

Agenda

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Communities and Partnership Scrutiny Committee

Date: **Monday 6 June 2011**

Time: **5.00 pm**

Place: **Oxford Town Hall, St Aldate's, Oxford**

For any further information please contact:

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Communities and Partnership Scrutiny Committee

Membership

Chair

Vice-Chair

Councillor Mohammed Altaf-Khan	Headington Hill and Northway;
Councillor Laurence Baxter	Quarry and Risinghurst;
Councillor Jim Campbell	St.Margaret's;
Councillor Mary Clarkson	Marston;
Councillor Beverley Hazell	Marston;
Councillor Graham Jones	St Clement's;
Councillor Shah Khan	Cowley;
Councillor Ben Lloyd-Shogbesan	Lye Valley;
Councillor Gill Sanders	Littlemore;
Councillor Dee Sinclair	Quarry and Risinghurst;
Councillor Ruth Wilkinson	Headington;
Councillor Nuala Young	St Clement's;

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AGENDA

Pages

- 1 ELECTION OF CHAIR FOR COUNCIL YEAR 2011/2012
- 2 ELECTION OF VICE CHAIR FOR COUNCIL YEAR 2011/2012
- 3 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE
- 4 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Note attached.

- 5 CHANGES TO GUIDANCE ON "CREATING SAFE, STRONG AND PROSPEROUS COMMITTEES"

Background Information	<p>The Government intends to revoke the current Statutory Guidance on "Creating Strong, Safe and Prosperous Communities". This includes plans to repeal the two remaining statutory duties covered in it – "Duty to Involve" and "Duty to Prepare and Sustainable Community Strategy"</p> <p>The Government is looking to introduce a minimal "Best Value Statutory Guidance" in its place. This will include a requirement that:-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Authorities should be sensitive to the needs of voluntary and community organisations and local businesses; • Authorities should seek to avoid passing on disproportionate cuts to the voluntary and community sector; • An authority threatening
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	<p>to reduce or end funding or resource that will materially threaten the viability of the organisation or the service it provides should give at least 3 months notice to the organisation;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An authority should engage the organisation as early as possible on the future of the service.
<p>Why is it on the agenda?</p>	<p>In view of the proposed changes outlined above, it was felt that it would be useful to consider how the voluntary sector in Oxford was coping in the light of changes funding especially from Oxfordshire County Council.</p> <p>Alison Baxter (Oxfordshire Council for Voluntary Action – OCVA) has been invited to attend the meeting and give a short presentation to the Committee concerning:-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Where the voluntary sector in Oxford now is in the light of changes/cuts for funding from Oxfordshire County Council; • What could the City Council do to help support services - this is not necessarily by financial means.
<p>Who has been invited to comment?</p>	<p>Alison Baxter (OCVA) will attend the meeting.</p>
<p>What will happen after the meeting?</p>	<p>Any further work will be considered within the regeneration strand of the committees new work programme.</p>

6 HOUSING STRATEGY UPDATE

1 - 4

Contact Officer – James Edwards (Strategy and Enabling Manager, Housing and Communities) - Tel (01865) 252249, jedwards@oxford.gov.uk

<p>Background Information</p>	<p>The overarching Housing Strategy, with supporting individual policies attached to it, is due to be renewed in 2011.</p> <p>The Scrutiny Committee previously expressed a wish to be involved in the development of, and consultation on, proposals of all elements of these strategies. Of particular interest were elements related to:-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Housing families with vulnerable children, and joint working within the CYP Plan; • Older People; • Young People; • The sustainability of tenancies let to vulnerable/challenging individuals and families. <p>Changes to housing funding nationally caused a pause in the development of the strategy.</p> <p>The Council’s Budget proposals recognised the challenges posed by these changes and Includes significant contingencies over the coming 4 years to address these. A request has been made within the work programme for the committee to consider both the development and progress of the housing strategy and changes. The focus suggested is to consider the actual outcomes matched against the contingencies</p>
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	<p>available to deal with these.</p> <p>Consultation on the overarching themes of the Housing Strategy was undertaken with the Council's Talkback Panel in March 2011, and the draft results are being analysed. Final results are expected later in June 2011.</p>
Why is it on the agenda?	<p>The attached report gives an update to the Committee on:-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Initial key points from the Talkback Consultation; • Information on Affordable Housing; • Illustration of rent levels In Oxford. <p>It is anticipated that the draft Housing Strategy for 2011 to 2015 will be completed over the summer, with wider consultation expected by September.</p>
Who has been invited to comment?	<p>Graham Stratford (Head of Housing and Communities) will attend the meeting.</p>
What will happen after the meeting?	<p>The Committee should consider If it wishes to add the work suggested to its programme for the coming year</p>

7 END OF YEAR PERFORMANCE FIGURES - COMMUNITY HOUSING

5 - 14

Contact Officer: Lena Haapalahti (Service Development Officer, Housing and Communities) Tel: 01865 252479, email: haapalahti@oxford.gov.uk

Background Information	<p>This is a quarterly monitoring report that the Committee has examined for a number of years.</p> <p>The attached report highlights the</p>
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	performance at the year end (2010/11) in areas of specific interest to the Committee – rough sleeping, homelessness and housing allocations.
Why is it on the agenda?	The attached report gives an overview of performance in the committees area of focus
Who has been invited to comment?	Graham Stratford will attend the meeting and present the information to the Committee.
What will happen after the meeting?	Further consideration of this information will be considered within the work programme setting

8 WORK PROGRAMME AND REPORT BACK ON COMMITTEE'S RECOMMENDATIONS

15 - 34

Contact officer: Pat Jones (Principal Scrutiny Officer), Tel 01865 252191, phjones@oxford.gov.uk

Background Information	<p>Scrutiny Committees work each year within a programme agreed by councillors. The programme for the coming year is yet to be agreed</p> <p>This item will appear on all future agendas to allow members to see progress on their programme items and plan agendas for future meetings</p>
Why is it on the agenda?	<p>Work is currently progressing on the preparation for the coming years programme. Shortly scrutiny members need to decide what they wish to include and how they want to be involved</p> <p>Members are asked to set a date in July for an informal meeting to allow this to happen. The 18th. July is suggested</p> <p>Also included is a report back on the recommendations made by the committee at its last meeting on the County Council's consultation on the</p>

	Household Waste Recycling Centre Strategy
Who has been invited to comment?	The Principal Scrutiny Officer, will present progress so far
What will happen after the meeting?	An informal meeting will be arranged to set the committees programme for the coming year

9 COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT - UPDATE ON THE DEVELOPMENT OF AREA FORUMS

35 - 56

Contact officer: Pat Jones (Principal Scrutiny Officer), Tel 01865 252191, phjones@oxford.gov.uk

Background Information	The committee nominated Councillors Wilkinson and Sanders to observe the development of Area Forums. There is also a recommendation from the last programme to review the operation of Area Forums at the end of the year
Why is it on the agenda?	The councillors present their observations so far and ask the committee to clarify the next steps
Who has been invited to comment?	Councillors Wilkinson and Sanders will answer questions
What will happen after the meeting?	Any further work will be included in the work programme for the coming year

10 MINUTES

57 - 64

Minutes of the meeting held on 30th March 2011 attached at page 10.1

11 DATES AND TIMES OF FUTURE MEETINGS

The following dates have been agreed by Council:

17th October
12th December
7th February 2012
2nd April 2012

Plus, an informal meeting to be arranged - probably in July.

The Committee is also requested to decide at what time its meetings should start. Last year meetings began at 5pm.

DECLARING INTERESTS

What is a personal interest?

You have a personal interest in a matter if that matter affects the well-being or financial position of you, your relatives or people with whom you have a close personal association more than it would affect the majority of other people in the ward(s) to which the matter relates.

A personal interest can affect you, your relatives or people with whom you have a close personal association positively or negatively. If you or they would stand to lose by the decision, you should also declare it.

You also have a personal interest in a matter if it relates to any interests, which you must register.

What do I need to do if I have a personal interest?

You must declare it when you get to the item on the agenda headed "Declarations of Interest" or as soon as it becomes apparent to you. You may still speak and vote unless it is a prejudicial interest.

If a matter affects a body to which you have been appointed by the authority, or a body exercising functions of a public nature, you only need declare the interest if you are going to speak on the matter.

What is a prejudicial interest?

You have a prejudicial interest in a matter if;

- a) a member of the public, who knows the relevant facts, would reasonably think your personal interest is so significant that it is likely to prejudice your judgment of the public interest; and
- b) the matter affects your financial interests or relates to a licensing or regulatory matter; and
- c) the interest does not fall within one of the exempt categories at paragraph 10(2)(c) of the Code of Conduct.

What do I need to do if I have a prejudicial interest?

If you have a prejudicial interest you must withdraw from the meeting. However, under paragraph 12(2) of the Code of Conduct, if members of the public are allowed to make representations, give evidence or answer questions about that matter, you may also make representations as if you were a member of the public. However, you must withdraw from the meeting once you have made your representations and before any debate starts.

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To: Communities and Partnerships Scrutiny Committee

Date: 6th June 2011

Item No:

Report of: Graham Stratford, Housing and Communities

Title of Report: Update on Housing Strategy and Related Issues

Summary and Recommendations

Purpose of report: To provide an update to scrutiny on the Housing Strategy and related housing issues.

Report Approved by:

Legal: Stephen Smith

Recommendation(s): Report is noted.

1) Housing Strategy 2011 – 2015

Consultation on the overarching themes of the housing strategy was undertaken with the Council's Talkback panel during March 2011 and the draft results are now being analysed (final results are expected later in June 2011). Some of the key points from this consultation include:

- a) Importance of housing issues:
 - i) High house prices – 88%
 - ii) Street homelessness and rough sleeping- 81%
 - iii) Lack of affordable housing for families – 80%
 - iv) Lack of affordable housing for singles / couples – 68%
 - v) Long waiting lists for affordable housing – 64%
- b) When asked for their top three issues, over one half (55%) mentioned lack of affordable housing for families. This was closely followed by high house prices (52%). Other issues received less of a response although 28% also mentioned high rental levels amongst their top three issues. Too many houses received the lowest percentage (4%), with few respondents placing this in their top three.
- c) Respondents were asked what type of new housing they thought is needed in Oxford and where this housing should be. Almost three fifths (57%) said that more family sized homes of 3 and 4 bedrooms are

needed whilst two fifths (41%) felt there is a need for more smaller homes. Family sized flats received less of a response with one fifth (20%) stating that more of this type of housing is required.

