

Oxford City Council Social Inclusion Audit

FINAL REPORT

**Draft v4
28/11/06**

Summary

Clearly many different organisations, public, private and voluntary, contribute to promoting social inclusion in Oxford. Whilst the Council recognises this, this report looks at Oxford City Council's contribution only. As is clear, much work that the Council does in this area is in partnership with various agencies, but there is no single overarching partnership under which social inclusion fits. Though desirable, the infrastructure does not currently exist to create a single social inclusion approach for the city to which all agencies can contribute.

The purpose of this social inclusion audit therefore is to link the high-level priorities identified in the Social Inclusion Strategy to the Council's existing service delivery. The result is an overview of our current activity to address these issues alongside some recommendations for further developments. It is hoped that this report will be a useful resource for both Members and Officers in service planning and budget setting to achieve our corporate priority to 'reduce inequalities through social inclusion'.

The audit has been the subject of wide involvement and consultation. It has been overseen by a cross-Unit steering group and presented at each of the six Area Committees. There have been discussions with Officers whose services are affected by these proposals. Consultation with the public has been achieved through analysis of recent consultation exercises and questions included in the Talkback questionnaire distributed during July and August 2006. In addition to this, a brief review of research and good practice guidance has been undertaken.

The audit has had a tight scope – necessarily, given the broad range of issues and services that 'social inclusion' encompasses. It has focussed on services and initiatives that are targeted on particular groups of people, rather than the core, mainstream Council services. Given that strategies are already agreed and being implemented in the fields of homelessness and community safety, these areas have largely been excluded – though some community safety services have been included where they cross over with other issues. It also excludes community and voluntary organisations with grant funding, as these are being covered by the ongoing review of support to community and voluntary organisations.

The recommendations are structured around four key target groups: people on low incomes, children and young people, deprivation in geographic areas and excluded black and minority ethnic people. Each section contains a policy statement on what the Council will do to contribute to better outcomes for that group, along with recommendations about how this work can be developed further.

There are four key priorities for further action identified in this report:

- Promotion of work to target people on low incomes, including families, older people and people from black and minority ethnic groups. This includes developing a scheme to proactively promote all existing schemes, increasing the resource available to benefits take-up campaigns and developing an Affordable Warmth Strategy
- To continue to support affordable play activities, sports, leisure and cultural activities for all, and through these address other issues including health and community safety
- Continue to provide support to vulnerable families where it links to the Council's core responsibilities – this includes family support and domestic violence work
- Develop an improved understanding of how the Council can promote community cohesion across all its services

Resource implications

Some of the recommendations in this report have resource implications for the Council. The policy statements and recommendations have been made in order to advise upon future prioritisation, but no direct recommendations have been made about how these should be resourced.

There are a number of routes available for addressing resource implications identified in this report:

- Using the findings to direct service priorities within existing budgets
- Using the recommendations to inform the prospectus for grants to community and voluntary organisations
- Exploring joint funding of services with partner agencies where responsibilities are shared
- Using the recommendations to inform budget decisions in the Council's annual budget-setting process
- Area Committees may wish to consider these recommendations in addressing local issues through their revenue budgets

Structure of this report

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1. Social Inclusion Strategy

The Social Inclusion Strategy states that the City Council must seek to promote social inclusion by inclusive provision of its statutory and/or mainstream services *and* by delivering targeted initiatives to address local priorities. This audit addresses the second of these imperatives and for the most part does not address mainstream services.

The priorities identified by the Strategy are (see Appendix A for more detail):

- 17 Super Output Areas which are in the 30% most deprived areas nationally, where the main priorities are education and skills, low income and child poverty
- Children and young people's educational attainment
- Child poverty
- Exclusion amongst black and minority ethnic groups
- Homelessness
- Crime

It also outlines a number of principles by which the Council will seek to work – namely that social inclusion work must be evidence-based, value for money, corporately supported, coordinated with partner agencies and involve local people.

In regard to deprived areas, it is also recognised that there are smaller pockets of deprivation which do not show up in the Indices of Deprivation 2004. However, need clearly exists in these areas and services need to be targeted accordingly. Thus it is recommended that the Strategy is amended to recognise the existence of these areas, and work is done to produce evidence to support this.

During the course of the audit work it has also been highlighted that the 2004 Private Sector Stock Condition Survey identified a large number of vulnerable older people on low incomes. With this in mind it is recommended that the Council also targets vulnerable older people as a key target group for social inclusion work. An additional report focussing on older people and social inclusion will therefore follow.

Recommendation:

- The Council should recognise the existence of smaller pockets of deprivation (in addition to the Super Output Areas highlighted), and do work on producing an evidence base to identify these pockets
- Oxford City Council should adopt vulnerable older people as a priority group for social inclusion work

2. Purpose and scope of the audit

The purpose of this social inclusion audit is to link the high-level priorities identified in the Council's Social Inclusion Strategy to existing service delivery. In essence its aim is to evaluate how we are delivering on the priorities and principles outlined in the Strategy and make recommendations based upon this analysis.

The result is a broad overview of our current activity to address these issues alongside some recommendations for further developments. It is hoped that this report will be a useful resource for both Members and Officers in service planning and budget setting to achieve our corporate priority to 'reduce inequalities through social inclusion'.

Scope:

- Targeted, not mainstream or statutory services
- Services which are resourced by the Council (or are delivered by the Council on behalf of an external funder), but excluding grant-funded organisations
- Focussing on implications for work on children & young people (particularly child poverty and educational attainment), deprivation in geographic areas and excluded black and minority ethnic groups
- Homelessness and community safety have been largely excluded as they already have strategies in place which are being implemented. However some community safety services have been included where they cross over with other issues (e.g. youth diversion schemes)
- Community and voluntary organisations (CVOs) funded by the Council through the grants budget have been excluded from the scope due to the ongoing review of support to CVOs. However the findings of this audit will feed into that review process

The key elements of the service audit were:

- Collection of information about existing social inclusion-related services delivered by the Council. This information includes the costs, outputs and outcomes of each service. A summary of these services is included as a grid, attached at Appendix C
- A review of recent consultation exercises to identify what stakeholders have told us about how to tackle these priorities (e.g. Area Plan workshops, Child and Family Poverty Forum) – a summary of this review is attached at Appendix D. Related questions have been included in the Talkback recruitment survey conducted this summer, attached at Appendix E
- A brief review of research and good practice guidance was produced to identify what literature suggests should be done to tackle social inclusion priorities – a summary is attached at Appendix F

A cross-Unit steering group has overseen the audit, with representatives from Strategy & Review, Neighbourhood Renewal, Customer Services, Area Coordinators, Community Housing, Environmental Health, Leisure & Cultural Services and Revenues & Benefits (the terms of reference of this group is attached at Appendix B). The steering group met four times and was chaired by the Strategic Director for Housing, Health and Community. The findings have also been reported to the Social Inclusion Steering Group (a cross-Unit forum for Officers) and the six Area Committees.

3. Current social inclusion work – an overview

In order to identify the relevant services provided by the Council, a grid was produced (attached at Appendix C) showing these services characterised by the type of groups they are targeted on and the type of service they offer (e.g. community safety, healthy living etc.). This exercise identified 36 services covered by the scope of this audit.

Estimated costs

Based upon information provided by Officers, the audit work attempted to estimate the net cost of social inclusion services provided by the Council. These figures should however be treated with caution as, for example, they include both direct budgeted cost and estimates of income which the Council forgoes by reducing charges. Thus these figures are meant to be illustrative only – more detail is available in the grid attached at Appendix C.

