

Scrutiny Reports and draft Cabinet responses for Cabinet - Wednesday 12 June 2019

7. Scrutiny Committee Reports (Pages 3 - 12)

Reports and responses for:

Item 8: Seacourt Park and Ride extension

Item 10: Safeguarding

Note: on 4 June the Scrutiny Committee also considered the report on the **Fusion Lifestyle Annual Service Plan**. This and the Scrutiny Committee's report and Cabinet response will be considered at the July Cabinet meeting.

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To: Cabinet
Date: 12 June 2019
Report of: Scrutiny Committee
Title of Report: Scrutiny Committee recommendation concerning the Seacourt Park and Ride Extension

Summary and recommendations	
Purpose of report:	To present a Scrutiny Committee recommendation for Cabinet consideration and decision.
Key decision:	Yes
Scrutiny Lead Member:	Councillor Andrew Gant, Scrutiny Committee Chair
Cabinet Member:	Councillor Alex Hollingsworth, Planning and Sustainable Transport
Corporate Priority:	Vibrant and Sustainable Economy, Clean and Green Oxford
Policy Framework:	Local Transport Plan 4, Oxford Local Plan 2036 (Submission Draft)
Recommendation: That the Cabinet states whether it agrees or disagrees with the recommendation in the body of this report.	

Introduction and overview

1. The Scrutiny Committee met on 4 June 2019 to consider a report concerning the Seacourt Park and Ride Extension, the appointment of a contractor and final project approval. The Committee would like to thank Councillor Alex Hollingsworth, Cabinet Member for Planning and Sustainable Transport and Paul Walker, Interim Project Director, for producing the report and attending the meeting to answer questions.

Summary and recommendation

2. The Committee noted that the report identified what were expressed to be minor changes to the scheme, which had a cumulative impact of reducing the number of planned additional parking spaces from 685 to 596. Councillors were of the view that when taken together, these changes amounted to a substantial change to the scheme. In response to questions, the Committee heard that this reduction in

numbers did not impact the overall viability of the scheme, and that the payback period was still considered to be within an acceptable range. The capital budget for the scheme was £5.156m.

3. The Committee heard from one member that the scheme did not represent value for money given in light of its low return on investment in comparison to other investment opportunities, increased cost, and reduced parking spaces. It was expressed that the new 1,000 space park and ride off the A40 would reduce demand for additional spaces at Seacourt. Further, that increasing the number of parking spaces did not align with the Council’s recent declaration of a climate emergency, as it would encourage additional car usage.
4. The Cabinet Member explained that the Seacourt Scheme was not progressing exclusively for a financial return, but also sought to reduce congestion in the City by encouraging the use of the park and ride facilities, in line with the Council’s environmental ambitions. The anticipated closure of Worcester Street Car Park would also increase demand for these facilities. The demand for the new 1,000 space facility was not forecast to have a significant impact on parking demand at Seacourt.
5. The Committee welcomed advice from the Interim Project Director that the Council would not be exposed to any increased risk by contracting with Oxford Direct Services Limited (ODSL), a wholly owned council company, as opposed to a private sector contractor. The Committee heard that despite ODSL having a “Teckal” procurement exemption, a robust tendering exercise had taken place prior to the selection of ODSL and the scheme would be delivered through a contract agreed by both the Council and ODSL. The risk of overspending was highlighted as a particular risk by councillors, but it was noted that poor weather conditions were identified as the most significant risk, for which contingency time had been built into the scheme.
6. Budget approval for the scheme had been passed by Full Council in February 2019. The report presented to the Committee will also request Cabinet on 12 June 2019 to grant final scheme approval to enable the scheme, as amended, to be delivered within the budget of £5,156,122. The Committee received a proposal that the final scheme approval should not be given, and to make a recommendation to Cabinet accordingly. The Committee voted in favour of the proposal, which was carried on a casting vote.

Recommendation 1: That the Cabinet does not grant final project approval for the Seacourt Park and Ride Extension.

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12 June 2019

Draft Cabinet response to recommendations of the Scrutiny Committee

The document sets out the draft response of the Cabinet Member to recommendations made by the Scrutiny Committee on 4 June 2019 concerning the Seacourt Park and Ride Extension. The Cabinet is asked to amend and agree a formal response as appropriate.

