

Agenda

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Communities and Partnership Scrutiny Committee

Date: **Monday 2 April 2012**

Time: **6.00 pm**

Place: **Oxford Town Hall, St Aldate's, Oxford**

For any further information please contact:

Lois Stock, Democratic Services Officer

Telephone: 01865 252275

Email: lstock@oxford.gov.uk

Communities and Partnership Scrutiny Committee

Membership

Chair	Councillor Jim Campbell	St. Margaret's;
Vice-Chair	Councillor Dee Sinclair	Quarry and Risinghurst;
	Councillor Mohammed Altaf-Khan	Headington Hill and Northway;
	Councillor Laurence Baxter	Quarry and Risinghurst;
	Councillor Mary Clarkson	Marston;
	Councillor Beverley Hazell	Marston;
	Councillor Graham Jones	St. Clement's;
	Councillor Shah Khan	Cowley;
	Councillor Ben Lloyd-Shogbesan	Lye Valley;
	Councillor Gill Sanders	Littlemore;
	Councillor Ruth Wilkinson	Headington;
	Councillor Nuala Young	St. Clement's;

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AGENDA

Pages

1 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

2 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Members are asked to declare any interests they may have on items contained in this agenda.

3 WORK PROGRAMME AND REPORT BACK ON COMMITTEE'S RECOMMENDATIONS

1 - 12

Contact Officer: Pat Jones (Principal Scrutiny Officer), Tel 01865 252191, phjones@oxford.gov.uk

Background Information
Scrutiny Committees work each year within a programme agreed by Councillors. This item will appear on all future agendas to allow members to see progress on the work programme items, and plan agenda for future meetings.
Attached is the current work programme that was agreed by Councillors at an informal meeting in July.
Why is it on the agenda?
This item is presented here to allow the Committee to agree lines of enquiry for future meetings; take an overview of progress, and gauge support for, and Councillor interest in, the items agreed.
Who has been invited to comment?
The Principal Scrutiny Officer will present the report and answer questions.
What will happen after the meeting?
The Chair and Vice-Chair will continue to monitor the Committee's work programme and report to future meetings.

4 SELECT COMMITTEE UPDATE - YOUNG PEOPLE

13 - 16

Contact Officers: Lois Stock (Democratic and Electoral Services Officer) Tel 01865 252275, lstock@oxford.gov.uk; Pat Jones (Principal Scrutiny Officer), Tel 01865 252191, phjones@oxford.gov.uk

Background Information
<p>The Select Committee looking at issues around helping young people into work, education or training had its first meeting last month.</p> <p>A short briefing note identifying the main issues and any gaps in evidence is attached.</p>
Why is it on the agenda?
<p>To allow the Committee to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consider the main points raised; • Decide how it wishes to take the issue forward and in particular how it wishes to engage with young people and other organisations.
Who has been invited to comment?
<p>Pat Jones (Principal Scrutiny Officer) will introduce this item.</p>
What will happen after the meeting?
<p>The work of the Select committee will continue in line with the wishes expressed by the Committee.</p>

5 HOUSING STOCK DE-DESIGNATION - 1ST YEAR REVIEW

Contact Officer: Pat Jones (Principal Scrutiny Officer), Tel 01865 252191, phjones@oxford.gov.uk

Background Information
<p>The Committee agreed with the City Executive Board a 5 year plan to de-designate some of the council housing stock held for the over 50s.</p> <p>Part of this agreement was for the Panel guiding this work to conduct a review of progress at the end of the first year.</p>
Why is it on the agenda?
<p>The extract below show the details agreed for the review</p> <p><i>Extract from City Executive report from the Scrutiny Committee</i></p>

“Yearly Review

- a) It is important to outline now clearly the 5 year plan for properties considered for de-designation. It allows all to know the outline plan and use this knowledge when considering and making allocations. This plan however will be subject to a yearly review. Below is the minimum proposal for review and includes the general scope alongside some of the detail considerations that would be expected as a minimum

General Scope – A review of the whole scheme each year to consider if properties should be rescheduled earlier or later. In considering this to be clear that the expectation is that individual difficulties in properties should be tackled quickly and positively and not used as a lever to undermine the whole scheme.

