

Agenda

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Communities and Partnership Scrutiny Committee

Date: **Monday 18 June 2012**

Time: **6.00 pm**

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

For any further information please contact:

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Communities and Partnership Scrutiny Committee

Membership

Chair	Councillor Mohammed Altaf-Khan	Headington Hill and Northway;
Vice-Chair	Councillor Ben Lloyd-Shogbesan	Lye Valley;
	Councillor Jim Campbell	St. Margaret's;
	Councillor Bev Clack	St. Clement's;
	Councillor Roy Darke	Headington Hill and Northway;
	Councillor Mick Haines	Marston;
	Councillor Rae Humberstone	Blackbird Leys;
	Councillor Graham Jones	St. Clement's;
	Councillor Pat Kennedy	Lye Valley;
	Councillor Helen O'Hara	Cowley;
	Councillor Gill Sanders	Littlemore;
	Councillor Ruth Wilkinson	Headington;
	Councillor Dick Wolff	St. Mary's;

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AGENDA

Pages

- 1 ELECTION OF CHAIR FOR COUNCIL YEAR 2012/2013
- 2 ELECTION OF VICE CHAIR FOR COUNCIL YEAR 2012/2013
- 3 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE
- 4 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

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

- 5 COUNCILLOR CALL FOR ACTION RAISED BY COUNCILLOR WOLFF - RE-DEVELOPMENT OF ST. CLEMENTS CAR PARK

1 - 8

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

Background Information

The Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007 and the Police and Justice Act 2006 allow for councillors to raise issues in support of their constituents. Councillors have the ability to call for a debate or discussion at a committee on a topic of neighbourhood concern and to try to bring about specific solutions to local problems. These are known as "Councillor Calls for Action" (CCA).

Councillor Wolff has submitted a CCA concerning the application to redevelop St Clement's Car Park. The attached report provides further details of this.

Why is it on the agenda?

The item is presented in order that the Committee can consider it. The issues raised by Councillor Wolff are as follows:-

- The City Council is the landowner and as a public body should give consideration to and balance the social and economic well being of its communities in the management and disposal of its assets. There are economic considerations in the disposal of this land which should be identified and evaluated. Mitigation measures should be suggested for any negative consequences identified.
- The same economic considerations are material to the

planning application to redevelop because of the value of this commercial area to the diversity of the City. The Planning committee needs to understand these issues and the effectiveness of mitigation measures.

The solution proposed by Councillor Wolff is that an Economic Impact study is commissioned by the Council and made available at the point of decision making on the planning application.

Who has been invited to comment?

The Committee will:-

- Hear the representation from Councillor Wolff;
- Hear any representations from the two Ward Members;

- Consider whether it wishes to proceed any further with the matter;
- If no, the matter ends there;
- If yes, the Committee has a number of options open to it (described below)

What will happen after the meeting?

If the Committee decides that it does not wish to proceed with this issue, then it is at an end.

If it decides that it will pursue this further, it can:-

- ask for further information to allow the Committee to form a view;
- make comments / recommendations to officers;
- make comments/recommendations to the relevant Planning Committee;
- make comments to the City Executive Board or Council (if the Committee believes there to be some systematic issue or failure)

The CCA does not stop any processes that are already in place.

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 draft work programme for consideration.

Why is it on the agenda?

This item is presented here to allow the Committee to agree its future work, lines of enquiry for future meetings; 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 work of the Committee will begin in line with the decisions made at this meeting. The Chair and Vice-Chair will continue to monitor the Committee's work programme and report to future meetings.

7 MINUTES

Minutes of the meeting held on 2nd April 2012 attached

8 DATES AND TIMES OF FUTURE MEETINGS

The following dates have been scheduled for meetings of this Committee:-

Monday 15th October
Monday 3rd December
Monday 4th February 2013
Monday 15th April 2013.

The Committee is asked to agree its starting time. Last year meetings started 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.

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To: Communities and Partnership Scrutiny Committee

Date: 18th. June 2012

Report of: Law and Governance

Title of Report: Councillor Call for Action – Redevelopment of St. Clements Car Park

Summary and Recommendations

Purpose of report: To present the view and allow consideration of the Councillor Call for Action presented by Councillor Dick Wolff (St. Mary's Ward)

Key decision? No

Scrutiny Lead Member: Committee Chair

Recommendations

To consider the representations made by Councillor Wolff and decide how it wishes to act.

Introduction

1. Powers in the Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007 and the Police and Justice Act 2006 allow for councillors to raise issues in support of their constituents. Councillors have the ability to call for a debate or discussion at a committee on a topic of neighbourhood concern and to try to bring about specific solutions to local problems. These are known as "councillor calls for action".
2. Exclusions to these powers for issues relating to planning and licensing have been repealed by the Localism Act leaving all "local government matters" subject to these powers.

