

Agenda

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Council

Date: **Monday 29 September 2014**

Time: **5.00 pm**

Place: **Council Chamber, Town Hall**

For any further information please contact:

**Jennifer Thompson, Committee and Members Services
Officer**

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Council

Membership

Lord Mayor Councillor Mohammed Abbasi

Deputy Lord Mayor Councillor Craig Simmons

Sheriff Councillor Rae Humberstone

Councillor Mohammed Altaf-Khan	Councillor Susanna Pressel
Councillor Farida Anwar	Councillor Bob Price
Councillor Elise Benjamin	Councillor Mike Rowley
Councillor Susan Brown	Councillor Gwynneth Royce
Councillor Bev Clack	Councillor Gill Sanders
Councillor Mary Clarkson	Councillor Scott Seamons
Councillor Colin Cook	Councillor Dee Sinclair
Councillor Van Coulter	Councillor Val Smith
Councillor Steven Curran	Councillor John Tanner
Councillor Roy Darke	Councillor Ed Turner
Councillor Jean Fooks	Councillor Louise Upton
Councillor James Fry	Councillor Oscar Van Nooijen
Councillor Michael Gotch	Councillor Ruth Wilkinson
Councillor Mick Haines	Councillor Dick Wolff
Councillor David Henwood	Councillor Ruthi Brandt
Councillor Sam Hollick	Councillor Andrew Gant
Councillor Alex Hollingsworth	Councillor Stephen Goddard
Councillor Pat Kennedy	Councillor Tom Hayes
Councillor Ben Lloyd-Shogbesan	Councillor Christine Simm
Councillor Mark Lygo	Councillor Richard Tarver
Councillor Sajjad Malik	Councillor David Thomas
Councillor Chewe Munkonge	Councillor Elizabeth Wade
Councillor Michele Paule	

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SUMMONS

A meeting of the City Council will be held in the Council Chamber, Town Hall, on Monday 29 September 2014 at 5.00 pm to transact the business set out below.

Peter Sloman

Proper Officer

AGENDA

	Pages
1 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE	
2 DECLARATIONS OF INTERESTS	
3 MINUTES	1 - 48
Minutes of the ordinary meeting of Council held on 14 th July 2014.	
4 APPOINTMENT TO COMMITTEES	To Follow
The Head of Law and Governance will submit a report which invites Council to make appointments to committees following three by-elections, the last on 18 th September. This report will be circulated with the briefing note.	
5 ANNOUNCEMENTS	
Announcements by:	
(1) The Lord Mayor	
(2) The Sheriff	
(3) The Leader of the Council	
(4) The Chief Executive, Chief Finance Officer, Monitoring Officer	

PART 1 - ITEMS FOR DISCUSSION

6 PUBLIC ADDRESSES AND QUESTIONS THAT RELATE TO MATTERS FOR DECISION AT THIS MEETING

Public addresses and questions received in accordance with Council Procedure Rule 11.10 and 11.11. The full text of any address or question must be received by the Head of Law and Governance by 5.00 pm on Tuesday 23rd September 2014.

Full details of addresses and questions submitted by the deadline will be provided separately prior to the meeting.

CITY EXECUTIVE BOARD RECOMMENDATIONS - ITEMS 7 TO 9

7 DRAFT COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT POLICY STATEMENT 2014-17

49 - 136

The Head of Policy, Culture and Communications has submitted a report which seeks approval from Council to adopt the draft Community Engagement Policy Statement 2014–17 which replaces the Consultation Strategy 2010–13 as part of the Policy Framework.

This report was presented to the City Executive Board on 3rd July 2014. An extract from the minutes of this meeting is also attached.

Council is asked to approve the draft Community Engagement Policy Statement 2014–17 for adoption within the Policy Framework.

8 INTEGRATED PERFORMANCE REPORT QUARTER 1 2014/15

137 - 178

The Heads of Finance and Business Improvement & Technology have submitted a report which details Council's finances, risk and performance as at the end of Quarter 1, 30th June 2014.

This report was presented to the City Executive Board on 10th September 2014. An extract from the minutes of this meeting is also attached.

Council is asked to:

1. approve a £160,000 capital investment in a Heavy Goods Vehicle Testing Facility; and
2. bring forward a £2 million capital investment in Homelessness Property acquisitions from 2015/16 to 2014/15 with the balance of the £10 million budget being profiled £2 million each year over four years from 2015/16.

9 ROSE HILL COMMUNITY CENTRE DEVELOPMENT

To Follow

If there are recommendations to Council either from the special meeting of the City Executive Board on 24th September or from officers, these will be circulated with the briefing note.

OFFICER REPORTS ITEMS 10 AND 11

10 HONORARY RECORDER - APPOINTMENT

179 - 182

The Head of Law and Governance has submitted a report asking Council to appoint the Honorary Recorder of Oxford.

Council is invited to:

- appoint His Honour Judge Ian Pringle QC to the post of Honorary Recorder of Oxford for as long as he holds the position of resident Judge at the Crown Court; and
- thank His Honour Judge Gordon Risius CB who stands down from his appointment as Resident Judge on 3rd October 2014.

11 COVENANT OF MAYORS

183 - 188

The Head of Environmental Development has submitted a report requesting Council to support the Covenant of Mayors, the mainstream European movement involving local and regional authorities, voluntarily committing to increasing energy efficiency and use of renewable energy sources in their municipality.

Council is asked to support the Covenant of Mayors and authorise the Lord Mayor to sign the Covenant adherence form.

12 CITY EXECUTIVE BOARD MINUTES

189 - 194

Minutes of the meeting held on 10th September 2014.

Minutes of the special meeting held on 24th September 2014 (circulated separately).

13 QUESTIONS ON NOTICE FROM MEMBERS OF COUNCIL

Questions on notice under Council Procedure Rule 11.9(b) may be asked of the Lord Mayor, a Member of the City Executive Board or Chair of a Committee.

Questions on notice must, in accordance with the Constitution, be notified to the Head of Law and Governance by no later than 1.00pm on Monday 22nd September 2014.

Full details of any questions and responses will be provided separately prior to the meeting.

PART 2 - PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT AND SCRUTINY

14 PUBLIC ADDRESSES AND QUESTIONS THAT DO NOT RELATE TO MATTERS FOR DECISION AT THIS COUNCIL MEETING

Public addresses and questions received in accordance with Council Procedure Rule 11.10 and 11.11. The full text of any address or question must be received by 5.00pm on Tuesday 23rd September 2014.

Full details of the addresses and questions submitted by the deadline will be provided separately prior to the meeting.

15 PETITIONS -TEMPLE COWLEY POOLS - OXFORD CITY COUNCIL MUST DELIVER VALUE FOR THE COMMUNITY

195 - 196

The Head of Law and Governance has submitted a report which advises on the procedure that Council needs to follow under the Council's Petitions Scheme in respect of large petitions, and to provide information specifically on the petition entitled "Oxford City Council MUST deliver value for the community".

Council is recommended to follow the procedure for large petitions by hearing the head petitioner, then debating the petition and deciding how to advise the Executive.

16 OUTSIDE ORGANISATION/COMMITTEE CHAIR REPORTS AND QUESTIONS

197 - 204

(a) Members who are Council representatives on external bodies or Chairs of Council Committees who consider that a significant decision or event has taken place, will give notice to the Head of Law and Governance by 1.00 pm on Thursday 25th September 2014 to present a written or oral report on the event or the significant decision and how it may influence future events.

(b) Each ordinary meeting of Council shall receive a written report concerning the work of one of the partnerships on which the Council is represented.

The Head of Policy, Communications and Culture has submitted a report on behalf of Councillor Price which informs Members of the work of the Oxfordshire Local Enterprise Partnership/Growth Board.

The programme of reporting will be:

- Community Safety – February 2015
- Environmental and Waste – April 2015

Council is asked to comment on and note the submitted report.

17 SCRUTINY COMMITTEE BRIEFING

205 - 222

The Chair of the Scrutiny Committee has submitted a report which updates Council on the activities of scrutiny and other non-executive Councillors since the last meeting of Council.

Council is asked to comment on and note the report.

PART 3 - MOTIONS REPRESENTING THE CITY

18 MOTIONS ON NOTICE

223 - 226

Council Procedure Rule 11.16 refers.

Motions received by the Head of Law and Governance by the deadline of 1.00pm on Wednesday 17th September 2014 are attached to this agenda.

19 MATTERS EXEMPT FROM PUBLICATION

If Council wishes to exclude the press and the public from the meeting during consideration of any aspects of the preceding agenda items it will be necessary for Council to pass a resolution in accordance with the provisions of Section 100A(4) of the Local Government Act 1972 specifying the grounds on which their presence could involve the likely disclosure of exempt information as described in specific paragraphs of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Act if and so long as, in all the circumstances of the case, the public interest in maintaining the exemption outweighs the public interest in disclosing the information.

(The Access to Information Procedure Rules – Section 15 of the Council’s Constitution – sets out the conditions under which the public can be excluded from meetings of the Council)

DECLARING INTERESTS

General duty

You must declare any disclosable pecuniary interests when the meeting reaches the item on the agenda headed "Declarations of Interest" or as soon as it becomes apparent to you.

What is a disclosable pecuniary interest?

Disclosable pecuniary interests relate to your employment; sponsorship (ie payment for expenses incurred by you in carrying out your duties as a councillor or towards your election expenses); contracts; land in the Council's area; licences for land in the Council's area; corporate tenancies; and securities. These declarations must be recorded in each councillor's Register of Interests which is publicly available on the Council's website.

Declaring an interest

Where any matter disclosed in your Register of Interests is being considered at a meeting, you must declare that you have an interest. You should also disclose the nature as well as the existence of the interest.

If you have a disclosable pecuniary interest, after having declared it at the meeting you must not participate in discussion or voting on the item and must withdraw from the meeting whilst the matter is discussed.

Members' Code of Conduct and public perception

Even if you do not have a disclosable pecuniary interest in a matter, the Members' Code of Conduct says that a member "must serve only the public interest and must never improperly confer an advantage or disadvantage on any person including yourself" and that "you must not place yourself in situations where your honesty and integrity may be questioned". What this means is that the matter of interests must be viewed within the context of the Code as a whole and regard should continue to be paid to the perception of the public.

¹Disclosable pecuniary interests that must be declared are not only those of the member her or himself but also those of the member's spouse, civil partner or person they are living with as husband or wife or as if they were civil partners.

COUNCIL

Monday 14 July 2014

COUNCILLORS PRESENT: Councillors Abbasi (Lord Mayor), Simmons (Deputy Lord Mayor), Humberstone (Sheriff), Altaf-Khan, Anwar, Baxter, Benjamin, Brandt, Clarkson, Cook, Coulter, Curran, Darke, Fooks, Fry, Gant, Goddard, Gotch, Haines, Hayes, Hollick, Kennedy, Lloyd-Shogbesan, Lygo, Malik, Paule, Pressel, Price, Rowley, Royce, Sanders, Seamons, Simm, Sinclair, Smith, Tanner, Tarver, Thomas, Turner, Upton, Van Nooijen, Wade, Wilkinson and Wolff.

18. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Susan Brown, Anne-Marie Canning and Beverley Clack.

19. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

No declarations of interest were made.

20. MINUTES

Council agreed to approve the minutes of the ordinary meeting held on 14th April 2014, Annual Council held on 9th June 2014 and the extraordinary meeting held on 2nd July 2014.

21. APPOINTMENT TO COMMITTEES

No appointments to Committee were made.

22. ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Lord Mayor, Councillor Mohammed, Niaz Abbasi made the following announcements:

- (1) A special meeting of Council was held on 2nd July 2014 which conferred the Freedom of the City on Professor Christopher Brown.
- (2) The annual Cowley Road Carnival took place and he congratulated the organisers for their efforts in making it such a success
- (3) Mathew Metcalfe, Committee and Members Services Officer was moving to a new role within the Council as an Electoral Services Officer and Council thanked him for his many years in Committee Services and clerking Council and wished him well in his new role.

- (4) Thanked David Williams, former Councillor for the Iffley Fields Ward of Oxford City Council for his many years representing his constituents and the City Council.

The Leader of the Council, Councillor Bob Price made the following announcements:

- (1) Thanked the staff, unions etc. for their help and support in the City Council winning the MJ Award for best improving Council in the country.
- (2) The Council achieved the Investors in People Gold Award which would be a Launchpad for further improvements.
- (3) Thanked Cowley Road Works for their work and support of the Cowley Road Carnival.
- (4) LGA Peer Review took place. A report would be presented to the Council at the end of July. Assessors said that the passion and commitment of staff for the services they provided was evident and that the central message was that the Council should now become a Leader of Place.
- (5) Successful bids from the Growth Fund which would go towards schemes which included the western conveyance flood scheme, eastern traffic arch and an improved College of Further Education campus in Blackbird Leys.

23. PUBLIC ADDRESSES AND QUESTIONS THAT RELATE TO MATTERS FOR DECISIONS AT THIS MEETING

Sietske Boeles asked a question of the Leader of the Council, Councillor Bob Price and Councillor Bob Price responded as follows:

Northern Gateway

The Northern Gateway policy in the Core Strategy allows for a mixed use site of 55,000 sq metres of employment use, with up to 200 houses and 3,000 employees. This took into account the potential for high economic growth and was identified by the Inspector to be at a level that would not jeopardise growth in Bicester and would provide a realistic housing versus jobs balance. However, the Inspector remained doubtful about the transport and environmental constraints and the final decision was therefore referred to the Northern Gateway Area Action Plan.

How can the City Council reconcile this with now bringing forward a plan that:

- Is significantly larger than that identified in the Core Strategy?
- Is ahead of the publication of vital evidence on commuter information from the last census, despite the fact that the development could put an estimated 10,000 more cars on the road in a particularly congested and polluted area?
- Is prioritising employment (which generates additional housing need) above meeting existing housing need?

- Is still not clear on funding for any necessary mitigation (given that the Growth Fund money announced last week will only cover around one third of the £88 million Access to Oxford Funding envisaged several years ago)
- And, given the above, is the decision to continue with the Northern Gateway Area Action Plan lawful or should the entire Core Strategy not now be revisited to take account of the implications of the Strategic Housing Market Assessment on employment sites?

Response: The question asks a number of specific questions about the Northern Gateway Area Action Plan, that is before Council. The following is a response to each question in turn:

The plan is significantly larger than that identified in the Core Strategy?

The AAP is not significantly larger. It provides for 90,000m² employment floorspace by 2026; this reflects the 80,000m² identified at Core Strategy and the 10,000m² released as there no longer being a requirement for the emergency services centre. In terms of the complementary uses, the AAP provides for the same level of retail development and the same size hotel as the Core Strategy. As part of the detailed AAP work, it has been shown that the site has capacity for a greater amount of housing than was originally identified in the Core Strategy, while still maintaining the employment focus for the site. Whilst CS6 makes provision for 200 dwellings to 2026, the AAP makes provision for 500 dwellings. It is considered prudent to increase the housing numbers at the Northern Gateway.

It is ahead of the publication of vital evidence on commuter information from the last census, despite the fact that the development could put an estimated 10,000 more cars on the road in a particularly congested and polluted area?

The County Council has carried out detailed transport analysis. The North Oxford Transport Strategy (NOTS) will provide an overall strategic approach to the transport needs of the area and specifically address the potential transport impacts related to the Northern Gateway.

The key findings from the NOTS work include:

- Traffic modelling completed to date concludes that transport solutions can be developed to mitigate the impact of Northern Gateway.
- The proposed transport improvements (identified in the AAP) will need to meet other traffic growth demands, not just those arising from Northern Gateway development
- The traffic generated by the Northern Gateway will be minimised through a series of policies in the AAP (including parking standards) and associated conditions with future planning applications.

It is prioritising employment (which generates additional housing need) above meeting existing housing need?

The AAP proposes an increase in the number of houses on the site. Through its Core Strategy and other planning policies the City Council seeks to deliver as

much housing as possible but without compromising the economic and environmental sustainability needs and constraints in Oxford. The National Planning Policy Framework expects Local Planning Authorities to deliver both housing and build a strong, responsive and competitive economy by ensuring that sufficient land of the right type is available in the right places and at the right time to support growth and innovation.

It is still not clear on funding for any necessary mitigation (given that the Growth Fund money announced last week will only cover around one third of the £88 million Access to Oxford Funding envisaged several years ago)

The Northern Gateway requires significant investment in infrastructure and in turn the development provides an opportunity to address current issues through attracting both public and private sector investment. The Northern Gateway infrastructure requirements will be funded through a combination of the following:

- Developer funding secured through the Community Infrastructure Levy
- Developer funding secured through a Section 106 agreement for site-specific requirements and Affordable Housing
- City Deal funding already secured £11 million towards highways and transport infrastructure which will fund the improvements to Wolvercote and Cutteslowe roundabouts and contribute towards the construction of the strategic link road
- Local Growth Fund monies bid for via the Oxfordshire Local Economic Partnership
- City and County Council funding (for example via capital programmes and funds secured from other sources)

And, given the above, is the decision to continue with the Northern Gateway Area Action Plan lawful or should the entire Core Strategy not now be revisited to take account of the implications of the Strategic Housing Market Assessment on employment sites?

The Core Strategy was adopted against the background evidence of a Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA) dated 2007 which demonstrated a large housing need for Oxford. The SHMA that was published more recently in April 2014 also demonstrated a comparable housing need. Therefore the context for housing need in Oxford has not changed with the publication of the latest SHMA. Evidence of housing need is only one piece of evidence that is considered in the Plan making process. Plans must balance all sustainability matters as specified in the National Planning Policy Framework such as the need to promote economic growth and the need to protect environmental designations such as flood plain and nature conservation areas. The Core Strategy Inspector confirmed that the City Council had produced a 'sound' plan.

In accordance with Procedure Rule 11.10(g) the question was considered with agenda item 11 – Northern Gateway AAP: Proposed submission document.

24. CAPITAL CONTRIBUTION TOWARDS FRIDESWIDE SQUARE

The Head of City Development submitted a report along with an extract from the minutes of the City Executive Board held on 3rd July 2014 (previously circulated,

now appended) The report detailed a request to make a financial contribution to Oxfordshire County Council towards the work to transform Frideswide Square.

Councillor Bob Price moved the report.

Council agreed:

- (a) To approve a capital grant to the Oxfordshire County Council of £670,000 in two phases of £335,000 each (50% in quarter 3 2014/15 and 50% in quarter 2 2015/16);
- (b) To delegate to the Executive Director of Regeneration and Housing responsibility to complete the legal agreement requested by the Oxfordshire County Council.

25. OXPENS DELIVERY STRATEGY - STAGE 1

The Executive Director of City Regeneration and Housing submitted a report and an extract from the minutes of the City Executive Board held on 3rd July 2014 (previously circulated, now appended). The report detailed an update and next steps to deliver the redevelopment of the Oxpens site area, including the establishment of a budget.

Councillor Price moved the report and clarified that under the City Deal a minimum of 300 residential units would be included as stated in paragraph 7 of the report and not to deliver up to 300 residential units as stated in paragraph 6 of the report.

Council agreed to approve the establishment of a budget of £320,000 in the Council's revenue budget funded from the New Growths Point Grant to complete due diligence and to progress the project through the next stages.

26. TOWER BLOCK REFURBISHMENT PROJECT

The Head of Housing and Property submitted a report and an extract from the minutes of the City Executive Board held on 3rd July 2014 (previously circulated, now appended). The report detailed a request for approval to commence a tender process and for the Executive Director of Regeneration and Housing to be able to appoint and award the contract for the refurbishment of the city tower blocks and to recommend a revised budget to cover the agreed scope of works.

Councillor Seamons moved the report.

Council agreed to approve the inclusion of an additional budget within the HRA Capital Programme of £1.743m funded by a combination of leaseholder contributions (for their element of the scheme), or as a last resort prudential borrowing together with appropriate revenue funding of a maximum of approximately £104k per annum in capital financing costs.

27. INTEGRATED PERFORMANCE REPORT FOR QUARTER 4 - 2013/2014

The Head of Finance and the Head of Business Improvement and Technology submitted a report and an extract from the minutes of the City Executive Board held on 3rd July 2014 (previously circulated, now appended). The report provided an update on finance, risk and performance as at the end of quarter 4, 31st March 2014.

Councillor Turner moved the report.

Council agreed to approve the inclusion of a budget of £162,000 in the capital programme in respect of highways vehicles as outlined in paragraph 22 of the report.

28. NORTHERN GATEWAY AAP: PROPOSED SUBMISSION DOCUMENT

The Head of City Development submitted a report (previously circulated, now appended) which sought the approval of Council for the Northern Gateway Area Action Plan Proposed Submission Document for public consultation and subject to the outcome of the consultation to submit the draft AAP to the Secretary of State for formal examination.

Councillor Bob Price moved the report and following a debate Council agreed to:

- (a) Approve the Northern Gateway Area Action Plan Proposed Submission Document for consultation;
- (b) Approve all the supporting documentation that included the Sustainability Appraisal, Habitats Regulation Assessment, Equalities Impact Assessment and Options Consultation Report;
- (c) Authorise the Head of City Development in consultation with the Executive Board Member, to make any necessary editorial corrections to the document, Sustainability Appraisal and Habitat Regulations Assessment, and to agree the designed version before publication;
- (d) Approve the Northern Gateway AAP Proposed Submission Document as a material consideration in determining planning applications;
- (e) Authorise, following publication, the Head of city Development, in consultation with the Executive Board Member, to make any minor changes to the document deemed necessary as a result of the consultation, and then to formally submit the Northern Gateway AAP to the Secretary of State for examination;
- (f) Approve the proposed amendment to the Local Development Scheme.

29. COUNCILLORS' ALLOWANCES - APPOINTMENT OF INDEPENDENT REMUNERATION PANEL

The Head of Law and Governance submitted a report (previously circulated, now appended) which explained the background to the Members' Allowance Scheme and sought authorisation for the appointment of an Independent Remuneration

Panel to draft a new Allowances Scheme. The Panel would recommend the proposed Scheme to Council in the autumn.

Councillor Price moved the report.

Council agreed:

- (a) To authorise the Head of Law and Governance to appoint an Independent Remuneration Panel to consider and formulate a new Members' Allowance Scheme; and
- (b) To pause the indexation of the members' basic allowance available for the year 2013/14 onwards, pending the report of the Independent Remuneration Panel. The 2013/14 increase and the 2014/15 increase would not be implemented in the meantime.

30. CITY EXECUTIVE BOARD MINUTES

Council had before it minutes of the City Executive Board as follows:

- (a) 23rd April 2014
- (b) 11th June 2014
- (c) 3rd July 2014

Questions were asked as follows:

City Executive Board – 11th June 2014

- (a) Minute 6 – Low Carbon Hub Loan facility – councillor Sam Hollick said that he would have welcomed more input into the decision to provide a £2.3m loan.

In response Councillor Ed Turner said that the issue was time critical due to the school holidays and being able to undertake the necessary works.

City Executive Board – 3rd July 2014

- (b) Minute 20 – Grant Monitoring Information for 2013/14 – Councillor Jean Fooks raised concerns on core funding of staff posts from grant funding.
- (c) Minute 32 – Appointment to Outside Bodies 2014/15 – Councillor Jean Fooks asked why ward Councillors had been excluded from being the Council representative on outside bodies in their wards.

In response Councillor Bob Price said that the Councillors that had been appointed to outside bodies had a definite interest in the organisation that they had been appointed to and were willing to represent the Council on them.

31. QUESTIONS ON NOTICE FROM MEMBERS OF COUNCIL

(1) Question to the Board Member, Housing and Estate Regeneration (Councillor Scott Seamons) from Councillor Sam Hollick

Discharging of homelessness duty

What is the number of households that have been relocated outside of Oxford as a result of the Council discharging a homelessness duty?

Response: To the end of May 2014, the Council used the Localism Powers to discharge our statutory homeless duty to 5 clients, who accepted private rented sector accommodation outside of Oxford City.

The Council tries to find suitable and affordable private rented sector accommodation as close to Oxford as possible, and recognises challenges around this in relation to employment, schooling, and specialist health and support needs. However, the buoyancy of the local property market at present, means that most landlords are only renting to persons that are in work, with good tenancy histories, and are charging at least £100pcm over the LHA rate. As such, it is extremely hard to secure access to such accommodation in Oxfordshire anymore. We have had success at finding suitable property at LHA rates in the next nearest rental markets of the West Midlands, Swindon, South Wales and Gloucestershire/ Worcestershire.

The substantive issue here however, is the chronic lack of decent, affordable homes in Oxford, which can really only be addressed through the supply of more housing, which the Council are trying to deliver on through the development of Barton Park; the Council's own building programme of 113 units; working with registered providers to bring forward sites; and looking to future developments at the Northern Gateway and the West End.

Councillor Sam Hollick in a supplementary question asked if the Board Member regretted that the Council was under providing social housing. In response Councillor Scott Seamons said that he was pleased with the 40% social rented accommodation that was being provided.

(2) Question to the Board Member, Housing and Estate Regeneration (Councillor Scott Seamons) from Councillor David Thomas

Lord Mayor's Deposit Scheme

Would the Board Member agree with me that the Lord Mayor's Deposit Scheme provided an important lifeline to those struggling to access rented accommodation in Oxford?

Response: Yes – It has provided, and continues to provide, additional assistance to single persons and couples that are not in priority need, and who would not be assisted under statutory homeless provision.

Councillor David Thomas in a supplementary question asked the Board Member if he could give an assurance that the way the current scheme was administered did not create unnecessary barriers for those trying to

access the scheme and in particular individuals were not being asked to sign binding tenancy agreements before being considered for the scheme. In response Councillor Scott Seamons said that the low take up was unfortunate but this was due to the expensive housing market in Oxford.

(3) Question to the Board Member, Housing and Estate Regeneration (Councillor Scott Seamons) from Councillor Jean Fooks

Rough sleepers – hostel beds

I have been told that the City Council is failing to give rough sleepers who have been in hospital priority for hostel beds when they are discharged. The situation came to light when a homeless person was discharged from a local mental health unit. Do you agree that this is a heartless and uncaring policy which will only increase the likelihood of people in these circumstances returning to the streets with the consequent deterioration in their health?

Response: The City Council, in conjunction with the County Council, which has the lead commissioning role for the adult homeless pathway, and with other stakeholders, launched the No Second Night Out (NSNO) initiative in July 2012. This expressly moved to a position whereby only clients verified as rough sleeping could access the homeless pathway. This followed best practice coming out from London and other major cities, as well as advice from Government and leading charities working in this sector. The purpose was to prioritise any new rough sleepers for a bed in the NSNO assessment centre, allowing them to leave the streets at the earliest available opportunity. This has resulted in persons who are not rough sleeping not being prioritised for access. The reality being that there are not sufficient beds, or move-on opportunities, for all the persons that could benefit from these services. In this environment I believe we have got our priorities right.

As you are aware, this is an area on which the County are currently consulting with regard to a 38% budget cut in this area.

One year after implementation of the NSNO initiative, a review was undertaken with some 20 stakeholders. This did indeed identify some areas where improvements around access were suggested, including hospital and prison leavers. As such, revisions were made to the pathway to allow for exemptions to be made in certain situations for 'non-verified' rough sleepers who are "at real and immediate risk of sleeping rough". It should be noted though, that this is a supported pathway, which means that individuals need to have support needs. If their only need is accommodation it is inappropriate for them to come into this pathway. There is another funded supported pathway for people with mental health issues.

The Council is improving its joint work with health, having hosted a recent round table meeting of various parties, and produced an Action Plan. There is a current Hospital discharge protocol in place that requires health authorities, as a minimum, to consider housing and notify the relevant council 48 hours prior to any discharge, and the Council is working to try

and ensure this is adhered to, and works as well as possible for vulnerable clients.

Councillor Jean Fooks in a supplementary question asked if the Board Member could ensure that this did not happen again, that a homeless person was not put back on the streets when leaving hospital, particularly a mental hospital. In response Councillor Scott Seamons said that he was happy to meet with Councillors Fooks to discuss the issues further, but added that the Pathway was provided by the CCG as well as the Council.

(4) Question to the Board Member, Culture and Communities (Councillor Christine Simm) from Councillor Craig Simmons.

East Oxford Community Association

What grounds is the Council using to evict the East Oxford Community Association from the East Oxford Community Centre?

Response: Oxford City Council decided to withdraw the East Oxford Community Association's licence to occupy the East Oxford Community Centre premises on the Cowley Road as the Council had serious concerns about the management of the community centre for some time.

Despite many attempts to regularise the management practices and an agreed action plan, the association committee failed to rectify matters and improve the overall management of the Centre.

I am pleased to be able to report that the association is working proactively with the Council to bring about a smooth and managed transfer which is in the best interests of the association and the communities of East Oxford.

Councillor Craig Simmons in a supplementary question asked the Board Member if she would agree that it was harsh to evict the Association with four weeks notice, when they had an extant lease of three months. In response Councillor Christine Simm said that the Association had a licence not a lease. Meetings had taken place with the Association and it was advised that if the Association put together a plan then the eviction could be reviewed. Everyone is working together for a smooth transition and to get the Association back on a firm footing.

(5) Question to the Board Member, Cleaner, Greener Oxford, Climate Change and Transport (Councillor John Tanner) from Councillor Jean Fooks.

Mobility support for elderly people

Has the administration simply forgotten that it promised to help elderly and disabled people to get round the city, with more transport provision such as Dial-a-Ride, to improve their quality of life with the £50,000 still sitting in 'Contingency'?

Response: Transport for elderly and disabled people is a responsibility for the County Council. I understand the County Council is reviewing transport provision in the city and seeking better co-ordination of its different transport services.

Oxford City Council will continue to urge the County Council to provide proper transport services for the elderly and disabled including an improved Dial-a-Ride service. If the County Council requests financial assistance from the City to deliver that service we will consider that request on its merits.

Councillor Jean Fooks in a supplementary question asked why it was not a priority. In response Councillor John Tanner said that he had checked the position with the County Council which was making no progress on integrated transport in the City. He added that as a small district Council there was a limit to how much the City could take on and the City was already subsidising County Council services. He further added that the City Council already supported a second dial-a-ride, but the County Council would not provide it.

(6) Question to the Board Member, Cleaner, Green Oxford, Climate Change and Transport (Councillor John Tanner) from Councillor David Thomas

Flooding alleviation in Oxfordshire

When can Councillors expect to see there the tender documents for the feasibility study into flooding alleviation in Oxfordshire?

Response: Oxfordshire County Council is the Lead Local Flood Authority (LLFA) and as such, it has a legal duty under the [Flood and Water Management Act 2010](#) to “develop, maintain, apply and monitor” a flood risk management strategy. The authority has produced a draft Local Flood Risk Management Strategy for Oxfordshire and this is now out to consultation until 19th September 2014. This can be found at:

<https://consultations.oxfordshire.gov.uk/consult.ti/floodriskmgmt/consultationHome>

The draft strategy envisages a range of measure to help control flooding and a key proposal is the construction of the Western Conveyance. This flood relief channel was proposed initially by the Environment Agency following an earlier option assessment. The Environment Agency has earmarked funding towards the cost of the scheme as has the Thames Regional Flood and Coastal Committee. Further funding has also been very recently announced by central government as part of the Oxfordshire Growth Deal; this will be made available to the Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP), which is working to facilitate further fundraising – to ensure the flood relief costs can be met in full. There is sufficient funding now however, for work to start in earnest. Our biggest success so far is helping to get funding the western conveyance.

The City Council regards flood protection as a matter of priority and leads the Oxford Area Flood Partnership (OAFP), which works closely with the

LLFA and the Environment Agency in particular. The Council is also a partner within the LEP, therefore it will be involved in the key processes that will lead to the finalised flood relief scheme.

In this context it is understood that the Council as a partner, will see any tender documents that will be made available for comment prior to sign-off by the commissioning body. Whilst at this time the project plan has yet to be firmed up, it is anticipated that early documentation will be available by late autumn / early winter.

Councillor David Thomas in a supplementary question said that the critical value for money case had not yet been made. In response Councillor John Tanner said that the Labour Administration fully supported the western conveyance scheme. The scheme had been worked on for many years and should have been in place before now.

(7) Question to the Board Member, Cleaner, Greener Oxford, Climate Change and Transport (Councillor John Tanner) from Councillor Craig Simmons.

Climate Change Adaptation Strategy

Is the Council planning to develop a Climate Change Adaptation Strategy?

Response: There are no plans within current resource to develop a specific climate change adaptation strategy. However the City Council is currently developing an Emergency Plan which will cover incidents linked to climate change such as heat waves, excess cold and flooding. The Council already has in place a series of Business Continuity plans, which address how the Council's own key services will be maintained or rapidly reinstated in a severe event, including that which could be caused by climate change.

We recognise that such events may well become more frequent in future due to climate change and are working with partners to reduce the impact of such events. The current main impacts of climate change in Oxford that require adaptation, are the more frequent and severe flooding events that the city is experiencing.

The City Council leads the Oxford Area Flood Partnership (OAFP) and works closely with both the Lead Local Flood Authority, the Environment Agency and other partners to address flooding problems. Some of the actions within the flood plans involve adaptation, especially in relation to improving resilience and recovery, for example. These adaptation plans remain under review and will be developed as necessary; they will of course be informed by best practice elsewhere.

Councillor Craig Simmons in a supplementary question asked if the Board Member would agree that an emergency plan was different to a strategy/adaptation plan. In response Councillor John Tanner said that he would like to see an adaptation plan but could not promise the resources required for this. The priority was to support schemes such as the Low Carbon Hub.

(8) Question to the Deputy Leader, Finance, Asset Management and Public Health (Councillor Ed Turner) from Councillor Jean Fooks.

Town Hall Flat

The flat in the Town hall was marketed a long time ago and a tenant accepted. It has still not been released for occupation so no rental income is coming to the Council. Why were all works such as fire safety measures not completed before it was even put on the market?

Response: The flat has now been let and the tenant taken occupation. A full survey of what was required had been taken prior to the marketing of the flat and the requirements considered, further works were subsequently identified following inspection by our insurers and an independent fire officer. It was also decided that no works should be carried out, and therefore incur cost, until such time as a tenant, and the associated rental income, had been identified to ensure that the letting would work, given the complexity of the accommodation and its surroundings.

Councillor Jean Fooks in a supplementary question asked the Board Member if he would agree that it would have been better to have done all of the works now. In response Councillor Ed Turner said there were issues concerning access which had prevented this. He added that the Council was working hard to get the most from its assets which had resulted in rental income in the 2013/14 year of £7.4m.

(9) Question to the Deputy Leader, Finance, Asset Management and Public Health (Councillor Ed Turner) from Councillor Jean Fooks.

Mortgage help for teachers

The City Council set up a scheme to assist senior teachers with mortgages to purchase property in the city. How many teachers at what levels have taken advantage of the help available since the scheme began?

Response: None yet. The contract with Catalyst has been negotiated and we can complete once the Financial Conduct Authority (FCA) has agreed the content of the consumer credit agreement which Catalyst are proposing to use. Approval was needed because the requirement that teachers must repay equity loans if they leave school employment in Oxford, which is a key feature for the Council, was not covered in Catalyst's existing agreement.

This application was made in February but was caught by the transfer of responsibility from the Office of Fair Trading to the FCA at the beginning of April. It has now been approved so after this unfortunate period of hiatus caused by the antics of the Coalition Government agencies, we can now get on with supporting senior teachers as we intended.

(10) Question to the Deputy Leader, Finance, Asset Management and Public Health (Councillor Ed Turner) from Councillor Ruthi Brandt

Cost of Treasury Management Strategy

Can the Board Member tell us how much the Council is paying for Treasury Management Strategy advice from Capita Asset Services, and does this advice include long term views such as bail-in risks and climate related investment risks?

Response: The Council is paying an amount of £10,000 per annum for its Treasury Management Strategy advice from Capita (formerly Sector) following the award of a contract through open tender in July of last year. The advice includes information on the credit ratings of financial institutions meeting the Councils minimum credit rating for investing, together with regular updates on changes to these credit ratings and recommendations on periods for which investments may be made with individual institutions. Bail-in risks and climate related investment risks are part of the information taken into consideration when advising the Council.

Capita also assisted in the evaluation of potential property funds to invest in recently. Cllr Fry and I were involved in the evaluation of tenders for this work, of which two were received at the time of appointment.

Councillor Ruthi Brandt in a supplementary question asked the Board Member if he was aware of the criticism levels of Capita. In response Councillor Ed Turner said that he was, but that the Council required good Treasury Management advice. He said that the Council had received two tender documents and this had been considered and that Capita was the best company to provide this external support.

(11) Question to the Deputy Leader, Finance, Asset Management and Public Health (Councillor Ed Turner) from Councillor David Thomas

Calls to Oxford's Domestic Violence Helpline

Does the Board Member share with me a sense of horror that monthly call numbers to Oxford's Domestic Violence Helpline increased by over 40% between 2009 and 2012, rising from 172 to 357, and that last month alone on one occasion it received six calls in less than an hour?

Response: The increase in calls to the Helpline, run by Oxfordshire Domestic Abuse Service (A2Dominion) is viewed positively, although clearly the extent of domestic abuse which it evidences is deeply concerning. Interpersonal violence is by its very nature a hidden crime. Over the last 8 years, nationally and locally there has been a drive to raise awareness and encourage victims to speak out and get appropriate support. We would like people to disclose before it escalates into physical and sexual violence and have focused on early intervention including providing a helpline. By coming forward earlier it reduces the harm, not only to the victim but any children, and improves their life chances. In Oxford there has been an increase in reporting such incidents to the police since 2005. In 2006 there were 2385 reports to the police in Oxford; 1250 (52%) were non-crime and 1135 (48%) were crime. In 2012 there were 3237 reports to the police; 2416 (75%) were non-crime and 821 (25%) were crime. The helpline has seen a similar increase in reporting and coming forward to seek help earlier. The prevalence has not changed

but the confidence to come forward and how we tackle and manage domestic abuse has. Not everyone wants to go to the police and therefore it is important that there are other avenues for disclosure and support. The helpline is vital for victims, female and male, as they have a safe place to talk, get safety planning advice, are risk assessed and given appropriate support such as an outreach worker, support group or a community perpetrator programme. In addition professionals use it for advice and information to assist them in supporting their clients and to manage the risk.

The County Council have proposed a 40% cut to Oxfordshire Domestic Abuse Service funding, as part of its wider cut to "Supporting People" budgets. It will have a direct impact on the helpline. If the cuts go ahead then A2Dominion will have no choice but to either significantly reduce the time when the helpline is open or close it all together. The victims and children will suffer without the appropriate support and this will impact on all agencies both in the short and long term. We intend to respond critically to the County Council's proposed budget reductions in this area of work.

Councillor David Thomas in a supplementary question asked when the Board Member would meet with him and the Management to help them understand first-hand the devastating impact the cuts would have on the safety of the most vulnerable women and mothers in our community.

In response Councillor Ed Turner said that he represented the Council on the Health Improvement Board and there were also other Executive Members that had an interest in this area and would meet with the organisation and those affected by the cuts. He said that the Council intended to respond critically to the consultation and had offered comments at the Health Improvement Board. The County could remove funding and the City could step up to fill the gap, but then the County could remove more funding. If the County could put on the table a commitment to leave it alone and not make any further cuts then a conversation could be had, but no such commitment had been given at the moment. The other Members with an interest in this area were Councillors Scott Seamons and Dee Sinclair. The Council also added value to this area through the work of the Domestic Abuse Co-ordinator.

(12) Question to the Deputy Leader, Finance, Asset Management and Public Health (Councillor Ed Turner) from Councillor David Thomas

Oxford Investigation Service

Would the Board Member join me in recognising the sterling work done by the eight-strong Oxford Investigation Service in combating fraud across the City?

Response: Yes I join with the Councillor in congratulating the Fraud Investigation Team for the tremendous work that they have done in combatting fraud across the city. Fraud is ever present in the public sector, from sub-letting our council dwellings, payment of welfare benefits and council tax discounts. The team has been able to detect and put plans in place for recovery of monies overpaid and has played a key role

in protecting the public purse. The Councillor will be aware that the government is going to take on part of these functions in due course, and I am certain that this administration will wish to ensure appropriate capacity to investigate potential fraud affecting our General Fund is maintained.

Councillor David Thomas in a supplementary question asked if he could press upon the Board Member to review staffing levels and allay fears that the team will be understaffed and under funded.

Councillor Ed Turner in response said that to get rid of our general fund fraud capacity would be a nonsense, and the Council would not be releasing staff to the DWP that the Council needed.

- (13) Question to the Leader of the Council, Corporate Strategy, Economic Development and Planning (Councillor Bob Price) from Councillor Ruth Wilkinson.**

Diary date changes to meetings

Why was the date to the Members' briefing changed from 15th July, as in the published diary to 16th July when it clashes with the East Area Planning Committee?

Response: The communication of the dates for Members' Briefings to the officer who organises them contained a clerical error for the July meeting date. When this was identified the speakers had already been organised and invitations sent out and replies had been received. In the event, the East Area Planning Committee scheduled for that evening has been cancelled so there is, now, no clash.

- (14) Question to the Leader of the Council, Corporate Strategy, Economic Development and Planning (Councillor Bob Price) from Councillor Ruth Wilkinson.**

Community Infrastructure Levy Update

The Community Infrastructure Levy 123 list is supposed to be updated every six months. An updated list was due in April I think. When will this be circulated and what is the process of discussion for projects to be included in the list?

Response: The CIL list has been updated and will be circulated to members in September.

Councillor Ruth Wilkinson in a supplementary question, asked what was the procedure for backbenchers for putting forward ideas for the 123 list. In response Councillor Price said that date came automatically from the schemes that the Council was involved in and Members should continue to provide ideas to Adrian Roach in City Development.

- (15) Question to the Leader of the Council, Corporate Strategy, Economic Development and Planning (Councillor Bob Price) from Councillor Jean Fooks.**

West Area Planning Committee – site location of application

West Area Planning Committee had to defer a planning application for the corner of Walton Street and Little Clarendon Street because they were unable to decide which street it was in. This has meant that the deadline for determination was passed and the developer has gone to appeal – with the consequence that the application will be determined by an Inspector not by the Council. Can the Board member explain why this very important aspect of the application was not determined before the application went to Committee?

Response: This application for the change of use of the shop units at the corner of Little Clarendon and Walton Street to a restaurant was reported to West Area Planning Committee (WAPC) in May, within the 8-week statutory decision period, and with an officers' recommendation for approval.

The relevant retail frontages policy and Local Plan Map include the properties at the two ends of Little Clarendon Street, namely on Walton St and Banbury Road, within the Little Clarendon Street shopping area. On this basis officers recommended approval, as the 65% A1 minimum policy threshold would not be breached.

At the May WAPC, members expressed the view that the premises might instead be included in the Walton Street shopping area (which is further north), in which case the threshold would be breached. The application was deferred for further consideration by officers, who duly reported back to the June WAPC. The Committee resolved to interpret the policy as including the premises in the Walton Street area, and therefore decided that it would refuse planning permission. Since the application had in the meantime gone out of time, the applicant had submitted an appeal against non-determination, leading to the position that Cllr Fooks describes.

Councillor Jean Fooks in a supplementary question asked the Board Member if he agreed that it did not reflect well on the Council. In response Councillor Bob Price agreed with Councillor Jean Fooks.

- (16) **Question to the Leader of the Council, Corporate Strategy, Economic Development and Planning (Councillor Bob Price) from Councillor Sam Hollick.**

LGA Challenge results

Will the results from the LGA challenge be made available to opposition Councillors?

Response: The informal feedback session at the end of the team's visit provided a generally positive assessment, and a number of helpful proposals for the development of the Council's future policies. A written report is expected within four weeks and will be sent to all members. A Members Briefing will be arranged in September to consider the group's analysis and suggestions and it would be included in the scrutiny process.

- (17) **Question to the Leader of the Council, Corporate Strategy, Economic Development and Planning (Councillor Bob Price) from Councillor Craig Simmons.**

Kassam Stadium

Can the Board Member update the Council on the status of the Kassam Stadium?

Response: The Council is not privy to the commercial aspirations of the new Oxford United board. As far as the Council's Local Plan is concerned, the stadium site is allocated for leisure purposes and would not be available for a housing development as seems to have been suggested in the context of a putative move to a new stadium in the Green Belt north of the city.

- (18) **Question to the Leader of the Council, Corporate Strategy, Economic Development and Planning (Councillor Bob Price) from Councillor Craig Simmons.**

Downgraded Council jobs

In the last year, how many Council jobs have been downgraded? And how many downgraded jobs have been filled by the same person who held the original job, meaning an effective salary cut?

Response: None.

Councillor Craig Simmons in a supplementary question said that he knew of at least two members of staff that had come to him with the accusation and that he was happy to share this information with Councillor Bob Price outside of the meeting. In response Councillor Bob Price said that a down grading involves a grade being reviewed and a job down grade. This had not happened here. Different jobs were graded differently and they were not the same jobs that had been downgraded.

32. PUBLIC ADDRESSES AND QUESTIONS THAT DO NOT RELATE TO MATTERS FOR DECISION AT THIS COUNCIL MEETING

Addresses

- (1) Park Pitt – Wildflower wipeout – The text of the address is appended to these minutes.

Councillor Mark Lygo, responded to the address and said that the City Council was currently writing a pollinator management plan to ensure that we embed where possible sensitive habitat management for our pollinator's. this will involve the creation of new wild flower meadows, pollinator friendly bedding plants in our formal gardens, planting tree which have early pollen and the creation of pollinator homes near suitable food sources. The City Council has joined up with Oxford's Friends of the Earth, Local Bee Keepers Association, leading ecologists to create a work group to help advise the City Council on what can be done. Both Parks

and Streetscene Operation Managers are heavily involved to ensure that we can deliver what we say we are going to do. Currently we are looking at our existing assets across the Council to see what our teams are already doing. We have wild flowers in our church yards and we are looking to put a green roof on our Parks Office. There will be a joint event held at the end of September where we will create at least four new flower meadows across the City.

- (2) Nigel Gibson – Oxford City council must engage with the East Oxford Community – Text of the address appended to these minutes.

Councillor Mike Rowley responded to the address and said that Nigel Gibson asks the Council to ensure that Officers provide him with a long list of detailed operational information on the Temple Cowley Pool as quickly as possible. This information, which largely comes from Fusion, has been sought and collated by Officer as a matter of urgency and is already being supplied to Mr Gibson.

- (3) Sarah Lasenby – Temple Cowley Pools Campaign – Text of the address appended to these minutes.

Sarah Lasenby did not attend to give her address and Councillor Mike Rowley said that he would provide a written response, now detailed below:

I would fundamentally disagree with the speaker's contention that the new pool in Blackbird Leys will not represent an entirely adequate, indeed superior, replacement facility for Temple Cowley. The Council has undertaken this project on the clear basis that by building the new pool, residents are obtaining an improved facility, that will last much longer, at less cost to the public purse.

Our aim is to put a top quality, affordable, accessible, publicly provided leisure service for all the people of Oxford that is financially and environmentally sustainable into the long-term future. The replacement of the old pool is a vital part of this Council's highly successful leisure strategy.

- (4) Jane Alexander - £108 million for Oxford – Text of the address appended to these minutes.

