

Oxford City Council Business Plan 2022-2023

Oxford City Council Change Programme – 2022-23

Oxford City Council has accelerated and widened its structural transformation work over the past year. This now involves all areas of service, all teams and all individual employees with the objective of delivering improved outcomes and secure financial sustainability. Over the next year, the internal and external Change Programme will be focused on:

- Full use of **digital technologies** to maximise the efficiency of our operations and make it easy for customers to deal with us
 - New website that is designed around the needs of our customers
- Reducing the number of **office locations** and enabling staff to work flexibly
 - Deploying Microsoft 365 to all our staff
- Increasing our opportunities to **make more money** with a commercial focus on supplier management and seeking **new innovative and creative income streams**
 - Reviewing our contracts with a commercial focus
- **Removing bureaucracy** through effective governance that ensures rapid decision making
 - Simplifying our meeting structures
- Developing our **workforce** to become high performing by updating core skills, maximising our resources and target our work in the right places
 - Attract and retain a talented workforce
 - Reducing our need for agency workers

Year 3 delivery of our Council Strategy 2020-24

Priority 1: Enable an inclusive economy

Oxford needs a more inclusive economy in which wealth is distributed across our communities and where all citizens can share the benefits of growth.

Council Strategy 2020-2024 Outcome	Year 3-4 (2022-2024) Actions
<p>DELIVER</p> <p>1. Our Council-owned companies will have increased their profits to help maintain the services we provide, and we will have supported more local businesses, including social enterprises and cooperatives, by changing the way we buy our goods and services.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Implement the new Procurement Strategy that seeks to increase weighting on social value from 5% to 10%. • Work to align and deliver the actions in social value plans for both the Council’s wholly-owned companies, Oxford City Housing Limited (OCHL) and Oxford Direct Services (ODS).
<p>2. Our staff will be more skilled and confident in delivering services our citizens want and our workforce will better reflect Oxford’s diverse population.</p>	<p>Implement the priority aims and actions from the Workforce Equality report for 22-24 including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create an Equalities Steering Group. • Develop workforce development plans for each service. • Review recruitment and on-boarding to consider how we can apply best practice at different stages of the recruitment process. • Improve our data collection so we can use evidence-based insights, data, and experience to progress our diversity and inclusion commitments.

Council Strategy 2020-2024 Outcome	Year 3-4 (2022-2024) Actions
<p>PARTNER</p> <p>3. Oxford's economy will be stronger, with diverse sectors providing a wider range of accessible business and employment opportunities for all.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop an Inclusive Economy Charter for the city, to articulate and promote a high standard of economic and social wellbeing for businesses and organisations to adhere to.
<p>4. We will have secured different types of new workspace in the city to support business and employment growth.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use the £20m identified in the Council budget to actively seek investment opportunities in regeneration across the city, where our investment could support the priorities of the Business Plan including supporting access to good quality space and jobs and wider regeneration. • Explore the potential for an affordable workspace policy through the next Local Plan. • Work proactively with landowners to intensify, modernise, and regenerate commercial space on key employment sites as defined in the Local Plan and in line with the objectives of the Economic Strategy. • Seek planning permission and if permitted commence redevelopment of Standingford House on Cave Street as flexible and affordable workspace, working with a workspace operator.
<p>5. The movement of people and goods into and within the city will have improved, resulting in less traffic congestion, better air quality and faster journey times.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work with the County Council to refresh the Oxford Transport Strategy and help secure funding to support the implementation of a range of measures that may include the Connecting Oxford proposals, including traffic filters, a Workplace Parking Levy, extension of Controlled Parking Zones and the 20mph speed limit, as well as improvements to active travel and public transport. Throughout the year there will be extensive engagement and consultation

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<p>PARTNER</p>	<p>with key stakeholders, community groups and residents to help shape the final proposals. As part of our work on this we will seek to ensure that proposals consider the inclusive economy principles of our Economic Strategy.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work with Network Rail and the County Council to actively pursue funding for the Oxfordshire Connect programme of rail improvements. This will include agreeing the shortlist of masterplan options for Oxford Station and interchange with partners to inform the further work necessary to identify a preferred option. It should also include work on the detailed design and funding options for the Cowley Branch Line.
<p>INFLUENCE</p> <p>6. We will improve the resilience of the city centre and its relevance to more of our citizens.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Adopt the City Centre Action Plan and set up task groups with key partners for each workstream.
<p>7. The city centre will be expanding to the west. Attractive new areas will be emerging around Oxford Station, in Oxpens and Osney Mead - but not at the expense of the health and vibrancy of the existing city centre.</p>	<p>We will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue to facilitate the Oxford West End Strategic Board, involving local and central Government, and landowners to co-ordinate and align activity. • Adopt a new West End masterplan Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) to guide development in the West End Area of Change, in line with the Local Plan. • As part of OxWED, submit outline planning permission for the redevelopment of Oxpens to enable this key site’s redevelopment with a mix of uses that enhances the city centre.

