

To: Council

Date: 7 December 2015

Report of: Chair of the Scrutiny Committee

Title of Report: Scrutiny Briefing

Purpose of report: To update Council on the activities of the scrutiny function

Appendices

Appendix 1 - Scrutiny work programme 2015/16

Appendix 2 - Scrutiny Recommendation Tracker July to November 2015

Introduction

1. In my previous report to Council, I provided a summary of the work of the Council's scrutiny function during the 2014/15 municipal year. That report highlighted the great work being done by the standing panels and review groups as well as the Scrutiny Committee, and the positive influence this work has had on policy making within the City. One measure of the effectiveness of scrutiny is the proportion of recommendations accepted by the City Executive Board. This remains reassuringly high (82% agreed in full or in part so far this municipal year).
2. Not only has the Scrutiny function demonstrably improved the Council's policy-making, it has also helped identify and deliver associated financial benefits running into the £m's. Some of the more tangible financial benefits of recent scrutiny work include:
 - The Blue Bin Recycling League - a idea that originated from the Recycling Review Group - that attracted £350k of Government funding;
 - More than £1m additional funding secured for the Northway and Marston Flood Alleviation Scheme Project that is unlikely to have been forthcoming without the close working between Thames Water Utilities and the Waste Water Flooding Panel;
 - The Finance Panel recommendation to pursue 'Real Lettings' has leveraged in additional outside funds to help secure more affordable homes;
 - The special session organised by Finance Panel on European Funding has certainly led to an increase in successful funding applications.
3. The non-monetary benefits of the scrutiny function are more difficult to quantify but no less important. For example:

- CEB recently agreed the majority of the Inequality Panel's wide-ranging recommendations which are aimed at maximising the Council's impact in combatting harmful social and economic inequality;
- The City Centre PSPO, whilst not universally supported, was substantially amended, and by all accounts improved, during its passage through scrutiny.

Work programme

4. The Scrutiny work programme for 2015/16 is progressing on schedule. As ever, the Christmas and New Year period is going to be a busy time for Scrutiny. The Budget Review will take priority from mid-December to the beginning of February, on top of a busy programme of Committee and Standing Panel meetings.

Current Activity

Guest Houses Review Group

5. At the time of writing this Review Group, led by Councillor Van Coulter, has completed its evidence gathering and is formulating recommendations. The Review Group has engaged with a range of officers, partner authorities and individuals who run guest houses and will be proposing the introduction of a voluntary code of practice for the owners of guest house to sign up to. The report of the Guest Houses Review Group is expected to be presented to the Scrutiny Committee on 9 December and the City Executive Board on 17 December.

Equality and Diversity Review Group

6. The scope of the Equality and Diversity Review Group, chaired by Councillor Tom Hayes, has been agreed. It will focus on the City Council's own employment practices. In particular, the Review Group will be looking at what barriers are faced by under-represented groups in recruitment and career development, and how the Council prevents and deals with discrimination. The Review Group has begun taking evidence from officers and union reps but this review will go on hold until February while Scrutiny focuses its resource on the annual Budget Review.

Budget Review

7. The Finance Panel has agreed a similar format to previous years for this relatively short but intensive review. Meetings with Directors are scheduled to take place in the first week of January. Given the Government enforced changes affecting housing, it has been decided to focus on the Housing Revenue Account. Members of the Housing Panel have once again been invited to join the housing focused sessions. As always, individual members are welcome to make their own budget suggestions or submit questions for Directors to the Scrutiny Officer, which we will collate and incorporate into our agendas.

The Scrutiny Committee

8. The Committee has continued to monitor Council performance, Discretionary Housing Payments spend and the work of the Oxfordshire Growth Board. Since September, the Committee has also pre-scrutinised the following CEB decisions. The numbers of recommendations made to CEB and those agreed (either in full or in part) are given in brackets:
 - Leisure and Wellbeing Strategy (3 / 3)
 - Oxford Growth Strategy (2 / 1)
 - Financial Inclusion Strategy – Action Plan Update (6 / 3)
 - Proposed Lease & Monitoring Arrangements for Community Centres (4 / 3)
 - Planning Annual Monitoring Report (1 / 1)

9. The Scrutiny Committee heard a call in of the City Centre Public Spaces Protection Order in November and decided by majority not to refer the original decision back to the City Executive Board.

Housing Panel

10. The Housing Panel is scrutinizing the various major housing-related decisions taken by CEB while also increasingly pursuing its own agenda. Substantive items considered in September and October included a review of the Council's Homelessness Action Plan and pre-scrutiny of the following decisions:
- Homelessness Property Investment (0)
 - Houses in Multiple Occupation (HMO) Licensing Scheme (2 / 2)
 - Arrangements for fitting solar panels on Council-owned stock (1 / 1)

Finance Panel

11. The Finance Panel recently convened a discussion with one of the individuals behind the successful Low Carbon Hub crowd funding campaign to understand whether this model could be adopted by the City Council to fund affordable housing. Officers have agreed that it has sufficient potential to investigate further.

Looking Ahead

12. The findings of the Budget Review Group and the Equality and Diversity Review Group are expected to be reported in February and April respectively. Scrutiny will not be establishing any new Review Groups in the current Council year.
13. Scrutiny has however requested reports on a number of topics and Council services of interest to members. The following will be considered at Committee and Standing Panel meetings over the coming months.
- Taxi licensing;
 - Customer contact performance;
 - Educational attainment;
 - Planning enforcement;
 - Graffiti removal on private property;
 - Youth Ambition;
 - Rent arrears;
 - Proposed changes to the Choice Based Lettings scheme;
 - The Great Estates programme;
 - Security in communal areas of tower blocks;
 - Tenant involvement in decisions that affect them;
 - Council tax exemptions.
14. Scrutiny will also continue to monitor performance, scrutinise selected CEB decisions, and monitor the implementation of agreed recommendations.

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Appendix 1 - Scrutiny work programme 2015/16

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

1. Standing Panels


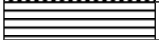

Topic	Area(s) for focus	Nominated councillors (no substitutions allowed)
Finance Panel – All finance issues considered within the Scrutiny Function.	See appendix 1a	Councillors Simmons (Chair), Fooks, Fry & Hayes
Housing – All strategic and landlord issues considered within the Scrutiny Function.	See appendix 1b	Councillors Smith (Chair), Benjamin, Henwood, Hollick, Sanders & Wade; Geno Humphrey (co-optee)

2. Items called in and Councillor calls for action

None

3. Items referred to Scrutiny by Council

None

	Scoping
	Evidence gathering and review
	Reporting

5. Items for Committee meetings

The Committee has reviewed all new suggestions received from Councillors. These have been assessed these against the following objective criteria to determine whether they are a higher or lower priority for inclusion in the work programme:

- *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?*

Topic	Description
Discretionary Housing Payments	Mid-year update on spending profiles.
Performance Monitoring (corporate)	Quarterly report on a set of Corporate and service measures chosen by the Committee.
Oxfordshire Growth Board	To will monitor agendas and minutes published by the Board.
Taxi licensing	To review rules and processes; to understand driver issues and consider policy changes.
Fusion Lifestyle annual performance	Annual item agreed again by the Committee to consider performance against contact conditions.
City Centre Public Spaces Protection Order	To pre-scrutinise the revised City Centre PSPO decision following submission by Liberty; to monitor how the PSPO is working, once in place and whether it is achieving desired outcomes.
Local Economy	To monitor progress of agreed recommendations and review the business case for a Business Improvement District.
Forward Plan items	To consider issues to be decided by the City Executive Board.
Equality and Diversity	To scrutinise a particular diversity strand in detail. For example, the work the Communities (CAN) team is doing with BME communities to build cohesion and tackle CSE.
Youth Ambition	To receive an update on spend and outcomes of the Council's Youth Ambition programme.

