

# Agenda

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## Council

Date: **Monday 23 April 2012**

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Time: **5.00 pm**

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Place: **Council Chamber, Town Hall**

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For any further information please contact:

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# Council

## Membership

Lord Mayor

Councillor Elise Benjamin

Deputy Lord Mayor

Councillor Alan Armitage

Sheriff

Councillor Jean Fooks

Councillor Mohammed Abbasi

Councillor Mohammed Altaf-Khan

Councillor Antonia Bance

Councillor Laurence Baxter

Councillor Tony Brett

Councillor Stephen Brown

Councillor Clark Brundin

Councillor Jim Campbell

Councillor Mary Clarkson

Councillor Colin Cook

Councillor Van Coulter

Councillor Stuart Craft

Councillor Roy Darke

Councillor John Goddard

Councillor Michael Gotch

Councillor Beverley Hazell

Councillor Rae Humberstone

Councillor Graham Jones

Councillor Bryan Keen

Councillor Shah Khan

Councillor Ben Lloyd-Shogbesan

Councillor Mark Lygo

Councillor Sajjad Malik

Councillor Stuart McCready

Councillor Joe McManners

Councillor Mark Mills

Councillor Matt Morton

Councillor Susanna Pressel

Councillor Bob Price

Councillor Nathan Pyle

Councillor Mike Rowley

Councillor Gwynneth Royce

Councillor David Rundle

Councillor Gill Sanders

Councillor Scott Seamons

Councillor Dee Sinclair

Councillor Val Smith

Councillor John Tanner

Councillor Bob Timbs

Councillor Ed Turner

Councillor Oscar Van Nooijen

Councillor Ruth Wilkinson

Councillor David Williams

Councillor Dick Wolff

Councillor Nuala Young

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## SUMMONS

A meeting of the City Council will be held in the Council Chamber, Town Hall, on Monday 23 April 2012 at 5.00 pm to transact the business set out below.

*Peter Sloman*

Proper Officer

## AGENDA

	<b>Pages</b>
<b>1 MINUTES</b>	1 - 18
Minutes of the ordinary meeting held on 20 February 2012.	
<b>2 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST</b>	
<b>3 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE</b>	
<b>4 APPOINTMENTS TO COMMITTEES</b>	
None to be made.	
<b>5 LORD MAYOR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS</b>	
<b>6 SHERIFF'S ANNOUNCEMENTS</b>	
<b>7 ANNOUNCEMENTS BY THE LEADER</b>	
<b>8 ANNOUNCEMENTS BY THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE, THE CHIEF FINANCE OFFICER AND THE MONITORING OFFICER</b>	
<b>9 ADDRESSES BY THE PUBLIC</b>	

To hear addresses from members of the public in accordance with Council Procedure Rule 11.8 for which the required notice (1.00pm on Thursday 19<sup>th</sup> April 2012) and the full wording of the address has been given to the Head of Law and Governance.

## **10 QUESTIONS BY THE PUBLIC**

To hear questions from the public in accordance with Council Procedure Rule 11.9 to the Leader or other Board Members of the City Executive Board for which the required notice (1.00pm on Thursday 19<sup>th</sup> April 2012) and the full wording of the question has been given to the Head of Law and Governance and to hear responses from those Members.

## **CITY EXECUTIVE BOARD RECOMMENDATIONS - ITEMS 11 - 15**

### **11 EMPLOYMENT POLICIES**

19 - 108

Report of the Head of People and Equalities and an extract from the minutes of the City Executive Board held on 8<sup>th</sup> February 2012.

### **12 HOUSING STRATEGY AND ACTION PLAN 2012-15**

109 - 194

Report of the Head of Housing and Communities and an extract from the minutes of the City Executive Board held on 4<sup>th</sup> April 2012.

### **13 ALLOCATION OF PREVENTING HOMELESS GRANT AND OXFORD CITY GRANT FOR HOMELESS SERVICES**

195 - 214

Report of the Head of Housing and Communities and an extract from the minutes of the City Executive Board held on 4<sup>th</sup> April 2012.

### **14 ANNUAL LETTINGS PLAN - ALLOCATIONS PERCENTAGES 2012-13**

215 - 234

Report of the Head of Housing and Communities and an extract from the minutes of the City Executive Board held on 4<sup>th</sup> April 2012.

### **15 CORPORATE PLAN 2012-2016 - TARGETS**

235 - 256

The following papers are attached for this item:-

- (1) Report of the Head of Business Improvement and the Head of Policy, Performance and Communications
- (2) Clean copy of Appendix 1 to the report that contains the targets being recommended to Council

(3) Report of the Finance and Performance Scrutiny Panel

(4) Minute extract of the City Executive Board of 4th April 2012

The Corporate Plan itself was adopted by Council on 20th February 2012. The Plan will be adjusted in line with the targets if Council agrees the targets today.

## **16 CITY EXECUTIVE BOARD DECISIONS (MINUTES) AND SINGLE EXECUTIVE DECISIONS (MINUTES)**

257 - 280

### City Executive Board decisions (Minutes)

(1) Minutes of the meeting held on 4<sup>th</sup> April 2012-03

### Single Executive Member decisions (Minutes)

(1) Minutes of the Single Executive Member Decision meeting (Board Member – Housing Needs) held on 15<sup>th</sup> February 2012.

(2) Minutes of the Single Executive Member Decision meeting (Board Member – Cleaner Greener Oxford) held on 16<sup>th</sup> February 2012.

(3) Minutes of the Single Executive Member Decision meeting (Board Member – Finance and Efficiency) held on 20<sup>th</sup> February 2012.

(4) Minutes of the Single Executive Member Decision meeting (Board Member – Housing Needs) held on 27<sup>th</sup> February 2012.

(5) Minutes of the Single Executive Member Decision meeting (Board Member – Finance and Efficiency) held on 2<sup>nd</sup> March 2012.

(6) Minutes of the Single Executive Member Decision meeting (Board Member – Finance and Efficiency) held on 29<sup>th</sup> March 2012.

## **17 RECOMMENDATIONS AND REPORTS FROM SCRUTINY COMMITTEES**

No reports submitted.

## **18 QUESTIONS ON NOTICE FROM MEMBERS OF COUNCIL**

Questions on notice under Council Procedure Rule 11.10(b) may be asked of the Lord Mayor, a Member of the City Executive Board or the Chair of a Committee.

Questions on notice must, by the Constitution, be notified to the Head of Law and Governance by no later than 9.30am on Friday 20<sup>th</sup> April 2012.

Full details of any questions for which the required notice has been given will be circulated to Members of Council before the meeting.

## **19 STATEMENTS ON NOTICE FROM MEMBERS OF COUNCIL**

Statements on Notice under Council Procedure Rule 11.10(b) may be made. Statements do not need to be directed to a specific Councillor.

Statements on notice must, by the Constitution, be notified to the Head of Law and Governance by no later than 9.30am on Friday 20<sup>th</sup> April 2012.

Full details of any statements for which the required notice has been given will be circulated to Members of Council before the meeting.

## **20 PETITIONS**

None to be debated.

## **21 MOTIONS ON NOTICE**

281 - 286

Council Procedure Rule 11.14 refers. The Motions (listed in the order received) that have been notified to the Head of Law and Governance by the deadline of 1.00pm on Wednesday 11<sup>th</sup> April 2012 are attached to this agenda.

## **22 REPORTS AND QUESTIONS ABOUT ORGANISATIONS THE COUNCIL IS REPRESENTED ON**

## **23 SENIOR MANAGEMENT RESTRUCTURES - DELEGATION**

287 - 288

The Head of Law and Governance has submitted a report which proposes an amendment to the Constitution that would have the effect of granting the Chief Executive authority to implement organisational changes at senior levels of the Council.

Council is asked to adopt the constitutional provisions proposed at Paragraph 4 of this report with immediate effect and that the Monitoring Officer be authorised to amend the Constitution accordingly.

## **24 REGULATION OF INVESTIGATORY POWERS ACT 2000 - 1ST APRIL 2011 TO 31ST MARCH 2012**

289 - 300

The Head of Law and Governance has submitted a report which reports the Council's application of its powers under the Regulation of Investigatory Powers Act 2000 between 1<sup>st</sup> April 2011 and 31<sup>st</sup> March 2012.

Council is asked to note the use of its powers under the Regulation of Investigatory Powers Act 2000 (RIPA) during the period 1<sup>st</sup> April 2011 to 31<sup>st</sup> March 2012.

## **GUIDANCE ON DECLARING INTERESTS AT MEETINGS**

### **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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## COUNCIL

Monday 20 February 2012

**COUNCILLORS PRESENT:** Councillors Benjamin (Lord Mayor), Armitage (Deputy Lord Mayor), Fooks (Sheriff), Abbasi, Altaf-Khan, Bance, Baxter, Brett, Brown, Brundin, Campbell, Clarkson, Cook, Coulter, Darke, Goddard, Gotch, Hazell, Humberstone, Jones, Keen, Khan, Lloyd-Shogbesan, Lygo, Malik, McCready, McManners, Mills, Morton, Pressel, Price, Pyle, Rowley, Royce, Rundle, Sanders, Seamons, Sinclair, Smith, Tanner, Timbs, Turner, Van Nooijen, Wilkinson, Williams, Wolff and Young.

### **80. CHANGE TO THE ORDER OF BUSINESS**

The Lord Mayor asked Council if it would agree to the order of business being changed and to adopt the procedure for dealing with the budget debate:

- To deal with agenda items 1-8 in the order shown on the agenda
- To take addresses and questions from the public on the Budget items ONLY
- To debate the budget items
- To take addresses and questions from the public on non-budget items
- That Council then proceed with the business from agenda item 16 onwards in the order shown on the agenda

Council resolved to:

- (a) Adopt the procedure for dealing with the Budget;
- (b) Take agenda item 23 (Council Tax 2012/13) after agenda item 15 (Housing Revenue Account (HRA) Business Plan Draft for consultation and to take agenda item 20 (Petitions – “Don’t Cut Services in East Oxford”) immediately following the Budget.

### **81. MINUTES**

Council resolved to approve the minutes of the ordinary meeting held on 19<sup>th</sup> December 2011 which had been adjourned and reconvened on 16<sup>th</sup> January 2012.

### **82. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

Councillors declared interests as follows:

- (a) Councillor Sajjid Malik declared a personal interest in agenda item 12 (Budget 2012/13 – 2015/16) as he was involved in the hackney carriage and private hire Licensing trade, held a street trading license and owned a business in Oxford. (Minute 92 refers).

- (b) Councillor Mohammed Niaz Abbasi declared a personal interest in agenda item 12 (Budget 2012/13 – 2015/16) as he was involved in the hackney carriage and private hire Licensing trade. (Minute 92 refers).
- (c) Councillor Mohammed Altaf-Khan declared a personal interest in agenda item 12 (Budget 2012/13 – 2015/16) as he was involved in the hackney carriage and private hire Licensing trade. (Minute 92 refers).
- (d) Councillor Shah Jahan Khan declared a personal interest in agenda item 12 (Budget 2012/13 – 2015/16) as he was involved in the hackney carriage and private hire Licensing trade. (Minute 92 refers).
- (e) Councillor Rae Humberstone declared a personal interest in agenda item 12 (Budget 2012/13 – 2015/16) as he was a City Council appointed representative on the Agnes Smith Advice Centre and employed by the Oxfordshire County Council with regard to the Dial-a-Ride Service. (Minute 92 refers).
- (f) Councillor Beverley Hazell declared a personal interest in agenda item 12 (Budget 2012/13 – 2015/16) as she was involved with the capital management of the Oxford Night Shelter. (Minute 92 refers).
- (g) Councillor Nuala Young declared a personal interest in agenda item 12 (Budget 2012/13 – 2015/16) as she was involved in the tourist tour guide trade. (Minute 92 refers).
- (h) Councillor Mark Mills declared a personal interest in agenda item 16(a) (City Executive Board Decisions (Minutes) and Single Executive Member Decisions (Minutes) – City Executive Board held on 8<sup>th</sup> February 2012) as he sat on the Advisory Board of the Oxford Hub. (Minute 97 refers).

### **83. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies were received from Stuart Craft.

### **84. APPOINTMENTS TO COMMITTEES**

None.

### **85. LORD MAYOR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS**

None.

### **86. SHERIFF'S ANNOUNCEMENTS**

None.

### **87. ANNOUNCEMENTS BY THE LEADER**

None.

## **88. ANNOUNCEMENTS BY THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE, THE CHIEF FINANCE OFFICER AND THE MONITORING OFFICER**

The Chief Executive informed Council that the City Council had achieved the Equalities Standard.

## **89. ADDRESSES BY THE PUBLIC**

Council received and took four addresses to Council (text of the addresses are appended to these minutes) (along with an Officer response to the address from Nigel Gibson) from the following:

- (1) Mr M Hugh Jones – Dial-a-Ride Minibuses in Oxford City.
- (2) Nigel Gibson – Decisions concerning leisure in East Oxford.
- (3) William Clark – Blackbird Leys Park Town Green application.
- (4) Anna Thornhill – Oxford Safer Masts Group.

## **90. QUESTIONS BY THE PUBLIC**

One question was submitted by a member of the public as follows:

- (1) **Question to the Board Member, Leisure Services (Councillor Van Coulter) from Nigel Gibson**

### Contract for Blackbird Leys Pool

I understand that the Council intends entering into a contract imminently for the construction of a new swimming pool at Blackbird Leys, and that this will then bind the Council into a contractual relationship with certain conditions in connection with a decision that is subject to the application for Judicial Review concerning the lack of consultation in relation to the closure of Temple Cowley Leisure Centre. Can you please confirm whether you intend entering into this relationship before the outcome of the Judicial Review application is known (and if so, when), and if so how much the Council would have to pay the contractor to get out of the contract should the Judicial Review succeed?

**Response:** The Council intends to sign as soon as possible, and before the outcome of the judicial review application is known, a contract and should the judicial review application succeeded this would not cost the Council anything.

## **91. REPORT OF THE COUNCIL'S CHIEF FINANCE OFFICER ON THE ROBUSTNESS OF THE BUDGET**

The Corporate Director, Finance and Efficiency submitted a report (previously circulated, now appended) under Section 25 of the Local Government Act 2003. The Act required the Section 151 Officer to report to Council on the robustness of the estimates made for the purposes of the calculations of the budget, and the adequacy of the proposed financial reserves.

The Corporate Director, Finance and Efficiency in response to questions informed Council that there was no requirement for her to provide a response on the opposition budget amendments. However she confirmed that she had seen the proposed amendments and that there were no issues with the Liberal Democrat Group amendments, nor the Green Group amendments except for a proposal to take out £500k from the redundancy fund, which would leave insufficient funds in 2013/14.

Council resolved to note the report when setting the budget for 2012/13 and the indicative budgets for 2013/14-2015/16.

## **92. BUDGET 2012/13 - 2015/16**

Council had before it the following (previously circulated, now appended):

- (1) Minute extract and recommendation from the City Executive Board held on 8<sup>th</sup> February 2012;
- (2) Report of the Head of Finance;
- (3) Liberal Democrat Group budget amendments;
- (4) Green Group budget amendments.