Issues for detail consideration (minimum requirement) –

The following information and tests will be considered and made objectively by a review:

- The current age profile of tenants within blocks
- The allocations made within the previous year. The profile of new tenants, the sustainability of these tenancies and any negative affects that can be associated directly with the allocation
- Actions taken to solve problems and the effectiveness of these
- The positive results of the scheme and any particular reasons or actions that can be associated with these that can be applied elsewhere
- The views of Tenants Representatives "

Who has been invited to comment?

Pat Jones (Principal Scrutiny Officer) will give an oral update to the Committee on progress to date.

What will happen after the meeting?

The member review group will consider the findings.

6 AREA FORUM DEVELOPMENT

Contact Officer: Pat Jones (Principal Scrutiny Officer), Tel 01865 252191, phjones@oxford.gov.uk

At 6.45 or immediately following this meeting there will be a meeting of the Area Forum Panel. This meeting is set to:

- Consider the views of the Area Forum Panel.
- Agree the public recommendations that will be made to the City Executive Board and Council on this issue.

The papers for this meeting have been circulated separately.

7 MINUTES

17 - 24

Minutes of the meeting held on 12th March 2012 are attached.

8 DATES AND TIMES OF FUTURE MEETINGS

The following dates have been programmed for meetings:-

18th June 2012
15th October 2012
3rd December 2012
4th February 2013
15th April 2013

All meetings have been programmed to start at 6pm

DECLARING INTERESTS

What is a personal interest?

You have a personal interest in a matter if that matter affects the well-being or financial position of you, your relatives or people with whom you have a close personal association more than it would affect the majority of other people in the ward(s) to which the matter relates.

A personal interest can affect you, your relatives or people with whom you have a close personal association positively or negatively. If you or they would stand to lose by the decision, you should also declare it.

You also have a personal interest in a matter if it relates to any interests, which you must register.

What do I need to do if I have a personal interest?

You must declare it when you get to the item on the agenda headed “Declarations of Interest” or as soon as it becomes apparent to you. You may still speak and vote unless it is a prejudicial interest.

If a matter affects a body to which you have been appointed by the authority, or a body exercising functions of a public nature, you only need declare the interest if you are going to speak on the matter.

What is a prejudicial interest?

You have a prejudicial interest in a matter if;

- a) a member of the public, who knows the relevant facts, would reasonably think your personal interest is so significant that it is likely to prejudice your judgment of the public interest; and
- b) the matter affects your financial interests or relates to a licensing or regulatory matter; and
- c) the interest does not fall within one of the exempt categories at paragraph 10(2)(c) of the Code of Conduct.

What do I need to do if I have a prejudicial interest?

If you have a prejudicial interest you must withdraw from the meeting. However, under paragraph 12(2) of the Code of Conduct, if members of the public are allowed to make representations, give evidence or answer questions about that matter, you may also make representations as if you were a member of the public. However, you must withdraw from the meeting once you have made your representations and before any debate starts.

Communities and Partnership Scrutiny Committee

Work programme debate outcomes

General Principles

After consultation with back-bench councillors the committee has decided this year to run its programme through a series of themes. Each theme will be led by a small group of councillors.

At least half of the available committee meetings will be organised around “select committee principles” with lead members working with officers to determine lines of inquiry and attendees. Co-option around themes will be considered to enhance the expertise and views of the committee

A Housing Standing Panel has been set to bring together all housing issues and therefore mirror the organisation of the Council. A tenant representative has been invited to be part of this Panel

The programme remains flexible and open to reorganisation by committee. A complete review will be undertaken by the Chair and Vice-Chair in January 2012

The information that follows shows:

- The themed draft programme and focus
- Current nominations
- Projected agenda schedules
- On going Panels
- Housing Panel

