

Scrutiny Work Programme 2014 - 2015

This programme represents the work of Scrutiny, and is divided between those items to be considered at:

- Full Committee Meetings – draft agenda schedules at the end of this document
- Standing Panels
- Review Panels in progress
- Potential Review Panels (to be established when 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
Discretionary Housing Payments	<p>Issue carried forward from 13/14 Work Programme.</p> <p>Quarterly updates on spending profiles within a framework agreed by the Committee.</p> <p>Committee commented on the under spending of the DHP budget in 13/14 and wanted to see more outreach work in the private rented sector.</p>	<p>First spending report scheduled for November when there should also be a greater degree of certainty about future funding levels.</p> <p>Scrutiny Committee to receive mid and end of year reports. Housing Panel may wish to consider having a standing item.</p>	Lead: Councillor Coulter.
Performance monitoring	Quarterly report on a set of Corporate and service measures chosen by the Committee.	Panel agreed changes to measures. Q1 report to be considered at September Committee and Housing Panel meetings.	Councillors Altaf-Khan, Simmons, Coulter & Darke.
Effects of the City's investment	Issue carried forward from 13/14 Work Programme.	Members may want to attempt to form another partnership with a KRM school.	Lead Member: No lead

in education attainment at primary level.	To consider the academic progress and key stage results at schools operating the KRM model compared to those not.	Decision to be taken when key stage results considered in October. KRM report to be signed off on 17 September. This can be considered on 6 October alongside the KS2 results.	Councillors Altaf-Khan, & Thomas. No Labour nomination. Consider Jim Campbell as a co-optee.
Enfranchisement and Empowerment	Report produced by a Scrutiny Review Group focusing on the civic engagement of 3 specific minority groups in Oxford. Report from officers on Review Group recommendations awaited before presentation to City Executive Board.	Original brief achieved. Members may wish to consider a piece of work around Individual Voter Registration.	Lead Member: Councillor Darke.
Fusion Lifestyle Contract	Regular yearly item agreed again by the Committee to consider performance against contract conditions.	Report taken at the June 2014 meeting on performance during 2013/14. A number of requests for extra information have been made to the Board Member and an update paper is coming to the committee for consideration on 2 September.	Lead Member: None set.
Research commissioned on the effects of welfare reform	To identify and consider local issues (e.g. 25% child poverty, health referrals e.g. for malnutrition), impact of welfare reforms on these issues and how to improve prevention.	Committee to consider terms of reference.	Lead Member: Councillor Coulter.
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.	Community Engagement Policy - November Business in the Community- September Oxfordshire Growth Board – September Towards Mental Wellbeing and Community Resilience– Postponed to October Leaseholder payment options for major works – Postponed to October	Lead: Councillor Simmons.

Standing Panels

Topic	Area(s) for focus	Nominated councillors (no substitutions allowed)
Housing – All strategic and landlord issues considered within the Scrutiny Function.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Performance monitoring (housing measures) • To be agreed 	Lead: Councillor Smith. Co-opted Member – Linda Hill Councillors Hollick, Sanders and Wade
Finance Panel – All finance issues considered within the Scrutiny Function.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Budget Scrutiny • Quarterly budget monitoring • “Proper Body” for scrutiny of the Treasury Management Strategy and Function. • Capital process 	Lead: Councillor Simmons. Councillors Fry, Fooks and Darke.

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Potential Review Panels – to be taken 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
Council Tax exemption, are these being applied and managed consistently.	Suggestion made last year but not started by the Committee. Councillor Simmons has begun some work outside of the Committee. Scope to be agreed	Lead: Councillor Simmons

Items Called in and Councillor Calls for Action

None

Item referred to Scrutiny by Council:

Peer review report (LGA challenge process)

Review Panels in progress

Topic	Scope	Progress	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 TWU at a senior level to ensure delivery of the agreements reached.</p>	<p>Panel members during May 14 met with TWU 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 would be monitored and challenged via an Expert Group and a Steering Group including Members from the Scrutiny Panel and City Council Officers.</p>	<p>Lead: Councillor Darke</p> <p>Councillors Pressel, Thomas.</p> <p>Liberal Democrat Member to be notified</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>Based on available data to outline the timeframe within which it would be reasonable to deliver this standard.</p> <p>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>Housing Standing Panel members plus the Tenant Scrutiny Group</p> <p>Joint Chairing</p>