Councillors declared interests as follows:

- (a) Councillor Sajjid Malik declared a personal interest as he was as he was involved in the hackney carriage and private hire Licensing trade, held a street trading License and owned a business in Oxford.
- (b) Councillor Mohammed Niaz Abbasi declared a personal interest as he was involved in the hackney carriage and private hire Licensing trade.
- (c) Councillor Mohammed Altaf-Khan declared a personal interest as he was involved in the hackney carriage and private hire Licensing trade.
- (d) Councillor Shah Jahan Khan declared a personal interest as he was involved in the hackney carriage and private hire Licensing trade.
- (e) Councillor Rae Humberstone declared a personal interest as he was a City Council appointed representative on the Agnes Smith Advice Centre and employed by the Oxfordshire County Council with regard to the Dial-a-Ride Service. .
- (f) Councillor Beverley Hazell declared a personal interest as she was involved with the Capital Management of the Oxford Night Shelter.

- (g) Councillor Nuala Young declared a personal interest as she was involved in the Tourist Tour Guide trade.

Councillor Ed Turner, seconded by Councillor Bob Price, moved and spoke to the Administration's budget.

Councillor Mark Mills, seconded by Councillor Stephen Brown, moved and spoke to the Liberal Democrat Group's proposed General Fund Budget and Capital Budget amendments to the City Executive Board's recommendation.

Following a debate, Council voted on the Liberal Democrat Group's amendments but these were not carried.

Councillor David Williams, seconded by Councillor Matt Morton, moved and spoke to the Green Group's proposed General Fund and Capital Budgets amendments to the City Executive Board's recommendation.

Following a debate, Council voted on the Green Group's amendments but these were not carried.

Council voted upon the substantive City Executive Board's recommendation and these were carried.

The full decision of Council on the Council's Budget for 2012/13 – 2015/16 is set out below:

- (a) With regard to the Budget 2012/13 – 2015/16 to:
- (1) Approve the General Fund budget requirement for 2012/13 of £24.113 million as detailed in Appendix 1 to the report of the Head of Finance and in so doing to agree a Council Tax freeze for 2012/13, thereby resulting in an average Band D Council Tax of £262.96;
  - (2) Approve the Housing Revenue Account (HRA) budget for 2012/13 as set out in Appendix 4 to the report of the Head of Finance and an average dwelling rent increase of 7.83% and service charge increases of 6.1%
  - (3) Approve the Capital Programme for 2012/13 - 2015-16 as set out in Appendix 6 to the report of the Head of Finance subject to the inclusion of £300,000 in the 2011/12 Capital Programme in respect of the installation of photo voltaic works to General Fund Leisure properties to be funded by capital receipts and the inclusion of £400,000 for Council house properties in the HRA for similar works to be financed from underspends within the HRA capital programme; and
  - (4) Approve Fees and Charges as set out in Appendix 7 to the report of the Head of Finance;
- (b) With regard to the Periodic Report – Budget 2011/12 (Papers attached to the agreed copy of the minutes) to:

- (1) Agree the inclusion of £400k feed-in-tariff solar panel capital works to the 2011/12 HRA capital programme and the approval of the use of Capital Programme underspends to fund this project;
- (2) Agree to the inclusion of £300k feed-in-tariff solar panel capital works within the 2011/12 General Fund Capital Programme in the absence of any underspend on the Programme and the approval of such funding as appropriate;
- (3) On the basis of Council agreeing the additional funding in regard to the fitting of solar photovoltaic panels, to grant project approval for the fitting of such solar photovoltaic panels to appropriate Council-owned sheltered housing accommodation blocks and leisure centres; to waive the Council's procurement rules in regard to selecting an appropriate contractor or contractors for this work, on the basis that following such rules would not help to achieve overall best value; and to delegate the authority to award such contract or contracts to the Chief Executive;
- (4) Agree that £50k of capital expenditure be brought forward from 2013-14 to 2011-12 to fund feasibility work associated with the £2m Depot Relocation Project planned for 2013/14.

### **93. CORPORATE PLAN 2012-2017**

Council had before it the following (previously circulated, now appended):

- (a) Minute extract and recommendation from the City Executive Board held on 8<sup>th</sup> February 2012;
- (b) Report of the Head of Policy, Culture and Communications.

Councillor Bob Price (Leader of the Council) moved and spoke to the City Executive Board's recommendation.

Following a debate, Council resolved to adopt the Corporate Plan for 2012-17, but to defer to Scrutiny the part of the Corporate Plan that covered targets and to receive back to Council the comments from Scrutiny.

### **94. TREASURY MANAGEMENT 2011/12 STRATEGY UPDATE AND 2012/13 STRATEGY**

Council had before it the following (previously circulated, now appended):

- (a) Minute extract and recommendation from the City Executive Board of 8<sup>th</sup> February 2012;
- (b) Report of the Corporate Director of Finance and Efficiency.

Council resolved:

- (a) To adopt and approve the revised Treasury Management Strategy and Prudential Indicators and limits for 2011/12, which had been amended to allow for Housing Revenue Account borrowing as set out in paragraphs 71-95 of the report;
- (b) To adopt and approve the Prudential Indicators and limits for 2012/13 to 2015/16 as set out in paragraphs 71-95 of the report;
- (c) To approve the Minimum Reserve Provision (MRP) statement detailed in paragraphs 15-19 of the report which set out the Council's policy on repayment of debt;
- (d) To approve the Treasury Management Strategy 2012/13 and the Treasury prudential indicators at paragraphs 20-48 of the report;
- (e) To approve the Investment Strategy for 2012/13 contained in the Treasury Management Strategy and detailed in the investment criteria as set out in paragraphs 49-70 and appendices 1 and 2 of the report.

## **95. HOUSING REVENUE ACCOUNT (HRA) BUSINESS PLAN - DRAFT FOR CONSULTATION**

Council had before it the following (previously circulated, now appended):

- (a) Minute extract and recommendation from the City Executive Board of 8<sup>th</sup> February 2012;
- (b) Report of the Executive Director for Housing and City Regeneration.

Resolved to adopt the Housing Revenue Account (HRA) 30 Year Business Plan as part of the Council's Policy Framework.

## **96. COUNCIL TAX 2012/13**

The Head of Finance submitted a report (previously circulated, now appended) which detailed the Council Tax for Oxford City for 2012/13 which was required to be set by Council, in accordance with the Local Government Finance Acts, 1988 and 1992 as amended by the Localism Act 2011.

Council resolved:

- (a) To approve the City Council's precept and Council Tax requirement of £12,587,330 (inclusive of Parish Precepts). (Net of the Parish Precepts, the figure is £12,394,330);
- (b) To note the average Band D Council Tax figure (excluding Parishes) of £262.96. (This remains the same as in 2011/12, i.e. a zero percent increase. Including Parish Precepts the figure is £267.05, a minimal (0.41p) increase on the 2011/12 figure of £266.64 (paragraph 11 of the report));

- (c) To approve the contribution to the Parish of Old Marston of £10,000 in recognition of the additional expenditure that Parish incurs as a consequence of maintaining the cemetery (paragraph 17 of the report);
- (d) To agreed that the amount of £490,303 to be treated as Special Expenses (paragraph 18 of the report);
- (e) To agree the Band D Council Taxes for the various areas of the City (excluding the Police and County Council's additions) as follows:-

Littlemore	£284.50
Old Marston	£291.55
Risinghurst and Sandhills	£279.97
Blackbird Leys	£261.16
Unparished Area	£265.15

(These figures include the Parish Precepts and special expensing amounts as appropriate on top of the City-wide Council Tax of £252.56).

- (f) To note Oxfordshire County Council's precept and Band D Council Tax (paragraph 21 of the report);
- (g) Note the Thames Valley Police Authority's precept and Band D Council Tax (paragraph 22 of the report);
- (h) To note the overall average Band D equivalent Council Tax of £1,583.06 which included the Parish Precepts;
- (i) To note that Councillor Ed Turner had agreed to work with Officers on presenting a seminar for Members on Special Expenses.

**97. CITY EXECUTIVE BOARD DECISIONS (MINUTES) AND SINGLE EXECUTIVE MEMBER DECISIONS (MINUTES)**

City Executive Board decisions (minutes)

Councillor Mark Mills declared a personal interest as he sat on the Advisory Board of the Oxford Hub.

- (1) Unconfirmed minutes of the meeting held on 8<sup>th</sup> February 2012.
  - (a) Councillor Williams with regard to minute 81 – (Westgate Development), said that members of the Opposition needed to be included in the discussions on the new development as he felt there had been problems in the early stages of previous negotiations. In response Councillor Price said that parts of the Oxpens land were owned by the City Council and the BRAB, what was not clear at this stage was if any housing would be included in the Westgate planning application.
  - (b) Councillor Mills in regard to minute 85 – (Grant Allocations to Community and Voluntary Organisations 2012/2013) raised points on feedback to applicants. In response Councillor Bance said that



all groups whose applications had been successful received notification via a letter. Those that were unsuccessful could contact the Council for feedback on the reasons.

#### Single Executive Member decision (Minutes)

- (1) Minutes of the Single Executive Member Decision meeting (Board Member – Finance and Efficiency) held on 22<sup>nd</sup> December 2011.
- (2) Minutes of the Single Executive Member Decision meeting (Board Member – City Development) held on 2<sup>nd</sup> February 2012.
- (3) Minutes of the Single Executive Member Decision meeting (Board Member – Corporate Governance and Strategic Partnerships) held on 2<sup>nd</sup> February 2012.

#### **98. RECOMMENDATIONS AND REPORTS FROM SCRUTINY COMMITTEES**

No recommendations from Scrutiny Committees were received.

Councillor Brown said that 24 recommendations had been made on the budget from the Finance and Performance Scrutiny Panel and all had been taken on board by the City Executive Board.

#### **99. QUESTIONS ON NOTICE FROM MEMBERS OF COUNCIL**

##### **(a) Questions notified in time for written replies to be provided**

##### **1. Question to the Board Member, City Development (Councillor Colin Cook) from Councillor Nuala Young**

##### **Covered Market – Former Palms Delicatessen Unit**

Could the Board Member list the 42 applicants for the lease on the store in the Covered Market that was previously Palms Delicatessen and what type of trade was offered by each one?

**Answer:** The information is confidential and not for publication under Part 1, Schedule 12A, Paragraphs 1 and 3 of the Local Government Act 1972.

The information has been provided to Councillor Young.

Councillor Young in a supplementary question asked if considering that the Council had agreed conditions of tenancy, could he explain why 19 of the 42 applicants were discounted.

In response Councillor Cook said that Officers had applied the strategy and that out of the 42 expressions of interest, only 2 had met the strategy. He did not know why the 19 unknowns did not provide follow through information with a bid

**2. Question to the Board Member, Cleaner, Greener Oxford (Councillor John Tanner) from Councillor Jean Fooks**

Disposal of light bulbs

“The City Council is rightly asking residents to observe the restrictions on what goes into their green wheelie bins. Light bulbs are hazardous waste but at present the Council does not provide any facilities for their safe disposal. For those who are able to do so, driving dead bulbs to Redbridge is an option – but hardly environmentally friendly to do so. Many people do not have a car and this is applauded as reducing carbon emissions.

When will the Council provide special containers at recycling sites and in district centres for the safe disposal of light bulbs?”

**Answer:** Normal light bulbs can be disposed of in your green wheelie bin. Fluorescent tubes, normal light bulbs and low energy light bulbs can be taken to [Redbridge Waste Recycling Centre](#). You can also visit the [Recolight website](#) to search for your nearest collection point for low energy light bulbs. We have no plans for other collection arrangements for light bulbs. I understand the Councillor’s concern and I will investigate to see if there is anything further the City Council can do.

Councillor Fooks in a supplementary question asked if Councillor Tanner would explain why the leaflets said that batteries and lightbulbs should not go in bins.

In response Councillor Tanner said that as well as the Redbridge Centre, lightbulbs could also be taken to Homebase, Robert Dyas and Sainsburys.

**(b) Questions notified by the deadline in the Constitution (replies to be given orally at Council)**

**3. Question to the Board Member, Housing Needs (Councillor Joe McManners) from Councillor Tony Brett.**

I’d like to know whether the following living arrangement is an HMO? A rented 3 bedroom house occupied by three unrelated people, two of whom are a couple in a long standing relationship (although not married or civil partnered but possibly engaged) who use one bedroom for sleeping and another as a study/work room, effectively living as one household. The third person has their own bedroom and could be argued to be a separate “household”. I’m using the Administration’s own language here.

**Response:** The example given is a HMO as it consisted of 3 people renting who form more than one household and who share facilities. The use of the “household” is not the language of the Administration, as it comes directly from the definitions contained in the Housing Act 2004 and its associated regulation.

Councillor Brett in a supplementary question asked if the Board Member justified indirect discrimination on the grounds of marital status. In response Councillor McManners re-iterated that HMO's were defined by law.

**4. Question to the Board Member, Housing Needs (Councillor Joe McManners) from Councillor Tony Brett.**

Your guidelines on what needs to be licensed as an HMO say that a house with resident landlord(s) requires a license if it has more than two lodgers. Can you let me know, in the case of a resident landlord couple and three or four lodgers whether that house would count according to your definitions as a large HMO or a small HMO and thus be liable for fees of £470 plus £172 annually or £362 plus £150 annually? Would this change if any of the lodgers were related and so formed fewer "households" than the number of lodgers?

**Response:** Wherever there is a resident landlord in a HMO they are included in the total number of occupiers in the property. This is nothing new and it has been the case since 2006 when mandatory licensing of HMO's was introduced across the UK.

If the lodgers were all related, for example it was 2 brothers and a cousin, there would still be 2 households sharing the property with 3 people renting so a licence would be required.

**5. Question to the Board Member, Housing Needs (Councillor Joe McManners) from Councillor Tony Brett.**

May I ask why, given the onerous requirements of the Administration's amenities and facilities guide, it seems to be quite willing to let much larger households (often quite vulnerable ones) live in far lower standards of accommodation? As an example I can think of several households that contains eight people – three adults and five children. They get by with one bathroom containing a bath and toilet with just one extra toilet in a separate room. The children most certainly all need the bathroom at the same time in the morning as they all go to school at the same time. You appear to have banned private rented unrelated tenants from living like this but seem to be continuing to allow it for vulnerable families. Do you consider that vulnerable families need a lower level of amenity provision? What are you going to do for all the unrelated tenants you are making homeless by pricing their landlords out of the market? Do you want them to leave Oxford and thus stop contributing to its vibrant economic and cultural life?

**Response:** Firstly can I say that the amenities and facilities guide which provides the standards for HMO accommodation in Oxford is not onerous. We have compared our requirements with those used in 14 similar cities and the standards being applied in Oxford are very similar. In a recent meeting to review progress with the HMO Licensing scheme, our officers were complimented by the

accredited letting agents and landlords on their pragmatic approach in applying the standards.

Whilst the Housing Health and Safety Rating Scheme can be used to assess family homes, we do not have the statutory powers to intervene in relation to homes let to families like we do with HMOs. However, families regularly share facilities in a way that unrelated individuals would not be prepared to and this has clearly been recognised by Parliament which is why the same powers do not apply. If families are particularly vulnerable it could be that we could use a disabled facilities grant to improve facilities.