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<p>PARTNER</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue to develop plans for a new river crossing connecting Osney Mead into the wider city centre. • Work with partners to develop a business case for investment in the West End and secure funding.
<p>8. More organisations in Oxford will be socially and environmentally responsible - paying the Oxford Living Wage and adopting practices that deliver clean economic growth which benefits all residents.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue to work with partners to increase adoption of the Oxford Living Wage across the city.
<p>9. Oxford will have improved the workforce skills it needs through higher educational attainment and more training for the jobs of the future.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work with key partners including OxLEP and the Oxfordshire Inclusive Economy Partnership to increase the sector-based higher and advanced level apprenticeship programmes delivered locally, and promote the increased use of the new Community Employment Plan Toolkit across Oxford’s new developments.

Priority 2: Deliver more, affordable housing

Intervention is needed to address Oxford’s housing crisis where existing homes are unaffordable for many and demand for good quality homes outstrips what is available.

Council Strategy 2020-2024 Outcome	Year 3-4 (2022-2024) Actions
<p>DELIVER</p> <p>1. We will have increased the supply of high quality, energy efficient, accessible, and affordable housing, including new council housing as well as other types of homes to rent and for sale at different prices.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Deliver a new Housing, Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy for Oxford, setting out ambitious plans to increase the supply of affordable housing, including social rent and intermediate tenure types, and explore new approaches, such as developing an Oxford Living Rent intermediate housing product. • Provide strategic direction and support to Oxford City Housing Limited (OCHL), the City Council’s wholly owned housing company, to help it deliver and develop its Business Plan – this will involve acting as a best practice housing provider, scaling up the delivery of new housing, and considering a range of approaches to tenure including exploring an Oxford Living Rent. • Deliver an integrated Oxford Needs Homes communications and engagement campaign that explains the need to increase supply and build understanding as to how this will help address a range of needs. • Take actions to improve the condition and energy efficiency of the Council’s existing housing stock to improve standards and quality of living, informed by a Strategic Review of stock to inform investment and regeneration decisions and a new Asset Strategy.
<p>2. In regeneration projects such as Blackbird Leys, our new housing will be high quality with improved public</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue to support and where appropriate fund a number of key regeneration and new development schemes that will bring forward much needed housing, including new council housing - Blackbird Leys District Centre

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DELIVER	spaces and served by good public transport and cycling and walking routes.	regeneration (Council is a delivery partner); Oxpens (Council is a Joint Venture partner); South Oxford Science Village (Council is a land owner); Northern Gateway (Council is the Local Planning Authority and infrastructure funder).
	3. More Council and private sector tenants will have been supported to stay in their homes when they face the prospect of eviction.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue to improve services and countywide partnership working, strengthening the corporate commitment to homelessness prevention. Increase focus on upstream prevention, launching a trial of new prevention services for private rented sector (PRS) tenants, and establish a “single gateway” approach to make it easier for people to get the support they need quickly.
PARTNER	4. More developers, housing associations and others will view Oxford as a good place to build a range of different housing types.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Consult on policy options and potential development sites for the Oxford Local Plan 2040, and support the next stages of development of the Oxfordshire 2050 Plan, to address future housing need including the location and levels of housing and employment across Oxfordshire, and sustainable transport options.
	5. Working with neighbouring authorities we will be implementing the agreed countywide approach to meeting housing needs.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Work with neighbouring councils, landlords and stakeholders to deliver more houses that are integrated into the city and wider county with appropriate infrastructure to enhance a sense of community and wellbeing and enable people to live closer to where they work.
	6. Working with housing associations we will have delivered more move on accommodation for people in need.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Work with partners to deliver and increase access to housing to best meet locally identified needs, such as for those who have experienced rough sleeping and those living in temporary accommodation, and provide wraparound services such as mental health and substance support.
	7. Working with landlords we will have improved the quality and energy efficiency of privately rented homes in Oxford.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Subject to Government approval, implement a Selective Licensing Scheme for all PRS property across the City.

