communities, and the country.

 WEST OXFORDSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL	WEST OXFORDSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL
Name and date of Committee	FULL COUNCIL – 3 DECEMBER 2025
Subject	APPOINTMENT OF INDEPENDENT MEMBER TO THE AUDIT & GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE
Wards affected	ALL
Accountable member	Cllr Carl Rylett – Chair, Audit & Governance Committee Email: carl.rylett@westoxon.gov.uk
Accountable officer	Andrea McCaskie, Director of Governance, Monitoring Officer Tel: 01993 861294; Email: andrea.mccaskie@westoxon.gov.uk
Report Author	Andrew Brown, Head of Democratic and Electoral Services Tel: 01993 861634; Email: democratic.services@westoxon.gov.uk
Summary/Purpose	To appoint one appropriately skilled and experienced member of the public to be an “independent member” of the Audit & Governance Committee.
Annexes	None
Recommendation	The Council resolves to: I. Appoint Victoria Field to the Council’s Audit & Governance Committee as an Independent Member for the remainder of the 4-year term ending on 25 September 2028.
Corporate priorities	Working Together for West Oxfordshire
Key Decision	No
Exempt	No
Consultees/ Consultation	Director of Finance

1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 1.1 Council is recommend to appoint a suitably qualified and experienced Independent Member to the Audit and Governance Committee following the resignation of Gemma Collings, who was appointed on 25 September 2024 for a 4 year term.

2. BACKGROUND

- 2.1 Independent Members serving on Audit and Governance Committees can bring specialist knowledge and insight to the workings and deliberations of the Committee which, when partnered with elected Members' knowledge of working practices and procedures, ensure:
 - An effective independent assurance of the adequacy of the risk management framework.
 - Independent review of the Council's financial and non-financial performance.
 - Independent challenge to and assurance over the Council's internal control framework and wider governance processes.
 - Oversight of the financial reporting process.
- 2.2 Following a review of the Audit and Governance Committee, Full Council, at its meeting on 22 May 2024, approved a recommendation from the Audit and Governance Committee to commence the recruitment of up to two Independent (non-elected) Members of the Audit and Governance Committee.
- 2.3 On 24 September 2024 Council appointed two members of the public, Richard Deuttenburg and Gemma Collings, to fulfil this role on the Committee for a 4-year term.
- 2.4 Gemma Collings later resigned from the role on 25 June 2025 due to a change in her personal circumstances.

3. RECRUITMENT

- 3.1 The vacant Independent Member role was advertised on the normal platforms and social media channels with a positive response resulting in twelve applications, three of whom were shortlisted for interview. The interview panel comprised the Director of Governance and Regulatory Services and the Head of Democratic and Electoral Services.
- 3.2 Victoria Field demonstrated that she meets the requirements of the person specification for the role and will bring appropriate expertise to the Committee. Therefore, Victoria Field is recommended for appointment.
- 3.3 Victoria Field is a retired local government officer with 30 years' experience in senior roles including responsibility for HR Shared Services at Oxfordshire County Council. Victoria is also a former parish councillor who lives within the district.

4. ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS

- 4.1 Council could decide not to proceed with the recommended appointment but this option is not recommended given that Council has previously agreed to have two

Independent Members on the Audit and Governance Committee and the candidate meets all of the requirements for the role.

5. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 The Members' Allowances Scheme provides that co-opted members of the Audit and Governance Committee may claim a co-optees' allowance of £75 for up to four hours and £150 for more than four hours but less than 24 hours, in respect of attendance at any meeting of the Committee, or at a conference or training event, where attendance is authorised by the Council.
- 5.2 Co-opted members of committees are also entitled to travel and subsistence allowances on the same basis as councillors.
- 5.3 Any such costs will be funded by the budget for members' allowances.

6. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1 The responsibilities of the Audit and Governance Committee are set out in Part 3C of the Council's Constitution. The purpose of the Committee is to provide assurance to elected members and the public about the governance, financial reporting and performance of the Council.
- 6.2 The appointment of Independent Members on the Committee is not a legal requirement but is considered to be good practice and will assist and promote good governance.

7. RISK IMPLICATIONS

- 7.1 The Audit and Governance Committee has a role in overseeing the Council's internal controls and risk management arrangements. The appointment of Independent Members is intended to strengthen the expertise and skills of the Committee.
- 7.2 If the Council chose not to appoint to the vacant Independent Member role on the Audit and Governance Committee there is a risk that the Committee would not operate in accordance with good practice.

8. EQUALITIES IMPACT

- 8.1 Equalities issues were taken into account as part of the recruitment and selection exercise. Council is advised to have due regard to equalities issues when making appointments.


9. CLIMATE AND ECOLOGICAL EMERGENCIES IMPLICATIONS

- 9.1 There will be a requirement for the two Independent Members to travel to meetings of the Audit and Governance Committee. However, any emissions associated with this travel are likely to be more than offset by the recent reduction in the size of the Committee from 17 to 11 Councillors.

10. BACKGROUND PAPERS

None.

(END)

 WEST OXFORDSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL	WEST OXFORDSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL
Name and date of Committee	COUNCIL - 3 DECEMBER 2025
Subject	RECOMMENDATIONS FROM THE CONSTITUTION WORKING GROUP
Wards affected	None
Accountable member	Councillor Alaric Smith, Chair of the Constitution Working Group and Executive Member for Finance; Email: Alaric.Smith@westoxon.gov.uk
Accountable officer	Andrea McCaskie, Director of Governance and Regulatory Services Email: democratic.services@westoxon.gov.uk
Report author	Ana Prelici, Senior Democratic Services Officer Email: democratic.services@westoxon.gov.uk
Summary/Purpose	The Constitution Working Group met on 19 November, this report summarises their proposed recommendations.
Annexes	Annex A – Part 3C extract with changes shown Annex B – Part 5A Council Procedure Rules with amendment shown
Recommendation(s)	<p>That Council resolves to:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Agree the amendment (shown in Annex A) to Part 3C of the Constitution Audit and Governance terms of reference following a recommendation from the Council’s external auditor that the Council clarifies, within its Constitution, the responsibility for the assessment of the Council's Capital, Investment and Treasury Management Strategies as part of the annual budget setting process. 2. Agree to remove Rule 5 of the Council Procedure Rules “Special meetings” as well as any other reference to special meetings.
Corporate priorities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Working Together for West Oxfordshire
Key Decision	NO
Exempt	NO

Consultees/ Consultation	Head of Democratic and Electoral Services

1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 1.1** The Constitution Working Group (CWG) met on 19 November 2025 and this report summarises their proposed recommendations.

2. AUDIT AND GOVERNANCE TERMS OF REFERENCE

- 2.1** There was a recommendation from the Council's previous external auditor that the Council clarifies, within its Constitution, the responsibility for the assessment of the Council's Capital, Investment and Treasury Management Strategies as part of the annual budget setting process.
- 2.2** The terms of reference of the Audit and Governance Committee (Part 3C: Committee Functions) states that one of its functions includes:
Reviewing and monitoring treasury management arrangements in accordance with the CIPFA Treasury Management Code of Practice.
- 2.3** It was suggested that this be replaced with:
As part of the annual budget setting process, review and assess that the Treasury Management, Capital and Investment Strategies are prepared in accordance with CIPFA's Prudential Code and the Treasury Management Code of Practice (2021 editions), and the Ministry of Housing, Community and Local Government (MHCLG) revised Guidance on Local Government Investments.
- 2.4** The CWG agreed to make this recommendation to Council.

3. RULE 5 – SPECIAL MEETINGS

- 3.1** The Council Procedure Rules (Part 5A – Annex B) include provisions for Extraordinary Council Meetings and Special Council Meetings. The rules for calling Special Meetings and Extraordinary Meetings are similar, the exception being a slight difference in who can call meetings and whether urgent items can be referred to them. Special meetings can be called by the Chief Executive as requested by Chair, Monitoring Officer and Council (by resolution) while Extraordinary Meetings can also be requested by the Leader of the Council, the Head of Paid Service and the Chief Financial Officer and can have urgent items referred to them.
- 3.2** This was discussed at the CWG , as Officers found having two types of Special/Extraordinary Meetings unnecessary. The CWG agreed to remove the Special Meetings category and to clarify this, on the basis that all those who can call a Special Meeting can call an Extraordinary Meeting, the Special Meeting category was not considered necessary.

4. ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS

- 4.1** Council could choose to not agree the recommendations of the CWG.

5. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 1.1.** The proposed change to the Audit and Governance Committee terms of reference relates to the budget setting process but there are no financial implications arising directly from the recommendations in this report.

6. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1** There are no legal implications relating to this report.

7. EQUALITIES IMPACT

- 7.1** None.

8. SUSTAINABILITY IMPLICATIONS

- 8.1** None.

9. BACKGROUND PAPERS

- 9.1** None.

(END)

3C Committee Functions

- 3C.1 Council has established the Committees set out in the table below to discharge certain functions but retains the right to a concurrent and overriding exercise of all functions in the table below. Unless otherwise required by law, a Committee or Sub-Committee may determine not to exercise a function delegated to it and refer that function upwards for determination by Council or the ‘parent’ Committee
- 3C.2 The Council must have at least one Overview and Scrutiny Committee
- 3C.3 A Committee may establish such Sub-Committee(s) as it sees fit to undertake certain of its functions and the Table below include such Sub-Committees. (If applicable)

...

Audit and Governance Committee	
Governance, risk and control	
I	<p>Monitor the adequacy and effectiveness of the Council’s governance arrangements including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Monitoring the effectiveness of the Chief Finance Officer’s responsibility for ensuring an adequate internal control environment; To approve the Risk Management Policy Statement and monitor its operation; Monitoring the arrangements for the identification, monitoring and control of strategic and operational risk within the Council; Monitoring the adequacy and effectiveness of the arrangements in place for combating fraud and corruption; Providing an annual report to Council that its systems of governance are operating effectively, which includes the Committee’s performance in relation to the terms of reference; Reviewing and approving the annual Statement of Accounts, Annual Governance Statement and its associated assurance framework; As part of the annual budget setting process, review and assess that the Treasury Management, Capital and Investment Strategies are prepared in accordance with CIPFA’s Prudential Code and the Treasury Management

