**Scrutiny 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 and Ad hoc Panels in progress
3. Potential Review Panels (to be established if and when resources allow)
4. Items for Scrutiny Committee meetings
5. Draft Scrutiny Committee agenda schedule
6. Items called in and Councillor calls for action
7. Items referred to Scrutiny by Council
8. **Standing Panels**

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| **Topic** | **Area(s) for focus** | **Nominated councillors (no substitutions allowed** |
| Finance Panel – All finance issues considered within the Scrutiny Function. | See appendix 1 | Councillors Simmons (Chair), Darke, Fooks and Fry |
| Housing – All strategic and landlord issues considered within the Scrutiny Function. | See appendix 2 | Councillors Hollick (Chair), Sanders, Smith and Wade  Co-opted Member – Linda Hill |

1. **Review panels and ad hoc panels in progress**

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| **Topic** | **Scope** | **Progress** | **Next steps** | **Nominated councillors** |
| Thames Water investment to improve flooding | To continue engagement with Thames Water Utilities (TWU) at a senior level to ensure delivery of the agreements reached. | Catchment study publically launched and a press statement issued in advance. Contact made with TWU to establish governance structure. | Panel briefing on study to be arranged. Governance structure meeting dates to be set. | Councillors Darke (Chair) Pressel, Thomas and Goddard |
| Tacking Inequality | To review how the City Council contributes to combatting harmful inequality in Oxford, and whether there is more that could reasonably be done. | A call for evidence has been issued. A document has been developed detailing the ways in which the City Council combats inequality and opportunities and gaps identified. | Further evidence gathering meetings scheduled for 9 & 26 February. | Councillor Coulter (Chair), Gant, Lloyd-Shogbesan and Thomas |
| Budget Review | Annual review of draft budget and medium term financial plan | Three Budget Review meetings in w/c 12 January. | Recommendations to be agreed on 21 Jan. | Finance Panel Members |
| Recycling rates | To review of recycling and waste data rates, and consider community incentives and other recycling initiatives. | Continuation of previous panel which reported in July 2014. Meeting held on 8 October to consider bid for incentive funding. | Panel to visit depot and consider waste and recycling on 16 February 2015 | Councillor Fry (Chair), Simmons and Hayes |
| Supporting businesses in the city centre | 1. What can the City Council can do to mitigate disruption to the city centre economy while major developments are taking place? How can communication be improved for lasting benefit to residents and visitors? 2. What scope does the City Council have to minimise the time shop units are left empty, and to improve the appearance of empty units? | The panel met with the Town Centre manager to discuss possible areas of focus on 7 January 2015. | Scope to be considered by Scrutiny Committee on 19 January. | Councillor Fry (Chair), Darke, Benjamin and Gotch |

1. **Potential Review Panels – to be established when resources allow**

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| **Topic** | **Area(s) for focus** | **Nominated councillors** |
| Cycling | Scope to be determined. Panel to consider area(s) of focus which could include:   * Review cycling funding including City and County Council contributions. * Explore progress against sought outcomes and value for money achieved. | Councillors Wolff, Upton, Pressel and Hayes |
| Neighbourhood working | Scope to be determined. Could to consider how to address feedback provided to the City Council by the peer review group. | TBC |

**Indicative scrutiny review timeline 2014-2015 (does not include ad hoc review panels)**

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| **Review** | **Sept** | **Oct** | **Nov** | **Dec** | **Jan** | **Feb** | **Mar** | **April** | **May** | **June** | **July** |
| Budget Scrutiny |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Inequalities |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Supporting businesses |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Cycling |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |

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|  | Scoping |
|  | Evidence gathering and review |
|  | Reporting |

1. **Items for Committee meetings (in no particular order)**

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| **Topic** | **Area(s) for focus** | **Lead and other Councillors** |
| Discretionary Housing Payments | Quarterly updates on spending profiles within a framework agreed by the Committee. | Councillor Coulter |
| Performance monitoring | Quarterly report on a set of Corporate and service measures chosen by the Committee. | Councillors Altaf-Khan, Coulter, Darke & Simmons |
| 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, & Hayes & Thomas |
| Fusion Lifestyle contract performance | Regular yearly item agreed again by the Committee to consider performance against contact conditions. | Councillor Simmons |
| Research on the effects of welfare reform | To consider research into the impact of welfare reforms in the City. | Councillor Coulter |
| Clean streets | To receive an update on the City Council’s approach to keeping Oxford streets clean from graffiti, detritus, littering and waste. |  |
| Living Wage | To review how the living wage is enforced through procurement contracts |  |
| New controls over anti-social behaviour | To receive an update on the City Council’s changing approach to anti-social behaviour. |  |
| Low Carbon Oxford | To receive an update on the progress of this scheme and plans to progress the low carbon agenda in Oxford. |  |
| 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. |  |
| Activities for older residents and preventing isolation | To receive an update on services and activities for over 50s, with a focus on preventing isolation. |  |
| Individual voter registration | To receive an update on changes to electoral registration and to monitor how the City Council is maximising registration. |  |
| Taxi Licencing | To review rules and processes; to understand driver issues. |  |
| Forward Plan items | To consider issues to be decided by the City Executive Board. |  |