Notwithstanding these caveats, the estimated net cost of these 35 services in 2006/07 (excluding the statutory concessionary bus pass scheme) is £1.3 million. This includes:

- £500,000 (estimated) cost of Street Wardens
- £100,000 cost of other community safety measures
- £299,000 cost of services characterised as 'access to services and support' (including family support, reduced environmental health fees)
- £79,000 cost of Disability Unit work
- £160,000 cost of healthy living work
- £137,000 cost of skills and economic development work
- £75,000 cost of the Community Energy Programme

This cost is spread over nine Business Units.

Coordination of provision across Units and with other agencies

A key aim of the audit was to examine whether there was overlapping provision by different Business Units or with other agencies working in the City. Although isolated examples are highlighted in this report, there was little evidence of such overlapping provision. Indeed there are many examples of good coordination with other partner agencies. This includes the Holiday Play Schemes, where existing provision of numerous organisations was mapped to identify the service gaps before any additional provision was funded. The benefits take-up campaign has been planned in liaison with various community and voluntary agencies, and links with Jobcentre Plus have been established to jointly work on increasing the take up of benefits.

Evidence base and monitoring arrangements

Most services were able to provide a robust evidence base demonstrating need for the service. Additionally, most were able to provide a monitoring indicator to show what outputs the service is delivering.

It is recommended that, building upon this audit work, a monitoring framework for the Council's social inclusion work is developed to review progress on an ongoing basis. It is suggested that such a monitoring framework should focus less on process and outputs, but more on the outcomes for people living in the city.

4. Services for people on low incomes

The Council provides a number of services targeted upon people living on low incomes. As income deprivation is a key factor in social exclusion, presenting a barrier to accessing goods and services, these types of services should be the cornerstone of social inclusion policy. There are four services in this category:

- Benefits take-up campaign
- Community Energy Programme (for people experiencing fuel poverty)
- BONUS Slice card (reduced charges for leisure facilities for people receiving defined benefits)
- Reduced fees for Environmental Health services (for people receiving defined benefits)

Clearly a particularly key service is the benefits take-up campaign, which seeks to raise awareness of Council benefits (housing benefit & council tax benefit) to people who may be eligible but not claiming. This initiative is able to directly increase the incomes of people living in poverty. However, of the existing Council spend on social inclusion work, this initiative currently has no ring fenced budget and relies upon the core operational budget of the benefits service. Given the key part which maximising people's incomes ought to play in tackling social exclusion, it is a recommendation of this audit that more resources should be provided to implement effective, ongoing benefits take-up campaigns.

Policy statement on services for people on low incomes

- The Council should seek to maximise people's incomes through proactive promotion of Council benefits
- The Council should seek wherever possible to reduce charges to people on low incomes, thereby ensuring that its services are accessible
- Such schemes should target low income families and older people (as particularly vulnerable groups) and people from BME groups (amongst whom take-up is frequently lower)
- People accessing one available scheme ought to be proactively made aware of other schemes which are available to them

Policy commitment	Current activity
Proactive promotion of Council benefits	Benefits take-up campaign being undertaken for 2006-07
Reduced charges to people on low incomes	Environmental health services and use of leisure facilities are charged at a reduced rate to people in receipt of means-tested benefits
Schemes should target low income families, older people and people from BME groups	Benefits take-up campaign is working with voluntary sector to target these groups
Proactive promotion of all schemes	Some integration takes place e.g. combined fuel poverty and benefits take-up awareness

Recommendations for implementing this statement

- A ring fenced budget for ongoing benefits take-up campaigns should be provided on an ongoing basis
- A plan for integrating the promotion of all schemes available to people on low incomes on a routine basis ought to be devised between the relevant Business Units. This might include investigating how data held by the benefits service can be used to target people on low incomes (subject to data protection requirements)
- An Affordable Warmth Strategy should be developed to support the work being undertaken to tackle fuel poverty

5. Children and young people

The Social Inclusion Strategy highlights both child poverty and educational attainment as issues of concern in Oxford. There is a higher rate of child poverty in Oxford than the national average. Educational attainment amongst children in Oxford is poor compared with Oxfordshire and England at all ages, and of particular concern is that GCSE attainment has been on a downward trend over the period 2000-2005. These issues, and the problem of poor adult skills (see following section) are linked in key respects – children in low income families are at greater risk of poor educational attainment, and in turn are at greater risk of poverty and poor skills in adulthood. This can set up an intergenerational cycle of poverty.

Services for children and young people are being coordinated across the county as part of the Oxfordshire Children and Young People's Plan, which includes work to address the issues outlined above. The Council is identifying how it can contribute to better outcomes by producing its own Children and Young People's Plan, which will include the services identified below.

There are a number of services which the City Council provides to support children and families. These include the Youth Council, Holiday Play Schemes, Asian Families Officers, Football Foundation projects, Positive Futures, Family Support Initiative, domestic violence work, Active England project, Peers School Partnership support and free swimming. Of these, the Asian Families Officers and domestic violence work are vulnerable to time-limited funding.

Research suggests a number of key approaches to tackling the issues of child poverty. Firstly, the Council has a role in promoting take-up of existing low income benefits, and in contributing towards lowering essential expenditure for low income families through (for example) reducing the cost of services and tackling fuel poverty. Both these approaches are addressed in the previous section. It also suggests improving the skill levels of parents to get access to better employment opportunities, and improving access to childcare to improve access to employment. Neither of these are core Council responsibilities, but our approach is addressed in the following section on multiple deprivation in geographic areas.

Research suggests that poor educational attainment is most strongly influenced by social factors, including family background, with the school environment being important but less so. As such, both family support services and school initiatives can promote better educational outcomes for children and young people. The Council has a limited role in providing family support, as the majority of central government funding for such services is directed towards the County Council. However small family support initiatives are and should be provided in instances where it overlaps with some of the Council's core responsibilities – for example community safety and leisure. The Council can also play a role in supporting school initiatives by aligning its existing staff resources, which is currently being explored with the Peers School Partnership. This role will develop along with the evolving Every Child Matters reforms and the Extended Schools agenda.

Consultation evidence gives strong support for working to maximise incomes and providing support to children and families. It also suggests that leisure opportunities in deprived areas need to be improved and improving access to key services such as travel and food outlets. The Talkback panel results gave most weight to access to free leisure opportunities and support for young people.

Policy statement on children and young people

- The Council will seek to alleviate the impact of child poverty by targeting low income families in benefit take-up campaigns, and where possible charging reduced fees to access its services
- The Council will continue to support affordable sports, leisure, cultural and play opportunities accessible to children and young people regardless of income, and through these initiatives also address other issues including health and community safety
- It will seek to provide family support initiatives where their focus overlaps with the core responsibilities of the Council e.g. community safety and play. Such initiatives must be carefully coordinated with the larger-scale provision provided by the County Council
- In partnership with other key agencies, it will support initiatives to raise the skill levels of adults with no or low qualifications
- It will contribute to raising educational attainment by working in partnership with schools

Policy commitment

Current activity

Targeting low income families in benefit take-up campaigns and charging reduced fees for services	See previous section (services for people on low incomes)
Leisure, cultural and play opportunities to be accessible to all; address health and community safety issues through these schemes	Free swimming scheme and Holiday Play Schemes are promoting access to leisure and play for children affected by poverty These and the youth diversion schemes aim to reduce crime and anti-social behaviour by young people Active England project in Blackbird Leys is targeting young people to increase physical activity levels
Provide family support initiatives	Family Support Initiative in CANAcT support families where there are concerns over anti-social behaviour Asian Families Officers work from Sure Start in Rose Hill
Support initiatives to raise adult skill levels	Skills for Life programme raising skill levels of Council employees See also following section (deprivation in geographic areas)
Working in partnership with schools	Action Plan agreed for City Council Officers to support the Peers School Partnership

Recommendations for further implementing the policy statement

- Encourage other agencies to jointly fund Holiday Play Schemes in order to be extended to other priority areas (see following section on deprivation in geographic areas)
- A review of the free swimming scheme for under 17 year olds should be undertaken to identify whether it has been successful in widening access to children living in low income families
- Youth diversion schemes, including the Active Communities Manager post, need to be sustained as they are subject to time-limited funding
- Where undertaken, family support work should be closely coordinated with the County Council including exploring joint funding where appropriate. The City Council should ensure that family support can be sustained beyond its time-limited funding
- Domestic violence work, which aims to protect some of the most vulnerable children and families, should be sustained beyond the current one year commitment

6. Deprivation in geographic areas

The Council targets some of its services in areas of the city which are recognised as having multiple problems of social deprivation. It will use varied sources of evidence to identify where need exists.