Councillor Mike Rowley responded to the address and said Jane Alexander asks why various funds received from central government cannot be spent on supporting her community group's bid to purchase the Temple Cowley site. Quite apart from the fact that government funding is usually allocated to very specific uses, and that state funding given to an external company could well constitute unlawful state aid, this address makes a number of statements that are not accurate. The Save Temple Cowley Pool Campaign does not have community asset status, the pool does. The council awarded this status in order to give any locally based organisation an extra six months to put together a bid. All bids will be judged impartially and based on best value for the people of Oxford who pay for the pool through their taxes. I have no role in the assessment of the bids as the valuation process is non-political. This Council does not

“give” away public assets. The Council is under an obligation under s123 of the LGA 1972 to secure best value and best consideration for any asset that we dispose of. The Council has no preferred bidder. The speaker quite rightly objects to the idea of a preferred bidder being identified before the evaluation process has been completed. I don't blame anyone from seeking funding wherever they can but I'm sure members would appreciate why the Council advancing funds to an external company to purchase a private property would be viewed by our auditors with distain and could constitute unlawful state aid with Central Government money. The Council is indeed “talking” to the Save Temple Cowley Pool Company and communications with this group have recently taken up large amounts of officer time. The Council has not contacted it regarding the outcome of any bid and will not do so until the impartial officer evaluation is complete.

- (5) Alasdair De Voil – Oxford Visitor Information Centre – Text of the address appended to these minutes.

Councillor Bob Price responded to the address and said Experience Oxfordshire is a membership organisation and a company limited by guarantee. It receives grant aid from the City and County Councils on a gradually reducing basis as agreed when the company was established and took over the operation of the Tourist Information Centre.

EOL will act as a booking agent for all walking tour guides who are members of EOL and who agree to comply with EOL's Tour Operators Quality Charter. EOL provide Blue and Green Badge guides an enhanced booking agency service for walking tours, for which a 40per cent commission on ticket sales is charged. These tours are branded as the 'official' walking tours because the guides are independently quality assessed for tour guiding. All participating operators are listed on the website and at the TIC.

Councillor Colin Cook who had been mentioned in the address by Alasdair De Voil said that Mr De Voil claimed that he had said that the Council was not legally responsible for the Visitor Centre. Councillor Colin Cook asked that it be recorded that he has said no such thing and his response to Mr De Voil's question on 3rd February was in the minutes.

- (6) Helen Marshall – Housing in Oxfordshire – Text of the address appended to these minutes.

Councillor Bob Price responded to the address. He said that the SHMA was part of the NPPF's required approach to the identification of housing needs which is then considered in the local plan process. The assessment does not in itself say anything about the requirements in relation to a particular local plan. As was seen at the Cherwell inquiry the numbers of dwellings identified in the SHMA are considered as part of the land supply and sustainability assessment in developing the local plan. We are now in a position where there is a background County-wide assessment which will be taken into account in each of the individual local plan inquiries. Personally, I think this is an unsatisfactory system. Unlike the previous systems of either regional plans, sub-regional plans or County structure plans there was at least some capacity to look at the whole of an area at

the same time, we now have disjointed public inquiries undertaking similar analyses. The same data are considered at each inquiry and in each public consultation, and the SHMA figures provide a common background information base for this process.

The identification of employment sites for the implementation of the County's economic plan is again subject to the local plan inquiry process. The development of a science-based employment site cannot be done without it being consistent with the local plan of the particular district where it is located. Although the SEP is a framework document for economic growth, it has to be delivered through the local planning process. None of the background policy documents undermine the local authority planning functions.

So far as the City is concerned, we take the view that green belts are important and a vital part of the County's ability to retain its pleasant rural outlook, but they are not inviolate. The current Oxford green belt is very extensive and unnecessarily constraining for Oxfordshire in the 21st century. The assessment document that we have put forward as background discussion on the possible sites for the accommodation of an urban extension to the city would require a less than 2% reduction in the current green belt and could be replaced by additional green belt designations. The urban extensions proposed would provide a proportion of the housing that the city needs as shown by the SHMA. If more housing is not built, the cost of housing will simply become more and more unaffordable, and rents will continue to soar. It is the first step in balancing housing and employment needs. Allegations of a lack of democracy and consultation simply don't have weight; the SHMA and the SEP are background and framework documents informing the consideration of housing land and employment land allocations at local plan public inquiries.

Questions

(1) Question to the Leader of the Council, Corporate Strategy, Economic Development and Planning (Councillor Bob Price) from Sarah Wild

Sarah Wild did not attend to ask her question.

Planning Consultation

At the Full Council Feb 3 2014 I asked the following question:

One of the recommendations following the investigation into what happened over Roger Dudman Way is that consultation methods between the council and members of the public should be improved. This would mean that the public had optimal access to planning documents.

So why have the public been denied access to hard copy planning application documents, except for major developments, when the on-line version is unclear?

Following a discussion a decision was taken, and unanimously agreed in Full Council, that this issue would be referred to West Area Planning Committee for investigation.

This decision, agreed by the Full Council, was excluded from the main body of the minutes - and so far no investigation has taken place.

My request is that the Council act on the decision made in February 2014.

Response: This question was submitted and answered at the Council meeting on February 3rd 2014.

Approximately 80% of all planning applications to the City Council are now submitted electronically. The City Council no longer holds a paper copy of all planning applications in the reception area at St Aldate's Chambers ready to be viewed by the public. It is Council policy to encourage customers to access Council information via its website as far as possible.

However, the City Council does not deny access to hard copies of planning application documents. It has been, and remains, willing to make a hard copy of a planning application available on request in reception if a customer makes an appointment to come and view a particular application because the on-line copy is unavailable or unclear.

Furthermore, the City Council will be reviewing its post-application guidance on planning processes in response to one of the recommendations in the Independent Report on Roger Dudman Way.

The matter was referred to the West Area Planning Committee on March 18th 2014, where the committee agreed to add the question of how consultation processes are managed as an action on the planning services improvement plan, and that progress on the action plan should be reported to the two Area Planning Committees quarterly.

This matter of consultation will be included as part of the review of the Council's planning Statement of Community Involvement, work upon which has just commenced with a view to reporting to committees (both area Planning Committees and City Executive Board) later this year.

(2) Question to the Board Member, Leisure Contract and Community Partnership Grants (Councillor Mike Rowley) from Jane Alexander

Jane Alexander attended and asked her question.

Fusion Lifestyle Contract Performance

Paragraph 37 of the Report to Scrutiny Committee entitled "Fusion Lifestyle – Contract Performance 2013/2014" dated 23rd June 2014 shows the customer satisfaction ratings for a number of categories. Can you please tell me whether any payments (bonus, commission, penalty or similar) to Fusion or any member of council staff or a third party organisation depend on the value of these ratings? If so, can you please explain how this works?

Response: Leisure centre usage has grown by 40% over the past five years to nearly 1.3 million visits and we are confident that with the new pool opening that usage will continue to grow.

With this level of usage it is inevitable that on occasions the service standards will fall below our high expectations. In the nature of the partnership, when this happens the council often work with Fusion Lifestyle to ensure that problems are rectified. Service failings do though also results in points which when they accumulate lead to financial penalties.

No bonus or commission has been paid.

(3) Question to the Leader of the Council, Corporate Strategy, Economic Development and Planning (Councillor Bob Price) from Chaka Artwell

Chaka Artwell did not ask his question.

A future for Oxford people by 2020

It was really heartening to hear Bob Price, as Chair of the Finance Committee meeting recently, talking positively about creating a future for Oxford people by 2020, in which the Council would help provide a vision and Services for this wonderful City of Oxford.

With this aim of providing a vision and services for Oxford people it has been reported in the Oxford Mail of July 7th, that the Council is in discussions to buy the Gladiator Club. The Gladiator Club is registered as an Asset of Community value. This is a welcomed visionary act by Bob Price's Council and his Executives. Volunteers, for no financial reward, often administer many of our Community organisations. Occasionally Council assistance may be needed to help these voluntary community organisations.

I also note that a recent City Executive Board agreed a loan of £2.3m at preferential interest rates to Low Carbon Hub, despite the fact that many people of science dispute the theory that Climate Change is manmade. Nevertheless, this is to be welcomed by Oxford people as a visionary act.

Will the Elected Councillors discuss options for similar financial arrangements with Mr Nigel Gibson, as Director of the Community Interest Company (CIC), currently preparing a proposal to take over and operate another Asset of Community Value: Temple Cowley Pools and Gym?

The people of Cowley have seen their Community Centre destroyed and they do not want to see their Pool and Fitness centre destroyed also. Please include Temple Cowley Pools and Gym in your vision for the people of Oxford Mr Price and the Elected Councillors.

Response: The Council's approved Corporate Strategy sets out its vision for Oxford, under the key themes of economic development, housing, leisure, reduction of carbon usage, community development and efficient

and effective provision of services. Providing a top class leisure service at an affordable cost to customers and Council Tax payers is one of the key objectives in that Strategy. The decision to replace the old Temple Cowley and Blackbird Leys pools with a new pool linked to, and jointly managed with, the Blackbird Leys Leisure Centre on Pegasus Rd was taken in support of that objective. It will contribute to the reduction in the level of subsidy per visit to indoor leisure facilities to zero, as well as providing a modern, regional competition standard pool that better meets the needs of swimmers.

The Council's financial policies allow investment in externally owned assets that provide a sound commercial rate of return; the examples of the Low Carbon Hub loan to support solar power installations, and the possible purchase of the Gladiators Club are two recent examples. Any future proposals of that type will be assessed against the Council's policy and statutory financial regulations.

(4) Question to the Leader of the Council, Corporate Strategy, Economic Development and Planning (Councillor Bob Price) from Helen Marshall

Helen Marshall attended and asked her question.

Housing and scrutiny issues

Given that:

- The Oxford & Oxfordshire City Deal was passed without any public consultation,
- The Spatial Planning & Infrastructure Partnership, whose Executive Board meetings are not subject to public scrutiny, appears to have agreed a vision for Oxfordshire based on economic growth at all costs,
- And that the unelected Local Enterprise Partnership is now responsible for delivering the Oxfordshire Strategic Economic Plan which, in contrast to previous County Structure Plans, has not gone through Full Council let alone public consultation,

what is the role of democratically elected Oxford City councillors?’

Response: The Oxford and Oxfordshire City Deal was reported to Council earlier this year and the Strategic Economic Plan will come to Council in the autumn as planned.

The City Council adopted an economic development framework in 2012 in the Oxford Strategic Partnership Economic Growth Strategy. This sets out the city's economic development needs and plans. The City Deal and the Oxfordshire Strategic Economic Plan both reflect the City Council's policies, and were consequently endorsed by the Council's representative on the LEP.

The Spatial Planning and Infrastructure Partnership Board, not the Executive, has been responsible for determining the policies of the Partnership, and the minutes of that Board are published. The SPIP Board was comprised of councillor representatives from all the districts and the county, plus the chair of the LEP, with representatives of Government agencies as observers. It was chaired in rotation by one of the Councillors. The functions of the SPIP Board have now been subsumed into the Oxfordshire Growth Board with effect from this month.

The City Council is seeking to ensure that Oxford is a world city class for all its citizens and can realise its potential as a national economic asset. The city contains one of the greatest concentrations of research and knowledge based employment in the world, as well as an outstanding environment. The city is successful in many ways, with a third of all employment in the county, great economic vitality and with a global reputation.

It is also clear from a range of independent studies that for a number of years the city has not been realising its full potential and that there are continuing major issues of low incomes and poor housing. In particular:

- the universities, big science facilities and successful business need space to grow and develop, or investment and economic activity will locate elsewhere in the UK or to other countries.
- The city is the least affordable location for housing in the country; the impacts of the lack of housing and, particularly, of affordable housing are clear at every level. The universities, hospitals and businesses have difficulties attracting and retaining the staff that they require, the exceptional turnover of teaching staff in schools undermines children's education and attainment levels, and the pressures of overcrowding and homelessness are increasingly evident.
- According to the University's 'Innovation Engine' report, the lack of effective strategic planning for the wider city economy and housing to support growth has already cost the local economy over £0.5bn in economic activity, as well as contributing to inequalities and social injustice.

33. PETITIONS

No petitions had been previously submitted for debate at this meeting.

34. OUTSIDE ORGANISATION/COMMITTEE CHAIR REPORTS AND QUESTIONS

Oxfordshire Health Improvement Board

The Head of Policy, Communications and Culture submitted a report on behalf of Councillor Ed Turner (previously circulated, now appended) which informed Council of the work of the Oxfordshire Health Improvement Board.

Councillor Ed Turner introduced the report.

Council agreed to note the report and the work of the Oxfordshire Improvement Board.

35. SCRUTINY COMMITTEE BRIEFING

The Chair of the Scrutiny Committee submitted a report (previously circulated, now appended) which updated Council on the activities of scrutiny and other non-executive Councillors since the previous ordinary meeting of Council.

Councillor Craig Simmons as Chair of the Scrutiny Committee moved the report. He said that while there was a heavy workload for the Scrutiny Committee he welcomed suggestions from Members on possible areas which the Committee may wish to look into as some of this work could be undertaken by the various Panels such as the Finance Panel rather than just the main Committee

Councillor Val Smith said that Scrutiny should be vibrant and take on issues especially ones that mattered to the public. Councillor Jean Fooks added that maybe consideration should be given to having two Scrutiny Committees as there had been in the past.

Council agree to note the report.

36. MOTIONS ON NOTICE

Council had before it five Motion on Notice and reached decisions as follows:

(1) Control of residential lettings boards in the City – (Proposed by Councillor Ruth Wilkinson, seconded by Councillor Steve Goddard)

Liberal Democrat Group Member - Motion on Notice

Council acknowledges that “To Let” and “Let by” signs are erected on some properties for months despite the properties being occupied. This creates visual clutter, community objection and planning enforcement complaints, highlights student-targeted areas, and police advice in other parts of the country has pointed to a strong correlation between crime levels and the properties displaying “To Let” boards.

Council notes that other authorities have tackled this issue by means of either a voluntary code or a mandatory code, and that mandatory codes have been introduced in Leeds, and also in Newcastle following a review of a previously agreed voluntary code. Council further notes the well-documented success of a mandatory code on the erection of residential lettings boards in Inner NW Leeds which led to a reduction in crime and antisocial behaviour, and improved the appearance of two predominantly student areas in the City.

Council also notes that the majority of agencies involved in letting residential properties do ensure that boards are taken down when reminded.

Council asks the City Executive Board:

- (a) To require officers to introduce a code on the erection of residential lettings boards in Oxford
- (b) To carry out a formal consultation process on whether this code should be voluntary or mandatory
- (c) To work with landlords, estate agencies which operate lettings, lettings agencies, boards agents, Oxford City Council officers and the Universities on the content of the code, taking into account the relevant regulations and ensuring that there is an agreed and clear definition of the start date of a tenancy which triggers the board erection process.

Councillor Bob Price seconded by Councillor Ed Turner moved the following amendment:

To delete points (a), (b), (c) and replace with the following:

To ask the officers to bring forward proposals for a code of practice on the erection and removal of sales and letting boards in the City, including consideration of both voluntary and mandatory status ,and proposals for involving letting and estate agents in the development of an effective code.

Councillor Ruth Wilkinson accepted the amendment and following a debate Council voted and the amended Motion was adopted as follows:

Council acknowledges that “To Let” and “Let by” signs are erected on some properties for months despite the properties being occupied. This creates visual clutter, community objection and planning enforcement complaints, highlights student-targeted areas, and police advice in other parts of the country has pointed to a strong correlation between crime levels and the properties displaying “To Let” boards.

Council notes that other authorities have tackled this issue by means of either a voluntary code or a mandatory code, and that mandatory codes have been introduced in Leeds, and also in Newcastle following a review of a previously agreed voluntary code. Council further notes the well-documented success of a mandatory code on the erection of residential lettings boards in Inner NW Leeds which led to a reduction in crime and antisocial behaviour, and improved the appearance of two predominantly student areas in the City.

Council also notes that the majority of agencies involved in letting residential properties do ensure that boards are taken down when reminded.

Council asks the City Executive Board to ask the officers to bring forward proposals for a code of practice on the erection and removal of sales and letting boards in the City, including consideration of both voluntary and mandatory status, and proposals for involving letting and estate agents in the development of an effective code.

(2) Future of the Temple Cowley Pool site – (Proposed by Councillor Dick Wolff, seconded by Councillor Sam Hollick)

Green Group Member – Motion on Notice

In a letter published in the Oxford Mail on June 16th last, Cllr Price said:

'It is . . . untrue to assert that the (Temple Cowley) pool site will be 'turned into a block of flats for Brookes students'. The site is out to tender, and is registered as a Community Asset. We are expecting a proposal from the campaign group for a combined pool and housing development. Other developers will be offering different combinations of housing and leisure/ community uses, but Brookes will not be among them.'

Firstly, Council endorses Core Strategy para 21:

'Planning permission will only be granted for development resulting in the loss of existing sports and leisure facilities . . . if no deficiency is created in the area. Alternative facilities should be provided . . . in areas that have an identified shortage.'

Noting that the Cowley Community Centre is being replaced with a much smaller community room as part of a housing development, other leisure facilities (e.g. the Morris Motors Club, the Parish Halls on Between Towns Road) have been lost, and the Temple Cowley Pools & Leisure complex is being closed, Council 'identifies' a consequent clear 'shortage' of 'sports and leisure' facilities in Cowley/Temple Cowley.

Council therefore welcomes the Leader's commitment, in line with CS21, and agrees to secure continuing public leisure facilities on the Temple Cowley site, regardless of whether the Temple Cowley Pools campaigners succeed in producing a bid within the time available, and - recognising that, in the Council's Sites & Housing Development Plan Document, community use is described as "unlikely to be a viable use for the landowner" - agrees to provide capital funding for the leisure component.

Secondly,

(a) In line with the principles of 'transparency and clarity' in the Council's proposed 'Community Engagement Strategy', which states

'The boundaries of the decision (being consulted upon) must be defined — it should be clear which aspects are being consulted upon, and where decisions have already been made. To avoid creating unrealistic expectations, stakeholders and citizens must be told what they can or cannot influence by responding to engagement, and what the next steps will be.'

- (b) in view of the statement in the Leader's letter that the development of the site has already gone out to tender,
- (c) recognising (under the community engagement principle of 'proportionality') the potential impact of the development particularly on the Temple Cowley area
- (d) recognising that the Sites & Housing Development Plan document allocates the site only for 'residential' development, but that since the adoption of that plan the Pools & Leisure complex have been registered as a Community Asset
- (e) acknowledging that the tender document itself is not commercially sensitive

Council commits to:

- (1) making this tender document public and,
- (2) fully engaging with local residents, using the results as the key determinant in assessing tenders from developers.

Councillor Mohammed Altaf-Khan seconded by councillor Andrew Gant moved the following amendment:

- (a) Delete the paragraph beginning 'Council therefore welcomes the Leader's commitment.....' and replace with the following

'Council therefore welcomes the Leader's commitment , in line with CS21, and asks the Executive Board to investigate how leisure facilities could be provided on this site together with housing, whether or not this is achieved by the bid from the Temple Cowley pools campaigners.'

- (b) Amend the last point (2) to read

'fully engaging with local residents, ensuring that their views are taken into account when assessing tenders from developers.'

Councillor Dick Wolff did not accept the amendment and following a debate Council voted and the amendment was carried.

Following a further debate Council resolved under Procedure Rule 11.19(d) to have a named vote on the amended Motion. The result of the named vote was as follows:

For the amended Motion – Councillors Craig Simmons, Mohammed Altaf-Khan, Elise Benjamin, Ruthi Brandt, Stephen Curran, Jean Fooks, Andrew Gant, Steve Goddard, Michael Gotch, Mick Haines, Sam Hollick, David Thomas, Liz Wade, Ruth Wilkinson, Dick Wolff.

Against the amended Motion – Councillors Mohammed Niaz Abbasi, Rae Humberstone, Laurence Baxter, Mary Clarkson, Colin Cook, Van Coulter,

Roy Darke, James Fry, Pat Kennedy, Ben Lloyd-Shogbesan, Mark Lygo, Sajjad Malik, Michele Paule, Susanne Pressel, Bob Price, Mike Rowley, Gill Sanders, Scott Seamons, Christine Simm, Dee Sinclair, Val Smith, John Tanner, Richard Tarver, Ed Turner, Louise Upton, Oscar Van Nooijen.

With more Councillors voting for the amended Motion than against the amended Motion was adopted as follows:

In a letter published in the Oxford Mail on June 16th last, Cllr Price said:

'It is . . . untrue to assert that the (Temple Cowley) pool site will be 'turned into a block of flats for Brookes students'. The site is out to tender, and is registered as a Community Asset. We are expecting a proposal from the campaign group for a combined pool and housing development. Other developers will be offering different combinations of housing and leisure/ community uses, but Brookes will not be among them.'

Firstly, Council endorses Core Strategy para 21:

'Planning permission will only be granted for development resulting in the loss of existing sports and leisure facilities . . . if no deficiency is created in the area. Alternative facilities should be provided . . . in areas that have an identified shortage.'

Noting that the Cowley Community Centre is being replaced with a much smaller community room as part of a housing development, other leisure facilities (e.g. the Morris Motors Club, the Parish Halls on Between Towns Road) have been lost, and the Temple Cowley Pools & Leisure complex is being closed, Council 'identifies' a consequent clear 'shortage' of 'sports and leisure' facilities in Cowley/Temple Cowley.

Council therefore welcomes the Leader's commitment , in line with CS21, and asks the Executive Board to investigate how leisure facilities could be provided on this site together with housing, whether or not this is achieved by the bid from the Temple Cowley pools campaigners.

Secondly,

(a) In line with the principles of 'transparency and clarity' in the Council's proposed 'Community Engagement Strategy', which states

'The boundaries of the decision (being consulted upon) must be defined — it should be clear which aspects are being consulted upon, and where decisions have already been made. To avoid creating unrealistic expectations, stakeholders and citizens must be told what they can or cannot influence by responding to engagement, and what the next steps will be.'

(b) in view of the statement in the Leader's letter that the development of the site has already gone out to tender,

- (c) recognising (under the community engagement principle of 'proportionality') the potential impact of the development particularly on the Temple Cowley area
- (d) recognising that the Sites & Housing Development Plan document allocates the site only for 'residential' development, but that since the adoption of that plan the Pools & Leisure complex have been registered as a Community Asset
- (e) acknowledging that the tender document itself is not commercially sensitive

Council commits to:

- (1) making this tender document public and,
- (2) fully engaging with local residents, ensuring that their views are taken into account when assessing tenders from developers.

(3) Unmet housing need in Oxford – (Proposed by Councillor Bob Price, seconded by Councillor Scott Seamons)

Labour Group Member – Motion on Notice

Council notes the very significant scale of unmet housing need in the city in the Strategic Housing Market Assessment, and regrets the serious social and economic problems that the pressure on the existing housing stock is creating. It also notes that the result of the South East Regional Plan inquiry in 2007 was a recommendation for a review of the Green Belt designation of the land to the south east of the city with a view to a significant urban extension in that area.

Council calls on the other District Councils and the County Council to take forward the findings of the Housing Market Assessment through the 'duty to cooperate' that is at the heart of the NPPF, and to identify sites that will provide sustainable housing growth on a sufficient scale that will meet the needs of the city and the county for the next two decades.

Following a debate, Council voted and the Motion was adopted.

(4) Developing an ethical investment policy – (Proposed by Councillor Craig Simmons, seconded by Councillor Ruthi Brandt)

Green Group Member – Motion on Notice

At its 24th March 2014 meeting, the Scrutiny Finance Panel considered revising the content of the City Council's current Treasury Management Strategy having previously determined that it did not include a statement on ethical investment.

The Finance Panel have stated that they would like to work towards making recommendations on this as soon as possible. They proposed the following draft Ethical Investment Statement:

The Council will not knowingly invest directly in businesses whose activities and practices pose a risk of serious harm to individuals or groups, or whose activities are inconsistent with the Council's mission and values. This would include, inter alia, avoiding investment in institutions with material links to:

- *human rights abuse (e.g. child labour, political oppression)*
- *environmentally harmful activities (e.g. pollution, destruction of habitat, fossil fuel extraction, refinement companies)*
- *socially harmful activities (e.g. tobacco, gambling)*

With respect to its indirect investments, the Council will work with a ratings agency to develop a workable ethical policy aligned with the above mission and values.

Council welcomes this work by the Finance Panel and asks the City Executive Board to instruct officers to undertake the necessary research, in collaboration with Finance Panel, to develop a workable Ethical Investment Statement along the lines set out in the draft proposed above.

Council notes that this draft includes a recognition of the need to divest from companies involved in the extraction and refinement of fossil fuels.

Councillor Ed Turner seconded by Councillor Bob Price moved the following amendment:

- (a) To delete all of the words in the second paragraph and replace with the following:

Council welcomes this work by the Finance Panel and asks the City Executive Board to include the statement below in the next iteration of the Treasury Management Strategy, and encourages the City Executive Board to follow these principles from now on, in the absence of a formal policy:

- (b) To add at the end of the bullet points in the third paragraph the following

These principles will be applied to all investments made by the Council.

- (c) To delete the fourth, fifth and sixth paragraphs and replace with the following:

Council notes and endorses the encouragement made by the Leader of the Council to the Oxfordshire County Council pension fund to divest in fossil fuels.

Councillor Jean Fooks seconded by Councillor Mohammed Altaf-Khan moved the following amendment:

To delete all of the words in the final paragraph and replace with the following words:

Council notes that while this draft suggests total disinvestment from companies involved in the extraction and refinement of fossil fuels, it fails to encourage investment in alternative energy sources, which is essential before this disinvestment is viable. Any Ethical Investment Statement should include this caveat.

Councillor Craig Simmons did not accept the amendments proposed by Councillors Ed Turner and Jean Fooks.

Following a debate Council voted:

- (1) To adopt the amendment in the name of Ed Turner
- (2) Not to adopt the amendment in the name of Councillor Jean Fooks
- (3) To adopt the amended Motion as follows:

At its 24th March 2014 meeting, the Scrutiny Finance Panel considered revising the content of the City Council's current Treasury Management Strategy having previously determined that it did not include a statement on ethical investment.

Council welcomes this work by the Finance Panel and asks the City Executive Board to include the statement below in the next iteration of the Treasury Management Strategy, and encourages the City Executive Board to follow these principles from now on, in the absence of a formal policy:

The Council will not knowingly invest directly in businesses whose activities and practices pose a risk of serious harm to individuals or groups, or whose activities are inconsistent with the Council's mission and values. This would include, inter alia, avoiding direct investment in institutions with material links to:

- ♣ - human rights abuse (e.g. child labour, political oppression)
- ♣ - environmentally harmful activities (e.g. pollution, destruction of habitat, fossil fuels)
- ♣ - socially harmful activities (e.g. tobacco, gambling)

These principles will be applied to all investments made by the Council.

Council notes and endorses the encouragement made by the Leader of the Council to the Oxfordshire County Council pension fund to disinvest in fossil fuels.

(5) Privatisation of the Probation Service – (Proposed by Councillor John Tanner)

Labour Group Member – Motion on Notice

Oxford City Council considers the planned privatisation of 70% of the Probation Service as reckless, dangerous and costly. It is likely to increase re-offending in Oxford, could compromise the safety of local residents and ignores the expertise of the local probation service.

Coming hard on the heels of the savage cuts in Legal Aid this attack on the Probation Service underlines the Coalition's lack of interest in tackling crime. We call on the Government to withdraw its proposals and negotiate with the National Association of Probation officers for a sensible way forward.

Councillor John Tanner's Motion on notice was not considered as the time allowed for Motions on Notice by the constitution had lapsed.

37. MATTERS EXEMPT FROM PUBLICATION

The meeting started at 5.00 pm and ended at 9.35 pm

Park Pitt – Address to Council

Wildflower Wipeout

Every year we are treated to the glories of the English spring – birds sing, the leaves come out, the sap rises and our spirits soar, so too the wildflowers spring up, festooning the verges and green spaces still remaining in our city, yellow, white, purple, red, burrs to bells, petals to peas, a multicultural, multi-coloured riot of life of every shape and hue, their names redolent of beauty - marigolds, poppies, cinquefoil, pennywort, hair's tail grass, dandelions, bluebells and brambles and that sticky stuff.

The butterflies flutter, tortoiseshells, the painted ladies, Blues, in a complex ecosystem that brings life to the city and joy to our hearts.

Then along come the Oxford City Council mowers and smash it all up, yes it's the annual May Day Massacre, and this wonderful effusion of life and joy is razed to the ground in a senseless and brutal destruction and the garden of Eden is reduced to ugly grass.

With each successive cutting there are less seeds and less flowers next year, and, as only the grass survives this savage and wholly pointless assault, can we wonder it is seen as a mess?

Can anyone here explain to me what is so attractive about grass cut less than an inch of its life? Monotonous, one dimensional, an artificial ecological desert almost devoid of life and its sustenance, with all the charm and subtlety of a freshly scrubbed lavatory - and yet so appear our verges and too much of our parks.

What is this Victorian impulsion to tame nature, cut back and kill, impose order on "chaos", to stake our claim, as if nature were our enemy, stay back foul fiend! This is ours! Keep Out!

Is this a reflection of us? Is that really who we are? Is that it?

We would rather dominate a desert than share paradise.

How did this happen? The officers I have spoken to are dedicated, hard-working and helpful.

Lets start with the Green Spaces Strategy, misnamed as it is not "a plan of action" but just aims. It scarcely mentions biodiversity, and then in the context of SSIs. Verges are not even considered green space, the precious wildflowers are simply to be tidied up along with the bins by Streetscene.

Our lips drip with the cant of the new church of Green, ecology, environment and emission reduction, yet there are two ways to cut carbon – reduce production, or increase absorption, so why this war on wildlife?

If we love and treasure our wildflowers and the birds, butterflies and all creatures great and small that depend on their habitat, why are we destroying it with such misplaced zeal?

What can we do?

Lets start by adopting the recommendations of Alan Titchmarsh and The Charity Plantlife that demand that all councils should not cut any verges prior to the end of August and before the end of March.

But he is talking about 100's of miles of rural verges in Oxfordshire alone, but in the urban context, with so little green space left, these are much more precious, and we must go much further to save our ecological heritage.

Lets rip up the grass that has become dominant due to decades of mismanagement.

Bring in the ecologists, horticultural experts, - the scientific jury is out as to the degree to which exotic species compete with native ones. Involve the Friends of this, that and the other, let low traffic areas in parks return to nature, and provide grants for planting.

In Headington for example, engage the Oxford Preservation Trust, Ruskin College, Headington High ask them to review their mowing and planting strategies, there are large private green spaces in Headington where scarcely a single wildflower exists among hectares.

Lets reduce the energy inefficient, gas guzzling co2 producing, water absorbing, ecological deserts called lawns, lets plant according to ecological value and not just ornamentation.

Lets say farewell to the silent spring, senselessly smashed.

I dream of a Headington where Cuckoo Lane is once again a riot of colour and a haven for wildlife, a walk of choice, where the verges of Dunstan and Osler Road flower late into the year amongst the buzz of insects, and children pick posies in Bury Knowle Park and take them proudly home to their mummies and daddies, where wildflowers are regarded as our friends and companions, to be kept close, nurtured and cherished in a city we should not call just our own.

Thank You.

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Oxford City Council Must Engage with the East Oxford Community

Much has happened since I addressed Council on the last occasion the public was permitted to entertain you. We've had another local council election, and some councillors have left, some new ones have arrived and some of you I see still remain. I thought you would all like either an update on the Save Temple Cowley Pools Campaign, or an introduction. And, on behalf of the people in the community of East Oxford, I have a request for all councillors.

So, for those just joining, the least you need to know. Temple Cowley Pools and Gym is classed as a 'wet/dry' leisure centre; it is not just a swimming pool. It has a 25m competition swimming pool, but also a diving pool, a learner pool, a steam room and sauna suite, an exercise studio and a gymnasium. You, Oxford City Council, have decided that you wish to close it, and build what is only a 25m swimming pool in Blackbird Leys – you call this a replacement – we, all non-Labour supporters (and even lately some Labour ones), recognise that it is not.

You've said that Temple Cowley Pools is too costly to run, that its carbon emissions are too high, that it is old and at "risk of catastrophic failure". We have, over the last five years, demonstrated repeatedly, mostly using your own information, that none of this is true.

Maintenance costs are under £100,000 a year, the facility remains even now the most energy efficient centre of its type, it is barely halfway through its expected lifespan having been rebuilt in 1987, and a recent visit by a structural engineer attested to it not being about to fall down in any way anytime soon.

This is not an issue on which reasonable people can reasonably differ – it is not and cannot be a matter of opinion. The facts, and we've presented them time and again, are compelling, whether or not you have chosen to ignore them. And along with the indomitable will of all the people across Oxford and beyond who have contributed so much to this Campaign, this means that only one reasonable conclusion is possible to reasonable people – that Temple Cowley Pools should remain open.

What may have been true once was your original stated aim of needing £1.5m from the sale of Temple Cowley Pools in order to fund the construction of the new pool in Blackbird Leys. Even that is now redundant – you stated last year that the new scheme was completely funded, and at the last City Executive Board it was revealed that you are running at a £5m surplus. So you have no need to sell yet another asset that by rights belongs to the people, and which you are supposed to hold in trust on their behalf.

Nonetheless, on the 21st January this year, you decided to put the Temple Cowley Pools site up for sale. The plot, incidentally, includes the car park for the adjacent library, so you have to wonder what beloved asset will go on sale next.

The Campaign reaction was considered and measured; should we continue? After extending the life of the Pools by three years was there any point in carrying on. You obviously know the answer; we of course continued, and we registered Temple Cowley Pools as an asset of

community value. The Council, in recognising this, acknowledges that the centre is of value to the local community, something that is clearly self-evident.

But that meant that an appropriate organisation could exercise a Right to Bid under the Localism Act legislation. So we did exactly that by forming a community interest company. We have until October 7th this year to put in a bid. You can then evaluate that bid and decide whether the community, the public you are here to serve, deserve to take over operating the centre, or whether you will sell to a property developer who will of course make a tidy profit from the transaction. In contrast, the community company is 'not-for-profit' – there are no shareholders to benefit financially, no well-paid employees and directors who can expect to gain; all profits, or 'surplus' as it is known, will go back into the centre, and/or back to public funds controlled by the Council.

It was very encouraging when I spoke at the last Council meeting and you debated the seventh petition from the general public asking you to co-operate with us, that so many councillors of all political persuasion announced their support and interest in our proposal. We have had encouragement from councillors since then, even I have to report very recently from a CEB member.

It is unfortunate then, that your council officers do not seem prepared to offer similar support. And here lies the problem for which I have come to you this evening to ask for your help. We have asked to meet with council officers to discuss our proposal; we have asked for the information we need to put together a credible, financially viable and acceptable proposal. This is a community group asking for help and information, not a commercial private developer experienced and used to making a profit out of the sale of public sector assets.

I have to report that we have been met with refusal, delay and a continuing lack of information. We have a deadline set by you of October 7th, which gets ever nearer; delay and lack of information and active co-operation from the council severely prejudices our bid. This we believe is both unfair and inequitable. So I am here this evening not only to provide an update, but to ask for your help, building on the encouragement and support you have provided in recent months; please speak with your council officers and ensure that they engage with us to provide the information that we need. Our plans to develop Temple Cowley Pools have met with overwhelming support as we consult with the public. Their support is being shown yet again through a petition – our eighth, yet another record for the Campaign and a record we wish we didn't have. And another record: speed. In the space of a week we have collected over 700 signatures towards the 1,500 needed to enable you to debate this matter. We have made it clear time and again that the people want Temple Cowley Pools kept open even if the Council doesn't. Please, collectively, work together and with the Council officers to help us to make our case.

Sarah Lasenby – Address to Council

Temple Cowley Pools campaign

To all City Councillors

I have been helping with the Campaign to Save Temple Cowley Pools and want to share my experience of the local people's responses on the issue.

In the past, when I was asking people if they would like to sign a petition (number 7) to help save Temple Cowley Pools, I have been surprised to find some people running up and asking to sign. Of the other people I spoke with, a very large number of people want to sign as soon as they know what it is about.

Recently there has been misinformation in local press and some have said, 'oh but its too late' or, 'I thought it had been decided to keep it'.

More recently we have been showing people the proposed plan as to how the pool and leisure centre could be retained; a space for a Community Centre added and flats built, 50 % of which would be for social housing.

On the 21st June when it was the 80th anniversary of Florence Park Fête I was outside the main gates and talking with people as they came in. [Only one couple did not want TCP saved.] All the rest were very keen to keep it and willing to stop and listen to my explanation of the plans that could be developed at TCP. They were really enthusiastic about the possibility of this plan becoming a reality and saving Temple Cowley Pool.

Those who came from Rose Hill were particularly unhappy as they would need to take two buses to reach the centre in Blackbird Leys. Local people see the closing of TCP as a significant deterioration in the provision for people in this area and wonder what else will be taken away.

I felt very touched by them and sad when I realised that this Council has not, and is not listening to what the people in this area want. How can these people be heard ? The Council have the solution in their hands and if they do not make sure that the leisure provision at Temple Cowley is retained then they will have done a great injustice. TCP's proposal is your chance to get it right after so many years of not responding appropriately.

The people's needs are what matter and you should now be listening and acting on what you hear.

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Jane Alexander – Address to Council

£108 million for Oxford

BBC radio Oxford is telling of £108 million coming to Oxford from central government to be spent on various important causes.

Radio Ox is asking what we, the people of Oxford, want to see money spent on. Some of this money should be spent on making sure that the Save Temple Cowley Pools Community Interest Company can buy and take over the running of the facility for the good of all the people of Oxford.

The Council is not talking to SaveTCP CIC and only talking with their 'preferred bidder'.

How can SaveTCP CIC who have Asset of Community Value Status, prepare their bid on behalf of all of us, without vital information?

Anyone who wants to buy anything will ask the seller questions, about what they are thinking of buying and expect answers.

I believe Oxford City Council have given away other Oxford City land and premises to private developers, such as the Northway and Cowley Community Centres, and the massive land at Barton.

All of this land which belongs to Oxford residents has been given away for free. Yet the council wants to 'sell' TCP!

Why is the TCP site not yet being offered to the SaveTCP CIC for free on the same understanding, that social housing is provided too?

Of course as some of you know the 50% figure for social housing at Barton has now been dropped to 40% so yet more of these homes will be occupied, not by Oxford people but by others who want to live here increasing the population and not doing as much for the 1,800 Oxford people who do need social housing.

The SaveTCP CIC is working for the benefit of all the people of Oxford who need and want to use health and exercise facilities.

It is to the benefit of all that people take care of their health, indeed we are encouraged to do so yet in Cowley and Blackbird Leys, our facilities are being cut by half.

Some sites where people want to put housing are blocked from being granted planning permission on the grounds of not enough car parking space not being available.

Yet the Barns Road Community Centre was granted planning permission with NO CAR PARKING ALLOWED! On the grounds that this would be a car free site! (Apart from the one 'disabled' flat with its own parking space).

So 39 dwellings, half social and half private are expected NOT to have cars. And if they do have cars the council office advice given was "that they can park them in front of other houses in nearby roads"!

"Thanks very much" say the people of Cowley to whom the Council is not listening!

Let's have some openness and transparency in the City Council!

At the Carnival, people seeing both the SaveTCP mermaid and SaveTCP CIC stall, showed how much massive support there still is to save TCP!

Let's listen to the sensible, intelligent and deserving people of Cowley and Oxford and stop these hair brained schemes.

If possible, let's use just some of this money where the people want and need it to be spent.

£13 million on a new pool at Blackbird Leys which could have been beautifully built for £4 to 5 million with an ASA approved company.

2,500 signatures on an *online* petition to re-time Didcot Power station demolition.

Over 21,000 signatures on 'real paper' petition to Keep TCPools yet the Council has so far refused to listen.

Ask yourself, why?

Ask the people what they want, then listen and act on their behalf.

At the last council meeting there was a petition from the people asking that you work with us to facilitate our needs and aims. This has not been forthcoming.

I ask that you now honour your words and ensure that the council provide the information required in full, without further delay.

We want to keep our TCPools and Fitness Centre and be able to have a new replacement community centre on the site as proposed by the SaveTCP Community Interest Company.

Please do the right thing and make this happen.

Alasdair De Voil – Address to Council

Oxford Visitor Information Centre

This is a follow up to previous request that the full Council address how and why it is appropriate to continue its funding of a company which is not delivering a fair, transparent and impartial service viz. Visit Oxfordshire Ltd which runs Oxford visitor information centre and its associated websites on behalf of the city and county councils.

In my last address at full council, Cllr Colin Cook stated that by nature of the council's partnership agreement with Visit Oxfordshire Ltd, "the council is not legally responsible for the visitor centre". However, after investigating the circumstances of that rather suspicious looking partnership agreement, I learned that the Council never followed its own procurement handbook to tender this service as it's claimed and that the Council never actually procured the tourist info services. As that's the case, consequently, we should conclude that in fact the city Council is in fact responsible on some level for the visitor info services partnerered (including circumstances and complaints about how info is presented at the visitor info centre and on its website).

It seems very odd for the council to continue funding a company by over 200K p.a. which is the object of repeated vociferous complaints made by the kinds of businesses such as my own which one would presume should be benefitting most from it - but we don't. Instead, our livelihoods are deliberately being sabotaged and undermined by the way in which the visitor centre services are presented. This includes FACTS like following:

- a) the visitor centre staff do not present impartial info on Oxford tours available. Instead, they simply market and sell their own preferred so-called 'Oxford official walking tour'.
- b) the centre sign, its counter, its windows all present only the official tour, except for one advert for the independent ghost tour (which they are happy to market as it doesn't conflict with the timing of selling their own preferred tour)
- c) The website has over 200 pages marketing only the official tour and in most brochures and in group travel leads, they nearly always only mention the official tour. This despite fact that the official tour is not a paid up partner tour. Meanwhile, businesses like mine have to pay from a minimum fee of £390 upwards pa and only get their info published on part of one page. That's 0.5% of available page views!
- d) The supposedly independent guild of blue badge guides will never respond to, nor will Visit Oxfordshire Ltd, to answer what is the status of the relationship between these two organisations and why they get such preferential status, including having special payments made on their behalf by Visit Oxfordshire Ltd to Visit England, which we don't get paid for us.

Yet all my previous attempts to get the council to review and intervene to ensure that circumstances make for a fairer marketplace have been ignored. This is not helping

struggling small traders like myself and it is misinforming the public too. Neither does it make sense to continue funding such a company when there are public cuts. Will the council take seriously the need to address these complaints?

CPRE Oxfordshire Address to Oxford City Full Council, 14 July 2014

CPRE believes we need more housing in Oxfordshire - affordable housing for local people.

The trouble is the unpalatable truth - that increasing land supply will not deliver this. Oxfordshire's attractiveness, and proximity to London, means that housing *demand* in the county is virtually limitless and house prices will remain out of reach for those most in need. To meet genuine housing *need*, we will need a different approach probably based on significant investment in social housing.

Meanwhile, CPRE believes we are currently facing not just a debate over housing numbers, but a fight for the future of Oxfordshire. What is the vision for the county?

Do we stay as the most rural county in the South East, a county of small village communities and market towns, with a historic city of character at its heart? Not set in stone, but growing organically to meet the needs of local people.

Or, alternatively, do we become an overflow county for London and the Thames Valley, another Birmingham perhaps, actively seeking to bring more and more people into the area?

Some time ago it seems, the leaders of our various local councils in conjunction with the unelected Oxfordshire Local Enterprise Partnership effectively decided, behind closed doors, that it was the latter vision they were after, keen to pursue a policy (in line with the government) of economic growth at all costs.

Out of this has flowed a whole series of announcements, all presented as 'done deals':

- The Oxford & Oxfordshire City Deal - no public consultation.
- The Oxfordshire Strategic Economic Plan, which proposes creating 80,000 new jobs in a county of full employment - unlike previous county plans, no public consultation and no Public Inquiry.
- And the Oxfordshire Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA) - no public consultation. Heavily influenced by the draft Strategic Economic Plan, the SHMA proposes 100,000 new houses in the county within just 17 years.

This is roughly double the previous estimate and is the equivalent of a 40% increase in every town & settlement in the county.

These figures are horrifying.

They are not about meeting local need but about catering for the influx of people to meet those 80,000 notional new jobs.

It completely fails to take into account that increasing land supply will not make housing more affordable - no builder is going to build at this rate.

What it will do is allow developers to cherry pick the most attractive sites, putting our Green Belt, our Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty and other greenfield sites at risk.

The impacts for Oxford City

The impacts of all these decisions are now starting to be felt in terms of planning for Oxford:

- 1) The growth plan south of Grenoble Road, looking to include both a science park extension and houses in the Green Belt
- 2) The significantly enlarged Northern Gateway Application, which proposes to take out a piece of the Green Belt
- 3) The planning application for the bioescalator and other developments coming through on Old Road Campus and at the Churchill Hospital site.

All of these will add significantly to infrastructure demands on the City in terms of transport, parking, education, health etc. So, whilst Government funding may be available to support some of this, it will not solve existing problems, but only help to offset a little of the increased impact from expansion.

What do we want Councillors to do?

1. Ask for a Public Inquiry into the Oxfordshire Strategic Economic Plan so that all these issues can be explored in a proper democratic forum
2. Reconsider the Strategic Housing Market Assessment figures, which are deeply flawed as shown by an independent report *Unsound & Unsustainable: Why the SHMA will increase greenfield use but not meet housing needs* - commissioned by CPRE and available via our website
3. Ensure that development sites in Oxford are prioritised for housing, rather than employment (which creates additional housing need)
4. Direct development away from the Green Belt, which provides a much needed resource for all the people of Oxfordshire and protects the historic setting of the City itself.

To: Council

Date: 29th September 2014

Report of: Head of Policy, Culture and Communications.

Title of Report: Draft Community Engagement Policy Statement 2014 – 17.

Summary and Recommendations

Purpose of report: To seek approval from Council to adopt the draft Community Engagement Policy Statement 2014 – 17 recommended by the City Executive Board on 3rd July 2014. This replaces the Consultation Strategy 2010 – 13 as part of the Policy Framework.

Key decision? No

Executive lead member: Councillor Christine Simm, Executive Board Member, Culture and Communities

Policy Framework: Corporate Plan, Strong Active Communities

Recommendation: Council is recommended to approve the draft Community Engagement Policy Statement 2014 – 17 for adoption within the Policy Framework.

Appendix 1: Draft Community Engagement Policy Statement 2014 – 17

Appendix 2: Consultation Results – draft Community Engagement Plan

Appendix 3: Risk Register

Appendix 4: Equalities Impact Assessment Screening

Appendix 5: Consultation Toolkit 2014

Introduction

1. Oxford City Council has a long track record of working with local people to build strong and active communities, and its commitment to community engagement predates, outlives and goes much further than legislative requirements.
2. The purpose of the new Community Engagement Policy Statement is to provide a framework for how the Council engages with its residents and communities to develop a greater understanding of their needs, and to increase the level and quality of involvement in the decisions that affect their lives.
3. The policy statement includes:
 - an analysis of how demographic and technological factors impact community engagement;
 - the principles that underpin the Council's community engagement activities; and
 - the Council's methods of community engagement, including the role of Councillors.
4. As an overarching principle, the City Council believes that services must be delivered within a framework of standards where people have access to high quality services regardless of where they live.
5. Using a re-purposed set of principles of community engagement the policy statement describes how the different forms of community engagement activities relate to the principles. The principles are: flexibility, proportionality, transparency and clarity, timeliness, feedback and inclusiveness and accessibility.