	<p>Code of Practice (2021 editions), and the Ministry of Housing, Community and Local Government (MHCLG) revised Guidance on Local Government Investments.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Considering the Council's arrangements to secure value for money and review assurances and assessments on the effectiveness of these arrangements; • Ensuring that Internal Audit has the right of independent access to the Committee and its Chair; • Reviewing and monitoring treasury management arrangements in accordance with the CIPFA Treasury Management Code of Practice; • Considering and advising changes to the Council's Constitution in respect of Contract Standing Orders and Financial Regulations; • Formulating and keeping under review a Code of Conduct to promote high ethical standards amongst Officers and doing anything that is considered to promote and maintain high standards of conduct by Officers; • Formulating and keeping under review the Council's 'whistle-blowing' policy; • Formulating and keeping under review the Council's arrangements for handling complaints and investigations by the Local Government Ombudsman, and • Monitor the adequacy and effectiveness of cyber security arrangements (the protection of information systems, hardware, software and associated infrastructure, the data on them, and the services they provide, from unauthorised access, harm or misuse). This includes harm caused intentionally by the operator of the system, or accidentally, as a result of failing to follow security procedures.
Ethics and Behaviours	
2	<p>To promote, maintain and assist the achievement of high standards of conduct by Councillors and co-opted members in accordance with the Council's Code of Conduct for Members.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To monitor the operation of the Code of Conduct for Members; • To advise the Council on any amendment or revision of the Code; • To secure adequate and appropriate training of Councillors and co-opted Members on the Code of Conduct for Members; • To give general guidance and advice to Councillors on Members' interests and keep under review the Register of Members' Interests maintained by the Monitoring Officer; and • To give general guidance and advice to Councillors and employees on gifts and hospitality; • To receive a report, at least annually, from the Council's Monitoring Officer with a summary of conduct complaints received, trends and key issues arising.
External Audit	

3	<p>Monitor the adequacy and effectiveness of the Council’s external audit service and respond to its findings. Specifically:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Considering the appointment, nature and scope of the external audit of the Council’s services and functions; • Receiving and considering all external audit reports including the annual plan, annual audit letter and governance report; and • Monitoring management’s response to the external auditor’s findings and the implementation of external audit recommendations.
Internal Audit	
4	<p>Monitor the adequacy and effectiveness of the Internal Audit service. Specifically:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Approving the Internal Audit Charter; • Approving the annual risk based Internal Audit Plan; • Receiving communications from the Chief Internal Auditor on the internal audit activity’s performance relative to its plan and other matters, including the annual report and opinion; • Receiving and considering major Internal Audit findings and recommendations; • Monitoring management’s response to Internal Audit findings and the implementation of the recommendations; • Making appropriate enquiries of management and the Chief Internal Auditor to determine whether there are inappropriate scope and resource limitations; • Agreeing the scope and form of the external assessment as part of the quality assurance and improvement plan; • Receiving the results of internal and external assessments of the quality assurance and improvement programme, including areas of non-conformance with professional standards; and • Approving significant consulting services not already included in the audit plan, prior to acceptance of the engagement, if this materially impacts on core assurance activity.
	Powers
5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Committee has the right to require the attendance of any Council officers and/or members in order to respond directly to any issue under consideration; • To review any issues referred to it by the Chief Executive, other statutory officer or any Council body; • The power to report and make recommendations to Council; • The power to call expert witnesses from outside the Council to give advice on matters under review or discussion; • The ability to raise issues at a meeting of the Executive; and • The power to establish Sub-Committees.

	Membership
6	<p>There are 11 seats on the Audit and Governance Committee. Appointments to those seats shall be made by full Council in accordance with the regulations regarding political proportionality, unless a Group Leader confirms to Council that the political group does not wish to take up their allocation of seats. No members of the Executive may sit on the Audit and Governance Committee.</p> <p>The membership of the Audit and Governance Committee may also include up to two Independent Persons as non-elected co-opted members (without voting rights).</p> <p>The quorum for a meeting of the Audit and Governance Committee shall be 4 Members.</p> <p>The Audit and Governance Committee shall elect its own Chair from its membership.</p> <p>Subject to Part 5A paragraph 2.3.8, substitute members are permitted from amongst any Elected Members of the Council.</p> <p>The Audit and Governance Committee has the power to establish Sub-Committees, and to appoint members to those Sub-Committees from the membership of the Committee, and to establish the terms of reference for any such Sub-Committee. Any such Sub-Committee shall elect its own Chair and shall report back to its 'parent' Committee. The powers of any Sub-Committee are also exercisable by its 'parent' Committee, subject to when exercising the function of determination of a code of conduct complaint, the mandatory training must have been completed by all Members.</p> <p>The Audit and Governance Committee has established 1 Sub-Committee:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Standards Sub-Committee
Standards Sub-Committee	
	Powers
1	<p>The Standards Sub-Committee is responsible for determining, in conjunction with the Independent Person, allegations that Members of the Council, and Members of Town and Parish Councils where West Oxfordshire District Council is the Principal Authority, have failed to comply with their Member's Code of Conduct. Specifically to determine allegations of breach of the code of conduct referred to it by the Monitoring Officer, and to, where appropriate, impose sanctions upon Members of West Oxfordshire District Council, and, where appropriate, recommend sanctions to the relevant Town or Parish Council in respect of their Members. Any such determination by the Standards Sub-Committee should</p>

	be made in accordance with the Standards Sub-Committee Procedure Rules as set out in Part 5E of the Constitution.
	Membership
2	<p>There are 5 seats on the Standards Sub-Committee. Quorum for meetings of the Standards Sub-Committee shall be 3 Members.</p> <p>Membership of the Standards Sub-Committee must be from the membership of the Audit and Governance Committee. Members are allocated to the Sub-Committee by the Audit and Governance Committee. Allocation of seats on the Standards Sub-Committee shall be in accordance with the regulations relating to political proportionality of Committees and Sub-Committees, unless political groups confirm that they do not wish to take up their allocation of seats on the Sub-Committee. If so, that would allow the Audit and Governance Committee to appoint to the Standards Sub-Committee without regard to political balance, but still from within its own membership.</p> <p>Subject to Part 5A paragraph 2.3.8, substitutes on the Standards Sub-Committee are permitted from any Member of the Audit and Governance Committee. However, no Member may sit on the Standards Sub-Committee, either as a Member or a substitute Member, when determining a code of conduct complaint, unless they have undertaken the mandatory training.</p> <p>The Standards Sub-Committee shall elect their own Chair from within their membership.</p>

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Part 5: Policy and Procedure Rules

5A Council Procedure Rules

...

RULE 4: Extraordinary Meetings of Council

4.1 Calling an Extraordinary Meeting

Those listed below may require the Chief Executive to summons Members to Council meetings in addition to Ordinary meetings:

- the Council by resolution;
- the Chair of the Council;
- the Leader of the Council;
- the Head of Paid Service;
- the Monitoring Officer;
- the Chief Financial Officer; and

Any 5 members of the Council, if they have signed a requisition presented to the Chair who has refused or failed to call a meeting within 7 calendar days of presentation of the requisition. Any such requisition will be deemed to have been presented to the Chair if emailed to the Monitoring Officer at democratic.services@westoxon.gov.uk.

4.2 Business

Extraordinary Meetings will:

- i) Elect a Councillor, who is not a Member of the Executive, to preside if both the Chair and Vice-Chair are not present;
- ii) Receive any apologies for absence;
- iii) Receive any declarations of interests;
- iv) In accordance with Council Procedure Rule 11 receive any questions from the public;
- v) Consider the single item of business specified in the summons to the meeting (a single item may be made up of more than one part provided that they all relate to a single subject);
- vi) Consider any business that the Chair deems to be urgent, having taken advice from the Monitoring Officer or their representative, in that the matter to be determined

Part 5A – Council Procedure Rules

NB: Numbering to also be updated, rule 6 becomes rule 5 etc.

has arisen since the publication of the agenda and failure to determine it at this meeting would cause significant adverse impact to the Council.

RULE 5: Special Meetings of Council

~~A Special Meeting of the Council is one that is required by statute or by the Council and shall only consider a single substantive item of business. The meeting shall be convened for the specific statutory purpose which shall be contained in the summons. No other business may be transacted at that meeting.~~

~~5.1 Calling a Special Meeting~~

~~Those listed below may require the Chief Executive to summons Members to a Special Meeting of Council:~~

- ~~• The Council by resolution;~~
- ~~• The Chair; and~~
- ~~• The Monitoring Officer.~~

~~5.2 Business~~

~~Special Meetings will:~~

- ~~i) Elect a Councillor, who is not a Member of the Executive, to preside if the Chair and Vice-Chair are not present;~~
- ~~ii) Receive apologies for absence;~~
- ~~iii) Receive any declarations of interests;~~
- ~~iv) Receive questions from members of the public in accordance with Council Procedure Rule 11, relating to the specific single item of business on the agenda; and~~
- ~~v) Consider the specific item of business for which the meeting has been convened.~~

RULE 6: Time and Location of Meetings

An annual calendar of meetings will be agreed by Council and will detail the dates of all meetings.

6.1 Council

Both the annual and ordinary meetings of Council will commence at 2pm and be held at the Council Chamber at Woodgreen, unless:

- The Council resolves otherwise; or
- For some practical reason this is not possible or appropriate, in which case the meeting will be held at another location, to be decided by the Chief Executive, after consulting the Chair and Leader of the Council.

If an emergency occurs, the Chief Executive may, after consulting with such of the Chair, the Leader of the Council and Leaders of the Political Groups as may conveniently be contacted, vary any arrangement agreed by the Council for the holding of Council meetings.

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NB: Numbering to also be updated, rule 6 becomes rule 5 etc.

No meeting of the Council shall, except in an emergency, be held on a Friday evening, Saturday, Sunday, Bank Holiday or day on which the Council shall have granted a general holiday for its employees.

The time and location of Extraordinary and Special Council meetings will be determined by the Chief Executive, in consultation with the Chair and Vice Chair, and will be notified to all Member on the summons to the meeting.

6.2 Committees

The timing of meetings will be agreed by the respective Council Committees and Sub-Committees at their first meeting of the civic year. Such Council Committee meetings will usually be held at Woodgreen.

The timing and location of Executive meetings will be determined by the Leader, in consultation with the Monitoring Officer, and will be notified on the summons to meetings.

The Monitoring Officer is authorised to cancel meetings and to reschedule meetings with reasons and in consultation with the Chief Executive and the relevant Chair of the Council, a Committee or Sub Committee, provided that the agenda for the meeting has not been published.

RULE 7: Notice of and Summons to Meetings

The Chief Executive will give notice to the public of the time and place of any meeting in accordance with the Access to Information Rules, by publishing the time and location of the meeting on the Council's website. Where the meeting is called by Members of the Council, the notice shall be signed by those Members and shall specify the purpose of the meeting.

At least five clear working days before the day of the meeting, the Chief Executive will send a summons or agenda, signed by or on behalf of him or her, to every Member of the Council, by electronic mail, by post or by leaving it at their usual place of residence. The summons or agenda will give the date, time and location of each meeting and specify the business to be transacted, and will be accompanied by relevant reports, or shall provide access to such reports electronically.

RULE 8: Chair of Meeting

The person presiding at the meeting may exercise any power or duty of the Chair. If it is necessary to choose a Member of the Council (who cannot be a Member of the Executive) to preside in the absence of the Chair and the Vice-Chair, the Monitoring Officer or their representative will preside and call for a motion that a Member of the Council take the Chair. If there is any debate on the motion then that Officer shall have all the powers of the Chair for the purposes of that debate.

The ruling of the Chair, having taken advice from the Monitoring Officer or their representative, as to the construction or application of any of these Rules, or as to any proceedings of the Council, shall not be challenged at any meeting of the Council. Where these rules apply to Committee and sub-Committee meetings, references to the Chair also include the Chair of Committees and sub-Committees.

