

## LEISURE BEST VALUE REVIEW – FINAL REPORT

### DOCUMENT CONTROL

<b>Document</b>	<b>Leisure Indoor Facilities Best Value Review – Final Report</b>
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## **BACKGROUND PAPERS**

**Leisure Indoor Facilities Best Value Review – Baseline Statement  
Audit Commission – Public Sports and Recreation Service Report  
Audit Commission – Corporate Governance KLOE  
Audit Commission – Culture Assessment KLOE  
Audit Commission – Use of Resources KLOE**

## REPORT FRAMEWORK

This Best Value Review has been carried out in line with Oxford City Council's Best Value Review methodology which was agreed by Executive Board in October 2004. The scope of the Best Value Review was agreed by Finance Scrutiny Committee in December 2005. The outlined objective of the project is to undertake a Best Value Review of the Council's leisure centres. The review will be governed by the 4 Cs – Consult, Compare, Compete and Challenge. In particular the review will focus upon:

- To consult on the current provision of Oxford City Council formal provision of sport in line with community needs. The focus of this will be on producing a 'baseline statement' establishing the current service provisions
- To compare whether the sports services deliver value for money in comparison with other Local Authorities and external providers of leisure facilities such as the private, voluntary and academic sectors
- To compete by reviewing the provision of non-Council sports facilities within Oxford City; to investigate collaboration with existing non-Council facilities
- To challenge why the Council provides the Leisure Centre function
- To analyse the alternative options for Oxford City Council to deliver its sports services
- To produce recommendations for the potential to improve the current sports infrastructure
- To agree recommendations as to how Oxford City Council delivers its sports services
- To ensure a continuous 'golden thread' from the Council's strategic objectives through to the Best Value recommendations

This Final Report follows the Audit Commission's self-assessment framework. In order to objectively rate the current service provision and its prospects for improvement the Audit Commissions' Key Lines of Enquiry (KLOE) will be used. Further information on this can be found in Appendix C.

## SUMMARY

Oxford City Council has a fair leisure service with promising prospects for improvement.

The Council is a direct provider, key partner and enabler for a range of sporting services including leisure centres, swimming pools, sports pitches and an ice rink. In 2005/6 the Council spent £3.17 million annually on these services.

The Council has set out its ambitions for leisure services in a series of strategy documents which are being transformed into clear headline targets for the service, however, there is no strategic plan for the services that identifies headline long and medium term outcome targets for key corporate drivers such as health and social inclusion. The leisure service contributes to the Council's priorities by providing opportunities for life and promoting and encouraging active and healthier lifestyles which were identified in the strategy documents but the Council's priorities have since changed. The service has its own vision aims and a strategic plan but could strengthen these key links to the delivery of corporate priorities.

KPMG undertook an audit of the Leisure and Events services and presented their findings in January 2006, which described the level of control as unacceptable. The key areas of concern were around procurement, health and safety and income management. An action plan was agreed and staff have been working to rectify these issues. In November 2006 KPMG returned and carried out a follow up audit of the leisure service. They reviewed the areas previously detailed for improvement and implementation. Having completed a thorough inspection of the services procedural and operational controls KPMG scored the controls in the service as satisfactory.

Whilst the Service has some knowledge of local needs this is not comprehensive. The impact and outcomes of all activities and services are not measured. Until recently limited ICT access has contributed to service standards not being able to be articulated and communicated. The service has since strengthened its ICT setup by implementing the leisure flex management system, which will provide the service with accurate performance management statistics and analysis. Overall there is limited knowledge about the needs of non-users for leisure facilities, however there are some good examples such as the renovation at Blackbird Leys Leisure Centre and the Barton Pool development, where the community have been engaged in consultation allowing the service to gauge and assess some areas of local need.

Access to services varies. The Council has a number of positive elements aimed at promoting access particularly for younger people such as free swimming for under 17s. Whilst the majority of facilities comply with the Disability Discrimination Act there is still work in the capital programme that needs to be undertaken. Opening hours of the key facilities are used to maximize efficiency and usage. The service has created targets on ensuring equality of access and diversity of usage through leisure centre business planning. Corporate level targets ensuring equality of access are being reviewed through the corporate service business plan and the introduction of the corporate leisure flex management which will allow the service to review the diversity of usage and identify areas for improvement. The slice membership scheme promotes the bonus slice card actively encouraging the less well off in the community to use the leisure centres at an affordable discounted rate, however further marketing and promotion needs to be considered. Overall, the Leisure service has not been able to measure how effective some of its access initiatives are but new controls and performance management tools recently put in place will assist with this.

The Council is unable to demonstrate service outcomes in some aspects of its leisure services. The service in particular needs to plan in terms of providing facilities where there is identified need. Satisfaction rates are high for users of the leisure service but significantly less so for non-users and there are significant gaps in the Council's understanding as to why this is. The service must gain a greater understanding of the needs and views of non-users of the service.

A thorough value for money exercise has not been carried out with the service only relying on the CIPFA data to judge value for money. The headline CIPFA results suggest that the service is not very good value for money and is only delivering minimum standards compared to other local authorities, that expenditure is high, with only average income and satisfaction. However this CIPFA data cannot be used to benchmark ourselves with others as the mix of services and facilities included in the comparison, and therefore the financial calculation, varies considerably from one authority to another, consequently not comparing like with like.

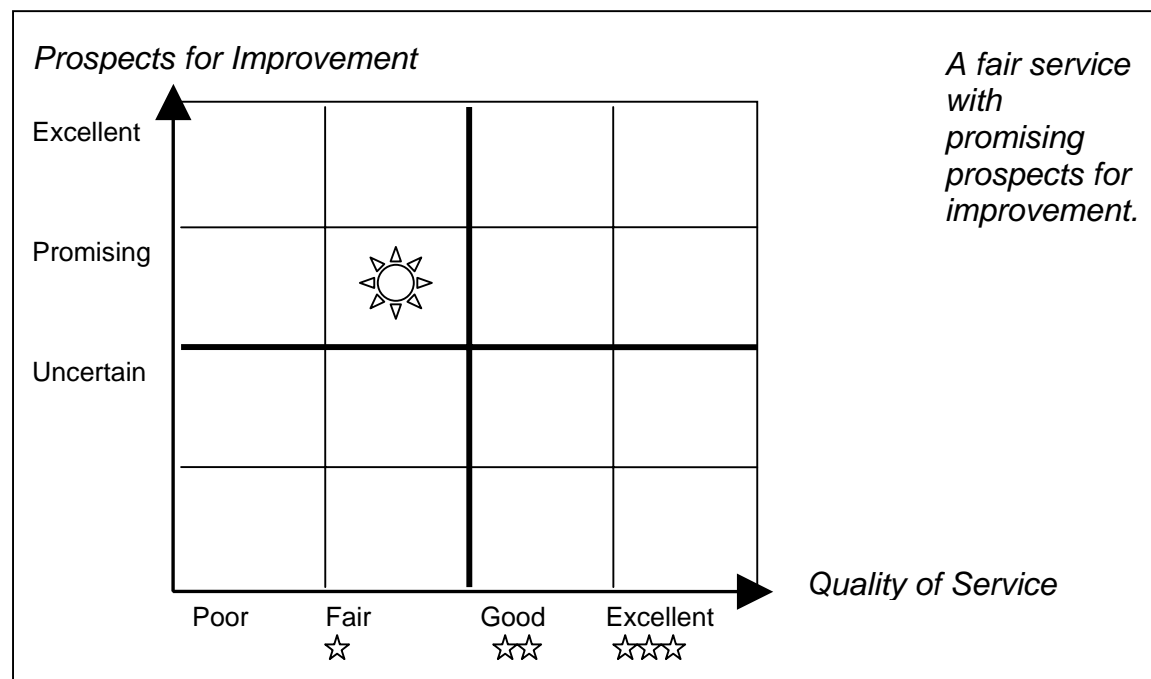
Outcomes are not always measured in line with the strategic objectives. However several capital programmes have been successfully delivered such as the building of Barton Pool and renovation of Ferry Sports Centre. There is not a comprehensive planned maintenance programme or budget provision for the leisure centres, some of which are now aging badly and will demand large future maintenance costs.

Capacity within the service has not been maximised due to a lack of effective cross-departmental working and service planning within the Council is inconsistent. A robust corporate medium-term financial plan has only recently been put in place. Until this is embedded the Council is unlikely to show progress and cannot remain focused on important activities. The Council has established

and developed external partnership with Sport England enabling the delivery of the Barton Pool development and refurbishment of Blackbird Leys Leisure Centre. The Leisure service also has strong links to the County Council and the Oxfordshire Sports Partnership initiative. Leisure centres have established links with individual sport governing bodies to provide a broad range of activities and to share and promote best practice across the service. More work could be done to attract external funding from partners to help maximise the current leisure service provision. There is no strategic direction with sport development feeding directly into the leisure centres.

A key strategic aim detailed in the corporate level business plan is to introduce a performance culture throughout the service. Work is in progress at the leisure centres at ground level with the introduction of the leisure flex management system. The Leisure service has recognised that more performance comparators are required to assess the impact of key strategic objectives and value for money. Work is being planned to benchmark against nearest neighbour authorities and historical cities to give the Council more robust information to gauge performance of the service. Performance monitoring is improving through service business plans. Where information is captured corporately a picture of consistence performance rather than growth or decline is portrayed.

## SCORING THE SERVICE



The sports service is a fair, one star service due to the following reasons:

- The leisure service contributes to the Council's priorities by providing opportunities for life and encouraging healthier lifestyles but the overall contribution is unknown.
- Whilst there is a leisure strategy which was linked to the councils priorities, those priorities have changed the Council has not yet fully transformed its ambitions for leisure services into clear outcome targets for leisure services.