The Social Inclusion Strategy highlights 17 Super Output Areas (SOAs) which are in the 30% most deprived areas in England, according to the Indices of Deprivation 2004 (see Appendix A). In addition it is recognised that there are a number of smaller pockets of deprivation where numbers are smaller and thus do not show up clearly in these statistics – however need clearly still exists and services will be targeted accordingly.

Some of the key issues in deprived areas are poor education & skills, low income, child poverty and crime. There are also relatively poor health outcomes in these areas compared to the general population.

There are a number of existing initiatives focussed on particular geographic areas, which include the following: Community Touring Programme, Area Committee social inclusion budgets, Holiday Play Schemes, Asian Families Officers, Tower Blocks CCTV, Street Wardens, Local Food Development Officer, Learning Communities and Skills Register. This is in addition to other initiatives which target people wherever they live.

Issues relating to children (child poverty and poor educational attainment) have been addressed in a previous section, so the related issues of low income and poor adult skills are concentrated upon here. In this regard, research suggests that community-based learning programmes, which proactively engage people and provide informal learning as a first step, can improve deprivation due to low skills. This approach is also key in tackling child poverty as it can raise the skills and therefore improve the employment prospects and incomes of parents. Consultation evidence suggests that poor attitudes towards learning and low expectations need to be tackled in deprived areas, and that job creation needs to be supported. The results from the Talkback panel show strong support for locally provided courses and access to childcare.

In broad terms this approach is being provided by the Learning Communities project, funded by SEEDA and delivered by Oxfordshire County Council. Clearly providing adult skills training is not a key role of the City Council, but it can support and promote such initiatives where possible. Currently the Council is doing this by supporting Learning Hubs in its community centres and match funding the Learning Communities project. Although childcare provision is identified in consultation evidence as important, it is not a core role of the Council to provide this.

There is a clear rationale for delivering services to improve health outcomes on a geographical basis, as there is evidence to show that the health of Oxford residents depends markedly upon where they live.

Policy statement on areas of multiple deprivation

- Social inclusion work with a geographical focus should be targeted where need exists. This includes the identified Super Output Areas along with smaller pockets of deprivation which are not highlighted in this data.
- Geographically focussed services should remain only a part of what the Council provides to tackle social exclusion – as not all people experiencing deprivation live in deprived areas
- The Council will seek to alleviate geographically-focussed multiple deprivation through the following measures:
 - In partnership with other key agencies, supporting initiatives to raise the skill levels of adults with no or low qualifications
 - Working through Neighbourhood Action Groups to address community safety concerns
 - Providing funding to Area Committees to address local social inclusion issues
 - Working with the Primary Care Trust to deliver geographically-focussed health initiatives
 - Addressing children & young people's issues (see previous section)

Policy commitment	Current activity
Support initiatives to raise adult skill levels	Match funding provided to Learning Communities project Learning Hubs established
Address community safety concerns	Street Wardens and Police Community Support Officers funded Youth diversion schemes established to reduce youth crime and anti-social behaviour
Provide funding to Area Committees	Social inclusion revenue budgets allocated to Area Committees for 2006-2009
Deliver geographically-focussed health initiatives with the Primary Care Trust	Joint Healthy Living Strategy being drafted for Oxford City Local Food Development Officer working in areas of deprivation Active England project established on Blackbird Leys
Addressing children & young people's issues	See previous section (children & young people)

Recommendations for implementing this statement

- Encourage other agencies to jointly fund Holiday Play Schemes in order to be extended to other areas of deprivation
- Area Committee social inclusion revenue budgets should continue to be allocated with regard to the Indices of Deprivation, alongside the use of other relevant information

7. Excluded black and minority ethnic groups

Oxford City has a larger than average black and minority ethnic (BME) population and data shows that some groups, particularly those of Bangladeshi or Pakistani origin, are at greater risk of social exclusion. This includes an increased likelihood of homelessness, poor health, unemployment, having no formal qualifications or working in low skill occupations.

Clearly the issues affecting black and minority ethnic groups overlap with those already discussed, and therefore it must be ensured that the initiatives previously discussed are made accessible to all. In addition to these there are some services targeted at people from BME groups, including Asian Families Officers, Council interpreting services, Active England project, food hygiene courses in multiple languages and procurement work targeted on BME businesses.

As already noted, research shows that there is a crossover with the issues already discussed. Take-up of low income schemes including benefits tend to be lower amongst BME populations, and thus benefits take-up campaigns need targeting in this way. As with other adults with low skills, basic skills provision is important but English fluency is a particular issue amongst this group. There is a greater rate of business start-up among BME groups, but also a greater rate of business failure – and thus there is a need for effective business advice to BME people to support the role of enterprise as a route out of social exclusion.

Discrimination in employment can be a problem for people from BME groups. Public bodies can have a role in promoting equal opportunities amongst local employers through appropriate use of their procurement practices.

As already noted, there are poorer health outcomes among some minority ethnic groups than the general population; this gives a clear rationale for targeting some health initiatives on at risk minority ethnic groups.

Analysis of consultation evidence revealed a gap in knowledge regarding black and minority ethnic groups and social exclusion issues. It will be possible in due course to analyse the results from the 2006 Talkback survey by ethnicity, which will give some additional evidence. Consideration should be given to whether additional evidence needs to be gathered from these communities.

Policy statement on black and minority ethnic groups

- All social inclusion initiatives need to be made accessible to people from BME groups
- The Council will use its procurement practices to promote equal opportunities among local employers
- Business advice and other economic development services funded by the Council will target BME groups
- The Council will work with partners to target skills development work amongst BME groups
- Working with the Primary Care Trust, it will focus health initiatives on at risk minority ethnic groups

Policy commitment	Current activity
All social inclusion initiatives to be accessible to BME groups	Benefits take-up campaign and Community Energy Programme explicitly targeting BME communities
Use procurement practices to promote equal opportunities	Pre-qualification questionnaire for Council contracts identifies equal opportunities issues
Business advice services to target BME groups	Mainstream business advice funded – but access by BME community unclear
Work with partners to target skills development among BME groups	Work ongoing through Oxford Strategic Partnership looking at skills provision and social inclusion
Focus health initiatives on at risk black and minority ethnic groups with the Primary Care Trust	Joint Healthy Living Strategy being drafted for Oxford City with a focus on BME groups Active England project aims to raise physical activity levels among BME community

Recommendations for implementing this statement

- Establish whether business advice services funded by the Council are adequately accessible to BME communities

8. Cross-cutting services

In addition to those services and initiatives already discussed, the Council delivers a number of other services to other groups. Although they do not fit under any one of the categories previously discussed, they cut across many of them and therefore contribute towards the Council's social inclusion work. These include:

- Community cohesion work plan
- Dance development (promoting access to dance opportunities)
- Disability Unit (including disability awareness training and the Shopmobility scheme)
- Target hardening (improved home security for victims of domestic burglary)
- Skills for Life (providing basic skills training to Council employees)
- Social enterprise support (providing business advice to improve the sustainability of local social enterprises)
- Business Action on Homelessness pilot (linking homeless people to work placements in the private sector)

Community cohesion overlaps significantly with the objective of promoting social inclusion, and cuts across all the issues and priority groups discussed in this audit report. The Community Cohesion Officer has delivered some successful cohesion events and there are more being planned. However it is an area of work in the early stages of development and the Council needs to improve its understanding of how it can promote community cohesion across all its services. This should include the development of a Community Cohesion Strategy.