Part 5A – Council Procedure Rules

NB: Numbering to also be updated, rule 6 becomes rule 5 etc.

The Chair of a Council or Committee meeting can ask the meeting to agree to a change in the order of business on an agenda, except for the first two items at an Annual Council meeting.

RULE 9: Quorum

The quorum of a meeting of the Council will be one quarter of the whole number of Members of the Council.

The quorum of any meeting of a Committee or sub-Committee shall be:

- not less than one quarter of the total membership of the Committee or sub-Committee; and
- subject to a minimum of three

If at any time during a meeting the number of members in attendance falls below the quorum, the person presiding will declare that there is not a quorum present, and the meeting will stand adjourned for 15 minutes. If, after 15 minutes, the person presiding declares that there is still no quorum present, then the meeting will be adjourned and any remaining business considered at the next meeting.

The consideration of all business which is on the agenda of a meeting brought to an end in this way, and which has not been completed before the meeting is brought to an end, shall be postponed to the next meeting, whether Ordinary, Extraordinary or Special, insofar as is allowed by law.

RULE 10: Duration of Meetings

Where any meeting of the Council, a Committee or Sub-Committee, has lasted 3 hours, the person presiding will interrupt the meeting and any Member speaking shall stop speaking. The person presiding shall, without discussion, take a vote on whether or not the Members of the meeting wish it to continue.

Unless a majority of members present vote for the meeting to continue, then the person presiding shall, without further discussion, take a vote on the item under discussion and then the meeting shall stand adjourned. The remaining business will be considered at a time and date fixed by the Chair of the Council or Committee at that time, or, if they do not fix a time and date, at the next meeting of the Council or Committee.

If the majority of Members present vote to continue the meeting, then a further vote on whether or not to continue the meeting will take place on an hourly basis thereafter.

This Council Procedure Rule does not apply to meetings dealing with matters arising under the Licensing Act 2003 and the Gambling Act 2005, Committee meetings dealing with staff appointments or staff appeals and Standards Sub-Committee meetings dealing with code of conduct determinations.

RULE 11: Questions and Engagement By the Public

11.1 Questions on Notice by the Public

Part 5A – Council Procedure Rules

NB: Numbering to also be updated, rule 6 becomes rule 5 etc.

A member of the public who lives, works, or studies in West Oxfordshire may ask questions of the Chair of Council, any Member of the Executive or the Chair of any Committee, on any matter in relation to which the Council has powers or duties or which affects the District.

A member of the public is limited to asking one such question at any meeting of the Council, other than Annual Council. No more than one question can be asked on behalf of any organisation or body at any Council meeting.

Notice that the question is to be asked, together with a written copy of the question, must be provided to the Monitoring Officer, via email to democratic.services@westoxon.gov.uk, or by post, to be received no later than noon on the seventh working day before the day of the meeting.

No questions from the public will be allowed where the requisite notice has not been given.

11.2 Grounds for refusal of a Public Question

The Monitoring Officer may reject a question if, in their opinion, it:

- Does not relate to a matter for which the Council has responsibility or does not affect the District or his residents, communities or businesses;
- Is Defamatory, frivolous, vexatious or offensive;
- It refers to legal proceedings taken or anticipated by or against the Council;
- It is substantially the same as a question which has been put to a meeting of Council in the previous 6 months;
- It requires the disclosure of confidential or exempt information; or
- It would more appropriately be responded to by the Council under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 or the Data Protection Act 1998 as amended.

11.3 Asking the Question and Responding

Copies of all questions, save for those that have been rejected, will be included in the briefing document circulated to all Members of the Council, and made available to the public attending the meetings via the Council's website, at least one clear working day prior to the meeting.

The member of the public may attend in person to ask their question, as written, or in their absence, or where they prefer, the question may be read out by the Chair of the Council, or the Monitoring Officer or their representative.

Questions will be taken in the order in which they were received by Democratic Services, except that the Chair may group similar questions together.

The response will take the form of:

- A direct verbal answer;
- Where the desired information is in a publication of the Council or other published work, a reference to that publication; or
- Where the reply cannot conveniently be given verbally, a written response within 3

Part 5A – Council Procedure Rules

NB: Numbering to also be updated, rule 6 becomes rule 5 etc.

clear working days, to be circulated to all Members of the Council.

The response will be recorded and incorporated into the minutes of the meeting.

11.4 Supplementary Questions

The member of the public may ask a supplementary question, which must arise directly from the question itself or the response provided to the question. The Member may provide a verbal response or provide a written response to the supplementary question within 3 clear working days, to also be circulated to all Members of the Council.

No discussion will take place in respect of any question or supplementary question.

11.5 Time Limits

There is no time limit for an individual question, but there shall be a maximum total of 15 minutes allowed for questions from members of the public. If the 15 minutes expires during a question or supplementary question, the Chair may allow the question to be heard and responded to, and any supplementary question also to be put and responded to. Where the 15 minutes is not used for this purpose, any remaining time may be used for Member questions in accordance with Rule 12.1.4.

Where a question cannot be responded to during public question time due to a lack of time, it will be dealt with by way of a written response within 3 clear working days, to also be circulated to all Members.

11.6 Referral to the Executive or a Committee

In addition, any Member of the Council may move that a matter raised by a question, be referred to either the Executive or a Committee. Once seconded, such a motion will be voted on without discussion.

This provision shall apply only at Council meetings.

11.7 Petitions

Petitions, other than statutory petitions, shall be managed in accordance with the Council's Petition Scheme set out in Part 6E of the Constitution.

RULE 12: Questions by Members

12.1 Questions on Notice by Members

12.1.1 Notice and Scope

Provided that the Member has given written notice to the Monitoring Officer, via email to democratic.services@westoxon.gov.uk, by no later than 12 noon on the seventh working day before the date of the meeting, at a Council meeting, a Member of the Council may ask:

- the Chair;

Part 5A – Council Procedure Rules

NB: Numbering to also be updated, rule 6 becomes rule 5 etc.

- a Member of the Executive;
- the Chair of any Committee;
- the Council's representative on any outside body

a question on any matter in relation to which the Council has powers or duties or which affects the District, (subject to Rule 12.2 below).

12.1.2 Urgency

Any Member of the Council may ask a question of the Chair or Leader of the Council where it relates to an urgent matter, which could not have been foreseen 7 working days before the meeting and cannot reasonably be left in abeyance until the next scheduled Council meeting, provided they have the consent of the Chair of the Council, and that notice and a written copy of the question have been provided to the Monitoring Officer, via email to democratic.services@westoxon.gov.uk, by no later than 10.00am of the day of the meeting.

12.1.3 Scope

The Monitoring Officer may reject any such question if it relates to:

- A decision of the Development Control Committee or its Sub-Committees on a specific Planning application;
- A decision of the Standards Sub-Committee on a Standards determination;
- A decision of a Licensing Committee on a specific application, review or similar matter;
- A decision on a staffing appointment or appeal relating to an Individual;
- A matter which is substantially the same as a question which has been put to a meeting of the full Council by a Member of that Council within the previous 6 month period.

12.1.4 Asking and Responding to the Question

Every question put and answered shall be without discussion.

The question will be included in writing in a briefing document to all Members, published on the Council website, and circulated at least one clear working day prior to the Council meeting.

The person to whom a written question has been put may refer it to another Member for written response.

The response will be in writing. The written response will also be included in the briefing document and circulated to all Members, and published on the Council's website, at least one clear working day prior to the day of the meeting.

Where the desired information is in a publication of the Council or other published work, the written response may simply be a reference to that publication.

12.1.5 Supplementary Question

Part 5A – Council Procedure Rules

NB: Numbering to also be updated, rule 6 becomes rule 5 etc.

A Member submitting a question under this Council Procedure Rule may ask one supplementary question, without notice, of the Member to whom the first question was put, or of the Member who provided the written response. The supplementary question must arise directly out of the original question or the response to it. The Member may provide a verbal response or provide a written response to the supplementary question within 3 clear working days. Where a written response is provided, it should be circulated to all Members of the Council.

12.1.6 Referral to the Executive or a Committee

In addition, any Member may move that a matter raised by a question be referred to the Executive or a Committee. Once seconded, such a motion will be voted on without discussion.

12.1.7 Time Limits

Questions will be taken in the order in which notice was given, save that the Chair may group similar questions together.

There is no time limit for each individual question but 15 minutes shall be allowed in total for Member questions. If the 15 minutes expires during a question or supplementary question, the Chair may allow the question to be heard and responded to, and any supplementary question also to be put and responded to. 15 minutes is also allowed for public questions, and if this has not been used, the remainder of this time may be added to the 15 minutes allowed for Member Questions.

Where a supplementary question cannot be responded to during member question time due to a lack of time, it will be dealt with by way of a written response to be circulated to all Members within 3 clear working days.

12.1.8 Record

Questions asked on notice at Council under this procedure rule will be recorded in the minutes, and published on the Council's website, as will any response provided.

This provision shall apply only at Council meetings.

12.2 Questions by Members Without Notice

A Member may ask a question, at a meeting of Council, without notice as follows:

- (i) A Member of the Council may ask the Leader or the Chair of a Committee any question on an item on the agenda when that item is being considered. Such questions should be raised prior to the item being moved or seconded;
- (ii) A Member of the Council may ask the Chair, Leader, Member of the Executive or the Head of Paid Service, Chief Financial Officer or Monitoring Officer, a question arising from an announcement made at the meeting;

RULE 13: Motions on Notice

13.1 Notice

Except for motions which can be moved without notice under Council Procedure Rule 14, written notice of every motion, signed by the Member or Members of the Council giving notice, must be delivered to the Monitoring Officer, via email to democratic.services@westoxon.gov.uk, no later than noon on the seventh working day before the date of the meeting. An electronic signature will suffice. The Member or Members should ensure they obtain an acknowledgement of its receipt.

Motions will be dated and numbered and entered sequentially in a book which shall be open to public inspection.

13.2 Motion set out on agenda

Accepted motions of which notice has been given will be listed on the agenda, unless the Member or Members giving notice state, in writing, via email to the Monitoring Officer at democratic.services@westoxon.gov.uk, by 10am on the date of the meeting, that they propose to move it to a later meeting or withdraw it. All accepted motions shall be published on the Council's website.

Motions will be taken in the order in which they were received, subject to the requirement to rotate motions from each political group. Any motion from the largest political group will be taken first, followed by each other political group in order of size, followed by any motion from a member not part of a political group.

The maximum number of accepted notices to be presented at a Council meeting shall be as follows: 2 each from the 3 largest political groups; 1 each from any other political group; and 1 from any Member not belonging to a political group.

13.3 Scope

Motions must be about matters for which the Council has powers or duties or which affect the District.

Any motion must be limited to 500 words.