New suggestions from Councillors or Residents

Key questions to consider when prioritising committee items

- *Is the issue controversial / of significant public interest?*
- *Is it an area of high expenditure?*
- *Is it an essential service / corporate priority?*
- *Can Scrutiny influence and add value?*

Suggested additions to the Scrutiny work programme	Suggested issue / area(s) for focus	Suggested approach
Street trading	Review Street Traders Policy; consider issues on Cornmarket.	Review Panel
Taxi licensing	To monitor rules, processes, taxi driver issues (e.g. 3 MOTs per year); taxi costs.	Review Panel
Engagement with BME communities	Consider how the council engages with BME communities, seek to address particular problems that are faced by ethnic groups in our city, and act as a point of engagement for BME communities to improve how the council represents and serves them.	Review Panel
Renewable energy generated on Council owned buildings and land	To investigate how we could increase the amount of renewable energy generation on council owned land and buildings, towards both meeting our climate obligations and generating revenue for the council.	Review Panel
Low carbon economy / low carbon City Council	What can we learn from other cities in Europe including twin cities such as Bonn. Explore how to promote a low carbon City Council.	Review Panel
Support for the local economy	To investigate what support the City Council could usefully provide to local businesses. Seek to improve the City Council's relationships with local traders and their satisfaction with us. Additionally, some work around helping smaller local businesses access City Deal funding would be useful.	Review Panel
Cycling safety and increasing cycling take-up	Explore how the City Council can make cycling more attractive; how do we influence the County County and how are any cycling budgets spent.	Review Panel
Food poverty in Oxford	Review current statutory and non-statutory provision; funding; usage (e.g. of food banks); referral processes; reasons for referral; explore the roles of the City Council and its contributions to both causing and mitigating against food poverty in Oxford; consider how policy and expenditure could be adjusted to improve outcomes.	Review Panel
Tackling fuel poverty	To explore how the City Council is working to minimise the instances of fuel poverty in	Review Panel

	Oxford.	
Tackling inequalities	To consider how the council can proactively tackle inequality in Oxford, including pay inequality as well as resulting social, housing and health inequalities.	Review Panel
Combatting loneliness	What is the role of the City Council in combatting loneliness and is there more we can do.	Review Panel
Tackling child poverty	What is the City Council's role in tackling child poverty and what do we already do; is there more that could be done to reduce child poverty.	Review Panel
Potential conflicts of priorities for City Council departments.	Business as usual vs. external contract work e.g. in parks – is the balance right?	Review Panel
Disability	Review and consider issues around disability provision through Council services.	Review Panel
Mental Health Services	Review Mental Health services in Oxford	Oxfordshire Joint Health Overview & Scrutiny Committee
Electoral registration changes	To monitor how we are managing the changes and maximising registration.	Scrutiny Committee item
Highways contract	To review and monitor effectiveness of current arrangement.	Scrutiny Committee item
Carbon and natural resources board	An update on the work of this cross-party board.	Scrutiny Committee item
Community & Neighbourhood Services	To look at aims, activities and outcomes post service re-organisation and how they are bettering the lives of citizens; grant distribution; community centres and associations; volunteering; process to take neighbourhood plans through consultation, examination and referendum; approval process for neighbourhood forums.	Scrutiny Committee item
Pavilions and sports bookings	Availability and provision of pitches, user satisfaction.	Scrutiny Committee item
Culture and Communication	To review the policy and the work of the Culture and Communication service	Scrutiny Committee item
Living Wage	To review how the living wage is enforced through procurement contracts	Scrutiny Committee item
Graffiti	To review the City Council's approach to cleaning graffiti up on residents' and Council properties, and how efficiency resources are distributed between this and other activities such as litter-picking.	Scrutiny Committee item
Anti-social behaviour policy	To review and scrutinise the City Council's approach to anti-social behaviour	Scrutiny Committee item
European funding	Is the City Council maximising Oxford's benefit from European funding.	Finance Panel review
Municipal Bonds	To explore the benefits and dis-benefits of the issuance of municipal bonds to finance capital expenditure.	Finance Panel review