Communities and Partnership Scrutiny Committee

Draft Work Programme 11/12

Theme	Area(s) for focus	Likely Status of Inquiry	Nominated/interested councillors
Housing	1. All strategic and landlord issues previously contained within the remit of Communities and Partnership and Value and Performance Scrutiny Committees. A separate programme is attached for	<p>Standing Panel with all housing issues considered on this agenda with the exception of HRA financing changes which will be considered by the Finance and Performance Panel within the Treasury Management Strategy</p> <p>Representative from the Tenant Involvement and Monitoring Panel. Named deputy to take the seat when holder is absent</p> <p>Panel meeting see schedule below for dates and topics</p>	<p>No councillor substitutions allowed</p> <p>Cllrs. Campbell, Sanders, McCready and Humberstone</p> <p>Barrie Finch - co-opted from the Tenant Involvement and Monitoring Panel</p> <p>Grace Oshinbolu – named deputy from the Tenant Involvement and Monitoring Panel</p>
Public Health	Focus under consideration. The guidance is that emphasis should be on activities where the Council is involved or can have some influence through partnership working. Agreed to consider how our Community Centres can be used to improve the health offer in the City	<p>Single issues committee meeting Meeting date: 14th. December.</p> <p>Select committee held – findings paper to 7th. February meeting</p>	<p>Cllrs. Jones and Sinclair are Lead Members. <i>Request from Cllr. Campbell to join the group</i></p>

Community Engagement	<p>To invite the Head of Policy, Culture and Communications to brief the committee and answer questions on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Partnership working - what the City Council is hoping to see and achieve through the reforming partnership structure How the service development to “Increase public input into policy and decision making” is to be delivered and within what objectives and measurements <p>As a separate item to invite County officers and the Cabinet member to outline the changes in Youth Service provision and what this practically means for young people in the City</p>	<p>Committee briefing Target meeting date: 17th. October</p> <p>Meeting held and report written for 7th. December CEB.</p> <p>Committee agree to change the regeneration select committee issue from youth unemployment to engagement with hard to reach groups</p> <p>Committee inquiry Target meeting date: To be decided</p>	<p>Councillor Wilkinson</p> <p>The committee is looking for at least 1 additional member to express an interest in this area</p>
Regeneration	<p>Suggestion: Unemployment amongst young people in deprived communities: (Exact format and attendees to be finalised by nominated members) This focus has been changed by committee to engagement and support for young unemployed people</p>	<p>Select committee inquiry Target meeting date: March 12th. 2012</p>	<p>Councillors Lloyd-Shogbesan and Altaph-Khan nominations required</p>
Hosing Stock de-designation	<p>Review of first year of the agreed de-designation programme as proposed by the scrutiny review panel in 2010</p>	<p>Panel Review Information gathering February 2012.</p>	<p>All previous review group members still serving</p>

		Scrutiny Officer review date 28 th . March 2012	Cllrs. Sinclair and Smith (co-opted) plus Anita Fisher IMP
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Communities and Partnership Scrutiny Committee Agenda Schedules

Dates	Slots and Items
6 th . June	1. Housing Strategy – issues and next steps 2. Community Engagement – Start up of Area Forums 3. End of year performance figures – Community Housing 4. Spending cuts and the effects on the voluntary sector in Oxford Introduction to David Edwards Meeting full
17 th . October	1. Cleaner Greener Panel Report 2. Interim report – Young Peoples Engagement 3. Partnership working and increasing the public involvement in policy and decision making Meeting full
12 th . Dec	1. Public Health – Single Issue meeting Meeting full
7 th . February Re-arranged to 12 th . March	1.Regeneration – Select Committee – Unemployment amongst young people 2.Public Health Select Committee Report Meeting full
27 th . March	Reception for Positive Futures Young Peoples Forum – Lord Mayor
2 nd . April	1. Area Forum development – Panel report 2. Stock de-designation 1 st . year review 3. Vacant slot

Communities and Partnership Scrutiny Committee

Ongoing panels

Topic	Comment
Young Peoples Engagement Councillors Campbell, Sanders and Sinclair	Interim report in October full report in February
Cleaner greener – Blackbird Leys Councillors Campbell, Humberstone and Smith (local councillor)	Final report in October
Community Engagement – Area Forums Councillors Wilkinson and Sanders	Progress Report in February

