

City Executive Board response to the recommendation of the Scrutiny Committee's Oxford Living Wage Review Group for City Executive Board - Tuesday 20 March 2018

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City Executive Board response to the recommendation of the Scrutiny Committee's Oxford Living Wage Review Group

Provided by the Leader of the Council

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Recommendation	Agree?	Comment
1 - That the Council continues to pay all its staff and agency workers at least the Oxford Living Wage, which should continue to be set at 95% of the London Living Wage rate.	Yes	Existing policy
2 - That the Council includes in its advice to businesses on selling to the Council a statement about the Council being an accredited living wage employer and the benefits of paying the Oxford Living Wage in terms of best value, wellbeing and quality	Yes	We advise our suppliers that they are expected to pay their staff the Oxford Living wage
3 - That the Council continues to require suppliers with contract values over £100k to pay their staff and subcontracted staff working on Council projects at least the Oxford Living Wage.	Yes	As above but we cannot enforce this
4 - That the Council maintains a watching brief on the legal position (including any emerging case law) relating to public bodies requiring contractors to pay their staff a living wage, with a view to strengthening the obligations on the Council's own suppliers and their subcontractors, should the opportunity to do so arise in future.	Yes	Yes, we will continue to review the situation
5 – That consideration is given to whether and how the Council could periodically monitor the payment of the Oxford Living Wage by suppliers and their subcontractors so that concerns could be raised with suppliers if they were found to not be keeping to their commitments.	Yes	We will consider whether and how the council might do this. We may seek to obtain confirmation of Living wage payment from suppliers and contractors by including such provision as a contract term to be agreed between the two parties.
6 - That the Council ensures that it remains a fully accredited living wage employer.	Yes	This will continue.
7 - That the Council commits to working with the Living Wage Foundation and the broad coalition of stakeholders, especially local trade unions, on making Oxford a Living Wage City. This could include the City Council promoting the	Yes	This is a sensible, staged approach that will support the policy of explaining the Living wage policy to employers, and partnership working to secure a greater level of adoption over time.

payment of the Foundation's 'Real Living Wage' to local businesses as a step in the right direction towards committing to pay the higher Oxford Living Wage from a future date.		
8 - That the Council creates, maintains and promotes a list of local employers paying the Oxford Living Wage and makes this list available on the Council website, and newsletter, as well as linking to the Living Wage Foundation's map of employers paying the Real Living Wage.	Yes, in part	This can be managed by the Economic Development Team with input from other parts of the Council. We would not set up a separate list but provide a link on the council website to the Living Wage Foundation (LWF). LWF are the accrediting body so we would promote their list of accredited employers locally
9 - That the Council makes it very clear that in most circumstances grants will only be awarded to organisations paying their employed staff no less than the Oxford Living Wage, and contacts other local public sector commissioners urging them to do likewise.	Yes	The Charity Leaders Forum is considering whether they can make a formal commitment on behalf of their members. However, the Council's grants programme involves a great many bodies employing volunteers, staff members and pro bono workers and it would be very difficult to impose this requirement. We suggest instead that we make it clear in the grant letters that employed staff should normally be paid at least the Real Living Wage, and preferably, the OLW.
10 - That the Council puts the issue of the Oxford Living Wage and the Real Living Wage on the agenda of the Economic Growth Steering Group to seek ongoing input into ways of boosting its adoption.	Yes	We are asking the Economic Growth Steering group to set up a Task and Finish group on actions employers can take to support a fairer economy. Living Wage will be a key part of that agenda.
11 - That the Council hosts an annual Oxford Living Wage seminar or symposium, which could involve local employers, trade unions, campaigners, universities, faith leaders and the Living Wage Foundation, to monitor progress and promote the case for the Oxford Living Wage and encourage employers to sign up to that or the Real Living Wage.	In part	We will aim to ensure that we hold an annual event, in partnership with others as appropriate, targeting employers who wish to discuss workforce issues relating to pay, recruitment practices, training and development, and ways of making the most of their workforce within the CSR context. The OLW can be a key part of this discussion, but other aspects of the wider agenda will also be important to secure business engagement.
12 - That the Council allocates responsibility to a designated officer to support and oversee the promotion of the Real Living Wage and the Oxford Living Wage. This should include a suite of 'business as usual' activities, as well as specific campaigns, for example around Living Wage Week	Yes	The Economic Team can identify an officer to work with colleagues to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Undertake promotion during living wage week • Promote living wage adoption as part of ongoing

<p>(building on the successful communications campaign of Living Wage Week 2017).</p>		<p>business engagement activity</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Commission Research into the barriers to living wage adoption and seek a best practice approaches in line with the agreed recommendations (see 13) • Monitor the RLW accreditation measures over time. • Undertake one related event per annum (see item 11).
<p>13 - That the Council sets additional targets for the promotion of the 'living wage', with at least one such target monitored at the corporate level: a) The number of accredited living wage employers based in the city (e.g. doubling the current number within 2 years). b) The number of local employers paying the Oxford Living Wage.</p>		<p>The principle of having three targets per corporate priority is one that we want to maintain. At this time, rather than create a new target of the type proposed by Scrutiny, we propose to undertake research in 2018/19 to better understand the position on Living Wage accreditation among Oxford's employers and to use the budget allocation of £5k to support a broader campaign to increase employer adoption of the Oxford Living Wage.</p> <p>The Oxford Strategic Partnership has identified this as an important strand of activity for 2018/19 and may link up with research being undertaken by Oxford Brookes University Business School. All these activities will be underpinned by communications campaigns to promote the Oxford Living Wage/Living Wage.</p> <p>This commitment will be added to the list of Corporate Plan Priorities for 2018/19.</p>
<p>14 - That the Council commits to flying the Living Wage Employer flag when pay rates are raised every April. Consideration should also be given to flying the Living Wage Employer flag during part or all of Living Wage Week (which would require resolving a clash with an existing commitment to fly the Royal British Legion flag during the same week).</p>	<p>In part</p>	<p>This will be considered on each annual occasion that a new rate is announced and will be done if there is flagpole capacity and no precedence given to another organisation's flag. The commitment to fly the Royal British Legion flag in the week of Remembrance Sunday will not change.</p>

15 – That CEB identifies a specific member to lead on the Oxford Living Wage work over the coming year	Yes	We will continue with the model used for the scrutiny review and will consider which portfolio holder will have a lead on this.
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