

This report is public	
Annual Council Business Report 2026/2027	
Committee	Council
Date of Committee	20 May 2026
Portfolio Holder presenting the report	Not applicable
Date Portfolio Holder agreed report	Not applicable
Report of	Monitoring Officer, Shiraz Sheikh

Purpose of report

To note the results of the district elections held on 7 May 2026, to appoint the Leader of the Council and to consider the appointments and allocation of seats on Committees for municipal year 2026/2027 in accordance with the duty under Section 15 Local Government Housing Act 1989, to ensure that this reflects the political make-up of the Council following the elections. The political representation of members on committees needs to be considered on an annual basis.

1. Recommendations

**** The recommendations are also included in the relevant section of the report ****

Council resolves:

- 1.1 To note the results of the District elections held on 7 May 2026.
- 1.2 To note the constitution of Political Groups and notification of Group Leaders which has been notified in accordance with Regulation 8 of the Local Government (Committees and Political Groups) Regulations 1990.
- 1.3 To appoint the Leader of the Council.
- 1.4 To note the appointment of the Deputy Leader of the Council, the membership of the Executive and Executive portfolios for the municipal year 2026/2027.
- 1.5 To agree the allocation of seats on committees that are subject to the political balance requirements as set out in Appendix 2 (to follow).
- 1.6 To agree that the allocation of seats on the Licensing Acts Committee reflects the General Licensing Committee.
- 1.7 To appoint members (and where required, substitute members) to serve on each of the committees in accordance with the nominations made by political groups (Appendix 3 - to follow).

Cherwell District Council

- 1.8 To appoint a non-Executive representative to the Oxfordshire Joint Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee.
- 1.9 To appoint a representative and named substitute to the Health and Wellbeing Board.
- 1.10 To appoint a representative and named substitute to the Police and Crime Commissioner Scrutiny Panel.
- 1.11 To appoint an Executive member representative and an Executive member substitute to the Oxfordshire Leaders Joint Committee.
- 1.12 That authority be delegated to the Monitoring Officer to make changes required to the Constitution as a result of the changes referred to in this report.

2. Executive Summary

- 2.1 This report sets out the results of the District Elections, the membership of the Political Groups and Group Leaders and appointment of the Leader of the Council.
- 2.2 The Council is required to appoint Committees and other members bodies that are not part of the Executive. Membership of the Council's Committees is agreed annually at the Annual Council Meeting.
- 2.3. The appointment of the Deputy Leader and the Executive are a matter reserved to the Leader of the Council.

Implications & Impact Assessments

Implications	Commentary
Finance	There are no financial implications arising directly from this report. Michael Furness, Assistant Director Finance & S151 Officer, 12 May 2026
Legal	The allocation of seats to the Political Groups is in accordance with section 15(5) of the Local Government Act 1989 and related regulations mentioned in the report. It is a legal requirement for Council to appoint a Leader, agree proportionality after an election and make appointments to committees. It is for the Council Leader to appoint the Deputy Leader and the other Executive members, and to allocate portfolio holder responsibilities. Shiraz Sheikh, Monitoring Officer, 12 May 2026
Risk Management	None

Impact Assessments	Positive	Neutral	Negative	Commentary
Equality Impact				
A Are there any aspects of the proposed decision, including how it is delivered or accessed, that could impact on inequality?		X		
B Will the proposed decision have an impact upon the lives of people with protected characteristics, including employees and service users?		x		
Climate & Environmental Impact				N/A
ICT & Digital Impact				N/A
Data Impact				N/A
Procurement & subsidy				N/A
Council Priorities	N/A, this report is pursuant to a statutory requirement			
Human Resources	N/A			
Property	N/A			
Consultation & Engagement	The political groups have been consulted on aspects of this report.			

Supporting Information

3. Background

- 3.1 Principal Councils are required to hold in every year an annual meeting of the full council. In an election year, this must be held on the eighth day after the retirement

of councillors or such other day within 21 days immediately following the day of retirement as the council may fix.

- 3.2 This meeting fulfills that requirement and ensures that the council has conducted the business required in legislation and the Council's Constitution to ensure governance arrangements are in place for the forthcoming municipal year.

4. Details

7 May 2026 District Election Results

- 4.1 Scheduled elections were held for one seat in each of the 16 district wards. Councillors were elected as set out below.
- 4.2 Following the resignations of councillors in the Banbury Calthorpe and Easington and Bicester West ward, by-elections were held alongside the scheduled elections on 7 May 2026. In these two wards, the candidate elected with the highest number of votes was elected for a four year term. The candidate with the second highest number of votes will serve the remainder of the term of the councillor who resigned.

