

# SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

**Tuesday 2 September 2014**

**COUNCILLORS PRESENT:** Councillors Simmons (Chair), Hayes (Vice-Chair), Altaf-Khan, Anwar, Coulter, Darke, Fry, Hollick, Lloyd-Shogbesan, Sanders, Smith, Upton and Price.

**BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT:** Councillor Bob Price (Corporate Strategy, Economic Development and Planning)

**INVITEES AND OTHER MEMBERS PRESENT:** Chris Price, Head of Cherwell School

**OFFICERS PRESENT:** David Edwards (Executive Director City Regeneration and Housing), Simon Howick (Head of Human Resources and Facilities), Pat Jones (Committee and Member Services Manager), Andrew Brown (Scrutiny Officer) and Sarah Claridge (Committee and Member Services Officer)

## 12. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Nigel Kennedy.

## 13. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest made.

## 14. WORK PROGRAMME AND FORWARD PLAN

The Head of Law and Governance submitted a report (previously circulated, now appended) which detailed a list of suggested future items and review topics for the Committee to consider.

The Committee made the following comments on the proposed review topics:

Proposed Topics to Review	Committee's response
Engagement with the BME communities	High priority – review panel needed
Support for the local economy	High priority – review panel needed
Cycling safety and increasing cycling take up	High priority – review panel needed
Food poverty in Oxford	High priority - Merge these topics into an inequalities panel. Need to work with County as lots of work done there. Work with the third sector.
Tackling inequalities	
Tackling child poverty	
Tackling fuel poverty	High Priority – topic for the Housing Panel to review.
Combating loneliness/ elderly	High priority – review panel needed

issues	
Using incentives to encourage recycling	Panel to continue.
Renewable energy generated on Council owned buildings and land	High priority-Merge these two topics — review panel needed
Low Carbon economy/ low carbon City Council	
Disability provisions	Whole Committee will look at.
Street Trading	Low Priority – legislation covers this
Taxi Licensing	Low Priority- legislation covers this.
Potential conflict on priorities for city council departments	Low priority.

The Scrutiny Officer will circulate the list of high priority topics to all non-executive members who will volunteer onto the panel(s) they are interested in. The panels will then draft their terms of reference for approval from the Scrutiny Committee.

The Housing Panel's list of topics included a lot of information reports from officers. Cllr Smith will discuss with the Scrutiny Officer the Housing Panel workload after the meeting.

The Committee would like to pre-scrutinise at the October meeting the following reports from the Forward Plan:

- Cultural Strategy 2015-18
- Towards Mental Wellbeing and Community Resilience
- Welfare Reform, European Social Fund Project
- Oxfutures – Mobilising Local Energy Investment

The Housing Panel will look at the following reports from the Forward Plan:

- Housing Strategy 2015-18
- Leaseholder Payment Options for Major Work

Cllr Darke updated the Committee on the progress the Flooding Panel had made. They held a meeting on 9 May with Thames Water, who has taken on board all the panel's recommendations and plan to publically launch their 'catchment study' in October.

It was agreed that the Flooding Panel should continue with updates report to the Scrutiny Committee on a 6 monthly basis.

Cllr Simmons reported that the Council Tax Exemption Panel had not progressed and required officer support to get the information required. The Scrutiny Officer offered his assistance.

## **15. UPDATE FROM STANDING PANELS**

Cllr Smith updated the Committee on the progress made with the Oxford Standard Panel, which will set a standard of repairs council tenants can expect. The report has been written and is awaiting the approval of tenants.

## **16. REPORT BACK ON RECOMMENDATIONS**

The Head of Law and Governance submitted a report (previously circulated, now appended) which detailed the results of recommendations since the last meeting and the cumulative results of all scrutiny recommendations.

The Scrutiny Committee noted the report.

## **17. UPDATE PAPER - FUSION LIFESTYLE - CONTRACT PERFORMANCE 2013/2014**

Nigel Gibson presented the Chair of the Scrutiny Committee a petition from the Save Temple Cowley Pool campaign. The Chair agreed to pass the petition to the Lord Mayor to present to Council on 23 September.

The Head of Leisure, Parks and Communities submitted a report (previously circulated, now appended) answering the Committee questions posed at the September meeting.

Nigel Gibson spoke on the report. He was concerned about:

- the leisure facilities running costs and whether the true costs were being shown in the figures provided.
- the monitoring performance statistics and the independence of the surveys used to gauge customer satisfaction.

The Chair asked officers to report to the committee the total expenditure of the leisure contract compared to the total revenue.

## **18. PERFORMANCE MONITORING - QUARTER 1 2014/15**

The Head of Business Improvement and Technology submitted a report (previously circulated, now appended) which detailed the performance indicators the Committee had chosen to monitor for the forthcoming year.

### DE003 – Number of enforcements carried out as a result of environmental offences

- Cllr Smith asked whether officers could produce a guidance note for Councillors so they can provide the correct information to residents regarding what is, and what is not an environmental offence.

### N195b –Percentage of streets with detritus levels falling below Grade B (YTD)

The committee were interested in knowing:

- Littering in the city centre - especially the time the business rubbish was collected from Cornmarket and whether it could be shifted so rubbish was not piled up for collection in the early evening.
- out of the streets checked for detritus levels, whether it was the same streets which continued to be dirty

Cllr Sanders asked that it be minuted that she was very supportive of the work Geoff Corps and the Street Cleaning Team were doing.