- The Council's understanding of local need is partial – with only a limited knowledge about the needs of non-users for facilities along with and the current and the emerging needs of prospective users.
- Information about the performance of Oxford City Council's leisure services is improving allowing for the Council to assess and monitor impact and track progress towards delivering improved value for money.
- The service works hard at establishing partnership work with external organisations and there is evidence of secured external funding.
- Performance management information has improved meaning that outcomes in areas such as health, social inclusion or education are more likely to be measured and evaluated.
- The leisure service has relatively high customer satisfaction results.
- Leisure services have not taken full advantage in the way they communicate with customers through marketing, capturing user feedback and through websites.
- Performance management throughout the service has been strengthened.
- The Council is unable to consistently demonstrate its services are delivering significant outcomes against key priorities.
- CIPFA Benchmarking suggest that sports services in Oxford offer relatively weak value for money with high spending.
- Several facilities are ageing with high future maintenance costs and there is no plan in place to fully address this.

Leisure services have promising prospects for improvement because of the following:

- New senior management team in place committed to taking the leisure service forward.
- New Leisure strategies agreed in May 2006.
- Some objectives met through the leisure strategy action plan.
- Good level of political and community interest in the services.
- Body of experienced staff.
- Infrastructure of leisure facilities in place.
- Improvement planning and review in place working with KPMG Audit.
- The KPMG audit report for November 2006 states that the leisure services have improved from being a service with unacceptable controls to one with satisfactory controls.
- The Council is in the process of a facilities review, which sets out the plan for leisure facilities in the medium term.

- Plans are being reviewed to improve relations with other providers of sports facilities such as Neighbourhood Renewal and Community Centres.
- The Council is undertaking a facilities review in order to potentially rationalise and improve the quality not quantity of the service.
- The Council is open to considering various options for the management of the leisure service.
- Sound consultation practice exists within the service.
- The leisure service is improving its approach to financial management and there is some evidence to show that it is beginning to allocate resources in line with high-level policy decisions.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

Through the course of the Best Value Review an issues log has been maintained to cover all of the challenges faced by the service. The areas for review were initially introduced in the Baseline Statements. The issues log set the foundations for the best value review service improvement plan which is a comprehensive document linking specific actions directly to the leisure strategy aims and the Audit Commission key lines of enquiry (Appendix D). In order for the service to gain outcomes from the best value review process it is recommended that the improvement plan be used as an active document, monitored and reviewed at regular intervals. Each action has been allocated a priority, which was agreed through discussion with the Project Board and Project Team. A table summarising the Strategic Improvement Actions follows this section.

### **Vision Statement**

Oxford City Council needs to consider what sort of leisure service it wants to provide. This includes the level of provision, location of facilities, type of provision and how it works to deliver its strategic priorities through the provision of leisure services. It is from this vision that all other decisions can be taken.

### **Business Planning**

This is being formalised alongside the appraisal process. Formal business plans for each facility and the leisure service should be produced and reviewed on a regular basis. Before this can be truly effective the budget setting process and management information issues need to be resolved.

### **Communication**

Joint working across all facilities and across the Council needs to be improved. Key areas such as Leisure and Neighbourhood Renewal should be strengthened for example the relationship between leisure centres and community centres need to work in collaboration to provide a clear direction if officers are to maximise opportunities.

### **Corporate Approach**

Expand upon the recent moves towards more corporate working. An advertising/marketing role and quality/performance role have recently been created within Leisure and Culture. Whilst these are addressing issues only within the Leisure service, they should be broadened to encompass other services in order to improve services to our users and non-users.

### **Maintenance, Supplies and Environment**

The Council has no coherent supplier strategy or clear maintenance programme. A maintenance manager has since been appointed which will assist. Supplies should be procured centrally and potentially with other local authorities. Maintenance processes should be reviewed and roles/responsibilities made clearer for each site. The future maintenance programme needs to be clearly documented. There are no clear objectives or plan for reducing energy at the leisure centres, objectives will need to be created and included in the environmental policy.

### **Management Information**

During the course of this review, the leisure flex management system has been fully updated, networked and installed into all the leisure centres, all centres are now on a central server which ensures the consistency of management information. Staff training on the performance management facility of the system is being implemented. Corporate customer satisfaction surveys are only formally measured on a three year basis which needs to be more frequent.

### **Membership Architecture**

A thorough overview of the membership offer needs to be carried out. Prior to this a vision of what leisure service Oxford City Council want to provide is essential to inform the membership offer. No pricing strategy has been agreed with the members. Each year prices are reviewed and increased, however there is no clear picture as to why prices have been set at certain levels. The benchmarking exercise showed that costs for certain activities such as badminton and squash are out of line and need revising. The Slice card needs to be reviewed as it is not hitting target markets and is under utilised when compared with other authorities.

### **Performance Management**

Budgetary targets need to be set for all management priorities in line with strategic objectives. The targets then need to be monitored on a regular basis and met.

### **Promotion/Advertising**

A formal marketing strategy needs to be produced with supporting funding. Non-users of the service have poor preconceptions of the service in comparison to actual service users.

### **Sports Leisure Strategy**

The leisure strategy links directly to the Council's priorities but more work is needed in order to translate the aims into actions. The best value improvement plan links directly to the Council's priorities and will add further focus for the future.

### **Staffing**

Key issues such as the staff contracts have started to be addressed through a formal contract review that was initiated during this Best Value Review. This process has been delayed due to capacity issues arising from staff sickness and needs to be continued. The benchmarking review highlighted that Oxford has higher staffing levels and higher staff pay than the other Councils. Staff structures at the leisure centres should be reviewed and rationalised where possible as staffing costs are a large contributing factor to the high level of cost to the service. Enhanced pay for staff at weekends and evenings also contributes to high staff costs, this should also be reviewed.

### **Targeted Services**

The leisure service needs to document and agree, in line with the strategies, their target markets, users and sports. These will help focus the services to achieving their goals.

## Leisure Indoor Facilities Best Value Improvement Plan

The improvement plan has been created based on the findings and recommendations from the Leisure Best Value Review. To maintain consistency throughout the best value process the improvement plan has been linked to the strategic priorities of Oxford City Council and the Audit Commissions key line of enquires. Example tables of both can be found in figures 1 and 2.

Figure 1.

Figure 2.

<b>Numeric Reference</b>	<b>Council Strategic Priorities</b>	<b>Numeric Reference</b>	<b>Audit Commission Key Line of Enquiry</b>
1	Reduce inequality through social inclusion.	1	What has the service aimed to achieve?
2	More housing for Oxford, better housing for all.	2	Is the service meeting the needs of the community and/or users?
3	Improve the local environment, economy and quality of life.	3	Is the service delivering value for money?
4	Reduce and prevent crime and anti-social behaviour.	4	What is the service track record in delivering improvement?
5	Tackle climate change and promote environmental resource management.	5	How well does the service manage performance?
6	Be an effective and responsive organisation providing value for money service.	6	Does the service have the capacity to improve?

## Strategic Improvement Action Plan

Area For Review	Detailed Action	Lead Officer	Resource Needs	Link to Council's Strategic Priorities	Due date	Risk	Person Days Allocated
<b>Strategic</b>  Develop a clear vision for the future of sport and leisure provision in the City.	Complete the Leisure Facilities Review and undertake any approved recommendations	Business Unit Manager	Unknown	3, 6	July 2007	Medium	24
	Create a 5 year investment programme aimed at delivering the vision for the provision of leisure facilities	Business Unit Manager	Unknown	3, 6	June 2007		10
	Establish better strategic working relationships with other Business Units where conflict of interest could exist; e.g. Car Parks, Neighbourhood Renewal	Business Unit Manager	Within existing Resources	1, 6	On going	Low	N/a

	<p>Define the function and role of Sports Development in the City and produce a Sports Development Strategy that identifies local development needs and links with partnerships such as Oxfordshire Sports Partnership and Community Sports Network.</p>	<p>Leisure Operations Manager</p>	<p>Within existing Resources</p> <p><i>Outturn may dictate requirement of additional resources dependant upon approved actions</i></p>	<p>1, 3, 6</p>	<p>May 2007</p>	<p>Low</p>	<p>20</p>
	<p>Develop and implement a marketing plan that adopts a balanced approach to marketing based upon business and social needs, as identified within the Councils Strategic Priorities</p>	<p>Leisure Operations Manager</p>	<p>Within existing Resources</p> <p><i>Outturn may dictate requirement of additional resources</i></p>	<p>3, 6</p>	<p>Oct 2007</p>	<p>Low</p>	<p>20</p>
	<p>Undertake community needs assessment and provide activities and facilities based upon the outcome.</p>	<p>Leisure Operations Manager</p>	<p>Resources needed</p> <p>20k</p>	<p>3, 6</p>	<p>Aug 2007</p>	<p>Medium</p>	<p>20</p>



	Undertake further detailed review of the management options for the future running of the leisure facilities	Business Unit Manager	Resources needed 100k?	3, 6	2010	Medium	25
<b>Pricing Policy.</b>  Adopt a pricing policy that encourages more people to participate in sport and active recreation within the Cities facilities	Review the structure of the slice card to ensure it is meeting desired needs, and improve if appropriate	Leisure Operations Manager	Within existing resources	1, 3, 6	Sept 2007	Low	30
	Review pricing structure considering the option of peak and off peak pricing so as to encourage usage during quieter times. Implement changes as appropriate	Leisure Operations Manager	Within existing resources	1, 3, 6	Oct 2007	Low	15

<p><b>Performance</b></p> <p>Develop a more performance orientated culture</p>	<p>Ensure performance information is readily available so that performance can be accurately measured and benchmarked</p>	<p>Business Unit Manager</p>	<p>Within existing Resources</p>	<p>6</p>	<p>Immediate</p>	<p>Low</p>	<p>15</p>
<p><b>Environment</b></p> <p>Practice considers the impact on the environment</p>	<p>Produce and implement an environment policy detailing best practice for the leisure centres to instil energy saving regimes, and ensure procurement of goods and services considers environmentally friendly options.</p>	<p>Leisure Operations Manager</p>	<p>Within existing Resources</p>	<p>3, 5</p>	<p>June 2007</p>		<p>20</p>
<p><b>Staffing</b></p> <p>Ensure staffing structures and Terms and Conditions of service are 'Fit for Purpose'</p>	<p>Review staffing structure to ensure it is provided in the most efficient way possible.</p>	<p>Leisure Operations Manager</p>	<p>Unknown</p>	<p>6</p>	<p>Dec 2007</p>	<p>Medium</p>	<p>40</p>
	<p>Review Terms and Conditions of Employment to ensure they are consistent with the service needs/demands and are achieving value for money.</p>	<p>Leisure Operations Manager</p>	<p>Unknown</p>	<p>6</p>	<p>Dec 2007</p>	<p>Medium</p>	<p>80</p>

## REPORT CONTEXT

### **The locality**

Oxford is a city in the south of England known for its world-class university, as well as being an important centre of tourism, car manufacturing and light industry. It is well served by road and rail links to London, the Midlands and the South.