- d) The most common response to the question, rate the council's performance on provision of affordable housing in the City was don't know (41%) suggesting that there is low awareness amongst the general public on activity in this policy area.
- e) Respondents were asked to explain why they had given the rating they had given when asked to rate the Council's performance on the provision of affordable housing. On the whole the comments received either stated how respondents felt they were unable to comment as they did not have enough knowledge on the issue or were negative about the Council's performance. Negative comments focused on the high house prices and rental levels in Oxford and long waiting lists for council properties. Comments included:
- *"House prices and rents are very high - one of the most expensive places in UK to live"*
 - *"There never seems to be enough affordable housing, and there is not enough pressure from the council on builders to supply it"*
 - *"Because there are still lots of homeless people un-housed and there are many professional people who cannot live affordably except in expensive rented accommodation within the ring road i.e. there is no affordable housing for young couples or for families on lower incomes to buy in reasonable areas within the city"*
 - *"Because house prices in Oxford are absurdly high"*
 - *"I know families who have been on the waiting list for years and have had to move away from the area"*
 - *"Long waiting list and poor application process"*
 - *"The waiting list for council houses is enormous and presumably the council tax payers have to fund accommodation whilst they wait for a house"*
- f) There were some respondents however who felt more positive about the Council's performance as illustrated by the comments below:
- *"A reasonable performance given the attraction of Oxford to many newcomers"*

- *“City makes efforts to reduce waiting lists, provide affordable housing in new developments”*
 - *“I think the city council does the best it can, but is hamstrung by lack of support from central government and from neighbouring authorities.”*
 - *“Plenty of council / housing association properties”*
- g) Respondents were provided with a list of the seven objectives in the current Housing Strategy 2008/11 and asked to what extent they agree or disagree with them. Agreement was high across all the objectives, ranging from 82% agreeing overall that the Council should provide more affordable housing, to 74% agreeing that they should improve their understanding of housing needs to develop and implement housing strategy.
- h) In order to get a better sense of prioritization respondents were then asked to list their top 3 objectives in the current Housing Strategy 2008/11. In line with the previous question providing more affordable housing was most frequently identified by respondents as being in the top 3 objective they most agreed with (61%). Similarly preventing and reducing homelessness was the second most popular objective (54%), closely followed by addressing the needs of vulnerable people (52%). Improving understanding of housing needs to develop and implement housing strategy was the objective respondents least agreed with (24%).
- i) Respondents were informed that the government is suggesting councils and housing associations consider offering fixed-term tenancies rather than tenancies for life. At the same time the rents for social housing will be increased. Respondents were then asked what impact they thought these changes might have on housing and homelessness in Oxford. Seven out ten (70%) respondents stated that they thought the proposals would have a big impact, with 23% saying ‘very’ big impact. Just 9% said they thought they would have little impact and 2% no impact. One fifth (19%) gave don’t know as a response.

The draft Housing strategy 2011 – 15 will be completed over the summer with wider consultation expected by September.

2) Affordable Housing

The Homes and Communities Agency (HCA) published its Affordable Homes Programme Framework 2011 – 15 which outlines how housing associations and also councils could bid for inclusion on the 2011 – 15 programme for development.

- a) The main points were:
- i) A 4-year programme covering 2011 – 15.
 - ii) Councils able to bid for inclusion on the programme.

- iii) New flexible tenancies and affordable rent models specified:
 - (1) Flexible tenancies must be for a minimum of 2 years.
 - (2) New affordable rent model sets rent 'up to' 80% of local market rents (they are currently around 30% to 50%).
 - (3) Landlords on the programme would be expected too convert a proportion of existing social rented housing to the new forms (flexible tenancy and 80% of market rent).
- iv) New local authority build homes using HCA funds from this programme would have to be new affordable (i.e. up to 80% market rent) unless:
 - (1) In regeneration schemes where decanting existing social rent tenants is necessary, and
 - (2) Can demonstrate affordable rent would not be viable, or
 - (3) Social rent may be provided by the LA (or supported by) through use of its own resources (e.g. land), and, where this meets HCA VFM assessments at the same level as affordable rent.
- v) There are no formal caps on the level of affordable rent ('up to 80%'). However, the Framework states that landlords will wish to consider the local market context (including the Local Housing Allowance (LHA)) as well as welfare benefit reforms on the whole when setting rents. On this the Framework says that providers may wish to charge a rent lower than 80% or market where that is exceeding or close to the LHA.

Illustration of Oxford rent levels:

Property type	Average Council rent	Average RSL rent	LHA rent for Oxfordshire (week)*	Average private rent**	Average private rent***
Room	N/A	N/A	£78.46	£138.46	£147.69
1 bed flat	£74.31	£82.85	£150.00	£176.54	£166.85
2 bed flat	£78.92	£92.08	£183.46	£233.08	£281.54
3 bed house	£85.62	£100.38	£213.46	£267.46	£315.46
4 bed house	£89.54	£108.00	£288.46	£348	£339.92

* June 2011

** www.findaproperty.com

*** www.look4aproperty.com

- vi) The Council has submitted as bid for inclusion of the Affordable Homes Programme.

Name and contact details of author: James Edwards, Strategy and Enabling Manager, Housing & Communities

Background papers: None

Version number: 1

To: Communities & Partnership Scrutiny Committee

Date: 6 June 2011

Item No:

Report of: Head of Service, Housing & Communities

Title of Report: Year end 2010/11 Performance Report Community Housing

Summary and Recommendations

Purpose of report: This report highlights the performance for the year end 2010/11 in the areas of specific interest to the Scrutiny Committee

Report Approved by: Graham Stratford and Community Housing Senior Managers

Finance: Paul Jemetta

Legal: Stephen Smith

Recommendation(s): 1. Note the report.

Community Housing Performance – Executive Summary

1. The report is presented in four sections, the executive summary and three appendices. Appendix A lists Community Housing performance indicators with performance reported against the annual target with comments provided. Appendix B lists the allocations percentages for the relevant quarter. Appendix C provides graphs for temporary accommodation data.
2. The end of year results are somewhat mixed. Whilst we have met the target for reducing numbers of households in temporary accommodation, it is clear from the increased number of acceptances that any further reduction will be much more difficult to achieve than in past years. This is largely due to the increased number of complex cases presenting to Options team, where simple provision of a rent

deposit is not a suitable course of action, and to the difficulty in obtaining suitable private sector properties to enable homelessness prevention to take place in less complex cases.

3. Rough sleeping continues to be problematic, and additional resources are being deployed in the coming year in an attempt to further lower numbers. It should be borne in mind that previous to the introduction of the current programme of services, rough sleeping numbers in the city were often in the 50s. We are not complacent, however, and will continue to develop new approaches to working with this difficult client group.
4. Allocations percentages have largely been met, particularly in relation to family dwellings – this is not an exact science, but the team have done very well in coming close to the targets set by the council in this respect.
5. Affordable housing development result is disappointing, but members should be aware that the shortfall has been caused by slippage in development timescales, and that the “missing” properties will be delivered in 2011/12. There is little development coming forward in the city at the present time, and we are fortunate that the Rose Hill development, together with the council’s own new build schemes have kept the supply flowing to some degree.

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Background papers: None

Appendix A: Community Housing Performance Indicators 2010/11

Performance Indicator	Year end result 2009/10	Target 2010/11	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Year end result	Comments
BV 202 The number of people sleeping rough on a single night within the area of the local authority	16	6	17	18	11	16	16 (RED)	Count numbers are over target due to a combination of increased numbers of clients presenting with no recourse to public funds as well as higher number of entrenched rough sleepers who are not responding to traditional services. A pilot personalisation project has been launched to look at alternative ways of working with the entrenched population.
Client Share figure	49	Not applicable	47	48	35	36	36	The client share figure is an average and numbers tend to vary.
Homelessness acceptances	104	100	22	44	30	27	123 (RED)	<p>Acceptances have increased this year for various reasons, including a lack of suitable two-beds in the private sector; complex presentations of young people; and the high needs of customers presenting to us. Of the 123 acceptances, 118 were 'normal' acceptances with the households placed in temporary accommodation, 5 were accepted with arrangements made to accommodate them in the private sector instead.</p> <p>Main reasons for loss of last settled home: Exclusions by family & friends: 49% Left institution/care: 15% Relationship breakdown: 15% End of assured shorthold tenancy: 8%</p>

Community Housing Quarterly Performance Report – Appendix A

Performance Indicator	Year end result 2009/10	Target 2010/11	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Year end result	Comments
								Mortgage arrears: 2% Rent arrears: 3%
Households accepted as statutorily homeless who were accepted as statutorily homeless by Oxford City Council within the last two years*	2	Not applicable	0	1	0	0	1	*Reports level of repeat homelessness
Percentage successful reviews against homelessness decision	35.8%	Not applicable	25%	9%	12.5%	44.4%	23.4%	Of a total number of 18 completed reviews during the quarter, the decision was changed in the applicant's favour in 8 cases. In all these cases new information was obtained.
OO BV 213 Households who considered themselves as homeless, who approached the local authority's housing advice service and for whom housing advice casework intervention resolved their situation.	7.75 (per thousand households) 445 cases	400	151	127	137	278	693 (GREEN)	Cumulative figure.
NI156 Total households in temporary accommodation	240	175	203	203	162	156	156 (GREEN)	Target met.
Households with children in temporary accommodation	194	Not applicable	167	162	134	128	128	There is a small deficit with the total figure above as there are a small number of couples without children and families with adult children.
Single people in temporary accommodation	40	Not applicable	30	34	25	22	22	See above.

Community Housing Quarterly Performance Report – Appendix A

Performance Indicator	Year end result 2009/10	Target 2010/11	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Year end result	Comments
Direct cost of temporary accommodation	£800,750	Not applicable	£341,070	£393,219	£473,817	£667,453	£667,453	Net cost. Cumulative figure. Excludes staff costs.
Households housed through Homechoice scheme	206	200	53	46	49	52	200	Target met.
Number of affordable housing units developed - Local indicator (Includes social housing for rent and shared ownership) This indicator is in accordance with the definition of affordable housing in Oxford City Council's Affordable Housing Policy.	192	180	57	2	54	35	148 (RED)	We profiled the handover of 181 affordable homes to be delivered in 2010/11. However, the half-Orlits on Rose Hill have slipped because the Party Wall Awards took longer to put into place than expected and Cardinal House could not be handed over due to the damage sustained when the building was vandalised. We did have most of the units on Maple Pritchard/St Nicholas House in Littlemore handed over earlier than expected which resulted in a final total of 148 delivered for 2010/11.
NI155 Number of affordable homes delivered (Wider definition than the OCC local indicator – apart from the above also includes key worker housing, all types of intermediate housing etc)	233		57	5	57	35	154	The figure includes 6 Open Market Homebuy units.
BV64 Empty homes brought back into use	17	8	2	2	2	4	10 (GREEN)	Target met.