Ward	Elected	Party	Term of office
Adderbury, Bloxham and Bodicote	David Hingley	Liberal Democrat	Four years
Banbury Calthorpe and Easington	Ian Harwood	Conservative	Four years
Banbury Calthorpe and Easington	John Jefferson Brown	Reform UK	One year
Banbury Cross and Neithrop	Yvonne Green	Reform UK	Four years
Banbury Grimsbury and Hightown	Rebecca Biegel	Labour and Co-operative	Four years
Banbury Hardwick	Paul Jeffreys	Reform UK	Four years
Banbury Ruscote	Mark Gorman	Reform UK	Four years
Bicester East	Bryonie Wells	Liberal Democrat	Four years
Bicester North and Caversfield	Julius Parker	Liberal Democrat	Four years
Bicester South and Ambrosden	Chris Pruden	Liberal Democrat	Four years
Bicester West	Michael Wilson	Reform UK	Four years
Bicester West	George Popescu	Reform UK	One year
Cropredy, Sibfords and Wroxton	Nicola Borkman	Liberal Democrat	Four years

Deddington	Eddie Fraser Reeves	Conservative	Four years
Fringford and Heyfords	Jean Conway	Liberal Democrat	Four years
Kidlington East	Fiona Mawson	Green	Four years
Kidlington West	Lisa Smith	Liberal Democrat	Four years
Launton and Otmoor	Timothy Faltermeyer	Liberal Democrat	Four years

Recommendation

1.1 To note the results of the District elections held on 7 May 2026.

Constitution of the Council and Constitution of Political Groups and Political Group Leaders

4.3 The current constitution of the Council (48 Members) is:

- 20 Liberal Democrat (41.67%)
- 8 Labour / Labour & co-operative party (16.67%)
- 8 Conservative (16.67%)
- 6 Reform UK (12.5%)
- 4 Green (8.33%)
- 2 Independent (4.16%)

4.4 The constitution of Political Groups and Group Leaders as notified to the Proper Officer is:

- Liberal Democrat (20 Members, all Liberal Democrat party members)
 - Group Leader: Councillor Lesley McLean
- Conservative (8 Members, all Conservative party members)
 - Group Leader: Councillor Edward Fraser Reeves
- Labour (8 Members, all Labour and Labour & Co-operative party members)
 - Group Leader: Councillor Rebecca Biegel
- Reform UK (6 Members, all Reform UK party members)
 - Group Leader: Councillor Paul Jeffreys
- Green (4 Members, comprising all 4 Green party members)
 - Group Leader: Councillor Ian Middleton

4.5 In accordance with Regulation 8 of the Local Government (Committees and Political Groups) Regulations 1990, Members have given notice of their wish to be regarded as Members of the Political Groups as set out below.

Liberal Democrat	Labour	Conservative	Reform UK	Green
Cllr Lesley McLean (Group Leader)	Cllr Rebecca Biegel (Group Leader)	Cllr Edward Fraser Reeves (Group Leader)	Cllr Paul Jeffreys (Group Leader)	Cllr Ian Middleton (Group Leader)
Cllr Chris Brant (Deputy Group Leader)	Cllr Dr Kerrie Thornhill (Deputy Group Leader)	Cllr David Rogers (Deputy Group Leader)	Cllr John Brown	Cllr Tom Beckett (Deputy Group Leader)
Cllr Gordon Blakeway	Cllr Besmira Brasha	Cllr Fiaz Ahmed	Cllr Mark Gorman	Cllr Fiona Mawson
Cllr Nicola Borkman	Cllr Mark Cherry	Cllr Ian Harwood	Cllr Yvonne Green	Cllr Linda Ward
Cllr Jean Conway	Cllr Becky Clarke MBE	Cllr Kieron Mallon	Cllr George Popescu	
Cllr Grace Conway-Murray	Cllr Dr Isabel Creed	Cllr Zoe McLernon	Cllr Michael Wilson	
Cllr Timothy Faltermeyer	Cllr Dr Henry Elugwu	Cllr Nigel Simpson		
Cllr David Hingley	Cllr Dom Vaitkus	Cllr Douglas Web		
Cllr Frank Ideh				
Cllr Simon Lytton				
Cllr Julian Nedelcu				
Cllr Julius Parker				
Cllr Robert Parkinson				
Cllr Rob Pattenden				
Cllr Chris Pruden				
Cllr Alisa Russell				
Cllr Lisa Smith				
Cllr Dorothy Walker				
Cllr Bryonie Wells				
Cllr John Willett				

- 4.6 The Labour Group and Conservative Group have the same number of members and will therefore both be referred to as the official opposition.
- 4.7 There are two Members not aligned to any political group: Councillor Les Sibley and Councillor Nick Cotter.