The population of 142,000 residents is increased by 30,000 university and college students and 50,000 language students. There is a higher than average black and minority ethnic (BME) resident population, with established Chinese and Afro-Caribbean communities and the more recent arrival of East Europeans.

There is a healthy local economy, with low-levels of unemployment. This and regional factors have resulted in a very high house price to local incomes ratio, leading to very high levels of housing need. There are pockets of deprivation notably in Blackbird Leys, Barton and Rose Hill estates, which are located on the periphery of the city.

### **The Council**

No political party has overall control of the Council. There are 18 Labour, 16 Liberal Democrat, 8 Green, 4 Independent Working Class Association and 2 Independent councillors. The Council is run by a Liberal Democrat minority administration.

The business of the Council is governed by an Executive Board, six overview and scrutiny committees and six area committees. The management of the Council is organised into three directorates that comprise of a total of 18 business units. Those most relevant to this review are:

- Leisure and Cultural Services, who manage the Leisure Centres, playing pitches, cemeteries, parks and events;
- Neighbourhood Renewal team, who have overall responsibility for healthier communities and community centres;
- The Strategy and Review team, who produced the Leisure Strategies;

- Human Resources;
- Finance asset management; and
- Built Environment, who help maintain the property portfolio

The Council was judged to be weak in the 2004 comprehensive performance assessment (CPA) undertaken by the Audit Commission. In March 2007, a review of progress was made by the Commission. It found the following.

- Many of the building blocks for improvement are in place but their application is inconsistent across all services. For example, performance management is inconsistent, though the framework is in place.
- The value for money of many services was highlighted as a weakness, with the procurement strategy not yet fully developed.

### **The Council's Leisure Services**

Oxford City Council is engaged and delivering leisure services in a variety of ways. There are a range of indoor leisure facilities provided by the Leisure and Cultural Services business unit. These services are delivered by the Leisure team, broadly providing indoor facilities such as swimming, gyms and ice skating. Although outside the scope of the review the Neighbourhood Renewal unit manages Community Centre, which are largely autonomous, but do provide comparable services which compete and complement the offer at leisure centres with activities such as dance classes and indoor football. Significant partnerships include the following:

- Joint Usage Agreements with the County Council for several facilities
- Sport England
- Oxford Swim Club to provide swimming lessons in City Council facilities
- Oxfordshire Sports Partnership

This focus of this review of the Council's indoor leisure facilities considered the effectiveness of the above service activity and approaches in meeting local needs. It also assessed the service's success in achieving value for money, delivering improvement, managing performance and ensuring there is sufficient capacity to improve services.

### **Question 1: How good is the service?**

#### 1.1 Community and user needs?

The Sport and Leisure strategy ambition is to '*ensure that the cultural, leisure and sporting opportunities of Oxford enhance the lives of all people in the city*'. In achieving this ambition the Council has set out a series of aims:

- To ensure equity of access and diversity of provision.
- To encourage participation in healthier lifestyles.
- To advance lifelong learning.
- To protect and enhance the natural and built environment.
- To enhance the vibrancy of the Oxford brand, both locally and internationally.
- To nurture community well-being and enable the expression of community spirit.

These strategic aims were developed with a cross-party group and following public consultation endorsed by the Executive Board and Full Council. Since these strategies were agreed the Council has revised its strategic priorities, with the consequence that all the leisure strategy documents need to be updated.

In order to meet the aims of the strategy a detailed action plan has been created but there is some evidence to support the completion of actions but little evidence that shows a continuous review of the action plan. The leisure strategy, although tackles short-term issues, does not provide the Council with a clear vision for the longevity of its leisure facilities. A key 'high level' action to ensure that the service is meeting the needs and aspirations of diverse communities is to review level, range and location of provision of the sport centres. There is no clear vision from the Council members for the long-term future of the leisure centres and until this has been resolved then the direction of the leisure service will remain unclear.

The service does not know fully the needs of its local communities although there are a broad range of activities and programmes in place. The leisure strategy does specify service aims for the community but these aims have not been fully translated into actions. The best value improvement plan links directly to the leisure strategy and will help to give direction for the future. The Council does not have a sports development strategy in place which inhibits realisation of priorities around access and healthy living.

There are no clear service aims to support local and national priorities for health, safer and stronger communities, economic vitality, learning and improving the quality of life for local people. The service does not demonstrate cross over with national aims such as promoting healthy living in children, free swimming for under 17s has been introduced; but there is no evidence to support that the Council adapted a planned approach with this initiative.

### 1.2 National and local priorities?

There are clear service aims to meet known local needs and aspirations or to meet national/regional agendas. Local feedback systems are in place and analysis is undertaken. Action plans arising from the analysis of the leisure centre data are acted upon, e.g. service amendments and programme amendments are changed and modified to reflect local priorities. No evidence that exit surveys and general feedback/communications influence the strategic shape and delivery of the service.

### 1.3 Wider corporate ambitions, strategies and priorities for improvement?

Previous management options have been considered looking at external trusts, private contractors and in-house capital investment. Due to the lack of a robust strategy, agreed vision for the future of the leisure centres and several periods of political change, no decision has been made on the future management of the leisure service or priority areas for improvement.

## **Question 2: Is the service meeting the needs of the community and/or users?**

### 2.1 Are the needs of citizens and users at the heart of the design and delivery of the service now and in the future?

Decisions relating to planning, managing and delivering services are based on some understanding and knowledge of local needs from surveys and other consultation, but gaps in understanding means that service planning and delivery to meet local needs is not fully effective. There is no existing action or improvement plans from recent exit surveys, which questions the worth of the exercise.

There is some evidence of local service reviews, improvements and changes to services in response to feedback and local people's comments. Some facilities have requested local user feedback on potential future activities to determine the validity of amending centre programmes; evidence of some joined up service planning and delivery but also indicates independent and "silo" working.

There is a general awareness of local needs among councillors, managers and staff and this informs many areas of services on offer. The lack of a detailed or higher level of awareness means that not all aspects of services are user-focused. The lack of a sports development strategy is a major weakness as this would focus delivery upon local activity need and ways to encourage participation in healthier lifestyles.

Services use a reasonable range of information including the ethnicity, vulnerability and disability of service users, and services are planned, prioritised and delivered in a non-discriminatory way. Children and young people, disabled and older people have opportunities to express their interests and aspirations with regard to the leisure through user groups at centres, but consultation is sometimes irregular or lacks co-ordination.

All leisure centres have been adapted in line with the Disability Discrimination Act allowing for good access routes, accessible facilities, reception modifications, induction loops, upgraded signage and where possible provided activities for groups. There is evidence to support that the activities on offer address disabled groups' needs or that plans exist to further develop this niche group. Many staff have been trained in disability awareness, not many staff have been trained in diversity awareness although the need for this training has been recorded on staff personal development plans. Post DDA works, all leisure centres have received a DDA audit from the Council access officer. All reports were issued to the centres with a detailed action plan.

Leisure works reasonably well together in a number of areas in trying to ensure that children and young people have access to affordable leisure activities such as the Slice Card for U17s, bonus users and free swimming for U17s. There is no systematic approach to pricing and/or national/local initiatives. Leisure requires a pricing strategy which focuses upon business need but also embraces those less well off in the community with a view to encourage participation in healthier lifestyles.

## 2.2 Is the service accessible, responsive and based on a robust understanding of local need?

Attendance records for leisure centres show there is still a need for the sustainable activities such as swimming, ice skating, gymnasiums, badminton and some aerobic sessions. Not enough analysis and review is undertaken on activities that under perform to understand why customers no longer attend. Decisions at the centres are sometimes made to cancel activities that under perform and new activities introduced but this is often based upon assumption that an activity will work rather than an informed decision based upon data about user need.

Many leisure centres comply with requirements for access for local people although the access needs for children, young people, older people and target communities are not effectively identified or addressed across these categories of potential users. Timing of activities is often based upon assumption and there is no evidence to show that activities are programmed according to need. In general the programmes provided at the leisure centres are broad and diverse – but based on opinion rather than needs analysis.

There is some evidence that the service understands the reasons for non-use or under-use of provision and some steps have been taken to address these where appropriate. The service has a partial understanding of its markets and this goes some way to inform planning and promotion. Utilisation of facilities during off peak times within the leisure centres are inconsistent e.g. Ferry Sports Centre uses its squash courts during the mornings to provide bouncy castle fun for mothers and toddlers, whereas Blackbird Leys Leisure Centre has very little usage of its dance studio during the mornings providing no activities. There needs to be a corporate approach to facility utilisation linked to centre and Leisure business plans. Understanding local need should feed into utilisation of centre facilities.

The leisure centres are located in appropriate locations and settings, and opening times in the majority are convenient for users. Physical access has been made possible for service users through adaptations and alterations and the majority of services meet DDA regulations. Service information can be accessed via remote means such as websites, email and phone, but lack of publicity means that take up is not as good as it could be. There is evidence to show that the majority of the centres develop and change in



response to local feedback, user comments, and complaints from users and local people. Feedback is encouraged across services and responses are acted on consistently.