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**Community Housing Quarterly Performance Report
Appendix B: Allocations percentages**

Lettings & Nominations 2010/11 (1 April 2010 – 31 March 2011)

Family Accommodation						
Property Size		Homeless	Move-on	Transfer	General	TOTAL
Two Bed	Percentage	31.3%	0.0%	21.2%	47.6%	
	Target	35%	0	15%	50%	
	Let	65	0	44	99	208
	Expected lets	68	0	29	98	195
Three Bed	Percentage	34.2%	0.0%	43.3%	22.5%	
	Target	30%	0	45%	25%	
	Let	41	0	52	27	120
	Expected lets	33	0	50	27	110
Four Bed+	Percentage	41.7%	0.0%	50.0%	8.3%	
	Target	30%	0	50%	20%	
	Let	5	0	6	1	12
	Expected lets	3	0	5	2	10

Non-Family (Non-Designated) Accommodation							
Property Size		Homeless	Move-on 1	Move-on 2	Transfer	General	TOTAL
Studio flat / One Bed	Percentage	13.2%	11.6%	7.0%	7.8%	60.5%	
	Target	35%	30%	10%	5%	20%	
	Let	17	15	9	10	78	129
	Expected lets	38	32	11	5	22	108

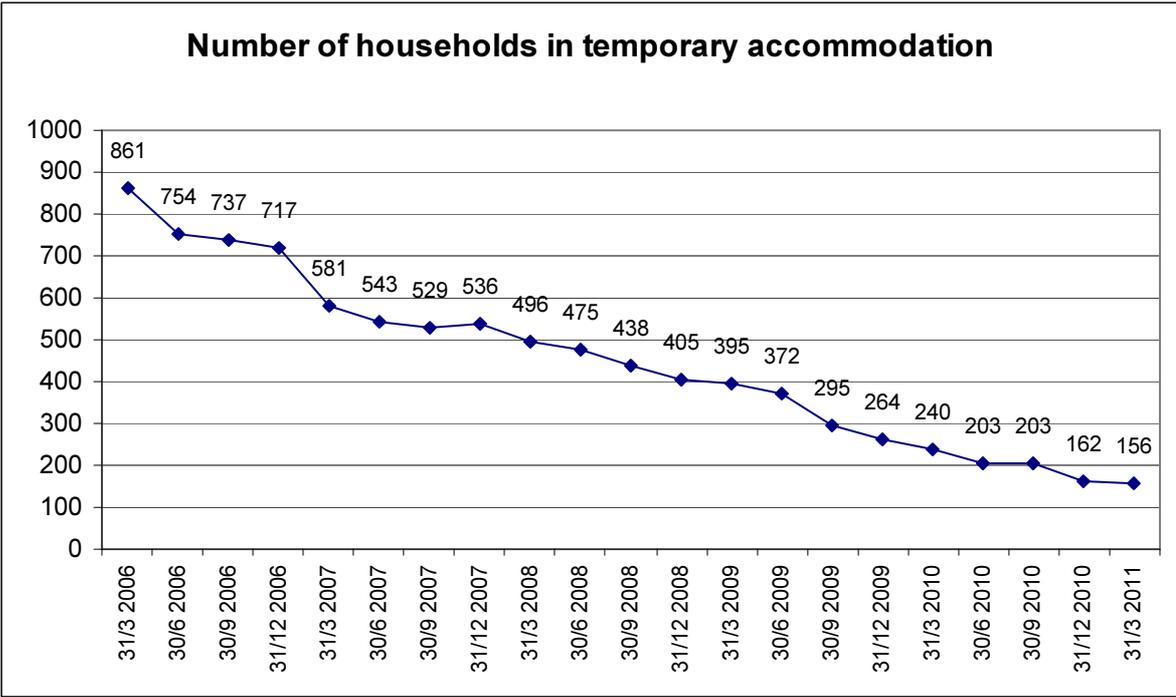
Designated Elderly Accommodation							
Property Size		Homeless	Move-on 1	Move-on 2	Transfer	General	TOTAL
Any Size	Percentage	5.1%	3.6%	0.0%	91.3%		
	Target	5%	15%	0%	80%		
	Let	7	5	0	126		138
	Expected lets	6	18	0	96		120

Sheltered Accommodation							
Property Size		Homeless	Move-on	Transfer	General	TOTAL	
Any Size	Percentage	1.4%		98.6%			
	Target	no target		no target			
	Let	1		70			71
	Expected lets	0		60			60

Total allocations:	678	+22 CBL sub-regional = 700
Expected allocations:	603	at year end

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Community Housing Quarterly Performance Report
Appendix C: Charts



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Household Waste Recycling Centre Strategy

Briefing note

1. This issue was considered by Oxfordshire County Council's Cabinet on 19th April 2011. The report presented by the Deputy Director for Growth and Infrastructure is attached as Appendix A to this briefing note, along with an extract from the minutes of that meeting.
2. Comments from the Communities and Partnership Scrutiny Committee, made at our meeting held on 30th March, were considered as part of the County Council's consultation on this matter. Our comments are attached in full as Appendix B to this note.
3. A summary of our comments and the County Council's views is shown below.

Summary of our comments	County Council response (where given)
<p>Welcome for the proposed new recycling centre at Kidlington</p>	<p>Committed to investment in Kidlington – provisional opening date is April 2012. This will have a dedicated re-use store where people can donate or purchase items of reasonable quality.</p> <p>The new facility will service Oxford City, along with Redbridge at limited times (see below)</p>
<p>Committee noted that the Strategy had been amended from its original form which proposed the closure of Redbridge to all domestic waste to allow it to take domestic waste at weekends. This is a step in the right direction.</p> <p>Concern remained about the service gap when Redbridge closed for refurbishment; efforts should be made to find a temporary site closer to the City</p> <p>However the Committee remained concerned that the proposals were not fully adequate for the City's needs. 40% of visits were on weekdays, and there was concern that poor or changed access would</p>	<p>Redbridge will accept domestic waste at weekends and over Bank Holidays when it re-opens in January/February 2013.</p> <p>Redbridge will close for refurbishment 1 month after Kidlington opens. Kidlington is scheduled to open in April 2012 (provisional date). No direct comment made about finding a temporary site during the service gap.</p> <p>New trade waste facilities at Kidlington and an improved facility at Redbridge should help discourage fly tipping.</p>

<p>lead to more fly-tipping. This is expensive to clear, a better use of money would be to support the full opening of Redbridge to domestic waste.</p> <p><i>(Note: 26% of all comments received in the Consultation expressed concern that fly tipping would increase)</i></p>	<p>Security measures will be introduced at all waste sites to control fly tipping at sites that are set to close. Oxfordshire County Council is working through the Oxfordshire Waste Partnership to support enforcement officers and this will continue to be a priority as part of the wider strategy on waste.</p> <p>It was acknowledged that concern was expressed in the consultation that restricted hours would be confusing, but support was given to the proposal as long as traders were not allowed to use the Redbridge site at weekends.</p> <p>The County Council feels that the Kidlington site is well placed for residents in North Oxford and that this will reduce pressure on Redbridge, The Drayton facility could increase its use and thus also reduce pressure on Redbridge.</p>
<p>It was felt that some people who would normally take bulky rubbish to Redbridge would ask for a kerbside collection, this increasing pressure on this service in terms of both affordability and customer service</p>	<p>Improved kerbside collection services have reduced the number of visits to the waste sites, but there was support for the strategy expressed in the consultation provided that bulky waste collections remained at a reasonable cost and garden waste was collected at the kerbside.</p> <p>The County Council would continue to work with District Councils via the Waste Partnership to ensure that pressures on kerbside collections are managed</p> <p>The County Council is continuing to explore opportunities to recycle more items, such as mattresses and carpets, and all sites will have a re-use area for furniture and bric-a-brac.</p>
<p>It was noted that the refurbishment at Redbridge was to be supported by private investment. Should this not appear, then all efforts to bridge the gap should be made.</p>	<p>It was acknowledged that the maintenance of a weekend opening at Redbridge, along with other measures, would result in additional costs being incurred compared with</p>

<p>The position whereby Oxford had no recycling facility for domestic waste was insupportable.</p>	<p>the Directorate's original Business Strategy. But it is possible that additional costs could be absorbed is overall waste arising continues to fall.</p> <p>There is a pressure arising from the decommissioning of sites in 2012/13 and 2015/16. In the absence of additional funding, pressures from 2014/15 onwards will need to be addressed inn the next round of service planning in autumn 2011.</p> <p>Capital pressure for the maintenance of opening at Redbridge is £1.5million with management fees of £130,000 for a 7 day opening. To undertake the work at both Redbridge and Stanford in the Vale, the £1.8million of capital savings currently shown in the savings plan would have to be released, plus further pressure of £450,000. It is anticipated that some of this could be made from revenue savings if landfill reductions can be made.</p> <p>Capital budget has been secured for Kidlington and a new facility near to Banbury (total of £3.75million)</p>
<p>Comments were made about traffic – with weekend opening, some weekday visits would probably move to the weekend, leading to increased traffic pressure around Redbridge or increased waiting time to enter the facility. This would cause disruption to those living in, or travelling through, this area.</p> <p>If there are increased visits to Kidlington there would be increased traffic flows and congestion in the north of the City.</p> <p>These issues need to be planned for within the strategy.</p>	<p>It was acknowledged that 21% of comments in the consultation related to impact on the local environment and increased traffic. Monitoring shows that the number of visits to sites is reducing.</p> <p>There are opportunities for recycling at sites other that HWRC, such as battery recycling at supermarkets and DIT stores</p> <p>By ensuring that sites are well located to the main centres of population, overall levels of accessibility will be improved.</p> <p>The proposals for Redbridge were supported provided that traders were limited to weekdays only in order to reduce congestion. The</p>

	<p>redevelopment of Redbridge would enable greater throughput and reduce congestion on site.</p> <p>The remaining sites offer scope for redevelopment and increased capacity should the need arise.</p> <p>Expansion of kerbside collections (supported via the Waste Partnership) should mean fewer visits to Waste Sites.</p>
<p>The Committee would like confirmation that the strategy has no intention of charging domestic waste customers.</p> <p>Consideration could be given to differential charging for trade customers in an effort to encourage recycling</p>	No comment made
<p>Further information required for Oxford residents , including clear information and signposting in plain English</p>	No comment made

4. CONCLUSION

The meeting of the Cabinet on 19th April resolved to:

a) Approve the Household Waste Recycling Centre Strategy as detailed in this report;

b) Authorise detailed implementation plans, including minor changes to the strategy, to be approved by the Director for Environment and Economy in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Growth and Infrastructure.

Information from Oxfordshire County Council is that the strategy is now being taken forward. County Officers are currently working with City Officers on issues at Redbridge and that there have been meetings at senior level. Further information on this is not known at present.

Lois Stock
23rd May 2011

Division(s): All

CABINET – 19 APRIL 2011

HOUSEHOLD WASTE RECYCLING CENTRE STRATEGY

Report by Deputy Director for Growth and Infrastructure

Introduction

1. Oxfordshire County Council (OCC) currently has eight Household Waste Recycling Centres (HWRCs) which all accept a full range of recyclables as well as residual waste.
2. The City and District councils have made excellent progress in recycling household waste through the expansion of kerbside collection services. Every house in Oxfordshire now has a comprehensive kerbside collection scheme for a full range of waste and recyclables including food waste.
3. Residents are increasingly embracing these new systems and recycling rates are increasing across the County. With the expansion of kerbside collection services the need for people to visit one of our HWRCs has reduced. The role and service that the HWRCs provide is changing.
4. OCC as the Waste Disposal Authority has a statutory obligation to provide places for members of the public to deposit their household waste. Improved kerbside services provide an opportunity to reform and reshape the current service provision. The aim is to build upon this success story. The current network of sites needs to be refined in order to maintain an efficient and effective solution as part of the wider joint municipal waste management strategy.
5. The current network of sites requires significant investment to bring them up to date as the current infrastructure is deteriorating. In addition in a number of locations the expiration of temporary planning permission requires action to be taken in order to provide an acceptable level of service.
6. This strategy will ensure that Oxfordshire has facilities fit for the future that are well located to the main centres of population.