Issue for Discussion

3. Attached at **appendix 1** is the issue of concern as raised by Councillor Wolff along with his proposed solution. The subject matter is the sale of the St. Clements Car Park by the City Council and the subsequent planning proposal for redevelopment.

4. The councillor raises 2 key issues he wishes you to consider:
 - The City Council is the landowner and as a public body should give consideration to and balance the social and economic well being of its communities in the management and disposal of its assets. There are economic considerations in the disposal of this land which should be identified and evaluated. Mitigation measures should be suggested for any negative consequences identified.
 - The same economic considerations are material to the planning application to redevelop because of the value of this commercial area to the diversity of the City. The Planning committee needs to understand these issues and the effectiveness of mitigation measures.
5. The solution proposed by Councillor Wolff is that an Economic Impact study is commissioned by the Council and made available at the point of decision making on the planning application.
6. Officers from City Development and Corporate Assets have been asked to comment on these 2 issues. These comments are presented below. The ward councillors have also been asked if they wish to comment.

The Role of the Scrutiny Committee

7. The committee has to hear the representation of Councillor Wolff. After this, as with any issue for scrutiny, the committee should take advice, make reasonable considerations and form their view. The fact of this presentation by Councillor Wolff does not stop any processes underway.
8. The scrutiny committee can:
 - Decide to do nothing.
 - Call for further information or take evidence to inform their view. To be clear the committee cannot instruct officers but can ask to see information the Council has.
 - Form an opinion at the meeting and pass this to officers. This opinion does not have to be acted upon but the committee can require a response.
 - Form an opinion and pass this to the planning committee responsible for the decision. They in turn will decide if this is material to their considerations.

- Report to Council or the City Executive Board should the committee believe there to be a systemic failure. Views do not have to be acted upon but the committee can require a response.

Comments from City Development and Corporate Assets

- 9 As planning authority, the City Council has a duty to preserve the integrity of the planning process. It cannot allow the fact that it is an affected landowner to impact upon that process. It has to remain impartial seeking to assess evidence provided by the applicant or third parties and deal with the application in the normal manner.

Thus it is suggested that if there is “widespread concern about the impact of this (the car park) closure on the economic activity in East Oxford”, as reported by the Councillor, it would normally be for those who have such concerns (and consider themselves to be adversely affected) to present the evidence and, for example, to prepare their own economic impact assessment to support their objection. Those persons would of course be ideally placed to produce such evidence.

The City Council as land owner has sought to address the impact of any adverse planning impacts of the development. It has not “distanced itself from the knock-on effects of its actions”. Indeed it has required the re-provision of car parking in the proposed development.

It has also gone to considerable lengths to secure temporary car parking space during the construction period. Even though it has proved impossible to find a suitable temporary car park site close to the current car park nevertheless it is now proposing to connect the temporary car park to St Clements with a free shuttle bus.

Other measures being considered to support local businesses include:

- a marketing campaign (free local publicity for local traders) during construction to remind customers St Clements is still open for business and how customers can access St Clements by car and public transport and free shuttle bus service.
- Consideration of options during the construction to permit some on site parking by moving the boundary fencing around when no on-site works are taking place (i.e. outside working hours – evenings and weekends).

The City Council as planning authority will determine the application taking account of what has been done and is proposed by the City Council as landowner in the same manner as it would were the landowner (and its actions and proposed actions) any other person.

It would not (were the applicant any other person) commission an economic impact assessment and, were it to do so in this case, would be

treating this planning application differently on account of the identity of the applicant.

Of relevance to this call for action, the planning application is accompanied by a technical transport assessment. That report includes a car park survey which measures the demand for spaces at the current car park, why people are using the car park and related on-street demand outside in St Clements. The user interviews have provided information on duration of stay, purpose of visit and whether this purpose was within St Clements. The interviews carried out in April this year indicate to what extent users are parking in the car park but going beyond St Clements while they park.

It might also be worth explaining that if there were to be an economic impact assessment, the brief would need to ensure that the assessment sought to capture any economic benefits of the proposed development as well as the perceived dis-benefits. Accommodation for 140 students together with a new attractive and modern car park covered by cctv will bring new customer trade and demand for services to local businesses. In addition those involved in the construction itself will bring some extra custom to the local cafés', sandwich bars and pubs.

By way of postscript it may be worth explaining that except in unusual circumstances the impact of a development during its construction is not a material planning consideration. The planning judgement is made on the development as to be built only.

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List of background papers:

Version number:1

Appendix 1

Councillor Call for Action – Councillor Wolff

The Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007 includes new powers that enable all Councillors to ask for discussions at Overview and Scrutiny Panels on issues where local problems have arisen and other methods of resolution have been exhausted.

This has become known as the 'Councillor Call for Action'. It came into force on 1 April 2009.