A motion may be rejected by the Monitoring Officer, if in their opinion, the motion:

- Is not relevant either to some matter in relation to which the Council has powers or duties or it does not affect the District; or
- Is defamatory, frivolous, unlawful, vexatious or offensive; or
- Refers to legal proceedings taken or anticipated by or against the Council; or
- Is substantially the same as a motion which has been received and accepted in the previous 6 months; or
- Requires to disclosure of confidential or exempt information; or
- Is improper, out of order, or not relevant.

Where a motion is rejected by the Monitoring Officer, they shall return the Motion to the Member of the Council who gave notice of it, stating that it will not be inserted on the agenda, and providing reasons for that decision.

Where the Council is in the process of consulting with the public on a proposal, or responding to a formal consultation process, no notice of motion expressing support or objecting to the proposals shall be accepted.

13.4 Time limit

There will be a total maximum time period for Motions on Notice of 60 minutes but no time limit for dealing with each motion.

13.5 Motion not proposed at Meeting

If a motion set out in the agenda is not proposed either by a Member who gave notice of it or by some other Member acting on their behalf it shall, unless postponed by consent, shown by a majority vote of those present, of the Council, be treated as withdrawn and shall not be further moved without fresh notice. In accordance with Council procedure Rule 13.3 above this cannot be until a period of 6 months has expired.

13.6 Action on the Motion

If the subject matter of any motion of which notice has been given falls within the remit of any Committee of the Council, or of the Executive, when it has been proposed and seconded it shall stand referred without discussion to that Committee or the Executive.

If the matter requires a decision of the Executive, the decision of the Executive shall be available to all Members via the minutes of the Executive meeting. If the matter stands referred to a Committee, the Council may decide whether it shall be decided by that Committee or whether action is to be taken by the Council on report of that Committee to a future Council meeting.

Notwithstanding the above, if the subject matter is to be determined by the Council and is not an Executive matter, the Chair may, if they consider it convenient and conducive to the conduct of business, allow it to be dealt with at the Council meeting at which it is brought forward.

13.7 Attendance at Meeting considering Motion

If a Motion is referred to a Committee of which the proposer, or the seconder in the absence of the proposer, is not a Member, or to the Executive, the proposer shall be entitled to attend that meeting and to explain the Motion. The Member may answer questions from the Executive or Committee, for the purposes of clarification, prior to any debate and may sit with the Committee or Executive for the item in question, subject to the access to information procedure rules. The Member may not partake in the debate, nor vote upon the item.

RULE 14: Motions without Notice

The following motions, and amendments to motions, may be moved without notice:

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NB: Numbering to also be updated, rule 6 becomes rule 5 etc.

- to appoint a Chair of the meeting at which the motion is moved;
- in relation to the accuracy of the minutes;
- to change the order of business in the agenda;
- to refer something to an appropriate body or individual, including referring any matter for consideration by the Executive or a Committee;
- to appoint a Committee or Member arising from an item on the summons for the meeting;
- to receive reports or adopt the recommendations of the Executive, Committees or Officers and any resolutions arising from them;
- to withdraw a motion;
- to extend the time limit for speeches;
- to amend a motion;
- to postpone consideration of a motion;
- to proceed to the next business;
- to take an immediate vote on a motion;
- to adjourn a debate;
- to adjourn a meeting;
- that the meeting continue beyond three hours in duration;
- to suspend a particular Council procedure rule;
- to exclude the public and press in accordance with the Access to Information Rules;
- to not hear further a member named under Rule 23 or to exclude them from the meeting under that Rule; and
- to give the consent of the Council where its consent is required by this Constitution;
- motions relating to a vote by way of ballot;
- motions relating to announcements from the Chair, Leader, Members of the Executive, Head of Paid Service, Chief Financial Officer or Monitoring Officer;
- To carry out a statutory duty of the Council which, by reason of special circumstances, the Chair is of the opinion should be considered at the meeting as a matter of urgency;
- To invite a Member to withdraw in accordance with the Members' Code of Conduct.

RULE 15: Rules of Debate for Council

Rules of debate for the consideration and determination of the annual budget, reference is made to the Council's Budget Procedure Rules in Part 5J of the Constitution.

15.1 Management of the debate

The Chair shall have the control of any debate and will use discretion to ensure the effective, efficient, fair and orderly conduct of the business.

The Chair will normally follow the rules set out in this Council Procedure Rule but the Chair's interpretation, application or waiver of these rules of debate will be final.

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NB: Numbering to also be updated, rule 6 becomes rule 5 etc.

15.2 Speeches and Questions

Before moving the motion, the proposer will take any questions on the motion from Members. Such questions must directly relate to the motion being proposed and are restricted to questions directly relating to clarity of what is proposed.

No speeches or debate may be made after the mover has moved a proposal or amendment until the motion or amendment has been seconded.

Once a proposal has been moved and seconded, no questions nor answers are permitted, other than in respect of an amendment to the motion prior to such an amendment being moved. Once proposed and seconded, only speeches or debate are permitted.

15.3 Right to require Motion in writing

Unless notice of the motion has already been given, the Chair may require it to be written down and handed to him/her before it is discussed or put to the meeting.

15.4 Secunder's Speech

When seconding a motion or amendment, a Member may reserve their speech until later in the debate.

15.5 Content and Length of Speeches

Speeches must be directed to the motion under consideration or to a personal explanation or point of order.

No speech by the proposer of a motion (but not an amendment) shall exceed 10 minutes, when proposing the motion and when exercising the right of reply at the close of debate on a motion. All other speeches in a debate shall not exceed 5 minutes. This rule is subject to the consent of the meeting to extend a speech.

15.6 When a Member may speak again

A Member who has spoken on a motion may not speak again whilst it is the subject of debate, except:

- to speak once on an amendment moved by another Member;
- to move a further amendment if the motion has been amended since they last spoke;
- if their first speech was on an amendment moved by another Member, to speak on the main issue (whether or not the amendment on which they spoke was carried);
- in exercise of a right of reply;
- on a point of order; and
- by way of personal explanation.

15.7 Amendments to Motions

An amendment to a motion must be relevant to the motion and will either be:

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NB: Numbering to also be updated, rule 6 becomes rule 5 etc.

- to refer the matter to an appropriate body or individual, including the Executive or a Committee, for consideration or reconsideration;
- to give guidance to the Executive or Committee on a subject determined under delegated powers;
- to amend the wording of the motion, provided that the effect is not to negate the motion or introduce a new proposal into the debate.

If necessary, the Chair, or an Officer supporting them, will read out the amended motion before the amendment is put.

If the Chair is of the opinion that any amendment proposed is of a defamatory, frivolous, vexatious or offensive nature, they may immediately put to the vote a motion that the amendment not be entertained or further permitted. If such a motion is seconded, a vote shall be taken without debate. If carried, the amendment will not be permitted and shall be considered disposed of.

Only one amendment may be moved and discussed at any one time. No further amendment may be moved until the amendment under discussion has been disposed of, but the Chair may permit two or more amendments to be discussed together (but not voted on) if in their opinion this would facilitate the conduct of the business.

If an amendment is not carried, other amendments to the original motion may be moved, provided that no such amendment may have a similar effect to one previously determined by the meeting.

If an amendment is carried, the motion as amended takes the place of the original motion. This becomes the substantive motion to which any further amendments are moved.

After an amendment has been carried, the Chair or an Officer supporting them, will read out the amended motion before accepting any further amendments.

After all amendments have been considered and determined there shall be an opportunity for further debate on the original motion, as amended or otherwise, as the case may be, prior to the taking of a vote.

15.8 Alteration of Motion

With the consent of the seconder, and the Council, signified without discussion, a Member may alter: -

- a motion of which they have given notice; or
- a motion which they have moved without notice; or
- an amendment to a motion they have moved.

Only alterations which could be made as an amendment to the motion may be made.

15.9 Withdrawal of Motion

A Member may withdraw a motion of which they have given notice, by simply not proposing it at the meeting.

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NB: Numbering to also be updated, rule 6 becomes rule 5 etc.

A Member may withdraw a motion, or an amendment to a motion, which they have moved, with the consent of both the meeting and the seconder. The meeting's consent will be signified without discussion. No member may speak on the matter after the mover has asked permission to withdraw it unless permission is refused.

15.10 Right of Reply

The mover of a motion has a right to reply at the end of the debate on the motion, immediately before it is put to the vote.

If an amendment is moved, the mover of the original motion has the right of reply at the close of the debate on the amendment, but may not otherwise speak on it. The mover of the amendment shall have a right of reply immediately after the reply on the amendment by the mover of the original motion before a vote is taken.

A Member exercising a right of reply shall confine him or herself to answering previous speakers and shall not introduce new matters or material. The Chair's ruling on this shall be final and not open to discussion.

15.11 Chair may sum up debate

The Chair may, if they think fit, sum up the debate before putting a motion or amendment to the vote and if such debate involves a question of a legal, administrative or technical nature, they may request the appropriate statutory Officer, or their representative, to draw the attention of the meeting to any relevant factors.

15.12 Motions which may be moved during debate

When a motion is under debate, no other motion may be moved except the following procedural motions:

- (i) to withdraw a motion;
- (ii) to amend a motion;
- (iii) to postpone consideration of a motion;
- (iv) to proceed to the next business;
- (v) to take an immediate vote on the motion;
- (vi) to adjourn a debate;
- (vii) to adjourn a meeting;
- (viii) that the meeting continue beyond three hours in duration;
- (ix) to exclude the public in accordance with the Access to Information Rules; and
- (x) to not hear further a Member named under Rule 23 or to exclude them from the meeting under that Rule.

15.13 Closure Motions

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NB: Numbering to also be updated, rule 6 becomes rule 5 etc.

A Member may move, without comment, the following motions at the end of a speech of another Member:

- (i) to proceed to the next business;
- (ii) to take an immediate vote on a motion;
- (iii) to adjourn the debate;
- (iv) to adjourn the meeting;
- (v) to exclude the public from the meeting in accordance with Access to Information Rules; or
- (vi) that a Member be not heard further in accordance with Council Procedure Rule 23.

If a motion to proceed to next business is seconded and the Chair considers the item has been sufficiently discussed, they will give the mover of the original motion a right of reply and then move, without further debate, to a vote on the procedural motion to proceed to next item of business. If that motion is carried then the substantive motion before Council is dropped and no decision has been taken on it and none will be recorded.

If a motion to take an immediate vote is put and seconded and the Chair thinks the item has been sufficiently discussed, they will put the procedural motion that the vote now be taken, to the vote, without debate. If the procedural motion is carried, they will give the mover of the original motion a right of reply and then move to the vote on the substantive motion.

If a motion to adjourn the debate or to adjourn the meeting, is proposed and seconded, and the Chair considers the item has not been sufficiently discussed and cannot be reasonably discussed at that meeting, they shall put the procedural motion to the vote without debate and without giving the mover of the original motion, or amendment, a right of reply. On resuming an adjourned debate, the Member who moved the adjournment is entitled to speak first; the proposer of the substantive motion, or amendment, will have their right of reply in the usual way at the end of the resumed debate. The motion may specify the location, date and time at which the adjourned debate or meeting shall take place, but if it does not, such decisions shall be determined following the meeting by the Chair in consultation with the Monitoring Officer. Members shall be advised in the usual way by notice of summons to the adjourned meeting.