Children and young people have access and opportunities to a number of varied safe, affordable formal and informal sporting opportunities within easy reach of home. Service provision for older people and target communities is available but not consistent across all leisure centres and there is not a fully effective match between provision and needs.

Note: There is no bus route to Hinksey outdoor pool, which will need reviewing.

### 2.3 Are service standards clear and comprehensive and have users been involved in setting them where appropriate?

Currently service standards do not exist in the Council's leisure centres. The absence of service standards has been raised through leisure quality standard QUEST self-assessments which have been carried out at all leisure centres. Currently there is consultation being carried out at all of the leisure centres so that users and local people are involved in setting service standards. Views from children, young people, older people and target communities will be considered and included where appropriate.

### 2.4 Are there appropriate arrangements for consulting, engaging and communicating with users and non-users?

Consultation exists but generally focuses on existing users of the leisure centres. There are examples where non-users have been included in the consultation process such as the Ferry Sports Centre and Blackbird Leys Leisure Centre re-development projects and over the Leisure Strategy through using the OCC website facility. The general view from non-users is that leisure services do not provide value for money and 38% of non-users have not heard of the Slice Card compared to 48% of users. These percentages show that further engagement and better communication with both users and non-users is required with a planned approach to consultation, acting upon the information and feedback given by these key stakeholders.

There is evidence of arrangements to involve children and young people, older people, and target communities in consultation processes, but their views are not proactively sought and as a result, in their involvement is not maximised.

## Diversity

2.5 Does the delivery of the service embrace equality, diversity and human rights and ensure that all users, or potential users, have fair and equal access?

The leisure service has information regarding its local community and makes use of census and other information, including that of key stakeholders and partners. There is little evidence to suggest that this information is used to plan, deliver and improve its services. The service does not discriminate directly or intentionally against any person or other organisation on the grounds of race, ethnic origin, disability, nationality, gender, sexuality, age, class, appearance, religion, beliefs, responsibility for dependants, unrelated criminal activities, or any other matter which causes a person to be treated with injustice. The staff mix across the leisure centres reflects the community being served in the majority of service areas; most managers and staff have received training and information to ensure that policies and procedures work in ways that do not discriminate. There are however staff that have not received diversity training and this has need has been recorded through personal development plans.

Diversity, equality and human rights implications of proposed service decisions or actions are considered before action is taken. Service policies and practices have been reviewed for the equalities and human rights legislation. Some changes have been made as a result and good progress is being made in addressing remaining weaknesses. Diversity, equality and human rights implications of service decisions are considered before action is taken but not on a consistent basis, for example when agreeing and adopting policies, procedures and strategies, or in consultations with local people.

The service makes efforts to raise awareness with managers and front-line staff across many service areas beyond responding to legal challenges and complaints when they happen. Most services which have a direct link to leisure have risk assessed their policies for human rights and equalities, keep abreast of current case law and make changes where appropriate. Procurement policies are inclusive and the majority of contractors and consultants can demonstrate some commitment to diversity in service provision, but do not achieve high levels of compliance. There is regular performance monitoring but this does not inform procurement and contract management as fully as it might.

## Service outcomes for the users and the community

### 2.6 Is the organisation delivering what it promised to?

Leisure has made some progress to achieve some of its objectives and aspirations as detailed in the Leisure Strategy. An ongoing action taken direct from the leisure strategy is '*to continually review and develop facility programmes to meet the needs of the local communities*'. There is no comprehensive evidence to show that leisure services fully understands the needs of the local communities. There have been three major development projects across the leisure service at Ferry Sports Centre, Blackbird Leys Leisure Centre and the construction of a new facility at Barton Pool, all of which were delivered on time and on budget. The service would benefit from reviewing the leisure strategy action plan and communicating completed action/improvements to the staff and its users as there is good work being done and objectives are being met.

Leisure uses a number of partnerships with the public, private and voluntary sectors to meet its objectives, but this may be reactive rather than proactive. Leisure services make some impact on the Council's adopted local and national priorities and objectives such as active and healthy communities and opportunities for life but this is not as broadly based or significant as it could be. There is some evidence of impact to benefit children, young people, older people and target communities as satisfaction levels and attendance levels are high in several of the leisure centres. The free swimming initiative for U17s has had an increased swimming participation.

### 2.7 Is the service effective in meeting local, regional and national objectives?

#### 2.7.1 Participation in healthier lifestyles

Leisure services can be linked to local and national issues but there is no driver for delivery or targets for achievement. Service development is driven by the availability of funding, not the needs of the local community but does coincidentally meet some needs. The organisation involves partners in delivery but not in strategic planning.

Limited use is made of external partnerships and funding to achieve objectives, and service delivery and developments can be inhibited by internal revenue constraints.

Leisure services have an impact in encouraging an understanding of healthy living within communities, either as direct service provider or enabler, but this is not as widespread or targeted as it might be. Not having a sport development

strategy, which feeds into the leisure strategy, is a weakness and needs addressing. Sports development has a large part to play in co-ordinating participation in sport across all ages and promoting healthier lifestyles to all.

There is some increase in user participation and services partially contribute to national targets for healthy living and health improvement. The council provides a range of opportunities (but these may be time limited) to tackle health inequalities and uses part of its leisure services to achieving its health objectives e.g. free swimming for U17s. Although this example does go some way in helping achieve healthier lifestyles in the City there is no structured approach to the free swimming initiative which should embrace long-term health and participation in the sport.

### 2.7.2 Encourage community spirit and well-being

There is a general understanding of the role leisure services play in developing safer and stronger communities but this can be patchy and may not permeate the organisation fully to frontline service delivery. Access to the majority of facilities is considered to be safe with only a small number limited by location or surroundings; this is also true of provision for children, young people, older people, and target communities.

There is evidence that services contribute to strengthening communities through work with groups and organisations, but this may be limited in range and work may not be consistent or ongoing. Temple Cowley Pools operates a women's only session once a week to encourage ethnic minority usage. Further evidence from other centres show consultation around this topic has been carried out and actioned.

There are difficulties in quantifying what impact leisure services contribute to creating safe environments in some local communities for children and young people, older people, or communities at risk. There has been a general increase in children participating in activities across the leisure services e.g. 20% increase in usage at Ferry Sports Centre. There is a programme of accommodating youth offender groups at several leisure centres including the Ice Rink.

### 2.7.3 Enhance the recognition of Oxford

Leisure services have some understanding of the value of their contribution to local economic objectives and although this results in some economic vitality there is scope to achieve more. The sector's contribution is valued and recognised by some partners and key stakeholders.

There is some encouragement of creative industries through promotion and ongoing support. Although there is the provision and promotion of workshop space, retail, and exhibition space for local work, this is limited and may not provide many opportunities to add to the area's economic vitality.

A leisure strategy aim is 'To enhance the vibrancy of the Oxford brand'. Little evidence to support that the service is meeting this objective as detailed in the strategy e.g. developing centres of excellence to nurture sporting talent and promoting facilities as venue's for events such as trade fairs, exhibitions and community shows.

There is some basic promotion of leisure centres in the Tourist Information Service, visitor guide or events targeted at local people and visitors. The website promotion is limited but improving.

There are some activities that support the council in achieving its economic objectives and improving job prospects for local people. While the council does use its leisure sector to contribute to this, it may not be as well applied, utilised or effective in relation to economic vitality, regeneration, or tourism.

#### 2.7.4 Lifelong learning

Opportunities exist for local people to develop their vocational or technical skills through the leisure service with a high percentage of staff living in and around the city.

Lack of a sports development strategy inhibits the service to embrace lifelong learning through structured goals for users and non-users.

Although the council uses its leisure services partnerships to provide learning opportunities through sports coaching and activities these are limited and do not maximise the potential in the sector to share expertise and resources, or encourage learning and personal development.

#### 2.7.5 Enhance the natural and built environment

The service contributes to some basic improvements in the quality of life for a number of local people, including children, young people, older people, and target communities and has strived to improve quality of provision and in recent leisure centre redevelopments. There has also been a range of initiatives to improve the built environment, parks and open spaces, opportunities for play and recreation, the arts, sport, or heritage.

Leisure services sometimes dovetail with others i.e. care and health services, and are seen by some as complementary and valuable contributions to quality of life e.g. GP referral scheme for leisure centre gymnasiums.

There is a range of services to children and young people but they may be varied and medium in quality and the range of provision may not be comprehensive. Provision in some facilities is under-utilised by local young people. Several leisure centres have increased its activity and provision range to accommodate children and young people's needs.

## 2.8 What is user experience of, and satisfaction with, the quality of the service?

Levels of user satisfaction are in the moderate range across leisure services – between 50% and 60% and have risen in the latest survey. Nationally, Oxford City Council is in the upper quartile.

There are notable differences in satisfaction between users and non-users. 68% of leisure centre users are satisfied with the facilities and 38% of non-users are satisfied with the facilities. Results from the exit surveys, undertaken in 2005 show that the satisfaction with individual leisure facilities is higher than the overall satisfaction for Oxford City Council leisure facilities which reinforces the higher satisfaction experienced by service users.

The differences between user and non-user information can be used to help understand the image of the Oxford City Council Brand; There is a notable relationship between satisfaction and experience of Council run leisure facilities and perception and dissatisfaction with the facilities; The negative perception of those who do not use Council run facilities does not truly reflect the experiences of those who use the facilities; There is lack of awareness over service provision, facilities and benefits e.g. 38% of non-users had never heard of a Slice Card but 48% of users had; Those who use the services are likely to say that they get value for money in comparison to those who may not have used the facilities before; The 2005 exit surveys revealed significantly higher satisfaction ratings than the whole city surveys.

The leisure service has a dedicated Promotions and Advertising officer to actively promote the service. The budget for advertising is less than 1% of the total service budget. This approach should be reviewed to address the views of non-users of Council services.