The Business Action on Homelessness pilot was a short-term project, delivered by Business in the Community, seeking to connect homeless people with employment opportunities via a structured mentoring and work placement scheme. The City Council funded a pilot including a work placement at Unipart, as a result of which four of the five trainees secured employment. This was a highly successful project which, though sustainable through private sector finance in the longer-term, will need initial public sector support to be continued. The Council should work with partners to explore sustaining this model as an innovative way of linking the voluntary and private sectors to the benefit of some of the most socially excluded people in the city.

As well as providing social enterprise support in-house, the Council also funds Oxfordshire Business Enterprises to provide business advice including advice to social enterprises. There are also other agencies in the city providing advice to social enterprises. A review ought to be undertaken to identify existing social enterprises in the city and match this to available social enterprise support services to ensure that the Council is receiving value from each of these services and that there is no overlap or duplication of service.

Recommendations

- Further work to be undertaken to understand the Council's role in promoting community cohesion across all its services
- With partners, the Council should explore whether the Business Action on Homelessness model can be sustained as an ongoing project
- A review of social enterprise support services should be undertaken to ensure that the Council is receiving value for money

APPENDIX A

Oxford City Council Social Inclusion Strategy 2006: One-page summary

Adopted definition of social exclusion:

'A short-hand term for what can happen when people or areas suffer from a combination of linked problems such as unemployment, discrimination, poor skills, low incomes, poor housing, high crime, bad health and family breakdown¹.'

Two ways in which the Council can seek to promote social inclusion:

- (i) through inclusive provision of statutory and/or mainstream services; and
- (ii) working with its partners to deliver non-statutory targeted initiatives which address local priorities.

Identified social inclusion priorities in Oxford City:

- 17 Super Output Areas which are in the 30% most deprived areas nationally (these are in the Barton, Wood Farm, Blackbird & Greater Leys, Littlemore, Rose Hill, Donington Bridge and Carfax areas). The priorities for action in these areas are education and skills, low income and child poverty.
- Crime: over one third of the City population lives in areas which are in the 10% most deprived in the South East on crime.
- Children and young people's education & skills: over one quarter of the City population lives in areas which are in the 10% most deprived in the South East on this measure.
- Child poverty: Oxford City has a higher rate than the national average, and over one quarter of the City population lives in areas which are in the 10% most deprived in the South East on this measure.
- Black and minority ethnic groups: Oxford City has a larger than average BME population, and evidence shows they are at greater risk of social exclusion than other residents.
- Homelessness: Oxford has almost four times the national rate of homeless households in temporary accommodation. There is also a concern that rough sleeping is on the increase.

Five principles which underpin the City Council's approach to social inclusion:

- (i) All social inclusion initiatives must be evidence-based and provide value for money
- (ii) All Council services must be inclusive and there must be a corporate approach to social inclusion
- (iii) The Council will work with partner agencies and involve local people in decision-making
- (iv) Mainstream services and targeted initiatives can both promote social inclusion
- (v) As well as tackling social exclusion, the Council will work to prevent people from becoming socially excluded

Four strands of work will form the initial actions flowing from the strategy:

- Audit of current activity
- Strategic work with partners
- Utilising Area Committees to involve local people in targeted neighbourhood projects
- Outcome-based monitoring of social inclusion

¹ Social Exclusion Unit (2004) *Breaking the Cycle: Taking stock of progress and priorities for the future*

APPENDIX B
Oxford City Council Social Inclusion Audit Steering Group
Terms of reference

Purpose

- (i) Agree scope of audit
- (ii) Review information to ensure that all relevant services are covered – namely those targeted to specific vulnerable groups (not mainstream services) into which OCC puts financial resources
- (iii) Facilitate access to information
- (iv) Agree method of consultation
- (v) Develop findings from audit with due regard to risk, resourcing, equalities, and learning and development issues
- (vi) Incorporate findings into budget and relevant Unit business plans for 2007-08

Membership

Michael Lawrence (Chair)	Strategic Director, Housing, Health & Community
Richard Adams	Community Safety Team Leader, Strategy & Review
Phil Adlard	Benefits Performance & Quality Manager, Revenues & Benefits
Jan Banfield	Business Manager, Strategy & Review
Ian Barrett	Business Manager, Customer Services
Craig Buckby	Community Development Team Leader, Neighbourhood Renewal
John Copley	Business Manager, Environmental Health
Angela Cristofoli	Area Coordinator (North East/Cowley)
Mark Fransham/Penny Randall	Social Inclusion Policy Officer, Strategy & Review
Graham Stratford	Business Manager, Housing Services
Kam Raval	Sports Development Officer, Leisure & Cultural Services

Ad hoc members

Value for money advisor: Peter McQuitty (Corporate Projects Manager, Strategy & Review)

Consultation advisor: Natalie Child (Consultation Officer, Strategy & Review)

Social inclusion service audit – services identified

The audit has included targeted initiatives to which OCC contributes funding (or where external funding comes through OCC). Mainstream work has been excluded. Housing-related work has been excluded due to pre-existing strategies (except fuel poverty work which has been included); services supported through OCC grants have not been included due to the ongoing review of CVO support.

The grid shows priority vulnerable groups as columns, with the type of initiative in rows. The table also indicates where services cut across the priority groups. Services shown in brackets indicate where it has already been included elsewhere in the table but also targets another priority group. For information, the second column indicates some of the relevant services which have been excluded from the audit.

Type of service	<i>(Excluded from audit)</i>	Priority vulnerable groups				
		Areas of deprivation	Excluded BME groups (city-wide)	Children & young people (poverty, educational attainment; city-wide)	Older people (city-wide)	Homeless people (city-wide) (<i>most services excluded</i>)
Access to services and support	Local Services Shops Local Housing Shops Telephone Contact Centre Fusion Community Centres Talkback Panel	Dance Development Reduced environmental health fees				
		Community Touring Programme Area Committee revenue budgets Holiday Play Schemes (Asian Families Officers)	Asian Families Officers Interpreting services	Youth Council (Holiday Play Schemes) (Asian Families Officers)	Concessionary bus travel Agewell Pensioners Forum	
Maximising incomes	Benefits administration Welfare advice agencies Oxford Credit Union	Benefits take-up campaign				

Community cohesion & equalities	<i>Equalities Steering Group</i>	Disability Unit				
			Community cohesion work plan			
Community safety	<i>CaNACT City Centre CCTV Noise enforcement Exclusion powers Neighbourhood Policing Nightsafe</i>	Target hardening Domestic Violence coordinator				
		Tower blocks CCTV Street Wardens		Football Foundation projects Positive Futures Family Support Initiative (Domestic Violence coordinator)		
Healthy living		BONUS Slice card BBL Active England project				
		Local Food Development Officer	(BBL Active England project)	Free swimming for U17s (BBL Active England project)	(BBL Active England project)	
Skills & economic development	<i>Oxfordshire Business Enterprises Ltd. Oxford Means Business</i>	Skills for Life Social enterprise support				
		Learning & Connected Communities Skills Register Horspath Road Resource Centre	Food hygiene courses Procurement Strategy implementation	Peers School Partnership Action Plan		Business Action on Homelessness pilot
Housing	<i>(most services excluded as covered by existing strategies)</i>	Community Energy Programme				

Social inclusion service audit – estimates of net cost per annum

This grid shows the estimates of net cost per annum associated with each service included in the audit – in many cases these are approximate so should be treated with caution. In some cases this has not yet been provided (shown as 'tbc'). Also indicated in italics is external funding to OCC. Amounts struck through (e.g. ~~£5000~~) show services which are vulnerable to lack of funding by the end of this financial year.