HWRC Strategy

7. The aim of the proposed strategy is to:
 - provide modern facilities that are well located for the main centres of population
 - provide facilities that complement/support the expanded kerbside collection services provided by the City and District councils
 - provide facilities that are fit for purpose and cost effective
 - prevent non-separated waste going to Landfill
 - provide reuse facilities at all sites for bulky waste and expanded recycling containers
 - minimise fly-tipping
8. The County Council is committed to invest in a new modern recycling facility at Kidlington. This will have a dedicated re-use store where people can donate or purchase goods of reasonable quality.
9. The infrastructure at Redbridge is deteriorating and the site needs to be refurbished and modernised. Construction of the new facility at Kidlington will enable the Redbridge site to be closed for redevelopment. Work at the Redbridge site will require private sector funding to be secured.
10. Upon re-opening Redbridge would operate as an additional commercial waste facility during the week and a facility for household waste at weekends and bank holidays.
11. As part of the strategy the County Council will provide a new facility near to Banbury; the exact site is yet to be located.
12. Sites at Dean Pit, Ardley and Stanford in the Vale would be closed as their temporary planning permissions expire and investment in new facilities comes on stream. The final site closures would not take place until December 2014.
13. Data observatory information indicates the areas of population density in Oxfordshire and we know of areas planned for development. Factoring this growth in over a 15-year period enables a strategy to be set out that links the proposed facilities to the major areas of population:

Proposed Facility	Areas
New Kidlington Facility	Oxford City / Bicester
Relocated Alkerton Facility (Banbury Area)	Banbury / Chipping Norton
Existing Drayton Facility	Didcot / Abingdon / Wantage
Existing Dix Pit Facility	Witney / Carterton / Chipping Norton
Existing Oakley Wood Facility	Wallingford / Henley
Existing Redbridge Facility (trade Monday – Friday, householders weekends including Bank Holidays)	Oxford / Abingdon

14. All HWRCs would accept non-recyclable (residual) waste, although visitors will be expected to make full use of the recycling, composting and reuse facilities by pre-sorting waste before using the landfill skips. The strategy for HWRCs will support further behavioural change by encouraging residents to pre-sort their waste before going to the HWRC.
15. The County Council is continuing to explore opportunities to extend the range of items that can be recycled, such as mattresses and carpets. More recycling means even less waste going to landfill.
16. It is proposed that all of the sites will have a re-use area enabling furniture, bric-a-brac and other reusable items to be collected at each HWRC.
17. New trade waste facilities at Kidlington and an improved trade facility at Redbridge would greatly improve on current trade waste provision and provide greater capacity to accommodate trade thereby discouraging fly-tipping.

Timeline

18. The timeline for implementing the strategy is linked to the expiration dates for temporary planning permissions:

2011

- Dean Pit closing – September 2011

2012

- Kidlington Provisional Opening – April 2012
- Redbridge closure for refurbishment – 1 month after Kidlington Opens

2013

- Redbridge opening (weekends & bank holidays only) – January/February 2013
- Ardley closing – September 2013

2014

- Banbury opening – November 2014
- Alkerton closing – December 2014
- Stanford in the Vale closing – December 2014

Site Provision Summary by District:

District	Current Provision	Future Provision
Cherwell	Alkerton & Ardley	Kidlington & New Banbury
City	Redbridge	Redbridge (weekends / bank holidays) & Kidlington
South	Oakley Wood	Oakley Wood
Vale	Drayton & Stanford in the Vale	Drayton
West	Dix Pit & Dean Pit	Dix Pit

19. The proposed network of facilities fully supports the wider ambition of the Oxfordshire Waste Partnership as set out in the joint municipal waste management strategy.

Consultation

20. Consultation on the proposed strategy was undertaken with the support and involvement of the consultation team between 7 March and 4 April 2011.
21. The consultation was advertised on the County Council website and at all the HWRCs. All County and District Council Councillors were emailed, and the consultation was discussed at the Oxfordshire Waste Partnership meeting. Emails, letters and posters were sent to all the Parish, Town and District Councils for distribution; posters were also distributed to key public buildings such as libraries, schools, children's centres, community centres, garden centres, GP's surgery, Dentists, Police Stations, DIY shops, supermarkets and other OCC buildings. Through the customer contact centre we ensured that people could ask for and receive paper copies of the consultation.
22. Responses could be made either on-line (through the e-portal), by emailing the waste management inbox or writing to the waste management team.
23. A copy of the consultation document is attached in Annex 1.

Summary of Consultation Responses

24. A total of 337 responses were received and are summarised below by type, HWRC and WCA. A number of responses included more than one comment meaning that a total of 610 comments were received.

Responded As:	Number	%
Resident	256	76%
Councillor	54	16%
Organisation or Group	22	7%
Unknown	5	1%

Household Waste Recycling Centre Used?	Number	%
Alkerton HWRC	11	3%
Ardley HWRC	13	4%
Dean Pit HWRC	76	23%
Dix Pit HWRC	12	4%
Drayton HWRC	28	8%
Oakley Wood HWRC	12	4%
Redbridge HWRC	62	18%
Stanford in the Vale HWRC	115	34%
I don't use a HWRC	2	1%
Not applicable	6	2%

Which District do you live in?	Number	%
Cherwell	33	10%
Oxford City	24	7%
South Oxfordshire	29	9%
Vale of White Horse	163	48%
West Oxfordshire	84	25%
I don't live in Oxfordshire	1	0%
Unknown	3	1%

25. The main themes raised through the consultation centred on fly-tipping, environmental impact and the provision of services in the local area.

Key Themes	Count	% of the total number of comments received (610)
Lack of provision in the local area	170	28%
Fly-Tipping will increase	160	26%
Impact on the local environment/increased traffic	128	21%
Support the proposals in principle	40	7%
Opening times at Redbridge	39	6%
Support the opening of a re-use shop at Kidlington	21	3%

26. The number of responses by HWRC for each of the six main themes is shown in Annex 2.

Lack of provision in local area

27. The main concern was that the journey time to their nearest facility would increase for some residents in rural locations. Comments were raised that despite the fact that kerbside recycling had improved (and this was welcomed) not all materials could be accepted and therefore trips to HWRC would still be required for items such as electrical goods and batteries. There was also concern that the amount of waste going into the residual bins at the kerbside would increase as the kerbside recycling containers provided (especially green waste) are not large enough.
28. All WCAs now collect an increased number of recyclables from the kerbside and this was acknowledge in responses to the consultation. Monitoring shows that the numbers of visits to HWRCs is reducing and the County Council will work with the district/city councils through the Oxfordshire Waste Partnership to ensure that pressures on kerbside collections are managed. There are increasing opportunities to recycle some items at locations more convenient than a HWRC: for example recycling of batteries in supermarkets and DIY stores.

Fly-tipping

29. There was concern that the reduction in the provision of sites serving West Oxfordshire and the Vale of White Horse could lead to an increase in fly-tipping. Some commented that the costs of clearing up any increases in fly-tipping would far outweigh the cost savings proposed by site closures.
30. Security measures will be introduced at all HWRCs to control fly-tipping and to prevent illegal dumping at sites set to close. The County Council has been working through the Oxfordshire Waste Partnership to support enforcement officers: this would continue to be a priority as part of the wider strategy on waste management.

Impact on local environment / traffic increase

31. Some felt that the proposals did not take proper account of pressures resulting from growth in Oxfordshire, especially in the southern part of the County. Concerns were raised that there could be a negative impact on the environment as a result of increased journey distances. In addition it was felt that there would be more pollution at the remaining sites because of the increase volume of traffic and queuing times.
32. The improved kerbside collection services have reduced the number of visits to the sites (a fact acknowledged by many in their responses). Generally there was support for the strategy if bulky waste collections remained at a reasonable cost and garden waste is collected at the kerbside. By ensuring that facilities are well located to the main centres of population overall levels of accessibility will be improved.

Opening times at Redbridge

33. Concerns were raised over traffic queues at the weekends due to the reduced opening hours for household waste. Some concern was also expressed that the restricted hours of opening would be confusing. However, there was support for the proposal as long as traders were not allowed on site over the weekend as this would reduce congestion.
34. At Redbridge 35% of visits are undertaken at weekends with 65% of visits occurring during the week. The need to redevelop Redbridge provides the opportunity to redesign the internal site layout to enable greater throughput and reduce congestion. The new Kidlington site will provide a well located facility for residents in North Oxford: this will reduce pressure on the Redbridge site. In addition, the Drayton facility has the capacity to increase its use, again helping to reduce pressure on Redbridge site. The remaining sites in the network all offer scope for redevelopment and increased capacity should the need arise.

Support for the reuse shop

35. There is general support for the reuse shop at Kidlington as it is seen as a positive step forward for the county. Respondents also requested the expansion of reuse to other sites.

HWRC usage

36. A summary of the usage of current sites is set out below:

Site	population served by site	% of population served by site	% of total household visits	% of total tonnage throughput
Alkerton	58,431	9.2%	7.9%	10.9%
Ardley	73,979	11.6%	10.4%	11.5%
Dean Pit	28,097	4.4%	5.1%	5.3%
Dix Pit	78,236	12.3%	9.2%	10.6%
Drayton	97,659	15.3%	16.6%	16.5%
Oakley Wood	80,500	12.6%	10.8%	8.6%
Redbridge	180,194	28.3%	26.3%	28.0%
Stanford in the Vale	39,967	6.3%	13.6%	8.5%
Grand Total	637,064			

37. It is estimated that visits to the site from residents living outside of Oxfordshire is approximately 20% at Alkerton and Ardley and 15% at Stanford in the Vale.

Equality and Inclusion Implications

38. An equalities impact assessment has been carried out and the proposed strategy does not impact upon this. WCAs now have comprehensive kerbside services and residents are encouraged to use these.

Sustainability

39. The proposed strategy aims to reduce the amount of waste going to landfill and increase reuse, recycling and composting. It forms part of Oxfordshire's joint municipal waste management strategy and should therefore be considered in the wider context of waste management across Oxfordshire. The expansion of kerbside collections means that fewer trips to the HWRCs are now needed thereby reducing the environmental impact.

Risks

40. Although there are concerns over the potential for an increase in fly-tipping, the increase in provision to deal with trade waste should make it easier for businesses to dispose of their waste legally.

41. The County Council works through the Oxfordshire Waste Partnership to support WCA enforcement officers. Monitoring shows that fly-tipping has reduced over recent years in response to this co-ordinated effort. The County Council will continue to support this work as part of the overall waste management strategy. It will also be important for the current bulky waste collection service to be maintained.

Legal Implications

42. Redbridge is currently operated by W&S Recycling. The closure of Redbridge would be a fundamental change to the existing contract. A procurement exercise would have to be undertaken in order to allow the site to operate as a trade waste facility during the week and for householder use at the weekends and Bank Holidays.
43. The closure of Dean Pit is accounted for within the existing W&S contract. Alkerton and Stanford in the Vale would both close after the expiry of the W&S contract and therefore there are no further legal issues. Ardley will close when the existing Contract with Viridor Waste Management ceases at the end of September 2013.
44. It is envisaged that the management of Kidlington HWRC and the re-use shop will require its own procurement.

Financial and Staff Implications

45. This strategy will achieve significant net revenue savings as a result of reduced management fees and disposal charges.
46. The retention of residual waste treatment at all sites and maintaining a weekend household waste facility at Redbridge will result in additional costs being incurred compared with the Directorate's original Business Strategy. Additional management costs, staffing costs and haulage costs incurred as a result of these changes are estimated to lead to a pressure of £300,000 (see below). It is possible that the additional costs could be absorbed if overall waste arisings continue to fall.