Housing Panel

Topics and outline lines of inquiry agreed for 2011/2012

Topic	Lines of Inquiry
<p>Development of the Housing Strategy</p> <p>Lead member:</p> <p>Councillor Campbell</p>	<p>To see a draft of the new strategy as early as possible and in addition to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • See the results against the targets for the expired strategy • Understand the gaps and new issues to be addressed • How these gaps are turned into priorities for action and targets within the proposed strategy • Understand what success depends on in realistic terms and where and how we can have the greatest influence <p>Target timing: October and Dec/January</p>
<p>Effects of recent government changes in housing and benefits and their effects in Oxford (positive and negative). Our policy response to this linked with the use of allocated contingencies</p> <p>Lead Member:</p> <p>Councillor Sanders</p>	<p>To consider:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The changes we are seeing in Oxford, as presented through our services • A judgement on how this likely to develop based on service demands and changes on the way • How we are responding in terms of spending and service delivery • How much of the budgeted contingencies have been used or are likely to be used <p>Target timing: October and February</p>
<p>Estate Management – Service Standards</p> <p>Lead member:</p> <p>Councillor Humberstone</p>	<p>To see and have an opportunity to comment on the scoping of the 6 month review of the new Landlord Service Structure</p> <p>To see outcomes from the review and have the opportunity to engage with and comment the issues arising</p> <p>Target timing: October and</p>

	December/January
<p>Investment in the housing stock beyond decent homes</p> <p>Housing repair – cost and quality</p> <p>Lead member:</p> <p>Councillor McCready</p>	<p>To be agreed</p> <p>Timing: asap</p>
<p>Tenant Involvement</p> <p>Lead member:</p> <p>Barrie Finch</p>	<p>To consider proposals/strategies to improve tenant involvement and how these compare to best practice</p> <p>In 6 months time (February/March) to have details of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The number of tenants actively involved • The activities tenants are involved in • The overall structure provided by the Council for tenant engagement • How these structure provide for real opportunities for tenants to influence and effect change. Examples of this happening <p>Target timing: October, February/March</p>

Potential Meeting Schedule

Meeting Date	Items	Lead Panel members
28th October 2.00pm	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Housing Strategy – issues, understanding and options 2. Effects of housing and benefits changes in the City. Response and costs 3. Scoping of the review of estate management changes 4. Tenant involvement best practice and structures 	
14 th . November 5.30pm	Just in case date	
1 st . December 5.30pm	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Housing Strategy – formal consultation response 2. Results of the review of estate management changes 3. Housing repairs vfm 4. Housing reform landlord/tenant issues 	
? January	Just in case date	
? February	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Effects of housing and benefits changes in the City. Response and costs 2. Housing repairs vfm 3. Housing reform landlord/tenant issues 4. Tenant involvement 	
? March	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Housing repairs vfm Housing reform landlord/tenant issues 	

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Briefing Note

Communities and Partnership Scrutiny Committee

Select Committee – Supporting Young People into Education Training and Work

At its meeting on 12th March 2012, the Committee heard from the following people:-

- Ruth Ashwell – Oxfordshire County Council Youth Engagement and Opportunities Service Manager, Early Intervention – Children, Young People and Families;
- Sarah Burrows – Oxfordshire County Council - Manager of the East Oxford Hub;
- Riaz Ahmed – Chair of the Stanley Road Mosque;
- Khalid Shariff – SportsBox;
- Sharon Highton – CfBT Education Trust (Oxford Includes);
- Amir Hamza;
- Jawaid Malik.

Key points and themes

The following key points were made and themes identified:-

1. Variations across the City

NEET figures varied across the City, but it was important not to look just at figures but at percentages too. Some smaller wards had a higher percentage of young people who were NEET, even if they had fewer individuals.

2 Relevance of educational attainment

Young people with LDD (learning difficulties and disabilities) were more likely to become NEET than any other group. A pilot scheme at St Gregory's School sought to screen young people to assess who was most likely to become NEET. If successful, this would be rolled out across the City. There was concern that some young people might be removed from the LDD register – this increased the likelihood of a vulnerable young people being missed. It was important to pick up on issues early. Working with children as young as those in Years 7 and 8 provided much greater sustainable benefits.