If a motion to exclude the public is moved and seconded, which is not on the agenda, the Chair shall ascertain the grounds for the motion and seek the advice of the Monitoring Officer, or their representative, as to whether members of the public may lawfully be excluded. If they may, the Chair shall put the procedural motion to exclude the public to the vote, without debate and without allowing a right of reply. If the procedural motion is carried, the Chair may, at their discretion, either immediately require the public to leave the meeting room or adjourn the debate until some convenient time later in the meeting when the public shall have been excluded.

If a motion that a named Member be not heard further, is proposed and seconded, the Chair shall put the motion to the vote without debate. If it is carried, the named Member shall not be permitted to speak again during the meeting on any motion or amendment relating to the same matter.

15.14 Points of Order

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NB: Numbering to also be updated, rule 6 becomes rule 5 etc.

A Member may raise a point of order at any time by indicating to the Chair. The Chair will hear them immediately, subject to Council Procedure Rule 23.4.

A point of order may only relate to an alleged breach of these Council Procedure Rules or the law. The Member shall be required by the Chair to indicate the Council Procedure Rule or law they consider has been breached and the way in which they consider it has been breached before they are heard.

The ruling of the Chair on the matter will be final and is not open to discussion.

15.15 Personal Explanation

A Member may make a personal explanation at any time, by indicating to the Chair. The Chair shall hear them immediately, subject to Council Procedure Rules 15.14 and 23.4.

A personal explanation may only relate to some material part of an earlier speech by the Member which may appear to have been misunderstood in the present debate. The ruling of the Chair on the admissibility of a personal explanation will be final and is not open to discussion.

15.16 Recommendations to Council from the Executive and Committees

Any recommendations from, or reports by, the Executive or a Committee, to Council, shall be taken in date order, unless otherwise required. Each recommendation shall be moved by the Leader or relevant Executive Member if Executive, or Committee Chair, if a Committee, or their representative. After being moved and seconded, the matter shall be open to debate and the rules of debate above shall apply.

RULE 16: Motion to Rescind or Amend a Previous Decision

16.1 Motions on Notice to rescind a previous decision or similar to one previously rejected

A motion on notice to rescind a decision made at a meeting of Council within the past six months, or a motion on notice similar to one previously rejected in that period cannot be moved unless the notice of motion is signed by at least 17 Members of the Council or advice has been given by one of the Council's statutory officers that the matter should be reconsidered.

16.2 Motions arising during debate to rescind a previous decision or similar to one previously rejected

If a motion or amendment is raised during a debate at a meeting of Council, to rescind a decision made at Council within 6 months, or similar to one rejected within the previous 6 months, the Chair shall reject it.

16.3 Exceptions

- Council Procedure Rules 16.1 and 16.2 do not apply;
- To motions moved in pursuance of a recommendation of the Executive or a Committee; or

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NB: Numbering to also be updated, rule 6 becomes rule 5 etc.

- To motions to carry out any statutory duty of the Council which, in the opinion of the Chair, is of an urgent nature; or
- Where a decision has been made by another body since the Council's decision, which significantly affects the decision and necessitates reconsideration of the matter.

RULE 17: Voting

17.1 Majority

Unless this Constitution provides otherwise, any matter will be decided by a simple majority of those Members voting and present in the room at the time the question was put.

Unless a ballot or recorded vote is demanded or required, then the Chair shall take the vote by an electronic vote or a show of hands.

The Chair shall ascertain the number of Members voting for, against or abstaining on any question, shall announce those numbers to the meeting, and declare the result and whether the motion is carried or not. The Chair's declaration as to the result will be final.

17.2 Chair's Casting Vote

If there are equal numbers of votes for and against, the Chair will have a second or casting vote. There will be no restriction on how the Chair chooses to exercise a casting vote.

If there are equal number of votes for and against and the Chair chooses not to exercise their casting vote, then the matter to be determined shall fall.

17.3 Ballot

A ballot is a vote whereby Members signify their vote by writing on a piece of paper issued to them individually for that purpose and the vote of individual Members is not identified as being by that Member. The vote will take place by ballot if a majority of Members present at the meeting demands it, and there has been no valid request for a recorded vote. Such demand to be made by motion without notice, moved, seconded and voted on without debate.

The Chair shall announce the numerical result of the ballot immediately the result is known.

17.4 Recording of Voting at Budget Decision Meeting

At a budget decision meeting of the authority where making a calculation under the relevant sections of the Local Government Finance Act 1992 or issuing the precept as the case may be was included as an item of business on the agenda for that meeting, the minutes of the meeting shall record in respect of each member present whether they voted for a proposition, or against a proposition, or abstained from voting.

The references above to voting are references to a vote on any decision related to the making of the calculation or the issuing of the precept as the case may be.

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NB: Numbering to also be updated, rule 6 becomes rule 5 etc.

Further reference should be made to the Budget Procedure Rules at Part 5J of this Constitution.

17.5 Matters for Noting

Where a meeting of Council is asked to simply note a matter, rather than determine it, or make any substantive decision, the Chair will take the vote by the affirmation of the meeting, provided there is no dissent.

17.6 Recorded Vote

A recorded vote is a vote by way of roll call (which may be taken as an electronic vote) and shall be recorded in the minutes of the meeting to show how each Member present and voting cast their vote. The name of any Member present and abstaining from voting shall also be recorded.

Any Member can request, before the vote is taken, that their individual vote is recorded.

Any Political Group Leader may request, before a vote is taken, that the votes of everyone within that political group are recorded.

If 7 members request a recorded vote, before the vote is taken, then the vote is to be recorded.

17.7 Voting on Appointments

If there are more than two people nominated for any position to be filled and there is not a clear majority of votes in favour of one person, then the name of the person with the least number of votes will be taken off the list and a new vote taken. The process will continue until there is a majority of votes for one person.

RULE 18: Council Officers

18.1 Officers Speaking at Council

Other than in relation to Council Procedure Rule 18.2, no Officer other than:

- The Head of Paid Service;
- The Monitoring Officer, or their representative at a meeting;
- The Chief Financial Officer, or their representative at a meeting.

Shall be called upon to speak at a Council meeting without the consent of the Head of Paid Service. However, where the consent of the Head of Paid Service is given, Officers in addition to those listed above, may be called upon to contribute by way of advice, guidance or presentations on any matter under consideration at the meeting.

18.2 Officer Reports to Council

Where any matter is subject to a report direct to Council, from an Officer, the Officer may introduce the report, answer any questions for the purpose of clarification and provide

advice during the debate. The Officer may decline to answer questions which they perceive to be political in nature.

18.3 Matters Affecting Officers

If any question arises at a meeting of Council, the Executive or a Committee at which the public are in attendance as to the appointment, promotion, dismissal, remuneration, pension matters, conditions of service or conduct of any officer of the Council, such question shall not be the subject of discussion until the Council, the Executive or the Committee, as the case may be, has considered excluding the public under the Access to Information Procedure Rules and section 100A of the Local Government Act 1972.

RULE 19: Representatives on Outside Bodies

Members of the Council who are appointed to outside bodies as representatives of that Council are encouraged to keep other Members of the Council informed about such meetings they attend on an informal basis.

Where a Member who is a representative on an outside body is of the view that a matter to be considered by that body is of such importance as to require that they are informed as to the Council's opinion on that item, the Member shall be entitled to request the Monitoring Officer to place the item on the agenda of the appropriate Council meeting, the Executive or a Committee. The Member may address the Council, Executive or Committee as in Council Procedure Rule 13.7.

RULE 20: Confidentiality of Papers

Save as provided by the Local Government Act 1972, and the Access to Information Procedure Rules, all summonses, agendas, reports and other documents shall be treated as confidential unless and until either they become public in the ordinary course of the Council publishing its business, or the consent of both the Chair and the Monitoring Officer are obtained.

RULE 21: Minutes

21.1 Signing the minutes

The Chair will sign the minutes of the proceedings at the next suitable meeting. The Chair will move that the minutes of the previous meeting be signed as a correct record, provided that the previous meeting took place more than 10 clear working days prior to the day of the meeting. The only part of the minutes that can be discussed is their accuracy. Any questions as to the accuracy of the minutes as a record shall be raised by motion.

Where there is no ordinary meeting of a Committee or Sub-Committee expected to take place within a period of 6 months after a meeting for which draft minutes have been prepared:

- In respect of a Committee, Council may agree the accuracy of the minutes;
- In respect of a Sub-Committee, the 'parent' Committee may agree the accuracy of the minutes;
- In respect of Committees or Sub-Committees which have ceased to meet and their

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NB: Numbering to also be updated, rule 6 becomes rule 5 etc.

functions have been subsumed in another Committee or Sub-Committee, the new Committee or Sub-Committee may agree the accuracy of the minutes;

21.2 Minutes at extraordinary meeting

Where in relation to any meeting, the next meeting for the purpose of signing the minutes is a meeting called under paragraph 3 of schedule 12 to the Local Government Act 1972 (an Extraordinary Meeting), then the next following meeting (being a meeting called otherwise than under that paragraph ie. an Ordinary meeting) will be treated as a suitable meeting for the purposes of paragraph 41(1) and (2) of schedule 12 relating to signing of minutes.

21.3 Form of Minutes

Minutes of Council and non-Executive meetings will contain a summary of any debate, setting out the main points that were considered, all motions and amendments in the exact form and order the Chair put them, and the wording of the final decision. Minutes are not intended to be a verbatim record of events.

Minutes of Executive meetings shall contain a summary of the reasons for the decision, the decision and the date for call-in.

RULE 22: Status of Draft Records of Decisions and Minutes

Until such time as the Council, the Executive or a Committee whose record is set out in the draft record or minute confirm that record or minute as an accurate record of their decision, they are a working draft only.

Subject to Council Procedure Rule 21.1, only the body whose record is set out in the draft record or minute may alter or amend the record or minute.

If a Member wishes to propose a recommendation to Council that differs from that set out in the draft record or minute then it must be done by way of an amendment to the motion before Council.

RULE 23: Attendance and Conduct of Members

23.1 Record of Attendance

All Members present during the whole, or part, of a meeting must sign their names on the attendance sheets before the conclusion of every meeting to assist with the record of attendance. Any omission may be remedied at the discretion of the Monitoring Officer, or by the amendment of draft minutes of a meeting prior to confirmation, at the next or subsequent meeting in accordance with Council Procedure Rule 21.

23.2 Attendance for Part of a Meeting

Any Member who is not present for the entirety of an agenda item, and has not heard the whole of the presentation and/or debate, is precluded from participating in the vote of that matter.

23.3 Speaking at Council

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A Member may indicate their desire to speak at full Council, by raising their hand. When called to speak by the Chair of the meeting, they should stand, where comfortable to do so, and should address the meeting through the Chair. If more than one member indicates a desire to speak, the Chair will attempt to take speakers in the order in which they indicated. Other Members must remain silent whilst a Member is speaking. Other Members must remain seated whilst a Member is speaking, unless they wish to make a point of order or a personal explanation.

