

Scrutiny Committee Work Programme 2013 - 2014

This programme represents the work of the Scrutiny Committee. It is divided between those items to be considered at:

- Full Committee Meetings – Agenda schedules at the end of this document.
- Standing Panels
- Review Panels in progress
- Potential Review Panels

Potential Review Panel items will only come forward for consideration as resources allow.

The programme also lists:

- Decisions called in.
- Councillor calls for action.
- New items suggested for scrutiny by councillors or residents.

Full Committee Meetings

Topic	Area(s) for focus	Progress	Lead and other Councillors
Thames Water investment to improve flooding and sewage issues in the City.	To consider the experience of Swindon Council in influencing Thames Water.	Committee agreed to extend the Panel membership to allow a group of councillors to meet officers in October to take a brief on: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The amount of investment already made by TW. • What further investment is needed. • Advice on our priorities for this 	Lead: Councillor Darke Councillors Pressel, Hollick and Jones.

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		<p>investment.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What are the City Council responsibilities as riparian owners and what money is available to deliver on these responsibilities. • Any lessons that can be learnt from Swindon. <p>This Group will then advise the committee on the best focus for this item.</p> <p>Briefing meeting set for 30th. October.</p>	
Discretionary Housing Payments	Quarterly updates on spending, claimant/property profiles, and issues and knock on effects.	<p>Report to September meeting.</p> <p>Committee asked for more information in subsequent reports. Councillor Coulter to pursue.</p> <p>Meeting with Board Member and Head of Service 8th. October.</p> <p>New framework agreed for presentation to December meeting.</p>	Lead: Councillor Coulter.
Performance monitoring	Quarterly report on a set of Corporate and service measures chosen by the Committee.	<p>Councillors met and agreed 2 performance sets:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Scrutiny Committee • Housing Panel 	Councillors Campbell, Simmons, Coulter and Darke.

		<p>Qtrly meetings scheduled.</p> <p>5/9/2013 meeting – clarification on LP106 requested – Information reviewed Panel asked for 5% target to be increased.</p>	
<p>Council Tax exemption for students. Is this being applied consistently and managed.</p>	<p>Two councillors to talk to officers about the process and report back to the committee if there is an issue to follow up on.</p>	<p>January meeting to take issues.</p>	<p>Lead: Councillor Simmons.</p>
<p>Fusion Leisure Contract</p>	<p>Leisure centre usage and the engagement in all leisure activities across the City with a particular focus on engagement of residents from our most deprived wards.</p>	<p>April meeting.</p>	<p>Lead: Councillor Coulter.</p> <p>Councillor Fry has expressed an interest in this item.</p>
<p>Community Safety</p>	<p>Issue to be decided on after consultation with the Board Member.</p>	<p>Discussion with Board Member at the October meeting.</p> <p>Asked Board Members to express concern to the Local Commander about the operation of NAGs since transfer of administrative responsibilities.</p> <p>Asked to see outcomes from the new ASB process in a year's time.</p>	<p>All Committee.</p> <p>Councillor Jones has expressed an interest in this issue.</p>

		No further issues	
The method by which the scale of new buildings and extensions is indicated in planning applications, in particular an evaluation of the agreed pilot scheme based on the practice in Swiss Cantons.	Evaluation of the pilot in City development.	Date check needed	Lead: Councillor Fry. Councillor Jones has expressed an interest in this issue.
Use of Social Media by the Council	Review proposals within the Public Engagement Strategy.	December meeting alongside the Public Engagement Strategy	Lead: Councillor Brett.
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.	The following have been considered by the Committee: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discretionary Housing Payments Scheme – Recommendations made to CEB. • End of year integrated report – Issues raised for inclusion in the scrutiny programme. • Corporate Debt Management Policy – No actions. • Appointment of the main contractor for the Affordable Homes Programme – No actions. • Youth Ambition Strategy – Recommendations made to 	Lead: Councillor Mills.