The purpose of licensing HMOs and applying our facilities and amenities guide is not to ban tenants from living in a certain way, but to ensure that they live in a property that provides them with adequate facilities.

There is no evidence of any overall loss of HMO accommodation. Whilst we have reports of some landlords choosing to stop letting their houses to sharers, there are as many reports of new investors in HMO stock and HMO owners increasing occupancy levels having previously reduced them to avoid the need for licensing

**6. Question to the Board Member, Housing Needs (Councillor Joe McManners) from Councillor Tony Brett.**

I noticed on a poster on a bus stop on 10<sup>th</sup> February that the Administration is offering a £600 “finders fee” to those people fortunate enough to have a 2-bedroom house to let with “no fees and no obligation to accept any potential tenant” as well as “payment of reasonable agency fees”. May I ask if the portfolio holder how he justifies that position given that for a 3 bedroom property that might be let to 3 unrelated people his administration is charging £362 for registration as an HMO (with an additional £150 per year to keep the license) and will most probably demand a lot more expensive works given that thus far his officers have deemed 98% of licensable properties unfit to receive a license? A three bed roomed property will release more pressure on Oxford’s housing situation than a 2-bed so why has the administration made it almost £1000 more profitable to let a 2-bed than a 3-bed?

**Response: Response:** The finders fee is being offered by the Housing and Community service as there is a shortage of 2 bed properties for families who have presented to the Council as being in housing need. There is far less need for 3 bed properties which is why there is no finders fee being offered for them. The payment of the finders fee is an incentive for landlords who would otherwise be able to rent their property to a family not in housing need at the market rate or use it as an HMO and make even more money. If we are unable to find a suitable property the costs of providing emergency accommodation are exceedingly high and overall the scheme helps reduces the Council’s costs in complying with its housing duties.

The cost of complying with the HMO licensing scheme should be just the licensing fee if the landlord has been maintaining the property and complying with the law.

**7. Question to the Board Member, Cleaner, Green Oxford (Councillor John Tanner) from Councillor Jean Fooks.**

Residents have to buy the paper ecosacks for garden waste in batches of 10 or 20. Can we assume that they will be allowed to use any sacks they still have at the end of this financial year in the next one?

**Response:** Yes.

**8. Question to the Leader of the Council (Councillor Bob Price) from Councillor Mark Mills**

Prayers at Council meetings

Should all local authorities follow Oxford City's example and avoid requiring councillors to participate in often hypocritical displays of religious devotion?

**Response:** It was a wise decision by the Courts and it is up to each Council to decide for itself.

**100. STATEMENTS ON NOTICE FROM MEMBERS OF COUNCIL**

None received.

**101. PETITIONS - "DON'T CUT SERVICES IN EAST OXFORD"**

The Head of Law and Governance submitted a report (previously circulated, now appended) which advised on the procedure that Council needed to follow under the Council's Petitions Scheme in respect of large petitions and provided information specifically on the petition concerning "Don't Cut Services in East Oxford".

Nigel Gibson the head petitioner presented the petition and spoke on its contents.

Councillor Mark Mills seconded by Councillor Graham Jones moved the following recommendation:

"Council notes the petition entitled "Don't Cut Services in East Oxford" and thanks those who have signed it for their views. Council believes that it reflects widespread unease with the Administration's current policy with regard to the provision of a pool. Council resolves to take all reasonable steps to retain a public swimming pool in the eastern half of the City within the ring road"

Following a debate, Council voted and resolved not to support the recommendation by Councillor Mark Mills.

## 102. MOTIONS ON NOTICE

Council had before it one Motion on Notice and reached a decision as follows:

(1) **Opposition to Right to Buy – (Proposer – Councillor David Rundle, seconded by Councillor Stuart McCready)**

This Council notes the announcement at the Autumn's Conservative Party Conference of a renewal of the Thatcherite policy of Right to Buy (RTB) and its subsequent inclusion as a proposal in the Government's Housing Strategy.

This Council also notes the long-standing cross-party opposition to RTB with its impact of decreasing the social housing stock in our city which has a very real housing crisis.

This Council further notes the aspiration in the Government's Housing Strategy to offset the loss of social housing via RTB by provision of replacement dwellings, but not necessarily in the same part of the country. This Council does not accept that this provides sufficient safeguard against the damaging effects of RTB.

This Council therefore calls on the Chief Executive to ensure that there is a robust response to the consultation on this proposed policy, restating Oxford's reasoned opposition to RTB. That response should express opposition in principle to the policy and also underline the special situation of Oxford which would mean a return to RTB would make our city suffer more than most.

***Councillor David Williams moved an amendment as follows:***

*To delete the word "Government" where it appears and to replace with the words "Coalition Government"*

*To add an additional paragraph as follows:*

*Council Officers will investigate the option of establishing a Cooperative Trust to manage all out Council house stock as suggested by the Local Authority Cooperative Network and the Rochdale model if that will circumvent the RTB provisions to be announced by the Secretary of State and thereby retain a form of social housing in Oxford.*

***Councillor Joe McManners, seconded by councillor Ed Turner moved an amendment as follows:***

*"To delete the amendment by councillor David Williams and to retain the substantive Motion by Councillor David Rundle"*

The mover of the substantive Motion Councillor David Rundle accepted the amendment by Councillor David Williams. Following a debate, Council voted:

- (a) Not to adopt the amendment by Councillor David Williams;

(b) To adopt the substantive Motion un-amended as follows:

“This Council notes the announcement at the Autumn's Conservative Party Conference of a renewal of the Thatcherite policy of Right to Buy (RTB) and its subsequent inclusion as a proposal in the Government's HousingStrategy.

This Council also notes the long-standing cross-party opposition to RTB with its impact of decreasing the social housing stock in our city which has a very real housing crisis.

This Council further notes the aspiration in the Government's Housing Strategy to offset the loss of social housing via RTB by provision of replacement dwellings, but not necessarily in the same part of the country. This Council does not accept that this provides sufficient safeguard against the damaging effects of RTB.

This Council therefore calls on the Chief Executive to ensure that there is a robust response to the consultation on this proposed policy, restating Oxford's reasoned opposition to RTB. That response should express opposition in principle to the policy and also underline the special situation of Oxford which would mean a return to RTB would make our city suffer more than most”.

#### **103. REPORTS AND QUESTIONS ABOUT ORGANISATION THE COUNCIL IS REPRESENTED ON**

None raised.

#### **104. REVISED CONTRACT AND FINANCE RULES AND OTHER MATTERS**

The Head of Law and Governance submitted a report (previously circulated, now appended) which presented revised Contract and Finance Rules and other matters for adoption.

Council resolved:

- (a) To adopt the revised Contract and Finance Rules and to replace with immediate effect the existing Contract and Finance Rules in the Constitution;
- (b) To approve the Constitutional amendment proposed at paragraph 18 of the report with immediate effect.

#### **105. PAY POLICY STATEMENT**

The Head of People and Equalities submitted a report (previously circulated, now appended) which sought approval for a Pay Policy Statement for the Council as required under the Localism Act 2011.

Council resolved:

- (a) To approve the Pay Policy Statement as agreed with the Trade Unions with immediate effect;
- (b) To authorise the Head of People and Equalities to implement the approved Policy and make changes to it if required to put right any clerical mistakes or to reflect changes in the law.

**106. PROGRAMME OF COUNCIL AND COMMITTEE MEETINGS 2012/13 AND 2013/14**

The Head of Law and Governance submitted a report (previously circulated, now appended) which sought Council's agreement to a programme of Council and Committee meetings for the Council Years 2012/13 and 2013/14.

Council resolved to approve the timetable of Council and Committee meetings for the Council Years 2012/13 and 2013/14 subject to the following further amendments:

**FURTHER AMENDMENTS 2012/13**

<b>City Executive Board as originally proposed</b>	<b>City Executive Board amended proposal</b>
Wednesday 27 <sup>th</sup> June	Wednesday 4 <sup>th</sup> July

<b>Council as originally proposed</b>	<b>Council as proposed amended proposal</b>
Monday 9 <sup>th</sup> July	Monday 16 <sup>th</sup> July

<b>Value and Performance Scrutiny Committee as originally proposed</b>	<b>Value and Performance Scrutiny Committee amended proposal</b>
Wednesday 11 <sup>th</sup> June	Wednesday 25 <sup>th</sup> June

<b>Meeting with Parish Councils as originally proposed</b>	<b>Meeting with Parish Councils amended proposal</b>
Monday 25 <sup>th</sup> June	Monday 23 <sup>rd</sup> July

**FURTHER AMENDMENTS 2013/14**

<b>City Executive Board as originally proposed</b>	<b>City Executive Board amended proposal</b>
Wednesday 26 <sup>th</sup> June	Wednesday 3 <sup>rd</sup> July

<b>Council as originally proposed</b>	<b>Council amended proposal</b>
Monday 8 <sup>th</sup> July	Monday 15 <sup>th</sup> July

<b>Value and Performance Scrutiny Committee as originally proposed</b>	<b>Value and Performance Scrutiny Committee amended proposal</b>



Monday 10 <sup>th</sup> June	Monday 24 <sup>th</sup> June
<b>Meeting with Parish Councils as originally proposed</b>	<b>Meeting with Parish Councils amended proposal</b>
Monday 24 <sup>th</sup> June	Monday 1 <sup>st</sup> July

#### **107. COMMUNITY GOVERNANCE REVIEW - BLACKBIRD LEYS PARISH COUNCIL - REDUCTION IN MEMBERS**

The Head of Law and Governance submitted a report (previously circulated, now appended) which sought approval for the terms of reference for a Community Governance Review into the number of Councillors on Blackbird Leys Parish Council.

Council resolved to approve the terms of reference for the Community Governance Review of Blackbird Leys Parish Council.

#### **108. MATTERS EXEMPT FROM PUBLICATION**

None.

**The meeting started at 5.00 pm and ended at 9.35 pm**

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**To: City Executive Board**

**Date: 8<sup>th</sup> February 2012**

**Report of: Simon Howick, Head of People and Equalities**

**Title of Report: EMPLOYMENT POLICIES**

## **Summary and Recommendations**

**Purpose of report:**

To present for approval and adoption 5 new Employment Policies and Procedures and the removal of two policies

**Key decision? No**

**Executive lead member:** Councillor Bob Price

**Policy Framework:** An efficient and effective Council

**Recommendation(s):**

1) That the following policies agreed with Trade Unions and appended to this report be approved with immediate effect:

Maternity Policy  
Adoption Policy  
Paternity Policy  
Parental Leave Procedure  
Flexible Working Policy

2) That the Fixed Term Contract Policy and Procedure and Job Share Policy are removed (the contents are mainstreamed into other policies).

3) That the Head of People and Equalities be authorised to implement the approved Policies and Procedures and make changes to the Policies and Procedures if they are required to put right clerical mistakes or to reflect changes in the law.

Appendices to report

Appendix 1 – Maternity Policy

Appendix 2 – Adoption Policy

Appendix 3 – Paternity Policy

Appendix 4 – Parental Leave Procedure

Appendix 5 - Flexible Working Policy  
Appendix 6 – Risk Assessment  
Appendix 7 – Equalities Impact Assessment

## **Employment Policies**

The following Employment Policies are presented for adoption.

### **1 Maternity Policy**

This is a revision of an existing procedure which has been updated to reflect current legislative and Her Majesty's Revenues and Customs (HMRC) requirements.

### **2 Adoption Policy**

This policy replaces the Council's current policy which has been updated to comply with current legislation and HMRC requirements.

### **3 Paternity Policy**

This policy replaces the Council's current policy. The current policy was implemented before the legislative requirement to provide Paternity Leave was introduced. In agreement with the Trade Unions the new policy combines the current legislative requirements for Paternity Leave and preserves the current locally agreed entitlement of 15 days leave plus a day for the birth.

### **4 Parental Leave Procedure**

This is newly drafted policy and procedure to document employees' legal entitlement to unpaid parental leave. It complies with current legislation.

### **5 Flexible Working Policy**

This is a revision of an existing policy which was based on the minimum legislative requirement. The new policy is legally compliant. In addition it extends the option to request flexible working arrangements to all employees. This reflects the Council's wish to adopt modern and flexible working practices wherever possible. The Government has also suggested that it will extend the legal right to make flexible working requests to all employees in the future.

### **6 Removal of Existing Policies**

It has been agreed with the Trade Unions that the Fixed Term Working Policy and Job Share Policy should be removed as they are not required. They are both captured in other policies. Fixed Term contracts are covered within the Organisational Change Policy. Job Sharing as an option is covered by the Flexible Working and Modern Work Styles Policy.

### **7 Level of Risk**

These policies will ensure that the Council complies with its legal requirements and the clear guidance to managers and staff will ensure consistency. The absence of the policies would increase the risk of

legal action against the Council with associated financial and employee relations implications. A risk management framework is attached at Appendix 6.

**8 Climate change / environmental impact**

There are no climate change or environmental impacts.

**9 Equalities Impact**

An equalities impact assessment is attached at Appendix 7.

**10 Financial implications**

By having legally compliant policies the risk of any financial compensation claims is minimised.

**11 Legal implications**

These policies will form part of the terms and conditions of employment for Council staff. By having legally compliant policies the risk of any legal challenge is minimised.

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

Name Simon Howick  
Head of People and Equalities  
People and Equalities  
Tel: 01865 252547 e-mail: [showick@oxford.gov.uk](mailto:showick@oxford.gov.uk)

**List of background papers: none**

**Version number:1.00**

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# OXFORD CITY COUNCIL

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# OXFORD CITY COUNCIL

## MATERNITY POLICY

### 1. POLICY STATEMENT

The Council is committed to supporting employees covered by this policy not only through its statutory obligations but also as a supportive employer who recognises the important of family life and its balance with work.

This policy is designed to make employees aware of their statutory rights and responsibilities during pregnant or having recently given birth, and the arrangements for ante-natal care, pregnancy-related sickness, health and safety, and maternity leave.

Managers are required to follow it for consistent and lawful treatment of female employees throughout pregnancy, the maternity period, and return(s) to work.

### 2. SCOPE

- 2.1 This policy applies to full-time and part-time employees (regardless of the number of hours worked) subject to qualifying condition, e.g. length of service. It does not apply to agency workers or the self-employed. If you require further guidance, please contact People & Equalities (P&E).