3 Young people and work

A proportion of young people “bounced” in and out of jobs. Whilst not NEET in the conventional sense, they were not in settled work and tended to gain low paid and more unskilled work. Other young people held jobs for quite a time, and then were (for example) made redundant, but they were well equipped to find other work and confident about doing so. It should be kept in mind that there was a broad spectrum of young people who could be considered NEET, and that the period for which they were NEET could vary.

4 Importance of mentoring

The provision of positive role models and mentors for young people could make a real difference. More youth workers like Khalid Sharif, who lived amongst the community with which they worked, were needed.

5 Outreach work

Outreach work was important. It was also important to meet and interact with young people where they met, which could include outside “normal” working hours.

There is a cultural perspective to engagement and support. Consideration should be given to the use of Mosques, as effectively they are community centres. It is important that outreach work is linked in with the mainstream, and developed as a referral point.

6 Apprenticeships and work experience

There were apprenticeship schemes in Oxford, but the problem for many young people was that they were set at too high a level – for example, for people who already had a level 2 qualification. Lack of formal qualification was a barrier for many.

Young people’s views of work experience varied; some found it valuable, others less so. Most agreed that they wanted work experience that was paid, and preferably resulted in a permanent job.

The Fire and Rescue Service provided a dedicated 2 weeks per year of training in schools focussed on work skills and team work. This was very valuable and more schemes of this nature were needed.

Gaps

1 Evidence from young people

The major gap identified by the Committee was that of gathering evidence directly from young people. One young person had attended the

meeting and been very helpful, but it was necessary to gather a wider range of views, and to go out and meet young people where they gathered.

2 Further information from the invited guests

The invited guests were asked the following:-

- *What do you think are the current barriers for young people, especially those who are NEET?.*
- *What one thing would you like the City Council to do in order to help alleviate the present situation?*

Information will be collated as it is received and circulated in due course.

3 Job Centre Plus

The Committee would like to talk with representatives from Job Centre Plus concerning their interaction with communities and the programmes that they have available.

Next Steps

- 1 Councillors Campbell, Altaf Khan and Lloyd Shogbesan will jointly review the comments made at the meeting and prepare a list of key points for the rest of the Committee;
- 2 Officers to gather information from guests (in hand);
- 3 Gather together a list of agencies and individuals who work with young people in the City – help from the guests in its compilation would be welcome;
- 4 Arrange to meet with young people in order to gather more information from them.

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Agenda Item 7

COMMUNITIES AND PARTNERSHIP SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Monday 12 March 2012

COUNCILLORS PRESENT: Councillors Campbell (Chair), Sinclair (Vice-Chair), Altaf-Khan, Baxter, Hazell, Jones, Khan, Lloyd-Shogbesan, Sanders, Wilkinson and Young.

OFFICERS PRESENT: Lois Stock (Democratic and Electoral Services Officer) and Pat Jones (Principal Scrutiny Officer)

26. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Received from Councillor Mary Clarkson

27. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

None

28. SELECT COMMITTEE - SUPPORTING YOUNG PEOPLE INTO EDUCATION, TRAINING AND WORK.

The Head of Law and Governance submitted a report (previously circulated, now appended) giving the background of this Select Committee. Councillor Jim Campbell introduced the report and explained how this part of the meeting would work.

This meeting was the start of the Select Committee that would look at supporting young people into education, training and work. He thanked Lead members Councillor Lloyd-Shogbesan and Councillor Altaf Khan for their work on this matter. Councillor Lloyd-Shogbesan would chair the meeting whilst the Select Committee was in action.