Development of the policy statement

6. The new Community Engagement Policy Statement develops the "Engaging Our Communities" themes already set out in the Council's Corporate Plan 2014-18. It references principles and methodologies that were included in the Council's Consultation Strategy and Toolkit 2010-2013, and it takes account of the significant developments that have occurred in neighbourhood working.
7. Benchmarking was carried out across nine local authorities. Principles of consultation and community engagement were drawn from sources including the Cabinet Office, where they were used to help re-define the principles contained in the revised draft policy statement.
8. The Community Engagement Policy Statement has been developed with Consultation Officers and the Communities and Neighbourhoods Manager, with input from service areas' Consultation Officers, and the Lead Member for Youth and Communities.

9. Public consultation was carried out from 20th December 2013 to 31st March 2014. Over 1300 invitations were sent to residents who have registered an interest in community consultations, as well as leaders of Residents' Groups and minority ethnic groups. 48 individual and three group submissions were received. The full results of consultation can be found in Appendix 2.
10. High level responses from the consultation show that:
- 89% of responders agree or strongly agree with the principles.
 - 100% wanted to be involved in decision making through a variety of methods, but the main barriers to participation were lack of time, lack of information, and concern that feedback was not being taken seriously.
 - People want to be more engaged in planning and housing decisions, in addition to a broader range of topics
 - The majority of responders want to see the more commitment to the principles of engagement reflected in the Community Engagement Policy Statement, such as accountability and inclusiveness.

The Policy Statement

The policy statement includes the following elements:

- Understanding communities
- Principles of community engagement
- Flexibility and proportionality
- Transparency and clarity
- Timeliness
- Feedback
- Inclusivity and accessibility
- The way forward

Managing and Monitoring

11. In parallel with the development of the Community Engagement Policy Statement, actions planning has been completed and incorporated into Service Plans for Policy Culture and Communications and Leisure, Parks and Communities, and will be managed through routine performance management processes.
12. Key success indicators for the Community Engagement Policy Statement have been developed. A formal Service Area performance measure tracks feedback on consultation activities, with targets set for the length of time to publish consultation results. In addition inclusiveness is monitored wherever the demographic information is available.

13. The policy statement will be reviewed once per year to ensure that it is still current.

Level of Risk

14. See Appendix 3 for the Risk Register.

Climate Change/ environmental impact

15. The Community Engagement Policy Statement offers an opportunity for the City Council to reduce its carbon footprint and consumption of paper by encouraging the use of digital technologies.
16. It is recognised that this needs to be balanced with our principles of inclusiveness and accessibility, which will require that some people will continue to require non-digital methods of engagement.

Equalities impact

17. The Community Engagement Policy Statement is based upon our principles of engagement, which includes inclusiveness and accessibility. This is defined as: "the participation of all stakeholders who have an interest in or who would be affected by a specific decision, including groups that are sometimes difficult to engage such as young people, older people, minority groups, and people with disabilities".
18. See Appendix 4 for the Initial Equalities Impact Assessment.

Financial Implications

19. There are no immediate direct financial implications of the Community Engagement Policy Statement as it reflects programmes that are funded within existing budgets.

Legal Implications

20. While there is not a statutory requirement to have a community engagement policy statement, there is new guidance from the Cabinet Office on Consultation Principles. Local Authorities should adopt those principles to engage stakeholders in policy and legislative developments. The Guidance is intended to improve the way public bodies consult by emphasising a more "proportionate and targeted" approach, so that the type and scale of engagement is proportionate to the potential impacts of the proposal under consideration.

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1. Executive Summary

This policy statement describes how Oxford City Council engages its communities in decision-making. It builds on and supersedes the Consultation Strategy 2010-13 and takes account of the significant developments that have occurred in neighbourhood and partnership working in recent times. It develops the “Engaging Our Communities” themes already set out in the Council’s Corporate Plan 2014-18, and while the Corporate Plan describes what we intend to do in support of this priority, the Community Engagement Policy Statement sets out the framework for how we will do it.

2. Purpose of this policy statement

The purpose of this new three-year Community Engagement Policy Statement is to provide a framework for how the Council engages with its residents and communities to develop a greater understanding of their needs, and to increase the level and quality of involvement in the decisions that affect their lives.

This policy statement aims to clarify:

- how demographic changes in Oxford impact on our approach to community engagement
- the principles underpinning the Council’s community engagement activities
- the different activities involved in community engagement and the purposes of these activities
- progress that has been made so far in different areas of community engagement and our plans for the future.

3. Introduction

Oxford City Council is committed to building a world-class city for all its citizens. Working with our communities to build channels for dialogue and engagement is a key part of the Council’s plan to enhance the relationship between citizens, their local communities and those who they elect to represent them.

The Council believes that building stronger communities and supporting community engagement in decision-making are mutually supportive, and that stronger communities and engaged citizens will participate more with the City’s decision-making processes.

In October 2013 the Cabinet Office issued guidance on Consultation Principles¹, which sets out the principles that public bodies should adopt when attempting to engage stakeholders.

¹https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/255180/Consultation-Principles-Oct-2013.pdf downloaded 1 May 2014.

The guidance proposes a proportionate and targeted approach, so that the type and scale of engagement is proportionate to the potential impacts of the proposal under consideration, and the ability to shape them. These principles are reflected in the City Council's long-standing approach to community engagement and are reflected in this policy statement.

4. Background

Oxford City Council has a long and successful track record of working with local people to build strong and active communities - community engagement is at the heart of how the Council does business. Examples include: working in the 1990s to regenerate east Oxford; engaging with the Prince's Foundation and the people of Blackbird Leys to improve the quality of life there; working with local people to remodel play areas across the city and engaging local people in Rose Hill to develop a new community centre; and working with Cowley Road Works to revive the popular Cowley Road Carnival.

The City Council engages with its residents and communities in a wide range of different ways. These include:

- Engagement through ward councillors. Oxford City Council is led by its elected members - they set the Council's policy and strategic direction. Oxford's 48 city councillors also provide a direct link between local residents and the City Council's decision-making mechanisms. One of their most important roles is explaining the community to the council by being the voice for local people
- The Customer Contact Strategy sets out how our customers can be involved in shaping and improving our front-line services. We want to know what is important to them in their contact with us and to understand how they wish to access services
- The Statement of Community Involvement describes how residents are involved in planning decisions at the city-wide and very local level. The Planning department is improving its consultation process. We want all planning development in our city to be of the highest quality. We also want to expand the scope and effectiveness of our consultation arrangements and to put collaboration at the heart of our planning processes. Improvements include allowing more time between project inception and commencement dates as a way of improving consultation with all interested parties
- Engagement with tenants and leaseholders. Tenants and leaseholders co-exist in areas of mixed tenure and solving problems and driving new initiatives must involve all relevant groups. The City Council's model of engagement has been developed with the national Tenant Participation Advisory Service (TPAS) and involves:
 - creating a structure which enables tenants and leaseholders to be involved in ways that suit their needs
 - developing training and support opportunities
 - ensuring transparency so that tenants and leaseholders are able to see the difference that their engagement has made
- The opportunity to comment on all policy and strategy documents, including the Corporate Plan and Annual Budget that are produced by Oxford City Council.

This Community Engagement Policy Statement focuses on ways that local people can further contribute to decision-making in their local communities. Flexibility, a desire to find

the most appropriate approach to each issue or community group, underpins the approaches to engagement set out above. Flexibility also plays a key role in our approach to community engagement.

5. Understanding our communities

Oxford's annual population churn of 25%, around 5,000 houses of multiple occupation, and a culturally diverse population present challenges in terms of sustained and effective community engagement. A thorough understanding of the city's demographics – city-wide and at ward and neighbourhood level – lies at the heart of our approach.

Oxford appears to be a thriving city with many opportunities for work and leisure and, for many residents, this is the daily reality of their lives. However, there are major inequalities in life chances and life expectancy in our city.

The Index of Multiple Deprivation 2010 ranks Oxford 131st out of 354, placing it in the top half most deprived local authority areas in England. Of 85 areas in Oxford, 12 are among the 20% most deprived areas in England. These areas, in the south and east of the city, experience multiple levels of deprivation - low skills, low incomes and relatively high levels of crime; the majority of the Council's 7,800 tenants live in these areas. Men and women from the more deprived areas can expect to live six years less than those in the more affluent areas. While 43% of Oxford residents have degree-level qualifications or above 14% have no qualifications at all.

In terms of ethnicity, Oxford has a diverse population. In 2011, 22% of the population were from black or minority ethnic backgrounds, compared to an England average of 13%. An additional 14% of residents were of white but non-British backgrounds. The largest non-white ethnic groups represented are Pakistani, Indian, Black African, 'other Asian' and Chinese ethnic groups. The child population is considerably more ethnically diverse than the older population and as a result the population is expected to become more ethnically diverse in the future.

In 2011, 16% of Oxford residents said their main language was not English; this is twice the national average. After English, the most common main languages were Polish and Chinese languages, followed by French, Portuguese and Spanish. South Asian languages - Urdu, Bengali and Panjabi – also made up a large proportion.

A significant proportion of the population is youthful. This is in part because of the student population; 24% of the city's adult population are students compared to an England average of 6%. Overall, 32% of the city's population are aged between 18 and 29 compared to an England average of 16%.

Oxford's high house prices make it one of the least affordable places in the country. The percentage of households who own their home is relatively low in Oxford - 47% compared to 63% in England. The percentage of households renting their home in the private sector is high - 28% in Oxford compared with 17% in England. Over the last decade the number of

households renting their home in the private sector rose by almost 50%, from nearly 11,000 households in 2001 to nearly 16,000 households in 2011. One in five Oxford residents lives in a house of multiple occupation. More than 6,000 people are on our waiting list for social housing.

6. Our principles of community engagement

The principles underpinning our approach to community engagement derive directly from the city's demographics.

Oxford is an extremely diverse city where multiple and changing concepts of community overlap. There are communities of place - people living in geographically distinct areas of the city; communities of identity - people from black and ethnic minority groups, older people, younger people, people with disabilities, religious groups, and gay and lesbian groups; and communities of interest –such as students, business and academic visitors, council tenants, allotment holders, cyclists, and theatre-goers, or people who come together to use services such as parks, roads, community buildings or transport.

In the light of this high level of diversity, the need to maintain and strengthen community cohesion, and the desire to engage people in decisions that impact on them, the City Council has adopted a strategy that operates at two levels.

As an overarching principle, the City Council believes that services must be delivered within a framework of standards where people have access to high quality services regardless of where they live. This means that the majority of services should be designed, delivered and reviewed on a city-wide basis. Services will, of course, reflect the different needs of areas across the city and resource allocation will vary accordingly. However, these variations should be seen in the context of the Council's vision for the whole city, which is set out in the Corporate Plan and the budget approved by Council.

Community engagement is about ensuring that elected councillors are aware of and engaged with the views of individuals, community groups, and other stakeholders. It is not intended to enable minority interests to overrule the best interests of the wider community and the city as a whole. Community engagement supports, informs and improves decision-making by elected councillors, but it does not replace it; the responsibility for the final decision on any issue that involves the Council's resources rests with the city's elected councillors.

However, within this framework of standards, arrangements for community engagement must be sufficiently flexible to enable people to engage in ways that suit them. In this regard, one size will definitely not fit all.

Within this context our principles of community engagement are:

1. Flexibility
2. Proportionality
3. Transparency and clarity

4. Timeliness
5. Feedback
6. Inclusiveness and accessibility

Our approach to community engagement contributes directly to the City Council's ambition to build a world class city for all its citizens. Many Oxford residents are highly articulate and very skilled at getting their points of view heard and their voices are always welcome. However, in areas of deprivation where challenges are greatest, the capacity for community involvement is often lower. Oxford City Council wants to open up more opportunities for engagement with people living in the more deprived areas of the city whose voices otherwise might not so easily be heard.

7. Flexibility

Successful engagement requires a range of mechanisms to build and sustain a conversation with the community, with a broad or narrow audience as the issue requires. Broad principles and general ideas could be consulted on across a wide audience while the details of implementation might require input from a much smaller group

This flexible approach to community engagement means that lessons can be learned and acted on quickly. For some people, public meetings are a popular method of community engagement, but for others it is either not appealing or impractical. For example, a recent consultation about tower block refurbishment was scheduled to be carried out at a meeting at local community centre. Turnout at the meeting was poor so officers carried out intensive door-knocking to gather feedback. A subsequent successful engagement activity took place in the tower block lobby.

The diverse and overlapping communities in the city have been referred to earlier in this report. People often see themselves as belonging to one community of place and one or more communities of interest, and this means that the City Council must provide appropriate methods of engagement. For example:

- communities of place could be engaged through Area Forums, Neighbourhood Forums or Community Partnerships
- communities of identity could be engaged through the work of the community development team and other officers and members given special responsibility for managing these relations
- communities of interest could be engaged through the delivery of services that they best relate to, such as sports and leisure, culture, or housing.

Effective engagement means identifying the kinds of audience that need to be involved at each stage of the process on any given issue. This requires a good understanding of the networks of interest and expertise in the area. Some examples of the range of engagement forums are described below.

Area Forums

Area forums are informal meetings held across six geographical areas of the city, providing an opportunity for local people to discuss priority issues for the community and agree actions with other residents, councillors, city council teams and other partners.

Area Forums are sponsored and supported by the Council, and are free to adapt arrangements to best meet their own needs. The purpose of Area Forums is to:

- identify key issues and priorities to feed into city-wide service and budget planning processes
- enable local councillors to play a central role in drawing up community plans, which provides an opportunity to link up service-planning more closely with local needs and aspirations

- provide a space in which residents and community groups can work with mainstream service providers – health, education, police, businesses and the voluntary sectors – to ensure that local services are responsive to community needs
- comment on policy documents and proposals that affect the area
- enable local issues and interests to be discussed with local members.

Oxford City Council is:

- providing each Councillor with an annual budget of £1,500 for small projects that link to the priorities emerging from forum discussions and other local consultations
- exploring ways to ensure that all of our communities, including the more ‘hidden’ groups, have the opportunity to engage with them
- providing an Area Support Officer to arrange and publicise meetings, and Senior Management support for each Area Forum.

Community Partnerships

Community Partnerships have been established in those areas of the city which have been identified as being in greatest need: Barton, The Leys, Rose Hill, Wood Farm, Northway, Cutteslowe and Littlemore. They are not decision-making bodies but provide a focus for local action and engagement on local issues.

A neighbourhood management approach is being implemented in these areas to develop a stronger sense of community. It involves residents working in partnership with mainstream service providers, the local authority, councillors, businesses and the voluntary and community sectors to address local priorities and make local services more responsive to the needs of their area.

It is a process which recognises the uniqueness of each place; allowing the people that live, work or provide services in it to build on its strengths and address its specific challenges.

Community plans are being developed in these areas so that there is co-ordinated action to address local issues and services can respond more effectively to local needs.

Oxford City Council is:

- Providing a Neighbourhood Locality Officer who supports and develops the partnership approach and co-ordinates bi-monthly or quarterly meetings and sub-groups to work on specific topic areas e.g. young people, housing and environment.
- Providing Community Development Officer support to engage with residents and develop local projects and support capacity building.
- Grant funding to Oxfordshire Community and Voluntary Action (OCVA) to support greater involvement of the voluntary sector within the partnerships
- Senior Management support for each partnership

These resources will primarily be focused on tackling the issues identified in the community plan.

Neighbourhood Forums

The Localism Act has introduced new rights and powers for communities and individuals to enable them to get directly involved in spatial planning for their areas. Neighbourhood planning will allow communities to come together through a neighbourhood forum to produce a neighbourhood plan.

Neighbourhood plans are about allocating land for development and being able to say where new houses, businesses, shops and so on should go and what they should look like. Once plans are adopted they will become an important consideration when making decisions on planning applications.

Three local groups have asked Oxford City Council to formally designate their proposed neighbourhood areas. Designating a neighbourhood area is the first step towards producing a neighbourhood plan. The proposed neighbourhood areas are:

- Wolvercote
- Jericho
- Summertown and St Margaret's

The details of the neighbourhood area applications and comments received will be considered at a meeting of the City Executive Board, where the final decision on whether to designate each of the proposed neighbourhood areas will be made.

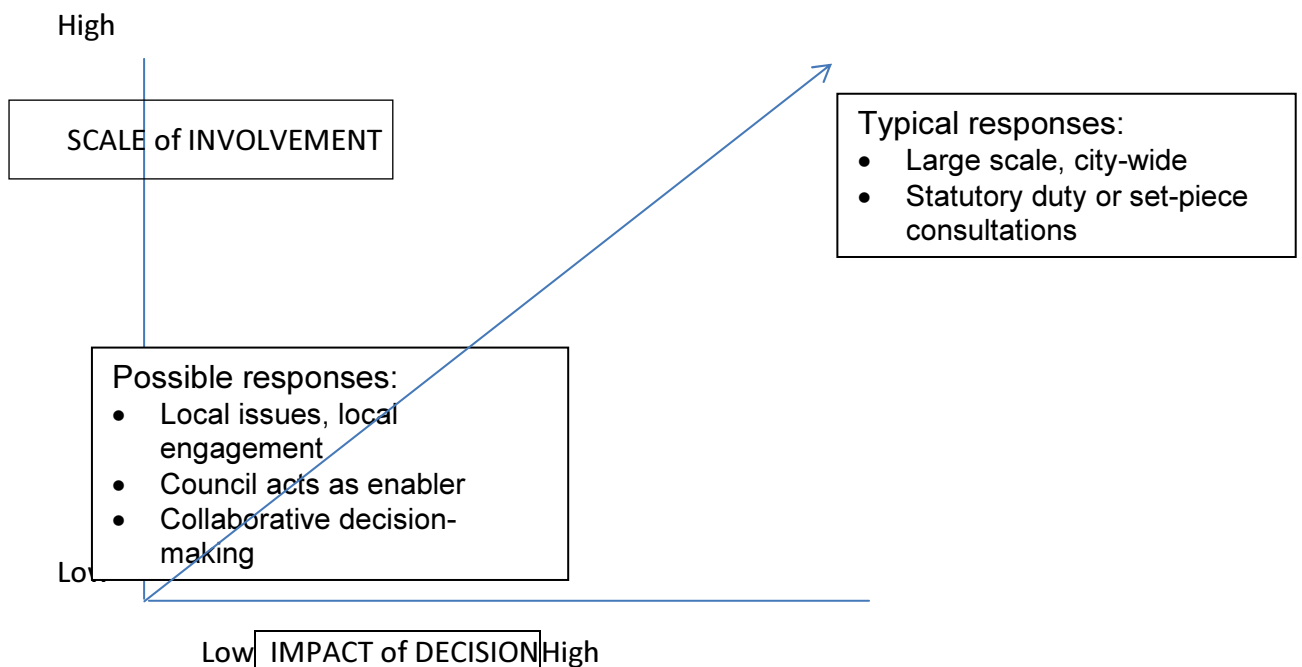
The Oxford Student Community Partnership Group

An example of a community of interest is the university student population of Oxford who run the Oxford Student Community Partnership Group. This meets twice a term and is attended by representatives from both universities, along with all Councillors and Oxford City Council officers. Topics of interest for this community include waste and recycling, voter registration and housing.

8. Proportionality

Oxford City Council applies the principle of proportionality when deciding which method of community engagement to use in any particular situation. This means that the type and scale of involvement will be proportional to both the potential impact of the proposal or decision being taken, and the ability to shape them.

The model below shows how the type of engagement varies according to the scale of impact, the role of the council and the nature and scale of the communities impacted by the issue. Adequate focus must be placed on the effective use of City Council resources as well as consideration for the resource commitment of community.



9. Transparency and clarity

Oxford City Council applies the principle of transparency and clarity to its engagement processes. This means that the objectives of the community engagement activity must be clear since they vary according to type of issue and the stage in the decision-making or policy development process that has been reached. This means that consultation on policy is less useful when councillors have clear priorities that they intend to pursue.

The boundaries of the decision must be defined -it should be clear which aspects are being consulted upon, and where decisions have already been made. To avoid creating unrealistic expectations, stakeholders and citizens must be told what they can or cannot influence by responding to engagement, and what the next steps will be.

Sufficient information should be available to enable stakeholders and residents to make informed comments. This will be provided both on a case-by-case basis through the provision of information related to specific consultations and engagement events and activities, and as part of Oxford City Council’s on-going commitment to provide the public with balanced and objective information to assist the understanding of issues.

The residents of Oxford receive information through a variety of media channels, as shown in the table below. These are all overseen by the City Council’s Communication team. There is evidence that suggests that community and tenant newsletters are particularly effective ways to make residents more aware of how decisions are made at the City Council². While some of the communication channels are broadcast in nature, others are more targeted.

Method	Frequency
Your Oxford	2 per year
City Briefing	3 per year
Facebook and Twitter	> daily
Oxford City Council website	> daily
Media releases	> daily
Service specific briefings	> Bi-monthly
Community and tenant newsletters (Leys News)	Quarterly?
Television and radio	Ad hoc

Social research

The social research function delivers high quality quantitative data to support policy development, service delivery, and project implementation. This research is carried out through both the Council’s social research functions (statistical analysis) and as part of its consultation function (opinion and perception research).

Social research is carried out by a central service within the Policy, Culture and Communications service area, and includes:

- Finding and sourcing data that can inform particular research questions.
- Researching and analysing data to inform strategies and plans.

² Living in Oxford Talkback survey spring 2014.

- Making research data available internally across service areas and externally to the public and communities, to enable them to understand the needs of their areas. The data can be used to help groups to develop funding bids, for example the social inclusion fund. This is done through the annual summary leaflet, website, monthly statistical publication and general statistics enquiry service.
- Providing research data that advocates the city's needs to other agencies that provide services.
- Providing links to national research.

Much of this data is available to the general public through the City Council's Statistics about Oxford website at http://oxford.gov.uk/PageRender/decC/Statistics_about_Oxford_occw.htm

Consultation

Consultation seeks public feedback on analysis, options, services and plans in order to inform decision-making, and in some cases this is statutory: the Council's annual budget for example. These decisions are critical to the successful development of Council policy and strategy, service design and service delivery. Consultation can only be successful with the active participation of the public.

Oxford City Council carries out its consultation through a variety of methods including a Citizens' Panel, postal and on-line surveys and focus groups; the different methods are described in the Consultation Toolkit. Consultation support is provided as a central service by the Consultation Officer, while management of the Citizens' Talkback Panel is managed by a specialist market research company, currently Ipsos MORI.

The Citizens' Panel model has been at the heart of Oxford City Council's approach to consultation. The Talkback Panel – consisting of around 1,000 residents (aged 16+) - was first established in 1997, when it was set up as a partnership initiative involving Oxford City Council, Oxfordshire County Council, the health authority, and Thames Valley Police. Also at this time, the Talkback Panel provided data for the Place survey, which allowed Oxford City Council to benchmark its performance against other local authorities.

Over time partners withdrew funding, but information sharing continues largely through the Oxford Strategic Partnership's programme boards. For example, in its role as a member of the Safer Communities Partnership, the City Council has continued to gather annual information from Talkback about community safety issues. The results are fed back to Thames Valley Police, who continue to reference Talkback findings in their annual report and forward planning.

While every effort is made to ensure that the panel membership is representative of the city's population (by using the demographic profile of Oxford residents from the Census 2011 data), the profile of respondents is significantly skewed towards white, older, female residents. To address this the Panel is refreshed every two years and ways of reaching

under-represented groups are called upon. For example, young people's views can be accessed through Youth Voice as described in chapter 12.

Oxford City Council has decided in principle to use Local Government Informas a survey methodology to measure residents' satisfaction. This will offer the council the opportunity to benchmark performance across other participating local authorities (the Place survey no longer exists). The methodology requires that at least 1,000 randomly selected responses must be received, and this will be administered by Ipsos MORI.

The principle of transparency and clarity is applicable to Oxford City Council's Local Development Planning engagement practices. The Council is required by law to consult on both Development Plan Documents and Supplementary Planning Documents, and the consultation process for each of these document types as well as consultation on planning applications is detailed in the Statement of Community Involvement.

The use of on-line technology enables transparency and clarity: information can be readily accessed by computer users, results and plans can be published. For information related to consultations Oxford City Council aims to post on its consultation website.

www.consultation.oxford.gov.uk

The representational and scrutiny role of councillors is vital to the consultation process, and all councillors must be informed of any consultations taking place within their wards.

In their role as community leaders, councillors play a key role in consultation as they have a unique relationship with residents and can provide valuable feedback from their involvement with local groups, partnerships and organisations. They are active members of local community initiatives and sometimes the instigators of consultation initiatives.

In their role on scrutiny committees, councillors provide a 'critical friend' challenge to Council decision-making and scrutinise external organisations and partnerships that influence and deliver services within the city.

10. Timeliness³

Oxford City Council recognises that engagement should begin early in the policy development or decision-making process when the policy is still under consideration and views can genuinely be taken into account.

There are several stages of policy development, and it may be appropriate to engage in different ways at different stages. As part of this, there can be different reasons for, and types of consultation, some radically different from simply inviting response to a document. Every effort should be made to make available the information an early stage to enable contestability and challenge.

³https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/255180/Consultation-Principles-Oct-2013.pdf downloaded 15th May 2014.

Timeframes for consultation should be proportionate and realistic to allow stakeholders sufficient time to provide a considered response and where the consultation spans all or part of a holiday period policy makers should consider what if any impact there may be and take appropriate mitigating action. The amount of time required will depend on the nature and impact of the proposal (for example, the diversity of interested parties or the complexity of the issue, or even external events), and might typically vary between two and 12 weeks.

The timing and length of a consultation should be decided on a case-by-case basis; there is no set formula for establishing the right length. In some cases there will be no requirement for consultation, depending on the issue and whether interested groups have already been engaged in the policy-making process. For a new and contentious policy, 12 weeks or more may still be appropriate. When deciding on the timescale for a given consultation the capacity of the groups being consulted to respond should be taken into consideration.

11. Feedback

Oxford City Council applies the principle of feedback (rather than a bureaucratic box ticking exercise), which recognises that open policy making should use real discussion with affected parties and experts to make well-informed decisions, and that consultation forms part of a wider scheme of engagement.

This means that policy-makers and decision makers should:

- explain what responses have been received and how they have been used. Results, including the number of responses, should be published within 12 weeks of the consultation closing and be mindful of current data protection legislation
- ensure that participants receive feedback about how their contributions have informed the outcome, and ensure that there are communications channels that allow for follow-up including reporting on final decisions and/or implementation plans
- ensure that Information and viewpoints have been collated and objectively assessed – there must be a fair interpretation of the results
- policy-makers should be prepared to change their plans as a result of community engagement. Citizens who participate in any form of community engagement must believe that their voice will be taken seriously, and that things can be changed if there is support for change
- ensure that engagement will be given sufficient priority, space, time and resources. There must be a genuine attempt to understand and incorporate other opinions even when they conflict with the existing point of view.

12. Inclusiveness and accessibility

Oxford City Council recognises that providing the opportunity for the participation of all stakeholders and citizens who have an interest in, or who would be affected by, a specific decision will inform better outcomes. This includes groups that are sometimes more challenging to engage such as young people, older people, minority groups, and people with disabilities.

It means that information should be easy to comprehend, and consideration should be given to appropriate forms of consultation by providing different ways for people to be engaged and ensuring that people are not excluded through barriers of language, culture or opportunity.

The results of Census 2011 are now available so it is possible to compare the demographic profile of participants with that of the population of Oxford. This has highlighted the need for focussed engagement with younger people (15-25 year olds), older people (over 65 year olds) and non-native English speakers.

Younger People

To enable younger people to influence and shape the services that affect their lives, Oxford City Council has established Youth Voice. This is a programme to support children and young people in Oxford between the ages of 15 and 21 (25 where there are special educational needs).

Youth Voice aims to:

- pro-actively listen to and act on the feedback of young people and to influence partners to do the same
- provide more and better personal and professional development opportunities to young people enabling them to effectively engage with decision makers
- enable young people to have increased access to decision-makers in their local community, the city, regionally and nationally
- To create a legacy of participation across the city and for young people to become role models and ambassadors for change now and in their adult lives.

The City Council's Youth Ambition Strategy details the Council's approach to engaging young people in positive activities and its aim to more fully involve young people in how we develop and deliver services.

Older People

Oxford City Council co-ordinates the Ageing Successfully Partnership to provide a partnership approach to addressing the needs of older people in the city; to improving wellbeing; and to addressing isolation and increasing engagement with older people.

An Older People's Needs Assessment has been carried out to review the needs of the older population of Oxford. This work will help inform the City Council of the longer term support for older people in the city.

The City Council works closely with the 50+ Network which is a volunteer-run community group whose aim is to engage with older people on relevant issues and increase involvement. This group have a representative on the Ageing Successfully Partnership.

English as a second language

As discussed earlier, many languages are spoken by the residents of Oxford. In the 2011 census 16% of residents said that English was not their first language, so there are challenges for developing services and policy that should be taken into consideration when determining the method of engagement.

Oxford City Council, through its Communities and Neighbourhoods team, is increasingly using community and voluntary networks to raise awareness of engagement activities that are less dependent upon a high level of competence in reading and writing English.

This is demonstrated in recent work with the Somali and Polish communities, where officers have:

- made use of community translators in meetings with the community
- tailored presentations to enable better clarity for people who have English as a second language
- attended pre-existing community led meetings rather than setting up separate City Council meetings. This maximises the number of people we can get feedback from
- advertised City Council opportunities through community newspapers and other sources to ensure we reach a wider cross section of the community.

The Communities and Neighbourhoods team facilitated a meeting between the Somali community and Scrutiny panel to receive feedback from the community on their experiences of living in Oxford and their perceptions of Oxford City Council. A number of the people in meeting had limited or no English and as such we made use of community leaders that were willing to act as an informal translator to ensure they were included at all times.

Communities and Neighbourhoods have worked closely with Human Resources to receive feedback on our recruitment process and how we are perceived as an employer from the Polish Community. A presentation was tailored to be more informal and visual for the community and it enabled plenty of opportunities for feedback and clarification. Both departments worked closely with the Oxford Polish Association to advertise the event and ensure that those who may not receive information from the City Council on a regular basis were aware of the meeting.

13. Summary

This policy statement describes how Oxford City Council engages its communities in decision-making. Not only does it build on the Consultation Strategy 2010-13 and the community engagement themes set out in the Council's Corporate Plan 2014-18, it takes account both of the demographic changes occurring in Oxford and the ideas and feedback provided during the process of creating this plan.

The intended purpose of this new three-year Community Engagement Policy Statement was to provide a framework for how the Council engages with its residents and communities to develop a greater understanding of their needs, and to increase the level and quality of involvement in the decisions that affect their lives. To achieve these objectives it has become clear, through the development of this policy statement, that the framework must be based upon the Principles of Community Engagement.

Analysis of consultation results showed that there was a keen interest in how we carried out public engagement, strong support for the community engagement principles and, naturally, areas where we could do better. These improvement suggestions have been factored into the redefinition and re-purposing of the Principles of Community Engagement. For example, concern was raised about the publication of consultation results and the outcomes of consultation, leading to scepticism that residents' voices were being listened to. To address this we have set a target to publish the results of 70 per cent of consultations within eight weeks by the end of the year.

It would be misleading to suggest our principles existed on paper only – indeed our focus on the demographics of the participants of public involvement activities and the development of corrective actions in partnership with Ipsos MORI is testament to this. This Community Engagement Policy Statement elevates the importance of the principles and the need to embed them further into our organisational culture.

14. The way forward

Oxford City Council is committed to continuous improvement. For community engagement this will continue to be done through benchmarking, engaging with professional organisations and the adoption of new technology.

Benchmarking

Benchmarking of consultation services is carried out across Oxfordshire and nationally when, for example, budget consultation practices are explored. Membership of the Consultation Institute and the relationship with Ipsos MORI ensures that we stay current with best practice. Research carried out through the Talkback Panel has shown an appetite for using mobile devices for responding to surveys – an example of technology supporting improvements to accessibility, which will be piloted during the year.

New Technology

The methods of engaging with residents of Oxford have changed considerably as a result of the increase in internet access, changes in the way of accessing the internet as well as how digital technology is used. For example, by 2012, 80% of all UK households had internet access, with 67 per cent of adults in Great Britain using a computer every day; this rises to over 80% amongst people under 45 years of age. Access to the Internet using a mobile phone more than doubled between 2010 and 2012, from 24% to 51, and in 2012 32% of adults accessed the Internet using a mobile phone every day.

Statistics about the level and type of internet use in Oxford are not available. However, as the city a very young population due to the large number of university students, we can expect that internet usage in Oxford is higher than the national average.

Social Media

For younger people - a rapidly increasing proportion of Oxford residents - social media has become the form of communication. Social media is a good way to engage people with specific issues where a quick turn-around is required; it allows for two-way, real-time dialogue and is an easy and cost effective way of getting people involved. Social media is transparent and open, and is a good way to build communities (especially communities of interest).

To make consultation more inclusive and accessible, the Council will assess what technology can best achieve our objectives. Twitter and Facebook can be used to raise awareness of community engagement events and as a pointer to the consultation website. YouTube can be used to upload videos of proposals as another format for gathering resident feedback. In addition the use of external discussion forums run by the community for the community can be encouraged, for example, the Headington and Marston Neighbourhood Discussion Forum. However, a strong social media presence and robust social media guidelines must be in place before relying on it as a consultation mechanism.

Currently potential consultees are required to sign up for an account to respond on the consultation system. This is stopping people contributing and limiting the usefulness of promoting consultations on social media channels. People have often responded to social media posts saying that they aren't going to contribute because the process they have to go through is too inaccessible. The Council will consider relaxing its approach to mandatory sign-in for some consultations. This won't be possible for all consultations, including those that are statutory, but there is little doubt that breaking down this barrier to participation will help to increase interaction.

However it is acknowledged that on-line methods are not for everyone and the Council will continue to offer multiple engagement channels, such as the provision and processing of paper surveys and face to face engagement opportunities.

The Council's consultations will be made more accessible by simplifying questions, removing large policy documents and adding more visuals where possible. This will encourage interaction on mobile devices and engage an audience who in the past have not had time to interact before.

15. Appendix 1 - Case Studies.

In order to understand the various types of engagement, below are 2 case studies. The first (Rose Hill Community Centre) is an example of how we have collaborated with the community on the development of a new community centre and the second (Open Space Event) is an example of how through talking to members of our community we have gathered information on Research.

Rose Hill Community Centre Case Study (Engagement Type: Collaborate)

The need for a new community centre in the Rose Hill area in Oxford was identified in 2012.

This engagement was undertaken in two stages: preliminary research and discussion with service providers and users. This was followed by a consultation fun day event where the local community could cast their vote as to whether they wanted a new community centre or to refurbish the existing one. To manage this, a sub group of local residents and partners was launched to work with officers from the City Council. This collaborative approach has been vital to the success of this project.

The main objective and purpose for undertaking this project was to collaborate with the different communities to develop strong and active links so that the community could make decisions for themselves

A questionnaire was developed and then designed into a flyer which was delivered to every home in the Rose Hill area, each leaflet could either be posted at one of the three key locations in the area or could be returned by using the prepaid envelope attached. In addition to this OCC Communities and Neighbourhoods (CAN) officers provided frequent opportunities for local residents to have face to face discussions to complete the questions in 'walk and talk' sessions. These sessions took place at different times in the day in order to speak to as many residents as possible. The strapline on these questionnaires was translated into seven different languages to promote inclusiveness.

From this process the architect used the gathered information to work up a concept for a new community centre. This was then taken back out to the Rose Hill Sub Group and other community groups before a final concept drawing could be generated for public display during the week leading up to the voting day on the 17th November 2012.

The method of engagement proved a huge success, and everyone in the community had the opportunity to share their views and vote upon the different options available. The support for the new centre was clearly demonstrated by 78% of all those voting being in support.

The City Council is confident that through undertaking this engagement exercise the new community centre will become a hub for the residents of the surrounding area. A one stop shop that the community can be proud of as having helped to drive and develop themselves. The relationship between the community and the Council has strengthened as part of this exercise as well as increasing community cohesion in the area. Collaborating on this project has helped to build a community they are all proud to be a part of.

Open Space Event (Engagement Type: Research)

This was an engagement event aimed at gathering information about the key issues that affect young people and through this research we have a better understanding of those issues.

The Open Space Event, where 35 young people came together, took place on 8th October 2013 at the Town Hall. The event was held to enable young people to discuss any issues that are important to them. By carrying out this research it improves our understanding of the issues important to young people. This in turn helps us when we are making decisions about particular areas and services and where we should target resources.

All the issues were put forward by young people, and they were given the space and time to discuss them in a way that suited them, without any preconceptions.

The young people who attended were from various ethnic backgrounds, in the lower third educational attainment bracket and from some of the most disadvantaged areas in the city.

In order to ensure that the young people felt comfortable we created a relaxed and friendly atmosphere by inviting the young people to host the event which was a great opportunity for them and something they enjoyed doing. We also ensured the lighting and branding made the space more inviting and less “stuff”. This atmosphere allowed young people to feel at ease enough to discuss issues important to them without a set agenda and some difficult topics were addressed.

The topics young people discussed included:

- Oxford Bus Fares – young people have to stay in education longer but still have to pay adult fares at the age of 16.
- Communication – most young people who had heard about what is offered had done so through word of mouth highlighting the importance of outreach. Other forms of innovative communication need to be explored.
- Positive Choices – young people wanted more support with financial management, sex education and alcohol and drugs education and didn’t always want to be taught about the extremes.

Having a central scribe so young hosts did not have worry about writing everything down worked well and took the pressure off hosts.

95% of participants thought their experience was satisfactory or above, with 81% rating the event at 4 or 5 (5 being the best).

We left the event with some very useful information about the issues that are important to young people, how young people feel about their lives and growing up in Oxford. This piece of research will help us when we are planning future consultations aimed at young people and also when we are making decisions on allocating resources to projects aimed at young people.

The output from this engagement exercise has been a greater understanding of the issues that are important to young people. With this information we can then develop further stages of engagement such as consultation where we take the information from the Research stage and use it to develop options to consult on.

Draft Policy Statement of Community Engagement 2014- 17

Final Consultation Report 23rd May 2014

Introduction

Consultation on the Draft Policy Statement of Community Engagement 2014- 17 opened on 20th December 2013 and closed on 31st March 2014.

47 individuals submitted their feedback using the City Council's on-line consultation system (eConsult) and four group submissions were received by email. One of the email submissions was short enough to be entered into eConsult and is included in the data in Part 1 below.

Of the other three email submissions, two were very similar in content: one from David Newman and the other from Craig Simmons on behalf of the Oxfordshire Green Party. The more expansive version from David Newman has been included in this document, together with the email submission from Oxford Civic Society. They are presented in Part 2 below.

Comments have been reproduced verbatim i.e. spelling mistakes have not been corrected.

Invitations to participate

Over 1300 invitations to participate in the consultation were sent out on 9th January (avoiding the holiday season) to residents who have registered an interest in community consultations, as well as leaders of Residents' Groups and minority ethnic groups

Demographics of 47 individual respondents

58% of the respondents who provided gender information were female (26) compared the Oxford Census 2011 data of 15+ age group (51%). 100% of the respondents who provided ethnicity information were White (39) compared the Oxford Census 2011 data of 15+ age group (80%).

The breakdown of the respondents who provided their age information is presented below. The table shows that the age groups (19- 44) are under-represented and the age groups (45- 74) are over-represented, when compared to the demographic profile of Oxford residents as a whole. There were no responses from people under 19 or over 74, although 24% and 5% respectively of Oxford residents fall into those age ranges.




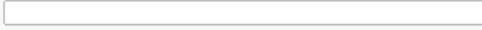

age range	count	%	Oxford %
19-24	1	2.5%	14.9%
25-44	7	17.5%	31.9%
45-59	18	45.0%	14.2%
60-74	14	35.0%	9.4%

Part 1 results from the on-line consultation system.

Questions and responses


1

To what extent do you agree or disagree with the principles underpinning community engagement on pages 5 and 6? (The principles include Commitment, Inclusiveness, Accessibility, Transparency and Clarity, Accountability, Responsiveness, Willingness to Learn, Productivity and Quality Assurance)

Option	Results
Strongly agree	 43% (20)
Agree	 46% (21)
Neither agree or disagree	 9% (4)
Disagree	 0% (0)
Strongly disagree	 2% (1)

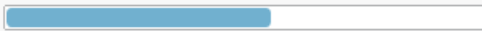







2

Oxford City Council is committed to involving residents in its decision making process. Would you like to be involved in the way decisions that affect you or your neighbourhood are made?

Option	Results
Yes, definitely	 81% (38)
Yes, I think so	 19% (9)
No	 0% (0)

3

In what ways would you like to get involved in making decisions about your neighbourhood?

Option	Results
Be part of a residents group or committee	 55% (26)
Attend local meetings	 62% (29)
Take part in online surveys/research	 94% (44)
Take part in postal or face to face surveys/research	 38% (18)
Through participating via social media e.g. twitter, facebook etc	 15% (7)
Quick poll on our website	 51% (24)
By talking to my local councillor	 57% (27)
I don't want to be involved in decision making	 0% (0)

Q3 Comments. Three additional ways of getting involved were suggested:

Comment
By being allowed access to planning applications
Direct contact from Council staff wherever specialist advice is required
Participatory budgeting; alternate reality games

4

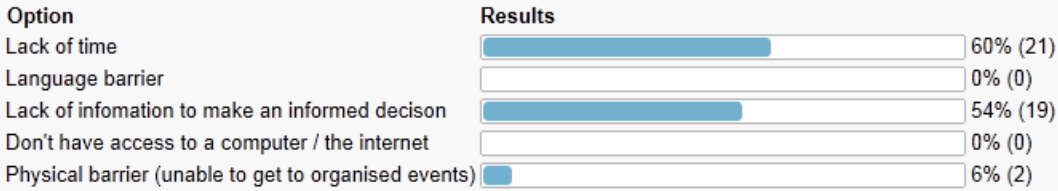
Do you feel there are barriers to getting involved in the decision making process?

Option Results



5

If yes, what are those barriers?



Q5 Comments.15 additional barriers were noted:

Barrier
Unable to get actual replies to questions
timing of meetings: at dinnertime. Why not have a few late morning or afternoon meetings?
The East Area Parliament was so successful that the Labour Group got rid of it.
Resistance to expertise external to the Council and poor accountability.
residents comments are often a 'box ticking' exercise without being taken seriously.
Reluctance or inability to fully understand issues.
MENTAL HEALTH
Meetings not always well publicised and local opinion is often ignored even when given
Long reports, or too many not of particular interest, would tend to put me off.
Lack of information about what decisions are being made and how to best input into the process
Cynicism about being taken seriously; nothing changes so whats the point culture; not informed
Council will not allow access to planning documents
As part of the boating community I see consultation going on with little representation sort.
A perception that our comments are not taken seriously.
Lack of serious response to citizen inputs.

6

In your view, are there particular areas and/or services where we should engage with you more often?

Yes, wherever the Council is attempting decisions where expertise in the community is better qualified e.g. specialist ecologists and naturalists.

working with like-minded residents and councillors to improve the community and environment for people living in Oxford City Central.
We want to ensure that Rose Hill and Iffley new-build houses and public buildings are well insulated and use their roof space for pv panels to the maximum extent. We can work with the Low Carbon Hub to put out share offers for pv panels on public buildings such as schools. We have already secured the agreement of the City Council to cover the new Community Centre for Rose Hill with pv panels.
Voluntary community group issues, anti-social behaviour. Changes or issues which impact on children, young people and young people with impairments
Views of older people who have difficulty with mobility.
Use of pavements, vide the debacle over locating cycle racks near St Andrews school in Headington. The use and abuse of pavements by cyclists. Designation of uses for shops.
Traffic and road use. Business rents and rates. Planning decisions.
There is no point in 'engaging' with communities unless the communities are listened to - something which the City council seem PROUD NOT to do. IE the huge opposition to the closure of Temple Cowley Pools, and the refusal of councillors and officers to listen.
The proposal mentions Oxford and its residents what it doesn't mention is that Oxford services Oxfordshire as the main destination and shopping destination. Oxfordshire residents should be consulted on things such as the redevelopment of the Westgate centre and the Botley road because the protestors who tend to be residents of the city do not represent the people from the surrounding area to travel into the city to access the facilities that are not available in the rural towns and villages of Oxfordshire.
The communication between the city council front line staff (for example the repairs team) and the contact admin staff (the call centre) seems to get very confused and often leads to the wrong worker being sent to the wrong job (electrician instead of plumber). this costs time and money. Direct contact between tenant and the repairs team is needed.
provision of pedestrian and bicycle paths.
pre school care, libraries
Practical, local stuff like work being done in our immediate area that misses a problem that locals could have identified to be sorted efficiently at the same time as other work. Good work being done with consultation / engagement at a more strategic level - now try using more local knowlege at the practical level
Planning..
Planning, Transport, HMO development
Planning decisions. Retention of green space.
PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES NEED TO BE GIVEN MORE INFO SO THEY CAN ENGAGE
Oxford City could do more to counter Oxfordshire County's policies which continually prioritise commuters and tourists over local residents (e.g. Headington traffic 'improvements'). Local open meetings should be held as people are more likely to drop in to their local community centre / hall than take the time to fill in online consultations. Also, people ask more questions face to face and a more acceptable solution is often reached. It is very easy to ignore online / social media comments (offensive Tweeting being a good example) and people don't see Council business as 'social' until a policy has been implemented and individuals are adversely affected.
No
N/a
Matters regarding funding/finance, and its impact on reducing services.
Many.
local transport: bus and coach schedules, bus and coach stops. HMOs: poor external upkeep. While it is comforting to know that licensed HMOs are basically safe for their occupants and nearby residents, many of them look decidedly decrepit from the street, and the letting agents leave signs up long after new tenancy agreements have been signed.
local history
Litter collection/recycling.

It is a great pity that so little was done to engage with local residents over the plans for the Castle Mill development. The general policy in favour of growth appears to have been decided upon without proper consultation.
in short the boating community is often overlooked as I've heard recently perceived in relation to the JLHT /OCCP canal project.
How to solve the housing crisis in Oxford!
Housing - location and number of multi occupations (high level of private rented in city and getting higher) Street furniture and layout - makes a direct impact on experience of being in a neighbourhood Leisure services - Temple Cowley Pool is still a thorn in the side of any kind of consultation and leaves a bad taste after all the petitions etc. that had so many respondents on them City Centre events to balance the positive and the negative
grants given to community groups, e.g. music services, pegasus theatre
General experience of the parts of Oxford which I frequently use, pass through, see, or value - i.e. not just the buildings immediately adjacent to or in sight from my own home. In my case, this would mean all the alternative N-S routes from Grandpont to the areas around St Giles Church and Jericho, Port Meadow and Univ Parks, and the railway and bus stations: not only via St Aldates, Cornmarket and St Giles, but also via the footbridge and New Inn Hall St, or by car via Oxpens; or via Turl St or Radcliffe Square and Parks Road and Keble Road,
Decisions that affect the living environment. At the moment, decisions are taken for the Community without resident consultation surveys.
Controversial planning decisions
Bus transport from north to south oxford, avoiding the walk along Cornmarket
At the moment it is unclear what are the areas where you are engaging people and how this happens. It would be great to have a more comprehensive approach or a way in which people could easily access information about the decisions that are being made and how to best input into them.
All topics
More engagement in Donington, and other small pockets of deprivation. More engagement with private tenants. More engagement with older people through elderly-led (and controlled) organisations, rather than younger people claiming to represent us. More continuous local engagement, rather than separate consultations. More engagement through online community networks. More engagement with participation professionals, rather than assuming Oxford knows best.
Planning, housing development, traffic, parking
No

7

In your view, are there particular areas and/or services where you think we should engage with you less often?