Increasing the provision of affordable housing	Consider the merits of different options available to maximise the provision of affordable housing and minimise the upward pressure on rents, including through planning policy, purchasing existing housing to boost the council housing stock, and other options.	Housing Panel review
Homelessness	To review homelessness pathways and highlight any issues and pressures. To explore the impact of cuts to the Supporting People's Budget.	Housing Panel review
Houses of Multiple Occupation (HMO) licensing	To review concerns raised by tenants and landlords about the operation of the current licensing scheme. To consider the current arrangements and possible improvements, including whether there is merit in proposing a wider licensing scheme in order to meet housing needs and improve living conditions and the treatment of tenants.	Housing Panel review
Tackling under-occupancy in Council properties	To explore the extent of under-occupancy and the impact of the bedroom tax on under-occupancy.	Housing Panel review
Bedroom tax	To explore the impact of the bedroom tax on people's management of finances.	Housing Panel review
Enforcement of tenancy agreements	How well does the City Council deal with tenants who breach the terms of their tenancy e.g. by engaging in ASB, drug dealing etc.	Housing Panel item
Rent arrears	Review the City Council's management of rent arrears	Housing Panel item
The Great Estates Programme	An update on how the City Council is aiming to provide high-quality estates through regeneration and the Great Estates Policies, including tower block refurbishment.	Housing Panel item
Implementation of the action plan on health and housing	To review progress made.	Housing Panel item
Beds in Sheds	Update on the Beds in Sheds project.	Housing Panel item
Repairs exemptions policy	Changes to rules around free repair and decorating entitlements.	Housing Panel item
Housing Strategy	Review the City Council's 3 year housing plan.	Housing Panel item
Planning changes	How we are dealing with planning changes in Oxford e.g. how do building control monitor people building extensions without planning permission? Feasibility and desirability of planning changes, in particular violations by people building extension that don't need permission.	Housing Panel item
Home insulation / Energy efficiency in the City Council's housing stock	Provision of better insulation, what support is available (e.g. Green Deal), is there a business case for borrowing to insulate homes.	Housing Panel item
Standards in new build housing	What the City can and can't do given that government is restricting its ability to enforce standards.	Housing Panel item

Draft Agenda Schedules

Scrutiny Committee

Date(<i>all 6pm, St. Aldate's Room</i>)	Agenda Item	Lead Member; Officer(s)
2 September 2014	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Update paper: Fusion Lifestyle contract performance 2013-14 2. Performance Monitoring – quarter 1 3. Oxfordshire Growth Board 4. Business in the Community - Working in Partnership 	<p>N/A</p> <p>Neil Lawrence</p> <p>Cllr Price; David Edwards</p> <p>Cllr Price; Simon Howick</p>
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 	<p>Cllr Smith</p> <p>Cllr Pat Kennedy; Anna Wright</p> <p>Cllr Turner; Val Johnson</p>
10 November 2014	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Consultation and Engagement – interim update report 2. Performance monitoring – quarter 2 3. Discretionary Housing Payments 	<p>Sadie Paige</p> <p>Neil Lawrence</p> <p>Cllr Susan Brown; Paul Wilding</p>
8 December 2014		
19 January 2015		
3 February 2015	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Performance monitoring – quarter 3 	Neil Lawrence
2 March 2015	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Consultation and Engagement 	Sadie Paige
23 March 2015		
5 May 2015		

Finance Panel

Date, room and time	Agenda Item	Lead Member; Officer(s)
4 September 2014, Plowman Room, 5.30pm	1. Treasury Management Annual Report	Cllr Turner; Anna Winship
	2. Treasury Management performance – quarter 1	Cllr Turner; Anna Winship
	3. Budget monitoring – quarter 1	Bill Lewis
8 October 2014, St Aldate's Room, 5.30pm	1. Ethical investment - follow up	Nigel Kennedy
	2. Budget Review - scope proposal	
21 January 2015, St Aldate's Room, 5.30pm	1. Capital programme process review update	David Edwards, Stephen Clarke, Nigel Kennedy
5 February 2015, St Aldate's Room, 5.30pm	1. Budget monitoring – quarter 3	Nigel Kennedy
	2. Treasury Management Strategy 15/16	Anna Winship

Housing Panel

Date, room and time	Agenda Item	Lead Member; Officer(s)
3 September 2014, Plowman Room, 5pm	1. Q1 performance	Neil Lawrence
9 October 2014, Plowman Room, 5pm	1. Star survey results	Gary Parsons
	2. Draft Housing Strategy	Gary Parsons
	3. Leaseholder Payment Options for Major Works	Cllr Seamons; David Watt
22 January 2015, Plowman Room, 5pm	1. Housing Strategy	Gary Parsons
4 February 2015, St Aldate's Room, 5.30pm		