	2011/12	2012/13	2013/14	2014/15	2015/16	2016/17
MTFP net savings / pressures	-£33,000	£165,000	-£40,000	-£547,000	-£747,000	-£747,000
Proposed strategy	£37,000	£150,000	-£120,00	-£327,000	-£253,000	-£453,000
Difference	£70,000	-£15,000	-£80,000	£240,000	£494,000	£294,000

47. There is a pressure arising from the de-commissioning of sites in 2012/13 and 2015/16. In the absence of additional funding, the pressures shown from 2014/15 onwards will need to be addressed as part of the next round of service resource planning this autumn.

48. This strategy will deliver substantial savings in management fees once it is fully in place. However, if Redbridge and Stanford in the Vale were to remain open 7 days a week there would be a further additional pressure of approximately £300,000 pa for management fees alone (£170,000 pa for Redbridge and £130,000 for Stanford in the Vale). Also if these sites were kept open there may not be the reduction in landfill tonnage anticipated (giving rise to additional costs) and additional revenue pressures for maintenance and infrastructure repairs.
49. If Redbridge and Stanford in the Vale were to remain open there would also be capital expenditure pressures of approximately £1.5m for Redbridge and £750k for Stanford in the Vale. To undertake this work the £1.8m of capital savings currently shown in the savings plan would need to be released, plus a further pressure of £450k. It is anticipated that some of this could be made from revenue savings if landfill reductions can be made.
50. Keeping the site at Stanford in the Vale would require a new planning permission: this could not be guaranteed as the location does not fit well with current planning policy.
51. Capital budget has been secured for the proposed Kidlington facility (£3m) and the new facility near to Banbury (£1.75m). The revenue implications of operating these sites have been budgeted for.

RECOMMENDATION

52. **The Cabinet is RECOMMENDED to:**
 - i) **Approve the Household Waste Recycling Centre Strategy as detailed in this report;**
 - ii) **Authorise detailed implementation plans, including minor changes to the strategy, to be approved by the Director for Environment and Economy in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Growth and Infrastructure.**

Martin Tugwell
Deputy Director for Growth and Infrastructure

Background papers:
Household Waste Recycling Centre Consultation Document

Contact Officer:
Rebecca Harwood, Service Delivery Manager, 01865 815281

April 2011

HWRC Consultation Document

Extract from the minutes of the Oxfordshire County Council Cabinet Meeting held on 19th April 2011

45/11 HOUSEHOLD WASTE RECYCLING CENTRE STRATEGY (Agenda Item. 6)

Cabinet considered a report that set out and sought approval for a strategy for Household Waste Recycling Centres (HWRCs).

Councillor Anne Purse, Shadow Cabinet Member for Growth & Infrastructure, welcomed the increase in the range of recycling and the possibilities for reuse at the Kidlington site. She referred to the existing problems of fly-tipping and expressed some concern, being anxious at anything which made it less easy to dispose of rubbish which would lead to an increased risk of fly tipping.

She noted the enforcement activity and hoped that surveillance would also increase. In response to a question from Councillor David Robertson querying whether she would support putting cameras into vulnerable spots, Councillor Purse replied that she would support any action that was proved to work. All options to take action should be looked at. Responding to a further question about the practicality of electronic chips in bins Councillor Purse indicated that that was not necessarily what she was meaning.

Councillor Shouler as the Efficiencies Champion referred to the reduction in the savings set out in paragraph 46 of the report. He expressed concern at a trend at this early stage of the budget year not to achieve the target savings as it could undermine the validity of the budget and he queried what alternative savings would be found. He also commented on the public consultation noting that the changes were not as a result of such consultation CA3 but that in any case where there were reductions in services then there was bound to be an adverse public reaction.

The Cabinet Member for Growth & Infrastructure in introducing the report highlighted that it was difficult to make assumptions about the level of household recycling at sites, given the success of District Council collections. He stressed that the strategy was about household waste, noting that fly tipping was often commercial in nature. He understood the concerns expressed by Councillor Shouler but felt confident that the savings target overall would be met by the Directorate. The Director of Environment & Economy reinforced the assurance given by the Cabinet Member that the agreed target savings for the Directorate as a whole would be met from within the Directorate

During discussion Cabinet Members referred to recycling initiatives in their local areas and also commented on the level of facilities provided. The Cabinet Member for Police and Policy Coordination referred to the high degree of cooperation between District Councils and the County Council. There was some debate on the merits of surveillance cameras at fly tipping

problem spots.

RESOLVED: to:

- a)* Approve the Household Waste Recycling Centre Strategy as detailed in this report;
- b)* Authorise detailed implementation plans, including minor changes to the strategy, to be approved by the Director for Environment and Economy in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Growth and Infrastructure.

Oxfordshire Recycling Centre Strategy Consultation

Oxford City Council's Communities and Partnership Scrutiny Committee comments

The following comments are offered by the Communities and Partnership Scrutiny Committee of Oxford City Council in response to the County Council's consultation on the Recycling Centre Strategy

The committee wish to thank Hugh Jones (Director for Environment and Economy) for attending their meeting to give advice and answer questions

General comments

1. The committee welcomes the new recycling centre at Kidlington as a significant investment in state of the art facilities for the County

Access and Service Levels

2. The change from the original proposals to close Redbridge to domestic waste to a facility that will take trade waste each day and domestic waste at weekends is recognised as a step in the right direction

The committee however remained unconvinced that the current proposals for Redbridge would adequately provide for Oxford's population. The committee would remind the County Council that the densely populated urban area of Oxford will be the only District within the Oxfordshire boundary without a full time trade and domestic waste recycling centre. The committee ask that the following views are considered:

- Currently 40% of the visits to Redbridge are on weekdays. It is not clear how this is split between trade and domestic customers but it seems reasonable to assume that some are domestic customers and that these are likely to choose to shift their visit to the weekend. The effect of this will be to increase traffic around the site and in turn increase waiting times to enter the facility. In essence a poorer service to Oxford residents and increased disruption to those living and driving through this busy area
- Poorer or changed access is likely to convert to increased fly tipping. This view is supported by the Waste Partnership who have factored the clear up operations of increased levels of fly tipping into their financial calculations for this strategy
- Established patterns of fly tipping are difficult to change and costly to deal with. This is evidenced in current patterns and

clear ups around the Oxford ring road. The allocating of money to counteract a behaviour potentially bought about by this strategy is a poor use of money. A better use would be to support the full opening of Redbridge to domestic waste

- It is likely that some domestic customers who would previously have taken bulky waste to Redbridge will, because of reduced access, ask the Local Authority to collect from their home. This will create pressure on these services both in terms of affordability and customer service
- Proposals presented to bridge the service gap whilst Redbridge is closed for refurbishment are not acceptable; they are likely to produce many of the difficulties outlined above. The scrutiny committee would wish to see further efforts made to find a temporary site closer to the City
- The refurbishment of Redbridge is to be supported by private sector investment. Should this investment not be forthcoming the committee wished to see all efforts made to bridge the funding gap. **The bottom line for the committee is that a position where Oxford has no recycling facility for domestic waste is insupportable**

Traffic

3. Comments on traffic issues in the south of the city have been made at 2 above, in addition the proposals assume that some of Oxford's domestic and trade waste customers will use the new facility at Kidlington. This is likely to cause increased traffic flows and therefore congestion in the north of the city. These increased traffic flows and the potential difficulties they present to residents and those passing through need to be acknowledged and planned for within the strategy

Charging

4. The scrutiny committee welcome the confirmation that the strategy had no intent either now or in the future to charge domestic waste customers. The committee would like to see consideration given to differential charging for trade waste customers in an effort to encourage recycling

Information

5. Oxford residents are to experience a significant change to service and therefore will be required to make changes to their well established habits. The committee wish to see clear information and signposting provided to all residents in a timely and plain English style

Pat Jones – Principal Scrutiny Officer
On behalf of the Communities and Partnership Scrutiny Committee
4th. April 2011
Email: phjones@oxford.gov.uk
Telephone: 01865 252191

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To: Communities and Partnership Scrutiny Committee

Date: 6th. June 2011

Item No:

Title of Report: Development of Area Forums

Summary and Recommendations

Purpose of report: To update the committee on the “starting point” for Area Forums across the City

Key decision - No

Scrutiny Lead members; Councillors Wilkinson and Sanders

Approved by: Councillor Sanders

Recommendation(s):

Committee is asked to:

1. Note the start up discussions in area groups
2. Consider how it wishes the scrutiny member group to proceed from this point. In particular the criteria to be used to review progress towards improved community engagement/leadership set for the end of the year

1. Introduction and Background

On the 10th. February 2011 the committee considered the proposals for changes to the City Council’s democratic arrangements. The recommendations with responses are included at Appendix 1

2. Recommendation 8 was to nominate Councillors Sanders and Wilkinson to be part of the member group detailed in the report. This group was to be set to discuss proposals for Area Forums. The group proposed was replaced with councillor meeting in their Forum groups to discuss what they wanted in their areas. The nominated scrutiny councillors and the scrutiny officer between them attended all of these meetings (with the exception of South East) and Appendix 2 shows the scrutiny lines of inquiry (linked to agreed recommendations) used by all to report back on what was agreed. Appendix 3 shows the outcomes observed from these discussions

Current Position

3. No conclusions are drawn at this point. As members can see at Appendix 3 the depth of thinking and shaping varies considerably

across the area groupings with some areas having a very clear view about what will work for their communities and areas and the interpretation of this into clear starting points to move forward from. Others areas still have thinking to do to form structures for their areas. Officers from Communities and Neighbourhoods have met councillors since these start up meetings to focus on their first meetings and ensure all have a starting point. At the time of writing this detail was not available but will have been circulated to all members by the time of the scrutiny meeting

4. The intention of the scrutiny committee is to review the working of the Forum structure at the end of the year to ensure that it achieves better community engagement in the long term. Some Forums have outlined what success means to them, others have not (or have simply outlined a review in 6 months with no criteria). The committee is asked to consider how it wants to take this work forward.