Q7 Comments.23 people answered "no" to this question and others had the following comments:

Politics
Loads, like the success of the East Area Parliament which threatened the Labour Group, so it was done away with. So it seems to me that the only consultation that this council wants is badly attended meetings with people going to them who have no views. And if the council have something to hide - like the Roger Dudman Way planning application - then the public are misled.
Less printed material posted
Crime - let TVP and the experts deal with this I don't feel as if I engage with services often at all as an owner occupier in East Oxford
Fewer council newsletters: instead fund hyperlocal independent newsheets and blogs.
Consultation should be relevant and meaningful at all times, i.e. don't ask everyone's opinion on everything or they will stop contributing. Also, local residents are just that. We are not 'stakeholders',

'customers' or any other such fatuous term of appeasement. The NHS is a Council stakeholder, I am not.

8

Is there anything else you like to see included in the Community Engagement Plan 2014-2017?

Q8 Comments. Seven people answered "no" and the following replies were submitted by others:

Yes. Mention is made of engaging those who may not be engaged due to barriers of language. Whilst this is right - this must be by ensuring that the people affected are given opportunities to learn the English language - otherwise we risk ghettos.
Whoever is running this consultation should watch this TED talk, particularly point 1, from the beginning to minute 2 approx) http://www.ted.com/talks/dave_meslin_the_antidote_to_apathy.html
We hope that community renewable energy plans will be on the list.
Undertaking to publish results of surveys/opinion polls
THERE NEEDS TO BE MORE INFORMATION IN LOCAL NEWS LETTER'S AS A LOT OF OLDER PEOPLE DO NOT HAVE A COMPUTER'S LET ALONE INTERNET
There needs to be mention of how the City Council plans to engage with students. It is repeatedly mentioned that students make up a larger than average proportion of the city's population and yet the document makes no reference to how the Council plans to engage with this section of its population! From Oxford University Student Union Vice-President (Charities and Community)
Some ACTION to enable people to be listened to by councillors. Access to all planning applications in hard copy.
Report corrective action to resolve issues brought up by local residents... and how long it takes them to be resolved..
priority list. creating an agenda to create a top 5 or 10 list of things that people really would like.
Outline Response from Oxford Green Party Consulting over the Xmas/New Year period was unfortunate and is likely to lead to a poor response rate to this important consultation. Our views on consultation are well known. Using the terminology in the draft plan, our views are that the Council is extremely poor at consulting residents. On planning, it does the statutory minimum consultation in most cases. And even where there is a clear opposition to its plans (for example, St Clement's Car Park redevelopment and the demolition of Temple Cowley Pool), it ignores the views of the majority. The abolition of area committees is a case in point. Despite a majority vote by residents in favour of retaining local powers and budgets, the Council pressed ahead and abolished them anyway. They represented a means by which local residents could be 'Empowered'. The reliance of the creation of Neighbourhood Fora in the Plan is unfortunate. These would seem to have few advantages and many disadvantages. they are in no way a substitute for the powers that were previously delegated to the now abolished Area Committees. As acknowledged in the report, the Area Fora are now 'talking shops' with no clear reporting in to the Council's decision making processes. They have no support (for example, minutes are only taken if Councillors agree to write them). So, we believe that the Council needs to be enhancing its engagement with local residents not relying on existing structures. The Council should return to full Area Committees with delegated powers; and improve its consultation processes more generally. Oxford Green Party c/o 41 Magdalen Road OX4 1RB
No. This draft plan seems well thought out and it will come down to implementation details, on which I hope we will have an opportunity to comment in due course.
No. It looks sound.
no, I think its' well written and comprehensive
More inclusion of Oxfordshire residents as opposed to residents of the city of Oxford.

Just continue to consult,inform and communicate with the local community.
I might have missed it but didnt' see much by way of leisure service provision ? Not just facilities but activities generally - more emphasis on well being for everyone meaning a commitment to the arts and to sports (in the widest sense) provision. Lots of research from Joseph Rowntree Trust and others about benefits of active leisure in older age and during periods of economic stress, So possibly engagement via the arts generally like in the Rose Hill example for instance - connecting with people while they are engaged in other activity which is pleasing and purposeful. Also open spaces and engagement on the multi use of parks etc - dog owners versus sports etc.
I believe local opinion is not given the importance it deserves
How to provide good, affordable local housing.
Effective Area committees where residents can express views and have a valid vote.
a way to address the lack of consultation offered to the boating community when decisions are made that effect them.
A statutory consultation meeting of residents in a local hall upon sensitive issues.
A provision for all resident-based groups within Oxford to meet together, say twice a year, so that we can share our thoughts, observations, and concerns. I note the availability of social media, but this something not everyone has access to.
A key to effective consultation is outcomes. Local residents, myself included, often feel our participation was in vain as comments appear to be ignored, glossed over or paid lip service to, at best. I appreciate not all comments and suggestions can be accommodated, but evidence of some modification to plans / policies based on local opinion would be a big boost.
A dedicated group for people with disabilities
I will descibe this in more detail in a separate e-mail, as there is so much Oxford could do to catch up with Bristol, Bonn, Bremen, Porto Alegre, Milan, New England town meetings and other leading exponents of e-democracy, citizen participation and citizen control.

Part 2 Consultation responses received by email.

From Oxford Civic Society.

"January 2014

Response to the Draft Community Engagement Plan 2014-2017

Overall comments

Thank you for inviting the Oxford Civic Society to comment on the Draft Community Engagement Plan 2014-2017.

The overall message that we glean from this report is 'more of the same'. We presume, therefore, that there is no ambition to change or develop engagement processes, and it is considered there is limited need to improve them. Is this the unstated intent? We recognise that local authorities are under severe financial constraints, but nevertheless we would expect to see statements about the 'direction of travel'.

The draft plan is structured around the widely accepted 'ladder of participation' model; inform, research, consult, collaborate, empower. Picking up key points on some of these 'rungs':

- We are pleased to note that some weaknesses in **consultation** processes are recognised – specifically inclusiveness and accessibility to the consultation process and

a need to improve consultation feedback. It is not stated how this will be done (although the document states in Section 1 that this is a how rather than a what plan).

- **Collaboration**, in our opinion, is the 'rung' where greatest returns can be made. Indeed we suspect this is also the view of the authors of this plan, as most 'column inches' are devoted to the topic. We are very surprised not to see more information on the future of Neighbourhood Partnerships and Neighbourhood Planning. We develop this point below.
- We do suspect there are more opportunities for **empowerment** if there is the will. We recognise this is not easy, and often not appropriate for democratic and accountability reasons. But, there is clearly no (political) intent to devolve decision making below the City level. We agree that decisions must be made by properly representative bodies, but surely there is scope for some devolution to areas / wards. The old 'area committees' had certain strengths in this respect although we are not advocating a return to them as previously constituted because there were clearly weaknesses, especially in the way they handled planning applications.

There is no evidence in the document about how good or poor community engagement currently is. Have any measures been made? With respect to **consultation**, for example, we suspect many residents would say this is poor – there is cynicism that consultations are window dressings.

We note and applaud the City's ambitions for strong active communities (*Corporate Plan 2013-2017: communities that are socially cohesive and safe, and citizens who are actively engaged in pursuing their own well-being and that of their communities*). We recognise that the Draft Engagement Plan is about engagement with decision making. It does not cover the important topics of community building and mutual support between citizens. But we think a linkage between decision making and community building should be recognised. Stronger communities will engage more with the City's decision making processes. Building stronger communities and supporting community engagement in decision making are mutually supportive.

We also note that planning consultations are not included in this paper, as the subject is covered elsewhere. We suggest the process for planning consultations should at the very least be recognised in the engagement plan as we suspect the public's poor regard to planning consultations reflects badly on all attempts by the City Council to consult, however well they are carried out.

Specific comments

Section 1 (Executive summary)

We note it is the intent of the Community Engagement Plan to set out how engagement will be done. We consider that the document will be strengthened if it incorporates more 'how' actions.

Section 4 (Understanding our communities)

We note that in areas of deprivation the capacity for community involvement is lower than in more affluent areas. This is clearly true. The document states that it contains a plan for how Oxford City Council will address this imbalance. We are not convinced this is adequately covered.

Section 5 (Principles of community engagement)

We note the nine 'principles underpinning community engagement'. Points 5 and 6 (accountability and responsiveness) are particularly important. We suspect residents have a poor view about the Council's performance here.

Section 7 (Inform)

We are puzzled about the statement 'informing residents is also achieved through Neighbourhood Forums'. We have seen no evidence of the City engaging with Neighbourhood

Forums to do this (assuming this is referring to Neighbourhood Forums as set up under the Localism Act).

Section 9 (*Consult*)

We are pleased to note that the City recognises the need to improve inclusiveness and accessibility (paragraph 6), and accountability and responsiveness (paragraph 7). There are no statements about how this will be achieved.

Section 10.1 (*Collaborate – Area Forums*)

Area Forums are not successful. There seems to be recognition that this is the case, but no stated intent to improve them. We understand a review of Area Forums was carried out about two years ago. Was a report published?

Section 10.2 and 10.6 (*Collaborate – Community Partnerships and Neighbourhood Plans*)

We applaud the City's work in developing Community Partnerships. They seem to be showing some successes.

In comparison, the section on Neighbourhood Planning is very bland. It gives no indication of how they might be embraced, or indeed any willingness to embrace them. And we are puzzled by the statement the 'Council's preference is to start with Community Planning'. What is meant by that? The phrase 'Community Planning' is not defined.

There is no mention of Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL). We suggest the document should contain statements about how CIL will support community engagement and community empowerment. Indeed, the relationship of CIL policy to both Community Partnerships and Neighbourhood Forums could helpfully be developed.

The impact of the Localism Act on community engagement structures and processes is omitted from the plan, although surely it is of relevance (and is likely to continue to be of relevance after the next general election, whichever colour of government is in power). An LGiU policy briefing (January 2014) is timely in this respect. See extract below.

Section 10.7 (*Collaborate – Oxford Strategic Partnership*)

We note there is recognition that there are weaknesses in the OSP process. But the document contains highly generalised statements about what will be done to address the weaknesses.

Section 11 (*Empower*)

As previously stated, we agree that empowering people at community level is not easy and is often not appropriate, but we would like to see an intent to devolve some powers to Councillor-led bodies at a local area level and a consideration of how more powers might be devolved to community groups and other agencies.

We note there is no mention of Parishes. We assume the Council does not support the concept of creating more city parishes, although they do provide an element of local area empowerment. We think this is a subject worth exploring.

We also note (and this surely is not contentious) that there is no mention of helping communities help themselves. Perhaps this is not seen as being of relevance to decision making.

Section 12 (*Next Steps*)

This section of the plan could usefully be strengthened and clarified. For example, we are unclear what is meant by a 'system for evaluating community engagement activities'.

Recommendations

The following provides some ideas about how, in our view, the document might be developed. This is largely a distillation of the comments made above.

1. More detail would be helpful about how community engagement will be done.
2. There should be some recognition of the importance of planning consultations and the development of active communities.
3. Something should be said on how accountability and responsiveness (5.5 and 5.6) will be improved.
4. There should be recognition of the value of communities helping themselves, and how this will be encouraged.
5. Devolution of powers to area / ward level should be considered.
6. There should be a recognition of the relevance of CIL to community engagement.

7. There is scope for developing area structures across the city, building on the Community Partnerships and Neighbourhood Forums already in place. This might enable a greater degree of local collaboration and even empowerment. It would have implications on the workings of the area forums, perhaps replacing them, and the role of councillors as decision makers.(See LGiU paper)
8. The statement on 'next steps' should be clearer and measurable."

Richard Bradley (on behalf of the Oxford Civic Society)
01865 762418 | 07802 215517

Where next for neighbourhood planning and management – opportunities and challenges for local government

7 January 2014

Selected extracts:

What is our 'vision and values' for community and neighbourhood planning and management in our area? There are a number of 'models' that might be important in this process – for instance:-

- community and neighbourhood empowerment as democratic and governance-related processes – e.g. through encouraging town and parish councils; or area/local committees and assemblies with a democratic mandate/accountability;
- community and neighbourhood empowerment as a service model – either commissioning and/or providing some specific local services;
- community and neighbourhood empowerment as an influencing model – through advocacy, mobilisation, processes like neighbourhood planning, but with other bodies beyond the council;
- mixed models of the above plus other roles and functions

How do local solutions and initiatives fit in with wider council and partner structures and processes – and are there any knock-on consequences of adopting different solutions in different local areas (e.g. for neighbouring communities)?

Whilst it makes sense for the council to work through these issues/questions, systematically, they can anticipate that there will be bottom-up pressures locally, and some top-down pressures from government, that may determine how any council perspective plays out in practice.

Lessons from NCBs and neighbourhood planning to date have tended to confirm the questions above as relevant and reasonable. More generally, though, neighbourhood planning and management are long-run processes. These processes have been shown to deliver significant benefits in local involvement and ownership, and can often produce valuable ideas for local improvement. However, they require considerable upfront investment (e.g. in evidence gathering, consultation, capacity building, business case formulation, and negotiation).

However, were an integrated approach to be pursued (and if it could be resourced), at one extreme, this most local of devolution might provide a particularly 'close to home' mirror on fundamental issues raised by localism and centralism – postcode lotteries, exclusive and inclusive character of communities, 'NIMBY charters' etc. For instance, it is noteworthy for neighbourhood planning, that only six areas have been designated across the twenty most deprived LA areas, with 15 of the 20 having no neighbourhood planning activity. For the twenty least deprived LAs, there have been 49 designations, and only six LAs with no activity.

In conclusion, all local authorities are likely to have to engage actively in major neighbourhood planning and management exercises over 2014/15 and beyond.

For full document see <http://www.lgiu.org.uk/briefing/where-next-for-neighbourhood-planning-and-management-opportunities-and-challenges-for-local-government-2/>

From the Green Party Group

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31 Mar. 2014

Draft Community Engagement plan

I am responding to your consultation on the Draft Community Engagement plan on behalf of the Oxfordshire Green Party. The Green Councillors group have asked me, as an expert on e-participation, to write this response.

Since moving to Oxford 2 years ago, I have been disappointed in the gap between the way public consultations are carried out here, and best national and international practice.

5. Principles of community engagement

Since the first question in your online questionnaire asks about the principles on p. 5-6, I will first respond to those. The list of principles is good, but could be extended. Categories reflecting sets of values on which professionals judge public consultations are listed at <http://www.e-consultation.org/Theory> and explained in Value Conflicts in e-Participation (Newman, 2006). The categories found were:

- | | |
|---|-------------------------------------|
| A) Honesty and transparency | G) Feedback |
| B) Facilitation (of process) | H) Relevance (to problem or people) |
| C) Citizen participation in decision-making | I) Preparation |
| D) Structure (of activities) | J) Support for constitutional goals |
| E) Impact | K) Feasibility and sustainability |
| F) Stakeholders/participants involvement | L) Fidelity |
| | M) Security |

□

Some of these evaluation categories concern the processes of consultation, that will form part of the forthcoming action plan. However, there are principles not listed in the Draft Community Engagement Plan.

Ⓢ Honesty is joined with transparency, making sure that there is no manipulation of the process or outcome (e.g. when an apparently objective reason is given to justify a politically biased choice).

Ⓢ The constitutional goals include democratic ones, aimed at reversing declining democratic participation. With turnouts of 30% in local elections, and small responses to consultations, this is an important goal. But increasing democracy does not appear to be an aim of Oxford City Council, at least in this document.

Ⓢ Citizen participation in decision-making is a very important criterion for both consultees and researchers in public participation. Yet it is explicitly excluded in the context of these principles.

The argument that the Council operates within the context of a representative democracy is spurious. There is a long tradition of citizen involvement in local government through consultation and partnership processes, separate from the representative role of councillors. We do not have to choose just between representative and direct democracy. The literature on democratic theories and practice includes many other alternative ways of achieving democratic governance, such as deliberative democracy, and networked governance (where decisions emerge from interactions between stakeholders). (J. Morison & Newman, 2001; John Morison, 2004).

Citizen engagement requires the sharing of power. It is limited sharing, but it still means that neither councillors nor officials, let alone the Cabinet, can make all decisions on their own. If there is no way for citizens to at least influence or modify decisions, then there will be no participation. The best consultations as reported by our focus groups of consultees in the north and south of Ireland (Fagan, Newman, McCusker, & Murray, 2006)□,

'... giving people a voice, better decision making, more informed decision making. More I suppose... a sense of participation and control over their own lives and things that are important for them, you know? That's the theory of why we need to do it...'

□ It is the control over your own lives that drives deep engagement, with good feedback as a minimum to get any engagement. From the perspective of the consulters, it is this deep engagement that reveals the experiential knowledge needed to make better-informed decisions. It is a common complaint of officials that they do not have enough relevant information to make decisions that avoid unanticipated consequences. Yet to transfer knowledge from of a mother taking her children to school to a Permanent Secretary requires the consulter to humble himself before her practical knowledge. In knowledge management terms, perceived status is a barrier to knowledge transfer.

Yet in Oxford, citizen and community input has often been ignored. Take for example the large numbers of people who have signed petitions to save Temple Cowley Pools. Each time, the petitions have been rejected by a whipped vote of councillors. There has not even been the reasoned justification that official bodies give when rejecting the recommendations of citizens' juries. Raw power has over-ridden reasoned argument. In the past there are many occasions when council leaders have not shown a willingness to learn (principle 7) or a commitment to make a genuine attempt to understand and incorporate other opinions even when they conflict with the existing point of view (principle 1).

We welcome the principles listed in this document, but not the context which can hinder their honest application in community engagement.

6. Methods of community engagement

The ladder of participation model is a shortened form of Arnstein's ladder.

8	Citizen Control	Degree of citizen power
7	Delegated Power	
6	Partnership	
5	Placation	Degree of tokenism
4	Consultation	
3	Informing	
2	Therapy	Non-participation
1	Manipulation	
0	Coercion	

Note that consultation is a degree of tokenism, not of citizen power. It is important that Oxford City does not limit itself to the lower levels of this ladder, but devolve power on local issues to local citizens, just as it would like central Government to devolve more power to the council.

We agree, as stated on p. 7, that effective engagement means identifying the kinds of participant (not audience) that need to be involved at each stage of the process on any given issue. However, the consult stage starts too late in the process. It is possible to consult people before any analyses, alternatives or decisions are made. In particular, it is possible to find out what people's needs are, and what problems they want the council to help them solve. In other words, public participation in agenda setting. See http://www.e-consultation.org/guide/index.php/Technology_matching_for_E-consultation. (J. Morison & Newman, 2001)□ and http://www.e-consultation.org/guide/index.php/Technology_classification (D. Newman et al., 2007). These show how far thinking on participation has advanced since David Wilcox's 1994 guide.

7. Inform

There are ways community groups can make use of council data to answer their own questions, so it is

important to make as much council data openly available for manipulation by computer programs (using RDF on the semantic web, not PDFs).

8. Research

It is important to make good use of research in decision-making. So we agree wholeheartedly with the importance of the two kinds of research mentioned here. Add to that the usefulness of community involvement in this research, by supporting research collaborations with community groups, and school and university students.

9. Consult

As mentioned above, consultation can start much earlier, in agenda setting, not just as a final rubber stamp to approve or reject fully formed plans. Indeed, some of the most interesting forms of consultation involve community design, as happens in participatory mapping sessions in developing countries, or some neighbourhood planning forums, where people gather to make maps showing current usage of land, and possible new uses.

Although Oxford City Council has a well-established consultation process, it is rather traditional, and falls short of the state of the art of Bristol City Council, Bonn and Bremen in Germany, participative budgeting in Porto Alegre, the use of online discussion forums to bring people from neighbouring municipalities together around Milan, or many of the practices discussed in the annual e-democracy conferences in Austria or even Prescott's Local E-Democracy project.

When Bristol City consults on parks, it gives people the chance to be a park warden for a day. Councillor Sam Hollick ran a participatory budgeting exercise, asking Holywell residents to decide on how to distribute his allocated small project budget. New York

10. Collaborate

Since the analysis of problems, the development of alternative options, and the ranking of solutions are part of any decision-making process, or indeed, of all learning processes (David R Newman, Johnson, Webb, & Cochrane, 1997)□), it is disingenuous to say these are not decision-making forums. The point is to make the most effective use of collaborations and partnerships in different stages of decision-making processes: and then to not ignore all this work when the final formal decision is made. We need decisions based on data, information and knowledge, not raw power.

The Area Forums could be a great opportunity for citizen design of locally appropriate solutions, rather than sticking to one size fits all models across the city. But they will not deeply engage citizen participation (both in number and time), until they have devolved powers to make and implement decisions on local issues. And it is notable that many Area Forums hardly ever meet, despite the claim that the council provides an area support officer to organise and publicise meetings.

There was a local model that worked, that of Area Committees, with devolved power to make decisions on local issues. A serious commitment to community engagement requires and equally serious commitment to community decision-making power over the issues that affect them locally.

A community partnership could do more than an area forum, but here there are two problems to overcome:

1. To involve a diverse range of groups within the area, rather just those friendliest to the council. The lists of groups represented look rather like “the usual suspects”.
2. Areas of greatest need may be large, like the ones identified, or pockets of deprivation inside areas that on average are in less need. Community partnerships need to be set up to deal with these pockets of deprivation.

There is not much resident involvement so far. When tenants representatives criticised the council, they were replaced by people who never criticise the council. Community Associations are in dispute with the Council, as they have been offered tenancy agreements with so many conditions they could easily lose their premises. There is a pattern of the Council acting as the master of Oxford, dictating terms, not humbly serving their masters, the people of Oxford. Collaboration needs to be as equals with the powerless, not just with the powerful in the Oxford Strategic Partnership.

11. Empower

This part of the document has too many limitations, as if the Council wants to avoid any empowerment of citizens. Contrast that to New York City, who invited in America Speaks to organise a meeting of 6000 New Yorkers to decide on what to do with the Twin Towers site. There were 600 tables of 10 people, all having facilitated conversations, with their points fed by computer to a team of who picked out common ideas and positions, which all the tables then voted on. By the end, they knew that the people of New York wanted new tall skyscrapers, so they changed the city plans for the site.

There are lots of benefits for localising power. This plan should not try to prevent that, but instead take risks, do trials, and evaluate the results.

12. Next steps

One important next step is for Oxford City Council to become a corporate member of the Consultation Institute, and then send the top officers, and the Executive on courses to learn about the benefits of effective participation.

Yours Sincerely,



Dr. David Newman

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Sadie Paige
23rd May 2014

Community Engagement Policy Statement 2014 – 2017 (draft)

Appendix 3 – Risk Register

Risk ID	Risk						Corporate Objective	Gross Risk		Residual Risk		Current Risk		Owner	Date Risk Reviewed	Proximity of Risk (Projects/ Contracts Only)
	Category -000- Service Area Code	Risk Title	Opportunity/ Risk Threat	Description	Risk Cause	Consequence		Date raised	1 to 6	I	P	I	P			
PCC 001	Budget	Threat	That City Council Budget 2015 – 2018 cuts affect service delivery	Need to reduce budget.	Resources are not available to carry out public engagement activities described in the draft Plan	4/11/13	3	3	2	3	1	3	2	Angela Cristofoli/ Sadie Paige	12/5/14	
PCC 002	Legal	Threat	That charges are made against the council related to Community Engagement activities	Legal challenge to community engagement activity	Damage to reputation, legal costs	4/11/13	3	4	2	4	2	4	2	Angela Cristofoli/ Sadie Paige	12/5/14	
PCC 003	Resources	Threat	That there are insufficient resources to execute this plan	Resources are under-estimated and stretch service delivery	Stress	4/11/13	3	2	3	2	1	2	1	Angela Cristofoli/ Sadie Paige	12/5/14	
PCC 004	Publication of results	Threat	That the decision making process is compromised by lack of trust by consultees	Lack of clarity and transparency	Poor quality decision making	12/5/14	3	3	3	3	1	3	3	Sadie Paige	12/5/14	
PCC 005	Inclusion of all groups	Threat	That the decision making process is compromised	Lack of inclusiveness and accessibility	Poor quality decision making	12/5/14	3	3	2	3	1	3	2	Sadie Paige	12/5/14	

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Community Engagement Policy Statement 2014 – 2017 (draft)

			by lack input from some groups														
LPC 001	Failure to engage appropriately with communities of identity.	Threat	Following implementation of Plan, services do not engage effectively with Communities of Interest	Lack of understanding or commitment by services of how to engage	Communities feel issues not being addressed and feel solated	4/11/13	3	4	3	4	1	4	3	Angela Cristofoli	4/11/13		
LPC 002	Increase in numbers engaged through collaborating.	Opportunity	Currently few residents actively engaged in deprived areas and amongst young people	Lack of active targeted engagement and dedicated resources	Does not address council's priority to encourage community engagement especially amongst hard to reach groups	4/11/13	3							Angela Cristofoli	4/11/13		

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Risk ID	Risk Title	Action Owner	Accept, Contingency, Transfer, Reduce or Avoid	Details of Action	Key Milestone	Milestone Delivery Date	%Action Complete	Date Reviewed
PCC 001	Budget	AC/SP	Reduce	2014/15 budget has been approved. CEP action plan based upon current resource level.	2015/16 budget approval	Feb 2015		12/5/14
PCC 002	Legal	AC/SP	Avoid	On-going participation of Legal Service Head at Public Involvement Board	None, action is on-going	Not applicable		12/5/14

Community Engagement Policy Statement 2014 – 2017 (draft)

PCC 003	Resources	AC/SP	Avoid	Review 2014/15 Service Plans for consultation activities. Develop Annual Plan and estimate resource. Develop service level agreement with service areas. Organise eConsult training.	Service Plans posted on intranet	May/ June 2014		12/5/14
PCC 004	Publication of results	SP	Avoid	Implement service level metric to improve the publication of results. Explore mail merge capability within eConsult.	New metrics added to CorVu	May 2014		12/5/14
PCC 005	Inclusion of all groups	SP	Avoid	Panel refresh. Raise awareness of consultations across Students, Polish community, voluntary sector.	Panel refresh	July/Aug 2014		12/5/14
LPC 001	Failure to engage	AC/SP	Avoid	Ensure training programme for services and regular updates. Consultation Officers group to share best practice and audit engagement. Public Involvement Board to review PIDs to ensure address Communities of Identity	Training and updates timetabled after Plan implemented			4/11/13
				Set annual targets for young people's engagement and also for residents in areas of deprivation	6 month review			

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Appendix 4 Initial screening Equalities Impact Assessment for the draft Policy Statement of Community Engagement 2014 – 17.

1. Within the aims and objectives of the policy or Plan which group (s) of people has been identified as being potentially disadvantaged by your proposals? What are the equality impacts?

The Policy Statement of Community Engagement is underpinned by our principles of engagement, which requires the participation of all stakeholders who have an interest in, or are impacted by, a decision, regardless of age, gender, disability, race, or language
We strive to engage with a representative sample of stakeholders and have used information from the Census 2011 to define that goal. We have developed plans to increase engagement with younger people, people from minority ethnic groups and people who are not native English-speakers. We are sensitive to the need not to alienate existing audiences – for example through the exclusive use of digital technology.

2. In brief, what changes are you planning to make to your current or proposed new or changed policy, Plan, procedure, project or service to minimise or eliminate the adverse equality impacts?

Please provide further details of the proposed actions, timetable for making the changes and the person(s) responsible for making the changes on the resultant action plan

In order to minimise the adverse equality impact we are now tracking and reporting the demographic profile of survey respondents. These are reported as caveats to reports where appropriate.
We have added the Communities and Neighbourhood Manager to the Public Involvement Board. This allows us to identify ways of tapping into hard to reach groups.
We will continue to enforce the use the Public Involvement Project Brief which requires that external consultation projects define their target groups, as well as the means of reaching the target groups. We will continue to segment our communication channels to ensure that the most appropriate means are used to reach the community.

3. Please provide details of whom you will consult on the proposed changes and if you do not plan to consult, please provide the rationale behind that decision.

Please note that you are required to involve disabled people in decisions that impact on them

The draft version of the Policy Statement of Community Engagement was available for consultation feedback from 20th December 2013 until 31st March

2014. Over 1300 invitations to participate in the consultation were sent out on 9th January (avoiding the holiday season) to residents who have registered an interest in community consultations, as well as leaders of Residents' Groups and minority ethnic groups. Within that time period consultation was extended to allow for additional representation from minority and hard to reach groups. The full results of consultation will be available in Appendix x £%^*£^%

4. Can the adverse impacts you identified during the initial screening be justified without making any adjustments to the existing or new policy, Plan, procedure, project or service?

Please set out the basis on which you justify making no adjustments

One of the principles that underpins the Policy Statement is "inclusiveness and accessibility" and we have now started to measure how successful we are at being inclusiveness by comparing response rates to a profile of Oxford residents that is based upon Census 2011 data. As a further example of our commitment to be more inclusive we will be refreshing the Talkback Panel in Autumn 2014, with the goal of making it more representative of the people of Oxford.

5. You are legally required to monitor and review the proposed changes after implementation to check they work as planned and to screen for unexpected equality impacts.

Please provide details of how you will monitor/evaluate or review your proposals and when the review will take place

We are tracking the demographics of people in the community who are involved or engaged with City Council. The profile of the members of the Talkback Panel is tracked whenever it changes (approximately every two years), and the profile of the responders to Talkback Panel surveys is monitored whenever surveys have been completed (approximately twice per year).

Lead officer responsible for signing off the EqIA:

Role:

Date:

Note, please consider & include the following areas:

- Summary of the impacts of any individual policies

- Specific impact tests (e.g. statutory equality duties, social, regeneration and sustainability)
- Post implementation review plan (consider the basis for the review, objectives and how these will be measured, impacts and outcomes including the “unknown”)
- Potential data sources (attach hyperlinks including Government impact assessments where relevant)

Sadie Paige 12 May 2014

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Consultation Toolkit

A Guide to Effective Consultation

Oxford City Council

Updated: June 2014

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1 Introduction

1.1 Introduction to consultation

Oxford City Council is committed to building a world-class city for all its citizens. Working with local communities and stakeholders to build channels for dialogue and engagement is a key part of the Council's plan to enhance the relationship between citizens, their local communities and those who they elect to represent them. Public services that are based on an understanding of citizens' needs are crucial and consultation is one way of achieving this.

Consultation is a vital part of a modern, representative democracy. It is about ensuring that elected councillors are aware of and engaged with the views of individuals, community groups, and other stakeholders. It is not intended to enable minority interests to overrule the best interests of the wider community and the city as a whole. Consultation supports, informs and improves decision-making by elected councillors, but it does not replace it; the responsibility for the final decision on any issue that involves the Council's resources rests with the city's elected councillors.

Consultation is the process of actively seeking information or advice prior to making a decision. It is the way in which residents can influence the delivery of services and the development of policies; it applies to both routine functions, as well as significant one-off decisions.

Consultation should be a dialogue - an on-going exchange of views - and councils, the police and health authorities have statutory duties to consult the public on a range of issues. However, we do not engage just because we have to... effective consultation can inform decision-making in the Council and ensures that we are meeting the needs of our citizens.

1.2 Purpose

This toolkit is intended to help officers across Oxford City Council to deliver effective consultation. Please contact the consultation team if you have any suggested improvements or questions.

1.3 Here to help

For advice and guidance on consultation projects, please contact the consultation officers:

Sadie Paige	spaige@oxford.gov.uk	01865 252250
Hamera Plume	hplume@oxford.gov.uk	01865 252057

(Hamera is on maternity leave until January 2015)

2 The Principles of Consultation

2.1 Context

With the adoption of the Community Engagement Policy Statement 2014 – 17, Oxford City Council agreed to a revised set of principles that apply to all forms of community engagement including consultation.

These principles of consultation have been adapted from ideas from the Consultation Institute, the Cabinet Office, and are informed by the feedback from residents provided by the December 2013 – March 2014 consultation activities.

2.2 Principles

1. **Flexibility:** Successful engagement requires a range of mechanisms to build and sustain a conversation with the community, with a broad or narrow audience as the issue requires. Broad principles and general ideas could be consulted on across a wide audience while the details of implementation might require input from a much smaller group. Flexibility requires that a range of engagement methods should be considered, including consultation, area forums, neighbourhood forums, community partnerships or through the work of the Communities and Neighbourhoods team.
2. **Proportionality:** Oxford City Council applies the principle of proportionality when deciding which method of community engagement to use in any particular situation. This means that the type and scale of involvement will be proportional to the potential impact of the proposal or decision being taken.
3. **Transparency and clarity:** is applied to the consultation processes. This means that the objectives must be clear since they vary according to type of issue and the stage in the decision-making or policy development process that has been reached.

It must be clear what is being consulted upon, and where decisions have already been made. To avoid creating unrealistic expectations, stakeholders and citizens must be told what they can or cannot influence by responding to consultation, and what the next steps will be.

Sufficient information should be available to enable stakeholders and residents to provide informed feedback. This will be provided both on a case-by-case basis through the provision of information related to specific consultations and engagement events and activities, and as part of Oxford City Council's on-going commitment to provide the public with balanced and objective information to assist the understanding of issues.

4. **Timeliness:** consultation should begin early in the policy development or decision-making process when views can genuinely be taken into account. Every effort will be made to make available the information an early stage to enable contestability and challenge.

Timeframes for consultation should allow stakeholders sufficient time to provide a considered response. When the consultation spans all or part of a holiday

period policy makers should consider what if any impact there may be and take appropriate mitigating action.

The amount of time required will depend on the nature and impact of the proposal (for example, the diversity of interested parties or the complexity of the issue, or even external events), and might typically vary between two and 12 weeks.

5. **Feedback:** policy and decision-makers must publish a summary of the responses to consultation that have been received and how they have been used; ensure that participants receive feedback about how their contributions have informed the outcome; ensure that information and viewpoints have been collated and objectively assessed; and ensure that there is a fair interpretation of the results.

Policy-makers must be prepared to change their plans as a result of consultation. Citizens who participate in any form of community engagement must believe that their voice will be taken seriously, and that things can be changed if there is support for change

6. **Inclusiveness and accessibility:** all stakeholders and citizens who have an interest in, or who would be affected by, a specific decision must have the opportunity to participate in consultation activities. This includes groups that are sometimes more challenging to engage such as younger people, older people, minority groups, and people with disabilities.

It means that information should be easy to comprehend, and consideration should be given to appropriate forms of consultation by providing different ways for people to be engaged, and ensuring that people are not excluded through barriers of language, culture or opportunity.

3 Overview of the Consultation Process

There is a defined process to follow for carrying out public involvement projects across the Council. The table below summarises the process these projects should follow.

			✓
PLAN	1	Discuss your need for public involvement with the consultation officers. Determine whether there is a need for project brief.	
	2	Complete the Project Brief and send it to the consultation officers. The brief will then be reviewed at the Public Involvement Board.	
	3	Once you have been notified that your public involvement activity has been approved you should inform the councillors whose wards will be involved and wider groups of councillors if appropriate.	
IMPLEMENT	4	Record the project on the City Council's consultation portal (eConsult) at www.oxford.gov.uk/consultation . If you require training on how to use the portal please contact the consultation officers. NB this is a requirement <u>whether or not</u> it involves an online survey.	
	5	Develop your survey with the support of the consultation officers	
	6	Pilot the questions you are proposing to ask.	
	7	Revise your questions if necessary following the pilot.	
	8	Run your public involvement exercise	
REPORT	9	Collate and analyse the results	

	10	<p>Produce a report including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The response rates • The groups that responded • The main findings • How you intend to use the results 	
	11	<p>Produce a newsletter summarising the main results. This should be sent to everybody who took part in your engagement project and also made available to the wider public on the portal at www.oxford.gov.uk/consultation.</p> <p>You must state how you intend to report all the findings back to those that participated in your consultation.</p> <p>The newsletter should also state how you intend to use the results.</p>	
REVIEW	12	<p>Carry out an evaluation. The completed evaluation form should then be sent to the Consultation Officers no later than 6 weeks after the closing date.</p>	

4 Planning your consultation

4.1 Public Involvement Project Brief Template

The project brief document, as highlighted in step 2 of the process, must be completed before any work on your public involvement project begins. All public involvement activities must follow the processes outlined below:

1. A project brief must be completed for all public involvement exercises. See below for the template that must be filled in, as well as guidance about public involvement. The template can also be found on the Intranet, under 'Processes and Procedures' and 'Consultation Process.'

Public Involvement Project Brief Template

2. The completed project brief must then be approved by the Public Involvement Board. The board meets monthly and is chaired by Tim Sadler and includes Angela Cristofoli, Jeremy Thomas, Peter McQuitty, Hamera Plume and Sadie Paige. See <http://occweb/intranet/consultation-toolkit.cfm> for dates
3. Internal staff surveys do not normally need to be approved by the Public Involvement Board and a lighter version of the project brief template is available.

[Project Brief Light Template](#)

The full process must be completed before any consultation or public involvement project can begin. The only exemptions from this requirement are individual development control and licensing consultations.

4.2 Questions to consider ahead of consultation

- What is the purpose of the consultation?
- Why would you like to carry out the consultation?
- Who is going to carry out the consultation?
- What has happened in the past around this situation?
- What is important to different people?
- What has been stated publicly about the situation?
- What are people's assumptions on the issues?
- What are different stakeholders' concerns?

4.3 What do we mean by stakeholders?

For all consultation projects, it is important to consider who your stakeholders are and how you intend to involve them. Stakeholders are by definition people who have a 'stake' in a situation. Identifying your stakeholders is key to a successful engagement exercise. The main groups usually consist of:

- The whole community. If you are talking about engaging 'the public' then you are probably thinking in terms of seeking public opinion about something, so you will want to run a process that involves a representative cross-section of your target population.
- A representative cross-section of the community. It may not be the public in general you want to involve, but people from a certain community, or even from a particular street.
- Specific groups in the community. These may be people of a particular ethnic community, people with special needs, or people with a common interest in a shared concern.
- Professionals, experts, and the organisations that have a statutory right to be involved. These are people and organisations who have to be involved in engagement and consultation either by law (hence 'statutory') or by virtue of the positions they hold, for example organisations such as the Environment Agency and local councils, and individuals such as Members of Parliament.

4.4 Identifying Stakeholders – who to involve, how to reach them?

- The purpose of your consultation will help to determine who you involve.
- If you are engaging stakeholders rather than just the public at large, it is better to involve too many than to miss out some who are crucial.
- Beware of 'consultation fatigue' caused by engaging the same people too often. There is a limit to the number of times that most people will respond to consultations. If you want to engage the same people repeatedly you would be well advised to ask them to join some sort of panel or group that meets regularly.
- Equally, beware of engaging the 'wrong' people. For example, some 'community leaders' are self-appointed or designated as leaders by the media. In reality they may have no mandate to speak on behalf of the local community; ensure you do not solely rely on such people for your engagement process.
- Who is or will be affected, positively or negatively, by what you are doing or proposing to do? For example, communities, employees, customers, contractors, suppliers, partners, trade unions and shareholders.

- Who holds official positions relevant to what you are doing?
- Who runs organisations with relevant interests?
- Who has been involved in any similar issues in the past? For example, regulators, Government agencies and politicians at regional or national levels, non-Government organisations and other national interest groups.

4.5 Key considerations when selecting your target audience

Representativeness

Representative audiences are important in consultation. A representative sample is of crucial importance when you need to gather the views of the public at large, for example when a new development has been proposed. However, it is less important if you are carrying out engagement relevant to a particular group, e.g. wheelchair users.

Sampling

Sampling involves engaging a small number of people and, provided that the sample is representative, extrapolating the results to work out what a much larger number thinks about a certain issue. The larger your sample, the more accurate your results will be. There are three basic sampling methods:

Random sampling: To do this you need a list of the people you need to sample, then you simply pick say, 10% of them by choosing every tenth name.

Stratified sampling: This involves a bit more work, but the results will be more representative. You begin by dividing the target population into sub-categories – say, single women, or people living in a certain area. Then you pick a random selection of that group, and combine all the random selections so that eventually your random selection reflects the composition of the total population.

Quota sampling: This involves finding a quota of people representing certain sub-categories of the target population – so you might ask an interviewer to stop and talk to 150 men under the age of 25, or 100 people over 60 and so forth.

Inclusiveness

It is vital that your consultation avoids the ‘usual suspects’ and reaches the ‘hard to reach’.

The ‘usual suspects’

People should not be excluded because they regularly attend meetings and get involved. However, we should also ensure we do not rely on them as our sole audience for consultation. Often useful ideas and observations come from those who are less familiar with the issues as they can bring different perspectives.

Therefore it is worth making efforts to go beyond the 'usual suspects' and thinking of people whose contribution could be valuable because of their viewpoint or expertise, or who could be excluded unless special efforts are made to include them (e.g. minority black and ethnic groups, special needs groups).

The 'hard to reach'

The flip side of the 'usual suspects' point is that you have to make special efforts to ensure that certain sections of the population are included in any engagement exercise. These are often designated as the 'hard to reach'. These groups include minority ethnic groups, the disabled and young people. But also consider other groups such as commuters, young professionals and parents with young children.

To ensure consultations are inclusive we must ensure the following conditions are met:

- There is accessible and targeted information about the community engagement.
- There is assistance with transport to the meeting where needed.
- There is an accessible building with accessible lavatory facilities.
- There is communication support; e.g. induction loop, interpreters.
- There is accommodation for personal assistants/helpers.
- There is supporting documentation in accessible formats.

We must also:

- Check access needs at the start.
- Ask the right questions, i.e. about barriers faced rather than about impairments.
- Ensure people speak one at a time at a pace to suit other participants and interpreters.
- Allow additional time for communicating with people who have sensory or learning impairments.
- Use appropriate and respectful language.
- Allow enough time for breaks.

Matching methods to people

Think, early on, about the engagement methods that you can use in relation to certain types of stakeholder. For example, if you are speaking to people with low levels of literacy a questionnaire may not be a good idea, and there is no point in having a public meeting designed to attract parents with children of school age during the school holidays.

5 Consultation Methods

Finding new and interesting ways to engage people is essential but can also be challenging. To find the best method for you bear the following questions in mind before embarking on a consultation exercise.

- What is the purpose of the engagement process?
- What would you like to have at the end of the process?
- Which particular stakeholder groups would you like to involve and what special needs do they have, if any?
- How interactive would you like your process to be?

Comparison of Consultation Methods

Method	Advantages	Disadvantages	Cost
Survey (face-to-face)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Useful for benchmarking against previous findings. • Statistically sound, you can ensure it is representative of the population. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Respondents cannot talk freely if the structure of the survey is too rigid. • There is little time for respondents to think about their answers. • Time consuming. 	£££
Survey (on-line)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cheap. • Allows consultation with a large number of people. • Can be used to access views from people that don't take part in traditional consultation methods such as attending public meetings. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Will miss those that do not use our website. • Can be unrepresentative unless you include a monitoring form. • No control over who completes the survey. 	£
Survey (postal)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Can access a large number of people. • Good when dealing with a sensitive subject. • Can target groups which are often excluded. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tightly structured surveys can constrain responses. • Can have a poor response rate. • No control over who completes the survey. 	££
Focus Groups	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enables participants to discuss topics in detail. • In groups participants can use each other to springboard ideas off one another. • Not prescriptive. • Can be useful for complex issues. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It is not statistically reliable as the numbers involved in a group are quite small. • Some members of the group may be more vocal than others and try to take over the group. 	££

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Can help to include people that are sometimes 'hard to reach' 		
Leaflets	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A good method when you want to inform people about a particular issue. • Relatively inexpensive to produce 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • May not be read by all that receive it. • Not suitable for those who cannot read or have visual impairments 	£
Citizens' Jury	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enables participants to make an informed judgement. • Encourages active citizenship. • Empowers participants by encouraging them to make decisions based on the information that has been presented to them. • A small number of citizens are involved, usually 12. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Participants' views may become unrepresentative of the community as a result of being more informed than others that have not been part of the Jury. 	£££
Citizens' Panel	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A cost-effective resource for all types of consultation. • A good way of building relationships with members of the community. • Encourages active citizenship. • Regular refreshment • Of the panel can keep it representative of the community. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Large amount of maintenance and administration involved. • If the panel is not refreshed regularly it could become unrepresentative of the community 	££
Public Meeting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Can engage with a large group of people in one setting 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Low turnout can lead to poor results 	££
Exhibition	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Displays can be clearly set out. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • People that are unable to attend will be excluded. 	££
Media / Press release/ Radio/ Television/ Website	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Useful when you need to give information to a large number of people. • Quick way to get out information. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Only goes to people that read certain newspapers, or listen/watch particular radio and TV stations. • Media can put their own 	Varies

		slant on a story.	
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5.1 Surveys

Surveys (and questionnaires) are one of the most popular consultation methods. They can be used to gather public views to proposals or find out what people think of certain services.

It is always a good idea to test how the questions work in practice and to ensure the questions you are asking will produce the information you want.

They can be used when consulting with a large number of people and are an excellent way of collecting quantitative data. They are also useful for benchmarking, if you would like to compare results over time. Also, the fact that there are several potential delivery methods make surveys a flexible way to get responses. However, it is harder than it looks to write a good questionnaire and a poor format can lead to misleading results.

Method

1. Decide which type of questionnaire or survey you want to use:
 - Deliberative: gives people information before asking their opinion
 - Qualitative: asks people to respond in their own words
 - Quantitative: asks people to react to various propositions by ticking boxes or marking answers against a scale.
2. Decide the delivery method:
 - Telephone: people are telephoned at home and the interviewer completes the form
 - Interview on the street: interviewer with a clipboard approaches people and asks questions
 - Interview at home: interviewer arranges to visit
 - Postal: form completed by householder and returned
 - Online: form completed online
3. Decide how you will manage, collate, analyse and use the responses.
4. Draft the survey or questionnaire taking your answers to the above into account.
5. Ask at least five people to complete it. Consider whether your questions have provoked the type of responses that you want.
6. Issue the questionnaire.
7. Receive responses and thank respondents (if you asked for contact details).
8. Collate, analyse and publish the results, and tell people how you will use them.

Hints for drafting questions for surveys and questionnaires

1. Try to keep questions as short as possible. A few carefully focused questions usually produce more useful responses than a larger number of general ones
2. Use simple words: people will not answer questions they don't immediately understand
3. Start by asking relatively straightforward questions and then those requiring more complex answers
4. Group together questions investigating similar themes
5. If you are using tick boxes, vary the question format so that people have to think about each response rather than just ticking the same box throughout. You should also alert people to the fact that the format changes
6. If you give people a number of alternatives, ensure you give them enough choice to ensure they think about the answer
7. If you give people a scale on which to score something, tell them which end is high and which low
8. Guard against phrasing questions in such a way that they reflect your own presuppositions or biases
9. Be careful not to lead people in particular directions either through the wording of the question or through any examples you use
10. Avoid composite questions such as "What are the advantages and disadvantages of public transport?" Separate them
11. Where possible avoid questions including words that need defining, such as 'regularly'
12. Avoid questions that are likely to have predictable answers. For example, "Is a safer neighbourhood important to you?"
13. Always put a closing date on questionnaires.

5.2 Focus Groups

Focus groups are groups of 6–12 people carefully selected to be representative of a designated part of the population. They are used primarily for intensive research designed to tease out the depths, subtleties and nuances of opinion. They need to be carefully facilitated.

Focus groups can explain what lies behind an opinion, or how people approach an issue. But they should not be used as a substitute for engaging directly with actual stakeholders in situations where merely knowing who thinks what is not enough. A warning: the term 'focus group' is coming to be used to describe any small meeting of people, regardless of whether they are representative and of the purpose for which the group has been convened.