### BI002b Number of Council apprentices created through Council investment for those living in Oxford

The Head of Human Resources and Facilities confirmed that it was possible to request that people live within the city as a requirement for Council apprenticeships.

A report on the Education Attainment programme will be presented to the Scrutiny Committee at its next meeting.

## 19. MINUTES

The Scrutiny Officer updated the committee on the work programme since the last meeting (refer minute 5) – changes in bold

<u>Topic</u>	<u>Councillors Allocated for 13/14</u>
Thames Water investment to improve flooding and sewerage issues in the City.	Panel to continue Lead: Councillor Darke  Councillors Pressel, Thomas and <b>Goddard</b>
Discretionary Housing Payments	Work to continue and go to the Housing Standing Panel  Lead: Councillor Coulter.
Performance monitoring  A quarterly report of progress against a selection of performance measures selected by the Committee.	To continue Councillors Simmons, Coulter, Darke and Liberal Democrat (to be determined) to select the measures on behalf of the Committee.  <b>The Committee has agreed the same set of indicators to monitor so there is no need to appoint a Liberal Democrat.</b>
Council Tax exemption for students. Is this being applied consistently and managed.	Work to continue Lead: Councillor Simmons.
Enfranchisement and Empowerment.  Review report completed by the Committee. Officer responses to proposals not yet seen so recommendations have not been presented to the City Executive Board	Panel to disband but Officer's report to come to Scrutiny Committee – as soon as possible.  <b>Officer's response still not received. Scrutiny Officer to chase officer response to the proposal before the October meeting.</b>
The effects and value of the City's investment in educational attainment at primary level.  Important issue to members with outcomes still to be seen in detail.	Panel to continue Lead: Not nominated  Councillors Thomas and Altaf-Khan. Former Councillor Campbell to be approached to continue work as a co-

	<p>opted member if no other councillor interested.</p> <p>Key Stage results report from Education Attainment Officer to come to Committee. (when available) List of schools in programme to be presented to Committee in Sept.</p> <p><b>Update report will be presented to Committee in October. Depending on report, the committee can decide a lead or not.</b></p>
Tracking the experience of a few families affected by benefit changes to record the affects in a holistic way.	<p>Committee to see the results of research commissioned by Paul Wilding in this area.</p> <p><b>Report will be available soon.</b></p>
<p><u>Finance Standing Panel</u></p> <p>To consider spending, treasury management function and conduct the Budget Review</p>	<p>To continue</p> <p>Chair: Councillor Simmons</p> <p>Councillors Fry, Darke and Fooks</p>
<p><u>Housing Standing Panel</u></p> <p>To complete the on-going review of the "Oxford Standard" and any other Housing issues from the programme</p>	<p>To continue</p> <p>Chair: Councillor Smith</p> <p>Councillors Hollick, Sanders and <b>Wade</b> and to include a co-opted Tenant.</p>

The Committee resolved to APPROVE the minutes of the meeting held on 23 June 2014 as a true and accurate record.

## 20. BUSINESS IN THE COMMUNITY

The Head of Human Resources and Facilities submitted a report (previously circulated, now appended) which detailed the development of the Business in the Community programme.

The Head of Human Resources and Facilities and Chris Price, Head of Cherwell School presented the report and explained the initiative to develop a mentoring scheme between City Council officers and Year 10 students from Cherwell School.

Thirty three officers have volunteered to be mentors in the scheme which will focus on career development, raising aspirations, citizenship and civics. The mentors come from across the council, and have been matched appropriately with the students.

Cllr Price explained that the Business in the Community programme arose through the Oxfordshire Schools Board, who discovered that local employers felt that many students didn't have the skills necessary for work. Several businesses across the County are taking part in the initiative and work placements at the different employers can be arranged for pupils should they appear more suitable.

The Committee made the following comments:

- It is vital to build sustainable links particularly with vulnerable pupils and suggested that pupils should be able to change their mentor if the arrangement is not working for them.
- High quality careers advice is vital and there should be a strong emphasis on equipping pupils with advice and skills tailored to their needs and the needs of employers before they embark on the world of work.
- It's important to set measurable and realisable targets, where possible, in order to monitor outcomes and ensure value for money.

## **21. OXFORDSHIRE GROWTH BOARD**

The Executive Director of City Regeneration and Housing and Cllr Price submitted a report (previously circulated, now appended) which detailed the structure of the Oxfordshire Growth Board, which would be the body responsible for managing how the City Deal funding is spent.

Cllr Price presented the report. He explained that the creation of the Oxfordshire Growth Board would merge three partnership bodies (the Joint Committee for the City Deal, the Spatial Planning and Infrastructure Partnership and the Local Transport Board) into one.

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. The Committee suggested that this should be made explicitly clear in the Terms of Reference. The Board would consist of a mixture of full voting and non-voting representatives.

The Board would fall under executive function and no non-executive functions have been transferred. This means that the running of the Board is completely separate from the planning process. The Board will have to apply for planning consent and individual councils will be responsible for determining planning applications associated with the development.

In terms of scrutiny, there will be the opportunity to pre-scrutinise the Board's proposals in the same manner the Committee scrutinises Council.

The Committee asked that officers include the Oxford Growth Board agendas on the Committee's agenda and that the Board's minutes be added to the council's website.

## **22. DATES OF FUTURE MEETINGS**

The Committee noted that the next meeting would be held on 6 October.

**The meeting started at 6.00 pm and ended at 7.35 pm**