Tackling loneliness among the elderly	To consider the Council's role in tackling loneliness among the elderly.
Educational Attainment	To monitor the Council's Educational Attainment Programme.
Tree cover, biodiversity and the work of the Forest of Oxford	To scrutinise the Council's work on tree cover with other work on biodiversity and with the work of the Forest of Oxford, consider having an annual Forum and the public can be involvement.
Arrangements for dealing with employment, training and HR matters	To consider whether the Council would benefit from having different arrangements (e.g. a Personnel Committee) to deal with employment, training and HR matters for staff.
Planning enforcement and monitoring compliance	To consider how compliance is monitored, when and how often non-compliance is enforced and whether this is relayed to the relevant Planning Committee.
Maintenance of roads and pavements	To consider what proportion and what elements of highways work are contracted out, the quality of sub-contractors' work and how this is monitored.
Public Communications	To receive an update on changes to the Council's communications and reputation management functions.
Graffiti	To receive an update on the Council's approach to preventing and removing graffiti.
Complaints received by the City Council	To monitor complaints made about the City Council.
Employment of interns, apprentices and work experience students	Monitor how many interns, apprentices and work experience students have been taken on by the Council and in which departments. Consider career progression and tasks undertaken.
Contact Centre performance	To receive an update on the performance of the Council's customer services contact centre.
School/employer links and careers advice	To receive an update on the Council's role in building links between schools and employers and influencing careers advice in schools.
Heritage listing process	To receive an update on the heritage listing process now that heritage assets are given more prominence in planning decisions and Neighbourhood Plans are being drawn up.
The Council's external contracts, funding raised and their impacts	To receive an update on how much Council funding is raised by taking on external contracts and how this contract work impacts on other Council activities.
Better Partnership with the County Council	To consider how the City Council and County Council could strengthen their partnership working in key areas.

6. Draft Scrutiny Committee Agenda Schedule

Date, time & room	Agenda Item	Lead Member; Officer(s)
9 December, 6.15pm, Plowman Room	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Community Centre Strategy 2015-2020 (pre-decision) 2. Asset Management Plan (pre-decision) 3. Corporate Enforcement Policy (pre-decision) 4. Performance Report – 2015/16 quarter 2 5. Report of the Guest Houses Review Group 	Ian Brooke Mike Scott Cathy Gallagher N/A Cllr Coulter
12 January , 6.15pm, St. Aldate's Room	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Taxi Licensing 2. Customer Contact performance 3. Oxford Railway Station Redevelopment (pre-decision) 4. Transfer Station for Recycled Material (pre-decision) (part exempt) 5. Recommendation Monitoring – Local Economy 	Julian Alison Michelle Iddon Fiona Piercy Roy Summers Cllr Fry; Laurie-Jane Taylor
2 February, 6.15pm, St. Aldate's Room	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Grant Allocations to Community & Voluntary organisations (pre-decision) 2. Corporate Plan 2016-20 (pre-decision) 3. Report of the Budget Review Group 2016/17 	Julia Tomkins Val Johnson Cllr Simmons

7 March, 6.15pm, St. Aldate's Room	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Educational Attainment 2. Youth Ambition programme 3. Planning enforcement 4. Performance Report – 2015/16 quarter 3 	<p>Ian Brooke</p> <p>Hagan Lewisman</p> <p>Patsy Dell</p> <p>N/A</p>
5 April, 6.15pm, St. Aldate's Room	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Graffiti 2. Report of the Diversity Review Group 3. Recommendation monitoring – Inequality 4. Recommendation monitoring – Cycling 	<p>Doug Loveridge</p> <p>Cllr Hayes</p> <p>Cllr Coulter; Val Johnson</p> <p>Cllr Upton; Mai Jarvis</p>

Provisional 2016/17 dates: 7 June, 4 July, 5 September, 3 October, 7 November, 6 December, 30 January, 28 February, 27 March and 2 May.

Appendix 1a - Finance Panel work programme 2015-16

Items for Finance Panel meetings

Suggested Topic	Suggested approach / area(s) for focus
Budget 2016/17	Review of the Council's medium term financial strategy.
Budget monitoring	Regular monitoring of projected budget outturns through the year.
Municipal Bonds	To receive an update on the progress of a municipal bonds agency and consider whether there is a case for the City Council investing in or borrowing from the agency.
Low Carbon Hub funding model	To receive a briefing on the Low Carbon Hub funding model and consider whether there is an opportunity for the City Council to use a similar model to generate capital funding.
Corporate Debt Policy	To pre-scrutinise the Council's Corporate Debt Policy.
Treasury Management	Scrutiny of the Treasury Management Strategy and regular monitoring of Treasury performance.
Recommendation monitoring - Budget Review 2015/16	To receive an update on the progress of the Panel's budget review recommendations from 2015/16.
Recommendation monitoring – European Funding	To receive an update on the progress of the Panel's European Funding recommendations.
Council tax exemptions	To receive an update on the financial implications of different types of exemptions.

Draft Finance Panel agenda schedule

Date and room (all 5.30pm start)	Agenda Item	Lead Member; Officer(s)
28 January, Plowman Room	1. Report of the Budget Review Group 2016/17	Cllr Simmons; Andrew Brown
	2. Capital Strategy 2016-17 (pre-decision)	Nigel Kennedy
	3. Treasury Management Strategy (pre-decision)	Anna Winship
7 April, Plowman Room	1. Council Tax Exemptions	Nigel Kennedy
	2. Low Carbon Hub funding model - update	Nigel Kennedy



Informal meetings closed to the public

Date and room (all 5.30pm)	Agenda Item	Lead Member; Officer(s)
14 or 15 December, TBC	1. Budget Review 2016/17 – initial meeting	Nigel Kennedy
5 January, Plowman Room	1. Budget Review 2016/17 – Community Services	Tim Sadler & Nigel Kennedy
6 January, Plowman Room	1. Budget Review 2016/17 – Organisational Development and Corporate Resources	Peter Sloman, Jackie Yates & Nigel Kennedy
7 January, Plowman Room	1. Budget Review 2016/17 – Regeneration & Housing (joint session with Housing Panel)	Stephen Clarke & Nigel Kennedy
14 January, Plowman Room	1. Budget Review 2016/17 – agree recommendations	Cllr Simmons; Andrew Brown

Appendix 1b - Housing Panel work programme 2015-16

Items for Housing Panel meetings

Topic	Approach
Tenant Involvement	Review group or one-off panel to look at how tenants are involved in decisions that affect them.
Performance monitoring	Regular monitoring of housing performance measures.
STAR survey results	Annual monitoring of results of the tenant survey.
Rent arrears	Monitoring of performance measures; update report.
De-designation of 40+ accommodation	Final annual report on the latest phase of the de-designation of 40+ accommodations.
Review of the Homelessness Action Plan 2013-18	Mid-point review of homelessness action plan.
Supporting people	Verbal updates on the joint commissioning of housing support services.
Choice Based Lettings	To consider proposed changes to the CBL scheme plus data on bidding activity, demographic data on non-bidders, and information on refusal reasons.
Security in communal areas	Request report on security issues in tower blocks and different approaches being taken to address ASB and other issues. Canvas views of block representatives.
Great estates programme	Request report to update members on capital investments to improve housing estates including Blackbird Leys and Barton.
Asset Management Strategy	Pre-scrutinise asset management strategy for Council's housing stock.
Sustainability of the Council's housing stock & HRA business plan	Report to CEB expected in 2016.
Homelessness Property Investment	Pre-scrutinise decision to approve investment in a property investment fund to help secure access to local, suitable and affordable private rented accommodation.
Housing Energy Strategy	Pre-scrutinise report to CEB on energy efficiency and fuel poverty in the Council's domestic housing stock. Consider environmental sustainability of the Council's housing stock
Houses in Multiple Occupation (HMO) Licensing Scheme	Pre-scrutinise report to CEB setting out the results of the statutory consultation and the proposed future of the licensing scheme. Consider research trends of private sector housing costs

Sheltered Housing Review	Pre-scrutinise decision to approve outcomes of review, including future of some of the stock. Consider progress against previous Housing panel recommendations.
Private Sector Housing Policy	Pre-scrutinise report to CEB setting out the future priorities and areas of intervention in the private rented and owner-occupied residential sectors in Oxford. Consider licensing for private sector landlords & research trends of private sector housing costs.
Housing Development delivery models	Pre-scrutinise report to Council setting out possible housing development models and to seeking project approval for the delivery of the Council's 2015-18 affordable housing programme. Consider alternative delivery models including; community land trusts, self-build, more housing on the waterways, high-density housing.