Interaction between participants, enabled by the small size of the group and the skill of the facilitator, can be very productive. Members can be carefully recruited to fit specific profiles. Focus groups enable a facilitator to design a very precise process that will examine the issues in the way required.

The smallness of the group allows the facilitator to get to the heart of difficult issues. Focus groups can obtain opinions from people who would not respond to other methods because they are not comfortable with writing or because of other constraints.

Some people have more confidence to participate in groups than others. This may result in an imbalance in discussion. Variations of ability and articulacy within the group may inhibit some members.

Method

1. Decide exactly how a focus group process will contribute to your overall engagement process and what specifically you want the use of them to achieve.
2. Identify groups of 8–12 people to form focus groups, ensuring they are representative of either the whole community or of the particular groups with whom you want to engage (or hire a market research company to do the work for you).
3. You will probably have to offer an incentive to attend. It needs to be enough to be attractive but be careful it does not tend to distort the representativeness of participation.
4. Engage a skilled facilitator to run the groups and work with him/her to devise questions and prompts, ground rules and briefing materials if required, and a co-facilitator to be responsible for recording the process.
5. Book venue(s), catering and childcare arrangements if necessary.
6. Produce a report of the process and the results, ensuring participants receive copies.

5.3 Newsletters

Newsletters provide the opportunity to set out plans or options and give feedback to stakeholders on the progress of a project. They are often used when an on-going process requires regular updating and they are one of the cheapest and most effective methods of keeping people informed. Newsletters are most useful when they are used in addition to other forms of consultation activities and are a good way to give people regular updates on a project's progression.

They should consist of key findings, be of a high quality and kept brief and to the point. It is also useful to include other local information in the newsletter that the recipient may find interesting.

It is a relatively cheap way of reaching a large number of people and is an excellent way to benchmark changes over time. It also allows you to control the flow of information that stakeholders will receive

The drawbacks are that newsletters can be seen as impersonal and so will be discarded by some as soon as they receive them

Method

Variable, depending on the numbers of newsletters to be produced and the quality used. If professionally written and produced they can become expensive.

Using this method:

1. Call a meeting to decide the purpose of the newsletter and who it is aimed at.
2. Research methods and costs of production and distribution.
3. Produce a 'dummy' to give you a clearer idea of the work involved and the practicalities.
4. Draw up a realistic schedule for producing and distributing it, and a list of the topics the first few issues should cover.
5. Call another meeting with the results of the above to decide whether to go ahead.
6. Produce and distribute your first newsletter.
7. Evaluate reactions and tweak the next one accordingly.

5.4 Citizens' Panel

A Citizens' Panel uses a representative sample of the public to obtain their views in order to ascertain what the community, as a whole, thinks about a particular issue. To ensure Panels do not become the same people giving us their views over time, it is important to refresh the Panel on a regular basis.

'Talkback' is our Citizens Panel in Oxford. It is made up of 1,000 residents over the age of 16 that are representative of the city's population. The panel are sent 2 surveys per year on a range of topics in either postal or online format. If you would like to submit a topic to a Talkback survey you should contact the Consultation Officers.

Talkback provides an immediately available means to assess opinion on specific issues. It overcomes the problem of having to recruit for each separate exercise. The response rate from Talkback is usually much higher than from the population as a whole as Panel members have expressed an interest in getting involved in consultation exercises, so tend to respond when they are asked.

Talkback can be used in a variety of ways, from questionnaires sent to all members when a sense of local opinion is required, to small numbers being recruited to attend a focus group meeting. Questionnaires are sent electronically as well as via the post, a variety of delivery methods increases the chances of receiving a high response rate. Panels are an excellent way to ensure there is a regular means of communication with a cross-section of opinion.

Results can deliver valuable trend information based on the survey being repeated over time which makes them an excellent benchmarking tool.

To maintain citizens' interest in the process it is important to give them feedback. Newsletters are used for this. In addition it is possible to use samples from the Panel for Citizens' Juries or other forms of discussion groups. Also at the end of each year, an annual newsletter is produced which highlights all the changes that have been made as a result of the Talkback surveys during that particular year.

Method

1. Contact the Consultation Officers if you would like to submit a topic to a Talkback Survey or if you would like to use members of the panel for a focus group.
2. The Consultation Officers will work with you to develop your questions for the Talkback survey.
3. Once the questions have been developed, a Pilot will take place to test your questions.
4. Any necessary changes will be made to the Talkback survey questions as a result of the pilot.
5. The Consultation Officers will run the Talkback survey.
6. The survey results will be analysed.
7. A Talkback report will be produced and circulated to the relevant Service Areas

5.5 Public Meetings and Workshops

Public meetings are normally large meetings where information about plans, decisions taken and options available are presented to the public. They are a conventional way of involving the public in discussions about schemes of work and projects.

To make the meeting more interactive a meeting can, after the initial presentation, be split into smaller discussion groups. The groups can then report back their discussion to the meeting, This encourages those that are not confident speaking in public to still get involved.

Good design and preparation, an experienced facilitator and a suitable venue at a suitable time can all help to make a successful public meeting.

A good public meeting enables all participants to say what they want to without feeling intimidated or inhibited. It also leaves people knowing what will happen as a result of it and how the results will be used.

Workshops are similar to public meetings in that they involved members of the public with the main difference being they are usually invited to attend the meeting and are usually asked to carry out some actions during the meeting. The method that applies to public meetings can also be used when holding workshops.

Method

1. Decide what you want your public meeting to achieve and therefore who should come to it
2. Identify a series of steps from beginning to end that will achieve these purposes.
3. Ask yourself what the participants will want from the meeting, and whether your steps will meet their needs as well as yours
4. Book a suitable venue, estimating the likely number of participants. Check heating, lighting, ventilation, electrical equipment, coffee/lunch break arrangements and house rules, e.g. emergency exits.
5. Identify a chair or facilitator and speakers.
6. Send out invitations and/or advertise the meeting.
7. Prepare background materials.
8. Hold the meeting, record key points visibly during it and provide participants with comment sheets so that those who are unable or too inhibited to speak can still make their points
9. After the meeting report the results to participants and thank them for attending.
10. De-brief and evaluate.

5.6 Exhibitions and Roadshows

Exhibitions are used to take the message about plans and schemes of work to dispersed audiences. Apart from the desire to reflect the interests of different geographical areas, another reason for travelling around with the exhibition material is that it increases the number of different people that get to see it. They can be taken out to where people are, such as schools, shopping centres and housing estates, rather than having to attract people to them, and they can appeal to groups, such as young people, who may not respond to document or meetings-based methods.

Care must be taken to ensure that the exhibition material is readable, interesting and easy to understand. Visual displays are particularly useful when you are consulting on proposed design or planning issues. These displays help give people a clear sense of what is involved and show how schemes would look and function.

Exhibitions can also be used to gather immediate reactions from those who see them. They are also good when access to local knowledge or concerns is required.

Exhibitions involve a significant amount of research around venues and the best times to hold the exhibition. To ensure maximum attendance they must be held in the right places at the right times. They are particularly useful when the audience would be more responsive to a visual image rather than written material, for example young children, older persons and those whose first language is not English.

Roadshows and exhibitions are time-consuming for staff that are attending and there must be a sufficient number of staff that are fully briefed for the exhibition/roadshow to be effective.

Exhibitions also allow you to get feedback from those attending, although you must treat this with caution as the people attending may not be fully representative of their community.

Method

1. Decide if an exhibition or roadshow is a good way to explain your project e.g. is it something that can be best explained visually?
2. If it is, establish the availability and suitability of venues, how long it will take to produce materials, and when staff will be available.
3. As soon as the materials are available, gather as many people as possible and ask them to study all the materials. Then go over each item in depth asking if the meaning is clear, if it explains issues at the right level of detail, and if the materials are visually attractive.
4. Edit and test the materials again.
5. Pick the staff who will attend and brief them on the questions they may be asked and how to answer them.
6. Arrive at the venues in good time to set up the exhibition and test equipment.

7. Welcome visitors and try to be as open as possible about all aspects of the project. If a question is asked that cannot be answered immediately, take the person's contact details and respond to them as soon as you can.
8. If you are running a sequence of exhibitions, hold a debrief session at the close of each to record questions asked and answers given to establish some consistency of responses.

5.5 Using the Media

The media – press, radio, television and internet – is an important channel for disseminating information to the community at large or to target audiences. Television and radio in particular offer a means to communicate with groups of people who might not otherwise seek information or who have difficulties with written material. The media can target information at transport users; for example, the radio can be used to reach commuters travelling by car.

The use of the media is useful when public awareness about a proposal or issue needs to be raised and local debate promoted. The media is also an excellent way to promote dates of roadshows/exhibitions/public meetings or telephone numbers.

The media can be used alongside other public involvement methods to raise awareness of events or services. Staff should receive training before dealing with the media. Any communication with the press must go via the Press Office. You should not make any direct contact with the press without agreement from the Press Office.

Method

1. Contact the Press Office to decide on the most appropriate form of media – if it requires an interview and explanation then a radio interview may be best. If it's to let people know of dates and venues of an event then a press article may be better.
2. If you plan to feature in a local newspaper, draft a press release about your consultation event and submit it to the press office. For advice on how to write a press release contact the press officer.
3. If you plan to feature on the radio ensure you have received media training and are prepared for the interview. Contact the Press Office if you require media training.

5.6 Mystery Shopping

There are many organisations that offer mystery shoppers to organisations to 'test' their services. The general format of the exercise is someone who is unknown to the Council would try out a service and they report back on their experience as a way of testing service quality. If the 'shopper' is properly briefed they can test, for instance, whether correct advice and information is being given out or whether standards or service provision have been adequately met.

Before embarking on this method it is important to ensure that the right questions are being asked and that shoppers are familiar with services and understand the responses they might receive. The use of trained mystery shoppers can provide precise and detailed feedback.

This is a useful method to use when you are testing the clarity of signing and directional advice, when different aspects of service quality are to be measured and compared or when services involve a strong person to person (or subjective) aspect such as issues of courtesy, knowledge, assistance etc.

Method

1. Decide on the service that you would like to be mystery shopped.
2. Design a brief that you would like the mystery shopper to test, e.g. housing advice service or making an enquiry at a leisure centre.
3. Appoint the mystery shopper.
4. Design the questions/scenario you would like the mystery shopper to test.
5. Organise a date/time to carry out the mystery shopper test.
6. Once the test has been carried out evaluate the results.
7. Feedback the results to the service that has been evaluated.

5.7 Conferences and Seminars

Conferences and Seminars differ from both public meetings and workshops. While public meetings are primarily information-oriented, and workshops action-oriented, the primary purposes of most conferences and seminars are analysis and discussion.

The format of such events tends to be presentations followed by discussion, sometimes with specialist breakout sessions (which may be referred to as 'workshops') for informal discussion.

This method tends to appeal more to professionals and experts as opposed to 'ordinary' people. Therefore it might be useful if you are trying to consult with a group of professionals but not if you would like a representative sample of people from the local community. It's a good forum for bringing a range of experts together to discuss issues in detail

Method

1. If you are intent upon using this method as part of an engagement strategy, decide what it is going to achieve, who will participate and how it contributes to your other engagement objectives.
2. If you are sure that it is the right thing to do, draft invitations and an outline programme that will achieve your objectives.
3. Issue a call for papers and abstracts (usually in parallel with invitations to attend).
4. Book an appropriate venue.
5. Assess abstracts, identify speakers and invite them.
6. Draft publicity material and mail-shot possible participants.
7. Invite someone to chair the event, or facilitate if it is relatively informal.
8. Produce a report of the event, including all the papers delivered, and distribute among participants.

5.8 Open Days and Drop-In Sessions

Open days and drop-in sessions offer opportunities for people to talk to staff, seek information, discuss local issues or proposals, or simply chat about the things that concern them. The essence of this approach is that it is informal

From the organisation's point of view it provides an opportunity to give information, show an interest in people's concerns, answer questions, and generally show people what goes on behind the public face of the organisation. It's a good way of reaching out to the community and seeking informal contact and it can fit into people's personal timetables.

Staff need to be briefed and some sort of introductory exhibition is usually a good idea. It is also a good idea to collect as many names and contact details as possible: the people who come may well be prepared to respond positively to other opportunities for engagement

Open days can be quite time intensive so you need to ensure staff have sufficient time to allocate to them. It is also difficult to predict attendance so you should market and promote the days to ensure as many people as possible are aware of them.

Method

1. Decide how holding an open day or drop-in session will contribute to your overall engagement activities
2. Identify whether there are particular sections of the community who might welcome this opportunity, or who would respond to this method of engagement. Think about what this might mean in terms of which of your staff should be involved
3. Identify general staffing requirements, where visitors will be welcomed, and assess impact on other duties
4. Decide what information should be available to visitors, and in what languages to produce it
5. Decide what you will seek in return and draft questionnaires or feedback sheets accordingly
6. Publicise dates, times, purposes and attractions
7. Organise refreshments and/or childcare
8. Brief staff
9. Meet and greet visitors
10. De-brief, evaluate and decide how to follow up

5.9 Using the Internet and Our Website

Community engagement is possible via our website. We have an online consultation system, eConsult, that allows all consultations to be stored in one area of our website at www.oxford.gov.uk/consultation.

Web based consultations offer a number of advantages: people can participate without having to travel to meetings, they save paper, they enable people to focus on the issues that particularly interest them and they work well for people who feel worried by speaking in public or for those that find writing English is easier than speaking it.

In order to run successful online consultations It is important that our website is easily navigable, the information is understandable and of relevance to users.

It is also vital that the needs of particular groups (e.g. visually impaired, black and minority ethnic groups) are considered and addressed. When there are particular needs to be addressed, e.g. visual impairments, facilities such as Text to Speech on our website, which reads web pages aloud, can address this.

Our eConsult system lets us present issues to stakeholders and the public easily and clearly, encouraging high levels of participation and response. It also lets us manage all our consultation needs through a single, flexible system.

On our website we can create and carry out large or small, private or public public engagement exercises easily and quickly. The eConsult system is designed to offer a wide range of feedback mechanisms, including interactive questionnaires, online discussions and commenting on specific sections in consultation documents.

It also lets us convert documents, questionnaires, communications and processes into hard copy form, to ensure that offline consultation can be managed in tandem.

Through our online consultation system we can:

- improve coordination of all our consultation activities, avoid unnecessary duplication and maintain an electronic record of all consultation activity
- provide a framework for best practice and consistency across our organisation
- enhance communications with participants, before, during and after each consultation activity
- build up a self-maintaining stakeholder database that can be used to profile and target interested parties
- save time in assembling evidence on which to base a decision
- automatically analyse feedback and increase efficiency in data processing
- quickly and efficiently publish summaries, formal responses and individual responses as required
- decrease errors and costs normally associated with data take-on and validation
- dramatically reduce costs on print production and posting, and improve your sustainability rating

5.10 Social Media

Essentially, social media incorporates the online technology and methods through which people can share content, personal opinions and swap different perspectives. Social media website content can come in many shapes and forms:

- Text - text is used to put across opinions or write blog posts.
 - Images - images and photos can be used to convey information in illustrative form.
 - Audio - social media lets you create podcasts (Podcasts are audio files that are automatically delivered directly to your desktop computer, and can be transferred to your iPod or other MP3 player) for users to download. Podcasting has now become popular as an alternative way of providing 'radio' type content that can be listened to whenever, wherever and as many times as the listener wants.
 - Video - video sites mean that you'll be able to record a video and then then allow people all over the world to see it.
-
- The most popular types of social media websites are huge at the moment. A few examples of these social media websites are:
 - Social networking - websites that allows you to create a personal profile about yourself then chat, discuss and share information with others such as friends and family. Prime examples of social networking sites are Facebook and Twitter.
 - Wikis - wikis are websites that allow you to create, edit and share information about a subject or topic. Wikipedia, for instance, is one of the world's most popular wikis.
 - Video sharing - video-sharing sites allow you to upload and share your personal videos with the rest of the web community. A perfect example of a video sharing website is YouTube.
 - Photo sharing - photo-sharing websites allow users to upload pictures and images to a personal account which can then be viewed by web users the world over. Flickr acts as a great example of a successful photo-sharing site.
 - News aggregation - news aggregators provide a list of the latest news stories published by users from a range of different websites. Digg, for instance, is one of the web's largest news aggregators with one of the most dedicated communities.
 - Social bookmarking - social bookmarking sites allow users to publicly bookmark web pages they find valuable in order to share them with other internet users.
 - Microblogging - these websites allow you to post micro blog-like posts to announce what you are currently doing. Twitter is a good example of a presence app.

This list is by no means exhaustive and there are many more types of social media sites available on the internet. The social media front is moving very fast and new and more innovative social media sites are springing up all the time.

What to do if you want to use Social Media

If you would like to use a form of social media such as set up a Facebook page or Twitter account, you should contact the Website Manager (Chris Lee, clee@oxford.gov.uk) in the Policy, Culture and Communications department to discuss your request.

Before you request access to use any social media you must ensure you have adequate resources to manage the process. This includes regularly monitoring the content of all messages that you receive in response to your consultation, managing the expectations of those participating, responding to messages where required and recording all consultation information on the City Council website.

Any messages from participants that contain offensive language, incorrect information or are vexatious must be removed. Social media sites must be regularly monitored in order to prevent this from happening wherever possible.

Online methods are a cost-effective way of hearing people's views on issues and they are also useful as they allow people to say what they want on a subject at any time of the day or night. They are good when it is important that participants have access to information on a regular basis to ensure effective participation. They are also a good way of potentially involving large numbers of people.

However, online methods should be used in addition to other methods rather than instead of otherwise you risk excluding people who don't have access to the internet from your consultation. Participation can also be confined to the very dedicated and may therefore be unrepresentative. This should also not be a substitute for meeting and talking to people face to face.

6 Incentive Guidelines

Introduction

These guidelines have been put together to ensure consistency across the organisation in the incentives we offer residents when participating in consultation. The document also outlines some conditions under which free prize draws must be operated at Oxford City Council.

Free prize draws

There is no specific legislation governing free prize draws but there are common law principles such as:

- Transparency
- Equity
- Fairness

All these must clearly be incorporated into the administration of free prize draws by those researchers who organise them as an incentive for survey participation.

Respondents should not be required to do anything other than agree to participate in a consultation exercise or return a questionnaire to be eligible for entry in to a free prize draw.

No incentive should be offered that requires respondents to spend any money.

Respondents should not be offered price discounts as incentives because claiming the incentive would involve the respondents paying the balance after the discount.

The offer of monetary vouchers is permissible because this does not necessitate expenditure on the part of the respondents.

The use of incentives to stimulate response must not be used as a means of collecting respondents' personal details. These should be kept separate from the completed questionnaires or response forms.

Permission to use a respondent's details must be specifically sought and must not be linked or be a condition of entry to a free prize draw. Failure to fully complete a free interview or questionnaire should not disqualify a respondent from entry to a free prize draw. Respondents should be clearly informed before participating of the following facts:

- The closing date for receipt of entry.
- The nature of the prizes.
- If a cash alternative can be substituted for any prize.
- How and when winners will be notified of results.
- How and when winners will be announced.

Unless otherwise stated in advance, prize winners should receive their prizes within six weeks after the draw has been held.

Winners in a free prize draw should be selected in a manner that ensures fair application of the laws of chance. The process by which winners will be selected must involve a clear audit trail and an independent draw. This process will not be made public but can be explained to individual respondents when specifically

requested.

A poor response or an inferior quality of entries is not an acceptable basis for extending the duration of a free prize draw or withholding prizes unless the draw organisers have announced their intention to do so at the outset.

Incentives

As above for free prize draws:

- No incentive should be offered that requires the respondent to spend any money.
- Respondents should not be offered price discounts as incentives because claiming the incentive would involve the respondents paying the balance after the discount.
- The offer of monetary vouchers is permissible because this does not necessitate expenditure on the part of the respondents.

Suggested guidelines

Some research has been done which looks at the impact of incentives and whether it improves response rate. The following points are worth considering when deciding on whether to use an incentive or not:

- Think carefully before offering an incentive. We are a public sector organisation and there are discussions going on about the appropriateness of offering incentives to take part in consultation
- It is recommended that those who attend a focus group are offered an incentive. You can offer the incentive after the event as this allows those who do not wish to have one to opt out. It is also an opportunity to send it with feedback from the session.
- Offering an incentive, e.g. entering a prize draw for completing a survey is becoming more and more popular. However, there is debate as to how much of an impact this has on the response rate. It is recommended to always enclose a prepaid addressed envelope and if the survey is long (15–20+ questions) to offer something. For smaller surveys it is less important and perhaps offer something which is related to the survey, e.g. for a fitness survey – a free exercise class.
- Where possible try and offer an incentive from a service we provide, e.g. a Slice card.

Table 1: Some examples of the type of incentive you might offer

Engagement Method	Example of an incentive (if needed/required)
1–2 hour focus group/workshop	£10–20 high street vouchers
2 hour+ workshop	£25+ high street vouchers
Questionnaire prize draws	Related to survey, e.g. free Slice card, game of tennis, free exercise class etc. Or £25+ high street vouchers
Consulting with young children	Stickers/Balloons

What not to do

Support individual retail outlets.

Offer food. There are always concerns over allergies, healthy eating policies, supporting fair trade etc.

Transport costs

It is advised that as an organiser of a consultation event, e.g. a focus group, you need to offer to cover travel expenses.

Useful tips

Enclose a free stamped addressed envelope.

7 What is a pilot?

A pilot is a way to test your consultation method to make sure it works before you carry it out for real. It is also a good way to measure what works and doesn't work with your engagement method so that you can make any changes necessary to it to ensure it works well.

A pilot usually involves getting a small group of people to test your engagement under the same conditions in which the real consultation will take place. The group are then asked for their feedback and the engagement method is revised accordingly.

Why is it important to pilot?

By carrying out a pilot you will limit your chances of missing something key in your consultation. A pilot will throw up any issues with the consultation such as poor wording of questions, spelling errors or unclear instructions.

When is the best time to carry out a pilot?

As soon as your consultation method is ready to test. By carrying out your pilot as early as possible you will be leaving enough time to make any necessary changes should the Pilot identify problems with your engagement method.

8 Evaluation

All public engagement projects should be evaluated after they have closed.

At the end of each public involvement exercise we should evaluate how things have gone. The evaluation criteria below, provides a set of questions that you should use. It is useful to think about these evaluation questions before you develop your project plan.

Purposes	<ul style="list-style-type: none">■ What were the purposes?■ Were they achieved?■ If not, why not?
Methods	<ul style="list-style-type: none">■ What methods were used?■ Did they achieve the desired results in terms of levels of participation and type of response?■ Which methods worked best for which types of people?■ Did the process go according to the intended timetable?
Participation	<ul style="list-style-type: none">■ How many people participated?■ Did all key stakeholders participate?■ If participation was intended to be representative, was this achieved?■ If it was intended to reach several different groups, was this achieved?■ What efforts were made to reach commonly underrepresented groups?■ What methods were used to encourage participation?■ Did they work?
Results	<ul style="list-style-type: none">■ Were the results – in terms of enough people responding usefully – satisfactory?■ How easy were they to analyse and interpret?■ What form did any final report of the results take?■ How were results communicated to participants?
Outcomes	<ul style="list-style-type: none">■ What were the results of the exercise?■ What has changed or will be changed as a result of the exercise?
Participant comments	<ul style="list-style-type: none">■ What comments were made by participants about the engagement process?
Cost	<ul style="list-style-type: none">■ What did the process cost?■ Were the results worth the money?

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EXTRACT FROM THE MINUTES

CITY EXECUTIVE BOARD

Thursday 3 July 2014

21. DRAFT COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT POLICY STATEMENT 2014 - 17

The Head of Policy, Culture and Communications submitted a report (previously circulated, now appended) which sought approval from the City Executive Board to adopt the draft Community Engagement Policy Statement 2014 – 17.

Cllr Simm, Executive Board Member for Culture and Communities presented the report.

The Board noted and agreed the Scrutiny Committee's recommendations 1-4. In terms of the pilot study (recommendation 3) it was suggested that officers use two case studies of consultations already planned. One case study should be a broad, city wide consultation and the other should focus on a small in-depth sole community of interest.

The City Executive Board resolved:

1. To approve the draft Community Engagement Policy Statement 2014–17 for adoption.
2. That Officers test the effectiveness of the Council's Community Engagement Policy Statement's principles by choosing two planned consultations as case studies. One should be a broad, city wide consultation and the other should focus on a small in-depth sole community of interest.

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To: City Executive Board
Council

Date: 10 September 2014
29 September 2014

Report of: Head of Finance
Head of Business Improvement and Technology

Title of Report: INTEGRATED PERFORMANCE REPORT FOR
QUARTER 1 2014/2015

Summary and Recommendations

Purpose of report: To update Members on Finance, Risk and Performance as at the end of Quarter 1, 30th June 2014

Key decision: No

Executive lead member: Councillor Ed Turner

Policy Framework: Improving value for money and service performance

Recommendations:

That the City Executive Board:

- a) Note the projected outturn for finance and performance as at the end of the first quarter of 2014/15 and also the risk position as at 30th June 2014;
- b) Recommend to Council the approval of a £160,000 capital investment in a Heavy Goods Vehicle Testing Facility.
- c) Recommend to Council the bringing forward of a £2 million capital investment in Homelessness Property acquisitions from 2015/16 to 2014/15 with the balance of the £10 million budget being profiled £2 million each year over four years from 2015/16.

Appendices

Appendix A – Corporate Integrated Report

Appendix B – City Regeneration Integrated Report

Appendix C – Organisational Development and Services Integrated Report

Appendix D – Community Services Integrated Report

Appendix E – June Finance Performance Report

- Appendix E1** – General Fund June Forecast Outturn
Appendix E2 – Capital Programme June Forecast Outturn
Appendix E3 – HRA June Forecast Outturn
Appendix E4 – General Fund June Year to Date Position

Executive Summary

1. This report sets out the projected outturn position for finance and performance for 2014/15 as at the end of the first quarter, together with the risks faced. A brief summary is as follows: -
 - **General Fund** – the outturn position is a net overspend of £66,000; this is unlikely to materialise at year end.
 - **Housing Revenue Account** – the HRA is on budget.
 - **Capital Programme** – forecast expenditure is £2.005 million higher than the latest budget, £2.109 million being pulled forward from future financial years of which £2.0 million relates to Homeless Property acquisitions; experience suggests an overspend on this scale is unlikely.
 - **Performance** – Performance against corporate targets is good with 16 (80%) delivering as planned, 1 being below target but within tolerance limits and 3 not meeting their target.
 - **Risk Management** – there were three red risks outstanding within Regeneration and Major Projects as at 30th June 2014 which are detailed in Appendix B.

Background

2. Finance, Performance and Risk management information is reported in an integrated format to the City Executive Board on a quarterly basis.
3. The Corporate and Directorate Integrated Performance reports as at the 30th June 2014 are attached at Appendices A to D. The reports use a Red, Amber and Green reporting methodology. These reports are available to members on line via the intranet.

Financial Dials

4. The following tolerances apply to the financial dials in the summary reports:
 - Green** – Forecast outturn is within 100% of the latest approved budget.
 - Amber** – Forecast outturn is within 100% - 105% of the latest approved budget.
 - Red** – Forecast outturn is over 105% of the latest approved budget. Performance in this area is a potential concern and will be commented on within the report.

Capital Programme – Heavy Goods Vehicle Testing Facility

5. An opportunity has arisen to provide heavy goods vehicle testing facilities onsite at the Marsh Road depot, earning additional income from external

works. Operating at 75% capacity this is predicted to breakeven after two and a half years and thereafter in a full year would generate a net contribution to overheads of around £100,000 per annum which will be included in the 2015/16 budget proposals. This provision requires some investment in the buildings to make adaptations to accommodate the testing facilities costing £160,000. The business case is financially sound and the additional expenditure can be financed from additional revenue income earned by direct services in 2014/15, as detailed in Appendix E. Approval is sought because the initial investment in the buildings is capital in nature and would therefore require a capital budget to be financed from revenue contributions to capital.

Risk

6. Corporate and Directorate risks are reported within Appendices A to C. Risks are measured according to the matrix shown below:

		Probability					
>90%	Almost Certain	5	5	10	15	20	25
50-90%	Likely	4	4	8	12	16	20
30-50%	Possible	3	3	6	9	12	15
10-30%	Unlikely	2	2	4	6	8	10
<10%	Rare	1	1	2	3	4	5
			1	2	3	4	5
		Impact	Insignificant	Minor	Moderate	Major	Catastrophic

7. The Council has recognised that there is a risk of not delivering the capital programme as planned and that processes need to be improved to ensure the delivery of agreed Capital Projects going forward. Consequently, officers have recently implemented a new Capital Gateway process which will ensure greater clarity regarding timescales for projects being brought forward as well as closer monitoring of delivery. This risk is currently amber within the risk register.

Climate Change / Environmental Impact

8. There are no issues arising directly from this report

Equalities impact

9. There are no equalities impacts arising directly from this report

Financial Implications

10. All financial implications are covered in the body of this report and the Appendices.

Legal Implications

11. There are no legal implications directly relevant to this report.

Name and contact details of author:-

Name: Nigel Kennedy, Jane Lubbock

Job title: Head of Finance, Head of Business Improvement and Technology

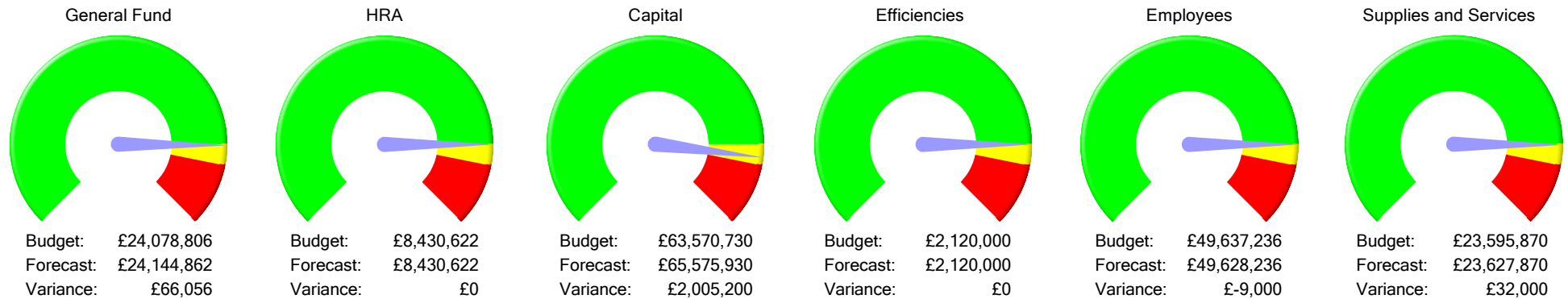
Service Area / Department: Finance, Business Improvement and Technology

Tel: 01865 252708 e-mail: nkennedy@oxford.gov.uk, jlubbock@oxford.gov.uk

List of background papers: None

Appendix A Corporate Integrated Report Q1 2014/15

Financial Performance



Performance Summary

Priority	No Data	Red	Amber	Green
Vibrant and Sustainable Economy	0 (0%)	2 (50%)	0 (0%)	2 (50%)
Meeting Housing Need	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	1 (20%)	4 (80%)
Strong and Active Communities	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	2 (100%)
Cleaner Greener Oxford	0 (0%)	1 (20%)	0 (0%)	4 (80%)
An Efficient and Effective Council	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	4 (100%)
Total	0 (0%)	3 (15%)	1 (5%)	16 (80%)
Previous Quarter	1 (5%)	3 (15%)	0 (0%)	16 (80%)

Direction of Travel

Priority	No Data	Declining	No Change	Improving
Vibrant and Sustainable Economy	0 (0%)	1 (25%)	1 (25%)	2 (50%)
Meeting Housing Need	0 (0%)	3 (60%)	0 (0%)	2 (40%)
Strong and Active Communities	0 (0%)	1 (50%)	0 (0%)	1 (50%)
Cleaner Greener Oxford	0 (0%)	1 (20%)	1 (20%)	3 (60%)
An Efficient and Effective Council	0 (0%)	1 (33%)	0 (0%)	2 (67%)
Total	0 (0%)	7 (37%)	2 (11%)	10 (53%)

Risk Management

Ref:	Category	Description	Previous		Current		Trend	Declined to red?
			P	I	P	I		
CRR-019	ICT Resilience	Resilience of ICT function - managing projects and improvements alongside business as usual	3	3	3	3	→	
CRR-020	Robustness of Medium Term Financial Plan	Medium Term Financial Plan savings not delivered and pressures not accurately recorded	3	3	3	3	→	
CRR-023	Managing Capital Projects and Contract Management	The need to ensure efficient management of capital projects and contracts	3	3	3	3	→	
CRR-027	Fraud	Risk of fraud against the council	3	3	3	3	→	
CRR-028	Data Protection	Risk of breaching the Data Protection Act	3	3	3	3	→	
CRR-021	Adverse Weather	The impact of adverse weather on service delivery and adverse financial impact on Council	3	2	3	2	→	
CRR-022	Welfare Reform	Changes to legislation regarding Welfare Reform will impact financially, directly and indirectly on the Council	3	2	3	2	→	
CRR-024	Business Continuity	Failure to ensure Emergency Planning and Business Continuity procedures are in place,	2	3	2	3	→	

CORPORATE SUMMARY

1 OVERALL SUMMARY POSITION

The overall performance of the authority is good overall based on the forecast position at 30th June 2014 and the Council's performance against its corporate targets. The General Fund revenue financial position is forecast at a small adverse variance to the budget of 0.3%. The HRA overall is forecast as on target against budget. The Capital Programme shows an adverse variance of £2.005 million; however this level of variance is related to pulling forward budget into 2014/15 from future financial years netted off by some forecast slippage into future financial years. Of the Corporate performance targets, 16 (80%) are being delivered as planned, one (5%) is below target but within acceptable tolerance limits and three (15%) are not meeting their target.

2 FINANCE OVERALL

General Fund

The forecast for the General Fund overall is showing a small adverse variance to the budget of £0.066 million (0.3%). This variance arises from an adverse forecast variance of £0.257 million relating to the Local Cost of Benefits netted off by a favourable forecast variance on services of £0.191 million.

Housing Revenue Account (HRA)

The HRA is currently being forecast as having a nil variance to approved budget as at the end of Quarter 1. There are areas which may result in a variance arising in the future, notably on rental income which is affected by Right to Buy sales (which have an adverse impact on rental income) and also relets (which have a favourable impact on rental income with rents being increased to the formula rent for new tenants); the position on this is being closely monitored.

Capital

As at the end of June, the Capital Programme shows an adverse variance of £2.005 million, which includes £2.109 million which is pulling forward budget into 2014/15 from future financial years and £(0.109) million slippage. This forecast variance predominantly relates to: -

- Stage 2 Museum of Oxford Development £0.027 million - request to bring forward budget from 2015/16
- New Council website £0.080 million - request to bring forward budget from 2015/16
- Homelessness Property Acquisitions £2.0 million - request to bring forward budget from 2015/16
- St Clements Environmental Improvements £(0.050) million - where work is to be undertaken in 2015/16
- Donnington Recreation Ground Improvements £(0.044) million - where slippage into 2015/16 is likely

Efficiencies

These are being forecast to be achieved in full, however it is worth noting that £0.017 million of these are forecast to be achieved through alternative mitigating actions.

3 PERFORMANCE OVERALL

Overall the Council's performance against its corporate targets is good with 16 (80%) delivering as planned, one (5%) below target but within acceptable tolerance limits and three (15%) not meeting their target. Exceptions to targeted performance are set out in the section below

Corporate Performance indicator Exceptions

Red:

Vibrant and Sustainable Economy: To achieve results for Oxford city schools that are 10% above the national average for KS2 by April 2015 - Latest reported performance is 62% against a target of 68%. This is a proxy result as the real results will not be known until late 2014. A review of education attainment is currently underway

Vibrant and Sustainable Economy: The number of Council apprentices created through Council investment for those who live in Oxford - 23 apprentices are currently employed: with 78% (18) from within the city, which is below our target of 22. The 2014 Business Admin/ Trade/ Pest Control cohort will be recruited by the end of July and is likely to add up to 14 new apprentices. Data is currently being gathered from companies that are subject to major investment by the council to ascertain the level of apprentices from within Oxford they are employing, and it is likely that this show the measure as on target once received.

Cleaner Greener Oxford: The number of enforcements carried out as a result of environmental offences - Enforcement levels to June 2014 were 388 against a target of 180, so are off target as the aim of this measure is to reduce the overall number of environmental offences this year. This is in part due to 107 notices to tackle domestic waste having been issued; an enforcement element of our carding arrangement with Waste and Recycling. It is anticipated that numbers will fall over the summer as students leave, and rise again in October.

Amber:

Meeting Housing Need: Number of new Rough Sleepers spending a second night on the streets - There was a rough sleeper count in May 2014 which counted 11 new rough sleepers spending a second night on the street, compared to a target of 10. The total count was 25 (12 of which were new to rough sleeping).

4 RISK OVERALL

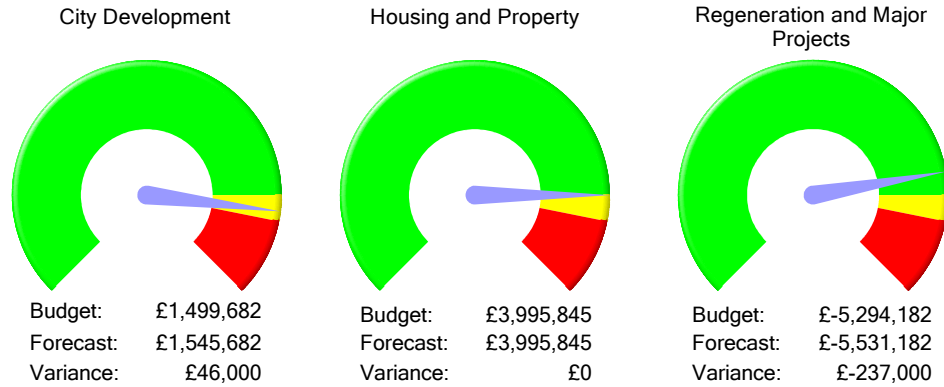
Corporate Risk Exceptions

The Corporate risk register has been reviewed in the first quarter of the year and this has identified no current red risks.

Appendix B

City Regeneration Integrated Report Q1 2014/15

Financial Performance



Performance Summary

Service	No Data	Red	Amber	Green
City Development	0 (0%)	1 (33%)	0 (0%)	2 (67%)
Housing and Property	0 (0%)	1 (14%)	1 (14%)	5 (71%)
Regeneration and Major Projects	0 (0%)	1 (17%)	2 (33%)	3 (50%)
Total	0 (0%)	3 (19%)	3 (19%)	10 (63%)

Risk Summary

Service	No Data	Red	Amber	Green
City Development	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	6 (75%)	2 (25%)
Housing and Property	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	5 (71%)	2 (29%)
Regeneration and Major Projects	0 (0%)	3 (30%)	4 (40%)	3 (30%)
Total	0 (0%)	3 (12%)	15 (60%)	7 (28%)

Service	No Data	Red	Amber	Green
Previous Quarter	0 (0%)	1 (7%)	0 (0%)	14 (93%)

Direction of Travel

Service	No Data	Declining	No Change	Improving
City Development	0 (0%)	1 (33%)	0 (0%)	2 (67%)
Housing and Property	0 (0%)	4 (67%)	1 (17%)	1 (17%)
Regeneration and Major Projects	0 (0%)	5 (83%)	1 (17%)	0 (0%)
Grand Total	0 (0%)	10 (67%)	2 (13%)	3 (20%)

Service	No Data	Red	Amber	Green
Previous Quarter	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	15 (38%)	9 (27%)

Direction of Travel

Service	No Data	Declining	No change	Improving
Total				

CITY REGENERATION DIRECTORATE

Directorate Overview

For the Directorate as a whole 10 (63%) of performance measures are on target with 3 (19%) below target but within tolerance limits and 3 (19%) off target. The Directorate overall is forecasting a favourable variance of £0.191 million.

1. Directorate Financial Performance

The Directorate is currently estimated to have a projected outturn position of £ 0.010 million against a budget of £0.201 million which is a favourable variance of £191 million.

City Development

Building Control Fees are expected to be £0.080 million below budget by year end, however this pressure will be partly mitigated by staff turnover savings in the Building Control, Heritage and City Centre Management areas resulting in a currently forecast outturn variance of £0.046 million.

Housing and Property

No variance to budget is being anticipated at this stage for Housing and Property.

Regeneration and Major Projects

Commercial Rent income is forecast to be £0.345 million above the budgeted position. The 2014/15 commercial rental income budgets were increased in the 2014/15 budget setting process by £0.425m over the 2013/14 level, which is broadly equivalent to the additional income received in 2013/14. This projected variance for 2014/15 therefore relates solely to changes occurring during the 2014/15 financial year, largely reflecting growth in the total return for the investment portfolio as rent reviews are completed in 2014/15. This beneficial position is offset against additional pressures relating to the net cost of caretaking and cleaning at Bury Knowle House of £0.058 million, cleaning charges for the Gloucester Green Market estimated at £0.020 million and Specialist Consultants to complete rent reviews estimated at £0.030 million. Permanent adjustments to budgets will need to be made as part of the Medium Term Financial Plan update in the lead up to setting the 2015/16 budgets.

2. Directorate Performance - Exceptions:

Regeneration and Major Projects

Delivering a programme of new homes at Barton - the Phase 1 affordable housing scheme is experiencing some slippage. The Phase 1 sale to house builder is currently on target. Infrastructure delivery has potential for slippage due to difficulties with SSE

Number of lease renewals /rent reviews reported - No reviews or renewals had yet reported at the end of June against a year to date target of 11.

Rental Income Arrears - performance to date is 9% compared to a target of 5%. This is largely due to arrears with the Covered Market, which is being addressed with the Market Manager.

City Development

Net additional homes provided - Completions to June 2014 were 41 against a target of 51. While below target, they are still at a higher level than this time last year which reflects an improving market. Delivery rates are expected to improve further as the increased number of planning permissions for housing in the city works through into greater construction activity on the ground.

Housing and Property

Empty homes returned to use - Currently, 1 home has been returned, compared to a target of 3.

Homelessness cases prevented - Reported prevention cases to date are 158 compared to a target of 225. However, data from Shelter for quarter 1 is still awaited.

3. Risk Performance- Exceptions

City Development

There are no red risks within this service area.

Housing and Property

There are no red risks within this service area.

Regeneration and Major Projects

Three red risks have been raised in this service area. The first relates to staff recruitment and retention. The risk has been raised that the current remuneration package for staff is no longer sufficient to retain skilled staff or to recruit suitable replacements. In order to mitigate this loss contractors and temporary staff are being employed.

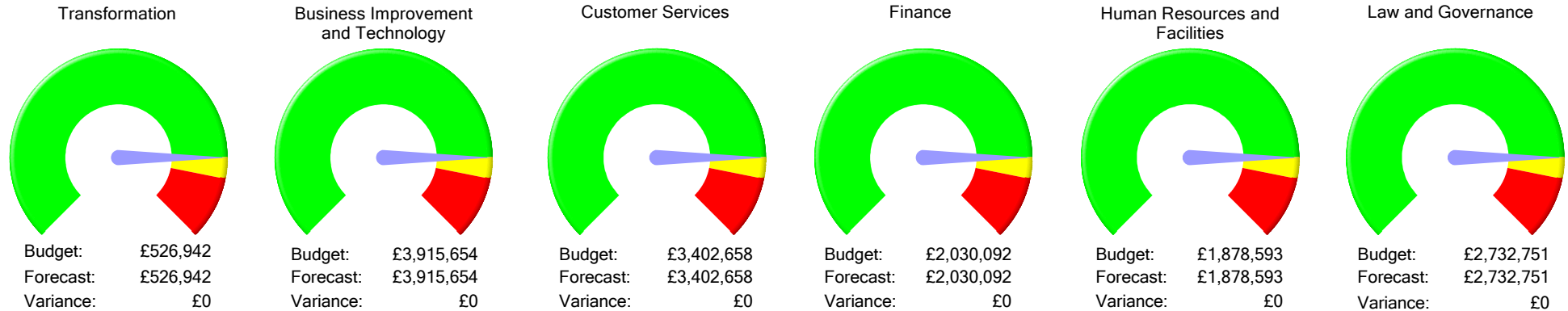
The second red risk relates to the Westgate re-development and whether it is viable to proceed. Dialogue is continuing with Land Securities and the County Council.

The third risk relates to the current workloads for the staff in the service area. A restructure has been agreed and new job descriptions are being evaluated.

Appendix C

Organisational Development and Services Integrated Report Q1 2014/15

Financial Performance



Performance Summary

Service	No Data	Red	Amber	Green
Business Improvement and Technology	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	1 (20%)	4 (80%)
Customer Services	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	3 (50%)	3 (50%)
Finance	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	2 (67%)	1 (33%)
Human Resources and Facilities	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	2 (50%)	2 (50%)
Law and Governance	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	2 (100%)
Total	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	8 (40%)	12 (60%)
Service	No Data	Red	Amber	Green
Previous Quarter	0 (0%)	10 (53%)	0 (0%)	9 (47%)

Risk Summary

Service	No Data	Red	Amber	Green
Business Improvement and Technology	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	3 (100%)	0 (0%)
Customer Services	2 (33%)	0 (0%)	2 (33%)	2 (33%)
Finance	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	3 (33%)	6 (67%)
Human Resources and Facilities	1 (50%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	1 (50%)
Law and Governance	1 (33%)	0 (0%)	1 (33%)	1 (33%)
Total	4 (17%)	0 (0%)	9 (39%)	10 (43%)
Service	No Data	Red	Amber	Green
Previous Quarter	6 (24%)	0 (0%)	6 (24%)	13 (41%)

Direction of Travel

Service	No Data	Declining	No Change	Improving
Business Improvement and Technology	0 (0%)	1 (25%)	1 (25%)	2 (50%)
Customer Services	0 (0%)	5 (83%)	0 (0%)	1 (17%)
Finance	0 (0%)	1 (33%)	0 (0%)	2 (67%)
Human Resources and Facilities	0 (0%)	2 (50%)	0 (0%)	2 (50%)
Law and Governance	0 (0%)	1 (50%)	0 (0%)	1 (50%)
Grand Total	0 (0%)	10 (53%)	1 (5%)	8 (42%)

Direction of Travel

Service	No Data	Declining	No change	Improving
Total				

ORGANISATIONAL DEVELOPMENT AND CORPORATE SERVICES DIRECTORATE

Directorate Overview

For the Directorate as a whole 12 (60%) performance measures are on target with 8 (40%) below target but within tolerance limits. The Directorate overall is forecasting a nil variance to budget.

1. Directorate Financial Performance

The Directorate is currently estimated to have a projected outturn position of £14.487 million and is currently anticipating no variance overall to the budget for the year.

Business Improvement and Technology

No variance to budget is being anticipated at this stage for Business Improvement and Technology.

Customer Services

No variance to budget is being anticipated at this stage for Customer Services.

Finance

No variance to budget is being anticipated at this stage for Finance.

Human Resources and Facilities

No variance to budget is being anticipated at this stage for Human Resources and Facilities.

Law and Governance

No variance to budget is being anticipated at this stage for Law and Governance.