Type of service	Totals	Priority vulnerable groups				
		Areas of deprivation	Excluded BME groups (city-wide)	Children & young people (poverty, educational attainment; city-wide)	Older people (city-wide)	Homeless people (city-wide)
Totals	<u>£3,191,000</u> <i>+ £402K external funding</i>	<u>£763,000</u>	<u>£84,000</u>	<u>£125,000</u> <i>+ £72K external funding</i>	<u>£1,900,000</u>	<u>£5,000</u>
Access to services and support	<u>£2,199,000</u>	Dance Development (£2000) Reduced environmental health fees (£100,000)				
		Community Touring Programme (£500) Area Committee revenue budgets (£50,000) Holiday Play Schemes (£90,000)	Asian Families Officers (£49,000) Interpreting services (£8,000)	Youth Council (tbc)	Concessionary bus travel (£1.9m) Agewell (tbc) Pensioners Forum (tbc)	
Maximising incomes	<u>£0</u>	Benefits take-up campaign (no defined budget)				
Community cohesion & equalities	<u>£79,200</u>	Disability Unit (£79,200)				
			Community cohesion work plan (tbc)			
Community safety	<u>£601,000</u> <i>+ £72K external</i>	Target hardening (£22,000) Domestic Violence coordinator (£52,000)				

	<i>funding</i>	Tower blocks CCTV (£7,379) Street Wardens (£500,000) Football Foundation projects (£20,000)		Positive Futures (£48,500) Family Support Initiative (£24,000)		
Healthy living	£160,000 <i>+ £85K external funding</i>	BONUS Slice card (tbc) BBL Active England project (£85,000)				
		Local Food Development Officer (£35,000)		Free swimming for U17s (£125,000)		
Skills & economic development	£137,000	Skills for Life (no defined budget) Social enterprise support (£45,000)				
		Learning & Connected Communities (£30,000) Skills Register (£10,000) Horspath Road Resource Centre (£20,000)	Food hygiene courses (self-funding) Procurement Strategy implementation (£27,000)			Business Action on Homelessness pilot (£5,000)
Housing	£75,000 <i>+ £248K external funding</i>	Community Energy Programme (£75,000 + £248,000)				

Estimated net cost per annum by Business Unit (excluding external funding)

The table below shows that the £3.2 million cost of these social inclusion services is spread across nine Business Units.

Business Unit	Area Coordinators	Built Environment	Community Housing	Customer Services	Environmental Health
Net cost	£50,000	£79,000	£7,000	£8,000	£197,000

Business Unit	Leisure & Cultural Services	Neighbourhood Renewal	Strategy & Review	Transport & Parking
Net cost	£127,000	£744,000	£79,000	£1,900,000

APPENDIX D

Social inclusion audit: analysis of existing consultation reports

This report presents an analysis of reports from previously conducted consultation exercises, with the aim of informing the Council about the response it should make to the following issues:

- People with low incomes and low qualifications living in priority geographic areas (namely areas of Blackbird Leys, Rose Hill, Littlemore, Barton, Wood Farm and Donington Bridge)
- Children and young people (at risk of) having poor educational attainment
- Families on low incomes
- Social exclusion amongst black and minority ethnic groups, especially those from Pakistani, Bangladeshi, Black African or Black Caribbean backgrounds – including unemployment, low incomes, poor skills

In addition to this analysis, questions relating to skills development and family poverty (see below) have been included in the Talkback recruitment survey which is currently being distributed. Initial results from this survey will be available in early September.

A summary of the salient points from the reports is below. Later in the report more detailed summaries of each report are given.

Low income/low skills in priority geographic areas

The Social Inclusion Strategy identifies 17 Super Output Areas (SOAs) which are a priority in Oxford as they fall in the 30% most deprived SOAs in England. In the majority of these the major issue of concern is people with low income and low skills – and a related high rate of child poverty. The consultations analysed here are the Area Workshops 2005-06, the Small Area Surveys and the Barton Resident Research Project. The main findings are:

- Poor attitudes to learning and education need tackling
- Need to raise the low expectations and low self-esteem of some people
- Work should be done with local businesses to support local initiatives
- Job creation which benefits areas of deprivation needs supporting
- The pressure of living on low income and benefits presents a barrier to being involved in initiatives
- High usage of pre-payment meters indicates a high risk of fuel poverty

Children and young people: child poverty and poor educational attainment

The Social Inclusion Strategy highlights a higher rate of child poverty in Oxford City than the national average. It also notes that children in Oxford have relatively poor educational attainment. The consultations analysed here are the Oxfordshire Children and Young People's Plan consultation, the Young People's Survey 2004 and the Discussion Forum on Child and Family Poverty in Oxford. The main findings are grouped under headings below.

Raising income levels:

- Families need help with lowering electricity and heating costs
- Access to cheaper savings and loans should be provided through a credit union
- Benefits advice should be extended and take-up increased

Parental support:

- There is a need for more help with parenting – in particular there should be one-stop advice available, and assistance should be available at an early stage before problems get worse
- Low income families require assistance with childcare

Support to young people:

- Young people not in school need to be supported and need good alternative provision
- Low educational aspirations need raising

Leisure opportunities in areas of deprivation:

- Leisure opportunities for young people living in areas of deprivation need to be improved. There is a particular need during holiday periods
- Young people should be consulted and involved in the development of projects

Access to services etc.:

- Free travel passes should be provided to young people
- Families on low incomes should be helped with easier access to healthy food
- Young people need better job opportunities

Social exclusion amongst black and minority ethnic (BME) groups

The Social Inclusion Strategy highlights the fact that Oxford City has a larger than average BME population, and evidence shows they are at greater risk of social exclusion (including unemployment, having no formal qualifications or working in low skill occupations) than other residents. The consultations analysed here are a report on employment patterns, two diversity scrutiny panel reports (on Employment of Ethnic Minorities and increasing participation at Area Committees) and a racial diversity audit.

However the reports identified have not been able to answer the broad question of what can be done to reduce social exclusion among BME communities. Three of the consultation reports identified address the issue of how the City Council can more effectively recruit, promote and retain employees of black and minority ethnic origin. The fourth addresses how Area Committees can more effectively engage the public. Unless other consultation reports can be identified, this would seem to be a gap in existing consultation reports. However the results of the Talkback survey can be used to fill this gap to some extent.

Low income/low skills in priority geographic areas

OCC Area Workshops Winter 2005-06 (Oxford City Council)

One or two Area Workshops were undertaken in each of the six Areas with the aim of ensuring that the developing Area Plans touch the appropriate issues in the right order. Attendees were invited members from key local organisations, plus the Police and PCTs. 15-20 people on average attended each workshop. The findings of these workshops are being validated by an on-street survey in each Area – this has now been completed and the findings are currently being finalised.