Although we have not seen any 'Councillor Calls for Action' in Oxford as yet, I wish to initiate one. Although the action I wish to call for relates to a planning decision, it does so tangentially and therefore I believe it falls within the terms of a 'Call for Action'.

I believe that without the action I am calling for, the Council in its role as a planning authority will not be able to carry out its legal function adequately : whichever way the planning decision in question goes, it may be a poor decision and major local problems may arise.

The planning department will be offering an inadequate service to its councillors and to the general public. The conventional 'method of resolution' -- holding public consultations and meetings -- is not addressing the issue because it is only gathering anecdotal evidence and what is needed is more systematic data.

I believe the primary function of the Council to which a 'Call for Action' is addressed is the Scrutiny function, and I am therefore asking that our Communities & Partnership Scrutiny Committee examine the service which the Planning department is offering to its planning committee and to the general public : certainly with regard to this specific application but also more generally.

Because this is a new procedure in Oxford, I am copying Jeremy Thomas in. Because it relates to planning services I am copying Michael Crofton-Briggs and Cllr Oscar van Nooijen (the chair of the relevant planning committee) in.

The case in question :

The City Council is dealing with an application for a major development of the St Clements car park -- one of only two public car parks serving the whole of East Oxford, an area which will soon shortly be a Controlled Parking Zone in its entirety, but which nonetheless hosts a wide array of independent businesses which give it its distinctive character and provide considerable employment. I am one of the city councillors for St Marys Ward in which many of these businesses are located.

A major sticking point in the process -- possibly the point on which the application will stand or fall -- is the fact that, as proposed, the development will lead to a total loss of all parking on the site during the 11 month period of

construction, and thereafter, a reduction from 112 to 80 parking spaces. (But the key issue is the 11 month closure). Temporary arrangements have been proposed.

There is widespread concern about the impact of this closure on the economic activity in East Oxford, since many of the businesses are already close to the edge owing to the current recession. The worst-case scenario is that East Oxford will permanently lose its distinctive character as a significant number of local businesses fold through loss of business. Considerable and lasting harm will have been done.

On the other hand, there are large sums of money at stake for the Council. If the application fails, the Council is holding a large refundable deposit from the developer that will have to be returned.

If it transpires that the only way forward is for a phased development on the site which will permit some car parking whilst construction is taking place -- and therefore almost certainly a smaller development -- the asking price for the land (owned by the City Council) may have to be renegotiated, and the Council may 'take a hit' that way.

Since it is the Council that is the landowner in this case, I believe the Council itself cannot distance itself from the knock-on effects of its actions in seeking to develop land it owns but has a moral responsibility to measure the impact of its actions on East Oxford, which it has not done, and could.

Despite the potential impacts -- in both directions -- there has been no economic impact assessment of the loss of car parking (or of the proposed alternative arrangements). We do not know who is using the car park, when or why. We do not know how the customers of the different businesses are getting there, and we do not know how many of them are in danger of going elsewhere if there is either no parking at St Clements or at least different arrangements. It is impossible to guess without a proper survey because of the wide variety of the businesses in question. It is standard practice for comments on planning applications to be solicited from the police, water and highways authorities, but I submit that the potential permanent harm that may be done to East Oxford's economy and distinctive character without appropriate remedial measures is probably of even greater significance. If the planning application is approved, the Council will not be in a position to know how to address the difficulties that may result, and if they do arise, will be unlikely to be able to respond quickly enough to save vulnerable businesses.

I have drafted a brief for an economic impact assessment study, which I attach. My call for action is that a study such as this should be commissioned forthwith by the City Council as landowner and planning authority, in the interests of the community of East Oxford and of Oxford as a whole.

--

Dick Wolff

Outline brief for Economic Impact Assessment of St Clements Car Park closure

The issue

Development of the St Clements car park is proposed and the Council will shortly be considering a second planning application from the developer, the first having been refused.

One of the grounds for refusal was inadequate provision for temporary car parking during the 11 month construction period. The developer has paid a deposit of around £300,000 to the seller of the land – the City Council – which he understands as being refundable in the event of planning permission not being granted.

Many traders in East Oxford are objecting strongly to the proposal because they believe that they will be driven out of business if there is no public car parking on St Clements for 11 months. This is especially the case because of the economic recession which several of them claim is already rendering them vulnerable. They are also unhappy that the development, once completed, would leave a net loss of 32 car parking spaces in St Clements.

The developer, in consultation with city officers, is proposing an alternative temporary car park for 65 cars some distance away up the Marston Road, with a shuttle bus service. The hours during which the shuttle bus would run have not yet been specified.