Draft Housing Panel Agenda Schedules

Date and room (all 5pm start)	Agenda Item	Lead Officer(s)
10 December, St. Aldate's Room	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Performance Monitoring – quarter 2 2. Proposed Changes to the Choice Based Lettings Scheme 3. Rent Arrears 	<p>N/A</p> <p>Tom Porter</p> <p>Tanya Bandekar & Damon Venning</p>
11 January, Plowman Room	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Externally Leased HRA Properties – Rent Setting (pre-decision) 2. Private Sector Housing Strategy (pre-decision) 3. A Housing Company for Oxford (pre-decision) 	<p>Dave Scholes</p> <p>Ian Wright</p> <p>Alan Wylde</p>

9 March, Plowman Room	1. Performance Monitoring – quarter 3	N/A
	2. Update on the Great Estates programme	Martin Shaw & Jack Bradley
	3. Security in communal areas of tower blocks	Daryl Edmunds
	4. STAR survey results	Bill Graves
	5. Review of Older Persons Accommodation / Review of Sheltered Housing (pre-decision)	Frances Evans

Informal meetings closed to the public

Date and room	Agenda Item	Lead Officer(s)
7 January, Plowman Room (5.30pm)	1. Budget Review 2016/17 – Regeneration & Housing (joint session with Finance Panel)	Stephen Clarke & Nigel Kennedy

Appendix 2 – Scrutiny recommendation tracker 2015-16 (Sept – Nov)

Planning Annual Monitoring Report – 2 November Scrutiny Committee		
Recommendation	Agreed Y/N	Executive response
1. That the Council includes the following two new indicators when considering the effectiveness of planning policies contained within the Oxford Local Development Plan: a) Number of units of affordable housing to rent built on Council owned land b) The amount of land freed up for affordable housing development through change of use	Y	
Arrangements for fitting Solar Panels – 8 th October Housing Panel		
Recommendation	Agreed Y/N	Executive response
1. That the City Council should make every effort to enter into a viable agreement with the Low Carbon Hub as soon as possible in order to maximise the available benefits of fitting solar panels on Council-owned housing stock.	Y	I agree with the recommendation and indeed officers are already looking at ways of working with the Low Carbon Hub to help install PV panels on Council homes.
Additional Licensing for HMOs – 8 th October Housing Panel		
Recommendation	Agreed Y/N	Executive response
1. That the City Council encourages landlords and agents offer longer term tenancies and rent level guarantees, and explores the option of including these as discretionary criteria within the Landlord Accreditation Scheme.	Y	The Council will endeavour to encourage landlords and agents to offer longer tenancies and affordable market rents wherever possible and investigate the option of including this as a desirable element of accreditation in consultation with landlords and agents at the next Landlord Information Exchange event planned for December 2015.
2. That the City Council considers whether there is anything that can be done to address the inequity whereby many tenants living in HMOs are unable to access free bulky waste collections.	Y	Officers will investigate the potential to increase the number of free bulky items collections for tenants living in HMOs and if feasible will report back to CEB at a future meeting.

City Centre Public Spaces Protection Order – 6th October Scrutiny Committee		
Recommendation	Agreed Y/N	Executive response
1. That the design and placing of signage is considered by a cross-party group of members and that every effort is made to remove obsolete signage across the city.	Y	I welcome this recommendation and will ask officers to convene a cross-party group of members to develop appropriate signage in suitable locations, and ensure obsolete signage is removed.
2. That full consideration is given to any further views expressed by Liberty in relation to the revised draft PSPO.	Y	A letter has been received from Liberty since the scrutiny meeting. The letter will be reported to the Board.
3. That the City Executive Board notes that there was no consensus in the Scrutiny Committee or PSPO Panel for the inclusion at this stage of the behaviours set out in sections 1a and 1e of the draft PSPO.	Y	Noted.
4. That the City Executive Board inserts the word “reasonably” before the word “perceived” in section 1a of the draft PSPO.	Y	Accepted.
5. That the City Executive Board should clarify and define the meaning of the word “near” in section 1a of the draft PSPO to protect and assist officers enforcing the order.	N	Not accepted. ‘Near’ is a word which is easily understood, which does not require further definition. It will be a matter of fact as to whether the prohibition is engaged.
Financial Inclusion Strategy – Action Plan Update – 6th October Scrutiny Committee		
Recommendation	Agreed Y/N	Executive response
1. That the Action Plan should be kept under review so that the Council can be responsive to significant changes in circumstances (e.g. further welfare reforms, reduced children’s centre provision).	Y	The report delegates authority to update the Action Plan as and when required, which enables us to be responsive to new or changing situations. In such an event we can add or change actions in the plan. I review the plan on a monthly basis with officers to look at any significant variations and officers also review it on a monthly basis. We will report any significant variations under delegated authority.
2. That the directory of affordable childcare should be shared with Councillors.	Y	There is no directory of affordable childcare. The availability of childcare is a constantly changing situation. The action in the plan that

		this relates to is to identify local providers of childcare. The County Council have a service which is able to tell you what is available at the time of contacting them. Anyone can access this, so we can provide the contact details. It is provided by the Family Information Service who can be reached on 08452 262636.
3. That the Action Plan should contain a stronger emphasis on more joined up partnership working, for example with the health sector to support social prescribing.	N	Action 28 in the plan deals with this area, although the wording doesn't make this explicit. The action is being delivered through our participation in the social prescribing project being carried out by Bury Knowle Surgery.
4. That all frontline staff should receive training on recognising the indicators of financial exclusion.	N	The revision of the action plan explicitly excludes contact centre staff from this training as it has been deemed not appropriate. The time spent identifying indicators of financial exclusion on a phone call would be too onerous and would require additional resource to maintain the same level of service as calls would take longer to deal with. Instead the new action focuses on delivering this to teams who have longer periods of engagement with customers likely to be at risk of financial exclusion. This would include tenancy sustainment, energy advice officers and the welfare reform team.
5. That the City Council should monitor the accessibility of the private rented sector to people who are out of work and the use of the Lord Mayor's Deposit Scheme.	Y	The Housing Needs Team already produces performance data relating to this area which includes number of new starts in Home Choice, and deposits provided under the Deposit Scheme. Housing Scrutiny Panel reviews performance in this area including the number of households in temporary accommodation, which is a good indicator of the difficulty in accessing the PRS. Housing Scrutiny could request that other data is reported relating to access to the PRS if this would be helpful.
6. That the City Council should bring forward any plans that would assist households in taking advantage of higher feed in tariff rates.	N	Recent policy changes from the government mean that drastic cuts in the housing revenue account budget will be required. This is subject to government confirmation but this is highly likely later in the autumn. This means that the Council will have to reassess its existing spending priorities between December and March so can no longer commit to many non-essential services. It is very likely that the major programmes with the housing stock such as energy efficiency and

		<p>solar PV will be significantly affected.</p> <p>Tighter budgets mean that the Council will have to do more with less, and means we are unable currently to commit to any work other than those that are basic, cost effective and/or vital programmes of work:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Loft insulation work to top up to about 270mm • Heating replacement programme • External insulation, double glazing and improved ventilation in Tower Blocks
Proposed Lease and Monitoring Arrangements for Community Centres – 6th October Scrutiny Committee 2015		
Recommendation	Agreed Y/N	Executive response
1. That the City Executive Board should consider deferring the decision on this report and taking it alongside the Community Centre Strategy decision, which is expected in November.	N	The report reflects the contents of the strategy report which will be brought in November. There is nothing within the leases report that is inconsistent with, or at odds with, the strategy report.
2. That the City Council should develop a “code of conduct” that sets out the expectations on Community Centre Associations and the types of support Associations can expect from the City Council. This code of conduct should be linked to the lease and monitoring arrangements for community centres.	In part	Many community associations will have their own Code of Conduct; this suggestion can be explored with community associations, either individually or through the Federation.
3. That the report should provide more detail on the standard forfeiture (termination) provisions on tenant default or insolvency.	Agreed	Agreed, we will seek further clarification from Legal.
4. That City Executive Board should make arrangements for independent legal advice to be available to Community Centre Associations.	Agreed	For those CAs moving from a licence to a lease, we will consider this during the period of discussion and negotiation. As there are areas of commonality in this process we can consider who would be the best source of advice of the CAs, for example, Community Matters. Associations with expired leases are being offered financial assistance towards seeking legal advice.