The workshop suggested a number of key actions that should be undertaken in each area. Popular suggestions relevant to social inclusion work were as follows:

South East (11 of 17 priority SOAs are in this Area):

- Tackle poor attitudes to learning and education
- More support for young people through youth clubs
- More parental support and help in parenting
- Raise low expectations and low self-esteem of some
- Improved sports facilities for Rose Hill adolescents

North East (4 of 17 priority SOAs are in this Area)

- Increased provision of activities for young people especially during holiday periods
- Explore possibilities of joint primary care development projects to develop facilities in Wood Farm, Northway and Barton
- Assist in the development of community facilities and groups across the NE area, particularly areas of greatest need, e.g. Wood Farm, Barton
- Establishing more effective dialogue with local people
- Work with local businesses to develop links to support local initiatives

East (1 of 17 priority SOAs is in this Area)

- Most comments were around retail development, community safety and private sector housing

Other popular comments specifically about BME communities or children's issues:

- Work in partnership with Oxfordshire Bangladeshi Association on local health-related issues (Cowley)
- Support for young people and children (North)
- Tackling rates of teenage pregnancy in Cutteslowe (North)

Barton Resident Research Project (J. O'Donoghue and Barton Resident Researchers, 2003)

This research project trained six Barton residents to carry out community research – the aim was to have the research owned by the community itself. Multiple methods were used to arrive at the findings, which focussed on community safety, leisure opportunities, community involvement and environment.

The most common request from Barton residents was "*things for the youth to do*". Others reiterated this, and there was particular support for summer play schemes. It was also commented that young people need to be consulted and involved in project development.

The research acknowledged that the “*lack of jobs makes life difficult*”, but that this had not been fully explored. Suggestions were made about the importance of adult education, supporting job creation and having local job fairs. It was also commented that “*surviving on low income or benefits means there may be no time to get involved*” in community initiatives.

Small Area Surveys: Barton (Oxford City Council, 2003) **and Wood Farm** (Oxford City Council, 2005)

The Small Area Surveys are not consultation as such but are surveys designed to give information about demography, social exclusion and community safety at a small area level. Both these surveys confirm the findings of the Indices of Deprivation 2004, namely that these two areas contain high levels of people living on low incomes. There was also a striking finding about the high usage of prepayment meters for energy – it has been suggested that these meters can be a contributory factor towards fuel poverty.

In the Barton Small Area Survey, there were a number of comments about a need for more leisure facilities, particularly for children and young people but also other age groups.

Talkback recruitment survey Summer 2006

The following question about skills development will be included in the Talkback recruitment survey:

Which 2 or 3 things, if any, do you think Oxford City Council and other organisations should do to ensure all of Oxford’s residents have the same opportunity for gaining and developing new skills? (Please tick a MAXIMUM of 3 boxes):

- Courses provided locally, in community centres or other local settings
- Informal courses not linked to qualifications
- Courses on general skills like self-confidence and timekeeping
- One-to-one advice on how to access courses
- Assistance with nursery provision and creches
- Don’t know
- Other (please specify)

This question was developed with reference to the Policy Action Team 02 report on Skills.

Children and young people’s issues

Oxfordshire Children and Young People’s Plan consultation (Oxfordshire County Council, 2006)

The development of the Children and Young People’s Plan included consultation with children and young people and parents and carers. The Plan encompasses all children’s issues across the County, so it is difficult to glean information about particular social exclusion issues in the City. However, the following key points were made during the consultation:

- Young people made the point that “if you’re not at school you need to be listened to, supported and not given ‘lame stuff to do’”.
- Parents would like multi-tasking parent supporters
- Support should look at what’s best for the whole family, including siblings

- More family friendliness should be developed in services e.g. hospital clinics with crèche facilities
- Help and support providing straightforward help at an early stage to stop problems getting worse

Young People's Survey 2004 (MORI, 2005)

This was a school-based survey of 471 young people aged 11-16 across three Oxford districts, 160 of which were young people from Oxford City. Many of the questions investigated community safety, leisure activities and environment. The key points relating to social inclusion were:

- The educational aspirations of Oxford respondents were high relative to other areas. However children living in areas of deprivation had low aspirations compared to children living in more affluent areas.
- There was no difference by area in the proportion of children who thought that having jobs available was important in making somewhere a good place to live.
- Most young people stated improvement in leisure facilities and the environment were priorities for making their local area a better place. However 1 in 4 City young people said it was important for there to be better job opportunities for young people.

Discussion Forum on Child and Family Poverty in Oxford (2004)

This was a joint forum held by Oxford City Council, the Child Poverty Action Group and the University of Oxford. It was attended by these organisations plus representatives from Oxfordshire County Council, health services, housing, faith groups, academic institutions and voluntary and community organisations. There were a number of presentations from relevant organisations and a discussion panel.

Participants shared ideas for tackling child poverty; these encompassed:

- Free travel passes for children
- Training on life skills and money management for young people leaving home/care
- One stop advice for all family services
- Help with lowering electricity and heating costs
- Enabling easier access to healthy food
- Encouraging breastfeeding amongst socially excluded groups
- Access to cheaper savings and loans through a credit union
- Extending benefits advice and increasing benefits take-up
- Services for young people on sexual health and reducing teenage pregnancy
- More assistance for low income households in nursery provision, workplace crèches and family centres

Talkback recruitment survey Summer 2006

The following question about child poverty will be included in the Talkback recruitment survey:

Which 2 or 3 things, if any, do you think are the most important things Oxford City Council and other organisations should be doing to help families and children living on low incomes? (Please tick a MAXIMUM of 3 boxes)

- Free travel passes for children

- Training on life skills and money management for young people leaving home/care
- One stop advice for all family services
- Help with lowering electricity and heating costs
- Enabling easier access to healthier food
- Access to cheaper savings and loans through a credit union
- Service for young people on sexual health and reducing teenage pregnancy
- Access to free leisure and play opportunities for children and young people
- Don't know
- Other (please specify)

This question was developed with reference to the suggestions developed at the Discussion Forum on Child and Family Poverty.

Exclusion amongst BME groups

Employment patterns of white and black/other racial minority communities in Oxford (Pearn Kandola, 2001)

This survey undertook to investigate perceptions of Oxford City Council as an employer, job preferences and job search behaviours. It showed that people from BME groups are prepared to apply to the Council, but that local authorities in general rate poorly as preferred employers. The recommendations suggested targeting minority communities, using community centres, influencing senior community members and publishing in multiple languages to improve recruitment of BME people.

Diversity Scrutiny Panel on Area Committees (12th September 2001)

This report investigates how to increase participation in Area Committees from various groups, not just BME communities. The recommendations focus heavily on communication changes - informing the public more effectively.

Diversity Scrutiny Panel on Employment of Ethnic Minorities (went to Council on 16th July 2001)

This report covers how the Council should change its recruitment and retention policies, drawing heavily on the Racial Diversity Audit conducted by the Oxford Research Agency – see below.

Racial Diversity Audit (Oxford Research Agency, November 2000)

The racial diversity audit consulted with ethnic minority staff and other key personnel in Oxford City Council to provide information about the recruitment, promotion and retention of black and minority ethnic staff. It highlighted that both BME and white members of staff feel they are discriminated against on the grounds of race. The recommendations of the audit focus on better communications, diversity training and improved recruitment practices.

Talkback recruitment survey Summer 2006

The two questions noted above which are to be included in the Talkback recruitment survey will be analysed by ethnicity to ascertain messages which are relevant to particular BME groups.

APPENDIX E
TALKBACK RECRUITMENT QUESTIONNAIRE: INTERIM RESULTS

It should be noted that the results shown below are interim results from 600 questionnaires received at 6th September 2006. They are unweighted i.e. have not been adjusted to take into account differential response rates from different groups of people. Further analysis of these results is planned to examine whether there are different responses from different groups of respondent.