Recommendation

- 1.2 To note the constitution of Political Groups and notification of Group Leaders which has been notified in accordance with Regulation 8 of the Local Government (Committees and Political Groups) Regulations 1990.

Leader of the Council

- 4.8 The appointment of the Leader of the Council is a Council function in accordance with provisions of the Local Government Act 2000 as amended. The Leader of the Council comes from the majority political grouping.
- 4.9 In accordance with the provisions of the Local Government Act 2000 as amended and the Council's Constitution, the Leader of the Council will hold office for a four-year term until:
- they resign from the office
 - (following local elections) their successor becomes entitled to act as Leader
 - they are removed from office by resolution of the council.
- 4.10 Councillor David Hingley was appointed Leader of the Council at the Annual Council meeting on 22 May 2024. Councillor Hingley has notified the Proper Officer of his intention to resign as Leader of the Council.
- 4.11 Council is therefore required to appoint a Leader.

Recommendation

- 1.3 To appoint the Leader of the Council.

Deputy Leader of the Council and Executive 2026/2027

- 4.12 The Leader of the Council shall be the Chair of the Executive. It is their responsibility to determine the size and membership of the Executive (providing the membership comprises between two and nine members, not including the Leader). The Leader shall also determine the remit of each portfolio. Council does not have any decision-making in this regard.
- 4.13 All executive functions are vested in the Leader, and it is the Leader's responsibility to determine how such functions shall be delegated. This responsibility can be a simple re-affirmation of the existing delegation of executive functions to Executive, and Officers. Full Council does not have any decision-making role in this regard.
- 4.14 The Leader of the Council will advise Council of their appointment of Deputy Leader and the Executive Portfolios for the Municipal Year 2026/2027.

Recommendation

- 1.4 To note the appointment of Deputy Leader of the Council, the membership of the Executive and the Executive Portfolios for 2026/2027.

Committee Appointments 2026/2027

- 4.15 The current constitution of the Council is set out at paragraph 4.2. The current constitution of Political Groups is set out at paragraph 4.4.
- 4.16 The Council is required by the Local Government and Housing Act 1989 to review the political balance on its committees on an annual basis. Appendix 1 summarises how the rules operate.
- 4.17 Appendix 2 (to follow) sets out the arithmetical product of the rules for the Council's Committees. The figures in Appendix 2 show the adjustments which are necessary to achieve the balance across and within committees to comply with the rules.
- 4.18 The Licensing Acts Committee allocation of seats is not subject to the political balance requirements. Due to the crossover with the functions of the General Licensing Committee, it is recommended that, as agreed in 2025/2026, the make-up of the Licensing Acts Committee reflects the make-up of the General Licensing Committee, and the same Members are appointed to both Committees.
- 4.19 Appendix 3 (to follow) sets out Group nominations to serve on each of the committees in accordance with the political balance requirements.
- 4.20 Members appointed to Committees shall hold office until no later than the next Annual Council meeting, unless appointments are amended by Group Leaders and notified to the Proper Officer or a Member ceases to hold office.

Recommendations

- 1.5 To agree the allocation of seats on committees that are subject to the political balance requirements as set out in Appendix 2 (to follow).
- 1.6 To agree that the allocation of seats on the Licensing Acts Committee reflects the General Licensing Committee.
- 1.7 To appoint members (and where required, substitute members) to serve on each of the committees in accordance with the nominations made by political groups (Appendix 3 – to follow).

Appointment of Representatives to Joint Bodies

- 4.21 Council is required to agree at its Annual Meeting appointments to the joint bodies of which the Council is a member and has a seat / seats in line with the Terms of Reference of that joint body. Appointments are made for the municipal year and the Members appointed hold office until no later than the next Annual Council meeting, unless the nomination is amended or they cease to hold office.

Oxfordshire Joint Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee

- 4.22 Oxfordshire County Council (OCC) has responsibility to "review and scrutinise any matter relating to the planning, provision and operation of the health services in its

area” and to make referrals to the Secretary of State about proposals where it considers proposals for service change, or consultations, have been inadequate. It discharges that responsibility to the Oxfordshire Joint Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee (‘the Committee’).

- 4.23 OCC, Cherwell District Council (CDC), Oxford City Council, South Oxfordshire District Council, The Vale of White Horse District Council and West Oxfordshire District Council (“the Constituent Councils”) have under powers in Section 8(2)(a) of the Health and Social Care Act 2001 and associated Regulations, formed a joint committee between the Councils to discharge the functions of Oxfordshire County Council given to it under that Act.
- 4.24 The voting membership of the Committee comprises 12 non-executive members of the Constituent Councils, including 1 Member from each district/city Council.
- 4.25 Council is asked to appoint a (CDC) representative to the Oxfordshire Joint Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee for the municipal year 2026/2027. The representative cannot be a member of the Executive.