		<p>CEB.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Low Emissions Strategy and Air Quality Action Plan – Recommendations made to CEB. • Riverside Land – Acquisition – September meeting (delayed to November meeting). • Customer Contact Strategy – September meeting – recommendations made to CEB on the 11th. September. • Oxfordfutures Fund – (item delayed indefinitely). • Grants Programme Commissioning Review – October meeting – recommendations to CEB on the 9th. October. • City Deal – October meeting – recommendations to CEB on the 9th. October.. • Public Engagement Strategy – October meeting (delayed to December meeting). • Oxpens Master Plan consultation outcome – November meeting. • Waste and Recycling Strategy – Panel in November. 	
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Standing Panels

Topic	Area(s) for focus	Progress	Nominated councillors
<p>Housing – All strategic and landlord issues considered within the Scrutiny Function.</p>	<p>Issues:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Allocation Policies and how we communicate, give advice and take account of feedback. • Decent Homes Standard – where do we go next in investment in our stock? • Regeneration on estates – what are our ambitions and how do we deliver and engage communities. <p>Items for pre decision scrutiny:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Housing Strategy Action Plan periodic review – September meeting • Housing Strategy refresh – September meeting. • Long term affordable housing for homelessness prevention – September meeting. • Allocations review and changes to the Allocations Policy – September meeting. 		<p>No substitutions allowed. Lead: Councillor Smith.</p> <p>Co-opted Member – Linda Hill Councillor Hollick, Sanders and McCready.</p>

Finance Panel – All finance issues considered within the Scrutiny Function.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Quarterly budget monitoring. • Medium Term Financial Strategy and budget review. • “Proper Body” for scrutiny of the Treasury Management Strategy and Function. 		<p>No substitutions allowed. Lead: Councillor Simmons.</p> <p>Councillors Fry, Darke and Fooks.</p>
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Review Panels in progress

Topic	Scope	Progress	Nominated councillors
Covered Market Strategy and Leasing Strategy.	Scope: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pre-scrutiny and engagement with the developing Covered Market Strategy and Leasing Strategy. • Independent engagement with the Covered Market Traders Association. • Review of the leasing decision for the unit formerly occupied by Palm’s Delicatessen. • Consideration of comparative data from similar markets. 	The Group is currently observing the Covered Market Stakeholder engagement. Alongside this: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Face to face consultation with Market Traders has taken place. • Visits to 4 London markets and Bristol market have happened. • Interviews with Officers and Board Members have taken place. 	<p>No substitutions allowed.</p> <p>Lead: Councillor Campbell.</p> <p>Councillors Fooks , Van Nooijen (resigned), Clarkson and Benjamin</p> <p>Councillor van Nooijen resigned from the Panel.</p>

		<p>Interim findings to the October Scrutiny Committee. Final report expected in November.</p> <p>Programmed to finish in November Delayed awaiting Strategy expected December/January..</p>	<p>Labour members asked if they wished to replace him.</p>
<p>Recycling Rates – Are our targets ambitious enough.</p>	<p>Scope:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consider our current policies and their effects. • Review with service officers barriers to improvement alongside best practice and new initiatives. 	<p>The Group have identified a number of areas for potential improvement and are currently working with officers to explore these.</p> <p>The Group has agreed to focus its efforts around reward and penalty schemes taking in a broad range of suggestions.</p> <p>Data gathering is underway.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Information has been gathered on the incentives currently used by the Council and the effects of these. • Information is being gathered from WRAP and other authorities on incentives and outcomes. 	<p>No substitutions allowed.</p> <p>Lead: Councillor Fry.</p> <p>Councillors Simmons and Jones</p>