The Committee welcomed the following guests:-

- Ruth Ashwell – Oxfordshire County Council Youth Engagement and Opportunities Service Manager, Early Intervention – Children, Young People and Families;
- Sarah Burrows – Oxfordshire County Council - Manager of the East Oxford Hub;
- Riaz Ahmed – Chair of the Stanley Road Mosque;
- Khalid Shariff – SportsBox;
- Sharon Highton – CfBT Education Trust (Oxford Includes);

- Amir Hamza;
- Jawaid Malik;

Introduction

The guiding question for the Committee was:-

To understand and review what organisations, agencies and the voluntary sector do to communicate with and support young people into education, training and employment. To consider data and evidence from young people and agencies concerning the effectiveness of these strategies.

Councillor Lloyd-Shogbesan explained that this was an important piece of work for the Council. He outlined to the guest speakers the areas upon which they were invited to focus:-

For agencies:-

- Where and what were the issues?
- What do you do in relation to the issues, both formally and informally?
- What outcomes are being achieved?
- What do you see as the barriers to better outcomes?

For young people (and other guests):-

- What are your ambitions for work, training and education?
- What do you see as the issues and barriers to your achieving your ambitions?
- What help have you had – and did you find it effective?
- What do you, and others, need to do in order to move forwards?

Councillor Altaf Khan reminded the Committee that there was concern about GCSE results within the City. Without good results, young people would find it even more difficult to move into work, education or training. The issue of educational attainment, and its relevance to the issue currently before the Committee, should not be overlooked.

First Witnesses: Ruth Ashwell and Sarah Burrows

Ruth Ashwell explained that she was responsible for youth engagement opportunities, and that she and her team are responsible for tracking young people from aged 16 plus in order to see how they are progressing.

Figures show that the situation for young people who were not in education, employment or training (NEET) in Oxfordshire was not as bad as nationally, and that the County was doing quite well. Information from Job Centre Plus showed that there were now 35 fewer young people on Job Seeker's Allowance (JSA). However, there were a percentage of young people for whom there was no information available and this was reflected in the adjusted figure on the graphs that Ms Ashwell supplied to the Committee.

Ms Ashwell and Ms Burrows then answered questions and supplied the following information:-

- The figures for young people who were NEET were 8.3% worse in Oxford than the County average;
- The biggest issues were for the 18/19 year old age group;
- Young people were NEET for an average of 4 to 6 months;
- NEET figures varied across the City wards. It should be noted that some of the smaller wards, even if they had fewer individual young people who were NEET, had a higher percentage of young people who were NEET;
- The highest number of young people who were NEET were those with learning difficulties and disabilities (LDD). Some of these disabilities were quite mild. People with severe disabilities were not included in the LDD figures. Many young people who are LDD have left school with very few or very poor GCSE results;
- Ms Ashwell was satisfied by the accuracy of her figures – they were tracked regularly and were supplied to the Department of Education;
- 420 young people aged 16 to 24 year olds in Oxfordshire were claiming JSA;
- A pilot scheme at St Gregory's School was screening young people to assess who amongst them was most likely to become NEET. Having a sustained relationship with a positive adult made a difference to young people's chances in life. Being LDD increased the likelihood of becoming NEET. If the pilot was successful, it was hoped to roll it out more widely;
- Young people were classified as NEET if they worked less than 16 hours per week, but there those who worked perhaps 20 hours or more and who still required support;
- There was concern about efforts to remove some young people from the LDD register. This would increase the likelihood that a young vulnerable person could be missed;
- All young people at Meadowbrook College are to be referred to the Early intervention Hubs from Year 11, as they have a high risk of becoming NEET;
- Some young people found work experience to be a valuable experience, others less so. Young people say that they want work experience that leads to a proper, paid job
- It was acknowledged that young parents faced particular challenges and were a hard group to work with. Help was available; Oxfordshire County Council had a contract for special work with young mothers, and "Care to Learn" grants were also available. The rate of teenage conceptions in Oxford had fallen slightly;
- Early Intervention was a service that ran between 0 to 19 years and began with the Children's Centres. Any young woman below the age of 18 who was pregnant would have a common assessment framework prepared for them;
- The Hubs aimed to pick up vulnerable people, who were sometimes identified by other agencies (for example Health Visitors). Teams worked with families and children, and could offer a range of services dependant on individual need. Whole family intervention could be expensive, but in the long run could save much more money than it cost;
- There were young people who have worked and then, for whatever reason, lost their job; but who are confident about gaining another job and knowledgeable about how to search for one. Other young people were not

so well equipped for job hunting. It should be remembered that there was a broad spectrum of young people who were NEET

Second Witness: Riaz Ahmed

Mr Ahmed introduced himself as a Community Pharmacist and Chair of the Stanley Road Mosque.