Children and young people, older people, and targeted communities are reasonably satisfied with the range and quality of services available to them.

The council can demonstrate that the majority of its objectives are being achieved and that most achieve the quality, performance and satisfaction standards set for them.

While there is evidence of service achievements against accepted performance indicators this is not consistent and the application of these models may be partial, narrow, or selective. The service makes some use of available frameworks to improve quality but this is not comprehensive.

### **Question 3: Is the service delivering value for money?**

#### 3.1 How do the organisation's costs compare to others, allowing for local context, performance and policy choices?

##### 3.1.1 How do the service costs compare with others?

There is some information on service costs, how these compare to other providers and to the quality of services, but the reasons for differences are not fully understood or used consistently to review cost effectiveness. Subsidy per user is high across the service and will increase with the addition of Barton Pool and with the introduction of free U17 swimming. Staffing costs are high across the service and need to be addressed. Leisure centre budgets are consistently required to make cuts year upon year; the introduction of the new facility at Barton Pool, added further pressure to the leisure budgets and to the Council.

##### 3.1.2 What external local factors affect costs and how do adjusted costs compare?

Overall costs and unit costs for key service areas are not significantly higher than others providing similar levels and standards of services, allowing for the local context. No formalised corporate pricing policy in place, which is a weakness. Leisure services have benchmarked against regional authorities and comparatively offer value for money to its customers. Membership fees are competitive providing no joining fee or contract commitment. The Bonus Slice Card scheme is also widely used offering discounts to the less well off and vulnerable. U17 free swimming has increased costs of provision disproportionately across some facilities.

##### 3.1.3 Are costs commensurate with service delivery, performance and the outcomes achieved?

Where costs are low (including overheads and any capital costs) services provided are of an average range, level and quality.

Significant unintended high spending is identified and addressed.

There is a positive relationship between costs (including overheads and capital costs) and the range, level and quality of services provided.

Service capital projects (if any) are generally completed on time and in budget.



### 3.1.4 Do costs and resource allocation reflect policy decisions?

Policy decisions do not consistently reflect resource availability and/or allocation. Ultimately the Leisure service is expensive to run. Decisions will have to be made whether OCC can sustain running the leisure centre provision as it currently exists. Users expect there to be affordable facilities available across the city. Policy/Strategy decision needed to establish whether the user expectation is manageable and achievable. Review after comprehensive community needs assessment incorporating findings into vision, strategy and operations.

### 3.1.5 Is accurate information on costs and services collected and is this used to decide priorities and strategically manage resources?

Leisure centres monitor budgets at least on a monthly basis to track cost centre allocation. Historical data is used to prioritise resources for cost centres and re-align budgets where necessary.

## 3.2 How is value for money managed, including through partnership and procurement and taking a long-term view?

### 3.2.1 Are modern procurement methods and partnerships applied that result in demonstrable value for money and delivering outcomes that meet the needs of users and/or the community?

The council has effective procurement practices in place and has a strategy that reflects good practice. Leisure services use the procurement team to assist with creating and tendering large contracts as detailed in the constitution.

### 3.2.2 Do value for money considerations focus on the costs and benefits to the customer?

Recent procurement examples such as the swimming lesson contract do not deliver on improving value for money through lower costs although arguably the user is receiving an improved service based on more efficient means of booking lessons.

3.2.3 Are management arrangements focused on value for money, and are they underpinned by robust mechanisms to drive and monitor progress, and review impact?

Processes for reviewing and improving value for money are in place, including setting targets. Service managers use appropriate information to review value for money and report to the appropriate councillors/governance structure. Areas of high spending identified are subject to review and scrutiny and action to address the results. Service reviews have led to some improvements in cost-effectiveness or efficiency.

#### **Question 4: What is the service track record in delivering improvement?**

##### 4.1 Can the service evidence a record of effectively implementing change that has led to improvements in service delivery?

The leisure service has made changes and delivered improvements but these are of mixed quality. Improvements at the two main leisure centres have been very successful in providing new and up-to-date facilities. However, one centre thrives on usage; the other has low usage which suggests that the need was not sufficiently assessed prior to making the improvements. The upgrade of the flex system was effectively implemented and now allows users to book facilities and activities from any centre. The service is working toward QUEST; this will naturally instil a change culture ensuring the improvements and changes that the service set out to achieve its aims and objectives result in the desired outcomes.

##### 4.2 Can the service show that it has delivered significant improvements in outcomes and key performance indicators that would be experienced by users?

Leisure has achieved some improvements to the quality of life for some users. The most disadvantaged have opportunities through the Bonus Slice Card but further promotions to encourage usage are required. The outcomes that have been achieved may not always have been those intended or may not impact on the intended recipients. Review of the leisure strategy is required to focus upon key improvements for delivery.

##### 4.3 What is the direction of travel of key performance indicators over the last three years of this and comparable services?

Leisure has delivered variable quality of improvement as reflected in national and local indicators which show that, while some elements of the service may be performing above minimum standards, others are performing below this level. It cannot point to a sustained trend of improvement in key performance indicators over the last three years. User satisfaction is mixed and service users and communities may have limited awareness of any improvement in services.

##### 4.4 Does the capacity and track record demonstrate improving value for money over time?

Leisure services can demonstrate steady improvement in value for money over the last three years but this has generally been around the minimum expected. The service also demonstrates investment and procurement decisions where the service considers

the long-term cost implications or long-term interests of service users. There are officers and members who show some awareness of value for money in day-to-day activities and decision-making however the lack of formalised pricing strategy is a weakness.

## **Question 5: How well does the service manage performance?**

### 5.1 How good is the service's improvement planning?

5.1.1 Does it have aims and priorities for the future that are clear, challenging and robust? Is the service aiming to improve the 'right' things – the things that matter most to users and communities – and to address service weaknesses?

Leisure has translated its vision into a set of aims and objectives, which aspire to improve the service for users. Despite this, it is not clearly understood where the future of the service is going and how it sits in the Council's plans. The aims are also unclear statements that would benefit from simplifying to make them understandable and robust. The aims tend to focus on the short and medium term with a lack of clarity about the sustainable outcomes for the longer term. The aims address many of the weaknesses in the service, although they tend to focus on process changes. The aims do not make clear all the outcomes or targets to be achieved and therefore may prove to be unrealistic given current context and performance.

Research into anticipated needs and forecasts is incomplete and therefore service aims may not fully reflect user aspirations now or in the future. A fuller understanding the community's needs may alter the aims of the service and directly formulate a new vision for leisure.

#### 5.1.2 Are aims and future plans co-ordinated, robust and deliverable?

Leisure has included within its aims, service and national priorities and preparation for forthcoming legislation and other initiatives. It has not looked more broadly at the contribution the service can make corporately or how related national and regional priorities and legislation may impact although the best value review improvement plan links to the aims of the leisure strategy.

Leisure has engaged with mainstream service users, partners, councillors and/or board members and staff in deciding the aims but may not have achieved a consensus or shared understanding about its aims based on community need. The consultation period and method was limited in its execution.

Leisure has plans which include tasks for the short to medium term. There are also some indicative milestones, targets and timescales although these could be more challenging and more outward focused to help the organisation assess performance and progress.

Leisure has not fully integrated its service plans and these tend to run in parallel with each other often overlapping. This could mean that resources are not always used to best effect and the relative priority of tasks between different service areas is unclear.

The service does not have clear priorities and therefore may be unable to target resources effectively. The service does have some information and research data to understand priorities but has not used this comprehensively to shape its aims or the timing and scale of its actions. It has not allocated resources to all services and growth areas and/or not explicitly identified lower priority areas.

The service can show the links between corporate aims through to community (if applicable), service and individual plans and priorities but these could be strengthened so that individuals are clearer about what is expected of them and how their work contributes to overall aims.

#### 5.1.3 Does it have clear and robust proposals for meeting efficiency targets and improving value for money?

The service has set targets which are applied to improve value for money e.g. continue subsidised provision of leisure activities, seek sponsorship to help deliver free and low cost activities. All budget savings re backed with deliverable action plans.

The high costs of the service are underpinned by a high level of facility provision, high staffing costs and some political initiatives, e.g. under 17 free swims. The Council needs to address these key issues if it is serious about improving value for money in this service.

## 5.2 Are there arrangements and a culture in place to support continuous improvement?

### 5.2.1 How effective is the leadership of the service?

Leisure has a mixed quality and calibre of leadership and management from officers, councillors and/or board members, and staff, partners and/or stakeholders confirm this. Staff and managers are supported but they may express frustration about the lack of leadership and that they are not enabled or empowered to perform to the best of their abilities. Political or board leadership and senior managers may at times get too involved in operational detail at the expense of providing clear strategic direction.

The service has a leadership style, internally and externally, which may be traditional, rigid and/or silo-based. It understands the environment in which it operates and the needs of clients who use the leisure facilities but do not fully and robustly understand the wider needs of communities that do not participate and how they link to local and national priorities. In the past there has been little encouragement for staff to creatively tackle issues; there have been some changes but this needs to be rolled out across the Business Unit.

Leisure has not maximised opportunities to set an example within the community to ensure fair access to services, to work towards eliminating discrimination and to promote sustainable communities. It has only taken minimum action so far to ensure it can recruit and retain councillors and/or board members, a management team, staff or contractors who are representative of the gender, race and age profile of their users and the broader community they serve.

The service has taken difficult decisions, but may have avoided other problem areas and in some cases may have not stuck to tough decisions taken previously. It may not have open and clear decision-making arrangements supported by councillors and/or board members and managers.

### 5.2.2 Are effective performance management arrangements in place to drive and monitor progress, and review impact?

The service has managers, councillors and/or board members who are involved in managing performance but they may not always be active and/or clearly understand their roles. While corrective action is taken in response to

variations in performance, this may not always be consistent with driving improvement. Personal development plans have been created for management level and cascaded down to staff with set objectives for the year and training needs. No evidence to link PDP objectives to leisure centre business plans.