Health and Wellbeing Board

- 4.26 Oxfordshire County Council and the NHS have a duty to establish a Health and Wellbeing Board. The Board is the principal structure in Oxfordshire with responsibility for promoting the health and wellbeing of the people of the county.
- 4.27 The rules on political proportionality do not apply to the Health and Wellbeing Board not to any sub-committees set up by it.
- 4.28 The membership of the Board includes elected Member representatives and officers from the Oxfordshire local authorities, local GPs and Healthwatch Oxfordshire. The Board’s Terms of Reference set out that the representative from each district/city Council must either be the Leader or the relevant Executive/Cabinet member.
- 4.29 Council is asked to appoint a representative and named substitute to the Health and Wellbeing Board for the municipal year 2026/2027.

Thames Valley Police and Crime Panel

- 4.30 The Thames Valley Police and Crime Panel examines and reviews how the Police and Crime Commissioner for Thames Valley carries out their responsibilities of ensuring that Thames Valley Police runs effectively and supports the Police and Crime Commissioner in their work.
- 4.31 The Panel’s Terms of Reference set out that the membership included 14 elected Members, including one from each of the Oxfordshire district/city Councils.
- 4.32 The Panel’s Terms of References state: “Appointments of elected Members to the Panel shall be made by each of the Authorities in accordance with their own procedures and in making their appointments to the Panel each individual authority shall have regard to the requirement in the Act that appointments shall be made with a view to ensuring that the ‘balanced appointment objective’ is met so far as is

reasonably practicable. It is recognised that each Authority may choose to appoint from within the membership of the majority group.”

- 4.33 Council is asked to appoint a representative and named substitute to the Police and Crime Commissioner Scrutiny Panel for the municipal year 2026/2027.

Oxfordshire Leaders Joint Committee (OLJC)

- 4.34 The Oxfordshire Leaders Joint Committee is a joint committee of the six councils of Oxfordshire (“constituent authorities”) formed to enable and facilitate the Constituent members working together to deliver the aims of the Oxfordshire Strategic Vision for Long Term Sustainable Development.
- 4.35 As the Joint Committee is constituted to be able to discharge executive functions if delegated to it by the constituent authorities, then the appointed person must be from the Cabinet/Executive of the constituent authorities. There should be one member from each constituent authority. It is custom and practice for this person to be the Leader of the Council.
- 4.36 Each constituent authority shall appoint a substitute (also being an Executive member). The substitute member shall have the same rights of speaking and voting at the meetings as the member for whom the substitution is made. It is permissible to appoint a specific individual substitute or any Cabinet/Executive member.
- 4.37 Council is asked to appoint an Executive member as the council’s representative and named substitute (also an Executive member) to the Oxfordshire Leaders Joint Committee for the municipal year 2026/2027.
- 4.38 There is provision within the OLJC Terms of Reference for the establishment of Task and Finish Groups, but none have been established to date.
- 4.39 In the event that decisions delegated to this OLJC require it, a Joint Scrutiny Committee consisting of each Constituent Authority’s Chair of its Scrutiny Committee, may be convened. Notwithstanding, decisions of the OLJC may be scrutinised by each Constituent Authority as part of its own arrangements.

Recommendations

- 1.8 To appoint a non-Executive representative to the Oxfordshire Joint Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee.
- 1.9 To appoint a representative and named substitute to the Health and Wellbeing Board.
- 1.10 To appoint a representative and named substitute to the Police and Crime Commissioner Scrutiny Panel.
- 1.11 To appoint an Executive member representative and an Executive member substitute to the Oxfordshire Leaders Joint Committee.

5. Alternative Options and Reasons for Rejection

- 5.1 The following alternative options have been identified and rejected for the reasons as set out below.

Option 1: To amend the appointments. This is not recommended as nominations have been submitted by Group Leaders following consultation with their Groups and in accordance with the proportionality calculations.

6 Conclusion and Reasons for Recommendations

- 6.1 The Council is required to note the results of the District Council elections, appoint a Leader, note the appointment of the Executive and portfolio allocation, agree the allocation of seats on committees that are subject to the political balance requirements and not subject to political balance requirements, to agree the appointments to each of the Committees in accordance with the nominations made by political groups and agree appointments to joint committees.

Decision Information

Key Decision	N/A
Subject to Call in	N/A
If not, why not subject to call in	N/A
Ward(s) Affected	All

Document Information

Appendices	
Appendix 1	Local Government & Housing Act 1989 – Political Balance
Appendix 2	Allocation of seats on committees subject to political balance requirements and not subject to political balance requirements 2026/2027
Appendix 3	Committee appointments 2026/2027
Background Papers	None
Reference Papers	None
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