Despite the fact that large sums of public money (>£4m), and people's livelihoods, are at stake, there has been no proper assessment of the economic impact of :

- the permanent loss of 32 car parking spaces in St Clements
- the temporary (11 months minimum) loss of the St Clements car park with no alternative parking offered
- the temporary loss of the car park with the suggested alternative car park/shuttle bus

Without a properly-conducted economic impact assessment the West Area Planning Committee will not have the information needed to make this major decision – a decision which may well hinge on this issue.

What is needed

A study by a consultancy, independent of both the developer and the City Council, but jointly commissioned and paid for by them in consultation with traders' representatives. The study needs to ascertain :

1. who is typically using the St Clements Car Park at different times of day and night, both weekdays and weekends, how long a typical stay is, and the purpose of their visit.
2. whether their intended destination is in East Oxford or in the city centre, and whether it is social or has an economic impact.
3. whether an alternative car park – either Tesco's car park on the Cowley Road or the proposed alternative up the Marston Road – would be adequate, or sufficiently *inadequate* to discourage the visitors from coming to East Oxford at all.
4. The study needs to conduct a longitudinal survey of every trader in St Clements and the Cowley Road as far as Marston Street to determine where their customer base is coming from, whether it is dependent on a car for transport, and whether the alternative parking on offer would be enough to retain their business.

5. The study needs to explore the possibility of remedial measures other than the proposed temporary car park e.g.
 - suspension of parking restrictions on St Clements, possibly combined with re-routing of the London-bound buses out of the city via Banbury Road (or some other route avoiding St Clements)
 - financial compensation to traders via business rate relief or suchlike
 - grants to fund free delivery services to customers
 - some scheme to refund customers the cost of their public transport into East Oxford, assuming they would be paying for car parking further out.
 - any other ideas suggested by traders and their organisations
6. The study report should outline the methodology and sample base used, but see note (4) – sampling of traders would not be adequate because of the widely varying nature of the businesses.
7. The study should conclude with an estimate of the total net loss (if any) to the economy of East Oxford that would be caused by the proposals, were they to be given approval.

To: Communities and Partnership Scrutiny Committee

Date: 18th. June 2012

Report of: Head of Law and Governance

Title of Report: Work Programme Planning 2012-2013

Summary and Recommendations

Purpose of report: To allow committee members to consider suggestions made for the work programme and begin to plan their work for the coming year.

Key decision? No

Scrutiny Lead Member: Committee Chair

Recommendations:

1. To note the methods of working and resources available
2. To consider the long list of items presented and other suggestions at the meeting and decide which issues to pursue this year
3. When placing an item in the programme to agree:
 - How the issue will be scrutinised
 - The broad scoping
 - The members who will be involved
 - The lead members
 - An details of co-option
 - Requirement for reporting

Introduction

1. Each year the committee sets a programme to guide its debates and inquiries for the coming year. This meeting is to set the outline of the programme for 2012/2013. The outcomes in the form of recommendations from last year's programme are available on request.

2. This is one of two scrutiny committees – Communities and Partnership (CAP) and Value and Performance (VAP). The remits of the 2 committees are broadly set as inward and outward facing with this committee (CAP) taking the outward facing role. In practice the distinction between the 2 committees is not always easy to draw and so members are asked to act collaboratively to allow for effective work flows.
3. In an effort to fit with the organisation the Councils Corporate Priorities are used as a guide:
 - Vibrant Sustainable Economy – CAP
 - Meeting Housing Need – CAP
 - Strong, Active Communities – CAP
 - Cleaner Greener Oxford – VAP
 - Efficient, Effective Council - VAP

General Principals of Working

4. In 2011/2012 committees agreed that all housing related issues (landlord and strategic) would be taken together at CAP. This decision was taken in an effort to fit with the organisation and recognise the need for holistic responses to housing issues. This proved successful and a Housing Standing Panel was set under CAP. It is hoped that members will agree to keep all housing issue together regardless of whether a Housing Standing Panel is set or not.
5. In order to bring forward suggestions officers have:
 - Asked all councillors what they would like to see in the programme. Councillors were directed to think as both ward representatives and members of the City Council.
 - Considered the work undertaken in 2011/2012 and brought forward any issues arising or outstanding
 - Identified key issues from the work planned by the Council in the first half year
6. Missing from this list are the views of residents as individuals or communities. One of the key roles of scrutiny committees is to “Enable the Voice of Communities”. The views of communities should be considered both in planning the topics to be considered and debating and concluding on recommendations. Councillors as ward representative act as community leaders and are a good source of knowledge but Committee needs to consider if it wishes to go further than his in planning for the future.

General Principles of Working

7. Scrutiny councillors work in a number of ways to take their evidence, form their opinions and make their recommendations. The table below

shows those used in Oxford and an outline suggestion of the capacity there is to deliver within these. Obviously the focus is for the committee to decide and so adjustments around the deployment of capacity are for members to debate.