Leisure does not have a good track record of sustaining its focus on priority areas and/or has few mechanisms in place to help it sustain focus. Leisure centres have fully integrated business plans and they may tend to run in parallel with each other. There is no evidence that this planned as business plans do not follow the same format across the centres. The best value review improvement plan will play a big role in improving the service. The improvement plan will need to be an active document at management level and reviewed quarterly by the Business Manager.

The service has an adequate track record of financial management and can show that resources are often directed towards priority areas. Performance and financial management processes may not be well integrated but the upgrade of the leisure flex system should assist with this.

The service has been unable to develop service/business/improvement plans and performance targets which fully reflect service priorities, as these aims and priorities of the service are unclear. Its plans set out some of the practical tasks necessary to deliver its aims and objectives for the service but this is fortuitous not necessarily planned. For other tasks, it is unclear how these relate to its aims and priorities and the plans may not set out a comprehensive framework for the delivery of user-focused achievements in the longer term.

Leisure has plans which include tasks for the short to medium term. They may have some indicative milestones, targets and timescales although these could be more challenging and more outward focused to help the organisation assess performance and progress.

The service produces regular information and intelligence which, while robust, could be improved in quality and consistency. The information does cover local and national performance indicators and user satisfaction but coverage is not comprehensive. There are a range of performance monitoring mechanisms in place but not all of these focus on outcomes for service users. The leisure centres have performance monitoring which does not give the organisation a full picture of how well the service is delivering against corporate and service objectives, improvement plans, the national agenda and local needs.

Coverage of service monitoring remains fairly static and/or limited information is available for managers, councillors and/or board members to understand reasons for variation in performance, or how well performance compares to others.

#### 5.2.3 Are effective performance management arrangements in place to drive and deliver improved value for money?

Some pricing benchmarking against neighbouring local authorities has been completed but this was 2 years ago and is not a rolling gathering of information. Prices for certain activities such as badminton and squash were determined through this process. There are reporting mechanisms to councillor detailing this information.

The Council currently relies upon CIPFA scoring results to compare value for money of its leisure centres. The scoring system is questionable as the service comparators include community centres. Accurate comparators need to be investigated and the service is currently revisiting nearest neighbour and historic city surveys.

#### 5.2.4 Does the service learn from high performing and other providers, user feedback and its own experience?

Leisure understands its strengths and weaknesses due to the comparator work and audits completed by KPMG and by going through the best value review process. Findings have included cost and performance work but also good practice. Improvement plans are in place in order for the service to improve further.

Leisure has its own system in place to receive complaints, grievances or representations. While procedures for dealing with these are followed, practice is inconsistent and the results are not systematically used to improve services. There is also a second system in place at the leisure centres adopted from corporate policy which confuses users. This needs to be addressed and feedback direct from site needs to be fed into the corporate system.

Action plans are created at leisure centres where improvements can be made based upon quarterly trend analysis of feedback. Actions can relate to short-term fixes to long-term gains. Responses to customers are posted to users based on improvements or recognition of feedback.



## **Question 6: Does the service have the capacity to improve?**

### 6.1 Does the service have access to the appropriate skills, tools and finances to deliver improvement?

The leisure service has a depth of staff and varying skills. It has not clearly identified strengths and weaknesses of its staff to help deliver improvement. This needs to be addressed at management level through formalised personal development plans. Understanding weaknesses will assist in creating and delivering a robust training needs plan for staff.

As the Service is not underpinned by a Council vision that is informed by a robust community needs analysis, it is not clear what the Service is trying to achieve and whether or not finances are available to deliver these required improvements. Investment into Ferry Sports Centre and Blackbird Leys Leisure centre has been made but still there are urgent improvements to be made at other centres such as the Ice Rink and Temple Cowley Pools but no clear commitment has been made to the future of these centres.

Planned and unplanned minor improvements have been made across the service within centre and central budgets and absence of a comprehensive vision for leisure facilities holds up future improvements.

### 6.2 Is there evidence of effective financial and human resource planning?

Human Resource practices only partially support the needs of the service; e.g. poorly managed criminal records bureau application process and inefficient management of casual contracts ultimately cost the service. These procedures need to be reviewed to deliver an efficient and fit for purpose workforce.

Training plans for the leisure centres have been developed and are monitored. No evidence to prove that the effectiveness of training is produced to help improve future performance. Training plans are linked directly to personal development plans but no evidence that the PDPs are directly linked to centre business plans. Training aligned to service aims and priorities of work is in most cases fortuitous rather than planned.

Leisure has a high turnover of staff; this places much reliance on the recruitment process which nurtures equal opportunities and demonstrates good practice. Recruitment costs are high and efforts to manage resources should be intensified.

6.3 Is there a robust, modern procurement strategy to apply best practice to achieve improved value for money in priority areas, including working with partners?

The Council owns a comprehensive procurement policy which is adhered to by leisure services. Where necessary external partners will be procured to assist with the development of the service and services from external partners will be procured evoking best value and good practice.

6.4 Is the service/organisation investing, and attracting inward investment, appropriately to deliver improvement?

No evidence exists to support the notion that external funding is systematically sought to support and enhance leisure service. Lack of specialist knowledge in this area across the service although significant funds have been brought in to improve key leisure centres, e.g. Barton Pool £1.3m and Blackbird Leys Leisure Centre £x.

**APPENDIX A –**

Leisure Best Value Review – KPMG Benchmarking – Indoor Facilities

## **APPENDIX B**

### Leisure Best Value Review – KPMG Options Appraisal – Indoor Facilities

## APPENDIX C – Key Line of Enquiry Summary

<b>Ref How good is the service?</b>	
<b>1</b>	<b><i>Direction</i></b>
	<b>What has the service aimed to achieve in terms of:</b>
1.1	Community and user needs?
1.2	Regional and national priorities?
1.3	Wider corporate ambitions, strategies and priorities for improvement
<b>2</b>	<b><i>Achievement</i></b>
	<b>Access, customer care and user and / or community focus</b>
2.1	Are the needs of citizens and users at the heart of the design and delivery of the service not and in the future?
2.2	Is the services accessible, responsive and based on a robust understanding of local need
2.3	Are the service standards clear and comprehensive and have users been involved in setting them where appropriate?
2.4	Are there appropriate arrangements for consulting, engaging and communicating with users and non-users?
	<b>Diversity</b>
2.5	Does the delivery of the service embrace equality, diversity and human rights and ensure that all users, or potential users, have fair and equal access?
	<b>Service outcomes for users and the community</b>
2.6	Is the organisation delivering what it promised to do?
2.7	Is the service effective in meeting local, regional and national objectives?
2.8	What is user experience of, and satisfaction with, the quality of the service?
<b>3</b>	<b><i>Value for Money</i></b>
3.1	How do the organisation's costs compare to others, allowing for local context, performance and policy choices?
3.2	How is value for money managed, including through partnership and procurement and taking a long term view?

<b>What are the prospects for improvement</b>	
<b>4</b>	<b><i>Service track record</i></b>
4.1	Can the service evidence a record of effectively implementing change that has led to improvements in service delivery?
4.2	Can the service show that it has delivered significant improvements in outcomes and KPIs that would be experienced by users?
4.3	What is the direct of travel of KPIs over the last three years of this and comparable services?
4.4	Does the capacity and track record demonstrate improving value for money?
<b>5</b>	<b><i>Performance management</i></b>
5.1	How good is the service's improvement planning?
5.2	Are there arrangements and a culture in place to support continuous improvement?
<b>6</b>	<b><i>Capacity to improve</i></b>
6.1	Does the service have access to the appropriate skills, tools and finances to deliver improvement?
6.2	Is there evidence of effective financial and human resource planning?
6.3	Is there a robust, modern procurement strategy to apply best practice to achieve improved value for money in priority areas, including working for partners?
6.4	Is the service/organisation investing, and attracting inward investment, appropriately to deliver improvement?

#### Background Papers.

Leisure Best Value Review – Baseline Statement – Indoor Facilities  
 Leisure Best Value Review – Baseline Statement – Outdoor Facilities  
 Audit Commission – Public Sports and Recreation Services Report  
 Audit Commission – Corporate Governance KLOE  
 Audit Commission – Corporate Assessment KLOE  
 Audit Commission – Culture and Leisure KLOE  
 Audit Commission – Use of Resources KLOE

## APPENDIX D: Service Improvement Plan

Aim 1: *To ensure equity of access and diversity of provision.*

Area For Review	Detailed Action	Lead Officer	Resource needs	Due date	Links to Audit Commission Key Line of Enquiry	Risk of not delivering	Update
Leisure Strategy <i>(high)</i>	Complete a comprehensive review of community needs in order to assist with establishing a vision for the leisure service. User and community need based against finances available to run and improve the service.	Business Manager	£10k	July 2007	1	Medium	
	Create a clear vision for the future of the leisure service and align the vision to strategy and to operations.	Business Manager	Within existing resources	Aug 2007	1	Low	
Joint Usage Agreements <i>(medium)</i>	Review all joint use agreements between the City and the County to ensure equity responsibilities and expectations are being met.	Leisure Operations Manager	Within existing resources	June 2007	2	Low	

Area For Review	Detailed Action	Lead Officer	Resource needs	Due date	Links to Audit Commission Key Line of Enquiry	Risk of not delivering	Update
Joint Usage Agreements <i>(medium)</i>	Ensure that where there are facilities being under used during the summer months there is flexibility within the JUA for the City to utilise areas. e.g. sports halls.	Leisure Operations Manager	Within existing resources	June 2007	2	Low	
Leases <i>(low)</i>	Review all leases under the Leisure portfolio to ensure responsibilities and expectations are being met.	Leisure Operations Manager	Within existing resources	June 2007	2	Low	
Opening Hours <i>(medium)</i>	Review the opening hours across all of the leisure centres based on customer need and demand.	Leisure Operations Manager	Within existing resources	Sept 2007	2	Low	
Membership Architecture <i>(high)</i>	Review and benchmark slice card and charging options following a needs assessment for user and non-users.	Leisure Operations Manager	Within existing resources	Aug 2007	2	Low	
	Actively promote the slice card brand to increase awareness	Slice Card Manager	£20k	May 2007	2	Medium	