23.4 Chair standing

If the Chair stands during a debate, any Member speaking at the time must stop speaking and be seated. The meeting must be silent, whilst the Chair speaks.

23.5 Member not to be heard further

If a Member persistently disregards the ruling of the Chair by behaving improperly or offensively or deliberately obstructs business, the Chair may direct the Member to stop speaking. If following such a direction to stop speaking, the Member continues to speak, the Chair may move that the Member be not heard further on the agenda item. If seconded, the Chair shall put the motion to the vote without discussion. If passed, the Member shall not be permitted to speak on the same matter again during that meeting.

23.6 Member to leave the meeting

If a Member persistently disregards the ruling of the Chair by continued irrelevance or repetitions, or by behaving improperly or offensively, or deliberately obstructs business, the Chair may request the Member to leave for the remainder of the meeting. If following a request to leave the meeting, the Member fails to leave, the Chair may move that the named Member leaves the meeting, or that the meeting is adjourned for a specified period. If seconded, the Chair shall put the motion to the vote without discussion.

23.7 General disturbance

If there is a general disturbance making orderly business impossible, the Chair may, at their discretion, adjourn the meeting for as long as they think necessary.

23.8 Electronic Devices

Members may at any meeting use any device for the recording of the meeting, the sending or receiving of communications in relation to the meeting or the publication of the contents of the meeting, provided that:

- Such device remains silent;
- The Member does not record or communicate any matter or information relating to the contents of any meeting or part of a meeting which is in relation to information which is confidential or which the Members have agreed to exclude the public in accordance with the Access to Information Procedure Rules.
- The use of the device does not disrupt the meeting nor distract members of the public, or any Member from the content of the meeting;
- No oral commentary is recorded;

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NB: Numbering to also be updated, rule 6 becomes rule 5 etc.

- The Member complies with statutory provisions relating to data protection and other legislation relating to the recording, use of and retention of personal data.
- If the Member's use of a device does not comply with this Council Procedure Rule, then the Chair of the meeting may take action in accordance with Council Procedure Rule 24.6.
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23.9 Vacation of office by failure to attend meetings

If a Member fails for a period of 6 months from the date of their last attendance, to attend a meeting of the authority, they shall, unless the failure was due to a reason approved by the authority before the expiry of that six month period, cease to be a Member of the Council.

Further advice should be sought, in a timely manner, from the Monitoring Officer as to what would constitute attendance at a relevant meeting to prevent section 85 of the Local Government Act 1972 having the effect of vacating the Member from their office.

RULE 24: Attendance and Conduct of the Public

24.1 Exclusion of the Public

Members of the public and press may only be excluded from a meeting of the Council either in accordance with the Access to Information Rules in this Constitution or this Council Procedure Rule. .

24.2 Removal of member of the public

If a member of the public interrupts proceedings, causes a disturbance or behaves improperly, or offensively, or by deliberately obstructing business, the Chair will warn the person concerned. If they continue their conduct after having been warned, the Chair may direct that they leave the meeting room. If necessary or appropriate, the Chair may adjourn the meeting for a short period to enable the person to leave.

24.3 General disturbance

If there is a general disturbance in any part of the meeting room open to the public, the Chair may direct that the part of the meeting room be cleared. If necessary, or appropriate, the Chair may adjourn the meeting to enable the area to be cleared.

RULE 25: Delegations

The Council may delegate non-Executive matters from time to time to Committees as it sees fit or as legislation prescribes. The Leader may delegate Executive matters from time to time to the Executive.

Both the Council and the Leader may delegate matters from time to time to Officers as it sees fit or as legislation prescribes, in addition to those delegated under the Scheme of Officer delegations.

When delegating to the Executive, a Committee or an Officer, the Council may give guidance as to the manner in which the matter should be dealt with, provided that such

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NB: Numbering to also be updated, rule 6 becomes rule 5 etc.

guidance does not have the effect of causing Council to breach the rules of natural justice, prejudicing the determination by the delegatee required to be judged on its own merits, or of fettering the discretion of the delegatee.

No individual Member, Officer or group of Members or Officers, or both, shall be entitled to exercise any power or function of the Council save as delegated to them by the Council, the Executive, a Committee or another Officer exercising a power or fulfilling a function on behalf of the Council or as detailed in this Constitution.

Whilst the Chair of a Committee and Executive Members can expect to be consulted on matters affecting their areas of responsibility, they shall not have power to act on behalf or, or bind, the Council, unless the Council or the Leader has given them specific delegated powers to do so.

RULE 26: Attendance by Members at Meetings of which they are not a Member

26.1 Attendance by the mover of a motion

A Member of the Council who has moved a motion which has been referred to the Executive or a Committee shall be given notice by the Monitoring Officer of the meeting at which it is proposed that the motion be considered. The Member shall have the right to attend the Meeting whilst the motion is being considered, to explain the motion and answer questions.

26.2 Attendance by Representative on Outside Body

Where a Member has requested the Monitoring Officer to place an item on the agenda in accordance with Council Procedure Rule 19, they shall have the right to attend that meeting whilst that item is under consideration.

26.3 Attendance of Members at Meetings

Any Member of the Council may attend, in the public gallery, as an observer, any Committee or Sub-Committee of which they are not a Member. A Member observing may remain in the Meeting where the public are excluded, subject to the provisions of the Access to Information Procedure Rules, provided that they have a need to know about the matter under consideration, and that they do not have a relevant interest in the matter that would preclude their attendance. It is assumed that every Member will have a need to know about the matter under consideration, although this presumption is rebuttable and advice should be taken from the Monitoring Officer.

A Member of the Council who is not a Member of the Executive or a Committee, and has a relevant interest in any item under consideration at a particular meeting, that would prevent them from participating if they were a Member of the Executive or that Committee, is not entitled to be present in any part of the room where the meeting is taking place during the discussion of that item, unless a dispensation has been granted by the Monitoring Officer.

No Member is entitled to attend any of the Meetings below unless they are appointed as a Member of that Committee or are substituting for such a Member. Council Procedure Rule 26.3 therefore does not apply when:

Part 5A – Council Procedure Rules

NB: Numbering to also be updated, rule 6 becomes rule 5 etc.

- The Standards Sub-Committee goes into closed session to determine a Member conduct complaint;
- The Licensing Committee or Sub-Committee when they go into closed session to determine an individual quasi-judicial case;
- Any Committee when it goes into closed session to determine the capability or conduct of an individual Officer under the Council's disciplinary or grievance procedure, or any other employment policy;
- Any Committee considering the appointment of a Council Officer.

26.4 Speaking by Members at meetings

Subject to the provisions below, an observer may, at the discretion of the Chair be invited to speak on an item under consideration at that meeting. The Member must have, prior to the commencement of the meeting, notified the Chair of their desire to address the meeting. The Chair shall have total discretion as to whether or not to invite such a Member to address the meeting.

However, a Member who is not a Member of the Development Control Committee may not address that Committee in respect of any planning application, unless a similar right within the Constitution is granted to the applicant, any objector and any supporter.

A Member who is not sitting as a Member of the Licensing Committee or the Licensing Sub-Committee may not address that Committee or Sub-Committee unless they have a right to speak under relevant statutory regulations.

A Member who is not sitting as a Member of the Standards Sub-Committee may not address the Sub-Committee when hearing a code of conduct complainant, unless they are representing or acting as witness for either the Monitoring Officer, Investigating Officer or the Subject Member.

26.5 Leader of the Council

The Leader of the Council, or Deputy Leader in their absence, may attend any meeting of a Committee and speak on any item under consideration as of right, unless they have a relevant interest in the matter that would preclude them from being present.

However Council Procedure Rule 26.5 does not apply to meetings of:

- The Standards Sub-Committee goes into closed session to determine a Member conduct complaint;
- The Licensing Committee or Sub-Committee when they go into closed session to determine an individual quasi-judicial case;
- Any Committee when it goes into closed session to determine the capability or conduct of an individual Officer under the Council's disciplinary or grievance procedure, or any other employment policy;
- Any Committee considering the appointment of a Council Officer.

26.6 Voting

Part 5A – Council Procedure Rules

NB: Numbering to also be updated, rule 6 becomes rule 5 etc.

A Member of the Council attending a meeting of the Executive or a Committee on which they have not been appointed to serve, and are not acting as a substitute Member is not entitled to vote on any item under consideration.

RULE 27: No Confidence in the Chair of a Committee

At any meeting of a Committee, a Member of that Committee may move that 'the Meeting has no confidence in the Chair'. If seconded, the motion shall, after debate, be put and, if carried by a majority of at least two thirds of the Members present, the Chair shall immediately stand down and the remainder of the meeting shall be chaired by the Vice-Chair or, in their absence, by a Member elected for that purpose by the Meeting.

During the consideration of such a motion the Chair shall cease to be the Chair of the Committee and shall be an ordinary member of the Committee, and as such, the Chair's casting vote would not apply. The Monitoring Officer, or their representative, will act as Chair of the Committee during consideration of the motion.

Following a successful vote of no confidence in the Chair, they shall not officiate at any subsequent meeting of the Committee prior to the next meeting of the Council. At that meeting, the Council shall consider whether or not to confirm the vote of no confidence. If by a simple majority they decide to confirm the vote, the office of Chair of the relevant Committee shall be declared vacant and a new Chair shall be elected by the Council. If the Council does not confirm the vote by a simple majority, the Member remains as the Chair of the Committee.

RULE 28: The Leader of the Council

28.1 Appointment of the Leader

The Council shall elect a Leader at each Annual Council Meeting where the term of office of the Leader has come to an end due to the fact that their term of office as a Councillor has ended.

Members present at the Annual Council Meeting shall nominate one or more persons to be Leader, from among the Members. Any nomination which is not seconded, shall not be considered further.

Where there is only one Member nominated and seconded, then the Chair shall provide an opportunity for a debate before calling for a vote which shall require a majority of those present and voting to determine whether the Member shall be elected as Leader.

Where there are 2 Members nominated and seconded then, following the opportunity for debate, the Chair shall call for a vote and the Member who received the largest number of votes shall be elected as Leader.

Where there are 3 or more candidates seeking appointment to a single position, there shall be a vote for each candidate; and

If one of the candidates receives more than half of all the votes cast in the election, that candidate is to be appointed;

Part 5A – Council Procedure Rules

NB: Numbering to also be updated, rule 6 becomes rule 5 etc.

If no candidate received more than half of all the votes cast then the candidate with the least number of votes will be eliminated and a new vote taken. This process will continue until there is a majority of votes for one person.

The motion shall be in accordance with Council Procedure Rule 13 and the voting shall be in accordance with Council Procedure Rule 17.

28.2 Removal of the Leader

If a Member wishes at a Council meeting to move a motion of no confidence in the Leader of the Council, the Member must give not less than 10 clear working days' notice to the Monitoring Officer via email at democratic.services@westoxon.gov.uk. The motion must be signed by the mover and the seconder.