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Recommendation	Agree?	Comment
Recommendation: That the Cabinet does not grant final project approval for the Seacourt Park and Ride Extension.	No	<p>The discussion at the Scrutiny Committee reflected previously stated opinions on this project. As the Chair of the Committee noted, some members simply don't accept the evidence submitted in relation to the need for the extension and its impact, and that continues to be the case.</p> <p>The report details the financial impact of the project over 30 years, but it is important to note that over the next ten years it is highly likely that the availability of public car parking in the city centre will be significantly reduced; it is also important to note that the lease on another of Oxford's park and ride car parks expires within the same period and will need to be renegotiated. Furthermore, while a substantial proportion of journeys to the city centre are made using the park and ride service, there are still many journeys in the city that are being made in the private car, all of which contribute to congestion and air pollution which seriously impacts on the health and well-being of the city's residents and workers. Finally, Cabinet is reminded that Seacourt is frequently operationally full, demonstrating a clear current need for additional capacity on the western approaches to the city.</p> <p>It therefore reasonably follows that there is a need for additional capacity in the park and ride system where it can be achieved. The proposed expansion at Seacourt Park & Ride will make a significant contribution in addressing this need. This is why the project has been repeatedly approved by a substantial majority of Full Council, including the allocation of the budget for the project.</p> <p>I therefore recommend that the Cabinet approves the project as outlined in the report.</p>

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To: Cabinet
Date: 12 June 2019
Report of: Scrutiny Committee
Title of Report: Scrutiny Committee recommendation concerning the Council's Safeguarding Report 2018/19

Summary and recommendation	
Purpose of report:	To present a Scrutiny Committee recommendation for Cabinet consideration and decision
Key decision:	Yes
Scrutiny Lead Member:	Councillor Andrew Gant, Scrutiny Committee Chair
Cabinet Member:	Councillor Nigel Chapman, Safer Communities and Customer Focussed Services
Corporate Priority:	Strong and Active Communities
Policy Framework:	Corporate Plan, Safeguarding Policy
Recommendation: That the Cabinet states whether it agrees or disagrees with the recommendation in the body of this report.	

Introduction and overview

1. The Scrutiny Committee met on 4 June 2019 to consider the Safeguarding Annual Report. The Committee would like to thank Councillor Nigel Chapman (Cabinet member for Safer Communities and Customer Focussed Services), Daniella Granito (Policy and Partnership Team Manager) and Rosie Woollcott (Safeguarding Coordinator) for producing the report and attending the meeting to answer questions.

Summary and recommendation

2. The report highlighted key achievements of the Council in relation to its safeguarding responsibilities, which were welcomed by the Committee. More broadly, councillors commended the report and the work being undertaken. It was positive to see that as part of the recent Safeguarding Audit, the Council was judged to have evidenced full compliance in ten out of ten safeguarding standards (up from 8 in the previous year). Since the previous year's report, the Committee

also noted that the MyConcern reporting system had been implemented, and safeguarding concerns were being reported through it.

3. The Committee discussed the approach the Council took when dealing with people who may be experiencing significant stress or anxiety concerning debts owed to the Council. The very nature of debt collection may firstly contribute to the development of mental health issues, and the pressure to repay may cause safeguarding concerns in itself. It was suggested that in some cases, the wording of letters to residents on these matters could be more compassionate. There may be alternative more personable approaches, including face to face interactions that may be more welcome.
4. Councillors sought assurances that Council officers approached debt recovery and other challenging conversations in a way that would limit any distress caused. The Committee heard that frontline officers had appropriate training in dealing with these cases, such as managing distressing phone calls.
5. The Committee noted that following the deaths of 5 individuals who were, or had previously been through the Oxfordshire homeless pathway, Oxford City Council had made a referral to the Oxfordshire Safeguarding Adults Board to undertake a Safeguarding Review. Councillors indicated their wish to review the outcome of this work at the Housing Scrutiny Panel later in 2019. The view was expressed that there should be formal public consideration of the outcome by the City Council.
6. When considering the 2017/18 Safeguarding Report on 5 June 2018, the Committee made the following recommendation:

That the Council works with partners, such as the Oxfordshire Safeguarding Board, to gather data on the number of school aged children that receive face to face safeguarding awareness training, such as that delivered by the youth ambition team, to better understand the reach of safeguarding work in Oxford. Once collated, this should be shared with partners such as the Children's Trust, together with any evaluation and analysis.