Area For Review	Detailed Action	Lead Officer	Resource needs	Due date	Links to Audit Commission Key Line of Enquiry	Risk of not delivering	Update
Membership Architecture <i>(high)</i>	and take up of the membership scheme.						
	Review off peak pricing at individual leisure centre's to encourage usage during quiet times.	Leisure Operations Manager	Within existing resources	June 2007	2,3	Low	
	Introduce a sales and marketing culture within the leisure centres to encourage usage and membership commitment.	Leisure Operations Manager	£70k	June 2007	2	Low	
	Develop options for 'ways to pay' so all potential participants have access to facilities e.g. website booking and payment.	Business Manager	Within existing resources	Jan 2008	2	Low	
Promotion and Advertising <i>(medium)</i>	Develop a marketing strategy which adopts a systematic approach to marketing based on business and customer	Leisure Operations Manager	Within existing resources	June 2007	1	Low	

Area For Review	Detailed Action	Lead Officer	Resource needs	Due date	Links to Audit Commission Key Line of Enquiry	Risk of not delivering	Update
Promotion and Advertising (medium)	need.						
	Identify target markets/user groups and identify needs in order to establish advertising and promotion plans.	Leisure Operations Manager	Within existing resources	June 2007	2	Low	
	Identify target markets/user groups and their needs in order to develop centre programmes.	Leisure Operations Manager	Within existing resources	June 2007	2	Low	
	Identify non-user perceptions of the service through surveys and feed outcomes into marketing plans in order to address mis-perceptions and to encourage usage.	Leisure Operations Manager	Within existing resources	Feb 2008	2	Low	
	Produce departmental marketing plan that has direct links to the aims of the leisure strategy, departmental business	Leisure Operations Manager	Within existing resources	July 2007	1	Low	

Area For Review	Detailed Action	Lead Officer	Resource needs	Due date	Links to Audit Commission Key Line of Enquiry	Risk of not delivering	Update
Promotion and Advertising (medium)	plan and target market needs.						
	Produce leisure centre specific marketing plans which feed into the departmental marketing plan and site business plans. Review and update marketing plans annually.	Leisure Centre Managers	Within existing resources	July 2007	1,2	Low	
	Review external signage for the leisure centre around the city to maximise local coverage.	Leisure Operations Manager	£10k	May 2007	2	Medium	
	Improve leisure website and promotions. Benchmark against other local authorities and make necessary improvements.	Promotions Officer	Within existing resources	June 2007	5	Low	
	Accumulate all leisure centre advertising budgets to implement a	Leisure Operations Manager /	Within existing resources	May 2007	6	Low	

Area For Review	Detailed Action	Lead Officer	Resource needs	Due date	Links to Audit Commission Key Line of Enquiry	Risk of not delivering	Update
Promotion and Advertising <i>(medium)</i>	corporate approach to marketing and promotion.	Finance					
	Consider the use of commercial partners for ways of advertising facilities/activities and incorporate into promotion plans.	Promotions Officer	Within existing resources	June 2007	2	Low	

Aim 2: *To encourage participation in healthier lifestyles.*

Area For Review	Detailed Action	Lead Officer	Resource needs	Due date	Links to Audit Commission Key Line of Enquiry	Risk	Update
Membership Architecture <i>(high)</i>	Implement a formal pricing strategy which meets the Council's aims of addressing the needs of the less well off in the community.	Business Manager	Within existing resources	Jan 2008	2,3	Low	
	Implement a pricing strategy which encourages more people to partake in sport focussing on key user groups e.g. children and the elderly.	Business Manager	Within existing resources	Jan 2008	2,3	Low	
Partnership Working <i>(medium)</i>	Implement the GP referral scheme across all of the Aspires Fitness suites and other possible facilities e.g. swimming pools.	Leisure Operations Manager	Resources needed currently unknown	Sept 2007	2,3	Medium	
	Investigate potential PCT joint projects work	Leisure Operations	Within existing	Sept 2007	2,3	Low	

Area For Review	Detailed Action	Lead Officer	Resource needs	Due date	Links to Audit Commission Key Line of Enquiry	Risk	Update
	to encourage healthier lifestyles across the service.	Manager	resources				
Slice Card <i>(low)</i>	Improve the promotion of the staff slice card to all personnel	Slice Card Manager	Within existing resources	May 2007	2	Low	Information now available on OCC Intranet. All personnel have received an e-mail shot.
Targeted Services <i>(high)</i>	Vision statement required that focuses upon target markets and target sports. Link to leisure and sports development strategy.	Business Manager	Within existing resources	Aug 2007	1	Low	

*Aim 3: To advance lifelong learning.*

Area For Review	Detailed Action	Lead Officer	Resource needs	Due date	Links to Audit Commission Key Line of Enquiry	Risk	Update
Sports Development Strategy <i>(high)</i>	Following a needs assessment of the local communities design an integrated approach to sport that feeds sports development and other agencies directly to the Leisure centres.	Business Manager	Within existing resources	Aug 2007	2	Low	
	Develop and implement a sports development strategy which defines the function and role of Sports development in the city. This strategy should link directly into the leisure strategy helping to achieve several aims.	Leisure Operations Manager / K. Ravel	Within existing resources	Aug 2007	1	Low	
	Sport development objectives to link directly into leisure centre business plans.	Leisure Centre Managers	Within existing resources	Aug 2007	1,2	Low	

Area For Review	Detailed Action	Lead Officer	Resource needs	Due date	Links to Audit Commission Key Line of Enquiry	Risk	Update
Sports Development Strategy <i>(high)</i>	Develop structured short term and long term plans which encourage participation in sports for all and actively promotes lifelong learning. Link to the sports development strategy.	Leisure Operations Manager	within existing resources	June 2007	2,5	Low	
	Develop plans to encourage participation in sport specifically for the elderly and the young.	Leisure Operations Manager	Within existing resources	Aug 2007	2,5	Low	
	Review nationally trends in sporting activities and implement new initiatives based upon trend and demand e.g. power plates, spinning classes.	Leisure Operations Manager	Within existing resources	May 2007	6	Low	



Aim 4: *To protect and enhance the natural built environment.*

Area For Review	Detailed Action	Lead Officer	Resource needs	Due date	Links to Audit Commission Key Line of Enquiry	Risk	Update
Environment <i>(medium)</i>	Implement an environmental policy and best practice guidelines for the leisure centres.	Leisure Operations Manager	Within existing resources	Dec 2007	1,5	Low	
	Ensure procurement of services and resources considers options that are environmentally friendly.	Leisure Operations Manager	Within existing resources	May 2007	6	Low	

*Aim 5: To enhance the recognition of Oxford through the pursuit of excellence, both locally and internationally.*

<b>Area For Review</b>	<b>Detailed Action</b>	<b>Lead Officer</b>	<b>Resource needs</b>	<b>Due date</b>	<b>Links to Audit Commission Key Line of Enquiry</b>	<b>Risk</b>	<b>Update</b>
Partnership Working <i>(medium)</i>	Create a partnership with the universities for providing facilities for sports groups across the city.	Leisure Operations Manager	Within existing resources	Sept 2007	3	Low	
	Create partnerships with other leisure providers in Oxford City and surrounding local authorities.	Leisure Operations Manager	Within existing resources	Sept 2007	3	Low	
	Enhance links with the universities to help actively promote the student slice card.	Slice Card Manager	Within existing resources	June 2007	3	Low	

Aim 6: *To nurture and encourage community spirit and well-being.*

Area For Review	Detailed Action	Lead Officer	Resource needs	Due date	Links to Audit Commission Key Line of Enquiry	Risk	Update
Targeted services <i>(high)</i>	Create a clear strategy for minority group sessions, incorporate into the leisure strategy and feed into centre business plans.	Business Manager / Leisure Centre Managers	Within existing resources	Aug 2007	1,2	Low	
Partnership Working <i>(medium)</i>	Establish links with the community centres so that Leisure is not in direct competition with neighbourhood renewal.	Business Manager / V. Johnson	Within existing resources	June 2007	3	Low	
Consultation <i>(high)</i>	Carryout consultation with the local communities and act upon their feedback providing information to the communities celebrating outputs and achievements.	Leisure Operations Manager	Within existing resources	Oct 2007	2	Low	

*Aim 7: Developing and delivering a well managed service.*

Area For Review	Detailed Action	Lead Officer	Resource needs	Due date	Links to Audit Commission Key Line of Enquiry	Risk	Update
Leisure Strategy <i>(high)</i>	Complete a comprehensive review of community needs in order to assist with establishing a vision for the leisure service. User and community need based against finances available to run and improve the service.	Business Manager	£20k	July 2007	1	Low	
	Create a clear vision for the future of the leisure service and align the vision to strategy and to operations.	Business Manager	Within existing resources	Aug 2007	1	Low	
	Complete a facilities review of the leisure centre provision. The review will consider their current condition, viability and level of capital investment	Business Manager	Within existing resources	Aug 2007	1	Low	

Area For Review	Detailed Action	Lead Officer	Resource needs	Due date	Links to Audit Commission Key Line of Enquiry	Risk	Update
Leisure Strategy	needed to make improvements. It will also look at and consider facility rationalisation.						
	Following the facilities review the Council need to establish the future of its leisure centres.	Business Manager	Within existing resources	Sept 2007	1	Low	
	Develop a clear leisure facilities strategy including priorities for future site developments.	Business Manager	Within existing resources	Sept 2007	1	Low	
	Complete a comprehensive review of the management options for the future running of the leisure centres.	Business Manager	Within existing resources	May 2007	1	Low	KPMG options appraisal completed 2006
Business Plans (high)	Implement a systematic approach to business	Business Manager	Within existing	Apr 2007	1	Low	