Methodology	Outline	Frequency
Committee Meetings	<p>Formal public meetings. All committee members.</p> <p>Holding decision makers to account, short term inquiries, pre scrutiny of decisions, call in, review reports.</p>	4 planned meetings plus a planning meeting
Select Committee	<p>Formal public meetings. All committee members but with a few working behind the scenes to agree a scope and write a select committee report.</p> <p>Taking evidence in public around a particular issue, decision or proposal.</p>	<p>Usually within the planned committee meeting slots above but additional slots can be added.</p> <p>2 if held within planned meeting slots.</p> <p>1 if additional slots required.</p>
Standing Panel	<p>Informal private or public meetings. No more than 5 members of the committee.</p> <p>Small groups meeting to consider or develop a particular set of information or actions regularly.</p>	1 Panel, meeting as required but usually about 4 or 5 times a year.
Short Term Panel	<p>Informal private or public meetings. No more than 5 members of the committee.</p> <p>Small groups meeting to pursue short term inquiries or respond to proposals from the organisation or its</p>	2 Panels meeting 3 or 4 times each over a short period.

	partners.	
Review Group	<p>Informal public or private meetings. No more than 5 members of the committee.</p> <p>Small group making detailed inquiries and investigations into a topic, service or issue.</p>	<p>1 group meeting as required over a period of between 3 and 6 months.</p> <p>Work will often require members to be involved in a more detailed way than attending meetings.</p>
Championing of Issues	<p>Informal work within the organisation or with partners.</p> <p>Councillors acting as spokespersons or champions for the views or recommendations of the committee.</p>	As many as committee wish to delegate.

All these have their part to play in a balanced programme. The skill is to:

- Be sure that the issues chosen for the programme are likely to add value, have broad support and have a clear aim.
- Choose the correct method for the subject matter through issue scoping.
- Engage councillors that are “interested” in the topic and are willing to give their time.
- Co-opt people to bring skills and broaden opinion.

8. The resources available to the committee fall into 3 groups:

- Staff in Democratic Services – 1 Scrutiny Officer plus the equivalent of 1 Democratic Services Officer.
- The time, skills and information provided by senior officers and City Executive Board Members who are required to attend and advise scrutiny.
- The time and skills of scrutiny councillors.

9. The work programme you are about to decide will guide the year and will be managed by the committee through discussions at each committee meeting and in-between meetings by the committee Chair and Vice Chair. In practice this broadly means:

- The whole committee will decide on the themes and issues it wishes to pursue and then delegate these to the groups that it

sets. The detail of that delegation is for the committee to decide but should be a minimum of identifying a lead councillor and setting a broad scope for the work.

- The work programme has a degree of flexibility and will be available at each committee meeting for members to discuss and adjust as necessary.
- Any committee member or any 4 members of Council can place an item on the agenda of a committee and it is for the committee to decide how much time it gives to the item.
- Committee must review and report back on issues required by the Full Council. The timing of these issues is for the committee to decide upon. The committee does not have to undertake reviews requested by the Executive but should give these requests proper consideration.
- The committee must consider decisions that have been “called-in” at its next available meeting or at a meeting called by the Monitoring Officer.
- The committee can require, with reasonable notice, City Executive Board Members and Senior Officers to attend their meetings and debates and to provide information.
- Scrutiny is entitled to see and review information relating to the issues it is scrutinising (this includes confidential information).
- When conclusions are drawn and recommendations agreed these are presented by the Committee Chair or another Lead Councillor agreed by the committee.
- Panels will present their own recommendations without reference back to the committee unless this has been specifically required at set up. These recommendations will be shown to the Chair and Vice Chair of the committee before presentation.
- Decision makers are required to consider and respond to the recommendations made by scrutiny.
- Lead Members will be required to keep the committee up to date on the progress of their work through committee meetings and other informal networks.
- A report back on the success or otherwise of recommendations will be presented to each committee meeting.

10. Last year the committee set a Housing Standing Panel and offered a non voting place on that Panel to an Oxford City Council Tenant. A number of housing issues have been suggested for inclusion in the programme and the committee will decide which of these it takes and how it wants to deliver on them. Whatever the outcome it is right and reasonable to include the views of tenants broadly and possibly individually, particularly when considering “landlord issues”.

11. Developments and improvements in tenant engagement are underway in the organisation with the potential in the medium term to set an independent Tenant Scrutiny Panel. Once committee has set its

programme it is suggested that in all housing related matters the committee agree to take the views of tenants in the most appropriate way related to the topic under discussion. In practice this means:

- **If a Housing Standing Panel or review is agreed –** Councillors ask the Council’s involvement staff to provide a short list of tenants who are interested in being part of the Panel or review and councillors select the best candidate.
- **For anything else** the committee agree to take witness evidence from tenants as part of their debates and considerations. These tenants similarly to be identified through involvement staff.