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<p>INFLUENCE</p> <p>8. New housing including new urban extensions will be built to create strong communities with good local amenities and sustainable transport links into the city. Sites valued by local people for leisure and recreation will be protected.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work with Oxfordshire councils and other partners to ensure that schemes are well designed, are integrated into the city and the wider county, and promote both active travel and public transport alongside low carbon/zero carbon building.

Priority 3: Support thriving communities

Oxford’s diverse communities should be equipped, supported and enabled to tackle inequality and ensure everyone is able to play a full part in the life of our city.

Council Strategy 2020-2024 Outcome	Year 3-4 (2022-2024) Actions
<p>DELIVER</p> <p>1. Our services, grants, community and leisure facilities, parks and cultural events will have helped reduce inequality, increase cohesion and improve health and wellbeing across Oxford’s communities.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Deliver a Service Integration Programme that brings together our Communities, Housing, Customer Service and Community Safety teams to deliver a seamless and more efficient service for our tenants and residents. • Work with Fusion Lifestyle to sustain a recovery in usage of our leisure centres, which have been badly impacted through the pandemic. Develop a plan for their longer term sustainability.
<p>2. Children and young people’s resilience and confidence will have increased through the educational and recreational activities we offer.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • With the County Council, which is now investing in youth service provision in Oxford, review our Youth Ambition programme and seek closer partnership working to achieve a more efficient and effective joint approach to support children and young people.
<p>3. As a good landlord, we will have worked with our Council tenants and residents to strengthen local communities; and worked with other major landlords to improve the services they provide.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Design and implement a new locality-based model for supporting our tenants and residents, shaped by their views and needs - improving engagement and driving up tenant satisfaction levels. • Respond to the feedback from the recent Tenant Survey, through a programme of increased investment into our council stock and improvements to our repairs service.
<p>4. Our parks and public spaces will remain clean, safe, and well maintained, and</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Extend the impact of social prescribing that links funding to health improvement activities delivered through the Council’s leisure, wellbeing and

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DELIVER	<p>will be accessible to more people to enjoy the health and wellbeing benefits they provide.</p>	<p>community facilities and maximise the opportunities from our GO Active and Move Together programmes to get more people active.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Subject to DEFRA approval, operationalise the bathing water status designation for a stretch of the River Thames in Port Meadow and work with local communities to make wild swimming safer. • Put in place transition arrangements for a new burial space in Oxford and a firm delivery plan.
PARTNER	<p>5. Working with neighbouring councils and partners, we will prevent homelessness, move people in temporary accommodation more rapidly into secure housing, and ensure that no one has to sleep rough on the streets of Oxford.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work with partners to implement the countywide homelessness prevention strategy to reduce homelessness and rough sleeping in Oxford, through new commissioned services to deliver a housing-led approach, and support people through more flexible and responsive services. • Continue to transform our homelessness services based on the principles of early homelessness prevention and rapid rehousing, working in partnership to prevent people losing their homes, and bringing down numbers of people in temporary accommodation.
	<p>6. Local voluntary and community groups will be better engaged with, supported and enabled to take a greater role in improving the city and the lives of citizens.</p>	<p>Implement the Thriving Communities Strategy - delivering programmes of work to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase participation, inclusivity and accessibility of leisure and community centres, arts venues and parks, ensuring they work for everyone. • Tackle issues of isolation in our elderly communities. • Protect and safeguard the heritage of local communities as part of our place-based and asset development strategies for the future.

Council Strategy 2020-2024 Outcome	Year 3-4 (2022-2024) Actions	
PARTNER	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work closely with advice centres and other community and voluntary sector organisations to extend their support and reach across Oxford’s diverse communities, linking with Locality Hubs (Council teams that support residents), Welfare Reform and the Contact Centre. 	
	<p>7. Increasing numbers of people who walk and cycle around the city, benefitting their health and wellbeing.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Secure funds to deliver the first phase(s) of the Oxford Greenways cycle routes project.
	<p>8. Our work with Thames Valley Police will keep communities safe and help reduce hate crime, human trafficking, modern slavery, domestic abuse, sexual violence, drug-related crime and antisocial behaviour.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work with our partners to deliver the Oxford Safer Communities Partnership’s Violence Against Women and Girls, and Hate Crime plans.
<p>9. Vulnerable people will continue to be safeguarded against harm.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work with other agencies to develop local responses to the findings of the Modern Slavery research. 	
INFLUENCE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Embed an Equalities, Diversity and Inclusion strategy that will increase trust and belonging between the Council and communities, predicated on inclusive values and reflecting the rich diversity in Oxford - and help us to build back fairer. Refresh the gender-balanced Race Advisory Group every two years. 	
	<p>11. Citizens will increase their active engagement in civic and political life.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ongoing engagement work by Elections team to increase participation in elections.