Inequality recommendations – 30 th June Scrutiny Committee		
Recommendation	Agreed Y/N	Executive response
1. That the City Council leads on the development of a long-term multi-agency inequality strategy for Oxford. This should be informed in part by the evidence gathered in this Inequality Review and enhanced when Oxfordshire Clinical Commissioning Group produces its report on health inequalities. The Strategy should be supported by an Action Plan that includes any accepted Inequality Panel recommendations..	In Part	The Oxford Strategic Partnership has been leading a multi-agency programme entitled 'Tackling the Cycle of Deprivation' for a number of years and the CCG review will build on the OSP's work. Many of the recommendations from the Panel are being addressed through existing strategies and action plans, and we would propose to return to the question of whether an overall strategy document and plan when the outcome of the CCG work is published.
2. That the City Council ensures it has sufficient staffing resources in partnership posts to play a leading role in working with partners to deliver on a multi-agency inequality strategy for Oxford (see recommendation 1). We envisage that savings are achievable from overcoming silos and working in partnership to tackle long terms issues associated with inequality.	Agreed	Agreed in principle, but the current pressures on local authority and NHS budgets make it difficult to guarantee that the desired staffing resources can be made available from year to year. Our approach to the influencing and development of strategies and policies is based on a matrix approach and includes influencing strategies and policies for the key strategic Oxfordshire Partnerships, the Oxford Strategic Partnership and ensuring consistency and alignment, where appropriate, to Oxford City Council policies and plans. The new Assistant Chief Executive role will provide additional capacity in this area. Policy Officers Group, with representation from all service areas, is used to cascade and share information and best practice in developing our policies internally.
3. That the City Council commissions Professor Danny Dorling and the City Council's Social Research Officer to develop an Oxford City Inequality Index based on aspects of inequality that that the City Council can influence either directly, or indirectly to a significant extent. Council Performance should be assessed against the movement of this index.	Not agreed	The Council uses ONS data and small area statistics and publishes these in an accessible form (see the Council monthly charts and other useful information available on the Oxford City Web site: http://www.oxford.gov.uk/PageRender/decC/Statistics_about_Oxford_ccw.htm It is not clear what a specific City Index would add to what is already available and as a stand- alone index it would lack credibility with central government or the EU, who have their own definitions of deprivation and inequality for benchmarking and resource allocation.

		The Council uses nationally recognised indices which facilitate benchmarking and funding submissions. Deriving a set of local indices would be costly and not have these advantages.
4. That all strategy papers and major decisions should include an assessment of their short, medium and long term impacts on inequality. This assessment could be based on an Inequality Index (see recommendation 3), and guidance should be available to assessing officers.	Agreed	The Council's existing equality impact assessment process requires officers and Members to consider the impact of decisions and actions on groups with protected characteristics. Currently these do not include socio economic inequalities and including them as a required part of the process will involve careful definition and extensive training. The Corporate Lead (HR / OD) will review the current process in line with best practice during the autumn.
5. That the City Council progresses all options for boosting the supply of affordable housing, including by: a) Continuing to push for a review of the Green Belt around Oxford as part of a wider county land review to identify sites for new housing, b) Enforcing the City Council's 50% affordable housing policy, c) Considering greater use of Compulsory Purchase Orders to buy derelict land and properties that aren't coming forward for development, d) Evaluating the potential local impacts of the new Government's housing policies, such as the extension of the Right to Buy scheme to housing association properties, e) Encouraging ethical or institutional investors to rent good standard accommodation to people in housing need at affordable rates, f) Aiming to make Oxford a centre of excellence in innovation for new social and affordable housing solutions, ensuring that its own	Agreed	Recommendation 5 a) to f) are already part of the Council's normal business. Recommendation 5g) is being taken forward by the Council's Ageing Successfully Group that is working with Age UK Oxfordshire on a Home Share Programme in Oxford that has been funded by the Lloyds Bank Foundation and the Big Lottery Fund . On 5h) the Council's allocations policies aim to assist 'downsizing' where residents wish but organising transfers on a collective basis would be extremely difficult and unlikely to accommodate many community groups who are characterised by different current housing tenures. However, in light of proposed changes in government policy the Council may be forced to review its Housing and Planning Policies.

<p>policies (such as the Balance of Dwellings Policy) are compatible with this aim. Affordable Oxford could be asked to provide advice on what options would be viable in Oxford,</p> <p>g) Considering whether there is scope for the City Council or the Universities to promote 'inter-generational shared living'.</p> <p>h) Considering whether there is a way the City Council could assist groups of older people in downsizing collectively while staying together as a community, perhaps by creating a group or register that people can join or sign up to.</p>		
<p>6. We note the significant difficulties that schools, hospitals and universities (as well as businesses) face in attracting workers to settle in Oxford, and recommend that the City Council:</p> <p>a) Gathers evidence as soon as possible to identify the best way of delivering new build keyworker housing within the 20% of affordable housing provided as intermediate housing,</p> <p>b) Seeks to extend its keyworker housing intervention to more teachers (this is currently offered to senior teaching staff),</p> <p>c) Considers whether there is scope to assist key workers (particularly teachers in priority schools) in accessing housing in the private rented sector, for example by encouraging registered landlords to offer 3 year tenancies and agreeing to raise rents by no more than the CPI measure of inflation.</p>	Agreed	<p>Recommendation 6a) is in hand and will form part of a wider review of affordable housing and planning policies. Recommendation 6b) has been implemented with the scheme open to all teachers from the beginning of July, following consultation with schools.</p> <p>Recommendation 6c) will be difficult to achieve as the Council has no means of practically influencing private sector rents and landlords' letting policies but the proposals could be put forward to key landlords and agents.</p>

<p>7. We note that the City Council is developing a Private Rented Sector Strategy and recommend that this aims to extend the City Council's interventions in the private rented sector to address abuses in the student housing market and poor standards across the wider private rented sector. This should include the extension of discretionary licensing to cover more properties where possible, enhanced enforcement of the HMO licensing regime and further promotion of landlord accreditation to encourage take up.</p>	<p>Agreed</p>	<p>We agree to take this recommendation into account in developing the strategy. Work is underway on identifying the most appropriate extension of discretionary licensing following the introduction of legislative restrictions by the government. The HMO Licensing Scheme is currently being consulted upon and if renewed, the approach to improving compliance with licence conditions in licensed properties will be strengthened and stronger penalties imposed upon the landlords of unlicensed properties. Encouraging Landlord accreditation and improving the rewards available for good landlords will complement this tougher enforcement stance. It would be useful to understand the particular concerns about student housing if this refers to purpose built accommodation rather than general needs housing which just happens to be occupied by students.</p>
<p>8. That the City Council:</p> <p>a) Calls on the new Vice-Chancellor of the University of Oxford to provide reinvigorated engagement in Oxford's housing sector by learning from the Cambridge model and providing new accommodation to house academics.</p> <p>b) Tasks the new Assistant Chief Executive with working closely with the University sector and encouraging a greater degree of input into city matters, including financial contributions where appropriate.</p>	<p>Agreed</p>	<p>This work is already in progress. The new assistant Chief Executive will help take this forward.</p>
<p>9. That the City Council builds on its commendable work on addressing fuel poverty by:</p> <p>a) Making a fuel poverty calculator available online that directs people in fuel poverty to contact the City Council for advice on what support they may be entitled to,</p>	<p>In part</p>	<p>Partially agreed. The Council has developed a fuel poverty model to identify areas of the City which are at greater risk of fuel poverty. This model can be used to target resources and grants to people in fuel poverty. We will increase our advertisement of the help that can be provided to reduce energy costs through the advice centres and the Council.</p>

