

# SCRUTINY REPORTS FOR CITY EXECUTIVE BOARD - WEDNESDAY 15 OCTOBER 2014

## Agenda No Item

### Scrutiny Committee Reports for the following items:

6. Leaseholder Payment options for Major Works
8. Towards Mental Wellbeing and Community Resilience in Oxford.
9. Draft Culture Strategy 2015-18
15. Oxford City Council's European Social Fund Project



INVESTORS  
IN PEOPLE



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**To: City Executive Board**

**Date: 15 October 2014**

**Report of: Scrutiny Housing Panel**

**Title of Report: Leaseholder Payment Options for Major Works**

### **Summary and Recommendations**

**Purpose of report:** To present comments from the Housing Panel on the Leaseholder Payment Options for Major Works report.

**Key decision?** Yes

**Scrutiny Lead Member:** Councillor Hollick

**Executive lead members:** Councillors Seamons and Turner

**Policy Framework:** Housing and Regeneration

### **Introduction**

1. The Housing Panel considered the Leaseholder Payment Options for Major Works report at their public meeting in October. The Panel would like to thank Bill Graves for presenting the report and answering the Panel's questions.

### **Conclusion**

2. The Panel were satisfied that the framework set out in the report is sensible and fair, and fully endorse this.
3. Members noted that there is no provision for leaseholders to pay into a sinking fund to cover the cost of major works. To introduce a sinking fund now for existing leaseholders would involve changing the terms of all leases, while establishing a sinking fund for new leaseholders would create a new level of administration but with few benefits to start with, so there isn't a strong case for doing this.

### **Director and Board Member Comments**

**Name and contact details of author:-**

Andrew Brown on behalf of the Scrutiny Housing Panel  
Scrutiny Officer  
Law and Governance  
Tel: 01865 252230 e-mail: [abrown2@oxford.gov.uk](mailto:abrown2@oxford.gov.uk)

**List of background papers: None**

**Version number: 1**

To: City Executive Board

Date: 15 October 2014

Report of: Scrutiny Committee

Title of Report: Towards Mental Health and Wellbeing in Oxford

### **Summary and Recommendations**

**Purpose of report:** To present comments from the Scrutiny Committee on the Towards Mental Health and Wellbeing in Oxford report and action plan.

**Key decision?** Yes

**Scrutiny Lead Member:** Councillor Simmons

**Executive lead member:** Councillor Turner

**Policy Framework:** The Corporate Plan: Strong, Active Communities

**Recommendations:**

- 1. That the establishment of the Member Challenge Panel for Mental Health and Wellbeing does not divert officer resources away from other Member Services such as Scrutiny. Consideration should be given to whether a budget bid is required to support this new Member Panel.**
- 2. That the Action Plan is updated and elaborated upon to include progress made against actions that are due.**
- 3. That resources required to deliver the Action Plan are fully identified and costed, so that any bids for additional resources can be made as part of the current budget setting process.**
- 4. That consideration is given to the role of ethnic minority groups and faith leaders in supporting mental health and wellbeing in Oxford, and to how these can be included in the action plan.**
- 5. That consideration is given to how the action plan supports the mental health and wellbeing of service personnel and veterans, and to whether more focus on these specific groups is required.**

## Introduction

1. The Scrutiny Committee considered the Towards Mental Health and Wellbeing in Oxford report and action plan at their public meeting in October. The Committee would like to thank Val Johnson for attending the meeting and answering the Committee's questions.
2. The Committee was satisfied that the motion agreed by the City Council on 3 February 2014 had been successfully interpreted in the report and action plan, and thanked Val Johnson and her team for their work in achieving this.

## Conclusions and recommendations

3. The Scrutiny Committee noted that a Member Challenge Panel on Health and Wellbeing is being established, whereas the Council motion only asked for a Member Champion. The Committee heard that this is because several Members put themselves forward to be the Member Champion, which is welcome. However, the Committee were concerned that a Member Panel would require additional officer support, which could result in existing resources being diverted away from other activities such as Scrutiny.

**Recommendation 1: That the establishment of the Member Challenge Panel for Mental Health and Wellbeing does not divert officer resources away from other Member Services such as Scrutiny. Consideration should be given to whether a budget bid is required to support this new Member Panel.**

4. The Scrutiny Committee noted that some actions in the action plan had a target date of autumn 2014, and requested an update on progress made against these.

**Recommendation 2: That the Action Plan is updated and elaborated upon to include progress made against actions that are due.**

5. The Committee noted that some actions listed in the action plan had not been costed and that these had a target date of March 2015. The Committee suggested that the resources required should be identified as part of the current budget setting process, to prevent any possible delays in delivering these actions.

**Recommendation 3: That resources required to deliver the Action Plan are fully identified and costed, so that any bids for additional resources can be made as part of the current budget setting process.**

6. The Scrutiny Committee welcomed the partnership approach taken and suggested that the role of ethnic minority groups and faith leaders should also be considered and set out in this action plan.

**Recommendation 4: That consideration is given to the role of ethnic minority groups and faith leaders in supporting mental health and wellbeing in Oxford, and for these to be explicitly set out in the action plan.**

7. The Committee felt that service personnel and veterans are important groups who should not be overlooked in efforts to improve mental health and wellbeing in Oxford.

**Recommendation 5: That consideration is given to how the action plan supports the mental health and wellbeing of service personnel and veterans, and whether more focus on these groups is required.**

#### **Further consideration**

8. The Scrutiny Committee agreed not to re-visit the action plan as this would duplicate the work of the Member Challenge Panel.