The Monitoring Officer shall place the motion on the agenda for the next meeting of Council, ~~provided that such meeting is not a Special Meeting.~~ The motion before the Council shall be considered after the receipt of any declarations of interest, approval of minutes of the last meeting and questions and statements by the public.

The motion shall be in accordance with Council Procedure Rule 13 and the voting shall be in accordance with Council Procedure Rule 17.

28.3 Consequence of a Motion of No Confidence

Where a motion of no confidence is carried, the Leader shall cease to be the Leader of the Council with immediate effect. The Council shall proceed to elect a new Leader at that meeting or the next meeting of the Council, ~~provided it is not a special meeting.~~

28.4 Term of Office

The Leader shall hold the office of Leader in accordance with Part 2D of the Constitution (Article 4). Should the Leader resign from their appointment, an Extraordinary Meeting will be called to deal with the appointment of a new Leader in accordance with this Council procedure Rule. The Deputy Leader will assume the role of Leader until such appointment is made.

RULE 29: Chair of the Council

29.1 Election

The Council shall elect a Chair at each Annual Council Meeting. The existing Chair shall take the Chair for the item on the agenda, unless he is conflicted, when the Vice Chair will take the Chair for the single item of business. If both the Chair and Vice Chair are conflicted, the Monitoring Officer, or their representative, will take the Chair for the election of the Chair.

Members present at that Annual Meeting shall propose one or more persons to be Chair from among the Members. Any proposal which is not seconded shall not be considered further.

Where there is only one Member proposed and seconded, the Chair shall provide an opportunity for a debate before calling for a vote which shall require a majority of those present and voting to determine whether the Member shall be elected as Chair.

Where there are 2 Members proposed and seconded, then a debate on the proposals will follow, then the Chair shall call for a vote and the Member who received the largest number of vote shall be elected as Chair.

Where there are 3 or more Members proposed and seconded, following a debate on the proposals, the Chair shall call for a vote for each Member proposed and:

If one proposed Member receives more than half of all the votes cast in the election, that Member is elected as Chair;

If no Member received more than half of all the votes cast then the Member with the least number of votes will be eliminated and a new vote taken. The process will continue until there is a majority of votes for one person, who shall be elected as Chair.

Voting will take place in accordance with Council Procedure Rule 17.

29.2 Removal

If a Member wishes at a Meeting of Council to move a motion of no confidence in the Chair of the Council, the Member must give not less than 10 clear working days' notice in writing to the Monitoring Officer via email at democratic.services@westoxon.gov.uk. The motion must be signed by the mover and the seconder.

The Monitoring Officer shall consider the motion in accordance with the provisions of Council Procedure Rule 13. If accepted, the Monitoring Officer shall place the motion on the agenda for the next meeting of the Council, provided that such a meeting is not an ~~neither a Special Meeting nor~~ Annual Council Meeting. This may be at an Extraordinary Meeting of the Council if the provisions of Council Procedure Rule 4 have been complied with. The motion before the Council shall be considered as the first item of business after the receipt of any declarations of interest, approval of minutes of the last Meeting and questions by the public.

During the consideration of such a motion, the Chair shall cease to be Chair of the Council and shall be an ordinary Member of the Council. The Monitoring Officer, or their representative, shall act as Chair during consideration of the motion.

After debate, the motion shall be put to the vote and if carried by a majority of at least two thirds of the Members present, the Chair shall immediately stand down and the remainder of the Meeting shall be chaired by the Vice Chair.

29.3 Consequence

Where a motion of no confidence in the Chair of the Council is carried, the Chair shall cease to be the Chair of the Council with immediate effect. The Council shall proceed to elect a new Chair at that meeting of the Council. The item of election of the new Chair shall be chaired by the Monitoring Officer or their representative.

Part 5A – Council Procedure Rules

NB: Numbering to also be updated, rule 6 becomes rule 5 etc.

RULE 30: Business of an Urgent Nature

If having consulted both the Chief Financial Officer and the Monitoring Officer, the Chief Executive is of the opinion that urgent action is required, in accordance with the Scheme of Officer Delegations, before a decision could be taken by Council, the Executive or a Committee that has the appropriate authority, they may take the decision in accordance with their urgency power as set out in the Part 4A of the Constitution (Officer Scheme of Delegations).

If the decision is one which would normally be taken by the Council, the Chief Executive will consult with the Leader of the Council and all other Group Leaders, where practicable. If the decision is one which would normally be taken by the Executive, the Chief Executive will consult with the Leader. If the decision is one which would normally be taken by a Committee, the Chief Executive will consult with the Leader and the Chair of that Committee.

Every such decision shall be reported to the next available Ordinary Meeting of the Council, Executive or the Committee that would normally have taken the decision.

RULE 31: Filming and recording

The law allows the proceedings of council meetings which are open to the public to be filmed and/or recorded. Any such filming or recording can be by any member of the public, whether or not they are connected with the media. For more information about this, please see <https://www.westoxon.gov.uk/media/zz2cbxhw/filming-and-recording-of-meetings-protocol.pdf>

RULE 32: Suspension and Amendment of Council Procedure Rules

32.1 Suspension

All of these Council Procedure Rules except those parts of Rule 17 relating to the right to record an individual vote; and Rule 21 relating to the signing of minutes at an extraordinary meeting, may be suspended by motion on notice, or without notice if at least one half of the whole number of members of the Council are present. Suspension can only be for the duration of the meeting.

32.2 Amendment

Any motion to add to, vary or revoke these Council Rules of Procedure will, when proposed and seconded, stand adjourned without discussion to the next ordinary meeting of the Council, where a report will be received with a recommendation from the Monitoring Officer.

RULE 33: Application of Rules to Committees and Sub-Committees

All of the Council Rules of Procedure apply to meetings of full Council.

None of the rules apply to meetings of the Executive, except where expressly stated.

Subject to any requirements or exceptions set out in them, the following Rules:

Part 5A – Council Procedure Rules

NB: Numbering to also be updated, rule 6 becomes rule 5 etc.

Anex B- Part 5A Extract


Rule 6 (Time and Location of Meeting)
Rule 7 (Notice and Summons)
Rule 8 (Chair of meeting)
Rule 9 (Quorum)
Rule 10 (Duration of meeting)
Rule 11 (Questions and engagement from the Public)
Rule 12 (Questions by Members)
Rule 13 (Motions on notice)
Rule 14 (Motions without notice)
Rule 15 (Rules of debate for Council)
Rule 16 (Motion to rescind or amend previous decisions)
Rule 17 (Voting)
Rule 21 (Minutes)
Rule 23 (Attendance and Conduct by Members)
Rule 23 (Attendance and Conduct by the Public)
Rule 32 (Suspension and Amendment of Council Procedure Rules)
Rule 33 (Application to Committees and Sub-Committees)

shall apply to meetings of Committees and Sub-Committees, including the Overview and Scrutiny Committee and Overview and Scrutiny Sub-Committees

Part 5A – Council Procedure Rules

NB: Numbering to also be updated, rule 6 becomes rule 5 etc.

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 WEST OXFORDSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL	WEST OXFORDSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL
Name and Date of Committee	COUNCIL – 3 DECEMBER 2025
Subject	PROGRAMME OF MEETINGS 2026/27
Wards Affected	None
Accountable Member	Councillor Andy Graham, Leader of the Council. Email: andy.graham@westoxon.gov.uk
Accountable Officer	Giles Hughes, Chief Executive. Email: giles.hughes@westoxon.gov.uk
Report Author	Ana Prelici, Head of Democratic and Electoral Services. Email: democratic.services@westoxon.gov.uk
Purpose	To invite Council to set a programme of Council and Committee meetings for the civic year 2026–2027.
Annexes	Annex A – Programme of Meetings for 2026/27 (calendar format). Annex B – Programme of Meetings for 2026/27 (list format).
Recommendations	<p>That Council Resolves to:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Approve the Programme of Meetings for 2026/27, as detailed at Annex A and Annex B; 2. Delegate authority to the Director of Governance and Regulatory Services, in consultation with Group Leaders, to make changes to the programme of meetings, in the event that there is any future decision of the Council to change the committee structure, frequencies of committees or sub-committees, or committee remits that impacts the programme of meetings; 3. Delegate authority to the Democratic Services Business Manager to set meeting dates for committees and sub-committees that meet on an ad-hoc basis (Performance and Appointments Committee, Development Control Committee, Licensing Committee, Licensing Panel, Miscellaneous Licensing Sub-Committee, Standards Sub-Committee), member training, member briefing sessions, and any further working groups

	<p>established by the Council.</p> <p>4. Note that rule 6 of the Council Procedure Rules (Part 5A of the Constitution) allows each committee to set its own start time.</p>
Corporate Priorities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Working Together for West Oxfordshire
Key Decision	NO
Exempt	NO
Consultees/ Consultation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Management Team • Planning Services • Licensing • Financial Services • Counter Fraud • Internal Audit • Executive Members

1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY AND BACKGROUND

- 1.1** Council is responsible for setting the dates and times of Council and Committee meetings.
- 1.2** This report recommends a schedule of Council and Committee meetings for 2026/27 (June 2026 until May 2027 inclusive). Meeting dates up to and including May 2026 have already been set. Dates for meetings of the Executive are a matter for the Leader of the Council and are included in the programme for completeness.
- 1.3** Setting meeting dates in advance, allows for good governance, open, efficient and effective decision making, helping members and officers to plan their workloads & availability.
- 1.4** The Meeting Calendar follows the same pattern as the previous year, with no changes to the regular start times or ordinary day of meeting.

2. PROGRAMME OF MEETINGS FOR 2026/27

- 2.1** The programme of meetings for 2026/27 has been formulated on a similar basis to recent years and is based on the current committee structure. Council is recommended to approve the programme of meetings as set out in Annexes A & B. Should Council decide to make changes to its committee structure in future, a revised programme may need to be prepared and circulated. It is recommended that authority is delegated to the Director of Governance and Regulatory Services, in consultation with Group Leaders, to make changes to the programme as required following any such decision.
- 2.2** Meetings of Overview and Scrutiny Committee are scheduled to be held on the Wednesday prior to each meeting of the Executive. This is to enable the Overview and Scrutiny Committee to subject selected Executive reports to pre-decision scrutiny, with time allowed for the Committee's recommendations to be produced and then responded to by the Executive. Executive reports are subject to a robust internal clearance process. The timing of the process is such that Executive reports will not normally be cleared for publication when the Overview and Scrutiny Committee agenda is published and will need to follow as late papers a couple of days later.
- 2.3** The principle used in timetabling meetings is that business needs to take place in a timely manner, but that the broader needs of members will be taken into account. Oxfordshire school holiday dates have been avoided wherever possible, so that it does not adversely affect the overall meetings programme or the cycle of meetings. School holiday dates are shown in grey in Annex A.
- 2.4** District Councillors may also serve as County Councillors and/or Town or Parish Councillors. Meetings of Oxfordshire County Council have been set up to May 2026, with most meetings of that authority starting at 10.30am, 1.00pm or 2.00pm. There are no clashes of Cabinet and Council meetings at Oxfordshire County Council, with Executive or Council meetings at West Oxfordshire District Council. Where committee meetings of the

two authorities clash any Members who are on both committees would be able to arrange a substitute for one meeting or the other.