b) Asking Trading Standards whether they would like the Council to refer cases to them where an Energy Performance Certificate is required and whether they would be prepared to give the City Council any enforcement powers.		The Council is due to begin taking enforcement against private landlords with EPC ratings of F and G, and this action is included in the Council's Financial Inclusion Strategy and we will undertake this work directly..
<p>10a. That the City Council builds on its work with Oxford Clinical Commissioning Group and other health partners by:</p> <p>a) Supporting the delivery of more proactive health interventions in areas of multiple deprivations, such as contacting people who miss appointments,</p>	Agreed	The City Council, Oxfordshire Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG) and Public Health, have been working toward this in a number of ways: Some GP Practices use text messages to remind patients of upcoming appointments, where they have patients' mobile phone numbers. They also post messages in Practice waiting rooms to inform patients of the impact of missed appointments. In terms of health interventions, where there has been low uptake of NHS initiatives, such as screening programmes and health checks, some focussed work has been conducted by the CCG'S Equality and Access Team. This has included working with patients in some GP Practices to enable them to be booked into appointments. The CCG alongside Public Health and the City Council, has established multi-agency Community Partnership Health Groups, based in the city's key areas of deprivation. These help to support health promotion campaigns and activities at a local level. They have also drawn up Health Plans for each area, based on health indicator data, to identify the key issues and provide appropriate interventions and initiatives to tackle them. The development and delivery of the Community Health Plans are supported by the CAN Breaking the Cycle of health Deprivation Working Group (including the CCG, Public Health and CAN staff).
<p>10b. That the City Council builds on its work with Oxford Clinical Commissioning Group and other health partners by:</p> <p>b) Working towards the concept of pooled budgeting in areas where evidence suggests that this approach can improve health outcomes.</p>	Agreed	Pooling of budgets is not specifically a City Council issue. However, the Executive Director for Communities and the Executive Board Member, Corporate Assets and Public Health are actively offering to provide City Council premises and other assets to promote better health outcomes. An example of the possibilities in this domain is the proposed use of the health space at the new Rose Hill Community Centre.

<p>10c. That the City Council builds on its work with Oxford Clinical Commissioning Group and other health partners by:</p> <p>c) Utilising the City Council's assets (such as leisure centres) and the agencies we support to facilitate social prescribing, and encouraging more GPs to take up social prescribing.</p>	<p>Agreed</p>	<p>Agree, as above. In addition; the Head of Community Services is represented on the Oxfordshire University Hospital Trust, Public Health Steering Committee and on the Oxfordshire Clinical Commissioning NHS Health Inequalities Commission Steering Group. This is to ensure that Oxford City Council is well placed to identify opportunities for working with other agencies to deliver health promotion services. With reference to Social Prescribing: One Practice, which serves two regeneration areas in the city, has recently initiated a Social Prescribing project. The CCG's Equality and Access Manager has undertaken some research of models across the country. The findings will be presented to GP Leads and a decision will be made as to the potential of a county-wide Social Prescribing Project. This will also be considered for application at the new Rose Hill CC.</p>
<p>10d. That the City Council builds on its work with Oxford Clinical Commissioning Group and other health partners by:</p> <p>d) Working with partners to develop a single online point of access for multiple services in Oxford, including health, housing and social care.</p>	<p>Not agreed</p>	<p>There are a range of points where people can and should access information. It is important however to play our part in ensuring that all the agencies continue to work to improve information sharing and referral processes and to ensure that service signposting is appropriate. The voluntary and community sector have an important role to play in this and the City Council provides funding through its grant programme to a number of agencies providing advice, support, signposting and referral to health, housing and social care services. The CCG are piloting this approach and working with referral agencies to understand demand. It is a matter for them.</p>
<p>11. That the City Council explores how factors around inequality and public health could be designed in to the planning and development of sites. These factors should include cycling and walking provision, the accessibility of parks, and the provision of a variety of housing within the street scene. Consideration should also be given to shaping new communities. For example, new communities should include a centre and shared</p>	<p>Agreed</p>	<p>This is already in hand. For example, the Barton development is considered to be an example of best practice in this regard. Public Health have also been asked to comment on planning applications with strategic implications for building sustainable communities that support health and help to promote exercise, such as the Northern Gateway master plan. A member of the City Council Planning Policy Team recently attended a Public Health England workshop aimed at improving collaboration between planning and health improvement professionals. Some of the issues raised at this workshop have fed</p>

open space.		into on-going scoping work that Public Health are undertaking to ensure that health considerations receive more prominence when planning decisions are made across all Oxfordshire authorities.
12a. That the City Council: a) Assists in bringing about negotiations with local health, housing and social care commissioners and providers so that a county wide discharge policy for people experiencing homelessness can be adopted as per best practice guidelines	Agreed	There is an operational hospital discharge procedure in place, which provides client names and 48 hour notice of discharge to Housing Services. However, this procedure could be strengthened with a more strategic hospital discharge protocol agreed on a countywide basis with all key stakeholders. This would relate to care packages including a broader range of services, for example Hospital Trusts (specialist physical and mental health services) and adult social care. The City Council will try to facilitate the development of this further.
12b. That the City Council: b) Extends interventions aimed at supporting homeless people with complex needs (e.g. substance abuse and mental health issues), who are often excluded from accessing the services they need.	Agreed	Officers are already working with the Oxfordshire Clinical Commissioning Group, Public Health and providers to develop a suitable service for single homeless customers with complex needs, including when substance misuse limits effective treatment options for mental health. The Council is also part of a Complex Needs network which seeks to improve the access that people with complex needs have to current services. This aims to build on outcomes for people with the most complex needs through intensive support and a flexible systemic approach.
13. Oxford City Council is leading the way in defining, measuring and tackling fuel poverty and we recommend that the same priority should be given to the issue of food poverty. A part-time role should be created to tackle food poverty, which should involve facilitating the work of the not-for-profit and voluntary sector to maximise their impact, and developing a food poverty strategy for Oxford. This strategy should aim to replicate best practice established by Bristol to reduce food bank demand and increase access to good and affordable food across the city.	Not agreed	The OSP Breaking the Cycle of Deprivation Group has been working with Good Food Oxford to see how this work can be taken forward. The Breaking the Cycle Group (including representatives from the Oxfordshire Clinical Commissioning Group and Public Health) funded Good Food Oxford to carry out community activities on Blackbird Leys, to introduce food poverty and healthy eating elements to the work that food oriented Community Action Groups already do within their local communities. This has proved to be extremely effective. The aim is to continue to work with Good Food Oxford and other partnerships to build the capacity of local communities. Clarity is needed on whether the bid will address this and this recommendation will be kept under review.