2. Directorate Performance - Exceptions

Customer Services

Time to process changes in circumstances - We are seeing a slight increase in the days to process, with performance to June at 11 days against a target of 10 days. To counter this now we have requested additional input from the resilience contract which will commence during July and should start to show some improvement to the outstanding work. We are closely monitoring the workload as we expect an increase in staff leave in the coming weeks and are also working on streamlining processes to counteract this. We have had a delay in receiving Atlas files from the DWP which also affected performance in June.

Time to process new benefits claims - Performance to June was 14.95 days, and just above the target of 14 days. The reasons and actions to

mitigate are as for changes in circumstances

Customers getting through first time on Councils Main Service lines - performance is currently 90.92% compared to a target of 95%. Performance improved in June compared to the previous month (92% compared to 89.6%). This is due to ongoing multi skilling training and an increase in resources with vacant posts being filled. We are currently reviewing resources to identify and tackle potential issues over the summer months when there is more leave.

Finance

Percentage of invoices paid on time - Year to date performance is 95.65% compared to a target of 99%, representing a slight reduction from the previous month. Improvements will come from staff disputing incorrect invoices and Goods Received Notes in a timely manner.

Investment return above base rate - performance is at 0.28% compared to a target of 0.4%. The total investments for June are £73m with £14.26m in the Money Market Fund. The Councils Treasury advisors have amended their interest rate forecast, now expecting an increase in the rates by 0.25% in Quarter 1 of 2015, followed by a further 0.25% increase by Quarter 4 of 2015. Local authority rates remain low and are not expected to pick up until Quarter 3 of 2014.

Human Resources and Facilities

Percentage of employees with a disability - Numbers have risen by two to 109 declaring a disability, leaving performance to June at 8.88% and just below the target of 9%. However staff numbers have climbed to 1,228 due to recent increases in recruitment, meaning that the average remain broadly stable.

Percentage of black and ethnic minority (BME) employees - Staff numbers from BME backgrounds have remained the same at 83. However, the overall headcount has increased to 1,228 and this has influenced a small fall in the overall percentage to 6.8% compared to the target of 7%. In terms of trends, applications received from BME communities are running at 16.61% (191) since the start of April. This compares with an average of 18.77% for the previous year. Trend analysis will be run on a monthly basis.

Business Improvement & Technology

ICT contract savings - current performance remains at 100% of contract spend compared to a target of 99% for this point of the year. Further work is needed to assess the true baseline for ICT contract spend in order to better judge performance against this target.

3. Risk Performance- Exceptions

Business Improvement and Technology

There are no red risks within this service area.

Customer Services

There are no red risks within this service area.

Finance

There are no red risks within this service area.

Human Resources & Facilities Management

There are no red risks within this service area.

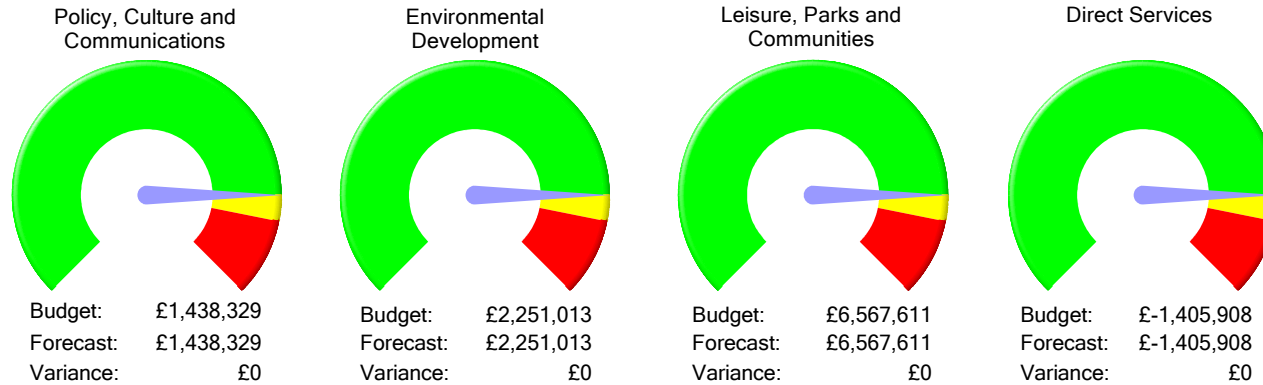
Law & Governance

There are no red risks within this service area.

Appendix D

Community Services Integrated Report Q1 2014/15

Financial Performance



Performance Summary

Service	No Data	Red	Amber	Green
Direct Services	0 (0%)	1 (11%)	0 (0%)	8 (89%)
Environmental Development	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	7 (100%)
Leisure Parks and Communities	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	3 (100%)
Policy Culture and Communications	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	16 (100%)
Total	0 (0%)	1 (3%)	0 (0%)	34 (97%)

	No Data	Red	Amber	Green
Previous Quarter	2 (6%)	2 (6%)	1 (3%)	26 (84%)

Direction of Travel

Service	No Data	Declining	No Change	Improving
Direct Services	0 (0%)	4 (44%)	1 (11%)	4 (44%)
Environmental Development	0 (0%)	2 (33%)	3 (50%)	1 (17%)
Leisure Parks and Communities	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	2 (100%)
Policy Culture and Communications	0 (0%)	10 (77%)	2 (15%)	1 (8%)
Grand Total	0 (0%)	16 (53%)	6 (20%)	8 (27%)

Risk Summary

Service	No Data	Red	Amber	Green
Direct Services	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	3 (38%)	5 (63%)
Environmental Development	3 (30%)	0 (0%)	4 (40%)	3 (30%)
Leisure Parks and Communities	2 (22%)	0 (0%)	2 (22%)	5 (56%)
Policy Culture and Communications	1 (17%)	0 (0%)	3 (50%)	2 (33%)
Total	6 (18%)	0 (0%)	12 (36%)	15 (45%)

	No Data	Red	Amber	Green
Previous Quarter	5 (14%)	0 (0%)	15 (33%)	15 (33%)

Direction of Travel

Service	No Data	Declining	No change	Improving
Total				

COMMUNITY SERVICES DIRECTORATE

Directorate Overview

For the Directorate as a whole, 34 (97%) performance measures are on target and 1 (3%) is below target. The Directorate overall is forecasting a nil variance to budget.

1. Directorate Financial Performance

The Directorate is currently estimated to have a projected outturn position of £8.851m. There is no overall projected outturn variance at present.

Policy, Culture and Communications

No variance to budget is being anticipated at this stage for Policy, Culture and Communications.

Environmental Development

No variance to budget is being anticipated at this stage for Environmental Development.

Leisure, Parks and Communities

No variance to budget is being anticipated at this stage for Leisure, Parks and Communities.

Direct Services

Engineering are currently successfully winning works over and above that which was anticipated in the budget and with the new structure now in place, the expectation is that they will again make an additional contribution over this year's budget in the region of £0.250 million.

An opportunity has arisen to provide heavy goods vehicle testing facilities onsite at the depot, earning additional income from external works. This provision requires some investment in the buildings to make adaptations to accommodate the testing facilities. This Driver and Vehicle Standards Agency (DVSA) Authorised Testing Facility will cost £0.160 million and a recommendation to include this in the capital programme is included in the main report. This additional investment together with additional funding required for Cowley Marsh welfare improvements of £0.1 million will be vired from the engineering surpluses in Engineering referred to above and will mean that the service overall at present is expected to achieve a balanced budget at year end.

2. Directorate Performance - Exceptions

Direct Services

Percentage of streets with detritus levels falling below Grade B - performance is currently 7.17% compared to a target of 3%. For the year to date, 17

out of 237 streets inspected were below grade B. For June, 5 out of the 79 streets was below grade B (6.3%)

3. **Risk Performance- Exceptions**

Policy, Culture and Communications

There are no red risks within this service area.

Environmental Development

There are no red risks within this service area.

Leisure, Parks and Communities

There are no red risks within this service area.

Direct Services

There are no red risks within this service area.

Financial Outturn as at 30th June 2014 (Quarter 1)

Appendix E1: June 2014 monitoring – General Fund Forecast Outturn

Appendix E2: June 2014 monitoring – Capital Programme Forecast Outturn

Appendix E3: June 2014 monitoring – Housing Revenue Account Forecast Outturn

Appendix E4: June 2014 monitoring – General Fund year to date position

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

1. This report sets out the Council's outturn position as at the 30th June 2014 and highlights major variances to the approved latest budget. In summary:
 - Appendix E1 shows the General Fund Revenue forecast outturn position to be an adverse net variance of £0.066 million to the latest budget.
 - Appendix E2 details the forecast capital outturn position which shows a forecast adverse variance against the latest budget of £2.005 million which includes £2.109 million of budgets to be pulled forward into 2014/15 from future financial years.
 - Appendix E3 shows the HRA forecast outturn position to be on target, leaving the HRA working balance at the £4.0 million level.
 - The collection rate for Council Tax at the end of June 2014 was 30.97%, up on June 2013's position of 30.55%.
 - The Business Rates collection rate at the end of June 2014 was 31.04% compared to 32.16% for June 2013. This is 1.12% deterioration, although the primary reason is that a proportion of ratepayers have taken advantage of a change in legislation which allows them to pay over 12 months instead of 10, delaying the receipt of payments by the Council.
 - The payment of undisputed invoices within 30 days for the year to 30th June 2014 was 95.63% which is under the target of 99%. The value of the 118 late paid invoices in June was £0.259 million.
 - HRA total arrears were £1.007 million as at the end of June 2014.
2. As part of the monitoring process Finance staff have met and had budget monitoring discussions with Cost Centre Managers and Heads of Service to verify the current budgetary position. The forecast variances have been identified and are commented on within the body of the report.

GENERAL FUND OUTTURN

3. Appendix E1 provides a General Fund revenue outturn position, broken down by Service Area. Table 1 below also details the summarised GF position as at the end of June 2014.

Table 1 General Fund Revenue

GF Outturn Report 14/15 @ Q1 June, 2014	Approved Budget (per Budget book)	Latest Budget	Expenditure	Income	Actual YTD	Budget YTD	Variance YTD	Projected Outturn against Latest Budget @ Q1 30th June, 2014	PO Variance	PO Variance (Prev Month)	PO Variance Mvt from Previous Month
	£000's	£000's	£000's	£000's	£000's	£000's	£000's	£000's	£000's	£000's	£000's
Directorates											
City Regeneration	(320)	201	3,382	(4,823)	(1,441)	(1,352)	(89)	10	(191)		(191)
Community Services	7,704	8,851	14,791	(12,753)	2,038	2,370	(332)	8,851			
Organisational Dev & Corp Services	14,010	14,487	4,341	(1,182)	3,159	3,794	(635)	14,487			
Directorate Total Excl SLA's & Capital Charges	21,393	23,539	22,514	(18,758)	3,756	4,812	(1,056)	23,348	(191)		(191)
SLA's & Capital Charges	(692)	(692)	387		387	(167)	554	(692)			
Corporate Accounts	1,438	1,071	13,295	(17,129)	(3,834)	94	(3,928)	1,328	257		257
Contingencies	1,939	1,808				258	(258)	1,808			
Total Corporate Accounts & Contingencies	3,377	2,880	13,295	(17,129)	(3,834)	353	(4,187)	3,137	257		257
Net Expenditure Budget	24,079	25,727	36,197	(35,887)	309	4,998	(4,688)	25,793	66		66
Transfer to / (from) Ear Marked Reserves		(1,648)	(1,648)		(1,648)	(1,648)		(1,648)			
Net Budget Requirement	24,079	24,079	34,548	(35,887)	(1,339)	3,350	(4,688)	24,145	66		66
Funding											
External Funding (RSG)	6,339	6,339		3,011	3,011	1,585	1,426	6,339			
External Funding (NDR Retention)	6,114	6,114				1,529	(1,529)	6,114			
Council tax	11,582	11,582				2,896	(2,896)	11,582			
Less Parish Precepts	(162)	(162)	(96)		(96)	(40)	(56)	(162)			
Collection Fund Surplus	205	205				51	(51)	205			
Total Funding Available	24,079	24,079	(96)	3,011	2,915	6,020	(3,105)	24,079			
(Surplus) / Deficit for year		(0)	34,644	(38,898)	(4,254)	(2,670)	(1,584)	66	66		66

- The forecast General Fund Revenue account outturn position is currently anticipated to be a net £0.066 million adverse variance to budget.
- City Regeneration Directorate** - The Directorate is currently estimated to have a projected outturn position of £ 0.010 million against a budget of £0.201 million which is a favourable variance of £191 million.
- Building Control Fees are expected to be £0.080 million below budget by year end, however this pressure will be partly mitigated by staff turnover savings in the Building Control, Heritage and City Centre Management areas resulting in a currently forecast outturn variance of £0.046 million.
- Commercial Rent income is forecast to be £0.345 million above the budgeted position. The 2014/15 commercial rental income budgets were increased in the 2014/15 budget setting process by £0.425m over the 2013/14 level, which is broadly equivalent to the additional income received in 2013/14. This projected variance for 2014/15 therefore relates solely to changes occurring during the 2014/15 financial year, largely reflecting growth in the total return for the investment portfolio as rent reviews are completed in 2014/15. This beneficial position is offset against additional pressures relating to the net cost of caretaking and cleaning at Bury Knowle House of £0.058 million, cleaning charges for the Gloucester Green Market estimated at £0.020 million and Specialist Consultants to complete rent reviews estimated at £0.030 million. Permanent adjustments to budgets will need to be made as part of the Medium Term Financial Plan update in the lead up to setting the 2015/16 budgets.
- Community Services Directorate** - The Directorate is currently estimated to have a projected outturn position of £8.851m. There are no projected outturn variances at present, however there are some significant variances within Direct Services which are explained in the following paragraphs.

9. Engineering are currently successfully winning works over and above that which was anticipated in the budget and with the new structure now in place, the expectation is that they will again make an additional contribution over this year's budget in the region of £0.250 million
10. An opportunity has arisen to provide heavy goods vehicle testing facilities onsite at the depot, earning additional income from external works. This provision requires some investment in the buildings to make adaptations to accommodate the testing facilities. This Driver and Vehicle Standards Agency (DVSA) Authorised Testing Facility will cost £0.160 million and a recommendation to include this in the capital programme is included in the main report. This additional investment together with some additional expenditure needed on Marsh Road Depot improvements of £0.1 million will be vired from the engineering surpluses referred to above and will mean that the service overall at present is expected to achieve a balanced budget at year end.
11. **Organisational Development and Corporate Services Directorate** - The Directorate is currently estimated to have a projected outturn position of £14.487 million and is currently anticipating no variance overall to the budget for the year.

CORPORATE ACTIVITIES

12. Local cost of benefits is forecast at £0.257 million adverse variance. This relates to a potential subsidy loss in respect of Local Authority error overpayments. Subsidy is only payable in full on overpayments if the level is within a threshold set by the Department for Work and Pensions. There is a further, higher, threshold within which the Council would receive 40% subsidy. Currently the level of errors is outside the expected levels of error and, unless there is mitigating action, there is a risk of total loss of subsidy on these overpayments. Work is being undertaken within Revenues and Benefits to correct the situation as much as possible; however there is a risk that the thresholds for the year may still be breached. The current projections are based on the level of error falling between the upper and lower thresholds and therefore the Council being impacted by a 60% loss of subsidy on these overpayments.

ACHIEVEMENT OF SAVINGS AND EFFICIENCIES

13. The Council's budget identifies £0.704 million of efficiencies, £0.224 million of service reductions and £1.192 million of additional fees and charges for 2014/15. As at the end of June it is anticipated that £0.017 million efficiencies will not be delivered, although it is anticipated that there will be mitigating savings to negate the impact as detailed below.
14. Table 2 below details the projected outturn position relating to efficiencies, service reductions and additional fees and charges at the end of June 2014.

Table 2 – Savings and Efficiencies as at 30th June 2014

	Efficiencies				Service Reductions				Fees and Charges				%
	Approved Savings	Projected outturn	Variance	Savings made to date	Approved Savings	Projected outturn	Variance	Savings made to date	Approved Savings	Projected outturn	Variance	Savings made to date	
	£000's	£000's	£000's	£000's	£000's	£000's	£000's	£000's	£000's	£000's	£000's	£000's	
Finance	(29)	(29)		(7)									0%
Business Improvement & Technology	(88)	(88)		(6)									0%
Law & Governance	(3)	(3)		(1)					(5)	(5)		(1)	25%
Human Resources & Facilities	(2)	(2)		(1)	(55)	(55)		(14)	(20)	(20)		(5)	25%
Customer Services	(25)	(25)		(6)					(14)	(14)		(4)	25%
Organisational Development and Corporate Services	(147)	(147)	0	(20)	(55)	(55)	0	(14)	(39)	(39)	0	(10)	25%
Direct Services	(240)	(240)		(57)					(512)	(512)		(115)	23%
Leisure, Parks & Communities	(66)	(66)		(17)	(140)	(140)		(35)	(60)	(60)		(15)	25%
Environmental Development	(84)	(84)		(28)	(16)	(16)		(4)	(52)	(52)			0%
Policy, Culture & Communication									(16)	(16)		(1)	5%
Community Services	(390)	(390)	0	(102)	(156)	(156)	0	(39)	(640)	(640)	0	(131)	21%
City Development	(48)	(31)	17	(8)	(13)	(13)		(3)	(71)	(71)		(18)	25%
Housing & Property	(89)	(89)		(22)									0%
Regeneration & Major Projects	(30)	(30)		(5)					(442)	(442)		(111)	25%
City Regeneration	(167)	(150)	17	(35)	(13)	(13)	0	(3)	(513)	(513)	0	(128)	25%
Mitigating Savings		(17)	(17)	(17)						0		0	
Total	(704)	(704)	0	(174)	(224)	(224)	0	(56)	(1,192)	(1,192)	0	(269)	23%

15. There is an anticipated underachievement of efficiency savings in City Development of £0.017 million. The restructure has resulted in the anticipated Full Time Equivalent reductions, however job evaluation has resulted in higher grades for staff than anticipated. Staff turnover savings and income from staff secondment to West Oxfordshire are expected to mitigate this in 2014/15.

HOUSING REVENUE ACCOUNT (HRA) OUTTURN

16. The summarised HRA position as at 30th June 2014 is set out in Table 3 and detailed on the attached Appendix E3.

Table 3 – Housing Revenue Account HRA

HRA Outturn Report 14/15 @ 30 June, 2014	Approved Budget (per Budget book)		Latest Budget	Profiled Budget 30th June 2014	Actual YTD	Variance Profiled Budget to Actual, June 2014	Projected Outturn@ 30th June, 2014	Outturn Variance
	£000's	£000's	£000's	£000's	£000's	£000's	£000's	£000's
Dwelling Rent	(40,590)	(40,590)	(9,807)	(9,786)	22	(40,590)	0	
Service Charges	(1,196)	(1,196)	(299)	(308)	(9)	(1,196)	0	
Furniture & Other Rent	(816)	(816)	(225)	(262)	(37)	(816)	0	
Major Project Team Fees	(329)	(329)	(82)	(45)	38	(329)	0	
Net Income	(42,931)	(42,931)	(10,414)	(10,401)	13	(42,931)	0	
General Management	5,138	5,155	1,129	1,117	(12)	5,155	0	
Special Management	2,771	2,771	557	540	(17)	2,771	0	
Other Management	2,648	2,663	355	314	(41)	2,663	0	
Bad Debt Provision	431	431	54	53	(1)	431	0	
Responsive & Cyclical Repairs	9,859	10,093	2,429	2,243	(186)	10,093	0	
Interest Paid	7,792	7,792	1,948	1,948		7,792	0	
Depreciation	5,595	5,595	1,399	1,399		5,595	0	
Total Expenditure	34,233	34,500	7,870	7,613	(257)	34,500	0	
Net Operating Expenditure/(Income)	(8,697)	(8,430)	(2,543)	(2,787)	(244)	(8,430)	0	
Interest Received	(64)	(64)	(16)	(16)		(64)	0	
Other HRA Reserve Adjustments	(7,996)	(8,263)	(248)	(251)	(3)	(8,263)	0	
Revenue Contribution to Capital	16,757	16,757				16,757	0	
Total Appropriations	8,698	8,431	(264)	(267)	(3)	8,431		
Total HRA (Surplus)/Deficit			(2,807)	(3,055)	(247)			

Income

17. There is a slight adverse variance at the end of June on dwelling rents due to a greater number of Right to Buy completions in 2013/14 than estimated (5 more), thus stock numbers for the current year will be lower than originally estimated. It is not currently anticipated that there will be an adverse position at the year-end due to rents on void properties being set at target rent when the properties are re-let. This forecast will change, however, if more Right to Buy completions than anticipated occur in 2014/15.

Expenditure

Responsive & Cyclical Repairs

18. Responsive Repairs is underspent against profiled budgets by £0.100 million. External Planned Maintenance is also underspent to date against profile by £0.086 million due the restructure in Major Projects and delays caused through awaiting the implementation of the results from the stock condition reports. It is anticipated that spend in both areas will pick up during the latter part of the financial year and that no year-end variances will occur.

CAPITAL PROGRAMME

General Fund and HRA Capital Programme

19. Performance against the Capital Programme approved for the General Fund and HRA for 2014/15 is shown in summary at Table 4 below. Appendix E2 shows the Capital Programme on a scheme on a scheme by scheme basis.
20. As at the end of June, the Capital Programme shows an adverse variance of £2.005 million, which includes £2.109 million (£2.0 million funded from revenue and the balance from capital receipts) which is pulling forward budget into 2014/15 from future financial years and £(0.109) million slippage. This forecast variance predominantly relates to: -
- Stage 2 Museum of Oxford Development £0.027 million – request to bring forward budget from 2015/16
 - New Council website £0.080 million – request to bring forward budget from 2015/16
 - Homelessness Property Acquisitions £2.0 million – request to bring forward budget from 2015/16
 - St Clements Environmental Improvements £(0.050) million – where work is to be undertaken in 2015/16
 - Donnington Recreation Ground Improvements £(0.044) million – where slippage into 2015/16 is likely

Table 4 – Capital Programme as at 30th June 2014

Capital Scheme	Latest Budget 2014/15	Spend to 30th June 2014	Profiled Budget	Variance to Profiled Budget	% Spend Against Latest Budget	Projected Outturn at 30th June 2014	Outturn Variance to Latest Budget	Outturn Variance due to Slippage	Outturn variance due to Over/ Under spend
	£	£	£	£		£	£	£	£
S01 Policy Culture & Communications Total	4,973,284	22,008	22,000	8	0%	5,000,484	27,200	27,200	0
S03 Business Improvement & Technology Total	460,301	201,689	197,598	4,091	44%	540,301	80,000	80,000	0
S11 City Development Total	630,426	14,512	10,000	4,512	2%	570,303	(60,123)	(64,635)	4,512
S12 Environmental Development Total	1,575,904	196,882	90,000	106,882	12%	1,575,904	0	0	0
S13 Housing and Property Total	10,977,949	284,049	248,080	35,969	2.6%	12,980,447	2,002,498	2,001,700	798
S22 Leisure & Communities Total	8,550,934	1,258,832	875,000	383,832	15%	8,506,559	(44,375)	(44,375)	0
S23 Direct Services Total	7,682,932	382,346	401,517	(21,380)	5%	7,682,932	0	0	0
S32 Finance Total	309,893	0	0	0	0%	309,893	0	0	0
GF Total	35,161,623	2,360,318	1,844,195	513,914	7%	37,166,824	2,005,200	1,999,890	5,310
Housing Revenue Account	28,409,107	3,997,812	4,023,953	(26,141)	14%	28,409,107	0	0	0
Grand Total	63,570,730	6,358,130	5,868,148	487,773	10%	65,575,930	2,005,200	1,999,890	5,310

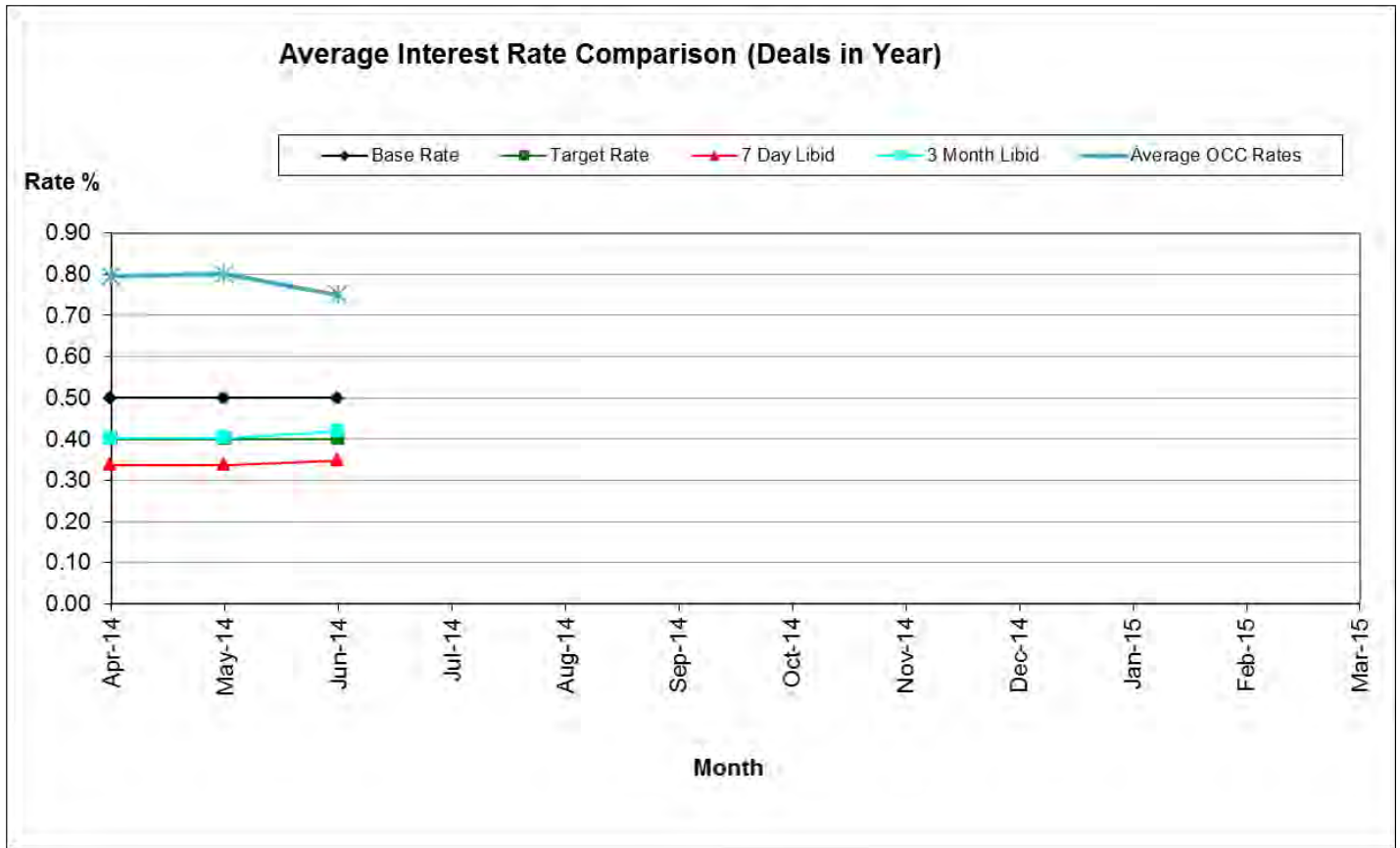
PERFORMANCE INFORMATION

21. There are a number of additional key performance indicators that need to be assessed along with the financial performance information to provide an overall financial health check position for the authority as at the end of June 2014. These additional indicators are detailed as follows:

Treasury Performance

22. Our total investments at the end of June were £67.4m. Without the £3.0 million investment in the CCLA Property Fund the average rate of return was just 0.56%, just 0.06% above the base rate. With the yield on the Property Fund working out at 6% however, the overall average comes out at 0.80%. Building Societies are now slowly increasing their rates but as yet are not offering more than we can receive from Svenska Handelsbanken AB (0.50%). IGNIS at 0.43% continues to be the Money Market Fund offering the best return. The Council also had a 364 day loan with Lloyds Bank maturing in May. This was paying 1.05% but on rollover this was reduced to 0.95%.

Table 5 – Average Interest Rate Comparisons for Deals in the Year



Payment of Invoices

23. The cumulative percentage of invoices paid within 30 days as at the end of Q1 was 95.63%, an improvement on the 2013/14 outturn position of 93.24%, but below the 2014/15 target of 99%. Service area performance is shown below starting with the best performing and moving to the worst performing further down the list:

Table 6 – Payment of Undisputed Invoices to 30th June 2014

Service Area	YTD Total Invoices	YTD Undisputed	YTD Over 30 Days	YTD % Over	YTD % Intime
S32 Finance	139	130	0	0.00%	100.00%
S23 Direct Services	5038	4198	52	1.24%	98.76%
S21 Customer Services	78	75	1	1.33%	98.67%
S24 Housing Revenue Account	584	524	26	4.96%	95.04%
S33 Human Resources & Facilities	160	150	10	6.67%	93.33%
S13 Housing & Property	354	351	28	7.98%	92.02%
S01 Policy, Culture & Communications	139	139	14	10.07%	89.93%
S12 Environmental Development	273	268	27	10.07%	89.93%
S14 Regeneration & Major Projects	283	271	30	11.07%	88.93%
S22 Leisure, Parks & Communities	743	730	86	11.78%	88.22%
S11 City Development	79	79	10	12.66%	87.34%
S03 Business Improvement	98	72	11	15.28%	84.72%
S02 Transformation	22	22	4	18.18%	81.82%
S34 Law & Governance	53	52	10	19.23%	80.77%
	8043	7061	309	4.37%	95.63%

24. As can be seen from this chart, there is only one service area currently achieving the payment of invoices target of 99% for the whole year, although there are another two

service areas that are not far below. As can be seen from the chart below, performance in June was worse than the year overall, indicating the need for improvement.

Table 7 – Payment of Undisputed Invoices in June 2014

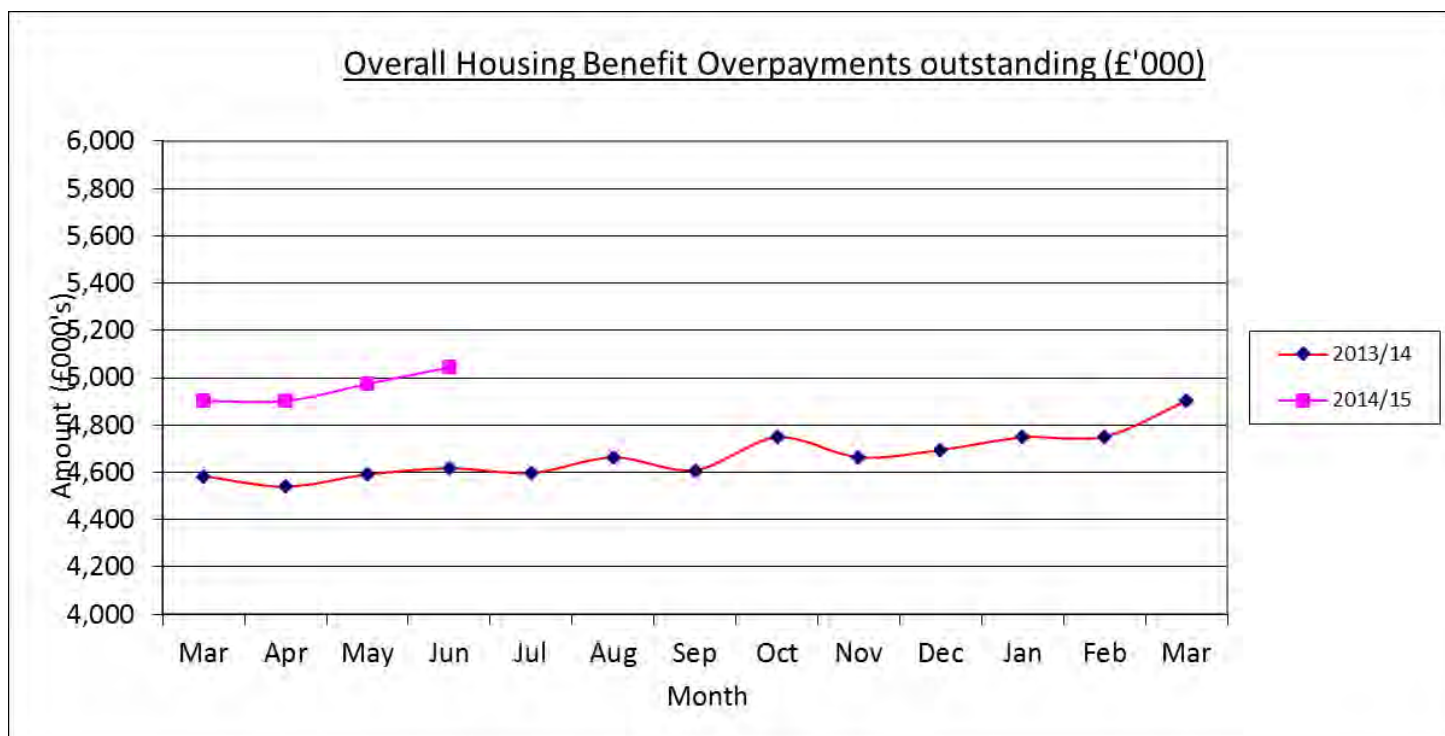
Service Area	Total Invoices	Undisputed	Over 30 Days	% Over	% Intime
S32 Finance	26	23	0	0.00%	100.00%
S33 Human Resources & Facilities	33	23	0	0.00%	100.00%
S21 Customer Services	15	12	0	0.00%	100.00%
S03 Business Improvement	34	10	0	0.00%	100.00%
S23 Direct Services	1558	1314	24	1.83%	98.17%
S13 Housing & Property	112	111	10	9.01%	90.99%
S22 Leisure, Parks & Communities	194	190	22	11.58%	88.42%
S24 Housing Revenue Account	113	103	12	11.65%	88.35%
S02 Transformation	8	8	1	12.50%	87.50%
S01 Policy, Culture & Communications	52	52	8	15.38%	84.62%
S14 Regeneration & Major Projects	64	61	12	19.67%	80.33%
S12 Environmental Development	57	56	16	28.57%	71.43%
S11 City Development	20	20	7	35.00%	65.00%
S34 Law & Governance	13	12	6	50.00%	50.00%
	2299	1995	118	5.91%	94.09%

25. The performance needs to be improved and then sustained throughout 2014/15 if the annual target of 99% for the year is to be achieved. The value of the 118 late paid invoices in June was £0.259 million which whilst not significant from the Council's perspective could make a significant difference to Small and Medium Enterprises.

Housing Benefit Overpayments

26. Overall overpayments of Housing benefit outstanding on April 1st stood at £4.902 million. Total arrears at 30th June stood at £5.044 million, an increase of 9.26% on the figure 12 months earlier.
27. Payment arrangements are in place for £2.395 million of the balance outstanding have got payment arrangements against them. Of the residual £2.650 million, a large number have had as much recovery action as possible undertaken and these debts are awaiting write off.

Table 8 – Housing Benefit Overpayments Outstanding

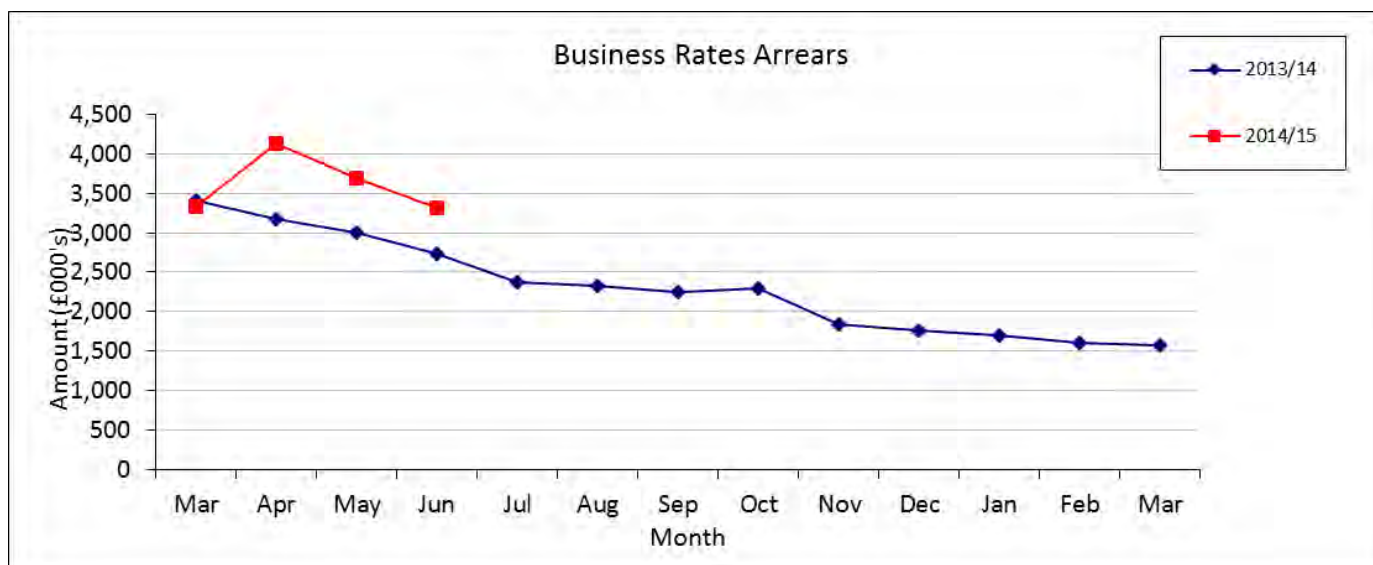


28. In the first quarter of 2014/15 there were £0.901 million of new overpayments identified whilst overpayments recovered, either by deductions, offsets of Housing benefit, or by payments received, totalled £0.700 million. The collection rate (based on the former BV 79b(i)) was thus 77.73%. This figure is down on last year's equivalent of 81.37% and the challenging internally set target of 82%. The indicator is based on the amounts collected compared to the amount identified. During the early part of the year there has been a high level of overpayment identified as the high volume of work generated from the end of the year has been processed. A provider to assist in the recovery of debt where internal recovery procedures have been exhausted is currently being sourced. This will help reduce the overall collectable debit and increase income. It should be noted that this is a volatile indicator as it is dependent on the amount of housing benefit overpayments raised each month against what is collected each month. It is therefore expected that the workload is moved onto a more stable basis and recovery activity is increased, this indicator will improve as the year goes on.

Business Rates

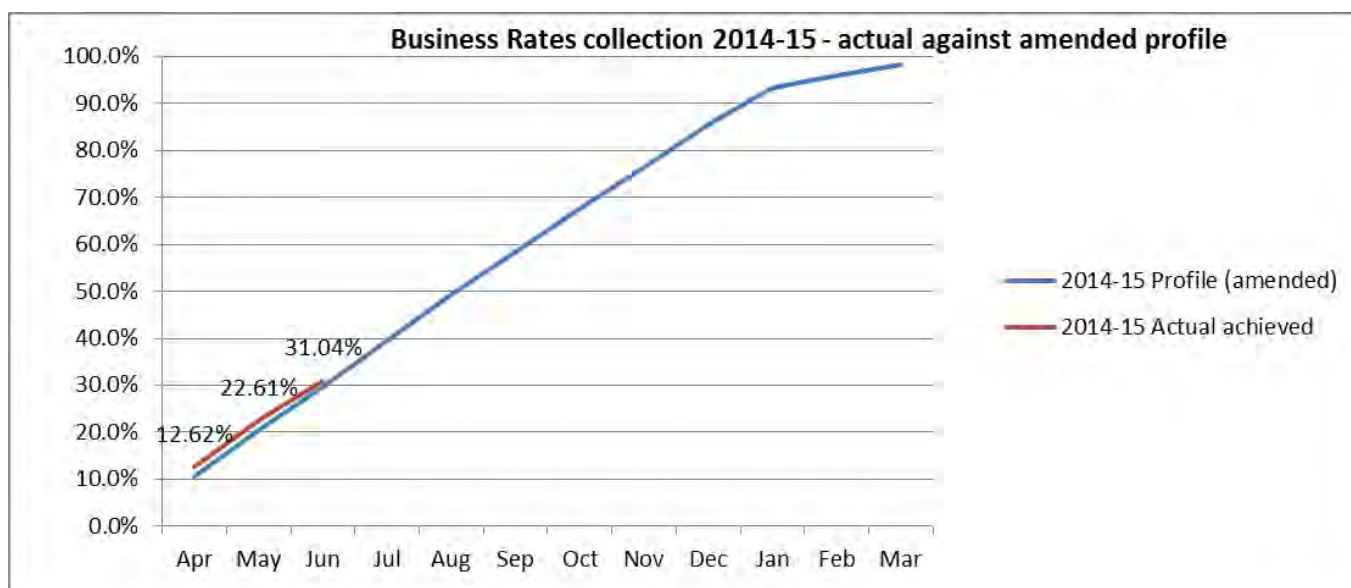
29. Arrears of non-domestic rates carried forward on April 1st 2014 were £3.323 million which is £0.086 million (2.5%) down on the corresponding figure 12 months earlier.

Table 9 – Business Rates Arrears



30. After the initial rise in the arrears, the arrears are now less than they were at the start of the year due to backdated rateable value increases being processed in April. The total as at 30th June was £3.309 million, a small 0.42% reduction on the start of year figure but it is expected that the total will drop steadily over future months.

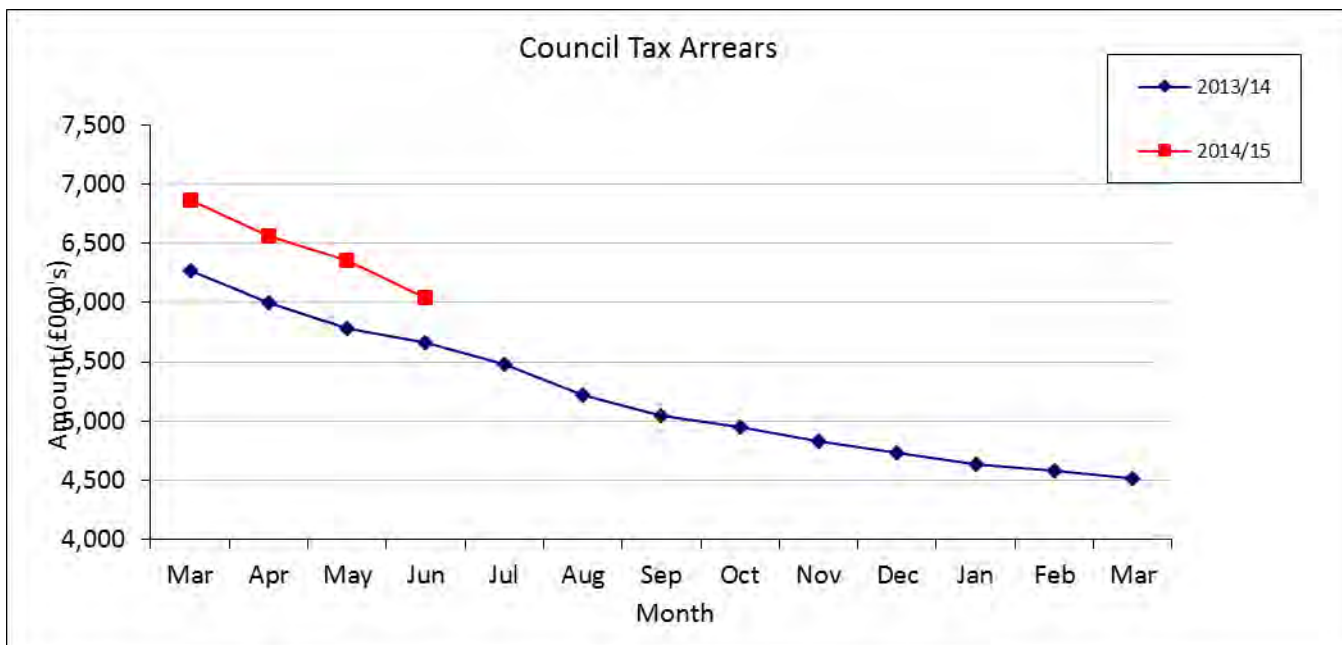
31. The 2014/15 collection rate was 31.04% at 30th June. This was down on the previous year's equivalent of 32.16%. The primary reason is that a proportion of ratepayers have taken advantage of a change in legislation allowing them to pay over 12 monthly instalments (previously it was 10 from April to January). The profiled target figures have been revisited because of this change in payment terms and the new profiled target for the end of June was 29.5%. Collection performance against the revised collection rate profile, is higher by 1.54% which is an equivalent of £1.3 million higher collection than the revised target. The actual Business Rate collection rate is shown below against the re-profiled target:



Council Tax Arrears Collection

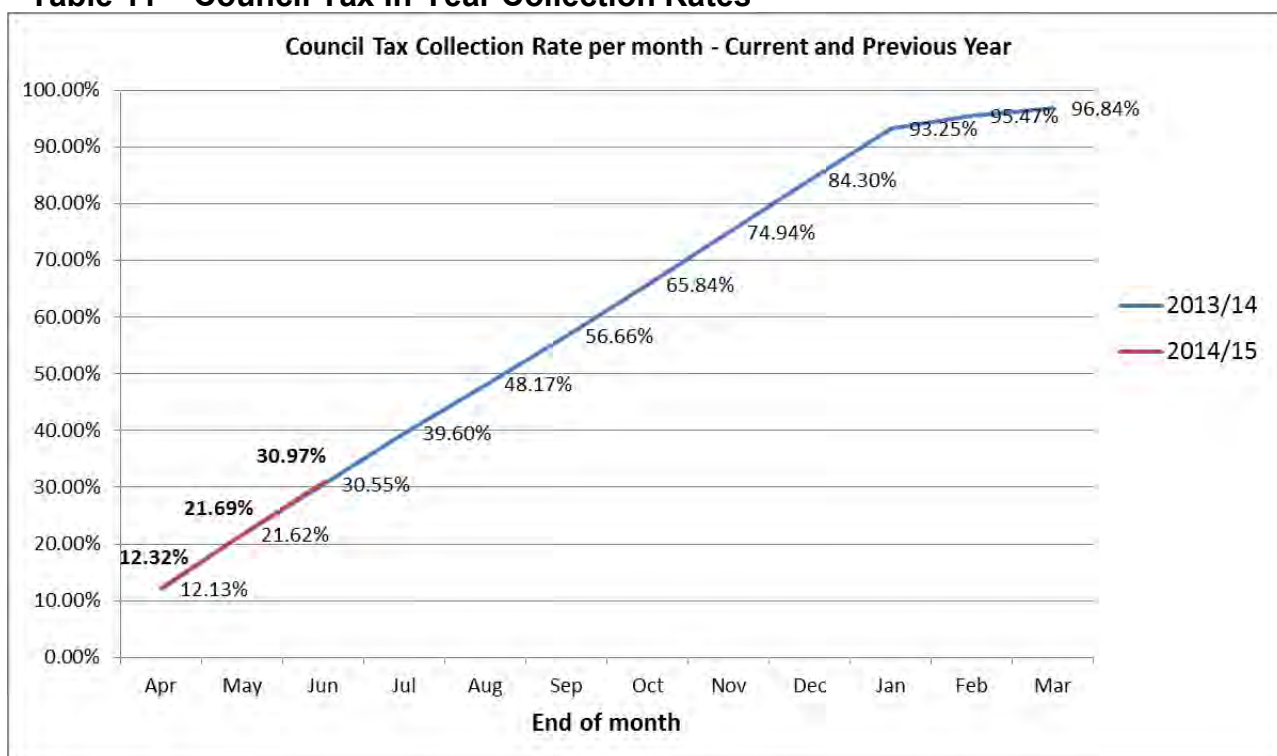
32. Arrears of Council Tax (i.e. payments due for years 1993-94 up to 2013/14) carried forward on 01/04/14 were £6.864 million, a 9.5% increase on the corresponding figure 12 months earlier. That total included outstanding Court Costs of £0.628 million.

