Review Group Scoping Documents for Scrutiny Committee - Tuesday 3 July 2018

6. **Scrutiny Review Groups 2018/19** **(Pages 3 - 12)**

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Oxford City Council Scoping Document
The No Local Connection Review Group

This scoping template is designed to assist councillors and officers in establishing the focus of a scrutiny review group. Specifically, the scoping template emphasises the need for scrutiny review groups to have a clear purpose, rationale and focus for their work, and to make the best use of the resources available within a given time frame. This document will act as a reference guide throughout the review process to ensure the review does not deviate from its intended purpose.

Chair	Councillor Nadine Bely-Summers
Membership	The membership of the Review Group will be cross party in accordance with the Committee Operating Principles, and members will be confirmed at the Scrutiny Committee meeting on 3 July
Officer support	The Scrutiny Officer will support the Review Group around existing work commitments. Approximately 10 hours a week will be dedicated to producing meeting notes, agendas, organising guests, research and drafting reports. Council officers within Housing Services will also provide technical advice, though their capacity to support the review may be limited among other commitments.
Background and rational	With average house prices around 16 times the yearly average household income, Oxford is one of the most unaffordable cities in which to live in England. Changes introduced by new legislation, Government policy and reductions in national and county-level funding have meant the demand for City Council services has increased.

Homelessness pressures are increasing, with over 100 households per month approaching the Council as homeless and requesting assistance. Despite these pressures, the council has been meeting its target of housing not more than 120 families in Temporary accommodation. Street counts of rough sleepers have however shown high and sustained levels in the City, with the most recent published data recording 61, and estimating 89, in November 2017

The Council recently agreed a new Housing and Homelessness Strategy 2018-21, which has an 18 month Action Plan. Members of the review group will be encouraged to study this document before their first meeting. This Strategy states that the Council intends to continue to apply a local connection approach to most of its accommodation based commissioned services, and will operate a reconnection service for persons that have a better local connection to another area.

There are however exemptions available to care leavers and victims of violence, for example, and the local connection policy does not apply in instances of severe weather. Many commissioned services do not require a local connection, including the Street Outreach service; Sit-Up spaces; Day Centres; Employment and Support services.

The Homelessness Code of Guidance for Local Authorities defines a local connection as having residence for at least 6 months in an area during the previous 12 months, or for 3 years during the previous 5 year period. Family connection to an area is also a factor in deciding whether there is a local |

	connection.
	A 2015 Crisis report suggested that "*a much broader debate needs to be had as regards the appropriateness of using the Code of Guidance local connection criteria to restrict rough sleepers' eligibility for accommodation and other building based services.*" This review will contribute to the conversation on this issue. Oxford City Council also uses this statutory definition with regard to eligibility to the Housing Register. Entry into the Adult Homeless Pathway is based around a less stringent 'Pathway Connection' being established. If a 'Local Connection' can also be established, then this is also recorded as it will open up more 'move-on' options at the end of the pathway. 69% of homeless people recorded in the City's 2017 street count did not have an identifiable or known connection to any of the local authorities in Oxfordshire. 21% had an identifiable local connection to one of the other district councils in the County and 10% had an identifiable local connection to Oxford City. There has been an increase in the number of people found rough sleeping in the City with no local connection and who are looking for work and somewhere to live. There has not yet been a detailed piece of work to assess what the impact of relaxing the Council's local connection policy would mean for service users and the Council, and the Review Group's work will seek to address this.
Purpose of the Review	The Review Group will carry out a review into the specific impact of the current local connection policy, which provides a higher tier of services to local homeless people than those without a local connection. The purpose of the review is to produce recommendations that might improve or broaden the level of services available to those without a local connection. It is expected that any recommendations to change the Council's policies will require the Review Group to consider the financial implications of such changes, and where funding might be made available. Specific areas to consider are: 1. What provision is already in place to support rough sleepers without a local connection. 2. How homelessness services are funded. 3. The views of service users, services providers and experts on how the local connection policy impacts on homeless people with and without a local connection. 4. Understanding the reconnection process for those without a local connection. 5. Consideration of alternative service models that could provide further assistance to persons with no pathway/ local connection, either by way of reconnection, support or accommodation (including faith groups operating without public funding) and the likely impacts of this. 6. The implications of relaxing the local connection policy. This includes the risks, benefits, financial and resource implications. 7. National best practice, legislative requirements, and alternative approaches in relation to preventing and reducing homelessness. 8. Fact checking misconceptions about the provision of services.