Report Author:

Pat Jones on behalf of Councilors Sanders and Wilkinson

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Appendix 1

Scrutiny Recommendations – Democratic changes

Recommendation	Response
<p>1. Any new system must be set as an improvement to current processes and in particular for better community engagement. The development of new systems and structures must have as key considerations issues of flexibility, broad engagement, and robustness of outcome for communities</p>	<p>Accepted</p> <p>Linked to recommendation 3</p> <p>Agreed that the systems had to be better than currently.</p> <p>Agreed that we needed criteria to review the new arrangement against (officers would be setting these). The starting point for Area Forum success measures would be:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The degree to which they engage with a broad cross section of communities in their area • What comes out from these in terms of community development and challenge for those areas
<p>2. To lay out clearly within a protocol the processes within which Area Forums operate detailing in particular any arrangements for them to be heard, responded to and rights of access</p>	<p>Accepted with amendment</p> <p>Area forums would be linked to the structures of the Council in the way that Area Committees are now (CEB and Scrutiny). This will be made clear. In addition a Director will be allocated to and attend meetings so will be able to link forums into officers and groups. For those in regeneration areas there will be significant influence</p>
<p>3. To review in December the operation of all new process and structures within the changed democratic arrangement against criteria to be decided now</p>	<p>Accepted</p> <p>See 1 above.</p> <p>A review will take place and the Board welcomes the work that scrutiny will do in considering the set up of the various area forum mechanisms with local members in their areas. This will be considered alongside this review</p> <p>See also recommendation 8</p>
<p>4. To detail the amount of staff time</p>	<p>Accepted with amendment</p>

<p>and budget available within the Community Development and Local Regeneration Team to support the inputs and outputs from Area Forums and the administrative processes necessary when running “meetings”</p>	<p>This will become clear in the current discussions with area councillor groupings. When a full picture is available of the requirements of local councillors an overall consideration of resources will be made. Scrutiny will be present at these meetings</p>
<p>5. Implementation must happen in June. The committee want planning discussions to begin now , running alongside consultation, to ensure administrative process are sound and can be built upon as decisions are made</p>	<p>Accepted</p> <p>This will happen and these will be “real” meetings</p>
<p>6. To provide in May a range of member briefings aimed at familiarising them with the new Area Forum system alongside other changed democratic arrangements</p>	<p>Accepted with amendment</p> <p>Outlines will be provided in the form of the papers in the report and protocols. Anything else will be at the request of members</p>
<p>7. To provide a broad consultation process using all opportunities to reach a wide group of people. To included within the consultation opportunities for residents to not only comment on the principle but make suggestions on ways of working</p>	<p>Noted</p> <p>The current consultation will be further improved with the addition of detailed consultation with members in areas about what structures and mechanisms they believe will fit their areas. These outcomes will be reconsidered in June along with the scrutiny view on this by a member group (see below)</p>
<p>8. To formally nominate Councillors Sanders and Wilkinson as members of the working group proposed and urge that this group meets as soon as possible</p>	<p>Accepted</p> <p>The 2 councillor’s work is welcomed and they should actively take part in the discussions with councillor area groupings. These will lead into a members group (which they will be members of) to consider “area outcomes” and the interpretation of these into structures, resources and practical operation</p>

Appendix 2

Approach Taken

Response to scrutiny recommendation on flexibility of approach when setting area structures

Sort of things you might want to listen for

- Is discussion focused on what will work for the area
- Is good use made of member knowledge
- Is good use made of what we know of issues within an area and therefore what might work
- Is good use made of what we know of the current operation of area committees
- Is there a neighbourhood/community approach taken in discussions
- Are the local partnership bodies for an area considered? What is the view on inclusion

Practicalities

Response to scrutiny recommendation on the practicalities of running meetings and the staff time and money available to do this

Sort of things you might want to listen for

- How often do members want to meet
- How do they want those meetings arranged and what support are they asking for to do this
- What are members contributing to the process
- Are the meetings likely to be formal, informal or a mixture of both
- Who will take the lead on administrative issues
- Are this group asking for anything different to other area groups
- What training and information do members want to get started and then on-going

Planning and Outcomes

Response to the scrutiny recommendation on planning, management of process and linking Forums into areas of influence

Sort of things you might want to listen for

- What do members want the overall structure of forums operation in their area to be
- What is the member view on how their forum should be linked into the Council and other groups of influence
- How do members want service and other officers to engage with and link to their forum
- How will agendas be decided upon
- How will outcomes from forums (in all forms) be managed

Engagement with Communities

Response to the scrutiny recommendation on improved engagement with a broad cross section of the community in an area

Sort of things you might want to listen for

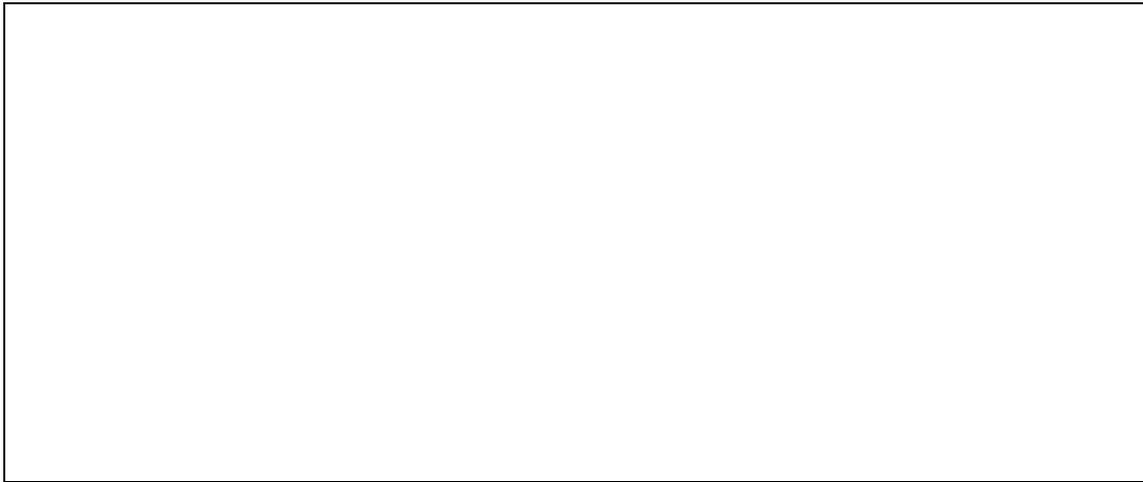
- Is the overall approach centered on community/neighbourhood `
- Is good use made of the member knowledge of communities
- Is good use made of overall Council knowledge of communities in areas
- Is there a good discussion on strengths and weakness currently
- Are options for improvement discussed and concluded

Review of Success

Response to the scrutiny recommendation on reviewing against success measures

Sort of things you might want to listen for

- What do members see as measures of success for their area forum
- How is the community view considered within this discussion
- What ideas do they have about how to measure success and how would they want to go about it
- Are options for measurement discussed and concluded



Appendix 3

	East	South East
Approach	<p>Only 3 members present at the start up meeting so no real consideration of what might work for all communities in the area</p> <p>Very much wanted to take a community approach and very keen that residents had an input to the possible themes for meetings. The first of these inputs happened at the last of the East Area Parliament meetings</p> <p>Some recognition that partnerships where needed at Forums to allow good quality challenge discussion and outcome agreement</p>	<p>Meetings to be styled for the 3 areas that make up South East Area:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Blackbird Leys and Northfield Brook – 2 meetings • Littlemore – 1 meeting • Rose Hill – 1 meeting <p>Run on an entirely local basis ie the issues/themes that affect/engage those wards</p> <p>Meeting priority is a problem solving opportunity for local groups rather than getting local people to attend so invitees would vary according to the ward makeup. The invitees however would be broad ranging with examples discussed from School Head Teachers, Sure Start and Tenant Representatives to TVP and County Councillors</p> <p>Only the Councillors for the wards will be specifically invited. A member of the City Corporate management Team would be expected to attend each meeting and a members of the County Council Management Team would be encourage to attend</p>
Structure	<p>Number of meetings: 12 meetings per year as follows:</p> <p>4 supported Forum meetings 2 unsupported Forum meetings</p>	<p>Number of Meetings: 4 per year as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Blackbird Leys and Northfield Brook – 2

	<p>At least 6 Ward Meetings (2 in each ward)</p> <p>Place: All Forum meetings will be held at East Oxford Community Centre Ward meetings at the discretion of local councillors</p> <p>General: Rotating Chair Forum meetings dates to follow a memorable pattern and set in advance Encourage ward councillors to do the same Advertise dates on posters around the area as soon as possible</p> <p>Agendas:</p> <p>Whole Area agendas</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To be focused on outcomes • Themed • Time limited • Not to include local “service” issues unless members feel these point towards a whole area issue for wider solution finding • To have action points produced on the items to take forward • Follow up on action points towards solution <p>Ward Meetings</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mixture of issues in wards • Not necessarily formal agendas • Time on “agenda” for listening and discussion items to inform agenda planning • Time limited <p>Meeting Style (still thinking to be done on this)</p> <p>Whole area</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Open meetings • Core for debate by invitation • County Councillors to be invited as “permanent members” 	<p>meetings</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Littlemore – 1 meeting • Rose Hill – 1 meeting <p>Other Meetings:</p> <p>All South East Area wards are included within the focus for the Regeneration Framework so there is or will shortly be partnership working with the local community. For this reason it is not envisaged that any other more local meetings will be necessary.</p> <p>Local members still have the discretion to call for and fund other meetings if this is felt necessary and should agree this with Communities and Neighbourhood officers and report back as necessary</p> <p>Place: In the local area:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • September – Rose Hill Area Forum • November – Blackbird Leys Area Forum • March – Littlemore Area Forum • May – Northfield Brook Area Forum <p>Agendas:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Created by the City Council • Items to be a mixture of corporate and central priorities and input on local issues from local groups
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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • County Officers to be invited when needed • Could decide on a mixture of styles (work shops/presentations/question and answer) depending on the particular theme or issue for consideration • Half an hour before the meeting starts councillors to be available to talk to residents about their issues • The issue for debate to be supported by a report - data/information/consultation/possible solutions • People who wish to address the forum on that theme are able to do so in a time limited fashion. The general expectation, however, would be that the listening, evidence gathering would have happened before the debate • Outcomes agreed by the meeting (facilitated by the Chair). Actions to take forward those outcomes similarly agree • Report back on the progress made on other actions <p>Ward Meetings</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Informal • Dependent on local area and or issues for consideration 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All interested parties to be asked in advance what substantive issues they would wish to see on the agenda for discussion • Agenda then put together by committee services with thought to the items rather than in a proforma way • Debate/discussion to be around written reports, presentations, speakers. Whatever is most appropriate for the item/issue under consideration • All items to be focused on the ward. No broader South East Area issues to be discussed • Regeneration and social inclusion to be an item on all meetings and a member of the City Council Steering Group on Regeneration to be invited to give an update appropriate to the area
Community Engagement	<p>Recognition that broader community engagement was necessary. Some concern expressed about how this would be achieved with residents and communities to allow them to influence the agendas and outcomes. Ideas:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ward meetings will engage directly with communities and information here should be used within the agenda setting debates • Communities have a view on what is important to them (community 	

	<p>planning will enhance this) and members have information about strategic plans for the area. Managing and bringing together these will produce a good forum</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Forum has to show it can work to produce good outcomes and then people will be interested • Good community leadership by councillors will bring forward the right topics <p>Ideas of different community groups:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Business • Faith • Student/University • Minority Groups • Residents <p>Social Networking to be used as part of engagement and communication</p>	
Outcomes	<p>Influence</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Don't have decision making powers but do have influence • Chairing/facilitating and planning is very important • Need to provide focus, data, local knowledge, options, conclusions and actions for issues to taken forward and influence to be credible • Need to be realistic • Tim Sadler will be the link back into the senior management of the Council but other service officers will engage • Members still have the rights to lobby CEB and Scrutiny Committees • The drawing of together of outcomes and the progression of these is important <p>Member Budgets</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Do not want to spend these on organising meetings 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An Action Sheet to be produced at the end of every meeting on how actions could be taken forward • Responsibility for the implementation of actions would be with the CMT representative and the officer from the Communities and Neighbourhoods Team
Review of Success	Short discussion on this with suggestions as:	No details