1. **Draft Scrutiny Committee Agenda Schedule**

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| **Date *(all 6pm, St. Aldate’s Room unless stated)*** | **Agenda Item** | **Lead Member; Officer(s)** |
| 3 February 2015 | 1. Community and Neighbourhood services 2. Activities for older residents and preventing isolation 3. Grant Allocations to Community and Voluntary Organisations 2015/2016 (pre-scrutiny) | Ian Brooke  Luke Nipen, Vicki Galvin  Julia Tomkins |
| 2 March 2015 | 1. Living Wage 2. Consultation and Engagement 3. Research into the local impact of Welfare Reform 4. Discretionary Housing Payments (pre-scrutiny) 5. The Culture Strategy 2015-18 (pre-scrutiny) | Simon Howick  Sadie Paige  Paul Wilding  Paul Wilding  Ceri Gordon |
| 23 March 2015 | 1. Low Carbon Oxford 2. Cycle City 3. Oxfutures programme (pre-scrutiny) | John Copley  Jo Colwell  Jo Colwell |

***The 5 May Scrutiny Committee meeting has been cancelled. Additional meeting date TBC.***

1. **Items called in and Councillor calls for action**

None

1. **Items referred to Scrutiny by Council**

None

**Appendix 1 - Finance Panel work programme 2014-15**

**Items for Finance Panel meetings**

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| **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. |
| Local financing | To consider whether there is a case for the City Council to generating capital financing locally through bonds or crowd-funding. |
| Ethical investment | To monitor the City Council’s approach to implementing an ethical investment policy. |
| Council tax exemptions | To receive an update on the financial implications of different types of exemptions. |

**Draft Finance Panel agenda schedule**

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| **Date and room (all 5.30pm, St. Aldate’s Room)** | **Agenda Item** | **Lead Member; Officer(s)** |
| 21 January 2015 | 1. Capital programme process review 2. Banking Services Provider (confidential) 3. Budget Review | David Edwards, Stephen Clarke, Nigel Kennedy  Nigel Kennedy  Cllr Simmons |
| 5 February 2015 | 1. European funding 2. Treasury Management Strategy 15/16 (pre-scrutiny) 3. Budget Review Report | Anneliese Dodds MEP  Anna Winship  Cllr Simmons |
| 25 March 2015 | 1. Local Financing 2. Budget monitoring – quarter 3 3. Capital Strategy (pre-scrutiny) 4. Creation of a Panel to Manage the Council’s Investment Portfolio (pre-scrutiny) | TBC  Nigel Kennedy  Nigel Kennedy  Jane Winfield |

**Meetings closed to the public:**

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| **Date and room (all 5.30pm)** | **Agenda Item** | **Lead Member; Officer(s)** |
| 3 February 2015, St. Aldate’s Room | 1. Review of published budget report | Peter Sloman, Nigel Kennedy |

**Appendix 2 - Housing Panel work programme 2014-15**

**Items for Housing Panel meetings**

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| **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. |
| Oxford Standard | To receive a progress update on the delivery of the Oxford Standard through the Asset Management Strategy and Action Plan, including an update on work to improve thermal efficiency in the Council’s housing stock. |
| 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 | To contribute to and monitor the customer profiling survey of residents in sheltered accommodation and how this data should inform future provision. |
| Fuel Poverty | To receive an update on the City Council’s approach to the issue of 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**

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| **Date, room and time** | **Agenda Item** | **Lead Officer(s)** |
| 22 January 2015, Plowman Room, 5pm | 1. Star Survey Results 2. Fuel Poverty | Gary Parsons  Deborah Haynes & Paul Wilding |
| 4 February 2015, St Aldate’s Room, 5.30pm | 1. Unlawful dwellings 2. Tackling under-occupancy 3. Housing Strategy 2015-2018 (pre-scrutiny) | Ian Wright  Bill Graves  Gary Parsons |
| 24 March 2015, Judges Room, 5pm | 1. Non-statutory homelessness services 2. De-designation review year 4 | Shaibur Rahman  Tom Porter |