		<p>Panel asked and it was agreed that they pre-scrutinise the Waste and Recycling Strategy expected at CEB in November.</p> <p>Programmed to finish no later than December.</p>	
Enfranchisement and Empowerment.	<p>Scope: As census data is published we begin to see the diverse and changing nature of Oxford and the number of people who failed to complete details without a least 1 reminder. Alongside this there are a number of properties with no one registered to vote.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What effect does this have on our understanding of Oxford's communities? • Do we understand why some households/communities choose not to engage? • What is the extent of this democratic deficit? • What does this mean for communities, services and funding? 	<p>Planning is underway for the Group to run 3 focus groups talking to the Somali, Pakistani and Polish communities to understand the extent of their knowledge of public services and issues they have with engagement. These will happen in October 2013.</p> <p>Programmed to finish in December.</p> <p>3 focus group dates agreed towards the end of October one more date still to secure. Delayed finish to December to accommodate this.</p>	<p>No substitutions allowed.</p> <p>Lead: Councillor Darke.</p> <p>Councillors Jones and O'Hara.</p>
The effects and value of the City's investment in	<p>Scope: To partner with a participating school</p>	The Group has agreed continuing discussions with its partner school	No substitutions allowed.

<p>educational attainment at primary level.</p>	<p>to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • See the on the ground effects of the KRM model. • Understand the effects for children of all ability types. • Hear and see how the school copes with the cultural and professional challenges. • See how school inspectors respond. • Understand the targets set by the school management team and the part KRM plays in this. <p>Latterly the group has also decided to look at absenteeism.</p>	<p>which will happen in July.</p> <p>Recent membership changes to the Group have slowed progress.</p> <p>Work with the school will continue for a third term.</p>	<p>Lead: Not nominated</p> <p>Councillors Campbell, Jones, Coulter, Paule and Khan.</p>
<p>Mutual Exchanges between Council Tenants.</p>	<p>Scope:</p> <p>To consider the under occupancy in the Council's stock and the potential for mutual exchanges to support those tenants affected by the changes to benefits and in particular the "bedroom tax".</p> <p>To consider what changes and support is needed to make mutual exchanges a more useful tool for tenants.</p>	<p>Interviews with tenants who are at various stages of the Mutual Exchange process have been completed.</p> <p>Interviews with scheme administrators have been completed.</p> <p>Observation of mutual exchange events is underway.</p>	<p>No substitutions allowed.</p> <p>Housing Panel with Linda Hill (Lead) tenant.</p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Interview a range of tenants who have just registered to move. <p>Interview a range of tenants at the point of swap within the mutual exchange system.</p>		
Budget Review	Scope: Review of the budget and Medium Term Financial Plan – focus to be agreed.	Meeting set to outline scope timetable for the 14 th . October. Scope and timetable outlined by Chair for discussion and agreement at the Finance Panel 7 th . November.	Members of the Finance Standing Panel.

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Potential Review Panels – to be taken when resources allow (no particular order)

Topic	Area(s) for focus	Nominated councillors
Tracking the experience of a few families affected by benefit changes to record the affects in a holistic way.	Initial scoping with Lead Councillor	Lead: Councillor Smith

Items Called in and Councillor Calls for Action

None

New suggestion from Councillors or Residents

None

Committee Agenda Schedules

Each agenda will have 2 standing items:

- Work programme and recommendation progress
- Forward Plan

Date	Agenda Item
4 th . June	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Scrutiny operating arrangements. 2. Forward Plan. 3. Pre-scrutiny – Discretionary Housing Payments. 4. Pre-scrutiny – End of Year Integrated Report. 5. Pre-scrutiny – Corporate Deb Management Policy. 6. Pre-scrutiny – Appointment of Main Contractor for Affordable Homes Programme.
2 nd . July	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Work programme selection and set up. 2. Fusion Contract End of Year Performance 2012 - 2013. 3. Pre-scrutiny – Emissions Strategy and Air Quality Action Plan. 4. Pre-scrutiny- Youth Ambition Strategy.
5 th . September	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Performance Monitoring – Qtr. 1. 2. Discretionary Housing Payments – Monitoring Report. 3. Pre-scrutiny - Riverside Land (item delayed at CEB). 4. Pre-scrutiny -Customer Contact Strategy. 5. Pre-scrutiny -Oxfutures Fund (item delayed indefinitely) 6. Pre-scrutiny – City Deal (item delayed at CEB)) 7. Pre-scrutiny -Grants Programme Commissioning Review (item delayed at CEB).
1 st . October	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Community Safety issues – Board Member. 2. Interim Covered Market – Panel report. 3. Pre-scrutiny – City Deal. 4. Pre-scrutiny – Review of the Community and Voluntary Organisations Grants Programme.
5 th . November	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Performance Monitoring – Qtr. 2. 2. Pre-scrutiny - Oxpens Master Plan – consultation outcome. 3. Councillor Calls for Action 4. Pre-scrutiny – Riverside Land 5. Recycling – Panel update and pre-scrutiny of the Waste and Recycling Strategy.
3 rd . December	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Panel advice on Thames Water investment. 2. Enfranchisement and Empowerment – Panel

	<p>report.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 3. Final Covered Market Report (possibly January). 4. Pre-scrutiny - Public Engagement Strategy. 5. Use of Social Media by the Council. 6. Discretionary Housing Payments – Monitoring Report.
14 th . January	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Student Council Tax Exemptions – issues.
4 th . February	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Discretionary Housing Payments – Monitoring Report. 2. Performance Monitoring – Qtr. 3. 3. Public Involvement Strategy (consultation outcome).
4 th . March	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Education Attainment Panel report.
1 st . April	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Leisure centre usage and the engagement in all leisure activities across the City with a particular focus on engagement of residents from our most deprived wards.

Finance Standing Panel

Dates	Agenda Items
6 th . September 5.00pm.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Quarter 1 spending against budget. 2. Treasury Management outturn 2012 – 2013. 3. Quarter 1 2013 – 2014 Treasury Management performance. 4. Panel work programme.
7 th . November 5.30pm	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Quarter 2 spending against budget. 2. Quarter 2 2013 – 2014 Treasury Management performance. 3. Budget review scope and timetable. 4. Contingencies detail 2008 to date. 5. Modelled effects of the agreed transfer of assets from the Housing Revenue Account to the General Fund.
6 th . February 2014 at 6.00pm.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Quarter 3 spending against budget. 2. Quarter 3 Treasury Management performance. 3. Draft Treasury Management Strategy 2014 - 2015

Housing Standing Panel

Outline –issues still to be developed by Panel

The Scrutiny Committee has asked that this Panel also take issues from the Forward Plan related to the Housing theme. Addition dates have been reserved to allow this to happen if necessary, these are:

- 3rd. October.
- 5th December (used).
- 15th. January 2014.
- 6th. March 2014.
- 3rd. April 2014.

Dates	Agenda Items
3 rd . September	1. Housing Strategy Action Plan.

5.00pm.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 2. Long term affordable housing for homelessness prevention. 3. Allocations review and changes to the Allocations Policy. 4. Performance monitoring – Housing Measures – Qtr. 1. 5. Allocation Policies and how we communicate, give advice and take account of feedback. 6. Panel work programme.
3 rd . October 5.00pm.	Provisional – not used.
4 th . November at 5.00pm.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Performance monitoring – Housing Measures- Qtr. 2. Item to include a report back on performance against CS002 and CS005 2. Follow up on benefits performance indicators.
5 th . December at 5.00pm.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Housing Strategy refresh. 2. Estate Regeneration – Scope 3. Management arrangements – Temporary Accommodation? 4. Communications Strategy for the Allocations Scheme 5. Outcome from review of the Mutual Exchange process.
15 th . January 2014 at 5.00pm.	Provisional <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Possible Asset Management Strategy – Oxford Standard
7 th . February at 5.00pm.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Performance monitoring – Housing Measures – Qtr. 3. 2. Possible Asset Management Strategy – Oxford Standard
6 th . March at 5.00pm.	Provisional
3 rd . April at 5.00pm.	Provisional

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