### 3. ABBREVIATIONS USED IN THIS DOCUMENT

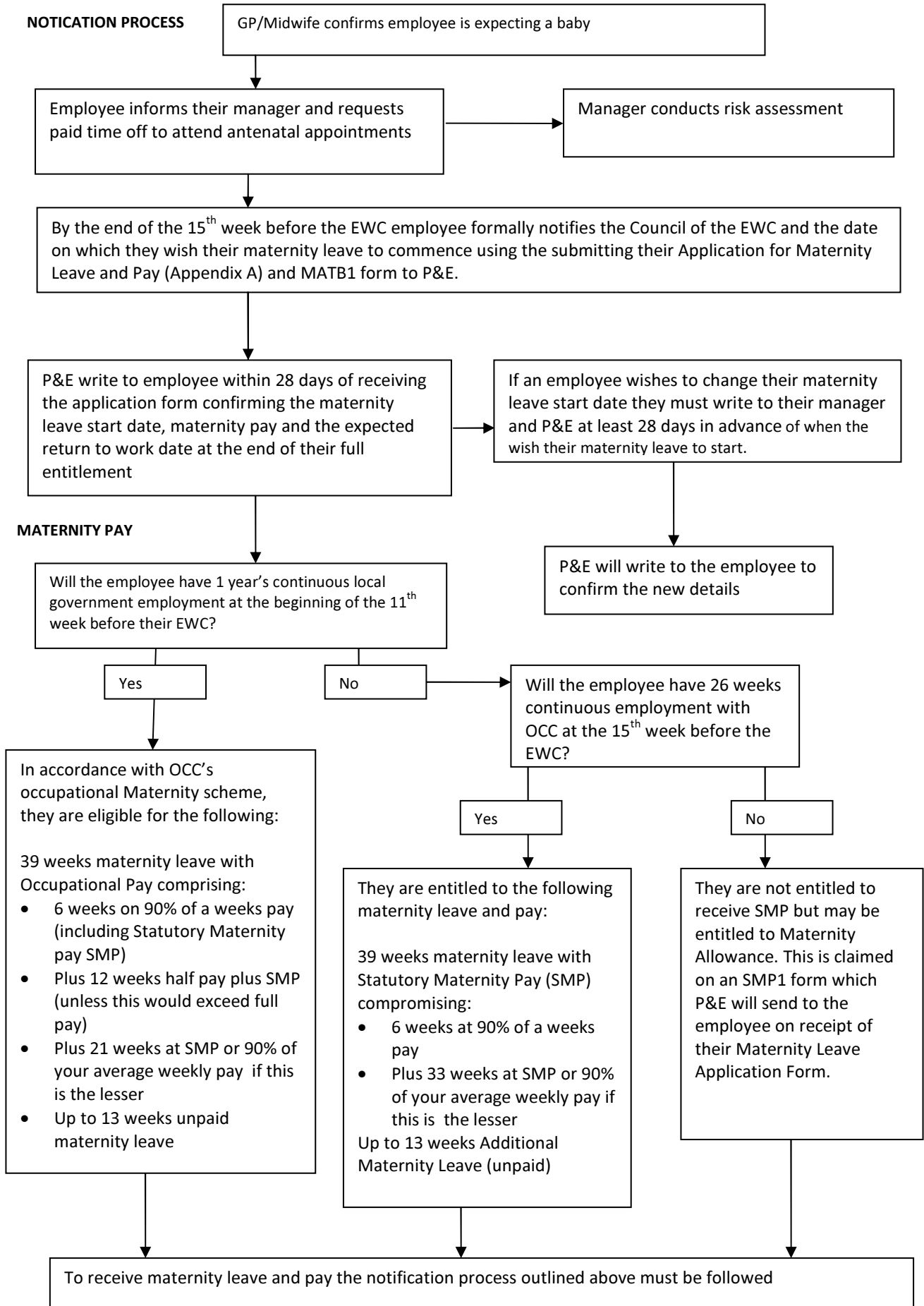
AML	Additional Maternity Leave
CML	Compulsory Maternity Leave
EDC	Expected date of childbirth (the day the baby is due)
EWC	Expected week of childbirth (the week, beginning with midnight between Saturday and Sunday, in which it is expected that the baby will be born)
MATB1	Maternity certificate issued by a doctor or midwife showing the date on which the baby is expected
OML	Ordinary maternity leave
OMP	Occupational maternity pay
SMP	Statutory maternity pay

Qualifying Week –the 15<sup>th</sup> week before the Expected Week of Childbirth (EWC)

- 3.1 Checklists are available for both Managers (Appendix B) and employees (Appendix C) to help outline the various stages of the process and the responsibilities of each.



#### 4. PROCEDURE OVERVIEW



## **5. IMPLEMENTING THE POLICY**

- 5.1 Managers have a specific responsibility to ensure the fair application of this policy and all members of staff are responsible for supporting colleagues and ensuring its success.
- 5.2 The Head of People & Equalities has overall responsibility for the effective operation of this policy and for ensuring compliance with the relevant statutory framework.

## **6. NOTIFICATION OF PREGNANCY**

- 6.1 Employees must inform their line manager as soon as possible that they are pregnant. This is important and in the employee's interests, as there may be health and safety considerations (see paragraph below, Health and safety). Before the end of the 15<sup>th</sup> week before the date the baby is due (EWC) or as soon as reasonably practical afterwards, the employee must tell the Council:
- That she is pregnant
  - The EWC date
  - When she intends her maternity leave to commence – this must be no earlier than the start of the 11<sup>th</sup> week before the EWC
- 6.2 The employee must provide a certificate from a doctor or midwife (usually form MAT B1) confirming the date the baby is due (EWC), which is normally issued after the 20<sup>th</sup> week of pregnancy. Employees should complete a Maternity Leave Application Form (Appendix A), which the employee should discuss with her line manager, then provide to P&E. P&E must have the forms by the end of the 15<sup>th</sup> week before the EWC. P&E will then write to the employee within 28 days of receiving the completed application form to confirm the date of return to work.
- 6.3 The line manager should ask the employee whether she wishes the fact that she is pregnant to be kept confidential for as long as possible and act accordingly. It is important to be aware that an employee may initially not want their pregnancy to be general knowledge. Employees may wish to get more information about maternity on the Government's website ([www.direct.gov.uk](http://www.direct.gov.uk)).

## **7. SICKNESS**

- 7.1 Periods of pregnancy-related sickness absence shall be paid in accordance with the Council's Sickness Pay Benefits & Provisions Guide in the same manner as any other sickness absence:  
[http://occcweb/files/seealsodocs/88475/Sickness%20Pay%20Nov09.doc#\\_Toc23015086](http://occcweb/files/seealsodocs/88475/Sickness%20Pay%20Nov09.doc#_Toc23015086).
- 7.2 Periods of pregnancy-related sickness absence from the start of your pregnancy until the end of your maternity leave will be recorded separately from other sickness records and will be disregarded in any future employment-related decisions.
- 7.3 If you are absent for a pregnancy-related reason during the four weeks before your EWC, your maternity leave will usually start automatically (see paragraph below, 'Starting maternity leave').

## **8. HEALTH AND SAFETY**

- 8.1 The Council has a general duty to take care of the health and safety of all employees. It is also required to carry out a risk assessment to assess the workplace risks to women who are pregnant, have given birth within the last six months or are still breastfeeding.
- 8.2 We will provide you with information as to any risks identified in the risk assessment, and any preventive and protective measures that have been or will be taken. If we consider that, as a new or expectant mother, you would be exposed to health hazards in carrying out your normal work we will take such steps as are necessary (for as long as they are necessary) to avoid those risks. This may involve:
- changing your working conditions or hours of work;
  - offering you suitable alternative work on terms and conditions that are the same or not substantially less favourable; or
  - suspending you from duties, which will be on full pay unless you have unreasonably refused suitable alternative work.
- 8.3 For help and advice relating to health and safety and risk assessments, please contact the Safety Advisor (Mark Preston) or Occupational Health (details available on the intranet)

## **9. TIME OFF FOR ANTE NATAL CARE**

- 9.1 A pregnant employee may take reasonable paid time off during working hours for ante-natal care. This may include appointments with a GP or midwife, hospital appointments for scans and tests, relaxation and parent craft classes providing they are made on the advice of a registered medical practitioner, midwife or health visitor. A manager can request confirmation that the employee is pregnant (if not already provided) and a copy of the appointment card.
- 9.2 Employees should try to give us as much notice as possible of the appointment. In order to minimise disruption within the work section, employees are asked to try and arrange appointments as close to the start or end of the working day, as possible.

## **10. ENTITLEMENT TO MATERNITY LEAVE**

- 10.1 All employees are entitled to up to 52 weeks' maternity leave which is divided into:
- Ordinary maternity leave of 26 weeks (**OML**).
  - Additional maternity leave of a further 26 weeks immediately following OML (**AML**).

## **11. STARTING MATERNITY LEAVE**

- 11.1 The earliest date you can start maternity leave is 11 weeks before the Expected Week of Childbirth (unless your child is born prematurely before that date).
- 11.2 You must notify us of your Intended Start Date in accordance with paragraph on Notification above. We will then write to you within 28 days to inform you of the date we will expect you to return to work if you take your full entitlement to maternity leave (**Expected Return Date**).
- 11.3 You can postpone your Intended Start Date by informing us in writing at least 28 days before the original Intended Start Date, or if that is not possible, as soon as reasonably practicable. You can also bring forward the Intended Start Date by informing us at least 28 days before the new start date, or if that is not possible, as soon as reasonably practicable.
- 11.4 Maternity leave shall start on the earlier of:
- your Intended Start Date (if notified to us in accordance with this policy); or
  - the day after any day on which you are absent for a pregnancy-related reason during the four weeks before the Expected Week of Childbirth; or
  - the day after you give birth.
- 11.5 If you give birth before your maternity leave was due to start, you must let us know the date of the birth in writing as soon as possible. The law prohibits you from working during the two weeks following childbirth.
- 11.6 Shortly before your maternity leave starts we will discuss with you the arrangements for covering your work and the opportunities for you to remain in contact, should you wish to do so, during your leave. Unless you request otherwise, you should retain email access/remain on circulation lists e.g. for internal news, vacancies, training and work-related social events.

## **12. PAY**

- 12.1 Employees are entitled to a range of benefits, subject to service. A summary of the various arrangements depending on service are set out in Appendix D

## 13. STATUTORY MATERNITY PAY

- 13.1 Statutory maternity pay (**SMP**) is payable for up to 39 weeks. SMP will stop being payable if you return to work (except where you are simply keeping in touch in accordance with paragraph KIT). You are entitled to SMP if:
- you have been continuously employed for at least 26 weeks at the end of the Qualifying Week and are still employed by us during that week;
  - your average weekly earnings during the eight weeks ending with the Qualifying Week (the Relevant Period) are not less than the lower earnings limit set by the Government;
  - you provide us with a doctor's or midwife's certificate (MAT B1 form) stating your Expected Week of Childbirth;
  - you give at least 28 days' notice (or, if that is not possible, as much notice as you can) of your intention to take maternity leave; **and**
  - you are still pregnant 11 weeks before the start of the EWC or have already given birth.
- 13.2 SMP is calculated as follows:
- First six weeks: SMP is paid at the Earnings-Related Rate of 90% of your average weekly earnings calculated over the Relevant Period;
  - Remaining 33 weeks: SMP is paid at the Prescribed Rate which is set by the Government for the relevant tax year, or the Earnings-Related Rate if this is lower.
- 13.3 SMP accrues from the day on which you commence your OML and thereafter at the end of each complete week of absence. SMP payments shall be made on the next normal payroll date and income tax, National Insurance and pension contributions shall be deducted as appropriate.
- 13.4 You shall still be eligible for SMP if you leave employment for any reason after the start of the Qualifying Week (for example, if you resign or are made redundant). In such cases, if your maternity leave has not already begun, SMP shall start to accrue in whichever is the later of:
- the week following the week in which employment ends; or
  - the eleventh week before the Expected Week of Childbirth.
- 13.5 If you become eligible for a pay rise before the end of your maternity leave, you will be treated for SMP purposes as if the pay rise had applied throughout the Relevant Period. This means that your SMP will be recalculated and increased retrospectively, or that you may qualify for SMP if you did not previously qualify. We shall pay you a lump sum to make up the difference between any SMP already paid and the amount payable by virtue of the pay rise. Any future SMP payments at the Earnings-Related Rate (if any) will also be increased as necessary.

#### 14. OCCUPATIONAL MATERNITY PAY (NATIONAL CONTRACTUAL SCHEME)

14.1 An employee with at least 1 years' continuous Local Government service at the 11<sup>th</sup> week before the EWC will qualify for maternity pay under the National Contractual scheme:

Weeks 7 –18	Half of contractual pay providing this figure, when added to any SMP/MA, does not exceed full pay
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#### 15. COMBINED STATUTORY AND OCCUPATIONAL MATERNITY PAY

15.1 If an employee:

- Has 26 weeks' continuous service with Oxford City Council, as at the 15<sup>th</sup> week before the EWC; *and*
- Has one years' continuous Local Government Service as at the 11<sup>th</sup> week before the EWC; *and*
- Normally earns more than the lower earnings limit (LEL) for National Insurance Contributions. (Refer to the last section of this guide for current rates.)

15.2 They will receive enhanced benefits as follows:

Weeks 1 - 6	90% of average pay (SMP rules)
Weeks 7 -18	SMP is paid at whichever is the lower of the earnings-related rate or the weekly rate, plus ½ of contractual pay , providing the total of the two payments does not exceed full pay
Weeks 19 – 39	SMP is paid at whichever is the lower of the earnings-related rate or the weekly rate

15.3 The Council will recalculate maternity pay levels if a pay increase comes into effect at any time between the start of the pay calculation period and the end of the maternity leave. The calculation period ends 14 weeks before the baby's due date and takes into account the mother's earnings over the previous 8 weeks.

#### 16. PAYING BACK OCCUPATIONAL MATERNITY PAY

16.1 **If an employee does not return to work or returns for less than 3 calendar months after receiving 12 weeks' of half pay, this amount, or a proportion of it for the period not worked, will have to be paid back to Oxford City Council.** This will be issued as a sundry account and the Council's normal rules of debt recovery will apply. If the maternity leave period falls within the same financial year as the debt recovery then some relief of Tax and National Insurance Contributions will apply. If it falls outside the financial year then repayment on the gross amount will apply. For further information, please contact the Payroll Team.

## **17. OTHER STATE BENEFITS**

- 17.1 The employee must advise the Payroll team if they are currently receiving benefits, so that any occupational maternity pay can be calculated correctly.

## **18. MATERNITY ALLOWANCE**

- 18.1 If, at the 15<sup>th</sup> week before the EWC, an employee has
- a) less than 26 weeks' service with Oxford City Council or;
  - b) has more than 26 weeks' continuous service, but normally earns less than the Lower Earnings Level (LEL) for National Insurance Contributions, they will not receive SMP from the Council. Refer to last section of this guide for the current level.
- 18.2 Instead they should request form SMP1 from the Payroll team to enable them to claim Maternity Allowance or other benefits direct from the Government.

## **19. TERMS AND CONDITIONS DURING OML AND AML**

- 19.1 All the terms and conditions of your employment remain in force during OML and AML, except for the terms relating to pay. In particular:
- benefits in kind [such as death in service, slice card benefit and use of a company vehicle if applicable] shall continue;
  - annual leave entitlement under your contract shall continue to accrue (see paragraph 20, Annual leave); **and**
  - pension benefits shall continue (see Pensions paragraph below).

## **20. ANNUAL LEAVE**

- 20.1 During OML and AML, annual leave will accrue at the rate provided under your contract. i.e. the hours the employee was working prior to the start of the maternity absence. If she returns on different hours then leave will be based on these hours from the point of return.
- 20.2 If a period of maternity spans more than one annual leave year, then leave can be carried over within the normal arrangements for the carry over of leave. Additional leave may be carried over provided that the leave is taken prior to the employee actually returning to work. The employee should discuss the arrangements with her Manager and her annual leave card should be amended accordingly.