Indicators of Success	1. The majority of recommendations are agreed and implemented. 2. A strong evidence base is produced to support current or alternative arrangements in relation to the local connection policy. 3. Improving public awareness in relation to street homelessness matters, and informing the debate about homelessness in the City (being initiated within the 'City Conversation'. 4. Improving outcomes for homeless people, with the ambition of reducing levels of rough sleeping within the City. 5. Service users and providers feel that they have been listened to and their feedback taken on board as part of an open and transparent review.
Out of scope	Issues around the availability and affordability of housing in the city and the cost of living, while relevant, will not be central to the review. The Council has recently agreed a Housing and Homelessness Strategy 2018-21, and the Strategy as a whole will not be subject to a review, as time is needed for the action plan to be implemented.
Method / Approach	The Review Group will carry out evidence gathering firstly by hearing from officers about current Council and third party provision for homeless people in the City. The Review Group will then undertake a series of evidence gathering exercises to meet the purpose of the review. This will involve meeting current and former homeless people to gather data on their experience, and recording anonymous case studies where relevant. The Review Group will then meet to feedback on their findings. The data collection process must be carried out in a robust and objective manner to ensure its credibility in supporting any recommendations. The Review Group will meet with service providers, experts and other guests to ask them about the current service provision for homeless people, the local connection policy, and possible recommendations that could be made. The group will meet with a variety of speakers across as many meetings as needed to develop a holistic and balanced understanding of the issues. The timeline agreed for the review may need to be reviewed where additional evidence is required. The Review Group will contact at least one other authority to consider their approach to supporting people without a local connection. Derby City Council has been highlighted. The Review Group will conclude by meeting to reflect on the evidence gathered, and agree its recommendations. Recommendations will be specific, measurable, achievable, realistic and timely (SMART). The Scrutiny Officer will support the Review Group by producing a detailed report of its work, the evidence gathered, and the recommendations agreed, with an accompanied rationale for the recommendations made.
Guest speakers	As a starting point, the Review Group will want to hear from: 1. Stephen Clarke, Head of Housing, Oxford City Council 2. Dave Scholes, Housing Needs Manager, Oxford City Council 3. Rachel Lawrence, Rough Sleeping and Single Homelessness Manager 4. Men and women who have experience of homelessness 5. Oxford City Council's Outreach Team 6. Crisis, national homelessness charity

	7. Oxford Winter Night Shelter 8. Oxford Homelessness Project 9. Housing needs manager(s) at other authorities. 10. Professor Sarah Johnsen and Dr Anwen Jones (Authors of The reconnection of rough sleepers within the UK: an evaluation) 11. Professor Suzanne Fitzpatrick (Author of The homelessness monitor: England 2018)
Specify evidence required and documents	Oxford City Council's Housing and Homelessness Strategy 2018-21 Evidence for the Housing and Homelessness Strategy 2018-21 Oxford City Council's spending commitment to homelessness services The Homelessness Pathway (March 2018 CEB report) Adult Homeless Pathway Map and Services Directory Operating protocols for the Adult Homeless Pathway (not a published document) Quarterly homelessness count data The homelessness monitor: England 2018 The reconnection of rough sleepers within the UK: an evaluation The Homelessness Reduction Act 2017
Specify Site Visits	Possible site visit to Derby City Council. There has been mention that the this Council has relaxed its local connection policy, but clarity is needed.

Projected start date	W/C 16 July 2018, subject to member availability	**Draft Report Deadline**	Report to 6 November Scrutiny Committee
Meeting Frequency	~ 6 meetings approx.	**Projected completion date**	Reports to 14 November CEB

Draft outline of meetings

Meeting 1 - Understanding the Local Context
The Review Group will meet with council officers to understand the current provision of services for homeless people in the City, and the wider homelessness pathway.

Meeting 2 – Meeting rough sleepers
Members of the Review Group, the Scrutiny Officer and an experienced frontline council officer familiar with interacting rough sleepers will engage with homeless people and record opinions and experiences in relation to the homelessness pathway and the local connection policy. For this to be meaningful, a robust and ethical research approach to interviewing/surveying individuals will need to be established, across a representative sample. This will require further planning before being undertaken.