<p>14a. That the City Council:</p> <p>a) Identifies how it can provide a greater degree of funding security to Asylum Welcome. Consideration should be given to including their work within the remit of the Council's Community Grants commissioning programme, which awards funding for 3 years rather than annually. This will reduce Asylum Welcome's administrative workload and help to ensure that they remain viable over the medium term.</p>	In part	<p>Noted. This recommendation will be considered as part of the annual review of the Council's grants programme in the budget round. We are in active discussions with Asylum Welcome and other charities in this area with regard to the refugee crisis and how we can assist them in making a fully effective response. The Council is currently in discussion with AW as part of its response to the refugee crisis. The Board is very appreciative of the work of Asylum Welcome.</p>
<p>14b. That the City Council:</p> <p>b) Explores whether it could provide low cost accommodation to third sector organisations by utilising unused capacity in Council-owned assets such as Community Centres.</p>	Agreed	<p>The Council supports and funds a number of voluntary and community groups, some of which have accommodation in City Council premises and some in the private rented sector. All registered charities are eligible for rate relief. Reduced hire rates for the Town Hall are also available to voluntary and community sector organisations.</p>
<p>15. We strongly endorse the City Council's approach to combatting financial exclusion and recommend that the City Council:</p> <p>a) Ensures that the Welfare Reform Team are fully and best deployed in order to provide greater assistance and proactively reach more people, particularly those moving on to Universal Credit,</p> <p>b) Moves towards implementing a 'single view of debt' in order to identify multiple debts owed to the Council, and where possible, consolidate these,</p> <p>c) Gives a high priority to continuing to protect the current level of funding for the advice sector over the medium term,</p> <p>d) Explores longer term funding options for a</p>	Agreed	<p>The Financial Inclusion Strategy supports this work.</p>

<p>housing needs money advice caseworker, and evaluates the impact of this provision over time,</p> <p>e) Continues to work closely with CAB and other agencies to encourage the take up of unclaimed benefits.</p> <p>f) Aims to make full use of its Discretionary Housing Payments budget.</p>		
<p>16. That the City Council establishes a reliable directory of charities for Oxford, setting out the aims, principle client groups and types of relief provided. This will help to ensure that local charities have a greater awareness of what other charities do.</p>	In part	<p>The OCVA have a register of Charities and are funded by the City Council. We will raise concerns about the register with OCVA and seek to address them with OCVA colleagues.</p>
<p>17. We recommend that the City Council continues to prioritise improving educational attainment in the city by:</p> <p>a) Offering a new educational grant programme to which Head Teachers from schools serving deprived areas can apply. This programme would provide tangible output-based funding to reduce educational inequalities in city schools. The criteria for awards should be non-prescriptive but grants could be used to fund specific line items in School Improvement Plans focused on Pupil Premium and Special Educational Needs pupils, for example.</p> <p>b) Engaging with partners and considering whether it has a role in ensuring that eligible year 1 and 2 pupils are registered for the Pupil Premium so that their schools receive the additional funding they are entitled to.</p>	Not agreed	<p>The Council is currently working through the Oxford Strategic Partnership (OSP) to see if a stronger partnership approach to raising education attainment can improve attainment levels in the city. An OSP Sub Group has been established to develop a set of actions for educational attainment improvement in the city. There have also been meetings with the head teachers of schools in the south of the City and discussions on how the regeneration of Blackbird Leys might contribute to the raising of attainment levels. The County Council has now established a Strategic Schools Partnership Education Commissioning Shadow Board. This Board is in the process of establishing the grant criteria for support. The City Council has representation on this Board. The aim is to ensure any activities funded/provided by the City Council which contributes towards education attainment is additional and complementary to the County Council Commissioning Strategy and Plan. The Council's financial and human resources are constrained and these recommendations are ones which would be difficult to fund within the known future budget envelope.</p>

		<p>This proposal does have a cost implication, as whilst the Council has some information in relation to benefits claimants it does not hold any data on schools children attend and as the roll out of Universal Credit continues it will hold no relevant benefit data. A new grant programme is something for Councillors to bear in mind during the budget setting process.</p>
<p>18a. That the City Council utilises skills within communities and works with partners to maximise every opportunity to provide employment and career paths for more residents living in areas of multiple deprivation, including by:</p> <p>a) Seeking to influence and improve the provision of targeted careers advice in schools, extending this to younger pupils (years 7-8), as well as offering mentoring into adulthood</p>	Agreed	<p>Skills, employment and career paths are not the statutory responsibility of the City Council. However, through the Leader, officers are working with the Oxfordshire Local Enterprise Partnership and the Oxfordshire Skills Board to improve services within the city. Oxfordshire County Council has established a service bringing together schools and businesses called O2i. This includes career advice, work placements and promoting apprenticeships. This work is overseen and monitored by the Oxfordshire Skills Board and information is circulated by the Policy and Partnerships Team Leader to the City Council Employment and Skills Group. There is a cross City Council Employment and Skills Group, which meets to share information and to ensure services are coordinated. This group includes officers from the Economic Development, Communities and Neighbourhoods, Policy and Partnership, Welfare Reform Team and Human Resources. The City Council has undertaken a robust needs analysis of skills and employment issues. This is available in the link below.</p> <p>http://www.oxford.gov.uk/Library/Documents/Statistics/EmploymentAndSkillsSupplementaryPaperAug2014.pdf</p> <p>A review of services was undertaken and an action plan was developed to fill the gaps. This is set out in the Employment and Skills report August 2014. City Council activities include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Working with Business in Community to provide business links with secondary schools, mentoring and work placement opportunities. Currently the Council is linked with Cherwell School. • The Youth Ambition Programme which aims to build the

		<p>confidence and skills of young people and ease the transition between school and work.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The development of Employment and Skills Plans for key physical regeneration schemes, • Apprenticeships within city council services • Support to Job Clubs on estates • Influencing and supporting the delivery of European Structural Funding Programmes.
<p>18b. That the City Council utilises skills within communities and works with partners to maximise every opportunity to provide employment and career paths for more residents living in areas of multiple deprivation, including by:</p> <p>b) Extending the use of social clauses to create more and better opportunities for young people. Clarity is required as to how the City Council will ensure that developers deliver social clauses.</p>	Agreed	<p>The City Council Skills and Employment Group ensure that the Employment and Skills Plans are linked into the Job Clubs that are based on estates. A recent Job Fair, arranged with Job Centre Plus, in Barton attracted over 400 potential job applicants and 20 businesses (mainly in the retail and construction sectors). Similar events will be rolled out to Rose Hill and Blackbird Leys. The Council's procurement policies are geared specifically to encouraging suppliers to offer training, apprenticeships and guidance to young people.</p>
<p>18c. That the City Council utilises skills within communities and works with partners to maximise every opportunity to provide employment and career paths for more residents living in areas of multiple deprivation, including by:</p> <p>c) Extending the offer of reduced fees for tutors to all Community Centres situated in areas of multiple deprivations. The City Council should also continue to make better use of Community Centres and promote them as vibrant local hubs..</p>	Agreed	<p>Agreed for consideration as a part of the development of the Community Centre Strategy.</p>
<p>18d. That the City Council utilises skills within communities and works with partners to maximise every opportunity to provide employment and</p>	Agreed	<p>Agreed. City Council Officers have been represented on the European Structural Investment Steering group and helped shape the European Social Fund Strategy and proposals. This included funding for two</p>