## **21. OTHER LEAVE ENTITLEMENTS**

- 21.1 Employees have rights to paternity leave, unpaid parental leave, unpaid time off for dependants and a right to request flexible working patterns. Please see the relevant Council policy documents (available on the Intranet or from P&E).

## **22. MISCARRIAGE AND STILLBIRTH**

- 22.1 If an employee suffers a miscarriage (up to the end of the 24<sup>th</sup> week of pregnancy), she should be paid sick pay in accordance with the provisions of the scheme. Oxford City Council sickness pay rules will apply.
- 22.2 Where a stillbirth occurs (from the beginning of the 25<sup>th</sup> week of pregnancy), OMP / SMP is normally payable (subject to service qualification). The employee qualifies for maternity leave as if a live birth had occurred.

## **23. CHILDCARE VOUCHERS**

- 23.1 Employees are entitled to continue to receive contractual benefits (except pay) during OML and AML.
- 23.2 Currently Childcare Vouchers are deemed to be a non-cash benefit (i.e. not pay) and therefore entitlement to them continues during OML and AML. An employee must be a member of the Childcare Voucher Scheme before starting maternity leave for this to apply. This is explained in more detail in the Guidance on the Childcare Voucher Scheme.

## **24. PENSION CONTRIBUTIONS**

- 24.1 During OML your pension benefits will continue to accrue based on your contractual hours even though your pay and consequently your pension contributions may be lower.
- 24.2 The contribution rate for the payment of pension contributions will be your normal contribution rate ie the percentage rate for determining contributions will not change. The amount of contributions paid may be lower as they are calculated on the pay actually received.
- 24.3 If you are not entitled to any Maternity Pay from the Council for all or some of the OML period, then you will only pay pension contributions when you are receiving pay. However, your pension service will accrue at the same rate as if you had been paying full contributions for the whole of the 26 weeks of OML.
- 24.4 Pension contributions will continue to be payable during any paid period of AML. Contributions will be based on the rate of maternity pay received and pension service will accrue at the same rate as if you had been paying full contributions for the part of the AML period that is paid.
- 24.5 You can choose to pay pension contributions during the unpaid period of AML. The amount of pension contributions is based on the amount of pay received in last week of paid maternity leave and pension service will accrue at the same rate as if you had been paying full contributions. If you did not receive any maternity pay from the Council the contributions will be based on your contractual pay immediately prior to starting maternity leave.
- 24.6 You will need to decide whether you wish to pay contributions for your period of unpaid AML within 30 days of your return from maternity leave. The Payroll



Team will calculate the amount due and will let you know about different payment methods where appropriate.

- 24.7 If you decide not to pay pension contributions during this unpaid period of AML the time will not count towards your pensionable service and will therefore not be included in the calculation of pension benefits.
- 24.8 If you work any KIT days during your maternity leave you will be paid full pay for these days (you must submit a claim for payment). These payments will be disregarded when calculating contributions due for the remainder of your leave ie if you were on the flat rate SMP when working a KIT day your contributions immediately before and after the KIT day will be based on the SMP rate. If you work a KIT day during a period of unpaid leave and you decide not to make contributions up for the unpaid period the KIT day worked will be pensionable and will count towards pensionable service.

## **25. REDUNDANCIES DURING MATERNITY LEAVE**

- 25.1 In the event that your post is affected by a redundancy situation occurring during your maternity leave, we shall write to inform you of any proposals and shall invite you to a meeting before any final decision is reached as to your continued employment. Employees on maternity leave shall be given first refusal on any suitable alternative vacancies that are appropriate to their skills, in accordance with the Organisational Change Policy..

## **26. KEEPING IN TOUCH (“KIT”)**

- 26.1 The employee and manager should discuss arrangements for keeping in contact during the maternity leave period before maternity leave starts. Managers should ensure that the employee will receive her payslips and agree arrangements for communicating significant workplace developments and training opportunities. Employees may be sent council communications. We may make reasonable contact with you from time to time during your maternity leave.
- 26.2 You may work (including attending training) for up to ten days during maternity leave without bringing your maternity leave or SMP to an end. The arrangements, are set by agreement with your line manager or People & Equalities Department, so pay will be made up to full pay for the hours worked. If an employee is in receipt of maternity payments that are equal to full pay at the time of working a KIT day they will not receive any additional pay. Conversely an employee in receipt of no pay at the time of working will receive full pay for the hours worked.
- 26.3 You are not obliged to undertake any such work during maternity leave, nor is the Council obliged to provide any work. In any case, you must not work in the two weeks following birth.

- 26.4 Shortly before you are due to return to work, we may invite you to have a discussion (whether in person or by telephone) about the arrangements for your return. This may cover:
- updating you on any changes that have occurred during your absence;
  - any training needs you might have; and
  - any changes to working arrangements (e.g. if you have made a request to work part-time; see final paragraph below, Returning to work part-time).

## **27. EXPECTED RETURN DATE**

- 27.1 Once you have notified us in writing of your Intended Start Date, we shall send you a letter within 28 days to inform you of your Expected Return Date. If your start date has been changed (either because you gave us notice to change it, or because maternity leave started early due to illness or premature childbirth) we shall write to you within 28 days of the start of maternity leave with a revised Expected Return Date. We will expect you back at work on your Expected Return Date unless you tell us otherwise. It will help us if, during your maternity leave, you are able to confirm that you will be returning to work as expected.

## **28. RETURNING EARLY**

- 28.1 If you wish to return to work earlier than the Expected Return Date, you must give us eight weeks' prior notice. It is helpful if you give this notice in writing. If not enough notice is given, we may postpone your return date until eight weeks after you gave notice, or to the Expected Return Date if sooner.

## **29. RETURNING LATE**

- 29.1 If you wish to return later than the Expected Return Date, you should either:
- request unpaid parental leave [in accordance with our Parental Leave Policy], giving us as much notice as possible but not less than [21 days]; or
  - request paid annual leave in accordance with your contract, which will be at our discretion.
- 29.2 If you are unable to return to work due to sickness or injury, this will be treated as sickness absence and our Sickness Absence Policy will apply. In any other case, late return will be treated as unauthorised absence.

## **30. DECIDING NOT TO RETURN**

- 30.1 If you do not intend to return to work, or are unsure, it is helpful if you discuss this with us as early as possible. If you decide not to return you should give notice of resignation in accordance with your contract. The amount of maternity leave left to run when you give notice must be at least equal to your contractual notice period, otherwise we may require you to return to work for the remainder of the notice period.
- 30.2 Once you have given notice that you will not be returning to work, you cannot change your mind without our agreement. This does not affect your right to receive SMP.

## **31. YOUR RIGHTS WHEN YOU RETURN**

- 31.1 You are normally entitled to return to work in the same position as you held before commencing leave. Your terms of employment shall be the same as they would have been had you not been absent. However, if you have taken any period of AML or more than four weeks' parental leave, and it is not reasonably practicable for us to allow you to return into the same position, we may give you another suitable and appropriate job on terms and conditions that are not less favourable.
- 31.2 It is possible that an employee who takes her full entitlement to maternity leave of 52 weeks may become pregnant whilst on leave and become entitled to another, consecutive period of leave without returning to work. An employee who takes two consecutive periods of maternity leave, which include one or more periods of AML, is entitled to return to her original job or, if this is not reasonably practicable, to another suitable, alternative post.

## **32. RETURNING TO WORK PART-TIME**

- 31.1 We will deal with any requests by employees to change their working patterns (such as working part-time) after maternity leave on a case-by-case basis. There is no absolute right to insist on working part-time, but you do have a statutory right to request flexible working and we will try to accommodate your wishes unless there is a justifiable reason for refusal, bearing in mind the needs of our business. It is helpful if requests are made as early as possible. [The procedure for dealing with such requests is set out in the Council's Flexible Working Policy.]

## **33. MONITORING AND REVIEW OF THE POLICY**

- 33.1 This policy is reviewed by People & Equalities in consultation with the Council's recognised unions. Recommendations for any amendments are reported to People & Equalities.
- 33.2 We will continue to review the effectiveness of this policy to ensure it is achieving its stated objectives.

**APPENDIX A – MATERNITY LEAVE & PAY APPLICATION FORM**

*This form must be completed and returned to People & Equalities by the end of the 15<sup>th</sup> week before your expected week of childbirth*

**Section A – Personal Details**

Surname	.....	Forename(s)	.....
Home Address	..... ..... .....		
Post Title	.....		
Business Unit	.....		
Place of Work	.....	Ext. No.	.....

**Section B – Maternity Leave & Pay**

My expected date of childbirth is:	.....
My MATB1 certificate is:	<input type="checkbox"/> Attached <input type="checkbox"/> Will follow shortly
I commenced my present service with Oxford City Council on:	.....
I commenced my present Local Government service on:	.....

**Maternity Leave**

I am claiming Ordinary and Additional Maternity Leave under the Statutory Maternity Scheme.

**Maternity Pay**

Approval date

I am claiming maternity **pay** under:

	<b>Weeks 0 – 39</b>
Statutory Maternity Pay	[ ]
National Contractual Scheme	[ ]
Combined Statutory and National Contractual Scheme	[ ]

*\* Please tick (✓) appropriate box(es)*

**The Payroll Team will check your details and confirm in writing what payments you will be entitled to receive.**

**Section C – Notice of Intention to Take Maternity Leave**

I intend to commence maternity leave on:		.....		
I intend to take annual leave	From:	.....	To:	.....
I intend to take credit leave	From:	.....	To:	.....

**Section D - Intention to Return to Work (*National Contractual Scheme*)**

You will need to complete this section if you have ticked the box above to indicate that you are claiming maternity pay under the National Contractual Scheme.

In order to receive the 12 weeks' of half pay under the National Contractual Scheme you must declare your intention to return to work. If you do not return to work, or return for less than 3 months, you will be required to repay all or a proportion of the payment made to you.

I intend to return to work after my maternity leave and wish to receive all payments due	[ ]
I wish to hold open my option to return to work after my maternity leave but do not wish to receive any payments, which would have to be repaid if I decide not to return	[ ]

\* Please tick (✓) appropriate box

**Section E – Pension Contributions**

Please tick (✓) the appropriate box to indicate your intentions.

I wish to consider paying contributions on my period of unpaid leave. Please inform me of the amount upon my return so that I can make a final decision	[ ]
I do not wish to pay pension contributions on my period of unpaid leave and therefore do not require any information. I understand that the unpaid period will not count for pension benefits	[ ]

**Section F – Declaration**

I declare that the information provided above is correct to the best of my knowledge.

Signed:	
Date:	

**\*Please keep a copy of this form for your own information**

-----  
**FOR OFFICE USE ONLY**

	Form checked by	Form Forwarded To	Date
People & Equalities			
Payroll Section			

## APPENDIX B – LINE MANAGER’S MATERNITY CHECKLIST

Notification of pregnancy	<p>Employee to advise her Line Manager of her pregnancy, her EWC and when she wishes to commence maternity leave: -</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Review risk assessments to ensure there is no danger or potential danger in the workplace to mother or baby</li> <li>▪ Allow paid time off for antenatal appointments</li> <li>▪ Issue the employee with a copy of the Council's Maternity Policy (including the maternity leave application form)</li> </ul>
11 weeks before EWC	Earliest date that an employee can commence maternity leave (OML)
4 weeks before EWC	If the employee is sick for pregnancy-related reasons, you must advise People & Equalities who will inform the employee that maternity leave will commence
During maternity leave (OML and AML)	<p>Maintain regular contact with the employee: -</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Update her on any changes within the Unit / team</li> <li>▪ Forward payslips to the home address</li> <li>▪ Forward communications as necessary</li> </ul>
Preferably 28 days before the employee's return to work date, or as soon as the return date is known, if later	<p>Make arrangements for the employee to return to work: -</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ If taking OML only, the employee should resume normal duties</li> <li>▪ If taking OML and AML or unpaid leave, the employee should resume normal duties, unless there are exceptional circumstances why this is not practical, which should have been discussed with P&amp;E</li> <li>▪ Discuss the keeping in touch days if not already used</li> <li>▪ Discuss any outstanding annual leave</li> <li>▪ Via People &amp; Equalities, arrange for notice to be served to the individual covering the maternity leave on a fixed term or secondment basis (if applicable)</li> </ul>
Employee's return to work	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Welcome the employee!</li> <li>▪ Review risk assessments</li> <li>▪ Discuss any training requirements</li> </ul>

**APPENDIX C – EMPLOYEE’S MATERNITY CHECKLIST**

<b>WHEN</b>	<b>WHAT TO DO</b>	<b>WHY</b>
Notification of pregnancy	<p>Advise your Line Manager of your pregnancy, giving the required notice</p> <p>Obtain an exemption certificate from NHS charges</p> <p>Inform the Jobcentre Plus (if you are on Income Support)</p> <p>Read Benefits leaflets available from the Jobcentre Plus</p>	<p>To ensure you receive your rights during pregnancy and any maternity payments due to you</p> <p>To obtain free prescriptions and NHS dental treatment</p> <p>To check your right to benefits and other financial assistance</p> <p>To check your right to benefits and other financial assistance</p>
Up to 20 weeks before your baby is due	<p>Ask your Doctor or Midwife for a MATB1. This must be signed and stamped or have your midwife’s registration number</p>	<p>To claim OMP / SMP or Maternity Allowance</p>
Up to 15 weeks before your baby is due	<p>Complete a Maternity Leave Application form and forward this (together with your MATB1) to P&amp;E. Arrange an appointment if required</p> <p>If you do not qualify for SMP, ask your Jobcentre Plus or Child Health Clinic for form MA1</p>	<p>To protect your right to OMP / SMP and enable P&amp;E to confirm your entitlements</p> <p>To apply for Maternity Allowance</p>
11 weeks before EWC	<p>This is the earliest date that an employee can commence maternity leave (OML)</p>	
4 weeks before EWC	<p>If you are sick for pregnancy-related reasons you must advise your manager</p>	<p>Your maternity leave will commence</p>
As soon as possible after the birth	<p>Inform your colleagues so that they can congratulate you!</p> <p>Register the baby’s birth</p> <p>Claim Child and other benefits as appropriate</p>	<p>To obtain a birth certificate and NHS card</p> <p>To obtain benefit entitlements</p>



<p>If plan to return early from OML/ AML then you must give at least 8 weeks notice of your intention</p>	<p>Give written notice of your intention to return in writing to your Line Manager (with a copy to P&amp;E)          Discuss any outstanding annual leave to ensure it is taken before return work</p>	<p>So that the Council can prepare for your return to work</p>
<p>Return to work</p>	<p>Review risk assessments with your Line Manager           Discuss any training requirements</p>	

*\* This is by no means an exhaustive list and so you should seek advice from the relevant agencies.*

**APPENDIX D - SUMMARY OF MATERNITY PAY ENTITLEMENTS**

Service	Pay Entitlement
<p>less than 26 weeks with the Council at 15<sup>th</sup> week before EWC</p> <p>less than 1 year local government at 11<sup>th</sup> week before EWC</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• No SMP</li> <li>• No OMP</li> <li>• Possibly MA</li> </ul>
<p>more than 26 weeks with the Council at 15<sup>th</sup> week before EWC</p> <p>less than 1 year local government at 11<sup>th</sup> week before EWC</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• SMP (if sufficient earnings)</li> <li>• No OMP</li> </ul> <p>therefore pay =</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>wks 1 to 6</b> - 90% of average weekly earnings</li> <li>• <b>wks 7 to 39</b> - weekly SMP/90% of average earnings if less</li> </ul>
<p>less than 26 weeks with the Council at 15<sup>th</sup> week before EWC</p> <p>more than 1 year local government at 11<sup>th</sup> week before EWC</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• no SMP</li> <li>• Possibly MA</li> <li>• OMP</li> </ul> <p>therefore pay =</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>wks 7 to 18</b></li> <li>✓ ½ pay (reduced to extent ½ pay plus MA exceeds full pay)</li> <li>x MA, if eligible</li> <li>• <b>wks 19 to 39</b> - MA, if eligible</li> </ul>
<p>more than 26 weeks with the Council at 15<sup>th</sup> week before EWC</p> <p>more than 1 year local government at 11<sup>th</sup> week before EWC</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• SMP (if sufficient earnings, if not possibly MA)</li> <li>• OMP</li> </ul> <p>therefore pay =</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>wks 1 to 6</b> - 90% of average weekly earnings</li> <li>• <b>wks 7 to 18</b></li> <li>✓ ½ pay (reduced to extent ½ pay plus SMP* [or MA] exceeds full pay)</li> <li>x SMP* (or MA), if eligible <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>wks 19 to 39</b> SMP* (or MA), if eligible</li> </ul> </li> </ul>

- \* Weekly SMP rate or 90% of average weekly earnings if less
- ✓ Declared intention to return
- x Is not intending to return.