Suggestions for the Programme

12. **Appendix 1** shows the suggestions made for the programme. At this stage members need to decide:

- The items they wish to pursue.
- The method they wish to us.
- Which members will take part.
- Who will take the lead?

13. When making selections members should be mindful of:

- The resources available (see paragraph 7).
- The need to leave “room” for new and topical items as they arise.
- Tasks always take longer than anticipated!
- Having a clear reason for pursuing an issue and the likelihood of adding value.
- The one year life of the committee means to get good outcomes we need to start early and strongly.

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List of background papers:

Version number:2

Communities and Partnership Scrutiny Committee 2012/2013- Suggestions made for the work programme

Long List

Suggestion/Issue	Source	Methodology	Comment
Review of the first year of Area Forums.	Communities and Partnership Scrutiny Committee	Review Already involved - Cllrs. Sander, Wilkinson, Campbell and Sinclair	This review ran throughout last year with an interim report presented to the Committee. More work was requested and this is ongoing. This should be completed by the committee otherwise a significant amount of work will be lost. Councillors have also raised issues related to this: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How the Council can effectively engage the public in decision making through local structures. • What have ward member budgets been used for and how effective a tool do councillors think they are.
Supporting young people into	Communities and Partnership	Select Committee/Review	A select committee at the end

education, training and work.	Scrutiny Committee	Already involved – Cllrs. Altaf-Khan and Lloyd-Shogbesan	<p>of last years programme took evidence from a number of partners and members of the community on the difficulties experienced by young people in accessing jobs, skills and training.</p> <p>Further consultation work was agreed by the committee to take this work forward. The outline agreed is at Appendix 2.</p> <p>This work has not started in detail so effort will not be lost however the issues considered are still live and topical in communities and a strong recommendation was made by last years committee to continue with this work.</p>
Housing related issues	Housing Standing Panel, Councillors, Forward Plan.	Standing Panel/Committee	<p>The Chair of the Housing Standing Panel requests that the committee consider setting the Panel for 2012/2013. A number of issues have been suggested to take either at this Panel or failing this at Committee:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tenancy Strategy –

			<p>consultation draft published June.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Homelessness Strategy – consultation draft published in June. • Rent arrears and debt advice arrangements review. <p>Recommendation from VAP on Housing Revenue Account Refinancing.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The operation of governance arrangements within the Housing Revenue Account Business Plan • Housing Strategy Action Plan – delivery year 1. • The effects of government housing policy in Oxford (performance set agreed by the last Panel)
Education attainment	Councillors, Communities and Partnership Scrutiny Committee, Councillors.	Standing Panel or Short Term Panel	To consider the focus and outcomes from the City investment to improve pupil attainment in City primary

			<p>schools. This work is underway with Anna Wright (Education Adviser) engaging with Stakeholders identifying the key issues contributing to underachievement. 2 further actions are planned:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • June – expert Panel to review findings and propose options for spending. • July – conference for all stakeholders to launch the initiative and communicate key decisions. <p>The aim is to make the first investments in September.</p> <p>If this topic is taken a Panel needs to be agreed now to allow engagement in this scoping and focus exercise. This is essential for effective challenge and encouragement to outcomes by members.</p>
Customer Contact Strategy	Councillors, Forward Plan	Committee/Short Term Panel	The Council's Customer

			<p>Contact Strategy has been refreshed and will be presented to the City Executive Board in July. It will outline our focus for improvement through to 2015.</p> <p>Comments have been received from councillors on the outcomes from all customer contact.</p>
Refresh of Oxford's Regeneration Framework	Forward plan, Communities and Partnership Scrutiny Committee, Councillors	Committee/Short Term Panel	<p>The committee has taken an active interest in the Regeneration Framework since its inception.</p> <p>The third re-fresh of the Framework will be presented to the City Executive Board in July. This is the third year of this Framework and it is likely that outcomes, achievements and trends will be more visible.</p>
Follow up on the health and well being select committee	Communities and Partnership Scrutiny Committee	<p>Championing</p> <p>Already Involved – Cllrs. Jones and Sinclair</p>	<p>The City Executive Board recently accepted the recommendations of the recent select committee on public health and asked that the scrutiny group work with the</p>

			<p>Board Member on an action plan for implementation.</p> <p>Cllr. Jones is leading on this for scrutiny (Cllr. Sinclair was originally part of this group but has recently become an executive member)</p>
Role of Community Associations in empowering communities	Councillors	Committee/Short Term Panel	<p>How effectively community centres are run to engage and empower communities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Managements arrangements • Governance • Training • Community events <p>Work is already underway in the organisation to support and improve outcomes from community associations. Committee may want to understand the current position to avoid duplication.</p>
Enfranchisement and empowerment	Councillors	Select Committee/Short Term Panel	<p>The first report on the census is due shortly this will show the proportion of people who did not complete the form without at least 1 reminder. Alongside</p>