<p>career paths for more residents living in areas of multiple deprivation, including by:</p> <p>d) Maximising links with universities, private schools, the student hub and businesses to get more volunteer help for appropriate programmes. These opportunities could include coaching and mentoring to help vulnerable people into work, assisting young people to whom English is not a first language, and broadening access to resources such as arts provision.</p>		<p>NEET programmes (to support those who are NEET and those at risk of becoming NEET) and Building Better Futures Funding aimed at long term unemployed. The City Council has submitted an application to deliver the Building better Futures Programme. Council Officers have been working with the County Council, Employment and Economy Team and Job Centre Plus to look at how teaching language services can be improved. The Oxford Community and Voluntary Alliance was commissioned to undertake a review, which identified that there is a range of good work being undertaken but that the sector needs improved coordination. Officers are in discussion with one of the colleges to see if they can take on this role, which has become even more important given the recently announced cuts in in this service.</p>
<p>19. That the City Council calls on local employers to put an end to exploitative employment practices in the city. These practices include employers charging restaurant staff to wait tables, paying less than the minimum wage, and employing workers on zero hours contracts against their will.</p>	Agreed	<p>The Council will continue to lead by example by offering good terms and conditions of employment to all staff including agency workers. Our contractors are required to commit to paying the Oxford Living Wage (OLW) and we have encouraged employers across the city to adopt the OLW with some success. We will continue to lead by example and try and influence other employers in good employment practice through normal channels. The Council will continue to promote best practice and support national initiatives such as Living Wage Week.</p>
<p>20. That the City Council continues to look to raise wages by:</p> <p>a) Creating a Living Wage Hub in Oxford based around the Oxford Living Wage. This should involve a programme of activities to promote the Oxford Living Wage, and a distinct logo that Oxford Living Wage employers are encouraged to display. Ideally these activities should be led by engaged citizens but they may initially require some officer resource. The Hub could also look at other related employment issues such as pay ratios.</p>	In part	<p>Partially agreed. The Council has already undertaken a number of initiatives including achieving Living Wage accreditation, campaigning in the city for other employers to adopt the Living Wage and speaking in support of the benefits of the OLW in various forums. We will continue to make use of the benefits of being a nationally accredited Living Wage Employer through Living Wage research, campaigns (such as Living Wage Week), etc. We will review the resource implications of the more extensive approach recommended in 20 a) and b). In addition to the above the Council will continue to pay its staff the Oxford Living Wage and require its contractors operating locally to do the same.</p>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> b) Identifying a public face of the Oxford Living Wage. This could be a member champion. c) Working constructively with the Living Wage Foundation in promoting Living Wage Week and seeking to raise wages and improve working conditions in Oxford, particularly in low paid sectors such as hospitality, health and social care. 		
<p>21. That Oxford City Council is a major employer in the city, and recommend that the City Council continues to develop its own employment practices through:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) More flexible recruitment practices such as accepting CVs and more widespread use of assessment centres, b) An annual managed calendar of interventions targeting black and minority ethnic communities and other underrepresented groups, c) Better targeting of constructive feedback to unsuccessful applicants, d) Interactive and accessible recruitment webpages with guidance for applicants, e) Uplifting the salaries of lower paid staff at a higher rate than those of higher paid staff to ensure that the pay gap between them doesn't increase over time. 	Agreed	<p>The Council is already progressing an action plan to improve its recruitment practices. This includes giving more attention to job descriptions, person specifications, selection testing which tests criteria more effectively than interviews alone, inviting CVs as part of the application process, etc. It is increasingly rare for a selection process to comprise only of an interview. We have also run initiatives such as targeting unsuccessful BME candidates to review their experience of the recruitment process, consider the shortlisting decisions, ensure they receive feedback, etc. We have an electronic recruitment system and a series of pages which include assistance for candidates in the application process and presenting the benefits of working for the Council. We have previously addressed the issue of low pay by introducing the Oxford Living Wage and deleting the lowest pay grades. Further consideration of low pay will feature in consultation and negotiation for a new pay deal to run after the current one expires (March 2018). Although recommendation 21 e) has generally been the case in recent years, no long term commitment can be made to it as our wage bargaining structures are not necessarily always going to be under our direct control.</p>
Leisure and Wellbeing Strategy – Scrutiny Committee 7 September		
Recommendation	Agreed Y/N	Executive response
That the City Council looks into extending the functionality of its mobile apps to enable leisure	Agreed	We will look into this in conjunction with Fusion.

bookings.		
That the City Council's Leisure and Wellbeing Strategy includes a greater emphasis on strengthening integration between leisure centres and the broader leisure offer, including community centres.	Agreed	This is already one of the main thrusts of the Leisure and Wellbeing Strategy, but we will look into strengthening the language.
That the City Council continues to monitor the accessibility of leisure provision across Oxford, including in those parts of the city that have no swimming pools within a 20 walk, such as Littlemore and Cowley, and how this relates to leisure target groups (the Committee noted that corporate performance measure LP106: To increase participation at our leisure centres by target groups was below target for 2015/16 quarter 1).	In Part	We will of course continue to monitor leisure participation across the City. Transfer of membership from Temple Cowley to the Leys Pools and Leisure Centre has been a great success, and Oxford is over-provided with swimming pools by national standards. The new Spires Temple Cowley gym with associated public-access facilities is due to open in December. We are working with Fusion to ensure that the missed target is not repeated. It is very important that we continue to increase participation in physical exercise from areas of deprivation in particular, given the significantly above average levels of obesity in the Leys especially and also in Barton, Littlemore and Rose Hill. The Leys Pools and Leisure Centre is at the centre of our strategy for tackling this. We are also continuing to press the bus companies to improve connections between the Rose Hill/Littlemore and Leys/Cowley areas to help make our leisure facilities easier to get to.
Oxford Growth Strategy – Scrutiny Committee 7 September		
Recommendation	Agreed Y/N	Executive response
That the Council's strategic approach to providing new affordable housing should be aligned with, and referenced in, the Oxford Growth Strategy.	Agreed	It is important to note that the Oxford Growth Strategy is one of a range of documents which taken together outline Oxford City Council's approach to meeting both overall housing need and affordable housing need, and that therefore the Oxford Growth Strategy implicitly includes affordable housing in its coverage. For example, the documents that make up the Local Plan specify how the City Council's policies for affordable housing should be applied to development sites within Oxford's boundaries, the overall number of which are part of the Growth Strategy. However, as the Scrutiny Committee heard, the

		<p>difference between the objectively assessed need for housing (SHMA¹) for Oxford and the number of homes that can be accommodated within the City's administrative area (SHLAA²) is substantial, and the majority of unmet need will have to be met on sites outside Oxford's boundaries. This means that different affordable housing policies of other Local Planning Authorities will apply to those sites. Where the City Council is a landowner it may be possible to take a different approach above and beyond that laid down in the relevant LPA's planning policies, but in most instances the sites are owned by others. In the SHMA numbers the need for affordable housing was a major factor, alongside supporting expected economic growth. Even so, it is important to note that it has been estimated that to meet all of Oxford's unmet need for just affordable housing, using current planning policies, requires a number that is HIGHER than the highest figure in the SHMA range (24-32k). That is why the City Council will continue to argue strongly for housing allocations to meet unmet need in Oxford to be at the higher end of the range in the SHMA. In conclusion, it will be helpful for future iterations of the Oxford Growth Strategy to make clear both the origin of the SHMA range as being in part influenced by the assessed need for affordable housing, and the likely impacts for affordable housing of different policy options being pursued by the City Council and by others in the current discussions over housing allocations in Oxfordshire.</p>
That the Oxford Growth Strategy includes a greater emphasis on mobile working and the opportunities presented by Better Broadband for Oxfordshire.	Not agreed	<p>Not Agreed. For many years now the growth in technology-driven networked working, in particular fast broadband, has been used as an argument for reducing the absolute numbers of new homes that would be required, and for their dispersal over a wider geographic area, which appears to be the suggestion here. However the evidence that such dispersal is actually workable is no more compelling now than when the</p>

¹ Oxfordshire Strategic Housing Market Assessment, 2014

² Oxford City Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment, 2014

		same arguments were produced to argue for reductions in housing numbers during debates over the emerging South East Plan in the early 2000s.
Waste Water Flooding Panel – Scrutiny Committee 7 September		
Recommendation	Agreed Y/N	Executive response
That the City Council continues to engage with Thames Water Utilities (TWU) at a senior level through the Oxford Area Flood Partnership and other appropriate channels. This should include early engagement in relation to future development proposals that affect TWU.	Agreed	Happy to agree and endorse the work of the Waste Water Flooding Panel
Report of the Cycling Review Group – Scrutiny Committee 7 September		
Recommendation	Agreed Y/N	Executive response
1. That the City Council's unallocated cycling capital budget (approx. £110k over two years) should be used to fund the lower cost Cycling Review Group wish-list items in order of priority. The highest priority is signing City Council route 5, extending to Littlemore and the Leys Pool. This should include signing cyclists onto this route from key destinations such as Oxford Business Park, Vue Cinema and Oxford Academy.	In Part	This recommendation isn't wholly clear, as the definition of 'lower cost' isn't precise in reference to the list of items in Appendix 2, which includes both precise sums of money – albeit without confirmation that these figures are accurate – and very approximate bandings of potential expense. However the general direction of the policy, that lower cost and achievable items with significant positive impacts, should be the priority, is accepted. It is important to note that as the County Council is the Highways Authority there are considerable constraints on what the City Council is able to do on its own. The County Council has been clear that it is unwilling to progress schemes in areas where it is planning or already carrying out consultation on larger projects – for example in the Headington area. The sums of money set aside by the City Council for capital schemes can and should be progressed as soon as possible, and that means selecting schemes that do not require any input or permission from the County Council.