	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• People engaging across a broad range• Feed back from the community• Community plans completed• Measures of successful influence (changes made)	
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	North	North East
Approach	<p>Want the Forum to be an opportunity to air community concerns and seek solutions to problems – community problem solving</p> <p>Also saw the Forum as an opportunity to discuss local initiatives</p> <p>Keen that local people and groups should be involved in setting the agenda</p> <p>Ward boundaries are not always appropriate lines to set meetings around. Some issues and communities exist across ward boundaries – North Area and Jericho mentioned as an example</p> <p>Cllrs. Campbell and Gotch to write a report for the last North Area Committee meeting on Forum proposals</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This is a large area so discussion, by necessity, was about what would work for the whole whilst recognising the difference • Councillors are clearly very active in their areas and gave a good view of the ward level engagement through existing “structures” • Barton, Northway and Woodfarm are regeneration areas so councillors will see more input by Communities and Neighbourhood officers here to deliver the Regeneration Framework • Communities and Neighbourhood officers also wish to introduce community lead planning outside of regeneration areas so will be supporting ward councillors to do this • Clear recognition that what they do now has to be better than what happens at area committees so there seemed to be agreement around: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Ensuring the Forum can “get things done and make a difference” ○ Dealing with issues in the “right place” and not letting small ward issues dominate ○ Setting the right topics, discussed in the right way to attract and engage a broader range of residents
Structure	<p>Number of meetings:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 4 supported meetings 	<p>Structure/Style</p> <p>Whole Area Forums (supported)</p>

	<p>themed</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Possibly others at ward level (under consideration) <p>Place:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Different venue for each meeting around the Area <p>General:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fix meeting dates in advance and make sure these are well advertised <p>Agendas:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Always a briefing on the Forward Plan at each meeting by an officer • Keep the engagement from Street Scene Officers at each Group • No other set agenda • Some issues from community lead planning could feed into the agenda • Consider issues that cannot be solved at the community level • Consider open session via post it notes and message boards <p>Style:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Problem solving meetings 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 4 Forum meetings mostly themed to take issues of strategic or generic value to the area. View that this may not be enough so would like the opportunity to call others if this proved necessary • Forum issues to be sourced from a number of places but no very ward specific issues, these should be challenged to resolution at this level unless they become entrenched across a wider area • Aim for more interaction and involvement. More dynamic • Move away from “them and us” so avoid the traditional “committee style” • No decision on Chairing but discussion on whether it might be practical or advantageous to have some themes Chaired by those other than councillors • Different venue for each Forum meeting around the area <p>Ward “Meetings” (unsupported)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number unspecified - decision on form and function left to the local ward councillors <p>Meeting process: Whole Area Forums</p> <p>Consensus that the process and type of discussion must fit the topics for discussion so forward planning is essential. Below are the non variables</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Open meeting • Always an advertised time limit of no more than 2 ½ hrs. Start at 6 with members available to talk
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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Invite residents groups <p>Member Budgets:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consider pooling member budgets 	<p>to residents between 6 and 6.30 (open session of a type but with no hangover into the main business of the meeting). Meeting starts promptly at 6.30</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Those taking part in the main forum debate will be invited particular to the themes for discussion. Generally expected that their should be a county presence because most issues involve them • Allow public comment on the themes but in a time limited way • Produce action points rather than minutes and always ensure that all are clear what has been decided, who is going to do it, within what timescale and how the result will be reported back and tracked (who will lead on the issue) <p>Ward “Meetings”</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Already well established in wards in the area and happen in many forms. Leave to wards councillors to engage with their residents in the way they think will work <p>Member Budgets</p> <p>General discussion</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Don’t want to spend this on administration <p>May consider pooling some of the money</p>
<p>Community Engagement</p>	<p>Keen that residents and resident groups are involved Local councillors to begin now to talk to</p>	<p>Members want to be sure they can make a difference so will always:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Set clear action points from their meetings (Chair to

	<p>residents and groups about possible themes and issues</p>	<p>ensure this happen and draw consensus)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Set a lead members to champion these, follow up and report back • Maybe set small groups to work up actions and options • There was a recognition that it may not always be possible to set clear actions or options at the end of meetings because further work/discussion may be needed <p>Agenda Setting</p> <p>This wasn't concluded upon but it was recognised as very important to success. Councillors wanted to be sure that they took items that where "important" to the community and so wanted communities to have an input. Suggestions made: Standing Group consisting of maybe 6 councillors and a couple of community representatives to suggest and drill down on themes and topics. They could also:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Decide how the meeting should be run to best effect and who should be invited • Follow up on action points and resolutions • Call extra Forum meetings at short notice if issues arose that necessitated this • Tie things together in a timely manner so that items can be discussed at the most effect time <p>Did decide that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • First meeting should take place either the last week in June or the first in July • The first meeting should hear from communities and
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		<p>partners about what they would wish to see as themes within the work of Forums and plan for the future</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The first 2 topics (Forum meetings) should be set now so that sufficient planning could happen to allow these to be successful and outcome focused • Agendas would be closed once set so as to control the quality of information, style and debate
Outcomes	<p>Do not want meetings to be talking shops only but no discussion on forming and taking forward actions</p> <p>Wanted to be clear what the powers of Area Forums are and the resources they will have</p> <p>Some consideration of a possible parish Council</p>	<p>Local councillors have establish neighbourhood working so discussions where mature in this area</p> <p>There was a healthy recognition that Forums had to be about more than very local ward issues and agendas had to be carefully set</p> <p>Similarly there was a recognition community interest and engagement would come about more easily if topics were set in partnership and focused enough so as to make a difference</p> <p>Needed expert advice and support to engage with some sections of the community on how was about s</p> <p>Some discussion about the business community and its tie in to the community but no resolution on their engagement or place in the process</p>
Review of Success	<p>Review after 6 months.</p> <p>No discussion about what outcomes councillors would see</p>	<p>Review after 6 months.</p> <p>No discussion about what outcomes councillors would see as defining success so this review may</p>

	as defining success so this review may prove to be about process rather than outcome	prove to be about process rather than outcome
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	Central South and West	Cowley
Approach	<p>Good mixture of community structures to support cross area working in Forums Broad opportunities for communities and groups to engage at different levels</p> <p>Recognitions of the distinct communities within the area: Hinksey/Abingdon road Botley Road Greater Jericho University Parks and City Centre</p> <p>Partnership in these areas at all levels to vary according to issue Want flexibility to pick up cross area issues</p> <p>Forums to be supported by Community Partnership meetings in the areas. Members show good consideration of who might be the partners within each areas</p>	<p>3 distinct areas: Lye Valley Cowley Marsh Cowley</p> <p>No real discussion about what might work in these areas but an acceptance that there would have to be an issue of community interest to encourage residents to attend</p> <p>Members were not clear what issues there were in their wards other than the very local</p> <p>Not clear what current “ward engagement” happens that could be part of the pool of local knowledge for ward planning and theme setting.</p> <p>Discussion about how to get to this knowledge so as to set themes/issues for Forums that could be could engage the whole area and provide community leadership</p> <p>Agreed to try to create a pool of knowledge by doing the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ward members would organise local meetings now to understand what was important locally • Possibly a stall would be taken in Templers Square to ask more generally about themes for Forums (need to be clear that local residents comments took priority) • Councillors would consider the information available to them as members of the Council

		<p>(crime data/school performance/council and partners strategies and plan for action etc) as they applied to the area and draw conclusions on possible themes from this</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Have an interactive session at the first Forum meeting in July to ask those present what themes they wanted <p>Councillors agreed to meet to bring this together to consider future themes</p>
<p>Structure</p>	<p>Number of meetings:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 4 forums a year around university terms (1 in each area) • More flexibility on community partnership meetings <p>Place:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In community grouping areas (venues identified) <p>Style:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Community partnership meetings to be more flexible depending on issues to be discussed (workshops etc) • Get away from lengthy power point presentations and reports etc. To be more interactive and outcome 	<p>General</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 4 Area Forums per year • Move around the 3 distinct areas starting in Cowley • Chair to be one of the councillors from the hosting wards • Representatives for the discussion or to give evidence to be invited according to the theme/topics • Police will only be there if this is necessary to the themes/topics • Want the Forums well advertised in advance including an advert in the Oxford mail • Review process and style after the first meeting <p>Agenda</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Open Session • Structured around 1 or 2 topics

	<p>focused</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Open session but place this at the end of the meeting • Action points from community partnerships to feed into Forums • Agendas limited to small number of themes for focus • Themes for meetings to be a mixture of cross community issues and cross area issues • Suggestion of themes already in place <p>General</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Time limited (1 ½ to 2 hours at the most) • Start time 6.30pm • Dates and times to be advertised • Cross party co-Chairing • Chairs will put together agendas and focus outcomes/actions • Open invitations to County Councillors • May also set up sub groups ,at any level, to consider specific issues of concern or to find solutions • Ward members to organise community meetings 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Time limited – start 6.30 – 7 –open session 7 – 9 <p>– main meeting</p> <p>Style</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Flexible – determined by topics • Move away from formal committee style • Try open session for the first meeting in the traditional style. If this doesn't work effectively consider other methods e.g. question board • Rebecca offered to take the lead in putting together the first meeting but members needed to do this for the future in their role as community leaders <p>First meeting</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 14th. July – 6.30 for 7 • Church Cowely • Cllr. Keen to Chair • Agenda – open session/High ways issues (parking and traffic safety)/consultation on Forum themes
<p>Community Engagement</p>	<p>Community Partnership in areas alongside opportunities to engage on broader themes</p> <p>Social media</p>	<p>No real consideration of how action/recommendations will be formed, promulgated or reported back on</p> <p>Suggestion that Simon Howick</p>

	Development of community planning to improve engagement	<p>as the CMT rep would take some of the outcomes</p> <p>Suggestion that answers to questions raised could be placed on a web site</p>
Outcomes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Action Notes to be taken • Link into authority through Peter Sloman and Communities and Neighbourhoods Officer • Ensure that people of influence are invited on themes discussions 	<p>See approach taken</p> <p>Members were clear that they needed to engage people more broadly across the area</p>
Review of Success	<p>Want to give more thought to this but suggestions after a year:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Complete 1 community partnership plan for each of the 4 community neighbourhoods within a year • Number of people still attending at the end of the meeting 	<p>No discussion on how they would judge if they were being successful</p> <p>The review after first meeting is presumably input rather than outcome based</p> <p>May become more clear when councillors have conducted their ward work</p>

COMMUNITIES AND PARTNERSHIP SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Wednesday 30th March 2011

COUNCILLORS PRESENT: The Chair (Councillor Jim Campbell), the Vice-Chair (Councillor Gill Sanders), Councillors Altaf Khan, Mary Clarkson, Jean Fooks (substituting for Councillor Ruth Wilkinson) Rae Humberstone, Matt Morton, Ben Lloyd-Shogbesan, Mike Rowley, Oscar van Nooijen and Dee Sinclair.

Councillor John Tanner (Board Member for a Cleaner Greener Oxford)

OFFICERS PRESENT: Lois Stock and Pat Jones (Law and Governance), Tim Sadler (Director, City Services).

ALSO PRESENT: Barrie Finch (Improvement Monitoring Panel – IMP),

INVITED SPEAKERS: Huw Jones (Oxfordshire County Council Director for Environment and Economy)

47. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE AND SUBSTITUTIONS

Received from Councillor Wilkinson – Councillor Fooks substituted.

48 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

None.