Table 10 – Council Tax Arrears



33. Over June the arrears fell by £0.319 million making the overall figure outstanding on 30th June 2014 £6.037 million. This figure is 6.6% higher than the equivalent 12 months ago. Payments received totalled £0.162 million and write-offs processed during June of £0.155 million were the main reasons for the reduction in June.

Table 11 – Council Tax In-Year Collection Rates

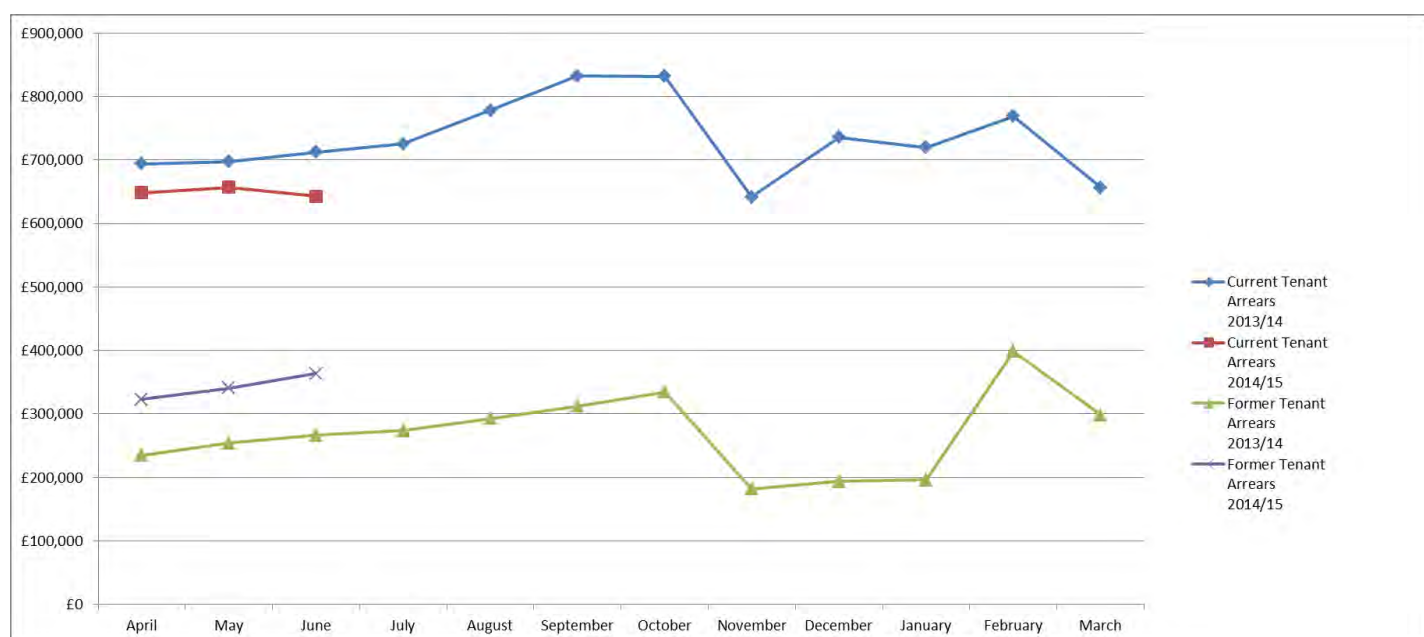


34. The collection rate for 2014/15 debt at 30th June was 30.97%, up on last year's equivalent of 30.55% and the profiled end of June target of 30.5%. The total collection rate for 2013/14 debt has moved from 96.84% at 31st March 2014 to 97.71% three months later at the end of June. The budgeted total collection rate for 2013/14 was 97%.

Housing Rent Arrears

35. Analysis of current and former tenant rent arrears is shown below for the year to date and for the 2013/14 financial year for comparative purposes.

Table 11 – HRA Rent Arrears Current Tenants and Former Tenants



36. HRA arrears, adjusted to exclude debt that is subject to direct payments and excluding rechargeable repairs, totalled £1.007 million at the end of the June 2014, an increase of £0.009 million on last month's position of £0.998 million. The arrears for June 2014 are £0.028 million more than the arrears of 12 months previously.

37. Former tenant arrears stood at £0.364 million as at the end of June 2014, which is £0.098 million higher than that for a year previously.

38. Current tenant arrears stood at £0.643 million as at the end of June 2014, which is £0.07 million lower than that for a year previously.

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GF Outturn Report 14/15 @ Q1 June, 2014	Approved Budget (per Budget book)	Latest Budget	Expenditure	Income	Projected Outturn against Latest Budget @ Q1 30th June, 2014	PO Variance	PO Variance (Prev Month)	PO Variance Mvt from Previous Month
	£000's	£000's	£000's	£000's	£000's	£000's	£000's	£000's
Directorates								
City Development	1,250	1,500	891	(430)	1,546	46		46
Housing & Property	4,009	3,996	1,505	(510)	3,996			
Regeneration & Major Projects	(5,579)	(5,294)	987	(3,883)	(5,531)	(237)		(237)
City Regeneration	(320)	201	3,382	(4,823)	10	(191)		(191)
Policy, Culture & Communication	1,383	1,438	321	(134)	1,438			
Environmental Development	2,191	2,251	1,106	(577)	2,251			
Leisure, Parks & Communities	5,707	6,568	2,333	(589)	6,568			
Direct Services	(1,578)	(1,406)	11,031	(11,453)	(1,406)			
Community Services	7,704	8,851	14,791	(12,753)	8,851			
Transformation Fund	527	527	127		527			
Business Improvement & Technology	3,877	3,916	1,228	(53)	3,916			
Customer Services	3,162	3,403	1,071	(506)	3,403			
Finance	2,030	2,030	480	(106)	2,030			
Human Resources & Facilities	1,792	1,879	632	(327)	1,879			
Law & Governance	2,622	2,733	803	(190)	2,733			
Organisational Dev & Corp Services	14,010	14,487	4,341	(1,182)	14,487			
Directorate Total Excl SLA's & Capital Charges	21,393	23,539	22,514	(18,758)	23,348	(191)		(191)
SLA's & Capital Charges	(692)	(692)	387		(692)			
Corporate Accounts								
Local Costs of Benefits	(50)	(50)	13,256	(16,605)	207	257		257
Corporate & Democratic Core	3,701	3,701	109		3,701			
Item 8 interest receivable	(7,757)	(7,757)			(7,757)			
Transfer to Capital Reserve	1,281	1,064			1,064			
Investment Income	(956)	(956)			(956)			
Interest Payable	6,713	6,713			6,713			
New Homes Bonus	(2,020)	(2,020)		(524)	(2,020)			
CRC Allowances	75	75	(70)		75			
Inflation on Utilities	249	249			249			
Promotion of Economic growth (City Deal)	150							
Payment to Parish Councils (Precepts)	20	20			20			
Revenue implications of Capital Bids	30	30			30			
Contingencies								
Pensions provision top-up	200	200			200			
Pay Progression	351	351			351			
Provision for Pressures, recessions & high risks	1,040	1,061			1,061			
Redundancy costs contingency	200	48			48			
Disabled Transport Contingency	50	50			50			
Jobs Club Contingency	42	42			42			
Flooding Contingency	56	56			56			
Total Corporate Accounts & Contingencies	3,377	2,880	13,295	(17,129)	3,137	257		257
Net Expenditure Budget	24,079	25,727	36,197	(35,887)	25,793	66		66
Transfer to / (from) Ear Marked Reserves		(1,648)	(1,648)		(1,648)			
Net Budget Requirement	24,079	24,079	34,548	(35,887)	24,145	66		66
Funding								
External Funding (RSG)	6,339	6,339		3,011	6,339			
External Funding (NNDR Retention)	6,114	6,114			6,114			
Council tax	11,582	11,582			11,582			
Less Parish Precepts	(162)	(162)	(96)		(162)			
Collection Fund Surplus	205	205			205			
Total Funding Available	24,079	24,079	(96)	3,011	24,079			
(Surplus) / Deficit for year		()	34,644	(38,898)	66	66		66

Capital Budget and Spend as at 30th June 2014									
Capital Scheme	Latest Budget 2014/15	Spend to 30th June 2014	Profiled Budget	Variance to Profiled Budget	% Spend Against Latest Budget	Projected Outturn at 30th June 2014	Outturn Variance to Latest Budget	Outturn Variance due to Slippage	Outturn variance due to Over/ Under spend
	£	£	£	£		£	£	£	£
B0075 Stage 2 Museum of Oxford Development	-	0	0	0	0%	27,200	27,200	27,200	
G6013 Superconnected Cities	4,973,284	22,008	22,000	8	0%	4,973,284	0		
S01 Policy Culture & Communications Total	4,973,284	22,008	22,000	8	0%	5,000,484	27,200	27,200	0
C3039 ICT Infrastructure	53,871	23,295	16,000	7,295	43%	79,392	25,521		25,521
C3044 Software Licences	174,598	164,077	174,598	(10,521)	94%	164,077	(10,521)		(10,521)
C3053 New Council website in Drupal	15,000	7,387	0	7,387		95,000	80,000	80,000	
C3054 Purchase of web service (API's)	71,000	0	0	0		84,000	13,000		13,000
C3045 Mobile Working	92,832	6,930	7,000	(70)	7%	92,832	0		
C3046 System Integration Capability	13,000	0	0	0	0%	0	(13,000)		(13,000)
C3047 Oracle 11g Upgrade	25,000	0	0	0	0%	25,000	0		
C3048 Server 2008 Upgrade for Idox	-	0	0	0	0%	0	0		
C3049 Source Code Management	15,000	0	0	0	0%	0	(15,000)		(15,000)
C3050 Tree Management Software	-	0	0	0	0%	0	0		
S03 Business Improvement & Technology Total	460,301	201,689	197,598	4,091	44%	540,301	80,000	80,000	0
F1323 Bridge Over Fiddlers Stream	70,000	0	0	0	0%	70,000	0		
F6013 Bullingdon Community Centre - Enhancement of Community Facilities	895	0	0	0	0%	895	0		
F7008 Landscaping Work at Lamarsh Road	1,032	0	0	0	0%	1,032	0		
F7006 Work of Art - Littlemore	1,560	0	0	0	0%	1,560	0		
F7007 Woodfarm / Headington Community Centre - Improvements	19,887	0	0	0	0%	19,887	0		
F7009 CCTV Gipsy Lane Campus	60,000	0	0	0	0%	60,000	0		
F7011 Headington Environmental Improvements	60,000	0	0	0	0%	60,000	0		
F7012 Rose Hill Recreation Ground Improvements	3,300	0	0	0	0%	3,300	0		
F7019 Work of Art Rose Hill	2,288	0	0	0	0%	2,288	0		
F7020 Work of Art Shotover View	14,635	0	0	0	0%	0	(14,635)	(14,635)	
F7022 Sunnymead Park - Enhancement of Play Area Facilities	1,830	0	0	0	0%	1,830	0		
F7023 Templars Square Public Safety Measures	10,000	14,512	10,000	4,512	0%	14,512	4,512		4,512
F7024 St Clements Environmental Improvements	50,000	0	0	0	0%	0	(50,000)	(50,000)	
M5014 West End Partnership	335,000	0	0	0	0%	335,000	0		
S11 City Development Total	630,426	14,512	10,000	4,512	2%	570,303	(60,123)	(64,635)	4,512
E3511 Renovation Grants	56,313	0	0	0	0%	56,313	0		
E3521 Disabled Facilities Grants	634,544	196,272	90,000	106,272	31%	634,544	0		
E3554 Additional SALIX Plus funding	200,000	0	0	0	0%	200,000	0		
E3555 Flood Alleviation at Northway & Marston	300,000	0	0	0	0%	300,000	0		
E3556 Additional CCTV to Speedwell street	40,000	0	0	0	0%	40,000	0		
F0015 Cycle Oxford	302,047	610	0	610	0%	302,047	0		
G6014 CCTV Project	25,000	0	0	0	0%	25,000	0		
G6015 CCTV Rosehill Parade	18,000	0	0	0	0%	18,000	0		
S12 Environmental Development Total	1,575,904	196,882	90,000	106,882	12%	1,575,904	0	0	0
Leisure Centres									
A4808 Blackbird Leys LC Improvements	128,278	0	0	0	0	128,278	0		
A4814 Leisure Centre substantive repairs	320,729	17,660	15,000	2,660	6%	320,729	0		
Community Centres									
B0033 Community Centres	539,003	54,242	54,000	242	10%	453,859	(85,144)		(85,144)
Covered Market									
B0027 Covered Market - Improvements & Upgrade to Roof	52,093	18	0	18	0%	52,093	0		
B0028 Covered Market - New Roof Structures to High St Entrances	101,114	9,698	25,278	(15,581)	10%	101,114	0		
B0036 Investment - Covered Market	250,048	994	0	994	0%	250,048	0		
Investment Properties									
B0003 Roof Repairs & Ext Refurbishment 44-46 George St	27,000	0	0	0	0%	27,000	0		
B0040 Investment - Broad Street	97,509	602	0	602	1%	97,509	0		
B0041 Investment - Misc City Centre Properties	12,321	1,231	0	1,231	10%	12,321	0		
B0044 Investment - Outer City	47,208	0	0	0	0%	47,208	0		
B0045 Investment - St. Michael's Street	6,035	0	0	0	0%	6,035	0		
B0046 Investment - Ship Street	71,222	950	0	950	1%	71,222	0		
B0043 Investment George Street	101,000	0	0	0	0%	101,000	0		
B0072 23-25 Broad Street	312,396	0	0	0	0%	312,396	0		
M5015 Old Fire Station	-	798	0	798	0%	798	798		798
Miscellaneous Council Properties									
B0088 Barns Road Car Park	128,254	0	0	0	0%	128,254	0		
B0052 Miscellaneous Properties	9,865	16,401	9,865	6,536	166%	9,865	0		
B0073 Clearing Channels under Frideswide Bridge	5,000	0	0	0	0%	5,000	0		
B0078 Allotments	16,700	0	0	0	0%	16,700	0		
B0079 Street Sports Sites	8,110	0	0	0	0%	8,110	0		
B0077 Direct Services Depots	45,384	63,699	45,384	18,315	140%	63,699	18,315		18,315
B0080 Templars Square Refurbishment/Relocation	140,467	14,296	28,093	(13,798)	10%	14,296	(126,171)		(126,171)
Parks & Cemeteries									
B0048 Leisure Cemeteries	-	1,700	0	1,700	0%	1,700	1,700	1,700	
B0050 Leisure - Depots	43,800	0	0	0	0%	43,800	0		
B0065 Parks & Cemetery - Masonry Walls & Path Improvements	34,298	689	0	689	2%	34,298	0		
B0067 Fencing Repairs across the City	146,007	216	0	216	0%	146,007	0		
B0085 Parks & Leisure Toilets	9,200	0	0	0	0%	9,200	0		

Capital Budget and Spend as at 30th June 2014									
Capital Scheme	Latest Budget 2014/15	Spend to 30th June 2014	Profiled Budget	Variance to Profiled Budget	% Spend Against Latest Budget	Projected Outturn at 30th June 2014	Outturn Variance to Latest Budget	Outturn Variance due to Slippage	Outturn variance due to Over/ Under spend
	£	£	£	£		£	£	£	£
Town Hall									
B0054 Town Hall	395,533	10,054	10,000	54	3%	395,533	0		
B0068 Town Hall - Conference System Refurbishment	281,759	3,100	3,000	100	1%	281,759	0		
B0076 Town Hall Improvements (OFTF2)	148,896	57,116	29,779	27,337	38%	266,896	118,000		118,000
B0089 Council Chamber Conference System	-					75,000	75,000		75,000
B0087 Property Investment Strategy	7,000,000	0	0	0	0%	7,000,000	0		
Housing Projects									
B0082 Garages	110,720	30,585	27,680	2,905	28%	110,720	0		
M5020 Empty Homes CPO Revolving Fund	250,000	0	0	0	0%	250,000	0		
M5021 Equity Loan Scheme for Teachers	138,000	0	0	0	0%	138,000	0		
N5019 Homelessness Property Acquisitions	-	0	0	0	0%	2,000,000	2,000,000	2,000,000	
S13 Housing and Property Total	10,977,949	284,049	248,080	35,969	2.6%	12,980,447	2,002,498	2,001,700	798
Community Facilities									
G1013 Dawson Street Gardens	19,000	0	0	0	0%	19,000	0		
G3015 NE Marston Croft Road Recreation Ground	19,300	0	0	0	0%	19,300	0		
G3017 South Oxford Community Centre Café	50,000	0	0	0	0%	50,000	0		
G3018 St Ebbes Deaf and Hard of Hearing Centre	50,000	0	0	0	0%	50,000	0		
Playground Improvements									
A1300 Playground Refurbishment	4,582	3,158	3,000	158	69%	4,582	0		
A1301 Play Barton	-	0	0	0	0%	0	0		
Indoor Sports									
A4810 New Build Completion Pool	5,412,827	704,840	400,000	304,840	13%	5,412,827	0		
A4815 Leisure Centre Improvement Work	442,992	0	0	0	0%	442,992	0		
A4835 Biomass store at Cutteslowe Park to supply new pool	90,000	0	0	0	0%	90,000	0		
A4829 Oxford Spires Academy	500,000	0	0	0	0%	500,000	0		
Sports Pavilions									
A4816 Sports Pavilions	1,459,780	401,659	400,000	1,659	28%	1,459,780	0		
Outdoor Sports									
	44,375	0	0	0	0%	0	(44,375)	(44,375)	
A3129 Donnington Recreation Ground Improvements									
A4820 Upgrade Existing Tennis Courts	71,169	17,311	20,000	(2,689)	0%	71,169	0		
A4821 Upgrade Existing Multi-Use Games Area	58,677	66,288	30,000	36,288	113%	58,677	0		
A4831 Three Artificial Turf Cricket Wickets	-	0	0	0	0%	0	0		
A4827 Cowley Outdoor Gym	25,056	0	0	0	0%	25,056	0		
A4828 Valentia Road Playground	10,000	0	0	0	0%	10,000	0		
Parks & Cemeteries									
A4818 Lye Valley & Chiswell Valley Walkways	64,000	0	0	0	0%	64,000	0		
A4826 Parks Works	179,176	62,716	22,000	40,716	35%	179,176	0		
A4830 Develop new burial space	50,000	2,860	0	2,860	6%	50,000	0		
S22 Leisure & Communities Total	8,550,934	1,258,832	875,000	383,832	15%	8,506,559	(44,375)	(44,375)	0
Vehicles									
R0005 MT Vehicles/Plant Replacement Programme.	2,991,131	107,158	110,858	(3,700)	4%	2,991,131	0		
T2275 MOT Service Bay Extension	50,990	46,962	50,990	(4,028)	92%	50,990	0		
Cleansing Services									
T2269 Toilet improvements	180,220	190	0	190	0%	180,220	0		
T2276 Invest to Save - Bin Washing Service	83,000	0	0	0	0%	83,000	0		
T2277 Food waste collection from flats	129,000	0	0	0	0%	129,000	0		
Car Parking									
B0081 Car Parking Oxpens	3,141,959	45,147	50,000	(4,853)	1%	3,141,959	0		
B0037 Car Parks	80,000	22,645	20,000	2,645	28%	80,000	0		
B0086 Extension to Seacourt Park & Ride (Part of feasibility reports)	400,000	0	0	0	0%	400,000	0		
F0011 Pay & Display Parking in the Car Parks	71,214	14,160	15,000	(840)	20%	71,214	0		
F0012 P & R Purchase of Capital Items - Peartree, Redbrid	-	2,210							
T2273 Car Parks Resurfacing	371,730	143,875	145,000	(1,125)	39%	371,730	0		
T2274 Gloucester Green Car Park Waterproofing	96,688	0	9,669	(9,669)	0%	96,688	0		
T2279 Leys Parking	87,000	0	0	0	0%	87,000	0		
S23 Direct Services Total	7,682,932	382,346	401,517	(21,380)	5%	7,682,932	0	0	0
B0074 R & D Feasibility Fund	248,893	0	0	0	0%	248,893	0		
C3051 Veriscan Solution, Identity Authentication Solution	20,000	0	0	0	0%	20,000	0		
C3052 Fraud Solutions and Data Warehouse	41,000	0	0	0	0%	41,000	0		
S32 Finance Total	309,893	0	0	0	0%	309,893	0	0	0
GF Total	35,161,623	2,360,318	1,844,195	513,914	7%	37,166,824	2,005,200	1,999,890	5,310
External Contracts									
N6384 Tower Blocks	279,000	103,656	103,156	500	37%	279,000	0		
N6386 Structural	128,000	30,625	30,500	125	24%	128,000	0		
N6387 Controlled Entry	215,000	0	0	0	0%	215,000	0		
N6389 Damp-proof works (K&B)	92,000	15,192	15,000	192	17%	92,000	0		

Capital Budget and Spend as at 30th June 2014									
Capital Scheme	Latest Budget 2014/15	Spend to 30th June 2014	Profiled Budget	Variance to Profiled Budget	% Spend Against Latest Budget	Projected Outturn at 30th June 2014	Outturn Variance to Latest Budget	Outturn Variance due to Slippage	Outturn variance due to Over/ Under spend
	£	£	£	£		£	£	£	£
N6392 Roofing	304,000	48,231	48,000	231	16%	304,000	0		
N6393 External Doors	205,000	0		0	0%	205,000	0		
N6394 Windows	106,000	5,190	5,000	190	5%	106,000	0		
N7020 Extensions & Major Adaptions	308,000	47		47	0%	308,000	0		
N7026 Communal Areas	154,000	38,161	38,200	(39)	25%	154,000	0		
N7027 Environmental Improvements	103,000	1,170	1,200	(30)	1%	103,000	0		
N7033 Energy Efficiency Initiatives	513,000	0	0	0	0%	513,000	0		
N7034 Digital Inclusion	164,000	0		0	0%	164,000	0		
N7035 Rose Hill Drainage	40,000	0		0	0%	40,000	0		
N7036 Food Waste Collection	113,000	0		0	0%	113,000	0		
New Build									
B0034 Rose Hill Community Centre	4,078,234	20,568	21,000	(432)	1%	4,078,234	0		
N7029 HCA New Build	13,101,334	1,938,851	1,940,000	(1,149)	15%	13,101,334	0		
N7030 Horspath Road Depot	1,488,000	0	0	0	0%	1,488,000	0		
N7031 Homes at Barton	104,000	32,011	32,000	11	31%	104,000	0		
N7032 Great Estates: Estate Enhancements and Regeneration	937,233	135,561	135,700	(139)	14%	937,233	0		
Internal Contracts									
N6385 Adaptations for disabled	559,091	166,811	139,773	27,038	30%	559,091	0		
N6390 Kitchens & Bathrooms	2,797,529	764,923	811,283	(46,360)	27%	2,797,529	0		
N6391 Heating	1,603,388	471,393	435,160	36,233	29%	1,603,388	0		
N6388 Major Voids	668,636	134,593	167,159	(32,566)	20%	668,636	0		
N6395 Electrics	347,662	90,829	100,822	(9,993)	26%	347,662	0		
Housing Revenue Account	28,409,107	3,997,812	4,023,953	(26,141)	14%	28,409,107	0	0	0
Grand Total	63,570,730	6,358,130	5,868,148	487,773	10%	65,575,930	2,005,200	1,999,890	5,310
Financing - General Fund									
Capital Receipts	11,832,075								
Direct Revenue Funding	3,837,000								
Revenue Reserves	3,041,959								
Property Reserve	7,000,000								
Developer Contributions -S106	699,070								
Community Infrastructure Levy	-								
Heritage Lottery fund for Town Hall	25,000								
Government Funding	441,544								
Government Grants	5,293,844								
Prudential Borrowing for Vehicles	2,991,131								
Total General Fund Financing	35,161,623	0							
Financing - HRA									
MRR	22,934,351								
External Contributions	3,835,000								
Capital Receipts (Affordable Homes Contribution)	1,210,000								
Developer Contributions -S106 (Rose Hill CC)	429,755								
Total HRA Financing	28,409,106	0							
Total Financing	63,570,730	0							

HRA Outturn Report 14/15 @ 30 June, 2014	Approved Budget (per Budget book)	Virements	Latest Budget	Profiled Budget 30th June 2014	Actual YTD	Variance Profiled Budget to Actual, June 2014	% budget spent to 30th June, 2014	Projected Outturn@ 30th June, 2014	Outturn Variance	Notes
	£000's	£000's	£000's	£000's	£000's	£'000's	%	£000's	£000's	
Dwelling Rent	(40,590)		(40,590)	(9,807)	(9,786)	22	24%	(40,590)	0	1
Service Charges	(1,196)		(1,196)	(299)	(308)	(9)	26%	(1,196)	0	
Furniture & Other Rent	(816)		(816)	(225)	(262)	(37)	32%	(816)	0	
Major Project Team Fees	(329)		(329)	(82)	(45)	38	14%	(329)	0	
Net Income	(42,931)		(42,931)	(10,414)	(10,401)	13	24%	(42,931)	0	
General Management	5,138	17	5,155	1,129	1,117	(12)	22%	5,155	0	2
Special Management	2,771		2,771	557	540	(17)	19%	2,771	0	3
Other Management	2,648	16	2,663	355	314	(41)	12%	2,663	0	4
Bad Debt Provision	431		431	54	53	(1)	12%	431	0	5
Responsive & Cyclical Repairs	9,859	234	10,093	2,429	2,243	(186)	22%	10,093	0	6
Interest Paid	7,792		7,792	1,948	1,948		25%	7,792	0	
Depreciation	5,595		5,595	1,399	1,399		25%	5,595	0	
Total Expenditure	34,233	267	34,500	7,870	7,613	(257)	22%	34,500	0	
Net Operating Expenditure/(Income)	(8,697)	267	(8,430)	(2,543)	(2,787)	(244)	33%	(8,430)	0	
Interest Received	(64)		(64)	(16)	(16)		25%	(64)	0	
Other HRA Reserve Adjustments	(7,996)	(267)	(8,263)	(248)	(251)	(3)	3%	(8,263)	0	
Revenue Contribution to Capital	16,757		16,757				0%	16,757	0	
Total Appropriations	8,698	(267)	8,431	(264)	(267)	(3)	(3%)	8,431		
Total HRA (Surplus)/Deficit				(2,807)	(3,055)	(247)				

Notes

- Dwelling Rent:** Slight adverse variance as at the end of June due to a greater number of RTB's completed in 2013/14 than estimated (5 more), thus stock numbers for the current year will be lower than estimated. However, not at this stage anticipating a year-end adverse position as waiting to see how 2014/15 RTB completions progress.
- General Management:** Several areas of re-profiling within Tenancy Management has taken place during the first quarter to account for the slower than anticipated spend associated with salary recharges. Similarly, within Rent Accounting supplies and services spend has been slower than estimated as has Council Tax payments associated with void properties within Rents and Charges. Again no projected outturn variance is being reported for these combined slippages in spend at this stage, rather progress will be monitored and if the current trend continues then several underspends may be reported in future months.
- Within Special Management Sheltered Housing public utility spend has been re-profiled as invoices have been delayed for payment. In addition Furnished Tenancies activity has been a little bit slower than estimated for the period to the end of June. Again it is too early in the financial year to predict any year-end underspends.
- Other Management:** Major projects team has a underspend of due to the restructure offset by a slight overspend of £11k in capital schemes recharged through Direct Services.
- Bad Debt Provision Contribution:** The bad debt provision contribution required to date is less than anticipated with the collection rate currently at 93.24%. This situation is being monitored and if this trend continues, there will be less bad debt provision needed for the year and a variance to budget will be forecast.
- Responsive & Cyclical Repairs:** Responsive Repairs is under by £100k primarily caused by the efficiency expectations for the Building Services Review 2012/13, being achieved earlier than programmed. External Planned Maintenance is under against profile by £102k due the restructure in Major Projects and the implementation of the results from the stock condition reports. It is anticipated during the latter part of the financial year for spend to catch up and no year-end variances to occur.

Appendix E4 - Subjective Analysis of YTD spend (@ 30th June, 2014)

	Latest Budget			Latest Budget			Latest Budget			Latest Budget			Latest Budget			Latest Budget			Latest Budget			Latest Budget		
	Actual	Var		Actual	Var		Actual	Var		Actual	Var		Actual	Var		Actual	Var		Actual	Var		Actual	Var	
	Employees			Premises			Transport			Supplies & Services			External Income			Internal Income			Other			Total		
City Development	722	724	1	2	2	0	1	(2)	(3)	168	167	(1)	(449)	(430)	19	0	0	0	0	0	0	445	461	16
Housing & Property	753	753	0	110	111	0	3	(11)	(14)	494	493	(1)	(524)	(510)	14	0	0	0	130	159	29	966	995	28
Regeneration & Major Projects	200	201	1	663	644	(20)	1	1	0	55	71	16	(3,753)	(3,883)	(131)	0	0	0	69	69	(0)	(2,764)	(2,897)	(133)
City Regeneration	1,675	1,678	3	776	757	(19)	6	(11)	(17)	717	730	14	(4,726)	(4,823)	(97)	0	0	0	200	229	29	(1,353)	(1,441)	(88)
Policy Culture and Comms	200	208	8	1	1	0	1	0	(0)	128	111	(17)	(125)	(113)	13	0	(21)	(21)	0	0	0	205	187	(18)
Environmental Development	911	918	7	10	20	10	11	13	1	144	155	11	(517)	(523)	(6)	(25)	(54)	(29)	0	0	0	534	529	(5)
Leisure, Parks and Communities	852	818	(34)	197	197	0	127	128	1	685	663	(22)	(541)	(520)	21	(78)	(69)	10	528	528	0	1,769	1,744	(25)
Direct Services	5,222	5,050	(172)	2,028	2,329	301	1,311	1,213	(98)	1,663	1,794	131	(3,735)	(3,906)	(172)	(7,272)	(7,546)	(274)	644	644	0	(138)	(422)	(284)
Community Services	7,186	6,994	(192)	2,237	2,548	312	1,450	1,354	(96)	2,620	2,723	103	(4,918)	(5,063)	(145)	(7,376)	(7,690)	(314)	1,172	1,172	0	2,370	2,038	(332)
Transformation	0	56	56	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	70	70	0	0	0	0	0	0	131	0	(131)	132	127	(5)
Bus Improvement & Technology	447	431	(17)	0	0	0	0	2	1	780	796	16	(55)	(53)	3	0	0	0	0	0	0	1,173	1,175	3
Customer Services	963	937	(26)	14	17	3	1	3	1	221	115	(106)	(211)	(506)	(295)	0	0	0	0	0	0	988	565	(423)
Finance	433	423	(10)	(3)	0	3	1	1	(0)	61	56	(5)	(108)	(106)	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	385	374	(11)
Human Resources & Facilities	558	486	(72)	14	14	0	15	35	20	100	97	(3)	(191)	(315)	(124)	0	(12)	(12)	0	0	0	495	305	(191)
Law and Governance	699	688	(11)	13	26	12	3	1	(2)	77	89	12	(171)	(190)	(19)	0	0	0	0	0	0	621	613	(8)
Org Dev & Corp Services	3,101	3,020	(80)	38	56	18	20	41	21	1,239	1,223	(16)	(736)	(1,170)	(434)	0	(12)	(12)	131	0	(131)	3,794	3,159	(635)
Grand Total	11,962	11,693	(269)	3,051	3,361	311	1,476	1,384	(93)	4,576	4,676	100	(10,380)	(11,056)	(676)	(7,376)	(7,702)	(326)	1,503	1,401	(102)	4,811	3,756	(1,055)

Direct Services - Further Analysis

	Employees			Premises			Transport			Supplies & Services			External Income			Internal Income			Other			Total		
Direct Services (General Fund)	3,005	2,915	(90)	1,592	1,678	86	1,091	995	(96)	865	903	38	(3,625)	(3,781)	(157)	(3,339)	(3,362)	(23)	343	343	0	(67)	(309)	(242)
Direct Services (Bldg Services)	2,217	2,135	(82)	436	651	215	220	218	(2)	798	891	93	(110)	(125)	(15)	(3,933)	(4,184)	(251)	301	301	0	(71)	(113)	(42)
Community Services	5,222	5,050	(172)	2,028	2,329	301	1,311	1,213	(98)	1,663	1,794	131	(3,735)	(3,906)	(172)	(7,272)	(7,546)	(274)	644	644	0	(138)	(422)	(284)

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To: City Executive Board

Date: 10 September 2014

Report of: Scrutiny Finance Panel

Title of Report: Budget Monitoring 2014/15 – Quarter 1

Summary and Recommendations

Purpose of report: To report the conclusions and recommendations of the Scrutiny Finance Panel on the Budget Monitoring 2014/15 – Quarter 1 report.

Key decision? No

Scrutiny Lead Member: Councillor Simmons

Executive lead member: Councillor Turner

Policy Framework: Improving value for money and service performance

Recommendations: For the City Executive Board to say if it agrees or disagrees with the following recommendations:

Recommendation 1

That urgent action is taken to avoid a loss of subsidy relating to the overpayment of benefits.

Recommendation 2

If necessary to avoid slippage, a flexible approach should be taken to spending the £2m investment in Homelessness Property Acquisitions in 2014/2015. This could include investing in social housing instead.

Recommendation 3

The premises for the heavy vehicle testing facility should be flexible enough that it can be used for other purposes in the event that the testing facility is not successful.

Recommendation 4

The capital programme should be a red risk in performance reports until the new capital gateway process proven to be effective.

Introduction

1. The Scrutiny Finance panel considered the Budget Monitoring 2014/15 – Quarter 1 report. The Panel would like to thank Bill Lewis and Anna Winship for supporting this discussion. The Panel agreed the following conclusions and recommendations.

Conclusions and recommendations

2. The overall financial position is general positive but a £257k overspend relating to the Local Cost of Benefits is a particular concern.

Recommendation 1

That urgent action is taken to avoid a loss of subsidy relating to the overpayment of benefits.

3. High staff turnover is a concern in areas where the Council is losing skilled and experienced staff and the costs of replacing them are significant.
4. The rephrasing of the investment in homelessness property acquisitions is welcome but the possibility of slippage is a concern. The £2m should be spent in the current financial year and a flexible approach should be taken in order to avoid slippage, such as by spending on social housing instead.

Recommendation 2

If necessary to avoid slippage, a flexible approach should be taken to spending the £2m investment in Homelessness Property Acquisitions in 2014/2015. This could include investing in social housing instead.

5. The proposal to invest £160k in a heavy goods testing facility is welcome. The premises should be flexible enough to be used for other purposes in future in the event that the testing facility is not successful.

Recommendation 3

The premises for the heavy vehicle testing facility should be flexible enough that it can be used for other purposes in the event that the testing facility is not successful.

6. The capital programme should be a red risk in performance reports until the new capital gateway process has been implemented and proven to be effective.

Recommendation 4

The capital programme should be a red risk in performance reports until the new capital gateway process proven to be effective.

Director and Board Member Comments

Recommendation 1 – Officers have put an action plan in place to address this issue and managers are reviewing performance on a weekly basis. It is worth noting however, that since the removal of Council Tax Benefit from the subsidy calculation the thresholds in cash terms for local authority error are more stringent than previously.

Recommendation 2 – It is unlikely that the procurement of social housing could be delivered within a shorter timeline than the procurement of homelessness accommodation. However, the sentiment in terms of flexibility is noted.

Recommendation 3 – Currently there is only one heavy vehicle testing facility within Oxfordshire at Bicester. It is extremely busy and the Council currently takes its vehicles to Newbury or Gloucestershire to be tested due to wait times. Soft market testing with local businesses indicates there is demand for a new facility within the City and the Driver and Vehicle Standards Agency are also supportive of the project. Due to current lack of provision it is unlikely the project will be unsuccessful.

Recommendation 4 - The Council has an agreed Risk Management Framework which allocates a Red, Amber or Green status dependant on the respective impact and probability of a risk occurring. This methodology is applied to all identified risks.

Name and contact details of author:-

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Law and Governance
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List of background papers: None

Version number: 1

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EXTRACT FROM THE MINUTES

CITY EXECUTIVE BOARD

Thursday 10 September 2014

47. INTEGRATED PERFORMANCE REPORT QUARTER 1

The Heads of Finance and Business Improvement and Technology submitted a report (previously circulated, now appended) which detailed the Council's finances, risk and performance as at the end of Quarter 1, 30th June 2014.

Cllr Turner, Executive Board Member for Finance, Asset Management and Public Health presented the report. His response to the scrutiny report is attached.

Cllr Simmons, Chair of the Scrutiny Committee highlighted the loss of subsidy related to benefit over payments. The Head of Customer Services said she had already taken action to avoid claw back and that the position have been adversely affected by the removal of council tax benefit from the calculations. This will be common to all local authorities.

Cllr Price said that the separation of the Council tax benefit from the housing benefit made the figures appear worse than they actually were. The benefit team's performance was the best it had ever been.

The Blackbird Leys Swimming Pool is within budget and is on target for completion by the end of the year, which is pleasing.

The City Executive Board resolved to:

- a. Note the projected outturn for finance and performance as at the end of the first quarter of 2014/15 and also the risk position as at 30th June 2014;
- b. Recommend to Council the approval of a £160,000 capital investment in a Heavy Goods Vehicle Testing Facility.
- c. Recommend to Council the bringing forward of a £2 million capital investment in Homelessness Property acquisitions from 2015/16 to 2014/15 with the balance of the £10 million budget being profiled £2 million each year over four years from 2015/16.

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To: Council – 29th September 2014

Item No:

Report of: Head of Law and Governance

Title of Report: HONORARY RECORDER - APPOINTMENT

Summary and Recommendations

Purpose of report: To advise Council about the position of Honorary Recorder and to invite Council to appoint the Resident Judge at the Crown Court as Honorary Recorder in place of His Honour Judge Gordon Risius CB who stands down from his appointment as Resident Judge on 3rd October 2014.

Policy Framework: Not applicable

Recommendation(s):

Council is **RECOMMENDED** to:-

- (a) Appoint His Honour Judge Ian Pringle QC to the post of Honorary Recorder of Oxford for as long as he holds the position of resident Judge at the Crown Court;
- (b) Thank His Honour Judge Gordon Risius CB for his services as Honorary Recorder.

1. Before the abolition of Courts of Quarter Sessions by the Courts Act 1971 the City Council as a borough council appointed a Recorder. The Recorder was the presiding judge at the City's Quarter Sessions.
2. When the Court Assize and Quarter Sessions were abolished under the Courts Act 1971 and replaced by the present system of Crown Courts and Recorders, former borough councils were given the power (Section 245 and 246, Local Government Act 1972) to appoint honorary recorders. The Honorary Recorder is the resident Judge at the Crown Court. The resident Judge usually holds office for one or two four year terms.

3. The role of Honorary Recorder is purely ceremonial but the position of Honorary Recorder is nevertheless an important link between the City and the Courts. The Honorary Recorder (and former Honorary Recorders typically) is invited to the City's major civic events (e.g. Annual Council, Christmas reception, Remembrance Sunday).
4. The Secretary of State and the Lord Chancellor have appointed His Honour Judge Ian Pringle QC to the position of Resident Judge at Oxford Crown Court. Judge Gordon Risius CB was the previous Honorary Recorder having been appointed to that position by Council in 2011 for as long as he held the position of Resident Judge. Previous holders of the position are listed for interest in the annex to this report.
5. Council is being recommended to:-
 - (a) Appoint his Honour Judge Ian Pringle QC to the post of Honorary Recorder of Oxford for as long as he holds the position of resident Judge at the Crown Court;
 - (b) Thank his Honour Judge Gordon Risius CB for his services as Honorary Recorder.

Name and contact details of author:-

Jane Stubbs
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Tel: 01865 252414
e-mail: jstubbs@oxford.gov.uk

List of background papers: None
Version number:

Honorary Recorder – Appointment

Details of former Honorary Recorders:-

1. 1972 to 1985 – His Honour Judge Edward Gibbens QC

There was no appointment between 1985 and 1989
2. 1989 to 1993 His Honour Judge Leo Clark QC – circuit judge/resident judge at Oxford Crown Court between 1976 and 1993.
3. 1993 to 2001 – His Honour Judge Harold Wilson – circuit judge from 1981 to 2001, resident judge Oxford Crown Court and Honorary Recorder between 1993 and 2001.
4. 2001 to 2002 – His Honour Judge Peter Crawford QC - circuit judge from 1988 to 2002, resident judge Oxford Crown Court and Honorary Recorder between 2001 and 2002.
5. 2002 to 2010 – His Honour Judge Julian Hall - circuit judge from 1986 to 2010, resident judge Oxford Crown Court and Honorary Recorder between 2002 and 2010.

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To: Council

Date: 29 September 2014

Report of: Head of Environmental Development

Title of Report: **Covenant of Mayors**

Summary and Recommendations

Purpose of report: To agree to sign the Covenant of Mayors

Report approved by:

Executive lead member: Councillor John Tanner, Board Member Cleaner, Greener Oxford, Climate Change and Transport

Policy Framework: The Corporate Plan/Sustainability Strategy

Recommendation:

1. Council is asked to support the Covenant of Mayors and authorise the Lord Mayor to sign the Covenant adherence form.
2. Delegate officers to complete online application.

Background

1. The Covenant of Mayors is the mainstream European movement involving local and regional authorities, voluntarily committing to increasing energy efficiency and use of renewable energy sources in their municipality. By committing to the Covenants signatories aim to meet and exceed the European Union 20% CO₂ reduction objective by 2020.
2. In March 2007 the EU's leaders endorsed an integrated approach to climate and energy policy that aims to combat climate change and increase the EU's energy security while strengthening its competitiveness. To kick-start this process, the EU Heads of State and Government set a series of demanding climate and energy targets to be met by 2020, known as the "20-20-20" targets. These are:
 - A reduction in EU greenhouse gas emissions of at least 20% below 1990 levels
 - 20% of EU energy consumption to come from renewable resources
 - A 20% reduction in primary energy use compared with projected levels, to be achieved by improving energy efficiency.

3. After the adoption, in 2008, of the EU Climate and Energy Package, the European Commission launched the Covenant of Mayors to endorse and support the efforts deployed by local authorities in the implementation of sustainable energy policies.
4. The Covenant of Mayors is open to all local authorities democratically constituted with elected representatives, whatever their size and whatever the stage of implementation of their energy and climate policies.

Benefits

5. Oxford City Council has an excellent track record on carbon reduction across its own estate and operations. The Council has reduced its own emissions through installed measures by 25% since 2008/09. In addition the Council set up the Low Carbon Oxford partnership which has a range of Pathfinders from across the public and private sectors including the Universities, BMW-Mini and Oxfam. Low Carbon Oxford pathfinders have signed up to a voluntary commitment for a 40% reduction in emissions by 2020 which meets and exceeds the Covenant of Mayors target.
6. The City Council is lead partner in the European funded programme 'OxFutures' which aims to mobilise and leverage investment in renewable energy in the city region which also contributes to reduction in CO₂ emissions.
7. Signature of the Covenant of Mayors would make a further public statement refreshing commitment to CO₂ reduction in the City. It would further reinforce and focus Low Carbon Oxford to ensure CO₂ reductions across the City. Importantly it allows the City to qualify for funding available to Covenant signatories.

Actions

8. Signatories to the Covenant of Mayors undertake to complete baseline data collection on CO₂ emissions, create administrative structures and submit a Sustainable Energy Action Plan (SEAP). The process is shown in Figure 1.
9. The Sustainable Energy Action Plan shows how the Covenant signatory will reach its commitment by 2020. It uses the results of the Baseline Emission Inventory to identify the targets of action and opportunities for reaching the local authority's CO₂ reduction target. It defines reduction measures, together with time frames and assigned responsibilities, which translate the long-term strategy into action. Signatories commit themselves to submitting their SEAPs within the year following adhesion.
10. Earlier this year Councillor Van Coulter attended the Climate Alliance conference in Frankfurt winning free consultancy for the City Council for the development and implementation of a Sustainable Energy Action Plan. This work was commenced earlier this month.

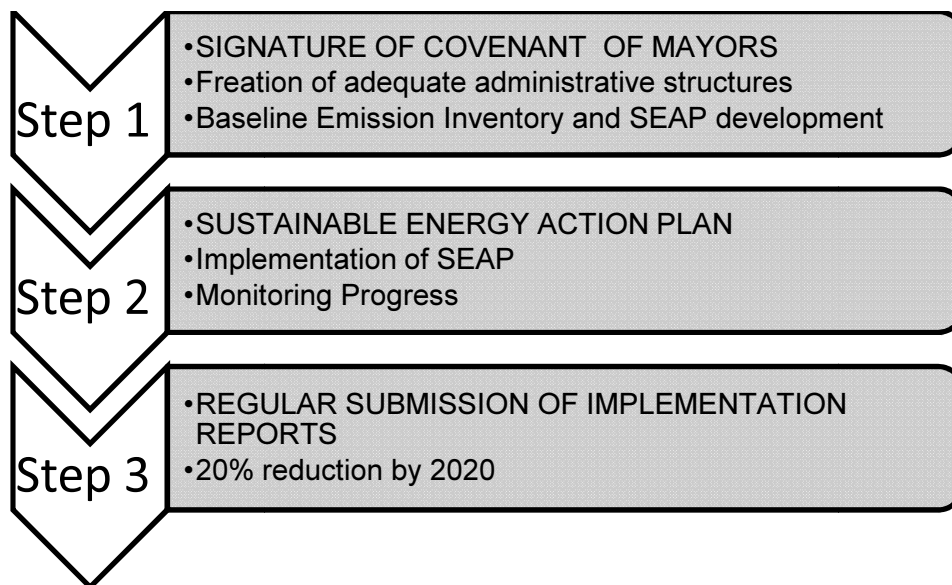


Figure 1: Process towards 20% reduction in CO2 emissions.

- In Oxford we have initial data and the potential to work with Low Carbon Oxford Pathfinders to develop this work. Given the level of support for the first ever Low Carbon Oxford week there is strong evidence to support that becoming a signatory to the Covenant of Mayors would be extremely positive for the City.
- Other authorities that have signed the Covenant of Mayors include Brighton, Bristol, Liverpool, Manchester, Southampton and Milton Keynes.

Process

- To join the Covenant of Mayors the Council needs to agree the recommendations in this paper at Full Council which will authorise the Lord Mayor to sign the Adhesion Form (Annex 1). There is no deadline for the process.

Legal Implications

- This is a voluntary process with no legal implications.

Financial Implications

- There is no cost to join the Covenant of Mayors. Other resourcing issues will be covered within in existing work areas. Membership will allow the City Council to qualify and access further European funding opportunities.