			<p>this there are a number of households with no one registered to vote.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Why is this? • What does it mean for services, funding and the understanding of our communities. • What effects does this have on community cohesion and engagement? • Can we do anything about it?
Localism Act –	Councillors	Select Committee	What should be the City Councils response be.
Cowley Road Carnival.	Councillors	Select Committee/Short Term Panel	<p>The Carnival is used extensively in the Council's promotional literature as an example of the vibrancy that exists in our multicultural City. How do we/are we supporting and encourage the community to allow this important event to happen.</p> <p>Does the City Council see the event as an important community capacity building exercise?</p>

Supporting Young People into Education Training and Work – Select Committee

Talking to young people

The select committee meeting decided it wanted to talk/consult with young people before it went much further to try to gather their views and opinions.

The Lead Members and the Chair (called the Panel) of the committee met on the 29th. March to decide on the outline for this work.

Outline

In principle The Panel agreed:

- To talk to as many young people as possible in a “focus/discussion group” format.
- To recognise that some groups may have particular issues that would be better discussed away from more general discussions.
- To get the most from discussions to be honest about what we can and cannot do and be prepared to “build a relationship”.
- To engage young people on their patch rather than expect them to come to the Town Hall
- To use the “Hubs” and the various area based initiatives and programmes to supplement the views of young people.

This consultation work is crucial to the evidence within the select committee and we should not move forward to conclusions until this is complete. The expectation is that the process will take about 6 months.

Organisation of discussion groups with young people

These will be organised around the 2 “Hub Areas” within the city with a pre determined script that allows some flexibility. The script will cover:

- What do you do with your day and time?
- What opportunities do you use or know about to support access to training and work.
- Where is your life at the moment and do you have a “plan”.
- What are the limitations on your ambitions?
- What have you done so far?
- What would help?
- What would you change if you could?
- Which support providers do you use?

For discussions organised around specific groups some time would be spent exploring the particular issues faced by the group as seen from their point of view.

The hope is to facilitate about 4 discussion groups and “get to know you sessions”.

Populating the Discussion Groups

This still needs more thought and the Panel will take advice from the consultation officer and officers in Housing and Communities but the initial view is that we need a mixture of young people. Those that:

- Have worked but are currently unemployed.
- Are NEET.
- Are about to leave school or are “out of school” and so will be looking for work or training shortly.

The Panel hope to identify these young people through:

- The various programmes running in particular areas (SHOUT, Include, Blitz)
- The Positive Futures Programme
- The Hubs
- Programmes in the 2 Academys
- Various cultural groups and connections

Next Steps

A report on this work will be produced for further discussion with City and County Council officers before the Panel decide what to do next.

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Agenda Item 7

COMMUNITIES AND PARTNERSHIP SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Monday 2 April 2012

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

OFFICERS PRESENT: Lois Stock (Democratic and Electoral Services Officer), Pat Jones (Principal Scrutiny Officer), Angela Cristofoli (Communities and Neighbourhoods Manager) and Jackie Yates (Executive Director Organisational Development and Corporate Services)

33. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies were received from Councillors Altaf Khan, Baxter (Councillor Humberstone substituted) and Clarkson (Councillor Darke substituted).

34. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

None

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

Pat Jones introduced this item to the Committee.

In answer to a question, she clarified that the issue of community engagement would very largely be covered by items concerning young people and the progress of Area Forums.

The Chair, Councillor Campbell, reported that, accompanied by Councillors Jones and Lloyd-Shogbesan, he had attended a workshop on the emerging health structures and their possible impact upon voluntary organisation. He invited his fellow Councillors to draw attention to any themes which they had noted as important.

Councillor Lloyd-Shogbesan noted particularly impacts on young people and educational attainment. There was allowance in the City Council budget for extra funding for educational attainment, but this must be seen as in addition to County Council funding and not a substitute for it. Councillor Campbell replied that the Leader, Councillor Price, was fully aware of this, but even so it would be advisable to re-draw this concern to his attention. Pat Jones added that Councillor Price wished to see joint Scrutiny/Executive monitoring of the spending of this money.

Councillor Jones felt that there was, in the new health structures, potential to consider issues in a holistic way, and he was keen to see how the 3 delivery boards would work together.

The Committee noted that Councillors Jones and Sinclair would present its report on public health to City Executive Board on 4th April.

Leading on from this, Councillor Campbell observed that it would be useful for the Director of Public Health to give an annual report to the City Council, much along the lines of the Chief Constable's report. It would be important for the Council to understand the new health structures and the new boards, and the means by which the Council could feed in to them.

36. SELECT COMMITTEE UPDATE - YOUNG PEOPLE

Pat Jones introduced this item to the Committee.

The select committee had decided that it needed to talk with young people before it went much further, in order to gather their views and opinions. This would be done gradually over a period of approximately 6 months.