Q15. Which 2 or 3 things, if any, do you think Oxford City Council and other organisations should do to ensure all of Oxford's residents have the same opportunity for gaining and developing new skills?

Courses provided locally, in community centres or other local settings	61%
Assistance with nursery provision and creches	61%
Informal courses not linked to qualifications	34%
One to one advice on how to access courses	34%
Courses on general skills like self-confidence and timekeeping	20%
Don't know	6%
Other	4%
No answer	1%

Q16. Which 2 or 3 things, if any, do you think are the most important things Oxford City Council and other organisations should be doing to help children and youth in Oxford living in poverty?

Training on life skills and money management for young people leaving home/care	46%
Access to free leisure and play opportunities for children and young people	45%
Enabling easier access to healthy food	39%
Service for young people on sexual health and reducing teenage pregnancy	36%
Help with lowering electricity and heating costs	31%
Free travel passes for children	27%
One stop advice for all family services	23%
Access to cheaper savings and loans through a credit union	16%
Don't know	1%
No answer	3%
Other	3%

APPENDIX F

Summary of findings from research

Area-based deprivation – low income/low skills

Key issues:

- There are 17 Super Output Areas in the City which are in the 30% most deprived areas nationally
- The most acute issues in these areas (with the exception of Carfax) are education and skills, low income and child poverty
- People living in these areas of the City have much poorer health outcomes than the general population

Key approaches:

- Provision of informal courses not linked to qualifications, provided locally in community centres or other local settings (SEU, 1999)
- People should also be trained in generic skills such as self-confidence and timekeeping (SEU, 1999)
- One-to one advice should be given about how to access courses (SEU, 1999)
- Individuals working in the informal sector need support, training and development to make the transition to more formal, secure and better-paid employment opportunities (Katungi *et al.*, 2006)

Children's issues – poverty & educational attainment

Key issues:

- Oxford City has a higher rate of child poverty than the national average. 22.6% of children aged 0-5 years live in households dependent on income support compared with 18.9% across England
- Educational attainment amongst children and young people in Oxford is a concern. GCSE results in Oxford are the lowest of any other Oxfordshire District, and are on a downward trend
- Children living in low income households are at greater risk of poor educational attainment than other children (DfES, 2006)
- Poor educational attainment is linked to an increased risk of being poor in adulthood – so leading to intergenerational transfer of deprivation (Blanden & Gibbons, 2006)

Key approaches:

- Local government has a role in promoting take-up of existing low income benefits (Hirsch, 2006)
- Local government can contribute towards lowering essential expenditure for low income families through (for example) reducing the cost of services and tackling fuel poverty (Hirsch, 2006)
- Improving skill levels of parents so improving access to better employment opportunities (Hirsch, 2006; Preston, 2005)
- Improving access to childcare to improve access to employment (Skinner, 2006)
- Early intervention projects should target young people at risk of poor educational attainment to tackle intergenerational poverty transfer (DfES, 2006)
- School interventions can also raise educational attainment (DfES, 2006)

Excluded BME groups

Key issues:

- Oxford City has a larger than average BME population, and evidence shows they are at greater risk of social exclusion than other residents
- Data about the population in Oxford indicates that people of Pakistani and Bangladeshi origin are at much greater risk of unemployment, having no formal qualifications or working in low skill occupations

Key approaches:

- Promotion of low income benefits as take-up is lower amongst BME groups (Preston, 2005)
- Improving skills to improve access to employment opportunities – English fluency is a particular issue (Cabinet Office, 2003)
- Early intervention projects should target young people at risk of poor educational attainment (DfES, 2006)
- Public sector bodies can promote equal opportunities practices in local employers by using procurement as a lever (Cabinet Office, 2003)
- Effective business advice should be provided to BME groups – there is a relatively large number of small to medium enterprises started by BME people but also a relatively high failure rate (Cabinet Office, 2003)

References

- Blanden, J. and Gibbons, S. (2006) *The persistence of poverty across generations: A view from two British cohorts*, The Policy Press
- Cabinet Office (2003) *Ethnic Minorities and the Labour Market*, Cabinet Office
- DfES (2006) *Social Mobility: Narrowing Social Class Educational Attainment Gaps*, Department for Education & Skills
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- Katungi, D., Neale, E. and Barbour, A. (2006) *People in low-paid informal work: 'Need not greed'*, The Policy Press
- Preston, G. (2005) *At Greatest Risk*, Child Poverty Action Group
- SEU (1999) *Policy Action Team on Skills*, Social Exclusion Unit
- Skinner, C. (2006) *How can childcare help to end child poverty?*, Joseph Rowntree Foundation

APPENDIX G

Brief service descriptions

Agewell

Bi annual conferences organised by a committee of older people which might be issues based or have a cultural theme.

Area Committee Revenue Allocation

Oxford City is divided into six area committees. Part of the revenue budget which these area committees receive is weighted towards more deprived areas in the city. The South East will receive 33%, the East 19%, the North East 19%, Cowley 14%, Central, South and West 13% and the North 2% in 2006/7.

Asian Families Officers

The officers do one-to-one sessions and groupwork with Asian Families, predominantly on Rose Hill but also in surrounding areas including Wood Farm. They target families with young children (aged 0-5), in particular women. They support families to help them access services and promote good outcomes for their children.

Benefits take-up campaign

This service exists to encourage those entitled to HB/CTB to claim the benefit, especially those already claiming IS, JSA, IB and the State Retirement Pension. It seeks to increase the number of people claiming HB/CTB so as to improve the local economy by increasing spending, alleviate poverty and related health and social issues and maximise the collection of rent on council properties and council tax.

Blackbird Leys Active England project

This project has a capital and revenue aspect. The capital aspect is completed and has increased the physical space available for individuals and community groups at Blackbird Leys Leisure Centre, including facilities for a community cafe. The revenue aspect (concentrated on here) is to create a dedicated outreach team to develop opportunities for participation by socially excluded groups including young people, older people and BME women. The project formally began in August 2006.

BONUS Slice card

People on low incomes in receipt of certain benefits can apply for a BONUS Slice card at a cost of £2.20 which entitles them to reduced rates for leisure activities at City Council facilities. The card is valid for six months but renewable free of charge upon proof of benefit.

Business Action on Homelessness pilot

This pilot programme provides support, mentoring and training to (ex-) homeless people to access work opportunities. It links with employers (in this case Unipart) to provide work placements and training, with a view to moving people on to paid employment. People are identified through agencies which work with homeless people. BITC is now looking to raise funding for a coordinator post to run the project on an ongoing basis.

Community Cohesion

This service facilitates communities so that they can function and grow in harmony rather than in conflict and has strong links to equality and diversity. It makes the communities stronger, safer and more vibrant and promote good race relations.

Community Energy Programme

The service provides physical improvements to housing alongside domestic energy advice on issues such as debts to energy companies. There is a part-time post assigned to the fuel poverty work. There are a number of different schemes which people qualify for - utility company schemes, central government schemes, funding from the City Council and a GOSE scheme. The service assesses people and directs them to whichever scheme(s) can give maximum benefit. Referrals come through self-referral and utility companies. Publicity is undertaken through the media and multi-agency campaigns.

Community Touring Programme

This programme aims to deliver arts events (plus associated workshops) through arts companies in areas of deprivation where people would not traditionally access arts events such as theatre, music, dance, circus etc. The events are subsidised so that cost is not a barrier to attending the events. Communities are consulted about the content of the events. This is a pilot programme which is funding four events in Rose Hill, Blackbird Leys and Barton during the period October 06 - March 07. Each area will have a community touring champion who will be responsible for organising the events.