49 OXFORDSHIRE RECYCLING CENTRES STRATEGY

The Committee received Oxfordshire County Council reports concerning the Household Waste Recycling Centre Strategy (HWRCS) (previously circulated, now appended).

The Chair, Councillor Jim Campbell, welcomed Huw Jones (Director of Environment and Economy, Oxfordshire County Council) to the meeting. It was important that the City Council had a chance to comment upon the strategy, and he thanked Mr Jones for his attendance in order to explain the issue to the Committee. Councillor Campbell also welcomed Councillor John Tanner, City Council Executive Board member for a Cleaner, Greener Oxford.

Huw Jones explained that the aims of the new strategy were to provide a strategic network of recycling sites, increase the capacity for growth in

recycling, especially for small and medium sized enterprises, and offer the opportunity to recycle closer to the centres of urban population. There would be more recycling opportunities than at present, despite the fact there would be fewer sites. The County Council believed that there would be a reduction in fly tipping. The new site at Kidlington would have a central “re-use” shop. It would require capital investment, and therefore there was a need to secure private funding for it.

Councillor Campbell asked the Committee, when considering this issue, to focus on the implications for Oxford – that is, the issues around the Redbridge and Kidlington sites.

The following comments were offered by the Communities and Partnership Scrutiny Committee of Oxford City Council in response to the County Council’s consultation on the Recycling Centre Strategy

General comments

1. The committee welcomed the new recycling centre at Kidlington as a significant investment in state of the art facilities for the County

Access and Service Levels

2. The change from the original proposals to close Redbridge to domestic waste to a facility that will take trade waste each day and domestic waste at weekends was recognised as a step in the right direction

The committee however remained unconvinced that the current proposals for Redbridge would adequately provide for Oxford’s population. The committee wished to remind the County Council that the densely populated urban area of Oxford would be the only District within the Oxfordshire boundary without a full time trade and domestic waste recycling centre. The committee asked that the following views were considered:

- Currently 40% of the visits to Redbridge were on weekdays. It was not clear how this was split between trade and domestic customers but it seemed reasonable to assume that some were domestic customers and that these were likely to choose to shift their visit to the weekend. The effect of this would be to increase traffic around the site and in turn increase waiting times to enter the facility. In essence, this would create a poorer service to Oxford residents and increase disruption to those living and driving through this busy area;
- Poorer or changed access was likely to convert to increased fly tipping. This view was supported by the Waste Partnership which had factored into their financial calculations for this strategy the clear up operations of increased levels of fly tipping

- Established patterns of fly tipping were difficult to change and costly to deal with. This was evidenced in current patterns and clear ups around the Oxford ring road. The allocating of money to counteract a behaviour potentially bought about by this strategy was a poor use of money. A better use would be to support the full opening of Redbridge to domestic waste;
- It was likely that some domestic customers who would previously have taken bulky waste to Redbridge would because of reduced access, ask the Local Authority to collect it from their home. This would create pressure on these services both in terms of affordability and customer service;
- Proposals presented to bridge the service gap whilst Redbridge was closed for refurbishment were not acceptable. They were likely to produce many of the difficulties outlined above. The scrutiny committee would wish to see further efforts made to find a temporary site closer to the City
- The refurbishment of Redbridge was to be supported by private sector investment. Should this investment not be forthcoming the committee wished to see all efforts made to bridge the funding gap. The bottom line for the committee was that a position where Oxford has no recycling facility for domestic waste was insupportable

Traffic

3. Comments on traffic issues in the south of the city had been made at 2 above. In addition the proposals assume that some of Oxford's domestic and trade waste customers would use the new facility at Kidlington. This was likely to cause increased traffic flows and therefore congestion in the north of the city. These increased traffic flows and the potential difficulties they present to residents and those passing through need to be acknowledged and planned for within the strategy

Charging

4. The scrutiny committee welcomed the confirmation that the strategy had no intent either now or in the future to charge domestic waste customers. The committee would like to see consideration given to differential charging for trade waste customers in an effort to encourage recycling

Information

5. Oxford residents were to experience a significant change to service and therefore would be required to make changes to their well

established habits. The committee wished to see clear information and signposting provided to all residents in a timely and plain English style

Resolved to

- (1) Send to Oxfordshire County Council and to Ian Hudspeth (Oxfordshire County Council Cabinet member for Growth and Infrastructure) via the City Council Executive Board, the above comments as part of the County Council's consultation on this issue;
- (2) Thank Huw Jones for his attendance and useful contribution to the debate.

50 CLEANER GREENER PANEL UPDATE

The Head of Law and Governance submitted a report (previously circulated, now appended) concerning the progress of the Cleaner Greener Scrutiny Panel. Pat Jones (Principle Scrutiny Officer) introduced this update report and explained the back ground to it.

The Cleaner Greener Panel was seeking from Blackbird Leys residents opinions about the efficacy of the "Cleaner Greener" campaign. This would include attendance at the Parish Council meeting in April in order to garner its view. The Panel would meet again at the end of April to review all responses and decide whether to continue with the work or draw a conclusion from the information already to hand.

Initial results indicated that house dwellers were generally satisfied with the outcome of the campaign, but that there were still some issues around flats and maisonettes. In general terms, people were happy and had noticed a positive difference in their environment as a result of the Cleaner Greener campaign.

One problem that had been identified, however, was that of dog fouling. Councillor Tanner suggested that Tim Sadler (Director of City Services) should address this issue as it clearly was of great concern across the City, and especially in Blackbird Leys. Councillor Dee Sinclair suggested that the Neighbourhood Action Group (NAG) should be made aware of this issue, and Barrie Finch (IMP) added that signs warning of £80 fines for dog fouling should be erected in Blackbird Leys.

Tim Sadler explained that as a result of the Cleaner Greener Campaign in Blackbird Leys there had been some improvements to the cleansing schedules. It was important that the positive outcomes from the campaign in Blackbird Leys should be noted and applied elsewhere as the scheme moved across the City. Councillor Humberstone added that there was a need to follow up the campaign on Blackbird Leys, perhaps by a second Cleaner Greener campaign during the summer.

Resolved to:

- (1) Note the current position;
- (2) Thank the Panel , especially Councillors Val Smith and Rae Humberstone, for all their hard work;
- (3) Ask Tim Sadler to investigate the issue of dog fouling and how this problem could be lessened, taking into account observations made by the Committee.

51 PROGRESS ON YOUNG PEOPLES' ENGAGEMENT PANEL

Pat Jones (Principle Scrutiny Officer) introduced this update report (previously circulated, now appended) and explained the background to it.

She explained that the Panel had been working with Neil Holman (Active Communities Partnership Manager), Ash Barosso and young people from around Oxford. It had required a great deal of hard work to enable the project to reach its current stage and it was envisaged that it would take another six months before the first five young people were fully engaged with the project. It was intended that some Councillors would fill a mentoring and communicating role, and would enable access for young people to decision makers. There was a good team of committed youth workers involved in the scheme, and it was hoped to carry it forwards into the next Council year.

Pat Jones observed that the Council often struggled to engage with young people, yet they were an important part of regeneration plans. In answer to a question, she indicated that she did not know what proportion of referrals to Neil Holman came from BME communities, but she could investigate and report back. Although it was expected that there would be an end of project review, in order to see how the scheme could be further developed, it was not possible, at this stage, to predict the shape of the project at its end.

The Committee felt that this was a very useful project, and members thanked Pat Jones for her persistence with it. Some concern was expressed about its future sustainability, although it was accepted that this was a small start that could be used to inform any future strategy. A question was asked about a role for the new Community and Neighbourhoods team; and it was noted that Rebecca Wrigley (one of the Team Leaders) had special responsibility for young people and had already been involved with this panel.

The Committee felt that Neil Holman and Ash Barossa could be trusted to find young people who would most benefit from this project. However, it would be helpful if some younger Councillors could become involved and meet the young people. !

Resolved to note the current position.

52 WORK PROGRAMME AND REPORT BACK ON THE COMMITTEE'S RECOMMENDATIONS

The Committee considered the Work Programme for 2010/11 (previously circulated, now appended). Pat Jones presented this report to the Committee, explaining that as this was the last Committee meeting of the 2010/11 Council Year, it was a good time to review the work completed and look forward to the next year's work. Of particular interest were Members' views upon:-

- Feelings of engagement with the scrutiny process;
- Balance between Panel work and more formal Committee work;
- Items to be rolled forwards for the next year;
- New items for inclusion next year;

The Committee made the following points:-

- (1) Generally there was a feeling that the process had become more effective. Despite the fact that there were now only two scrutiny committees, there was no loss of focus;
- (2) The real measure of success was the difference that had been made by the committee's deliberations. It would be interesting for Tim Sadler to explain the value that he saw in scrutiny;
- (3) Tim Sadler indicated that he found the pace of scrutiny committees now much easier to deal with, with helpful, high quality advice emerging from meetings. He found it useful to attend meetings where he could in order to determine what issues of concern for members were emerging;
- (4) There was some concern that only half the members of the Committee had volunteered to serve on a panel or in a review group. It was desirable for more members of the Committee to become involved in this way, especially if they suggested a topic for investigation by a panel;
- (5) There had been some excellent committee meetings, but it was the panel work that provided the greatest opportunity to make a difference. Some panels and reviews - for example, the housing stock de-designation panel - had provided a good mechanism for greater involvement by members. It took time but was more involving and rewarding;
- (6) There was a feeling that there was a lack of engagement of tenants and tenants' representatives, especially with issues such as the Housing Revenue Account and the Housing Strategy. This concern was something that Tim Sadler could usefully take up;

- (7) Sometimes, scrutiny could appear to be a “hands off” process. Issues were often very complicated for Committees to deal with. It was hard to understand a topic in the relatively short lead up to it, and then there might not be sufficient time at the meeting to address the subject adequately. It would be helpful if the focus could be on areas where the Committee had a chance to make a real difference, and if this could be made very clear in any reports that were written to support this;
- (8) Pat Jones observed that the Communities and Partnerships Scrutiny Committee had a more difficult remit than the Value and Performance Scrutiny Committee, because it had to tackle more outward facing issues which tended to be more complex and took longer to develop and investigate.

Members of the Committee were asked to contact Pat Jones with any suggestions for inclusion in the next work programme. It was felt that the programme should be no more than 75% full to allow space for any items that might crop up during the year. In the meantime, the following items were suggested for consideration for inclusion in the new work programme:-

- Tenant involvement and the role of Estate Managers;
- Older Person’s Strategy;
- An item drawn from “Measuring what Matters” – a case study of Coventry, including a Social Investment Bank and how this could be used in Oxford.

Resolved to:-

- (1) Note all comments and suggestions made;
- (2) Invite members of the Committee to contact Pat Jones with any suggestions of items for inclusion in the new work programme;
- (3) Thank Pat Jones for all her hard work over the year, especially as she has had a reduction in staffing resources available to her;
- (4) Thank Lois Stock (Democratic Services Officer) for her support to the Committee and Pat Jones, and her development in the scrutiny role.

53 MINUTES

Resolved to confirm as a correct record the minutes of the meeting held on 10th February 2011.

54 DATES OF FUTURE MEETINGS

Meeting dates have yet to be ratified by Council. It was noted that the provisional date for the next meeting of this Committee was Monday 6th June.

55 CONFIDENTIAL BUSINESS

None

The meeting started at 5pm and ended at 7pm