Priority 4: Pursue a zero carbon Oxford

In 2019 Oxford City Council declared a Climate Emergency and held the Oxford Citizens’ Assembly on Climate Change. The clear message from citizens was that they want the city to continue to take a lead in reducing emissions and increasing biodiversity, while ensuring this does not impact citizens’ living standards.

Council Strategy 2020-2024 Outcome	Year 3-4 (2022-2024) Actions
<p>DELIVER</p> <p>1. Oxford City Council will have reduced the carbon footprint from its own operations to zero.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Commission deep dive energy audits for Council buildings where we pay the energy bill to identify carbon reduction measures and optimum ways to transition from gas to electric based and other low carbon heating; and pursue funding opportunities to undertake the works identified. • Develop a plan outlining next steps towards the full decarbonisation of fleet vehicles by 2030. • Commission a new Sustainability Strategy to provide a roadmap for the many actions the Council is taking on decarbonisation and biodiversity.
<p>2. All new buildings by Oxford City Council will be significantly more energy efficient – moving towards near-zero or zero carbon standards.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improve standards of Council/OCHL builds in line with legislative and market developments and above the legal minimum - and balance further increases in the standard for energy efficiency with the need to increase both affordable housing supply and financial returns to the Council.
<p>3. We will have a significant programme of energy efficiency improvements across of our existing council housing.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Accelerate our Council house retrofit programme against requirements identified in the Stock Condition Survey, utilising the experience gained from existing programmes and the £7m we have already committed over the next four years to optimise our approaches to retrofit; and seek additional Government funding through national schemes as they come forward. Establish a Retrofitting Champions scheme involving tenants and those in

Council Strategy 2020-2024 Outcome	Year 3-4 (2022-2024) Actions
	<p>other accommodation to help engagement, highlight the financial and environmental benefits and boost take up of measures among tenants.</p>
<p>PARTNER</p> <p>4. All new buildings by developers in Oxford will be significantly more energy efficient – moving towards near-zero or zero carbon standards, with some examples of carbon-positive development.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work with our Zero Carbon Oxford Partnership (ZCOP) partners to accelerate emissions reduction in the city, focusing on priority areas identified in the ZCOP roadmap and action plan - including retrofit of residential and commercial buildings, supply chain, active travel, freight, new green technologies and skills.
<p>5. We will be promoting and enforcing the higher energy efficiency standards that will have been set nationally by the Government for residential and commercial landlords.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promote and incentivise compliance with energy efficiency (MEES) regulations among residential landlords. Prepare to extend this work into commercial premises in the following year.
<p>6. Oxford will have taken a leading role in the adoption of electric vehicles (EVs).</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Finalise an EV Strategy and Implementation Plan for Oxford, and work with ODS and commercial operators to identify optimal approaches for its implementation to accelerate the delivery of EV infrastructure across the city, including greater provision for car clubs.
<p>7. Air quality throughout the city will have improved.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work with officers at the County Council to deliver an integrated programme of transport measures to reduce private car use and improve air quality in the city, including the phased roll out of ZEZ and increase in walking, cycling and public transport usage.

	Council Strategy 2020-2024 Outcome	Year 3-4 (2022-2024) Actions
PARTNER	<p>8. Our streets, neighbourhoods and open spaces will be greener with more trees and other plants, and increased biodiversity.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Build public understanding of the importance of biodiversity and set a policy on offsetting linked to biodiversity enhancement and identify Council land and other sites - or even buildings - where this could be applied. This will be needed to help meet a statutory requirement (expected from 2023 onwards) that all new development delivers 10% Biodiversity Net Gain on the site itself, or elsewhere under an agreed programme determined by the Council as Planning Authority. • Implement the Council’s Urban Forest Strategy, initially by securing funding and sites to deliver additional street trees in Oxford to mark the Platinum Jubilee ‘Queen’s Canopy’ celebrations. Use the opportunity to encourage Oxford institutions and residents to plant trees on their own land.
	<p>9. The City will become more resilient to climate change including improved flood defences.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ongoing work to support Environment Agency delivery of the Oxford Flood Alleviation Scheme.
INFLUENCE	<p>10. We will campaign for the Government to introduce more rigorous energy efficiency standards on new builds and bring forward the end of petrol and diesel vehicle sales.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work with neighbouring authorities through Oxfordshire Plan 2050 and through Zero Carbon Oxford Partnership (ZCOP) to lobby Government for powers that would allow councils to set higher energy efficiency standards for new developments.
	<p>11. Citizens, businesses and other organisations in the city will be taking action to reduce carbon emissions and increase biodiversity.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work with other Oxfordshire councils to implement a Zero Carbon Communities Campaign to encourage and support residents to reduce their own carbon footprints. Train and educate our Council staff so we can use all of our points of contact with citizens to build engagement and encourage