Concessionary Bus Passes

People who qualify through age, disability or carer status can have free bus travel within Oxford City. Private bus companies charge the council for the fares of those who have a concessionary pass.

Dance Development

This service runs dance classes and workshops around Oxford. It also provides funding for community projects such as the community touring programme, which gives residents of Blackbird Leys, Rose Hill and Barton affordable access to live theatre in their own community.

Disability Unit

This service improves the accessibility of the built environment for disabled people and includes the shopmobility scheme. This scheme provides manual and electric wheelchairs and scooters free of charge to members of the public who have mobility issues. It also provides an information point about disability issues and helps raise awareness of disability access issues.

Domestic Violence Co-ordinator

The service implements strategies to reduce domestic violence and increase reporting of domestic violence. It assists support groups for victims of domestic

violence and hopes to ensure people have access to this support. It also raises the profile of domestic violence.

Environmental Health reduced fees

Reduced fees for some environmental health services are charged to residents in receipt of Income Support, Housing Benefit, Family Credit or Council Tax Benefit. This includes charges for returning impounded stray dogs and pest control treatments. In addition many pest control services are provided free of charge to all.

Family Support Initiative

This initiative aims to co-ordinate services working for the family and can provide funding for parenting support, psychotherapy, community mediation, mentoring and other services. It seeks to reduce the risk of eviction and reports of anti-social and criminal behaviour, to improve school attendance, parenting, relations with neighbours and the wider community and familial wellbeing. It hopes to provide alternative activities for young people and remove them from the "at risk" register.

Food Hygiene Courses

A number of food hygiene courses are offered to businesses and residents of Oxford each year. These can be offered in languages other than English, especially Bengali and Chinese languages.

Football Foundation Project

This service targets young people Littlemore and Rose Hill in order to provide them with access to football through training, matches and tournaments. The project seeks to engage young people in other youth service provision after engagement in football.

Free Swimming for U17s

All children under the age of 17 receive free swimming in all pools during general sessions. The initiative is delivered through issuing children with a KIDS Slice card upon proof of age.

Holiday Play Provision

This service funds holiday activities for 5-19 year olds across four estates (Blackbird Leys, Rose Hill, Barton and Wood Farm). The aim is to improve access to existing provisions for holiday activities by lowering the cost or increasing the number of places on such schemes. In areas where there is no provision of these services they are to be implemented, such as in Wood Farm. It hopes to reduce anti-social behaviour by engaging young people in constructive activity.

Horspath Road Resource Centre

The resource centre has a small IT drop-in centre (six PCs) which is used informally by local residents and by primary school pupils as an after-school facility. It also hosts small community meetings.

Interpreting Services

The council has various methods of providing translations of documents relating to council services and of telephone and face to face interpreting. A private company called Language Line provides telephone and face to face interpreting services. Some business units pay a fee to use this service. Others have approved lists of translators whom they employ on a commission basis. Some areas of the council are using ad hoc translation services based on the language knowledge of their staff.

Learning Communities

The project aims to develop 'Connected Learning Communities' in three neighbourhoods - Barton, Blackbird Leys and Rose Hill. Its priority task is to tackle underachievement and develop sustainable plans for future learning provision for adults and young people. In order to bring people into mainstream provision the project will provide accessible and informal learning as a first step. It will also focus on the creation of jobs and the generation of community based businesses. In order to achieve this the project will focus on the creation on physical learning spaces.

Local Food Development

Currently funded by lottery working on Healthy Living Initiative which will soon change to become Oxford Healthy Living Partnership. The Officer's role is to develop and support projects to improve access to food, promote local production, improving cooking and food safety skills and boost healthy eating awareness. It provides many courses in a community-based environment. This service seeks to increase access to food for those in areas of poor provision. It aims to promote local food producers, improve the cooking and food safety skills of those who attend courses and improve healthy eating awareness.

Pensioners' Forum

A forum of pensioners which meets three times a year to discuss political and social issues relevant to their demographic.

Positive Futures

Positive Futures is a national sports based social inclusion programme managed up to the end of March 2006 from within the Home Office Drug Strategy directorate. It is currently delivered through 115 local partnership projects located in England and Wales of which the one run by Oxford City Council is one. It aims to act as a diversionary activity which engages with young people who are referred to this service - outcomes would include reducing (risk of) offending behaviour and improving school attendance.

Procurement strategy implementation

This service has tidied up many contracts which the council had with private businesses. It encourages smaller companies to do business with the council and seeks to educate people about selling to the public sector whilst making the process of doing business with the public sector simpler. BME businesses will be targeted through the Meet The Buyer event to be held in Autumn 2006.

Skills for Life

Skills for Life is defined by the Basic Skills Agency as the 'ability to read, write and speak English, and to use mathematics at a level necessary to function at work and

in society in general'. It is also linked to IT skills. The scheme is promoted through the Unions by local Union Learning Reps. It is steered in partnership with Union representatives through the Learning Partnership, which meets quarterly and reports to SMB. It is linked closely with the GO Award Action Plan and IIP accreditation. The aim is to encourage OCC staff to participate in lifelong learning and ultimately to contribute towards the Council achieving a CPA score of 'good'.

Skills register

This is a one-off purchase of a software package which will be used by the Learning Communities project. It is a package which assesses people's skills, aptitudes and qualifications as part of guiding them to access learning opportunities. It can be used to structure an IAG (information, advice and guidance) interview. It can also provide reports about the skills of local people to inform service planning etc. The package is to be purchased in August 2006.

Social enterprise support

This is a reactive service supporting voluntary and community organisations who are in need of business planning support. It provides officer support to help develop robust business plans to improve the sustainability of the organisation and identify possible external funding opportunities.

Street Wardens

17 wardens have a permanent local presence in selected areas in Oxford city. These are Rose Hill, Littlemore, Iffley, Donnington, Sandhills, London Road Estate, Northway, Marston, Blackbird Leys, Greater Leys, South Cowley, Wood Farm/Churchill and Barton. This service seeks to reduce crime, disorder and anti-social or nuisance behaviour. It also seeks to engage with hard to reach groups in the aforementioned areas. It is hoped that the presence of wardens will make people feel safer.

Target Hardening

This service improves security on vulnerable homes in the private rental sector using a contractor employed by the council. This service aims to increase the home security which has already suffered burglary or which is at risk of burglary in the private rental sector by paying for or subsidising the cost of repairs/improvements on at-risk properties. This might include replacing locks on doors and windows, improving lighting and adding gates.

Tower blocks CCTV

There are CCTV cameras in the entrance to four OCC residential tower blocks - Plowman, Windrush, Forresters and Evenlode towers which are on the Blackbird Leys (2), Wood Farm and Northway estates. They are static cameras which are monitored 24 hours a day from the control centre in Barton.

Youth Council

The Youth Council is a forum for young people to be involved in decisions which affect them. It has other aims which include raising awareness of community issues, awareness of local democracy and building young people's confidence. Members of the forum are elected from schools in the City.

Document Control

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Author	Mark Fransham
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Version No.	Date	Notes
1	27/10/06	First draft for comment – distributed to Officers and portfolio holder
2	03/11/06	Added current activity under each section. Appendices added. Updated summary with key priorities. Draft for approval – distributed to Legal & Finance, Portfolio Holder, Business Manager and other relevant Officers
3	10/11/06	Amendments made to section on deprivation in geographic areas; also amended Social Inclusion Strategy section
4	28/11/06	Amended wording of benefits take-up recommendation. Added service descriptions as appendix.