Meeting 3 – Meeting service providers, experts and former rough sleepers
The Review Group will meet with service professionals from a range of organisations to gather data on their experiences of the local connection policy and the homelessness pathway. This may require a morning/afternoon, and for attendees to be staggered.

Meeting 4 – Meeting other authorities
Members of the Panel will meet with representatives from Derby City Council to discuss their views on relaxing the local connection policy. More clarity is needed in the first instance on the precise nature of the Derby policy.

Meeting 5 – Recommendations and Conclusions
The Review Group will review the evidence it has received and form recommendations.

Meeting 6 – Feasibility of recommendations (provision)
To discuss with relevant officers the feasibility of implementing any significant resource/spending intensive recommendations, prior to submission to the City Executive Board.

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The Tourism Management Review Group
Oxford City Council Scoping Document

This scoping template is designed to assist councillors and officers in establishing the focus of a scrutiny review group. Specifically, the scoping template emphasises the need for scrutiny review groups to have a clear purpose, rationale and focus for their work, and to make the best use of the resources available within a given time frame. This document will act as a reference guide throughout the review process to ensure the review does not deviate from its intended purpose.

Chair	Councillor Andrew Gant
Membership	The membership of the Review Group will be cross party in accordance with the Committee Operating Principles, and 4-6 members will be confirmed at the Scrutiny Committee meeting on 3 July
Officer support	The Scrutiny Officer will support the Review Group around existing committee and panel commitments. Approximately 10 hours a week will be dedicated to producing meeting notes, agendas, organising guests, research and drafting reports. Council officers will also provide technical advice, though their capacity to support the review may be limited among other commitments. The Scrutiny Officer will also support the budget review group in January 2019, and this will impact on the resources available at that time.
Background and rational	Oxford is a tourism gateway to the rest of Oxfordshire. The City attracts 7 million annual visitors, and generates over £780 million of income for local businesses, whilst supporting 12% (14,000 jobs) of jobs in the City. In terms of overseas visitors to the UK, Oxford is the seventh most visited city for staying visits. The City is famed for its heritage, and has numerous attractions (many of which are linked to the university), including the Ashmolean Museum, Pitt Rivers Museum, University Museum of Natural History, University Botanic Gardens, Sheldonian Theatre, Christ Church, Radcliffe Camera and Holywell Music Rooms.

With predicted visitor numbers set to increase, the growth of tourism in a small medieval city brings with it pressures and challenges. Particular issues have been raised by councillors and local residents relating to:

• Overcrowding on central pavements, particularly by large tour groups
• Coaches parking over cycle lanes and in inappropriate areas
• The condition of the public realm and public facilities in the city centre
• The need for pedestrian flows to be managed in an effective way.
• Street clutter, narrow footways and limited space for seating

However, the significant benefits of tourism in the City should not be lost in this discussion. The resource requirements to address some of these issues are significant, and any solutions will need to involve the views of various stakeholders, with the City Council being only one of the interested organisations. The bus companies, tour operators, County Council and universities have been identified as key stakeholders in this area. The Council currently subsidises the not-for-profit organisation Experience Oxfordshire to promote the region as a place to live, work, |

	visit and do business.
Purpose of the Review	The Review Group will carry out a review of Oxford's visitor welcome, and the current partnership approach to destination management. This will involve working with stakeholders to identify opportunities for improving the visitor and resident experience, with a focus on improving the coordination of the tourism offering. The review will not seek to duplicate any work already underway. It is expected that any recommendations from the Review Group will consider the financial implications of such changes, and where funding might be made available. Specific areas to consider are: 1. Is there a clear vision for tourism management in Oxford, and are partners aware of it? 2. How might the Council and its partners support private organisations to innovate? For example, the development of a city card for attractions and transport, or a city app. 3. What destination management model is best suited to Oxford? 4. What are the risks and benefits associated with the current and predicted number of visitors, particularly during peak season? 5. What are partner and stakeholder plans to manage rising numbers of visitors? 6. What are other cities doing to promote and manage tourism, that Oxford is not doing already, and what lessons can be learnt? 7. How are tourism management activities funded and resourced, and what work is planned to improve the public realm?
Indicators of Success	1. The majority of recommendations are agreed and implemented. 2. A strong evidence base is produced to support current or alternative arrangements in relation to the management of tourism and the public realm. 3. That the Council and other stakeholders are clear about their role in managing increasing numbers of visitors to the City. 4. A strengthening of relationships between the Council, local partners and stakeholders in the tourism sector. 5. Stimulating public conversation in relation to the growing numbers of visitors to the City.
Out of scope	The impact of the Westgate Centre is being reviewed by the Scrutiny Committee in November 2018, and therefore should not be considered in detail by this review group at this time. It may be timely to commence this review following consideration of that issue.
Method / Approach	The Review Group will firstly hear from officers about the Council's role in the tourism management function, and what work is underway in this area. The Review Group will then undertake a series of evidence gathering exercises to meet the purpose of the review. This will involve gathering information on the challenges that are presently experienced as a result of high numbers of visitors. It is proposed that the Review Group undertakes a city walk during peak hours to record first had experiences of the issues. This will help inform lines of questioning and areas of investigation going forward.