He had seen young people suffering the same problems and issues over very many years and acknowledged that this was a difficult issue for authorities to resolve.

Mr Ahmed felt that young people should be seen as a community asset and there should be a willingness to invest in them for the future. He tried to help young people, as they lost so much of their life searching for work. Parents want their children to do well, they want them to do better in life than their parents; but there are, even today, barriers to success that should not be there.

Third Witness: Khalid Sharif

Khalid Sharif explained that he represented Sports Box, a youth charity that used sport as an intervention measure.

Many young people slipped through the net and were not picked up by the statutory authorities. There were many marginalised young people in East Oxford, some of whom were homeless, others had drugs issues, and some were from an asylum background.

Sports Box had a structured outreach programme, and it tried to help young people into higher education as well as signpost them to the correct agencies to help them. Sports Box used football, cricket, boxing and other sports to try to engage young people, and there was a great deal of good work going on.

Young people were subject to a lot of peer pressure, not all of it positive; and some lived a nocturnal lifestyle which meant that they did not access daytime services. For this reason, he worked later shifts in order to meet young people when they were around. It was important to know and understand family and cultural perspectives. Religious buildings could be used to help bring about a change.

Fourth Witness: Jawaid Malik

Jawaid Malik introduced himself as both a Magistrate and someone working in East Oxford. He was also part of a pilot scheme for mentoring young people at the Oxford Spires Academy. Mentoring of young people and the provision of positive role models could make a difference.

He pointed out that it would be vital for the Committee to speak to young people, in places and situations that were comfortable for them. Councillor Campbell agreed that this was important and that the Select Committee was just starting its work, it would be meeting and speaking to young people in the future.

Mr Malik added that it wasn't just young people leaving school who faced problems with being NEET. Many young people had problems, and young people from the black minority ethnic (BME) community faced particular problems. According to the Guardian newspaper, unemployment for BME young people nationally had doubled in the last 3 years and was now about 59%.

Fifth Witness: Sharon Highton

Sharon Highton explained that her group, Oxford Include, was based at East Oxford Community Centre and worked with year 11 students.

She felt that many young people's issues were the result of today's society – there were many issues that would be hard to pull back. Young people needed to recognise their own abilities and their own responsibilities. Many issues were a result of young people emerging from schools with a poor education.

Sarah Burrows agreed that there was a need to pick up on issues affecting children when they were in school years 7 and 8 as early intervention was important.

Sixth Witness: Amir Hamza

Amir Hamza explained that he had been unemployed for a long time. He left school at the age of 18 but felt unsupported and lost. As a young person, he did not think that there was any one solution for the wide variety of problems.

He had originally wanted to enter a profession such as medicine or law, but was now trying to get into construction or skilled trades. He would be happy to have any career that would enable him to live a normal life.

Mr Hamza made the following suggestions:-

- Young people needed things to help them get out of a rut – perhaps short courses;
- More workers like Khalid Sharif were needed – he had been very supportive and helpful. He was a member of the community, lived and worked in it, and knew people;
- Outreach work, such as that provided by Sports Box, was important

Other information provided by all the witnesses during discussion

- It was hard to tell whether or not someone was genuinely interested in a job. Many young people bounced in and out of work for a variety of reasons;
- There were apprenticeships available in Oxford, but many tended to be at too high a level for young people who were NEET. Lots of employers only wanted to employ people who already had a level 2 qualification as apprentices, and this was a very real barrier for many;
- Young people wanted high quality advice and guidance;
- Mentoring really did make a difference;
- Partnership working amongst authorities really could help. There was a City-wide NEET action group that existed to do just this.

Funding

Sharon Highton's group was funded by CfBT, an educational trust.