#### **Board Member Comments**

Rec 1: I would anticipate this challenge panel being member led, and operating for the most part informally, rather than drawing upon extensive officer support.

Recs 2 to 5: These are sensible comments on how to develop the action plan, and we had certainly hoped to update and monitor it.

#### **Name and contact details of author:-**

Andrew Brown on behalf of the Scrutiny Committee  
Scrutiny Officer  
Law and Governance  
Tel: 01865 252230 e-mail: [abrown2@oxford.gov.uk](mailto:abrown2@oxford.gov.uk)

**List of background papers: None**

**Version number: 1**

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**To: City Executive Board**

**Date: 15 October 2014**

**Report of: Scrutiny Committee**

**Title of Report: Culture Strategy 2015-18**

### **Summary and Recommendations**

**Purpose of report:** To present comments of the Scrutiny Committee on the Draft Culture Strategy.

**Key decision?** Yes

**Scrutiny Lead Member:** Councillor Simmons

**Executive lead member:** Councillor Simm

**Policy Framework:** The Corporate Plan: Strong, Active Communities and Vibrant, Sustainable Economy

**Recommendations:**

- 1. That the Culture Strategy presents the fullest picture of Oxford's cultural offering, including cultural experiences that the City Council is not directly involved in.**
- 2. That the Culture Strategy sets out how City Council functions such as licencing and planning can play an important role in supporting culture.**
- 3. That the list of organisations invited to contribute to the Culture Strategy is shared with elected members, so that they can make any further suggestions.**
- 4. That consideration is given to how the City Council can encourage visitors to spend more time in Oxford, and to whether increasing visitor length of stay should be made a priority in the Culture Strategy.**

### **Introduction**

1. The Scrutiny Committee considered the Draft Culture Strategy 2015-18 at their public meeting in October. The Committee would like to thank

Peter McQuitty for attending the meeting and answering the Committee's questions.

### **Conclusions and recommendations**

2. The Scrutiny Committee noted that the strategy is aligned with the priorities of funders, which is welcome.
3. The Committee felt that the Culture Strategy does not provide the fullest picture of the City's cultural offering. For example, cultural events missing from the strategy included the Oxford Literary Festival, Lieder Festival and the Oxford Punt Festival.

### **Recommendation 1: That the Culture Strategy presents the fullest picture of Oxford's cultural offering, including cultural experiences that the City Council is not directly involved in.**

4. The Committee felt that the City Council has a wider role in supporting culture than the one set out in the strategy. This role extends to areas such as licencing and planning, which can influence or determine whether venues can stay open.

### **Recommendation 2: That the Culture Strategy sets out how City Council functions such as licencing and planning can play a role in supporting culture.**

5. Members noted that over 500 Oxford-based cultural, educational and community organisations are being invited to contribute to the consultation. Members requested access to this list in order to make further suggestions.

### **Recommendation 3: That the list of organisations invited to contribute to the Culture Strategy is shared with elected members, so that they can make any further suggestions.**

6. The Committee felt that extending the time that visitors and tourists spend in Oxford is crucial to maximising the economic benefits to the City. Members would welcome moves to change the marketing offer to encourage longer visitor stays.

### **Recommendation 4: That consideration is given to how the City Council can encourage visitors to spend longer in Oxford, and to whether increasing visitor length of stay should be a priority in the Culture Strategy.**

### **Further actions and consideration**

7. The Chair of Scrutiny will write to Oxfordshire County Council's Cabinet Member for Cultural Services encouraging them to participate in the consultation.

8. The Committee noted that the current strategy will be evaluated in April 2015 and have requested a report upon completion his exercise.

### **Director and Board Member Comments**

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Andrew Brown on behalf of the Scrutiny Committee  
Scrutiny Officer  
Law and Governance  
Tel: 01865 252230 e-mail: [abrown2@oxford.gov.uk](mailto:abrown2@oxford.gov.uk)

**List of background papers: None**

**Version number: 1**

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**To: City Executive Board**

**Date: 15 October 2014**

**Report of: Scrutiny Committee**

**Title of Report: Oxford City Council's European Social Fund Project**

### **Summary and Recommendations**

**Purpose of report:** To present comments from the Scrutiny Committee on the Oxford City Council's European Social Fund Project.

**Key decision?** Yes

**Scrutiny Lead Member:** Councillor Simmons

**Executive lead member:** Councillor Brown

**Policy Framework:** None

### **Introduction**

1. The Scrutiny Committee considered the European Social Fund report at their public meeting in October. The Committee would like to thank Councillor Brown and Paul Wilding for attending the meeting and supporting this discussion.

### **Summary**

2. The Scrutiny Committee endorse the European Social Fund project and expect the City Executive Board to give formal project approval.
3. The Scrutiny Committee noted that this project provides the City Council with an excellent opportunity to engage with residents in the private rented sector; a customer base that we know very little about. The Committee hopes that the benefits of engaging with this group can be maximised, which may involve changing how the City Council engages with them, and that lessons are learnt and shared across the Council.

### **Further consideration**

4. The Scrutiny Committee requested to see the full evaluation report at the end of this project in June 2015.

#### **Director and Board Member Comments**

**Name and contact details of author:-**

Andrew Brown on behalf of the Scrutiny Committee  
Scrutiny Officer  
Law and Governance  
Tel: 01865 252230 e-mail: [abrown2@oxford.gov.uk](mailto:abrown2@oxford.gov.uk)

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