- 2.5** Given that many of the officers who deliver the work of the Council and attend meetings are currently employed by Publica Group, and work across at least two other local authorities, care has been taken to avoid Council and Committee meetings at West Oxfordshire District Council clashing with major meetings of Forest of Dean District Council and Cotswold District Council where possible. In some cases, full Council meetings of West Oxfordshire District Council will be held on the same day as full Council meetings of Cotswold District Council but with different start times (2.00pm and 6.00pm respectively).
- 2.6** The meetings scheduled for July have been moved so that they take place a week later than usual to avoid a clash with the Local Government Association (LGA) conference.

3. COMMITTEES AND SUB-COMMITTEES THAT MEET AS REQUIRED

- 3.1** The following committees and sub-committees will generally only meet when there is specific business to consider, and this report seeks a delegation to the Head of Democratic and Electoral Services to set meeting dates for these committees and sub-committees as required:
- Performance and Appointments Committee – Responsible for matters relating to the appointment, performance, and dismissal of the Council's statutory officers;
 - Licensing Committee – Responsible for considering licensing policies and determining certain licensing applications where representations have been received;
 - Development Control Committee – Responsible for determining applications which in the opinion of the Senior Officer with responsibility for Planning, are of significant local importance, e.g. major housing development, or where either the Uplands or Lowlands area sub-committee proposes to make a decision which would be unlawful, seriously undermine policy, set adverse precedent or result in substantial costs being awarded against the Council.
 - The Standards Sub-Committee – Responsible for conducting hearings to, in consultation with an Independent Person, hear allegations that a Member or Co-opted Member has failed to comply with the Code of Conduct of Members.
 - Miscellaneous Licensing Sub-Committee and Licensing Panel meet as required to determine certain licensing applications. Regular dates are included in the programme which can be used for sub-committee meetings or panel hearings. These will be cancelled where there is no business and at times additional dates may be needed outside of the regular cycle of scheduled meeting dates.

4. MEETING START TIMES

- 4.1** No changes are proposed in this report to the current start times of Council meetings. Under the Council Procedure Rules of the Constitution, committees and sub-committees

may set their own start times and vary the timing of their meetings at their first meeting of the municipal year. The existing start times are as follows:

- Council meetings are held at 2.00pm;
- Overview and Scrutiny Committee meetings start at 5.30pm;
- Audit and Governance Committee meetings are held at 6.00pm;
- Development Control Committee meetings start at 10.00am;
- Area Planning Sub-Committee meetings are held at 2.00pm;
- Licensing Committee, Licensing Sub-Committee and Licensing Panel meetings start at 10.00am;
- Standards Sub-Committee meetings start at 10.00am;
- Executive meetings start at 2.00pm, however that is a matter for the Leader rather than Council.

5. TRAINING AND BRIEFING DATES

- 5.1** This report seeks a delegation to the Democratic Services Business Manager to set dates for member induction, training and briefing sessions. Member briefing sessions will continue to take place monthly at 5.30pm on the first Thursday of each month and at other times as required.

6. MEMBER WORKING GROUPS

- 6.1** The Council may establish informal cross-party member working groups to perform particular tasks. Recent examples include the Constitution Working Group and the Local Plan Cross-Party Member Working Group. This report seeks a delegation to the Democratic Services Business Manager to set meeting dates for current and future member working groups.

7. ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS

- 7.1** Should Council wish to consider alternative proposals, it could request that a further report is presented to a future meeting.

8. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 8.1** Members are entitled to claim mileage expenses for attending meetings and such costs can be met from existing budgets. The number of meetings within the recommended meeting programme is similar to previous years. It is anticipated that the majority of training will be delivered internally and will not therefore have a financial impact. Council has allocated a budget of £4,000 per annum which is available to fund externally delivered training sessions and members' attendance at external training courses. There are no further direct financial implications.

9. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 9.1** The responsibility for setting meeting dates for Council and Committee meetings rests with Council under the Local Government Act 1972 (Schedule 12). In a year of ordinary elections the Annual Council meeting must be held on the eighth day after the retirement of councillors, or such other day within twenty-one days of the date of retirement. In non-election years the Annual Council meeting may be held on any date in March, April or May.

10. RISK ASSESSMENT

- 10.1** If Council did not agree a programme of meetings for 2025/26, there is significant risk that decision making would not be able to take place in a timely, effective and open & transparent manner. There are no other significant risks in relation to this report.

11. EQUALITIES IMPACT

- 11.1** The recommendations are not expected to differentially impact any groups with protected characteristics. Meetings are held in accessible venues.

12. CLIMATE AND ECOLOGICAL EMERGENCIES IMPLICATIONS












Members are required to attend meetings in person, which will result in emissions associated with journeys to and from meetings. Members have the right to choose to have paper copies of agenda packs, however where possible, Members are strongly encouraged to access papers using the Modern.gov App or the Extranet website.

13. BACKGROUND PAPERS

None.

(END)

2026-2027 Calendar

	Bank Holidays
	School Holidays
	Previous/Next Month
	Executive
	Council
	Audit and Governance
	Overview and Scrutiny
	Lowlands Planning Sub-Committee
	Uplands Planning Sub-Committee
	Licensing
	Expected Conference Periods

June 2026				
Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri
1	2	3	4	5
		O&S		
8	9	10	11	12
LSC		Exec		
15	16	17	18	19
USC		Council*		
22	23	24	25	26
	Licen.		A&G	
29	30			

July 2026				
Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri
		1	2	3
6	7	8	9	10
LSC	O&S	Exec		
13	14	15	16	17
USC		Exec		
20	21	22	23	24
	Licen.	Council		
27	28	29	30	31

August 2026				
Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri
3	4	5	6	7
10	11	12	13	14
LSC				
17	18	19	20	21
USC	Licen.			
24	25	26	27	28
31				

September 2026				
Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri
	1	2	3	4
		O&S		
7	8	9	10	11
LSC		Exec		
14	15	16	17	18
USC		Council		
21	22	23	24	25
	Licen.		A&G	
28	29	30		

October 2026				
Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri
			1	2
5	6	7	8	9
12	13	14	15	16
LSC		O&S		
19	20	21	22	23
USC	Licen.	Exec		
26	27	28	29	30

November 2026				
Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri
2	3	4	5	6
		O&S		
9	10	11	12	13
LSC		Exec		
16	17	18	19	20
USC		Council		
23	24	25	26	27
	Licen.		A&G	
30				

December 2026				
Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri
	1	2	3	4
		O&S		
7	8	9	10	11
LSC		Exec		
14	15	16	17	18
USC	Licen.			
21	22	23	24	25
28	29	30	31	

January 2027				
Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri
				1
4	5	6	7	8
LSC		O&S		
11	12	13	14	15
USC		Exec		
18	19	20	21	22
		Council		
25	26	27	28	29
	Licen.		A&G	

February 2027				
Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri
1	2	3	4	5
LSC		O&S		
8	9	10	11	12
USC		Exec		
15	16	17	18	19
22	23	24	25	26
		Council		

March 2027				
Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri
1	2	3	4	5
		O&S		
8	9	10	11	12
LSC		Exec		
15	16	17	18	19
USC				
22	23	24	25	26
		Council		
29	30	31		

April 2027				
Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri
			1	2
5	6	7	8	9
12	13	14	15	16
LSC		O&S		
19	20	21	22	23
USC		Exec		
26	27	28	29	30

May 2027				
Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri
3	4	5	6	7
10	11	12	13	14
17	18	19	20	21
		Council		
24	25	26	27	28
31				

Notes

* Additional meeting of Full Council for Local Plan regulation 19 Consultation.

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Annex B

West Oxfordshire District Council

2026-2027 Calendar of meetings – List

June 2026

Wednesday 3 June – Overview and Scrutiny Committee
Monday 8 June - Lowlands Planning Sub-Committee
Wednesday 10 June – Executive Committee
Monday 15 June – Uplands Planning Sub-Committee
Wednesday 17 June – Council (Additional meeting for Local Plan regulation 19 Consultation)

July 2026

Monday 6 July – Lowlands Planning Sub-Committee
Wednesday 8 – Overview and Scrutiny Committee
Monday 13 July – Uplands Planning Sub-Committee
Wednesday 15 July – Executive
Tuesday 21 July – Licensing Sub-Committee
Wednesday 22 July – Council

August 2026

Monday 10 August – Lowlands Planning Sub-Committee
Monday 17 August – Uplands Planning Sub-Committee
Tuesday 18 August – Licensing Sub-Committee

September 2026

Wednesday 2 September - Overview and Scrutiny Committee
Monday 7 September– Lowlands Planning Sub-Committee
Wednesday 9 September – Executive
Monday 14 September– Uplands Planning Sub-Committee
Wednesday 16 September – Council
Tuesday 22 September – Licensing Committee
Thursday 24 September – Audit and Governance Committee

October 2026

Monday 12 October – Lowlands Planning Sub-Committee
Wednesday 14 October – Overview and Scrutiny Committee
Monday 19 October – Uplands Planning Sub-Committee
Tuesday 20 October – Licensing Committee
Wednesday 21 October – Executive Committee

November 2026

Wednesday 4 November – Overview and Scrutiny Committee
Monday 9 November – Lowlands Planning Sub-Committee
Wednesday 11 November – Executive Committee
Monday 16 November – Uplands Planning Sub-Committee
Wednesday 18 November – Council
Tuesday 24 November – Licensing Committee
Thursday 26 November – Audit and Governance Committee

December 2026

Wednesday 2 December – Overview and Scrutiny Committee
Monday 7 December – Lowlands Planning Sub-Committee
Wednesday 9 December – Executive Committee
Monday 14 December – Uplands Planning Sub-Committee
Tuesday 15 December – Licensing Committee

January 2027

Monday 4 January – Lowlands Planning Sub-Committee
Wednesday 6 January – Overview and Scrutiny Committee
Monday 11 January – Uplands Planning Sub-Committee
Wednesday 13 January – Executive Committee
Wednesday 20 January – Council
Tuesday 26 January – Licensing Committee
Thursday 28 January – Audit and Governance Committee

February 2027

Monday 1 February – Lowlands Planning Sub-Committee
Wednesday 3 February – Overview and Scrutiny Committee
Monday 8 February – Uplands Planning Sub-Committee
Wednesday 10 February – Executive Committee
Wednesday 24 February – Council

March 2027

Wednesday 3 March – Overview and Scrutiny Committee
Monday 8 March – Lowlands Planning Sub-Committee
Wednesday 10 March – Executive Committee
Monday 15 March – Uplands Planning Sub-Committee
Wednesday 24 March – Council

April 2027

Monday 12 April – Lowlands Planning Sub-Committee
Wednesday 14 April – Overview and Scrutiny Committee
Monday 19 April – Uplands Planning Sub-Committee
Wednesday 21 April – Executive Committee

May 2027

Wednesday 19 May – Council

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