Name and contact details of author:-

Name:Jo Colwell

Job title:Environmental Sustainability Service Manager

Service Area: Environmental Development

Tel: 01865 0 252188**e-mail:**jcolwell@oxford.gov.uk

List of background papers:

Annex 1: Adhesion Form

Further information can be found on the web site link below:

<http://www.eumayors.eu>

Version number: 1

Annex 1



I, [Name of the Mayor or other authorised representative], [Mayor or Job title] of [Name of the city/town/region/territorial unit] inform you that the [City Council or equivalent decision-making body] decided at the meeting on [date] to mandate [me / legal representative: Mayor, President,..] to sign up to the Covenant of Mayors, in full knowledge of all commitments, in particular:

- to **go beyond the objectives set by the EU for 2020**, reducing the CO₂ emissions in our respective territories by at least 20%;
- to **submit a Sustainable Energy Action Plan** including a baseline emission inventory which outlines how the objectives will be reached, within one year of the abovementioned date;
- to **submit an implementation report** at least every second year following the submission of the Action Plan for evaluation, monitoring and verification purposes;
- to **organise Energy Days**, in co-operation with the European Commission and with other stakeholders, allowing citizens to benefit directly from the opportunities and advantages offered by a more intelligent use of energy, and to regularly inform the local media on developments concerning the action plan;
- to **attend and contribute to the annual EU Conference of Mayors** for a Sustainable Energy Europe.

[Name and complete address of the city/town/region/territorial unit]

[Name, e-mail and phone number of the contact person]

[Date].

SIGNATURE

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CITY EXECUTIVE BOARD

Wednesday 10 September 2014

COUNCILLORS PRESENT: Councillors Price (Chair), Turner (Deputy Leader), Sinclair, Simm, Brown, Kennedy, Rowley, Seamons, Tanner and Simmons.

OTHER MEMBERS PRESENT: Councillor Craig Simmons (Chair of Scrutiny Committee)

OFFICERS PRESENT: Peter Sloman (Chief Executive), David Edwards (Executive Director City Regeneration and Housing), Tim Sadler (Executive Director Community Services), Jackie Yates (Executive Director Organisational Development and Corporate Services), Nigel Kennedy (Head of Finance), Helen Bishop (Head of Customer Services), Lindsay Cane (Law and Governance) and Sarah Claridge (Committee and Member Services Officer)

39. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

None

40. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

No declarations of interest were received

41. PUBLIC QUESTIONS

Full written questions with answers were distributed as a supplement before the meeting. Questions were asked on:

1. Commissioning Advice Services 2015-18 (minute 45) by Sue Tanner (Rose Hill & Donnington Advice Centre) and Fran Bennett (Agnes Smith Advice Centre)
2. Integrated Performance Report Quarter 1 2014/15 (minute 47) by Nigel Gibson

The Board noted the public questions.

42. COUNCILLOR ADDRESSES ON ANY ITEM FOR DECISION ON THE BOARD'S AGENDA

No Councillors addressed the Board.

43. SCRUTINY COMMITTEE REPORTS

The Scrutiny Committee's recommendations on the Integrated Performance Report for Quarter 1 2014/15 (minute 47), Treasury Management Annual Report (minute 48), Oxford Growth Board (minute 49) and Business in the Community – Working in Partnership (minute 50) were discussed during the Board's discussion of the items.

44. DESIGNATION OF HEADINGTON NEIGHBOURHOOD FORUM

The Head of City Development submitted a report (previously circulated, now appended) which detailed the designation of the Headington Neighbourhood Forum.

Cllr Price, Executive Board Member for Corporate Strategy, Economic Development and Planning presented the report

The City Executive Board resolved to designate the proposed Headington Neighbourhood Forum as a neighbourhood forum for the Headington Neighbourhood Area.

45. COMMISSIONING ADVICE SERVICES 2015-18

The Head of Customer Services submitted a report (previously circulated, now appended) which sought approval of a new service specification for commissioning advice services.

Cllr Susan Brown, Executive Board Member for Customer Services and Social Inclusion presented the report.

The Head of Customer Services outlined one change to the report, in paragraph 12; the first sentence should read "For 2015/16 the priority area will be in line with the Council's Financial Inclusion Strategy"

Cllr Tanner said the discussion should focus on teaching people how to spend money well rather than telling them how to spend their money. Personal catastrophe causes people to get into debt rather than financial mismanagement.

Cllr Seamons asked how the Board was to monitor the outcomes. Cllr Price said a monitoring report would come back to CEB once the priority areas and measures had been agreed.

The City Executive Board resolved to:

1. Approve the specification for commissioning advice services as set out in Appendix 1.
2. Agree that the identification of the priority area to be included in the service specification together with the associated outcomes and measures are delegated to the portfolio holder for Customer Services and Social Inclusion and the Head of Customer Services to agree with the commissioned advice agencies prior to 1 October 2014.

46. AWARD OF CONTRACT FOR A NEW TELEPHONY SOLUTION

The Head of Business Improvement and Technology submitted a report (previously circulated, now appended) which will deliver the telephony savings assumed within the Medium Term Financial Plan and request delegated authority to award a contract to deliver the solution.

Cllr Turner, Executive Board Member for Finance, Asset Management and Public Health presented the report. He explained it would be an effective cost saving measure which would free up funding for other projects.

The City Executive Board resolved to give project approval and delegated authority to the Director of Organisational Development and Corporate Services to award a new telephony contract.

47. INTEGRATED PERFORMANCE REPORT QUARTER 1 2014/15

The Heads of Finance and Business Improvement and Technology submitted a report (previously circulated, now appended) which detailed the Council's finances, risk and performance as at the end of Quarter 1, 30th June 2014.

Cllr Turner, Executive Board Member for Finance, Asset Management and Public Health presented the report. His response to the scrutiny report is attached.

Cllr Simmons, Chair of the Scrutiny Committee highlighted the loss of subsidy related to benefit over payments. The Head of Customer Services said she had already taken action to avoid claw back and that the position have been adversely affected by the removal of council tax benefit from the calculations. This will be common to all local authorities.

Cllr Price said that the separation of the Council tax benefit from the housing benefit made the figures appear worse than they actually were. The benefit team's performance was the best it had ever been.

The Blackbird Leys Swimming Pool is within budget and is on target for completion by the end of the year, which is pleasing.

The City Executive Board resolved to:

- a. Note the projected outturn for finance and performance as at the end of the first quarter of 2014/15 and also the risk position as at 30th June 2014;
- b. Recommend to Council the approval of a £160,000 capital investment in a Heavy Goods Vehicle Testing Facility.
- c. Recommend to Council the bringing forward of a £2 million capital investment in Homelessness Property acquisitions from 2015/16 to 2014/15 with the balance of the £10 million budget being profiled £2 million each year over four years from 2015/16.

48. TREASURY MANAGEMENT ANNUAL REPORT

The Head of Finance submitted a report (previously circulated, now appended) which detailed the Council's treasury management activity and performance for 2013/2014.

Cllr Turner, Executive Board Member for Finance, Asset Management and Public Health presented the report. He highlighted the subject of ethical investments to comply with Council's recommendation. His response to the Scrutiny Committee's report is attached.

Cllr Simmons, Chair of the Scrutiny Committee asked the Board to consider a more flexible approach to the capital programme to avoid slippage. A delay in one programme shouldn't cause a delay in other programmes.

Cllr Price said it was great news that the Council should get all its investments back from the Icelandic banks.

The Board noted that the Total Borrowed estimate for 31 March 2014 in Table 5 of the report should be £249,000M not £238,000M.

The City Executive Board resolved to note the report.

49. OXFORDSHIRE GROWTH BOARD

The Head of Executive Director of City Regeneration and Housing submitted a report (previously circulated, now appended) which detailed the terms of reference of the Oxfordshire Growth Board and to make an appointment to it.

Cllr Price, Executive Board Member for Corporate Strategy, Economic Development and Planning presented the report. He explained that the Board would be a joint committee under the Local Government Act 1972 and would therefore comply with all meeting requirements of the act (like any other council committee) and would be open to the public. Not all partners have equal status; the local authorities have full voting rights while the University and other partners are non-voting representatives. Oxford University is heavily engaged in the partnership while other partners are less so.

Cllr Simmons, Chair of Scrutiny Committee outlined Scrutiny's concerns around getting timely access to the Growth Board's agendas so that effective scrutiny work could be done.

The Chief Executive said that West Oxfordshire District Council is clerking the meetings of the Growth Board and will be publishing the agendas and minutes on their website. He would ask for a list of proposed meeting dates to be presented to members and for a link to the Growth Board's agendas to be added to the Council's website.

Cllr Tanner congratulated Cllr Price and the officers on the work done. He asked how transparent the Board was going to be. It was agreed that keeping all members informed of Growth Board decisions was critical to enabling proper scrutiny.

Cllr Brown asked for a members' briefing on how the Growth Board fits with other partnership bodies and how members could stay informed and engage with decisions being made.

The City Executive Board resolved to:

1. Approve the City Council becoming a member of the Oxfordshire Growth Joint Board and the draft Terms of Reference appended to this report.

2. Appoint the Leader of the Council as the City Council's representative on the Board and any other Executive Member as substitute, to be determined by the Leader of the Council.

50. BUSINESS IN THE COMMUNITY - WORKING IN PARTNERSHIP

The Head of Human Resources and Facilities submitted a report (previously circulated, now appended) which detailed the background to the development of the Business in the Community programme which seeks to foster business links with Oxford cluster schools.

Cllr Price, Executive Board Member for Corporate Strategy, Economic Development and Planning presented the report.

Cllr Simmons, Chair of the Scrutiny Committee presented the Scrutiny report. He said that Scrutiny thought it was an excellent scheme and highlighted the focus on career advice.

Cllr Simms raised the concern of civics not being taught in schools and the reluctance of young people to vote. She asked whether this scheme could be a way to engage young people in civics and introduce them to how local/ central government operated.

Cllr Brown was concerned that some schools had stopped offering career advice and she endorsed any scheme that would offer career advice to young people.

Cllr Price said that the County's skills deal was looking into re-creating an Oxford Career Scheme.

The City Executive Board resolved to endorse the partnership connection with Cherwell School under the Business in the Community initiative.

51. FUTURE ITEMS

Nothing was raised under this item.

52. MINUTES

The Board resolved to APPROVE the minutes of the meeting held on 3 July 2014 as a true and accurate record.

The meeting started at 5.00 pm and ended at 5.42 pm

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To: Council

Date: 29th September 2014

Report of: Head of Law and Governance

Title of Report: PETITIONS SCHEME

Summary and Recommendations

Purpose of report: To advise on the procedure that Council needs to follow under the Council's Petitions Scheme following receipt of the petition entitled 'Oxford City Council must deliver value for the community'.

Report Approved by: Jeremy Thomas, Head of Law and Governance

Policy Framework: Not applicable

Recommendation(s): Council is RECOMMENDED to follow the procedure for large petitions in the Council's Petitions Scheme by hearing the head petitioner for the petition entitled 'Oxford City Council MUST deliver value for the community', debating the petition and deciding whether to make any recommendations to the City Executive Board.

Introduction and Background

1. A petition entitled 'Oxford City Council must deliver value for the community' was handed in by Mr Nigel Gibson at the Scrutiny Committee meeting on 2nd September 2014. The petition contains just over 1800 signatures. The petition reads as follows:-

"We the undersigned express our support for the Save TCP cic plans for the Temple Cowley Pools and Fitness Centre and ask Oxford City Council to accept this bid as offering best value for the community and so keep health, fitness community facilities on this site".

2. Council has adopted a Petitions Scheme. The scheme details that petitions containing over 1,500 signatures from people who live, work or study in the city will be debated by Full Council. A sufficient number of signatures to achieve the 1,500 mark on this petition have accompanying names and addresses. It is not of course possible to check whether any signatories from outside Oxford work or study in the City.

Actions for Council

1. The Petitions Scheme provides that the petition organiser will be given five minutes at the Council meeting to present the petition and that Council will then debate it. Mr Gibson has been invited to do this. There are no minimum requirements in law or in the Council's Petitions Scheme as to the format, quality or duration of the debate.
2. The subject matter of this petition is an Executive function so any recommendations from this Council debate will be presented to the City executive Board for their consideration.

Name and contact details of author:

Jennifer Thompson
Oxford City Council
Town Hall
Oxford
OX1 4BX
Tel 01865 252275
Email address jthompson@oxford.gov.uk

Background papers: Petition entitled "Oxford City Council MUST deliver value for the community"

Version number: 2

To: Council

Date: 30th September 2013

Report of: City Development

Title of Report: The Oxfordshire Local Enterprise Partnership

Summary and Recommendations

Purpose of report: To provide members with an update on the work of the Oxfordshire Local Enterprise Partnership and recent developments in the delivery of the City Deal..

Report approved by:

Finance: Emma Burson, Finance Business Partner

Legal: Emma Griffiths, Supervising Lawyer

Executive lead member: Councillor Bob Price

Policy Framework: The Corporate Plan

Recommendation:

1. Council is asked to note the contents of the report and to ask questions on it.

The role of the Oxfordshire Local Enterprise Partnership

1. The Oxfordshire Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP) is responsible for the development of the Oxfordshire economy and is now established as part of the economic growth landscape. The Partnership appointed a Chief Executive, Nigel Tipple, just over a year ago and whilst he is still heavily supported by Oxfordshire County Council staff and services, the Partnership is now located in the Innovation Centre and has a number of seconded employees and temporary appointments.
2. There have also been minor adjustments to the governance structure with the Board extended to include representatives of all the Districts. Councillor Bob Price, Leader of Oxford City Council, remains as the City Council's representative. Cllr Price is also a representative of the LEP on the Oxfordshire Skills Board. Richard Venables, Managing Partner of VSL Ltd, has joined the Board as a representative of the

Oxford City business community, nominated by the Oxford Strategic Partnership

3. Over the last year the LEP has delivered a series of important outcomes:
 - a. Concluded and signed off a City Deal with BIS and the Cabinet Office
 - b. Prepared and submitted the Oxfordshire Strategic Economic Plan
 - c. Negotiated the first Local Growth Deal for Oxfordshire
 - d. Prepared the European Structural investment Funds Strategy for Oxfordshire.

4. City Deal

5. The City Deal was signed at Harwell in January and the focus has now turned to delivering the four work streams in the Deal and strengthening the wider governance arrangements. In line with the agreement in the City Deal a joint committee of the Oxfordshire local authorities has been established as a 'Growth Board' charged with delivering the City Deal, it met for the first time in 'shadow' form in September. CEB approved the terms of reference and City Council membership of the Board in September.
6. The key elements of the City Deal are:
 - a. Innovation - The Oxfordshire Support for Business Programme has been launched This provides benefits for businesses through increased funding (channelled through existing University and Oxford Investment Opportunities Network structures), vouchers to reduce the cost of leadership development, and the use of research facilities and training sessions for start-up entrepreneurs. This is supported by a team of 9 Network Navigators who work part time with the programme team to help those seeking support to access it effectively. A new web portal, support grants, vouchers and training are also available as part of this initiative.
 - b. The City Deal provided financial support for the development of four incubator/innovation 'hubs', at Begbroke, the Churchill site, Culham and Harwell. Completion dates range from mid 2015 to early 2017.
 - c. Skills - The skills element of the City Deal provides support for apprenticeships and a new careers advice and guidance structure that is designed to radically improve school and college students access to information about the transition to work. Some further details are provided in Annex 1.

- d. Transport - The City Deal and the SEF focus on key elements of the Oxfordshire road network where improvements are required to support the economic developments that are planned. Approved projects include a programme of schemes to relieve congestion and enhance access at the Milton and Chilton interchanges on the A34, the Hinksey hill /A423 southern bypass and the Northern Gateway development site (Wolvercote and Cutteslowe roundabouts). Science Transit phase one is a package of measures that will improve connectivity all along the route from Science Vale to Oxford including junction enhancements and improved public transport.
- e. Housing - The City Deal committed the Oxfordshire Districts to provide an accelerated development of 7500 houses between 2015 and 2018, and to work together to deliver the enhanced housing requirements identified by the Strategic Housing Market Assessment...

7. Oxfordshire Strategic Economic Plan

- 8. Oxfordshire's Strategic Economic Plan(SEP) was developed by the Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP) in partnership with the business community, academic institutions and the Local Authorities; and was submitted to Government on the 31st March 2014.It has subsequently been endorsed by Government. This Plan sets out the long term vision and ambitions for economic growth in the county.
- 9. The ambition set out in the Strategic Economic Plan builds on the narrative developed as part of the City Deal - that the Oxfordshire economy has enormous potential to deliver world leading technology and business innovation built upon research conducted in the HE sector and our big science facilities. The 'strapline' vision for the Oxfordshire Strategic Economic Plan is:

"By 2030 Oxfordshire will be a vibrant, sustainable, inclusive world leading economy, driven by innovation, enterprise and research excellence"

- 10. The Plan is based around four Thematic Objectives :

- a. Innovative Enterprise – innovation-led growth is at the heart of our strategy, underpinned by the strength of our University research and development capacity, business collaboration and supply chain potential
- b. Innovative Place – providing both the quality and choice of homes needed to support growth whilst capitalising upon the exceptional quality of life, vibrant economy and dynamic urban and rural communities

- c. Innovative People – delivering specialist and flexible skills at all levels as required by our businesses with full employment and fulfilling jobs
 - d. Innovative Connectivity – allowing people to move freely, connect easily and providing the services and facilities needed by a dynamic, growing and dispersed economy.
11. The Plan also has a geographic dimension focusing on the three growth points identified in the City Deal (Bicester, Oxford City and Science Vale). The rationale for this geographic focus was to reinforce the Knowledge Spine concept that was promoted in the City Deal. Indeed many of the interventions put forward in the Strategic Economic Plan are already in the City Deal or are extensions of City Deal activity.

Oxfordshire Local Growth Deal

12. As part of the 2013 Spending Review, the Government announced proposals for strengthening of the role of Local Enterprise Partnerships by introducing the concept of Growth Deals which will be supported by a Single Local Growth Fund. Through Growth Deals Local Enterprise Partnerships are invited to bid for freedoms and flexibilities from Government as well as for a share of the new Single Local Growth Fund. Growth Deals (and access to the Single Local Growth Fund) are based on the production and the content of a Strategic Economic Plan.
13. The Oxfordshire Growth Deal was based on the projects and priorities developed by the Local Transport Board and the Strategic Planning and Infrastructure Partnership. Some £900m of the annual £2bn national LGF pot was allocated to LEPs on a formula basis (and in essence had already been allocated to local Transport Board approved projects), with the remaining £1.1bn allocated following a process of “competitive tension” based on the ambition, rationale and deliverability of the Strategic Economic Plan.
14. The Oxfordshire LEP has secured £108.5m from the Government’s Local Growth Fund to support economic growth in the area – with £9.2m of new funding confirmed for 2015/16 and £53.7m for 2016/17 to 2021. Within this package of funding were four schemes that have direct benefit to the City:
- a. Headington Phase 1 & Eastern Arc Transport Improvements - a package of junction and local road improvements to support growth in the Headington area of Oxford - a centre for medical research and the location of the bio-escalator at Oxford University Old Road campus, which was part-funded via the Oxford City Deal.
 - b. Oxfordshire Flood Risk Management Scheme (Western Conveyance) and Upstream Flood Storage at Northway - a comprehensive package of measures to mitigate the risks of

damage to homes, businesses and transport connections caused by excessive flooding.

- c. Centre for Applied Superconductivity - a new centre of innovation to coordinate the interaction between key industry players, Oxford University, cryogenics companies, and end users (including SMEs) on the Harwell campus and at the Culham Centre for Fusion Research Campus.
- d. Oxfordshire Centre for Technology and Innovation - development of a Technology and Innovation Training Centre in Blackbird Leys operated by Oxford City College to address skills shortages across engineering, electrical, design, and emerging technologies.

Oxfordshire European Structural Funds

- 15. The European Structural and Investment Funds for 2014 to 2020 exist to promote smart, sustainable and inclusive growth across all member states of the European Union. Allocation of the funds to each member state is based on economic performance compared to the average for the EU. Distribution within the member state is determined by national government following guidance issued by the EU. Essentially distribution is based on population and relative economic performance with the national government choosing the appropriate spatial level to allocate funding. In England the allocation is based on Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP) geographies, this is change from the previous programmes where funding was allocated to regions.
- 16. The European Structural and Investment Funds available to the United Kingdom comprise two cohesion policy funds, a programme for rural development from the Common Agricultural Policy, and a smaller programme from the Common Fisheries Policy. These funds are:
 - a. The European Regional Development Fund (ERDF);
 - b. The European Social Fund (ESF);
 - c. The European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development (EAFRD); and
 - d. The European Maritime and Fisheries Fund (European Fisheries Fund for the 2007-2013 programme period).
- 17. In Oxfordshire only ERDF, ESF and EAFRD is available. Overall Oxfordshire has very good economic performance and it also has a relatively small population. Consequently, of the 39 LEP areas in England, Oxfordshire receives the second lowest allocation (only Buckinghamshire Thames Valley LEP received a lower allocation) – a little over £19.5m. However, this is the first year that Oxfordshire has received any form of allocation.

18. The Structural Funds programme for 2014-2020 is significantly different from previous programmes. The key change is that the investment funds contribute to a new single “EU Growth Programme” to be financed by ERDF and ESF with a contribution from EAFRD (a separate EAFRD allocation will also fund LEADER programmes in some rural areas). There are two significant changes for the 2014 programme: firstly, it is a rationalisation of investment programmes - from 12 separate ones for 2007-13 to essentially one programme with four funds; secondly there is a much stronger emphasis on economic and employment growth and much less focus on capacity building, equalities and community cohesion and large scale infrastructure programmes (except in the less developed areas).
19. Following approval of the Oxfordshire EU Strategic Investment Funds (ESIF) Strategy the Local Enterprise Partnership must now prepare a Local Implementation Plan (LIP). In essence the LIP will be a three year rolling management plan updated annually. The first iteration of the Plan will cover activity which will operate over the first half of the programme and be brought into the programme through project calls (bidding rounds) opened during 2015, 2016 and 2017.
- a. Through the development of the Plan the Local Enterprise Partnership will:
 - b. Agree the types of investment/activities it wishes to bring forward.
 - c. Decide whether these will be secured through opt-in provision of national (government appointed) suppliers or project calls.
 - d. Profile the ESIF allocation to these investments over time.
 - e. Set out the level of ESIF deliverables it would expect to secure from these investments.
 - f. Set out arrangements for monitoring local performance against these profiles.

Resources

20. The City Council has not currently committed any financial resources to the Oxfordshire LEP, although there is a commitment in terms of member and staff time for attending meetings and coordination and communication of decisions. In addition the Economic Development Team Manager has spent one day a week working directly with the LEP to support the development of the Business Support theme of the European Structural Funds programme.

Name and contact details of author:-

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List of background papers:

Further information can be found on the web site link below.

<http://www.oxfordshirelep.org.uk/cms/content/about-oxfordshire-local-enterprise-partnership>

Version number: 3

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To: Council

Date: 29 September 2014

Report of: Chair of the Scrutiny Committee.

Title of Report: Scrutiny Briefing

Purpose of report: To update Council on the activities of scrutiny function.

Introduction

The Scrutiny Committee and Finance Panel have met for the first time since the summer break. The Scrutiny work programme for the months ahead is currently being formulated and I would like to thank Members from all parties who have contributed ideas and suggestions.

Work programme

Lots of substantial issues have been identified for Scrutiny to focus on and these all have been considered by the Committee. We are currently planning and prioritising how to approach these topics in a manageable way. However, it may not be possible to fully cover everything that Members have suggested within our existing resources. In particular, we will have to continue to prioritise the potential review panels, and some of these will need to be dealt with as items at committee meetings, rather than as wider pieces of review work.

The priority for the Committee was to establish one or more reviews under the broad theme of 'reducing inequality', and this work is in the early stages of being scoped.

My detailed report follows:

Standard Information

1. I will always include the following information:

- Current Panel work showing membership and progress.
 - Forward agendas – these will be indicative only.
 - Recommendations made and the outcome from these.
 - The number and result of any called in decisions or councillor calls for action.
2. This information is included as appendices to this briefing but is in **DRAFT** format awaiting the confirmation of the Scrutiny Committee.
 3. I will also provide verbal updates where there has been progress since the last Committee.

Current Activity

4. At its meeting on 2 September, the Scrutiny Committee pre-scrutinised the Oxfordshire Growth Board and the Business in the Community initiative. The Committee also reviewed the Council's performance in the first quarter and received a written response to a number of questions we posed back in June. The Finance Panel focused on Budget Monitoring and Treasury Management. These debates led to a number of recommendations to the City Executive Board. These recommendations, and the executive responses, are included with this report
5. The two pieces of panel work that are already underway have reported good progress:
 - The Oxford Standard Panel report is being finalised and is expected to make a number of recommendations for the City Executive Board to consider in October.
 - Thames Water Utilities investment in the sewerage system in Oxford – We understand that Thames Water will publically launch its 'Catchment study' at the meeting of the Oxford Area Flood Partnership in October, and a joint press release has been agreed.
6. I would like to remind all members of Council that if there is an issue they wish to see scrutinised then they are able to either ask a Scrutiny Councillor to place this on the agenda of the Scrutiny Committee or with 3 supporter add this to the agenda themselves.

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Scrutiny Committee Work Programme 2014 - 2015

This programme represents the work of Scrutiny, including panel work and Committee items. The work programme is divided under the following headings:

1. Standing Panels
2. Review Panels in progress
3. Potential Review Panels (to be established if and when resources allow)
4. Items for Scrutiny Committee meetings
5. Items called in and Councillor calls for action
6. Items referred to Scrutiny by Council
7. Draft Scrutiny Committee agenda schedule

1. Standing Panels

Topic	Area(s) for focus	Nominated councillors (no substitutions allowed)
Finance Panel – All finance issues considered within the Scrutiny Function.	See appendix 1	Lead: Councillor Simmons Councillors Darke, Fooks and Fry
Housing – All strategic and landlord issues considered within the Scrutiny Function.	See appendix 2	Lead: Councillor Smith. Co-opted Member – Linda Hill Councillors Hollick, Sanders and Wade

2. Review panels in progress

Topic	Scope	Progress	Next steps	Nominated councillors
Thames Water investment to improve flooding and sewerage issues in the City.	<p>Issue carried forward from 13/14 Work Programme.</p> <p>To continue engagement with Thames Water Utilities (TWU) at a senior level to ensure delivery of the agreements reached.</p>	<p>Panel members met with TWU in May and obtained agreement to bring forward a whole area study of the condition of Oxford's sewerage system.</p> <p>The governance of this process and subsequent investment will be monitored and challenged via an Expert Group and a Steering Group including Members from the Scrutiny Panel and Officers.</p>	<p>Catchment study will be publically launched at Flood Alliance meeting on 16 October and a joint press statement issued.</p> <p>Governance arrangements to be established.</p> <p>Panel to meet in early 2015 and again once the catchment study is nearing completion.</p>	<p>Lead: Councillor Darke</p> <p>Councillors Pressel, Thomas, Goddard</p>
Oxford Standard Panel	<p>To give advice to the City Executive Board on the content and definition of the Oxford Standard for all Council properties.</p> <p>To outline the timeframe for delivery of this standard. To use the experience and views of tenants and members when delivering the decent homes standard. To comment on the process of this delivery.</p>	<p>Data from the stock condition survey considered by the Group.</p> <p>Broader tenant consultation underway.</p> <p>Report to be complete in time to feed into the asset Management strategy at CEB in October.</p>	<p>Final report due to go to Scrutiny Committee and City Executive Board in October.</p>	<p>Housing Standing Panel members plus the Tenant Scrutiny Group</p> <p>Joint Chairing</p>

3. Potential Review Panels – to be established if and when resources allow (no particular order)

Topic	Area(s) for focus	Nominated councillors
Budget Scrutiny	Review of budget proposals. Scope to be agreed by Finance Panel in October.	Finance Standing Panel Members
Tacking Inequality	Scope to be determined. Panel to consider focus within the following potential review areas (to be taken one at a time): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Child Poverty • Food Poverty 	Councillors Thomas, Lloyd-Shogbesan
Growing a Low-Carbon Economy	Scope to be determined. Panel to consider area(s) of focus which could include one or more of the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review how the City Council is growing a low-carbon economy. • Renewable energy generated on Council owned buildings and land. • Review the work of the Carbon and Natural Resources Board. 	Councillor Upton
Community Engagement	Scope to be determined. Panel to consider area(s) of focus which could include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review how the City Council engages with community leaders and groups to build an on-going dialogue, and their perceptions of the City Council. • Identify and explore key interfaces with Council services and the satisfaction levels, feedback and common complaints of different groups. • Review participation levels in consultations and explore reasons for low participation. 	Councillors Hollick, Lloyd-Shogbesan, Altaf-Khan
Support for the local economy	Scope to be determined. Panel to consider area(s) of focus which could include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Explore how the Council’s activities support the local economy and whether there is a case for doing more. • Review efforts to improve relationships with traders and their satisfaction levels. • Explore how smaller businesses can access City Deal funding. 	Councillors Fry, Benjamin, Darke

Cycling	Scope to be determined. Panel to consider area(s) of focus which could include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review cycling funding including City and County Council contributions. Explore progress against sought outcomes and value for money achieved. 	Councillors Wolff, Upton
Recycling	Continuation of review established in 2013/14: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> To receive an update on the Recycling Fund. To consider community incentives and how to measure their success. Review of recycling rates (at Scrutiny Committee). 	Councillors Fry, Hayes, Simmons

4. Items for Committee meetings

Topic	Area(s) for focus	Lead and other Councillors
Discretionary Housing Payments	Quarterly updates on spending profiles within a framework agreed by the Committee.	Lead: Councillor Coulter
Performance monitoring	Quarterly report on a set of Corporate and service measures chosen by the Committee.	Councillors Altaf-Khan, Simmons, Coulter & Darke
Educational attainment investment	To consider the academic progress and key stage results at schools operating the KRM model compared to those not.	Councillors Altaf-Khan, & Thomas
Fusion Lifestyle contract performance	Regular yearly item agreed again by the Committee to consider performance against contract conditions.	Lead Member: Councillor Simmons
Research commissioned on the effects of welfare reform	To consider research into the impact of welfare reforms in the City.	Lead Member: Councillor Coulter
Highways contract	To review and monitor current arrangements.	TBA
Clean streets	To receive an update on the City Council's approach to graffiti, detritus, littering and waste collections.	TBA
Living Wage	To review how the living wage is enforced through procurement contracts	TBA

New controls over anti-social behaviour	To receive an update on the City Council's changing approach to anti-social behaviour.	TBA
Low Carbon Oxford	To receive an update on the progress of this scheme and plans to progress the low carbon agenda in Oxford.	TBA
Community and Neighbourhood services	To review aims, activities and outcomes; grant distribution; community centres and associations; volunteering; Neighbourhood plans; how better on-going engagement can be established with different communities.	TBA
Individual voter registration	To receive an update on changes to electoral registration and to monitor how the City Council is maximising registration.	TBA
Services for the older residents	To receive an update on how the Council and partners co-ordinate services and activities for over 50s, with a focus on preventing isolation.	TBA
Taxi Licencing	To review rules and processes; to understand driver issues.	TBA
Any item called from the Forward Plan for pre decision scrutiny.	To consider and comment on issues to be decided by the City Executive Board.	N/A

5. Items Called in and Councillor Calls for Action

None

6. Items referred to Scrutiny by Council

None

7. Draft Scrutiny Committee Agenda Schedule

Date (all 6pm, St. Aldate's Room)	Agenda Item	Lead Member; Officer(s)
6 October 2014	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Oxford Standard Panel Report 2. Educational attainment investment 3. Towards mental wellbeing and community resilience in Oxford 4. Culture Strategy 5. Welfare reform, European social fund project 	<p>Cllr Smith</p> <p>Cllr Pat Kennedy; Anna Wright</p> <p>Cllr Turner; Val Johnson</p> <p>Cllr Simm, Cllr Lygo; Peter McQuitty, Ceri Gordon</p> <p>Cllr Brown, Ian Brooke, Paul Wilding</p>
10 November 2014	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Budget Scrutiny proposal 2. Performance monitoring – quarter 2 3. Consultation and Engagement – interim update report 4. Enfranchisement and Empowerment - Individual voter registration 5. Discretionary Housing Payments 	<p>Cllr Simmons</p> <p>Neil Lawrence</p> <p>Sadie Paige</p> <p>Jeremy Thomas, Martin John</p> <p>Cllr Susan Brown; Paul Wilding</p>
8 December 2014	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Research into the local impact of Welfare Reform 2. Corporate Peer Challenge Action Plan 	<p>Paul Wilding</p> <p>Cllr Price; Peter Sloman</p>
19 January 2015	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. New Council controls over anti-social behaviour 	<p>Richard Adams</p>

Scrutiny work programme 2014 - 2015

3 February 2015	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Performance monitoring – quarter 32. Cycle City3. Community and Neighbourhood services	Neil Lawrence Jo Colwell Ian Brooke
2 March 2015	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Consultation and Engagement	Sadie Paige

Appendix 1 - Finance Panel work programme 2014-15

Items for Finance Panel meetings

Suggested Topic	Suggested approach / area(s) for focus
Budget Scrutiny	Review of the Council's medium term financial strategy.
Budget monitoring	Regular monitoring of projected budget outturns through the year.
Treasury Management	Scrutiny of the Treasury Management Strategy and regular monitoring of Treasury performance.
Capital process	To receive an update on the implementation of the Capital Gateway process.
Maximising European funding	To consider how the City Council can maximise funding opportunities; invite local MEPs to contribute to the discussion.
Municipal bonds	To receive an update on the establishment of a municipal bonds agency.
Council tax exemptions	To receive an update on the financial implications of different types of exemptions.
Ethical investment	To receive an update on the Council's approach to ethical investments.

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Draft Finance Panel agenda schedule

Date, room and time	Agenda Item	Lead Member; Officer(s)
8 October 2014, St Aldate's Room, 5.30pm	1. Municipal bonds	Nigel Kennedy
	2. Budget Review - scope proposal	Andrew Brown
21 January 2015, St Aldate's Room, 5.30pm	1. Capital programme process review update	David Edwards, Stephen Clarke, Nigel Kennedy
	2. European funding	MEPs, Heads of Service, Mark Lundy?

Scrutiny work programme 2014 - 2015

5 February 2015, St Aldate's Room, 5.30pm	1. Budget monitoring – quarter 3 2. Treasury Management Strategy 15/16	Nigel Kennedy Anna Winship
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Appendix 2 - Draft Housing Panel work programme 2014-15

Items for Housing Panel meetings

Suggested Topic	Suggested approach / area(s) for focus
Performance monitoring	Regular monitoring of performance measures for Estates Regeneration, Housing Supply and Welfare Reform and Housing Crisis.
Housing Strategy	Review headline priorities and sought outcomes in Housing Strategy at draft stage, and the action plan post-consultation.
Increasing the provision of affordable housing	Monitoring of performance measures; scrutiny of the Housing Business Plan and the Housing Strategy; consider alternative options e.g. pre-fabs and 'pods'; possible review topic.
Homelessness	Monitoring of performance measures; scrutiny of the Housing Business Plan and Housing Strategy; pre-scrutiny of homelessness grant allocations; possible review topics.
Rent arrears	Monitoring of performance measures; bi-annual update reports.
STAR survey results	Monitoring of results.
Tackling under-occupancy	Report on efforts to tackle under-occupancy; consider in rent arrears reports.
Improving thermal efficiency	Update report on work to improve thermal efficiency in the Council's housing stock, including home insulation and boiler replacements.
Private sector licencing	Update report on the scheme; consider views of landlords and PRS tenants.
Unlawful dwellings	A report on the City Council's approach to tackling illegal dwellings e.g. beds in sheds, given that funding ends in April 2015.
Repairs exemptions policy	To scrutinise proposed changes to the current policy.
De-designation of 40+ accommodation	Update report on the final phase of de-designating 40+ accommodation (expected in April 15).
Sheltered Housing	Scrutiny of changes to the City Council's sheltered housing stock. This could include reviewing the County Council's plans and/or the provision of extra care and virtual extra care.
Fuel Poverty	Commission/review research; consider during other items; possible review topic.
Supporting people	Verbal updates on the joint commissioning of housing support services.

Draft Housing Panel Agenda Schedules

Date, room and time	Agenda Item	Lead Member; Officer(s)
9 October 2014, Plowman Room, 5pm	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Performance Monitoring 2. Draft Housing Strategy 3. Rent arrears 4. Leaseholder Payment Options for Major Works 	Neil Lawrence Cllr Seamons; Gary Parsons Helen Bishop Cllr Seamons; David Watt
15 January, 5.30pm (TBC)	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Housing budget Scrutiny session. Key documents include the Housing Business Plan, Housing Strategy and Housing Asset Management Strategy 	Cllr Seamons; David Edwards, Stephen Clarke
22 January 2015, Plowman Room, 5pm	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Star Survey Results 	Gary Parsons
4 February 2015, St Aldate's Room, 5.30pm	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Unlawful dwellings 	Ian Wright

Scrutiny Recommendation Tracker 2014-15

Budget Monitoring 2014/15 – Quarter 1 – Finance Panel 4 September				
Recommendation	Agreed Y/N	Executive response	Lead Member & Officer	Implemented Y/N / due date
1. That urgent action is taken to avoid a loss of subsidy relating to the overpayment of benefits.	Y	Extra action is already being taken, looking at training and processes. The threshold is more stringent this year due to the removal of Council Tax benefit from this calculation.	Cllr Turner / Helen Bishop	Y
2. If necessary to avoid slippage, a flexible approach should be taken to spending the £2m investment in Homelessness Property Acquisitions in 2014/2015. This could include investing in social housing instead.	In part	Note sentiment but other uses are likely to take longer.	Cllr Turner	N/A
3. The premises for the heavy vehicle testing facility should be flexible enough that it can be used for other purposes in the event that the testing facility is not successful.	Y	The facility is expected to be successful.	Cllr Turner	March 2015
4. The capital programme should be a red risk in performance reports until the new capital gateway process proven to be effective.	N	Risks are measured using the Risk Management Framework agreed by Council.	Cllr Turner	N/A
Treasury Management – Finance Panel 4 September				
Recommendation	Agreed Y/N	Executive response	Lead Member & Officer	Implemented Y/N / due date

Scrutiny recommendations tracker 2014 - 2015

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1. That consideration is given to how the capital process can be made more flexible so that approved projects can be brought forward to mitigate slippage elsewhere in the programme.	In part	Noted. Where possible a flexible approach will be taken. Changes to the capital programme have to be agreed by Council.	Cllr Turner	N/A
Oxfordshire Growth Board - Scrutiny Committee 23 June				
Recommendation	Agreed Y/N	Executive response	Lead Member & Officer	Implemented Y/N / due date
1. For the Terms of Reference to explicitly set out that meeting agendas and minutes will be publicly available and that access to meetings will be possible for Councillors and members of the public.	Y	This suggestion will be referred to the Board	Cllr Price	Dec 2014
Community Engagement Policy Statement - Scrutiny Committee 23 June				
Recommendation	Agreed Y/N	Executive response	Lead Member & Officer	Implemented Y/N / due date
5. To provide a clear statement in the principles on the ambition for engagement focusing on depth as well as breadth.	Y	Merged with recommendation 3.	Cllr Price; Sadie Paige	N/A
6. To provide information on the engagement ambitions set for all consultations during the last year, what was achieved and how this fits with the principles set within the Policy Statement.	Y	To provide this information for all consultations would be a huge piece of work so a sample will be used instead, together with a forward-looking approach.	Cllr Price; Sadie Paige	10 Nov 14
7. To suggest to the Scrutiny Committee	Y	Two consultations identified as	Cllr Price;	2 March 14

Scrutiny recommendations tracker 2014 - 2015

an up and coming engagement/empowerment exercise that can act as a pilot study to demonstrate the effectiveness of the principles within this report.		candidates for the pilot as per CEB suggestion. Project brief created for the pilot, which includes the objectives, and a reporting template.	Sadie Paige	
8. To provide a table that shows how all comments received during the consultation on this Policy Statement have been handled.	Y	Expected at 10 November Scrutiny Committee meeting.	Cllr Price; Sadie Paige	10 Nov 14
End of Year Integrated Report – 2013-2014 - Scrutiny Committee 23 June				
Recommendation	Agreed Y/N	Executive response	Lead Member & Officer	Implemented Y/N
2. The Committee supports the purchase of the Iffley Road building as an asset of value to the community and recognises that negotiations are on-going. There is a gap between the asking price and the money available and the City Executive Board is asked to do what it can within reasonable value for money criteria to secure the purchase of this property.	Y	Noted (£250k has been earmarked for acquisition of property).	Cllr Turner; Nigel Kennedy; Jane Lubbock	N
3. To consider the contingency available to support homelessness in light of county proposals for implementing cuts in the Supporting People and if underspends from 13/14 should be maintained within this budget.	N	Current level of contingency considered to be sufficient.	Cllr Turner; Nigel Kennedy; Jane Lubbock	N/A

Fusion Lifestyle Performance 2013-2014 - Scrutiny Committee 23 June				
Additional information requested	Agreed Y/N	Outcome	Lead Member & Officer	Implemented Y/N
<p>Facility running costs It was agreed at the June meeting in 2013 that the running costs of the facilities would be shown including all capital investment and loan cost in the next report. This hadn't been done.</p> <p>Performance outside of expectations Members asked how poor performance was addressed and asked to see the issues raised and the actions/penalties taken over the last year.</p> <p>Publicity Campaign An issue was raised concerning literature used to highlight the Active Women Campaign. The images used were considered to be too stereotypical and gendered. The Committee asked that this issue be taken up with Sports England who run this national campaign.</p> <p>Views of non-card users at facilities The Committee asked to see any information on the views and experiences of non-card users.</p>	N/A	Information papers considered by Scrutiny Committee on 2 September.	Cllr Rowley; Lucy Cherry	N

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<p>Falling attendance amongst young people The Committee were concerned to see this and wanted some more detailed data and information to understand more fully the reasons behind it and whether it was a particular set of circumstances or a trend.</p> <p>Information excluded from the public The Committee heard a complaint from a member of the public that the information provided outlining the running costs to the Council of each Leisure Facility should be made public because if the Council was still running these centres then the information would be available publically. The Committee heard that this was commercial information but asked that this exclusion is reconsidered by Fusion.</p> <p>Investment financing Members were interested in why the City Council financed investment spending that Fusion Lifestyle was originally required to finance, and in how much this saved the partnership.</p>				
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MOTIONS ON NOTICE – Labour, Liberal Democrat, Green

(1) **Privatisation of the Probation Service** – (proposed by Councillor John Tanner).

Labour Group Member – Motion on Notice

Oxford City Council considers the planned privatisation of 70% of the Probation Service as reckless, dangerous and costly. It is likely to increase re-offending in Oxford, could compromise the safety of local residents and ignores the expertise of the local probation service.

Coming hard on the heels of the savage cuts in Legal Aid this attack on the Probation Service underlines the Coalition's lack of interest in tackling crime. We call on the Government to withdraw its proposals and negotiate with the National Association of Probation officers for a sensible way forward.

(2) **Low Carbon Economy** (proposed by Councillor Jean Fooks).

Liberal Democrat Group Member – Motion on Notice

Council notes the progress so far made to develop Oxfordshire's Low Carbon Economy, worth more than £1.15bn pa in sales, employing nearly 9000 people in more than 570 businesses.

It welcomes the award for Oxford's Community energy work, including the innovative loan of £2.3m to the Low Carbon Hub for solar panels on schools.

Council believes that Oxford can do more to develop the Low Carbon Economy, to the benefit of its citizens. It therefore asks the Executive Board to work with the LEP to:

- Investigate sources of funding for supporting researchers in winning grants from EU and UK research councils.
- Prioritise training for skilled jobs in the low carbon building sector.
- Develop the business case for investment in the Smart City concept.
- Focus support on growth sectors such as alternative fuelled vehicles.
- Appoint a 'champion' to co-ordinate all the strands necessary for success.

(3) **The Transatlantic Trade and Investment Partnership and its possible effect on local service provision**(proposed by Councillor Sam Hollick, seconded by Councillor Ruthi Brandt).

Green Group Member – Motion on Notice

Proposals under the Transatlantic Trade and Investment Partnership (TTIP) to govern trade relations between the EU and USA are currently being negotiated in secret.

UNISON believes TTIP is: “a profound threat to public services, which will not only lead to further liberalisation but will make it harder for government to regulate private companies providing public services. It could effectively prevent a future government bringing those services back in-house.”

and that it “threatens to restrict the ability of local authorities and other public bodies to source and employ locally. This undermines their ability to use public money to achieve social and environmental outcomes through their supply chain and employment practices.”

The TTIP will open up local authority procurement processes (already under scrutiny from EU Regulation) to US corporations meaning that contracts for some services could be challenged by US companies in such a way so as to undermine local democracy, threaten staff pay, the Council’s commitment to a living wage and employment conditions.

Amongst its provisions, the TTIP includes an Investor-State Dispute Settlement (ISDS) mechanism which allows multinational corporate investors to challenge government actions which they perceive as threatening to their investment. The cost to the Council of fighting any such legal action, were they to be challenged, could be immense.

Council therefore RESOLVES to call upon the leader of the council and the leaders of the two opposition groups to write to Oxford’s MPs and MEPs, and to the Prime Minister and Deputy Prime Minister, asking them to reject the Transatlantic Trade and Investment Partnership (TTIP).

(4) Proposed by Councillor Bev Clack, seconded by Councillor Tom Hayes.

Labour Group Member – Motion on Notice

While many ordinary people face falling household income and rising costs of living, some multinational companies are avoiding billions of pounds of tax from a tax system that fails to make them pay their fair share. Local governments in developing countries and the UK alike would benefit from a fairer tax system where multinational companies pay their fair share, enabling authorities around the world to provide quality public services. This council asks the UK government to listen to the strength of public feeling and to act to end the injustice of tax dodging by large multinational companies, in developing countries and the UK.

(5) Municipal bonds (proposed by Councillor Jean Fooks).

Liberal Democrat Group Member – Motion on Notice

Council notes:

- that local authorities across the country and across political parties want to have more powers to raise their own funds. This is particularly relevant at present as Governments of all complexions are likely to be reducing central grant as local demand for services increases

- that the Local Government Association believes that having a council-owned agency could save local authorities over £1bn in borrowing cost compared to the Public Loans Board
- that by July 2014 22 councils of all kinds had pledged almost £3m towards the setting up of a municipal bonds agency.

Council further notes that although the City Council is not looking to borrow at present, there could be big gains in the future from being able to access funds for capital investment in such ‘invest-to-save’ projects as renewable energy installation and specialist housing.

Council therefore asks the Executive Board to investigate the opportunities offered by joining the agency now rather than wait and be left behind.

(6) Making Oxford a Social Enterprise City(Proposed by Cllr Dick Wolff, seconded by Cllr David Thomas)

Green Group Member – Motion on Notice

This Council welcomes the announcement that Oxfordshire has become the UK’s first Social Enterprise County and congratulates the Oxfordshire Social Enterprise Partnership (OSEP), an innovative new partnership set up by Oxford Brookes University, the University of Oxford and Student Hubs to foster and support social enterprise locally.

This Council recognises the value of Social Enterprises to the Council and the local economy and aspires to join other cities in becoming one of the UK’s first Social Enterprise Cities.

This would require, amongst other things, that the Council:

- Establish business rate policies which support long-term and sustainable social and economic value creation.
- Explore the possibility of creating “Meanwhile Enterprise Zones” and “Social Enterprise Zones”.
- Review its policies to ensure that it is commissioning, procuring and buying goods and services in a manner which maximises social value (under the Social Value Act).
- Provide funding support for social innovations and social enterprises
- Look at ways and means of stimulating and supporting social enterprise in the area

Council therefore asks CEB to instruct officers to draw up a draft Social Enterprise Strategy for Oxford City.

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