# OXFORD CITY COUNCIL

## Adoption Policy

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## 1. POLICY STATEMENT

- 1.1 This policy outlines the statutory rights and responsibilities of employees who adopt, and sets out the arrangements for adoption leave. It only applies to employees and does not apply to agency workers or the self-employed.
- 1.2 This policy does not form part of any employee's contract of employment and it may be amended at any time.

## 2. SCOPE

- 2.1 This policy applies to full-time and part-time employees (regardless of the number of hours worked) subject to qualifying condition, e.g. length of service. It does not apply to agency workers or the self-employed. If you require further guidance, please contact People & Equalities (P&E).

## 3. DEFINITIONS

The definitions in this paragraph apply in this policy.

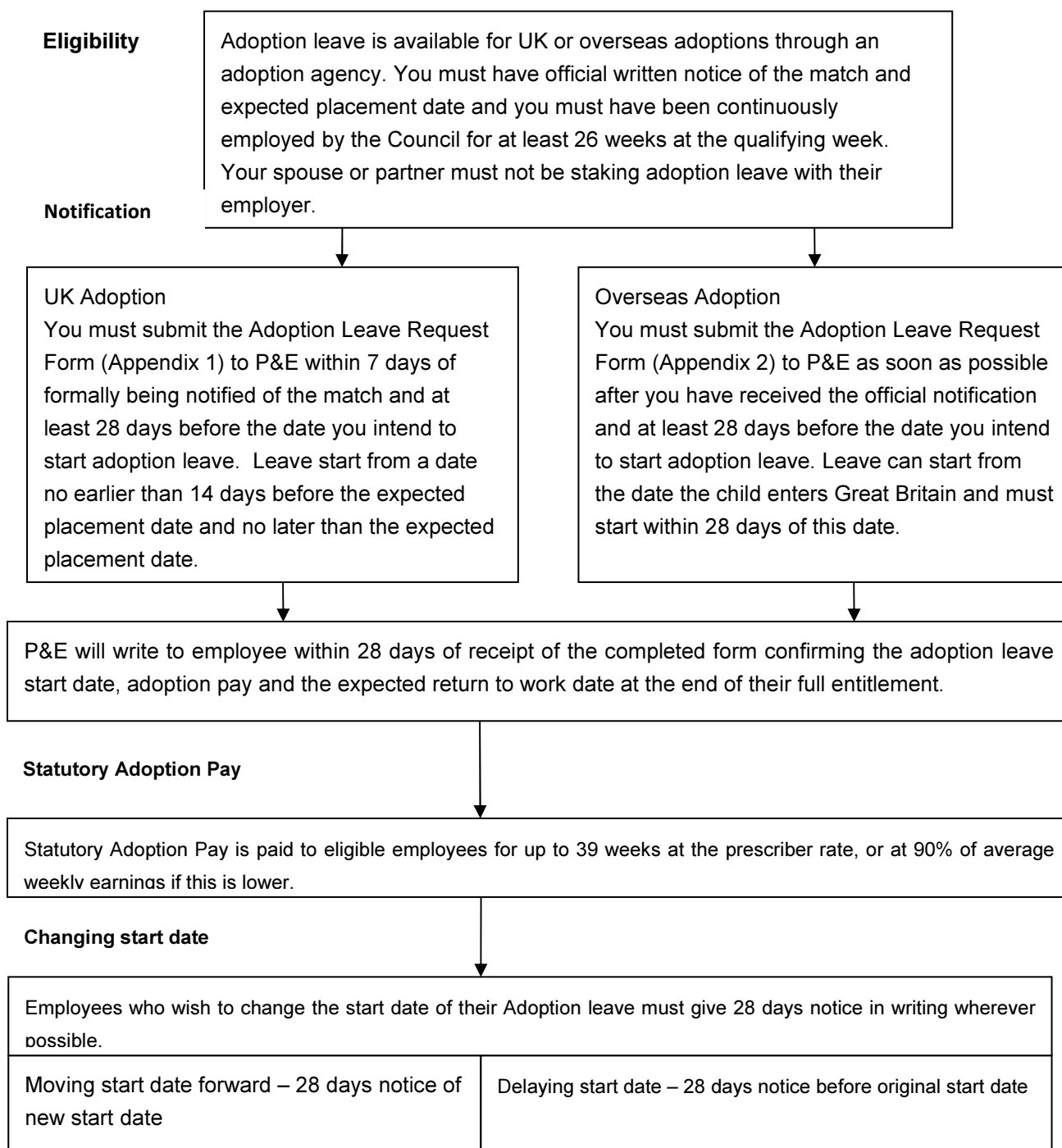
**Qualifying Week:** the week, starting on a Sunday, in which you are notified in writing by an adoption agency of having been matched with a child.

**Expected Placement Date:** the date on which an adoption agency expects that it will place a child into your care with a view to adoption.

**Ordinary Adoption Leave (OAL):** a period of up to 26 weeks' leave available to all employees who qualify for adoption leave

**Additional Adoption Leave (AAL):** a further period of up to 26 weeks' leave immediately following OAL.

**4. PROCEDURE OVERVIEW**



**5. IMPLEMENTING THE POLICY**

- 5.1 Managers have a specific responsibility to ensure the fair application of this policy and all members of staff are responsible for supporting colleagues and ensuring its success.
- 5.2 The Head of People & Equalities has overall responsibility for the effective operation of this policy and for ensuring compliance with the relevant statutory framework.

## 6. ENTITLEMENT TO ADOPTION LEAVE

- 6.1 Adoption leave is only available if you are adopting through a UK [or overseas] adoption agency. It is not available if there is no agency involved, for example, if you are formally adopting a stepchild or other relative.
- 6.2 You are entitled to adoption leave if you meet all the following conditions:
- (a) An adoption agency has given you written notice that it has matched you with a child for adoption and tells you the Expected Placement Date.
  - (b) You have notified the agency that you agree to the child being placed with you on the Expected Placement Date.
  - (c) You have been continuously employed by us for at least 26 weeks ending with the Qualifying Week.
  - (d) Your spouse or partner will not be taking adoption leave with their employer (although they may be entitled to take paternity leave).

## 7. NOTIFICATION OF INTENTION TO TAKE LEAVE

- 7.1 You must give us notice in writing of:
- (a) the Expected Placement Date; and
  - (b) your intended start date for adoption leave (**Intended Start Date**)
- 7.2 This notice should be given not more than seven days after the agency notified you in writing that it has matched you with a child.
- 7.3 At least 28 days before your Intended Start Date (or, if this is not possible, as soon as you can), you must also provide us with:
- (a) A Matching Certificate from the adoption agency confirming:
    - (i) the agency's name and address;
    - (ii) the name and date of birth of the child;
    - (iii) the date you were notified of the match; and
    - (iv) the Expected Placement Date.
  - (b) Written confirmation that you intend to take statutory adoption pay and not statutory paternity pay.

## 8. OVERSEAS ADOPTIONS

If you are adopting a child from overseas, the following will apply:

- 8.1 You must have received notification that the adoption has been approved by the relevant UK authority (**Official Notification**).
- 8.2 You must give us notice in writing of:
- (a) your intention to take adoption leave;
  - (b) the date you received Official Notification; and
  - (c) the date the child is expected to arrive in Great Britain.

- 8.3 This notice should be given as early as possible but in any case within 28 days of receiving Official Notification (or, if you have less than 26 weeks' employment with us at the date of Official Notification, within 30 weeks of starting employment).
- 8.4 You must also give us at least 28 days' notice in writing of your Intended Start Date. This can be the date the child arrives in Great Britain or a predetermined date no more than 28 days after the child's arrival in Great Britain.
- 8.5 You must also notify us of the date the child arrives in Great Britain within 28 days of that date.
- 8.6 We may also ask for a copy of the Official Notification and evidence of the date the child arrived in Great Britain.]

## 9. STARTING ADOPTION LEAVE

- 9.1 OAL may start on a predetermined date no more than 14 days before the Expected Placement Date, or on the date of placement itself, but no later.
- 9.2 You must notify us of your Intended Start Date. We will then write to you within 28 days to inform you of the date we will expect you to return to work if you take your full entitlement to adoption leave (**Expected Return Date**).
- 9.3 You can postpone your Intended Start Date by informing us in writing at least 28 days before the original date or, if that is not possible, as soon as you can.
- 9.4 You can bring forward your Intended Start Date by informing us in writing at least 28 days before the new start date or, if that is not possible, as soon as you can.
- 9.5 Shortly before your adoption leave starts we will discuss with you the arrangements for covering your work and the opportunities for you to remain in contact, should you wish to do so, during your leave. [Unless you request otherwise, you will remain on circulation lists for internal news, job vacancies, training and work-related social events.]

## 10. STATUTORY ADOPTION PAY

- 10.1 Statutory adoption pay (**SAP**) is payable for up to 39 weeks. It stops being payable if you return to work sooner or if the placement is disrupted. You are entitled to SAP if:
- (a) you have been continuously employed for at least 26 weeks at the end of your Qualifying Week and are still employed by us during that week;
  - (b) your average weekly earnings during the eight weeks ending with the Qualifying Week (the **Relevant Period**) are not less than the lower earnings limit set by the Government; and
  - (c) you have given us the relevant notifications.
- 10.2 SAP is paid at a Prescribed Rate which is set by the Government for the relevant tax year, or at 90% of your average weekly earnings calculated over the Relevant Period if this is lower.

- 10.3 SAP accrues with each complete week of absence but payments shall be made on the next normal payroll date. Income Tax, National Insurance and pension contributions shall be deducted as appropriate.
- 10.4 If you leave employment for any reason (for example, if you resign or are made redundant) you shall still be eligible for SAP if you have already been notified by an agency that you have been matched with a child. In such cases, SAP shall start:
- (a) 14 days before the Expected Placement Date; or
  - (b) the day after your employment ends, whichever is the later.
- 10.5 If you become eligible for a pay rise before the end of your adoption leave, you will be treated for SAP purposes as if the pay rise had applied throughout the Relevant Period. This means that your SAP will be recalculated and increased retrospectively, or that you may qualify for SAP if you did not previously qualify. We shall pay you a lump sum to make up the difference between any SAP already paid and the amount payable by virtue of the pay rise. Any future SAP payments at the Earnings-Related Rate (if any) will also be increased as necessary.

## **11. TERMS AND CONDITIONS DURING OML AND AML**

- 11.1 All the terms and conditions of your employment remain in force during OML and AML, except for the terms relating to pay. In particular:
- benefits in kind [such as death in service, slice card benefit and use of a company vehicle if applicable] shall continue;
  - annual leave entitlement under your contract shall continue to accrue (see paragraph 11, Annual leave); and
  - pension benefits shall continue (see Pensions paragraph below).

## **12. ANNUAL LEAVE**

- 12.1 During OAL and AAL, annual leave will accrue at the rate provided under your contract. i.e. the hours the employee was working prior to the start of the adoption leave absence. If they return on different hours then leave will be based on these hours from the point of return.
- 12.2 If a period of adoption leave spans more than one annual leave year, then leave can be carried over within the normal arrangements for the carry over of leave. Additional leave may be carried over provided that the leave is taken prior to the employee actually returning to work. The employee should discuss the arrangements with the Manager and the annual leave card should be amended accordingly.



### **13. OTHER LEAVE ENTITLEMENTS**

13.1 Employees have rights to paternity leave, unpaid parental leave, unpaid time off for dependants and a right to request flexible working patterns. Please see the relevant Council policy documents (available on the Intranet or from P&E).

### **14. DISRUPTED ADOPTION**

14.1 Adoption leave is disrupted if it has started but:

- (a) you are notified that the placement will not take place;
- (b) the child is returned to the adoption agency after placement; or
- (c) the child dies after placement.

14.2 In case of disruption your entitlement to adoption leave and pay (if applicable) will continue for a further eight weeks from the end of the week in which disruption occurred, unless your entitlement to leave and/or pay would have ended earlier in the normal course of events.

### **15. CHILDCARE VOUCHERS**

15.1 Employees are entitled to continue to receive contractual benefits (except pay) during OAL and AAL.

15.2 Currently Childcare Vouchers are deemed to be a non-cash benefit (i.e. not pay) and therefore entitlement to them continues during OAL and AAL. An employee must be a member of the Childcare Voucher Scheme before starting maternity leave for this to apply. This is explained in more detail in the Guidance on the Childcare Voucher Scheme.

### **16. PENSION CONTRIBUTIONS**

16.1 During OAL your pension benefits will continue to accrue based on your contractual hours even though your pay and consequently your pension contributions may be lower.

16.2 The contribution rate for the payment of pension contributions will be your normal contribution rate ie the percentage rate for determining contributions will not change. The amount of contributions paid may be lower as they are calculated on the pay actually received.

16.3 If you are not entitled to any Adoption Pay from the Council for all or some of the OAL period, then you will only pay pension contributions when you are receiving pay. However, your pension service will accrue at the same rate as if you had been paying full contributions for the whole of the 26 weeks of OAL.

16.4 Pension contributions will continue to be payable during any paid period of AAL. Contributions will be based on the rate of adoption pay received and pension service will accrue at the same rate as if you had been paying full contributions for the part of the AAL period that is paid.

- 16.5 You can choose to pay pension contributions during the unpaid period of AAL. The amount of pension contributions is based on the amount of pay received in last week of paid adoption leave and pension service will accrue at the same rate as if you had been paying full contributions. If you did not receive any adoption pay from the Council the contributions will be based on your contractual pay immediately prior to starting adoption leave.
- 16.6 You will need to decide whether you wish to pay contributions for your period of unpaid AAL within 30 days of your return from adoption leave. The Payroll Team will calculate the amount due and will let you know about different payment methods where appropriate.
- 16.7 If you decide not to pay pension contributions during this unpaid period of AAL the time will not count towards your pensionable service and will therefore not be included in the calculation of pension benefits.
- 16.8 If you work any KIT days during your adoption leave you will be paid full pay for these days (you must submit a claim for payment). These payments will be disregarded when calculating contributions due for the remainder of your leave ie if you were on the flat rate SAP when working a KIT day your contributions immediately before and after the KIT day will be based on the SMP rate. If you work a KIT day during a period of unpaid leave and you decide not to make contributions up for the unpaid period the KIT day worked will be pensionable and will count towards pensionable service.