<p>2. That the wish-list of cycling improvement projects drawn up by the Cycling Review Group, with advice from Cyclox and Sustrans, should be used to decide how future City and County Council funding for cycling improvements is spent. Flexibility should be applied so that new opportunities can also be funded where this is appropriate.</p>	<p>In Part</p>	<p>While the wish-list is a useful starting point, there needs to be greater assessment of the actual costs, benefits and feasibilities for each scheme or block of schemes before it can be used as the basis for spending prioritisation. A prioritisation scheme that referenced cost, impact, feasibility/deliverability against objective criteria would seem to be a more appropriate mechanism. This is particularly important for the County Council as the Highways Authority, who will be responsible for the vast majority of spending decisions about on-street schemes, and it is reasonable to expect them to carry out such as an assessment. Furthermore, almost all the schemes identified are on-street schemes, and don't include for example the funding of cycle parking and storage facilities off-street, whether on public (Council-owned) land or otherwise. For example there may be substantial benefits to a partnership approach with major employers, educational establishments (schools, colleges and universities) and other organisations to provide better cycle parking and storage; for the City Council, which is constrained in what it can carry out without County Council permission, these sorts of schemes may perform well in terms of benefits and deliverability.</p>
<p>3. That the City Council encourages the police and Direct Services to proactively send reusable abandoned bikes to Broken Spoke and other bike shops that are happy to take part, so that as many of these bikes as possible can be refurbished and reused locally.</p>	<p>Yes</p>	<p>Direct Services already makes repairable bikes available to shops and other schemes in this way; the remainder are recycled and are counted as part of the City's recycling figures. Direct Services will liaise with the police and any other institutions who collect abandoned bicycles to see if there is scope for greater co-ordination and efficiencies.</p>
<p>4. That the City Council ensures that developer funding can be used to contribute to cycling improvements where appropriate, including by: a) Ensuring that the City Council's Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) list is consistent with funding the higher cost cycling improvement projects set out in our wish-list, next time the CIL</p>	<p>Agreed</p>	<p>a) The Regulation 123 list which sets out what CIL can be spent on already is consistent with the recommendations. See list here: http://www.oxford.gov.uk/Library/Documents/Planning/CIL%20Regulation%20123%20List.pdf It includes: 'Improved environment for pedestrians and cyclists in City centre, including Queen Street, St Giles, Magdalen Street, George Street and</p>

<p>list is reviewed;</p> <p>b) Using CIL funding as a local contribution to attract match funding, for example from the Local Sustainable Transport Fund, for cycling improvement schemes in accordance with the Council's CIL list (often these will be part of wider transport improvement schemes);</p> <p>c) Alerting Ward Members when significant sums (>£5k) of the 'neighbourhood portion' of CIL have been allocated to their local area. We would encourage members to consider spending this funding on lower cost cycling improvement schemes from our wish-list where possible.</p>		<p>Broad Street' , 'Improved City centre cycling environment' & 'Orbital and radial cycle routes'. The Regulation 123 list is reviewed regularly, and is approved annually as part of the Budget process, and will be reviewed in the light of the wish-list and the responses above at that time.</p> <p>b) Agreed; this is largely how CIL is utilised already.</p> <p>c) Subject to the proviso that the 'neighbourhood portion' of CIL is only available in the non-parished areas of the city (in the parished areas it is transferred to the relevant parish council), and subject to final decisions on the process for allocating these funds to projects supported by the local community, agreed.</p>
<p>5. That the City Council ensures that its planning policies are consistent with its vision for Oxford to become one of the great cycling cities of Europe, including by:</p> <p>a) Ensuring that cycling routes and provision are considered and included in all major new developments, prioritising cycling and pedestrian access;</p> <p>b) Reviewing and updating planning policies relating to cycle parking standards for non-residential cycle parking, as part of the next full or partial review of the Local Plan.</p>	Agreed	<p>a) These issues are already covered in a range of policies in the Local Plan, including Core Strategy Policy CS14, Saved Local Plan Policy TR.4 and associated car parking standards, Saved Local Plan Policy TR.5 and the Parking Standards, Transport Assessment and Travel Plans Supplementary Planning Document SPD approved in 2007. (See http://www.oxford.gov.uk/Direct/61407AdoptedParkingStandardsSPD.pdf)</p> <p>b) Agreed</p>
<p>6. That the Council Leader or Board Member for Planning and Transport writes to the County Council and requests that they do the following in consultation with the City Council:</p> <p>a) Implement the Cycle Super Routes and Cycle Premium Routes as soon as possible;</p> <p>b) Bring together cycling organisations, county</p>	Agreed	

<p>highways planners and highway engineers to agree a set of specifications for cycle infrastructure design in Oxford, drawing on findings from the London Cycling Campaign. This should include priority phasing of traffic lights for cyclists;</p> <p>c) Consider how cycle routes can be signed more consistently and what the standard should be. We suggest that destinations and distances, rather than route numbers, should be shown on cycle signage;</p> <p>d) Agree that highway maintenance works should not be signed off until they are safe and suitable for cycling;</p> <p>e) Work with Government and other local authorities to implement the All Party Parliamentary Group recommendation to achieve a £10 per head of population investment in cycling.</p>		
<p>7. That the City Council nominates a Member Cycling Champion (a Councillor) to lead on work to improve cycling in Oxford at a political level and maximise the City Council's influence.</p>	Agreed	
<p>8. That the City Council brings forward proposals for additional staffing resources to enable the City Council to engage proactively with cycling groups, work smarter with the County Council, and support the member champion (see recommendation 7). We would suggest 1 FTE dedicated to cycling, with a creative solution to funding this post which may involve other organisations. This role should include:</p>	In part	<p>While on paper there is much to commend the idea of a City Council employed cycling officer, there are considerable practical concerns about proposed scope of the role, and the impact that it would have. The proposed responsibilities range from the organising of meetings to the identifying of ways in which to change motorists' behaviour, with many of the suggested responsibilities essentially overlapping with those already sitting with the County Council's Highways teams – this seems problematic in a single post.</p> <p>The proposal as it stands can of course form part of the annual</p>

<p>a) Supporting the Member Cycling Champion (see recommendation 6) in convening a forum of the different cycling groups and representatives of other stakeholders such as schools to co-ordinate efforts and agree a common position when lobbying for cycling improvement schemes;</p> <p>b) Engaging with the County Council to maximise the City Council's influence as LTP4 is put into practice;</p> <p>c) Influencing the development of a set of specifications for cycle infrastructure design in Oxford (see recommendation 5e);</p> <p>d) Monitoring the County Council's Highway Asset Management Strategy (road repairs) to identify opportunities for cycling provision to be improved during planned maintenance works (we have identified 4 such projects);</p> <p>e) Examining existing evidence on what works for improving cycling take up;</p> <p>f) Promoting active travel to school through Bikeability training and advocacy, particularly at the beginning of every academic year. Excellence in this area should be recognised perhaps through the Lord Mayor/Member Champion going in to schools to give prizes, or inviting winners to attend civic events.</p> <p>g) Identifying ways to change motorists' behaviour.</p>		<p>budgetary discussions, but at a time of extremely constrained budgets and with many critical services facing cuts to their budgets, the Council may find it difficult to justify substantial expenditure on a new post in an area primarily covered by another local authority's statutory responsibilities. However, there may be scope to develop an innovative partnership approach with major employers/organisations that would share costs and responsibilities. For example a collaboration with the Universities and the local NHS Trusts could provide expertise for their internal travel planning, and at the same time input into the planning of the city-wide cycle network that would join-up their sites. I would suggest that this option is explored as one more likely to deliver the objectives of the review panel. It is important to note that staff resource will be required to develop this sort of 'sustainable transport partnership', but once established and supported by other organisations the need for time and financial resource would be less than for a stand-alone officer employed solely by the City Council.</p>
<p>9. That the City Council promotes positive images of cycling in Council literature, particularly the soon to be signed route to Blackbird Leys pool.</p>	<p>Agreed</p>	<p>The Council already promotes cycling through maps, leaflets and other publications which highlight cycling's benefits for both individual health and the collective well-being of the city, and will continue to do so.</p>