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<p>INFLUENCE</p>	<p>behaviour change across domestic energy use, transport, waste and recycling and other areas that help decarbonisation and boost biodiversity.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Deliver and implement an updated Recycling and Waste Strategy for Oxford that supports the circular economy and ensures that waste reduction forms a key part of our goal of becoming a zero carbon city by 2040. The updated Strategy will also address an increase in street littering and will help prepare the city for likely significant changes in waste management expected to be introduced by Government following the 2021 Environment Act.

Glossary

BAME – Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic and is defined as all ethnic groups except White ethnic groups

CIZ – Community Impact Zone. A partnership working in Cowley Marsh, Cowley, Blackbird Leys and Northfield Brook which aims to create more opportunities for children and families

COP26 – The most recent United Nations Climate Change Conference, which was held in Glasgow in 2021

EDI – Equality, Diversity and Inclusion. This is all about ensuring all of Oxford's citizens have fair opportunities and a real share in the city's future

Energy Super Hub – hybrid battery system

EPCs – Energy Performance

Certificates. A requirement of a property that is built, sold or rented. It contains information about a property's energy use, typical energy costs and recommendations about how to reduce energy use and save money

Footfall – the number of people entering a shop or shopping area in a given time

Growth Deal – project funding for local enterprise partnerships (LEPs) that benefit the local area and economy

HELAA – Housing and Employment Land Availability Assessment. Shows the potential availability of sites in Oxford

Insetting and offsetting – Insetting refers to reducing or mitigating emissions directly in our supply chain, whereas

offsetting refers to reducing or mitigating emissions indirectly e.g. tree planting

Intersectionality – A recognition that some individuals and groups of people suffer discrimination in more than one way

Master plan – is a dynamic long-term planning document that provides a guide future growth and development

MEES – Minimum Energy Efficiency Standards

Modern Methods of Construction (MMC) – a range of offsite manufacturing and onsite techniques that provide alternatives to traditional house building

Natural Resource Management – The sustainable use of natural resources such as air, water and land

OLW – Oxford Living Wage a wage that is high enough to maintain a normal standard of living

OxLEP – Oxfordshire Local Enterprise Partnership plays a central role in deciding local economic priorities and undertaking activities to drive economic growth and create local jobs

OSP – Oxford Strategic Partnership brings organisations together to identifying strategic city challenges that will benefit from collaboration

ODS – Oxford Direct Services a company wholly-owned by the city council that runs waste services, street sweeping, building and engineering works

OCHL – Oxford City Housing Limited develops high

quality, sustainable, and energy efficient housing and promotes high levels of affordable housing

Oxford Living Rent – where rent is controlled to make it more affordable for people living in the city

Public Realm – commonly defined as any space that is free and open to everyone

Portfolio holders – Elected councillors who have responsibility for a particular area of work

Section 106 / S106 – Financial contributions made by developers that can be used to go towards infrastructure

SEND – Special Education Needs and Disabilities

Social value – a ‘catch-all’ term used to describe the difference an organisation

or project can make to the community they are operating within

Traffic filter – A road design that is generally used to filter out through traffic by allowing only traffic such as public transport to pass through (also known as bus gates)

Transport and Productivity Prospectus – a plan to promote inclusive, active and public travel modes

Wellbeing – state of complete physical, mental and social wellbeing and not merely the absence of disease or infirmity

Zero Carbon / Net Zero – the balance between the amount of greenhouse gas produced and the amount removed from the atmosphere. We reach net zero when the

amount we add is no more than the amount taken away

Zero Carbon Oxford Partnership (ZCOP) – Zero Carbon Oxford is a partnership that brings together universities, hospitals, councils, large businesses, and communities to support the city in its journey to net zero carbon emissions

Zero Emission Zone – vehicles used in the zone would be subject to charges, depending on their emissions. Only 100% zero emission vehicles would be able to be used in the zone free of charge