7. The Cabinet's previous response said the Council would work with the Local Authority Designated Officer at Oxfordshire County Council to collate, evaluate and analyse data on safeguarding awareness training in Oxford City Schools, which would be included in this year's Safeguarding Report for review by the Scrutiny Committee. This information was not included, and the Committee requests for this information to be made available.

Recommendation 1: That the Council revisits the safeguarding recommendation made by the Scrutiny Committee on 5 June 2018 concerning the number of school aged children that receive face to face safeguarding awareness training, and provides the Committee with further information on progress against the agreed action.

8. Councillors discussed that in recent history, significant safeguarding cases had been raised in relation to guest houses operating in the City. This was thought to have occurred in part because guest houses are not covered by the same regulatory regime as hotels. Councillors noted with regret that the recommendations and associated actions from the 2015/16 [Guest House Scrutiny](#)

[Review](#) Group did not feature in the Annual Safeguarding Report. The report previously concluded that:

It is clear some offences of exploitation took place within a number of Oxford's guest houses. Some of these detected offences centred on organised exploitation of vulnerable children.

9. Given these conclusions, it is strongly felt that the recommendations and actions resulting from the review should be revisited to ensure the Council has appropriate safeguards in place in relation to guest houses. An update on progress against the recommendations may be requested by the Committee in 2019/20.

Recommendation 2: That the Council revisits the recommendations, and agreed actions resulting from the 2015/16 Guest House Scrutiny Review Group to clarify that actions are being pursued, and ensures that matters relating to guest houses are a feature of future safeguarding reports to Cabinet.

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12 June 2019

Draft Cabinet response to recommendations of the Scrutiny Committee

The document sets out the draft response of the Cabinet Member to recommendations made by the Scrutiny Committee on 4 June 2019 concerning the 2018/19 Annual Safeguarding Report. The Cabinet is asked to amend and agree a formal response as appropriate.

Recommendation	Agree?	Comment
Recommendation 1: That the Council revisits the safeguarding recommendation made by the Scrutiny Committee on 5 June 2018 concerning the number of school aged children that receive face to face safeguarding awareness training, and provides the Committee with further information on progress against the agreed action.	Partial	<p>In considering Safeguarding issues, it is important to note the County Council Local Authority Designated Officer team (LADO) has responsibility for delivering safeguarding support into the Education system. Oxford City Council has a seat on the Oxford Safeguarding Children's Board (OSCB) board and also a seat on the sub group of the Board, overseeing Performance and quality assurance. This group has a rolling audit programme to oversee and scrutinise the safeguarding work being delivered across the sector and report back into OSCB. This includes all Oxfordshire schools both primary and secondary schools.</p> <p>Oxford City Council has limited funds for direct school engagement from the Thames Valley Police and Crime Commissioner. We have a programme where we are working with young people at risk of exclusion and/or reduced timetables as they have been identified as the most vulnerable to exploitation.</p> <p>We are currently working in The Oxford Academy, St Greg's and Oxford Spires.</p> <p>City Council Youth Ambition team also provide additional support to children within the school setting as part of 'our commitment to schools' offer. The topic areas that are covered with pupils include safeguarding awareness.</p>

<p>Recommendation 2: That the Council revisits the recommendations, and agreed actions resulting from the 2015/16 Guest House Scrutiny Review Group to clarify that actions are being pursued, and ensures that matters relating to guest houses are a feature of future safeguarding reports to Cabinet.</p>	<p>Partial</p>	<p>Hotel Watch, involving the Police, Council officers and sector representatives works with hotels and guest houses in the city to improve safeguarding practices. The Cabinet Lead Member will receive an update report on progress since 2015.</p>
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