In principle, the select committee panel had agreed:-

- To talk to as many young people as possible in a "focus/discussion group" format;
- To recognise that some groups may have particular issues that would be better discussed away from more general discussions;
- To get the most from discussions to be honest about what we can and cannot do and be prepared to "build a relationship";
- To engage young people on their patch rather than expect them to come to the Town Hall;
- To use the "Hubs" and the various area-based initiatives and programmes to supplement the views of young people.

The focus groups would be organised around the 2 "Hub Areas" within the city with a pre determined script that allows some flexibility.

Questions to be asked included:-

- What do you do with your day and time?
- What opportunities do you use or know about to support access to training and work?
- Where is your life at the moment and do you have a "plan"?
- What are the limitations on your ambitions?
- What have you done so far?
- What would help?

- What would you change if you could?
- Which support providers do you use?

For discussions organised around specific groups some time would be spent exploring the particular issues faced by the group as seen from their point of view. It was hoped to facilitate about 4 discussion groups and “getting to know you” sessions.

The population of the discussion groups still needs more thought, and the Panel would take advice from the consultation officer and officers in Housing and Communities. The initial view is that a mixture of young people would be needed, for example young people who:-

- Have worked but are currently unemployed;
- Are NEET;
- Are about to leave school or are “out of school” and so will be looking for work or training shortly.

The Panel hope to identify these young people through:

- The various programmes running in particular areas (SHOUT, Include, Blitz);
- The Positive Futures Programme;
- The Hubs;
- Programmes in the 2 Academies;
- Various cultural groups and connections

Jackie Yates (Director of Finance) reminded the Committee that Housing and Communities already carried out work with young people, and there was also the ongoing apprenticeship scheme and the funding for educational attainment issues. The Chair agreed that it was important to avoid duplication of work already in hand.

Councillor Wilkinson asked that attention be paid to ensuring (as far as possible) gender balance when establishing discussion groups with young people. The Committee agreed that this was important, but noted that it could be difficult to achieve, as much depended on who was willing to talk to the select committee. There had been no discussion about incentives to encourage young people to take part.

Councillor Gill Sanders informed the Committee that funding had been obtained for a youth club in Littlemore Community Centre.

Pat Jones pointed out that the focus/discussion groups might have a cost attached, and that scrutiny didn’t have a budget any longer, therefore there was a need to be aware of this.

The Committee then resolved:-

- (1) That it wished to see this work continue, noting the need to be aware of other projects that would be going on during the next year;
- (2) To agree in principle the suggested route to young people outlined above.

37. HOUSING STOCK DE-DESIGNATION - 1ST YEAR REVIEW

With the agreement of the Chair and Committee, Barrie Finch made a short statement concerning the role of a former tenant representative on the housing stock de-designation panel.

In response, the Chair, Councillor Campbell, stated that the point was noted, but that it was the responsibility of the Committee and the de-designation panel to decide who it wanted to serve on this panel.

Pat Jones the introduced this item to the Committee and explained the background to it.

In 2009, the Committee had agreed to establish a panel to consider the number and type of properties that were currently designated to be let only to those people over the age of 40. This excluded sheltered accommodation, which had been reviewed separately. The review came about because of a large mismatch between the low amount of 1 bedroom accommodation that was available to single tenants and couples under the age of 40, and the large number of such households that were in housing need.

City Executive Board agreed that de-designation of such properties should begin in April 2011, and should be phased in over 5 years with progress to be reviewed annually. This was the first such review.

Pat Jones informed the Committee that there had been no issues with re-lets, which had gone smoothly. Having said that, there had not been a large number of re-lets to date, and it might be more useful for scrutiny to become involved at the end of the second year, when properties that had been more "difficult" (for various reasons) came up for letting.

The Committee resolved to:-

- (1) Welcome the outcome of the first review, expressing pleasure that the de-designation programme had worked so well and that there had been no anti-social behaviour problems reported to CANAcT as a result of it;
- (2) Recognise that only a small percentage of properties had been re-let to date;
- (3) Ask that a further review be carried out at the end of the second year of the programme.

38. AREA FORUM DEVELOPMENT

Resolved to note that the Area Forum Panel (to which all members of the Committee were invited) would meet at 6.45pm immediately following the current meeting, in order to:-

- (1) Consider the views of the Area Forum Panel;
- (2) Agree recommendations that could be made to City Executive Board and Council on this issue.

39. MINUTES

Resolved to confirm as a correct record the minutes of the meeting held on 12th March 2012.

Minute 28: It was noted that Sharon Highton worked with the Oxford Spires Academy.

40. DATES AND TIMES OF FUTURE MEETINGS

Resolved to note the list of future meeting dates.

The meeting started at 6.00 pm and ended at 8.17 pm

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