Area For Review	Detailed Action	Lead Officer	Resource needs	Due date	Links to Audit Commission Key Line of Enquiry	Risk	Update
Business Plans <i>(high)</i>	planning ensuring all relevant personnel are trained to complete effective plans.  Create an overarching departmental business plan linked to the council vision, aims and objectives.	Business Manager	resources  Within existing resources	Apr 2007	1	Low	Business Manager produced draft Nov 06.
	Produce service and facility specific business plans maintaining the 'golden thread' approach.	Service and Leisure Centre Managers	Within existing resources	Apr 2007	1,6	Low	Leisure centre managers currently own there own business plans. No golden thread.
	Ensure budget targets are set and agreed at all levels that targets are being met.	Business Manager	Within existing resources	Apr 2007	5	Low	
	Implement a mechanism for reviewing and incorporating customer satisfaction into business planning.	Leisure Operations Manager	Within existing resources	Apr 2007	5	Low	

Area For Review	Detailed Action	Lead Officer	Resource needs	Due date	Links to Audit Commission Key Line of Enquiry	Risk	Update
	Set up systems that continually monitor customer satisfaction levels for all aspects of the service.	Leisure Operations Manager	Within existing resources	Sept 2007	5	Low	
Communication <i>(high)</i>	Create a communication plan from the department which incorporates a structure that ensures all staff are fully engaged and involved.	Business Manager	Within existing resources	Apr 2007	1	Low	
	Incorporate joint working across sites sharing best practice between sports centres, community centres and sports pitches.	Business Manager / V. Johnson	Within existing resources	Sept 2007	4	Low	
	Establish better liaison between sports development and the leisure centres to maximise potential usage and participation in sport.	Leisure Operations Manager	Within existing resources	Sept 2007	2	Low	

Area For Review	Detailed Action	Lead Officer	Resource needs	Due date	Links to Audit Commission Key Line of Enquiry	Risk	Update
Communication <i>(high)</i>	Clarify roles and responsibilities of management, Director through to service managers.	Business Manager	Within existing resources	Apr 2007	1	Low	
	Management to ensure minutes of monthly meetings are cascaded down to staff and key items communicated through site meetings, 1-2-1 meetings.	All managers	Within existing resources	Feb 2007	5	Low	
	Improve relationship with Leisure and Car Parks department. Resolve the car parking charges as customers currently pay for parking in addition to paying for activities.	Business Managers	Within existing resources	Mar 2007	2	Low	



Area For Review	Detailed Action	Lead Officer	Resource needs	Due date	Links to Audit Commission Key Line of Enquiry	Risk	Update
Maintenance and Supplies <i>(high)</i>	Complete building condition surveys to understand the maintenance requirements and cost for each leisure centre.	J. Bellenger / Maintenance Manager	Within existing resources	Jun 2007	1	Low	Some information available, more detailed and up-to-date survey needed.
Maintenance and Supplies <i>(high)</i>	Define the structure, role and responsibility of the leisure maintenance team.	J. Bellenger / Leisure Operations Manager	Within existing resources	Feb 2007	1	Low	
	Work with procurement to consolidate contracts for all supplies and services including plant service maintenance contract.	Leisure Operations Manager / J. Lubbock	Within existing resources	Sept 2007	3	Low	
	Employ a maintenance manager or consider using specialised skills already available in the Council to fulfil this role.	Business Manager	Within existing resources	Feb 2007	1	Low	Post appointed.
	Consolidate and understand the current maintenance	Leisure Operations Manager	Within existing resources	May 2007	1	Low	

Area For Review	Detailed Action	Lead Officer	Resource needs	Due date	Links to Audit Commission Key Line of Enquiry	Risk	Update
	programme.  Create a 5 year planned maintenance programme.	Leisure Operations Manager	Within existing resources	Apr 2007	1	Low	
Management Information (high)	Centralise and network the leisure flex till system in order to accurately record income an attendance, accurately review utilisation and generate accurate statistical data.	Leisure Operations Manager / Slice Card Manager	Within existing resources	Feb 2007	5	Low	All leisure centres have been updated and networked to the central server.
Management Information (high)	Implement flex till system at Blackbird Leys Pool.	Slice Card Manager	Within existing resources	Jan 2007	5	Low	System Installed 2006.
Performance Management (high)	Implement Council appraisal system across all of the centres producing personal development plans for all staff.	All service managers	Within existing resources	Dec 2006	5	Low	All leisure staff that work more than 10hrs per week have been appraised and own a PDP. Reviews have taken place.

Area For Review	Detailed Action	Lead Officer	Resource needs	Due date	Links to Audit Commission Key Line of Enquiry	Risk	Update
Performance Management <i>(high)</i>	Implement PDP for managers with set objectives for the year, monitor and review.	Leisure Operations manager	Within existing resources	Dec 2006	5	Low	Leisure service implemented system 2006. All Centre Managers own a PDP. Reviews have taken place.
	Review PDPs against Directorate, BU and centre business plans.	All service managers	Within existing resources	May 2007	5	Low	
	Review utilisation of all centre facilities including during school holidays.	Leisure Centre Managers	Within existing resources	June 2007	5,6	Low	
	Set out new corporate performance indicators.	Leisure Operations Manager	Within existing resources	Oct 2007	4	Low	
	Improve performance management regime through benchmarking.	Quality Officer	Within existing resources	Oct 2007	5	Low	Quality Officer attending local benchmarking group, mystery visits at centres. Programming use of outcomes.
	Implement COGNOS	Business	Within	May 2007	5	Low	

Area For Review	Detailed Action	Lead Officer	Resource needs	Due date	Links to Audit Commission Key Line of Enquiry	Risk	Update
	reporting and training.	Manager	existing resources				
Staffing <i>(high)</i>	Reduce staffing costs across the service considering a viable re-structuring exercise at the leisure centre's and central.	Business Manager	£20k	Oct 2007	3	Medium	Initial work has taken place looking at feasibility and potential savings to be made. On-going.
Staffing <i>(high)</i>	Reduce the level of casual staff at the leisure centres. Set up system so HR monitor casual contract end dates and terminate contracts when authorised to do so by Leisure Managers.	Business Manager / Human Resources	Within existing resources	Oct 2007	3	Low	Process started. Rationalised staffing list across leisure. System to be set up to continuously monitor contract end dates.
	Review contracts of employment and job description to ensure consistency across the service.	Business Manager / Human Resources	Within needed resources	Oct 2007	3	Medium	Will be looked at as part of the restructure feasibility. Job evaluation process to start Dec 06.
	Clarify support role of			May 2007	1	Low	

Area For Review	Detailed Action	Lead Officer	Resource needs	Due date	Links to Audit Commission Key Line of Enquiry	Risk	Update
Staffing (high)	Human Resources for Leisure Managers.	Leisure Operations Manager / Human Resources	Within existing resources				
	Sickness levels to be reduced across the service. Ensure that the OCC sickness absence policy is followed and managed at all levels.	All service managers/Human Resources	Within existing resources	On-going	3	Low	Policy is followed at leisure centres, schedule of staff interviews for sickness stages in place..
	Incorporate a mobile working policy under contract review to encourage roving duty managers across the service to create multi tasked staff and to promote sharing best practice.	Business Manager / Human Resources	Within existing resources	Oct 2007	3,6	Low	Plans in place centrally and at the leisure centres. A review of training received outstanding to assess at the impact of the PDP.
	Produce a training	Leisure Operations		April 2007	6	Low	Included as part of the

Area For Review	Detailed Action	Lead Officer	Resource needs	Due date	Links to Audit Commission Key Line of Enquiry	Risk	Update
	needs programme based on completed personal development plans. Implement, monitor and review training needs year on year.	Manager /Human Resources	Within existing resources				restructure feasibility project.
	Incorporate shift team working into staff restructure. Reduce staff costs by covering leave and sickness from within team.	Business Manager / Human Resources	Within needed resources	Oct 2007	3	Medium	The service has taken this approach for 06/07 budgets.
	Leisure Centre Managers to participate in the budget setting and monitoring process.	Leisure Operations Manager	Within existing resources	Ongoing	1,5	Low	
Comments and Complaints (low)	Clearly define the process for making formal suggestions and complaints at the leisure centres.	Leisure Operations Manager	Within existing resources	Feb 2007	4	Low	2 systems, site specific and OCC corporate policy. Clarifying site policy for customers and building process for tackling site specific outcomes.
Procurement	Involve the central	All service	Within	Dec 2006	3	Low	All managers working to

Area For Review	Detailed Action	Lead Officer	Resource needs	Due date	Links to Audit Commission Key Line of Enquiry	Risk	Update
<i>(low)</i>	procurement team for larger contracts needed for areas of leisure services e.g. swimming lessons at Barton Pool.	managers / J. Lubbock	existing resources				the Financial Regulations. Close working with procurement on specific contracts, eg swimming lessons at Ferry and Barton Pools
External Funding <i>(low)</i>	Service to be aware of opportunities for external funding to help enhance and improve the leisure facilities.	Business Manager	Within existing resources	Feb 2007	2,3	Low	
Stock Control <i>(low)</i>	Each leisure centre to keep an up-to-date inventory list and review every 6 months.	Leisure Centre Managers	Within existing resources	Dec 2006	3	Low	All centres have an inventory list that is maintained and reviewed on a 6 month basis.
	Review vending machine provision and consolidate contract.	Leisure Operations Manager	Within existing resources	Apr 2007	3	Low	Work currently being undertaken to consolidate contract. Leisure working with procurement.
Leisure Facilities <i>(low)</i>	Complete a feasibility study for implementing soft play facilities at the leisure centres.	Leisure Operations Manager	Within existing resources	Sept 2007	2	Low	