Sports Box was a local community organisation which kept costs to a bare minimum and ran very much on donations.

Further Information

The Committee asked each guest speaker to supply the following information:

- *What do you think are the current barriers for young people, especially those who are NEET? Please can you list them, and pass them to Lois Stock, who will circulate them to the Committee.*
- *What **one thing** would you like the City Council to do in order to help alleviate the present situation?*

Next Steps

- 1 Councillors Campbell, Altaf Khan and Lloyd Shogbesan will jointly review the comments made at the meeting and prepare a list of key points for the rest of the Committee;
- 2 Officers to gather information from guests (outlined above);
- 3 Gather together a list of agencies and individuals who work with young people in the City – help from the guests in its compilation would be welcome;
- 4 Arrange to meet with young people in order to gather more information from them.

The Committee thanked all guest speakers for the attendance at the meeting and their valuable contribution to the discussion.

29. SELECT COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC HEALTH - DRAFT REPORT

The Head of Law and Governance submitted a report (previously circulated, now appended). Councillor Jim Campbell introduced the report to the Committee.

Councillor Graham Jones, as one of the two Lead Members, commended the report to the Committee, and thanked Lois Stock and Pat Jones for all their support and enthusiasm for this project. The recommendations that were before the Committee were felt to be deliverable, affordable and measurable. Councillor Van Coulter (Board Member for Leisure) had been involved with discussions around the recommendations and had been very supportive and helpful. Should City Executive Board (CEB) accept the recommendations,

Councillor Jones felt that the Committee should keep a watching brief on them, and meet during the year to assess how well implementation of the recommendations was progressing.

Councillor Dee Sinclair, the other Lead Member, observed that, of the three recommendations, it was the final one – the “Community Mum” – that had presented the biggest challenge. She and Councillor Jones, with support from officers, had refined all the ideas down to what they felt the City council could reasonably do, using its own resources. She felt that the ideas were deliverable.

Pat Jones commented that this, the first Select Committee, had been a learning experience, and in future, the work would benefit from being carried out over a longer period. The three recommendations were chosen from a long list (which had been appended to the report); but she felt that Councillor Coulter had been supportive during the process and she was hopeful that the report would receive a good hearing from CEB. The “Community Mum” idea had indeed been a challenge, but there were projects elsewhere which delivered a similar type of work, and it was hoped that CEB would work with Scrutiny to persuade the Oxfordshire PCT to develop this idea. It is a new idea, but also an important idea.

Councillor Jim Campbell added that he had tentatively floated the idea of a “Community Mum” with his Health Centre, as there were a number of retired health professionals living in the City and it would be useful if they could be persuaded to come on board with this.

Councillor Wilkinson pointed out that not all deprived areas were within regeneration areas, and it was important that they were not overlooked.

Two small amendments were made to the report:-

- (1) Health Bus – need to recognise that Cherwell DC was providing some funding for this;
- (2) Difference in life expectancy across the City – need to check figures as the Committee felt that the disparity between north and south was greater than 5 years.

With those amendments, the report was APPROVED to be sent to CEB.

30. WORK PROGRAMME AND REPORT BACK ON COMMITTEE'S RECOMMENDATIONS

Pat Jones introduced this item to the Committee.

As members of the Committee were aware, work on the next Select Committee had started at this meeting, and would continue over the next few months.

She also reminded committee members that a reception was to be held for some young people from the “Positive Future” project with whom she and other officers had been working on a different project. This would be held on 27th

March starting at 6pm in the Mayor's Parlour, and it was hoped that as several members of the Committee would attend.

The Committee asked that Sharon Highton and Khalid Shariff should be invited along if possible.

31. MINUTES

Resolved to confirm as a correct record the minutes of the meeting held on 14th December 2012.

It was noted that Dr Peter von Eichstorff is one of the Oxford Leads on the Clinical Commissioning Body.

32. DATES AND TIMES OF FUTURE MEETINGS

Resolved to note the following date:-

2nd April at 6pm

The meeting started at 6.00 pm and ended at 8.05 pm