

Oxfordshire Councils Charter:

The County Council are working with The Oxfordshire Association of Local Councils, District and City Councils, and Town and Parish Councils and Parish Meetings to develop a shared charter. The charter will be a commitment of principles to support successful partnership working.

You have until 10th December to see examples from other areas and complete the survey via <https://letstalk.oxfordshire.gov.uk/ox-councils-charter>.

HIF1 update

Following the HIF1 Pre-Inquiry meeting earlier this month, the council have confirmed the Inquiry is now scheduled to start on **20 February and run until May 2024**. The Inspector will now be Lesley Coffey BA (Hons) BTP MRTPI. The Inquiry will be held at Bee House on Milton Park.

County Council budget proposals for 2024/25

Proposals to save more than £9.8 million in 2024/25 have been set out by the County Council as it seeks to set a balanced budget in the face of the continued inflation and growing service needs which have put many local authorities under financial pressure.

All local authorities are having to deal with the continued impact of slower than forecast falls in inflation in the UK and high costs of energy, fuel, materials and staff. The council also faces the rising cost of social care and care placements for both children and adults; and a national shortage of social care workers, leading to a reliance on more expensive agency staff. Oxfordshire has a growing and ageing population, which will continue to increase demand on services.

After taking account of proposed savings, funding changes and other factors that help meet pressures, the county council currently has a £9.1 million funding gap. It will work to close this and present a draft balanced budget in the new year, after the government has confirmed its financial settlement for local government.

New for this year, residents can take part in the budget consultation (for 2024/25) until 10 January using an online budget simulator, which will be hosted on the council's digital consultation and engagement platform Let's talk Oxfordshire.

<https://letstalk.oxfordshire.gov.uk/budget-consultation-2024-25>

The simulator allows residents to try to balance the council's budget, weighing up choices and impacts. People will also be able to comment on the [council's proposed budget](#) with feedback captured using an online form or in writing by Freepost.

The council is also running [three online Oxfordshire Conversations](#), which offer an opportunity for cabinet representatives to connect with residents on their priorities for local services and explore ideas for how we can make savings to balance our budget. The events are open to all (booking required) and will run on the following dates:

- Monday 4 December 1pm to 230pm
- Wednesday 6 December 7pm to 8:30pm
- Monday 11 December 4:30pm to 6pm.