## **17. REDUNDANCIES DURING ADOPTION LEAVE**

- 17.1 In the event that your post is affected by a redundancy situation occurring during your adoption leave, we shall write to inform you of any proposals and shall invite you to a meeting before any final decision is reached as to your continued employment. Employees on maternity and adoption leave shall be given first refusal on any suitable alternative vacancies that are appropriate to their skills, in accordance with the Organisational Change Policy.

## **18. KEEPING IN TOUCH (“KIT”)**

- 18.1 The employee and manager should discuss arrangements for keeping in contact during the maternity leave period before maternity leave starts. Managers should ensure that the employee will receive her payslips and agree arrangements for communicating significant workplace developments and training opportunities. Employees may be sent council communications. We may make reasonable contact with you from time to time during your maternity leave.
- 18.2 You may work (including attending training) for up to ten days during maternity leave without bringing your maternity leave or SMP to an end. The arrangements, are set by agreement with your line manager or People & Equalities Department, so pay will be

made up to full pay for the hours worked. If an employee is in receipt of maternity payments that are equal to full pay at the time of working a KIT day they will not receive any additional pay. Conversely an employee in receipt of no pay at the time of working will receive full pay for the hours worked.

18.3 You are not obliged to undertake any such work during maternity leave, nor is the Council obliged to provide any work. In any case, you must not work in the two weeks following birth.

18.4 Shortly before you are due to return to work, we may invite you to have a discussion (whether in person or by telephone) about the arrangements for your return. This may cover:

- updating you on any changes that have occurred during your absence;
- any training needs you might have; and
- any changes to working arrangements (e.g. if you have made a request to work part-time; see final paragraph below, Returning to work part-time).

## **19. EXPECTED RETURN DATE**

19.1 Once you have notified us in writing of your Intended Start Date, we shall send you a letter within 28 days to inform you of your Expected Return Date. If your start date changes we shall write to you within 28 days of the start of adoption leave with a revised Expected Return Date.

19.2 We will expect you back at work on your Expected Return Date unless you tell us otherwise. It will help us if, during your adoption leave, you are able to confirm that you will be returning to work as expected.

## **20. RETURNING EARLY**

20.1 If you wish to return to work earlier than the Expected Return Date, you must give us at least eight weeks' notice. It is helpful if you give this notice in writing. If not enough notice is given, we may postpone your return date until four weeks (or eight weeks as appropriate) after you gave notice, or to the Expected Placement Date if sooner.

## **21. RETURNING LATE**

21.1 If you wish to return later than the Expected Return Date, you should either:

- (a) request unpaid parental leave [in accordance with our Parental Leave Policy], giving us as much notice as possible but not less than [21 days]; or
- (b) request paid annual leave in accordance with your contract, which will be at our discretion.

21.2 If you are unable to return to work due to sickness or injury, this will be treated as sickness absence and our usual sickness policy will apply.

21.3 In any other case, late return will be treated as unauthorised absence.

## **22. DECIDING NOT TO RETURN**

- 22.1 If you do not intend to return to work, or are unsure, it is helpful if you discuss this with us as early as possible. If you decide not to return you should give notice of resignation in accordance with your contract. The amount of adoption leave left to run when you give notice must be at least equal to your contractual notice period, otherwise we may require you to return to work for the remainder of the notice period.
- 22.2 Once you have given notice that you will not be returning to work, you cannot change your mind without our agreement. This does not affect your right to receive SAP.

## **23. YOUR RIGHTS WHEN YOU RETURN**

- 23.1 You are normally entitled to return to work in the same position as you held before commencing leave. Your terms of employment shall be the same as they would have been had you not been absent. However, if you have taken any period of AAL or more than four weeks' parental leave, and it is not reasonably practicable for us to allow you to return into the same position, we may give you another suitable and appropriate job on terms and conditions that are not less favourable.
- 22.2 It is possible that an employee who takes the full entitlement to adoption leave of 52 weeks may become pregnant or seek to make a further adoption whilst on leave and become entitled to another, consecutive period of leave without returning to work. An employee who takes two consecutive periods of (maternity or adoption leave) which include one or more periods of AML or AAL, is entitled to return to her original job or, if this is not reasonably practicable, to another suitable, alternative post.

## **24. RETURNING TO WORK PART-TIME**

- 24.1 We will deal with any requests by employees to change their working patterns (such as working part time) after adoption leave on a case-by-case basis. There is no absolute right to insist on working part time, but you do have a statutory right to request flexible working and we will try to accommodate your wishes unless there is a justifiable reason for refusal, bearing in mind the needs of our business. It is helpful if requests are made as early as possible. The procedure for making and dealing with such requests is set out in our Flexible Working Policy.

## **25. MONITORING AND REVIEW OF THE POLICY**

- 25.1 This policy is reviewed by People & Equalities in consultation with the Council's recognised unions. Recommendations for any amendments are reported to People & Equalities.
- 25.2 We will continue to review the effectiveness of this policy to ensure it is achieving its stated objectives.

**APPENDIX 1 - ADOPTION LEAVE FORM (ADOPTION WITHIN THE UK) part 1 of 2**

<b>Full Name</b>	
<b>Service Area</b>	
<b>Job Title</b>	
<b>Date started employment with Oxford City Council</b>	-- / -- /20 --
<b>I give notice of my intention to take adoption leave as follows</b>	
<b>Start Date</b>	-- / -- /20 --
<b>End Date</b>	-- / -- /20 --
<b>The expected date on which the child will be placed for adoption.</b>	-- / -- /20 --
<b>The date on which I was notified by the adoption agency of having been matched with the child</b>	-- / -- /20 --
<b>I confirm that my wife/husband and I were/my civil partner/my partner was* notified by the adoption agency of having been matched with the child on the date below. [*delete as appropriate]</b>	
<b>Date of notification of matching</b>	-- / -- /20 --
<b>Please tick the appropriate box below</b>	
<b>I intend to return to work after my adoption leave</b>	
<b>I do not intend to return to work after my adoption leave and will therefore leave oxford City Councils employment on the last day prior to the commencement of my adoption leave</b>	
<b>Signature</b>	
<b>Date</b>	-- / -- /20 --

**To qualify for adoption leave, you must return this notice form to your Line Manager no later than seven days after the date on which notification of the match with the child was given to you by the adoption agency.**

**Adoption Leave Form (Adoption within the UK) part 2 of 2**

<b>Full Name</b>	
<b>Service Area</b>	
<b>Job Title</b>	
<b>Date Started employment with Oxford City Council</b>	-- _ / _ _ /20 _ _
<b>I previously notified you that I wish to take adoption leave commencing</b>	
<b>Start Date</b>	-- _ / _ _ /20 _ _
<b>End Date</b>	-- _ / _ _ /20 _ _
<b>I wish to confirm that the child in respect of whom I am taking adoption leave was placed for adoption on</b>	-- _ / _ _ /20 _ _
<b>Signature</b>	
<b>Date</b>	-- _ / _ _ /20 _ _

**APPENDIX 2 - ADOPTION LEAVE FORM (OVERSEAS) part 1 of 3**

<b>Full Name</b>	
<b>Service Area</b>	
<b>Job Title</b>	
<b>Date started Employment with Oxford City Council</b>	-- / -- /20 --
<b>I give notice that I intend to take adoption leave for a child adopted from overseas and I confirm I have received an official notification as follows</b>	
<b>I received the official notification on</b>	-- / -- /20 --
<b>The child is expected to enter Great Britain on</b>	-- / -- /20 --
<b>Signature</b>	
<b>Date</b>	-- / -- /20 --

To qualify for adoption leave, you must return this notice form to your Line Manager no later than 28 days after you received the official notification or, if you received the official notification before commencing work for the Oxford City Council, no later than 28 days after the date you completed 26 weeks' continuous employment with the Oxford City Council.

**Adoption Leave Form (Overseas) part 2 of 3**

<b>Full Name</b>	
<b>Service Area</b>	
<b>Job Title</b>	
<b>Date started Employment with Oxford City Council</b>	-- _ / _ _ /20 _ _
<b>I give notice that I wish to take adoption leave as follows:-</b>	
<b>Start Date</b>	-- _ / _ _ /20 _ _
<b>End Date</b>	-- _ / _ _ /20 _ _
<b>I have already informed the Oxford City Council of the date that I received the official notification and of the date that the child is expected to enter Great Britain.</b>	
<b>Signature</b>	
<b>Date</b>	-- _ / _ _ /20 _ _

**To qualify for adoption leave, you must return this notice form to your Line Manager no later than 28 days prior to the date that you wish your adoption leave to begin.**



**Adoption Leave Form (Overseas) part 3 of 3**

<b>Full Name</b>	
<b>Service Area</b>	
<b>Job Title</b>	
<b>Date started Employment with Oxford City Council</b>	-- / -- /20 --
<b>I give notice that the child in relation to whom I am taking adoption leave entered Great Britain on the date below:-</b>	
<b>Date</b>	-- / -- /20 --
<b>Signature</b>	
<b>Date</b>	-- / -- /20 --

**You must return this notice form to your Line Manager no later than 28 days after the date on which the child entered Great Britain.**

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**OXFORD CITY COUNCIL  
PATERNITY POLICY**

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## **1. POLICY STATEMENT**

- 1.1 This policy outlines employees' entitlement to paternity leave and sets out the arrangements for taking it. It also covers paternity leave as part of adoption
- 1.2 No-one will be discriminated against or subjected to a detriment for taking leave in accordance with this policy.
- 1.3 This policy does not form part of any employee's contract of employment and we may amend it at any time.

## **2. SCOPE**

- 2.1 This policy applies to full-time and part-time employees (regardless of the number of hours worked) subject to qualifying condition, e.g. length of service. It does not apply to agency workers or the self-employed. If you require further guidance, please contact People & Equalities (P&E).

## **3. DEFINITIONS/ABBREVIATIONS**

The following definitions apply in this policy.

**Partner:** someone (whether of a different sex or the same sex) with whom you live in an enduring family relationship, but who is not your parent, grandparent, sister, brother, aunt or uncle.

**Expected Week of Childbirth:** the week, beginning on a Sunday, in which their doctor or midwife expects your spouse, civil partner or Partner to give birth.

**Expected Placement Date:** the date on which an adoption agency expects that it will place a child into your care with a view to adoption.