	The Review Group will then explore how other cities manage tourism, and what lessons can be learnt or transferred to Oxford. This includes reviewing different models of destination management by public and private sector providers. The Review Group will meet with stakeholders, experts and other guests to ask for their views on the challenges and possible solutions for tourism management and improving the visitor welcome. The timeline agreed for the review may need to be revised where additional evidence is required. The Review Group will conclude by meeting to reflect on the evidence gathered, and agree its recommendations. Recommendations will be specific, measurable, achievable, realistic and timely (SMART). The Scrutiny Officer will support the Review Group by producing a detailed report of its work, the evidence gathered, and the recommendations agreed, with an accompanied rationale for the recommendations made.		
Guest speakers	The Review Group will want to hear from: Laurie-Jane Taylor, Oxford City Council City Centre Manager Matt Peachey, Oxford City Council Economic Development Manager Experience Oxfordshire Smart Oxford Programme Manager Oxfordshire County Council Transport and Highways Walking and bus tour operators Disability group representatives Oxford pedestrians association		
Specify evidence required and documents	Experience Oxfordshire: The Economic Impact of Tourism Oxford City Centre Movement and Public Realm Strategy Visit England: Principles for Developing Destination Management Plans Oxford Transport Strategy World Travel Tourism Council: Managing Overcrowding in Tourism Destinations Oxford city guides		
Specify Site Visits	Perform a city walk to establish challenges and issues in relation to: safety, cleanliness, congestion, the condition of public facilities and the prominence of large tour groups, for example.		
Proposed start date	November / December 2018	**Draft Report Deadline**	Report to 2 April 2019 Scrutiny Committee
Meeting Frequency	~ 6 meetings approx	**Projected completion date**	Reports to 10 April 2019 CEB

Draft outline of meetings

Meeting 1 - Understanding the Council's Role
The Review Group will meet with council officers to understand the Councils role in tourism management, and the work that is currently underway to improve the visitor welcome and the public realm.

Meeting 2 – A City Walk to identify the issues
The Review Group will perform a city walk at a busy period and report back to provide an up to date qualitative narrative about the challenges of managing high numbers of visitors. This could be done individually in member's spare time, or as a collective. Specific issues that could be considered include: safety, cleanliness, congestion, the condition of public facilities and the prominence of large tour groups. The Scrutiny Officer will collate feedback into a report, and all council members will be invited to contribute.

Meeting 3 – Destination Management
The Review Group will explore how other cities manage tourism, and what lessons can be learnt or transferred to Oxford. This includes reviewing different models of destination management by the public and private sector.

Meeting 4 – Meeting stakeholder, service providers and experts
The Review Group will meet with from a range of stakeholders to: 1) Understand their plans for managing increasing visitor numbers 2) Discuss ideas for innovation to improve the coordination of the tourism offer 3) Consider where the Council can support stakeholders on matters of mutual interests 4) Discuss possible recommendations that could be made as a result of the review This may require a morning/afternoon, and for attendees to be staggered.

Meeting 5 – Recommendations and Conclusions
The Review Group will review the evidence it has received and form recommendations.

Meeting 6 – Feasibility of recommendations (provisional)
The Review Group will discuss with relevant officers the feasibility of implementing any significant resource/spending intensive recommendations, prior to submission to the City Executive Board.