



THAMES VALLEY

Please reply to:

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Budget Consultation 2024/25  
FREEPOST  
Oxfordshire County Council

9<sup>th</sup> January 2024

Dear Sirs

### **BUDGET CONSULTATION 2024/25**

I am writing on behalf of Railfuture Thames Valley and thank you for the opportunity to comment on the proposed budget.

We fully understand the pressures that the Council is under to provide Adult Social Care and Children's Services. However, in many parts of the County the lack of public transport creates difficulties for young people in particular to reach education and employment. This adds to social pressures in the community.

It is therefore vital that bus and train services are maintained and enhanced across the County. Aside from the social aspects, lack of public transport is forcing increased car use, going against the stated environmental objectives of the County, City and District Councils and adding to congestion. This problem has been exacerbated because so many new housing developments are located away from bus routes and railway stations.

There are important schemes to enhance the rail network where continued budgetary provision from the Council is necessary to support the business cases etc in order to obtain approval from DfT. These are:

- the Cowley Branch Line for passenger services
- additional services to Hanborough
- Wantage/Grove Parkway Station
- the Windrush Line to Witney and Carterton

Budgetary provision is also vital to implement planned bus/rail interchanges at Banbury and Culham and the associated expansion of bus services linking to many more stations.

We should therefore be pleased if you would make the necessary provisions in the Environment and Place Budget for the public transport items we have outlined.

Yours sincerely

*Andrew McCallum*

Secretary  
Railfuture Thames Valley Branch