

**To: Council**  
**Date: 8 February 2016**  
**Title of Report: Public addresses and questions that do not relate to matters for decision – as delivered at the meeting**

### **Response to 1 - Alasdair de Voil, ILOveOxford Tours Director**

Mr de Voile has addressed the Council on the issue previously and all his points have been answered. He also tried unsuccessfully to commence a legal action on this, which was dismissed by the courts.

#### Service

The Council is not obliged to provide funding or support for tourism, but recognises tourism's contribution to the city's economy in supporting Experience Oxfordshire. The Experience Oxfordshire contract's primary aim is to seek to ensure that the combined service is delivered in an efficient and effective way, which best meets the requirements of visitors to Oxford and Oxfordshire and other customers. A number of key performance indicators were specified. Governance and arrangements created by the contract ensure that the City Council is able to monitor the performance of Experience Oxfordshire Ltd. In the event of a breach of contract, the City Council would have the right to seek redress.

#### Company Structure

Experience Oxfordshire is the main trading company, and its subsidiary Experience Oxfordshire Charitable Trust is the registered charity for charitable activity undertaken by the organisation.

#### Board Membership

None of the Board are existing or former City Councillors. The City Council nominates one Board Member, which is the Executive Director of Housing and Regeneration. There is no conflict of interest.

#### Walking Tours Income

Experience Oxfordshire is an independent company and is under no obligation to provide Mr de Voile or any other private individual with information. The company submits its annual accounts to Companies House and these are available for inspection.

#### Legal Liability

Mr de Voil asserts that the Council is legally liable. He is incorrect and further there is no evidence of misconduct. The courts have already rejected Mr de Voile's case and made clear that he will not be welcome if he pursues this.

Finally, there is no legal obligation on Experience Oxfordshire to advertise the services of competing tours in the same way as there is no legal requirement on the City Council to advertise the services of other local suppliers of the discretionary services we provide, e.g. pest control and commercial waste collection etc.

Experience Oxfordshire is a successful membership organisation with membership drawn from across the tourism economy in the city and county

If Mr de Voil thinks that he is not getting a good deal from his membership of Visit Oxfordshire, then the remedy is entirely in his own hands.

For information: Experience Oxfordshire Key Performance Indicators

- To open and operate the Tourist Information Centre on the Premises throughout the year other than on Christmas Day and on any other public holiday in keeping with past practice.
- To continue to run and operate City Centre walking tours
- To produce annual guides and publications to promote Oxford and Oxfordshire to key markets at home and overseas
- To attend key shows to promote Oxford and Oxfordshire – to involve attendance at Excursions and at one Group Travel Fair as a minimum
- To actively engage with Visit Britain and with Visit England to promote Oxford and Oxfordshire
- To produce an annual marketing plan for the Combined Service and to use reasonable endeavours to implement it