**OPL** – occupational paternity leave

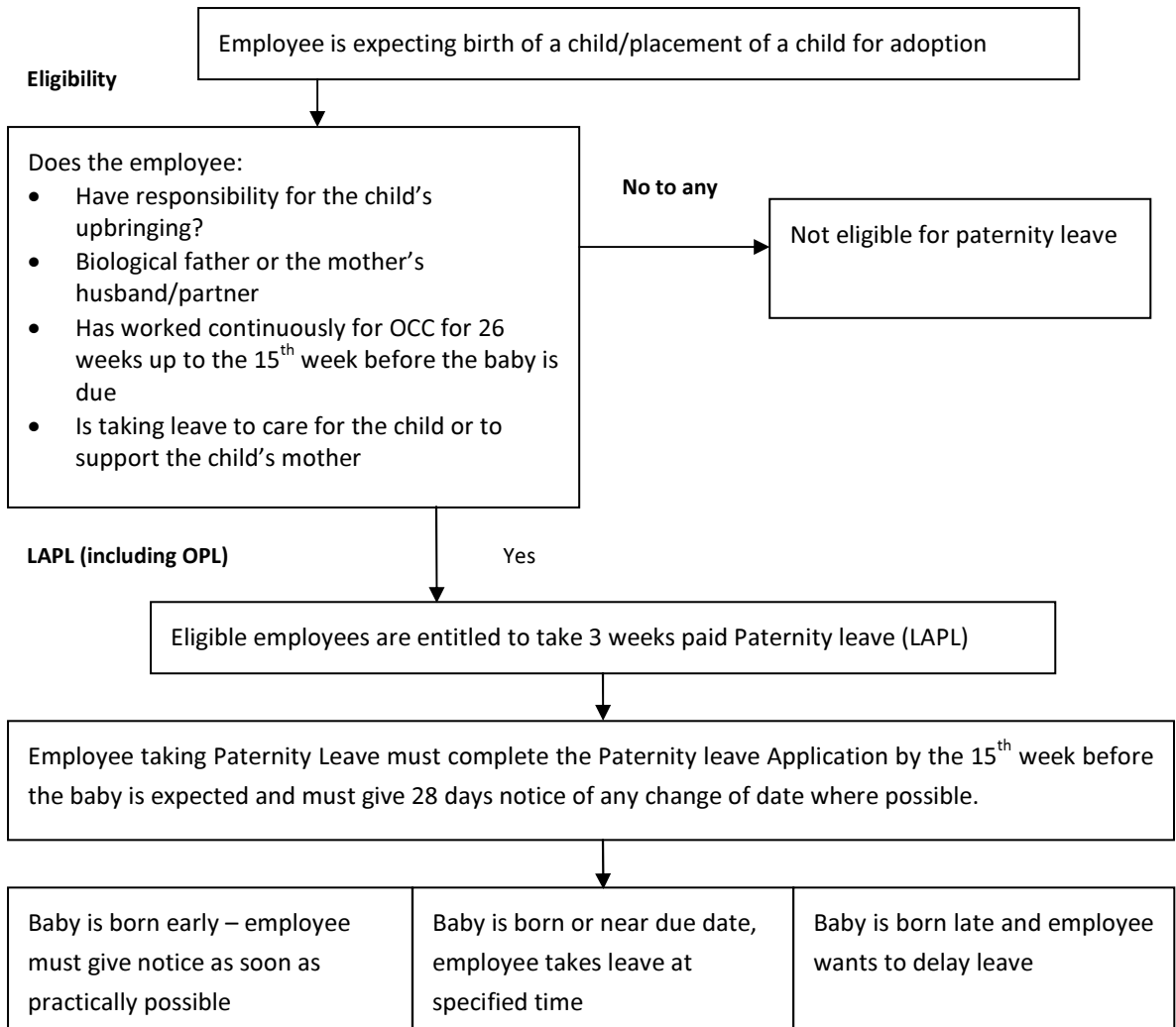
**APL** – additional paternity leave

**OSPP** – ordinary statutory paternity pay

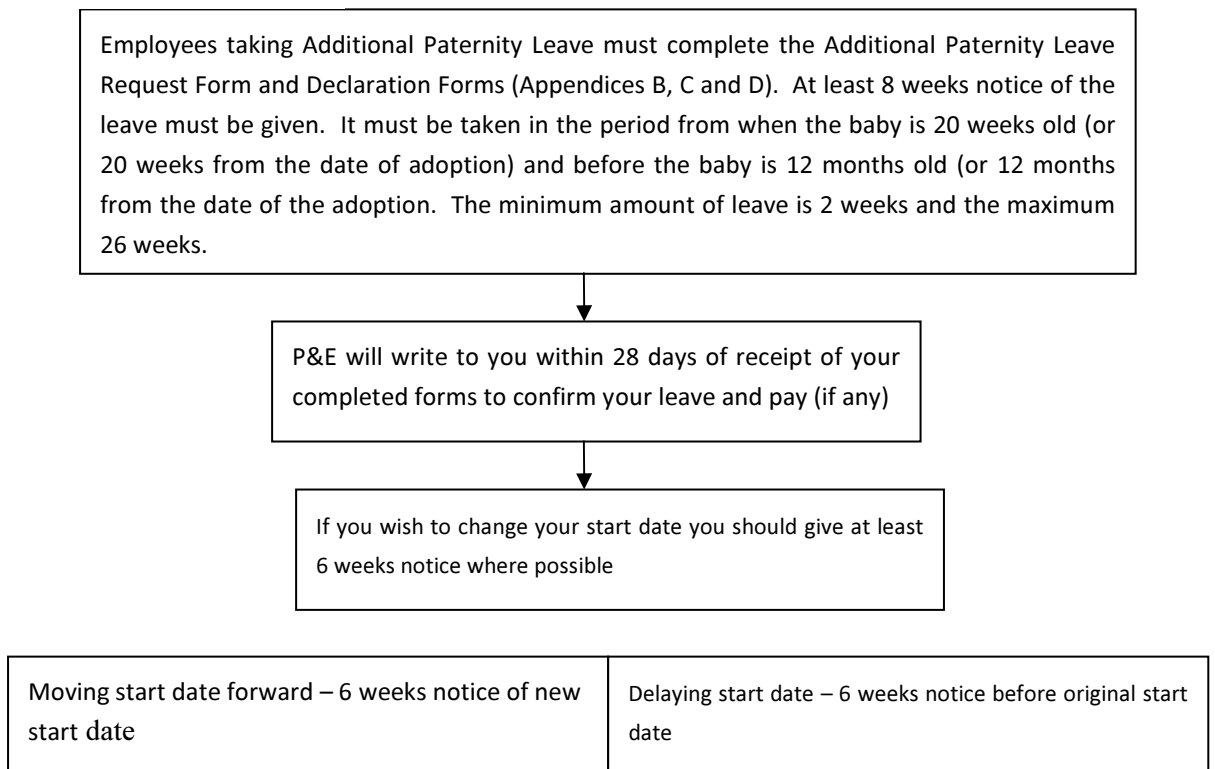
**ASPP** – additional statutory paternity pay

As the Council's scheme is more generous than the Statutory Paternity Leave Scheme, we do not reference the latter in this policy.

#### 4. PROCEDURE OVERVIEW



#### Additional Paternity Leave



## **5. IMPLEMENTING THE POLICY**

- 5.1 Managers have a specific responsibility to ensure the fair application of this policy and all members of staff are responsible for supporting colleagues and ensuring its success.
- 5.2 The Head of People & Equalities has overall responsibility for the effective operation of this policy and for ensuring compliance with the relevant statutory framework.

## **6. ENTITLEMENT TO PATERNITY LEAVE (INCLUDING AS PART OF ADOPTION)**

- 6.1 Certain employees can take paternity leave in relation to the birth or adoption of a child. In adoption cases paternity leave is not available to an employee who decides to take adoption leave. [Further details of adoption leave are set out in our Adoption Policy.]
- 6.2 Oxford City Council has an Occupational Paternity Leave Scheme (OPL). This Scheme is more generous in terms of the amount of leave and pay provided than the Statutory Scheme and the qualifying criteria are the same.
- 6.3 In addition to 3 weeks leave the OPL scheme provides for employees to take one day's leave for the day of the birth.
- 6.4 You are entitled to **OPL** if you meet all the following conditions:
  - (a) You have been continuously employed by us for at least 26 weeks ending with:
    - (i) in birth cases, the week immediately before the 14th week before the Expected Week of Childbirth.
    - (ii) in adoption cases, the week in which you or your Partner are notified by an adoption agency that you/they have been matched with a child.
    - (iii) you remain employed by us during the OPL period.
  - (b) You:
    - (i) are the biological father of the child;
    - (ii) have been matched with a child by an adoption agency;
    - (iii) are the spouse, civil partner or Partner of the child's mother; or
    - (iv) are the spouse, civil partner or Partner of someone who has been matched with a child by an adoption agency.
  - (c) You:
    - (i) expect to have main responsibility (with the child's mother, co-adopter or adopter) for the child's upbringing; or

- (ii) are the child's biological father and you expect to have some responsibility for the child's upbringing.
  - (d) Your intended leave is for the purpose of caring for the child, or supporting the child's mother, adopter or co-adopter in caring for the child.
- 6.5 You are also entitled to Additional Paternity Leave (APL) if in addition to the conditions in paragraph 6.4 above:
- (a) You remain employed by us until the week before the first week of your APL;
  - (b) The child's mother or your co-adopter has been entitled to statutory leave:
    - (i) in birth cases, the child's mother has been entitled to maternity leave, statutory maternity pay or maternity allowance in respect of her pregnancy, or
    - (ii) in adoption cases, the child's adopter has been entitled to one or both of adoption leave or statutory adoption pay in respect of the child's adoption; **and**
  - (c) The child's mother or your co-adopter had returned to work.

## **7. TIMING AND LENGTH OF PATERNITY LEAVE (OPL AND APL)**

- 7.1 OPL must be taken in one block or multiples of complete weeks. The maximum amount of LAPL is three weeks.
- 7.2 OPL can be taken from the date of the child's birth or adoption placement, but must end:
  - (a) In birth cases, within 56 days of the child's birth;
  - (b) In adoption cases, within 56 days of the child's placement.
- 7.3 If Additional Paternity Leave (APL) is requested, it must be taken as multiples of complete weeks and as one period. The minimum amount of APL that can be taken is two weeks and the maximum is 26 weeks.
- 7.4 APL must be taken in the period beginning 20 weeks after the child's date of birth, or adoption placement, and ending 12 months after that date of birth or adoption.

## **8. NOTIFICATION (BIRTH)**

- 8.1 If you wish to take OPL in relation to a child's birth, you must give us notice in writing of your intention to do so and confirm:
  - (a) The Expected Week of Childbirth;
  - (b) The number of weeks' leave you intend to take (either one block or in multiples of complete weeks).

- (c) When you would like to take your leave. You can state that your leave will start on:
- (i) the day of the child's birth;
  - (ii) a day which is a specified number of days after the child's birth;
  - or
  - (iii) a specific date later than the first date of the Expected Week of Childbirth.

8.2 You must give notice under paragraph 8.1 before the 15th week prior to the Expected Week of Childbirth (or, if this is not possible, as soon as you can). A Paternity Leave Request Form is attached at Appendix 1.

8.3 If you wish to take APL in relation to a child's birth, you must provide us with the following at least eight weeks before the date on which you would like to start your leave (A leave notice, employee declaration form and a mother declaration form is attached at Appendices 2, 3 and 4) :

- (a) A written "leave notice" stating:
- (i) the Expected Week of Childbirth;
  - (ii) the child's date of birth; and
  - (iii) the dates on which you would like your APL to start and finish.
- (b) A signed "employee declaration" confirming that:
- (i) you are **either** the child's father **or** that you are the spouse, Partner or civil partner of the child's mother;
  - (ii) apart from the child's mother, you have or expect to have the main responsibility for the upbringing of the child; and
  - (iii) you wish to take APL in order to care for the child.
- (c) A written "mother declaration" from the child's mother stating:
- (i) her name, address and National Insurance number;
  - (ii) the date she intends to return to work;
  - (iii) your relationship with the child;
  - (iv) that, to her knowledge, you are the only person exercising an entitlement to APL in respect of the child; and
  - (v) that she consents to us processing the information she has provided.

8.4 We will write to you to confirm the start and finish dates of your APL within 28 days of receiving your leave notice, your employee declaration and the child's mother's declaration.

8.5 We may require you to provide a copy of the child's birth certificate and the name and address of the mother's employer or, if she is self-employed, her business address.



**9. NOTIFICATION (ADOPTION)**

- 9.1 If you wish to take OPL in relation to the adoption of a child, you must give us notice in writing of your intention to do so and confirm:
- (a) The date on which you and/or your spouse, civil partner or Partner were notified of having been matched with the child, together with the Expected Placement Date;
  - (b) The number of weeks' leave you intend to take up to a maximum of 3 weeks and how you plan to take it. This may be as one block of up to three weeks, a two week and/or 1 week block or up to three single week blocks; and
  - (c) When you would like to take your leave. You can state that your leave will start on:
    - (i) the day on which the child is placed with you or the adopter;
    - (ii) a day which is a specified number of days after the child's placement; or
    - (iii) a specific date later than the Expected Placement Date.
- 9.2 You must give notice under paragraph 9.1 no more than seven days after you and/or your spouse, civil partner or Partner were notified of having been matched with the child (or, if this is not possible, as soon as you can).
- 9.3 We may require a signed declaration from you that you are taking LAPL for a purpose for which it is intended; namely, to care for the child or to support your spouse, civil partner or Partner in caring for the child.
- 9.4 If you wish to take APL following a child's adoption, you must provide us with the following at least eight weeks before the date on which you would like to start your leave:
- (a) A written "leave notice" stating:
    - (i) the date on which you were notified that you had been matched with the child;
    - (ii) the date on which the child was placed with you; and
    - (iii) the dates on which you would like your APL to start and finish.
  - (b) A signed "employee declaration" confirming that:
    - (i) you have been matched for adoption with the child;
    - (ii) you are either the spouse, Partner or civil partner of the child's co-adopter; and
    - (iii) you wish to take APL in order to care for the child.
  - (c) A written "adopter declaration" from the child's adopter stating:
    - (i) their name, address and National Insurance number;

- (ii) the date they intend to return to work;
- (iii) that you are their spouse, Partner or civil partner; and
- (iv) that they consent to us processing the information they have provided.

A combined leave notice and employee declaration form and an adopter declaration form are available from People & Equalities.

9.5 We will write to you to confirm the start and finish dates of your APL within 28 days of receiving your leave notice, your employee declaration and the adopter's declaration.

9.6 We may require you to provide the following:

- (a) The name and address of the adopter's employer or, if they are self-employed, their business address.
- (b) Documentary evidence issued by the adoption agency that matched you with the child which confirms:
  - (i) the name and address of the adoption agency;
  - (ii) the date on which you were notified that you had been matched with the child; and
  - (iii) the date on which the agency expected to place the child with you.

## **10. CHANGING THE DATES OF OPL OR APL**

10.1 Where you are to take OPL in respect of a child's birth, you can give us written notice to vary the start date of your leave from that which you originally specified in the notice given under paragraph 8.1. This notice should be given at least 28 days before the first day of the Expected Week of Childbirth:

- (a) Where you wish to vary your leave to start on the day of the child's birth;
- (b) Where you wish to vary your leave to start a specified number of days after the child's birth;
- (c) Where you wish to vary your leave to start on a specific date (or a different date from that you originally specified) – but in this case at least 28 days before that date.

10.2 Where you are to take OPL in respect of a child's adoption, you can give us written notice to vary the start date of your leave from that which you originally specified in the notice given under paragraph 9.1. This notice should be given at least 28 days before the Expected Placement Date:

- (a) Where you wish to vary your leave to start on the day that the child is placed with you or the adopter;
- (b) Where you wish to vary your leave to start a specified number of days after the child's placement;

- (c) Where you wish to vary your leave to start on a specific date (or a different date from that you originally specified) – but in this case at least 28 days before that date.
- 10.3 If you are unable to give us 28 days' written notice of the wish to vary the start of your leave as set out above, you should give us written notice of the change as soon as you can.
- 10.4 Where you are to take APL, following either the birth or adoption of a child, you are entitled to give us written notice to cancel or vary the start and/or finish dates that you previously notified to us in accordance with paragraph 8.3 or paragraph 9.4. You need to do this:
  - (a) At least six weeks before the date you originally told us was the date on which you wanted to start your APL; or
  - (b) If you want to start your APL earlier than that original start date, at least six weeks before the date on which you now wish your APL to start.
- 10.5 If you are unable to give six weeks' notice you should give us written notice of your wishes as soon as possible. However, in these circumstances, if we are unable to accommodate your request we may require you to take a period of APL of up to six weeks starting on either your original or revised start date. If you wish to discuss varying or cancelling your APL in these circumstances you should speak to People & Equalities.

## **11. STATUTORY PATERNITY PAY**

- 11.1 In this paragraph, **Relevant Period** means:
  - (a) In birth cases, the eight-week period ending immediately before the 14th week before the Expected Week of Childbirth.
  - (b) In adoption cases, the eight-week period ending immediately before the week in which you or your spouse, civil partner or Partner were notified of being matched with the child.
- 11.2 If you take OPL in accordance with this policy, you will be paid full pay, less any ordinary statutory paternity pay (**OSPP**) to which you are entitled. You are entitled to OSPP if, during the Relevant Period, your average weekly earnings are not less than the lower earnings limit set by the government. You will therefore be paid full pay for the three weeks of LAPL.
- 11.3 If you take APL in accordance with this policy, you may be entitled to additional statutory paternity pay (**ASPP**). Whether and, if so, for how long you may be entitled to ASPP will depend on:
  - (a) Your average weekly earnings being not less than the lower earnings limit set by the government during the Relevant Period; and

- (b) The child's mother or your co-adopter, as the case may be, having returned to work without having taken at least two weeks of their maternity allowance, maternity pay or adoption pay period. Your entitlement to ASPP will equate to the number of weeks of unexpired maternity allowance, maternity pay or adoption pay that remained when the child's mother or your co-adopter returned to work.
- 11.4 OSPP and ASPP are paid at a prescribed rate which is set by the government for the relevant tax year, or at 90% of your average weekly earnings calculated over the Relevant Period if this is lower. For details of the current prescribed rate, please contact People & Equalities.

## **12. TERMS AND CONDITIONS DURING OPL AND APL**

- 12.1 All the terms and conditions of your employment remain in force during OPL and APL, except for the terms relating to pay. In particular:
  - (a) Benefits in kind [such as slice card, etc.]
  - (b) Annual leave entitlement under your contract shall continue to accrue; and
  - (c) Pension benefits shall continue (see paragraph 16).

## **13. ANNUAL LEAVE**

- 13.1 During OPL and APL, annual leave will accrue at the rate provided under your contract.
- 13.2 Normally, no more than 5 days' annual leave can usually be carried over from one holiday year to the next. If the holiday year is due to end during your absence on paternity leave, you should ensure that you have taken your full year's entitlement before your paternity leave starts.

## **14. OTHER LEAVE ENTITLEMENTS**

- 13.1 Employees have rights to unpaid parental leave, unpaid time off for dependants and a right to request flexible working patterns. Please see the relevant Council policy documents (available on the Intranet or from P&E).

## **15. CHILDCARE VOUCHERS**

- 15.1 Currently Childcare Vouchers are deemed to be a non-cash benefit (i.e. not pay) and therefore entitlement to them continues during OPL & APL. An employee must be a member of the Childcare Voucher Scheme before starting paternity leave for this to apply. This is explained in more detail in the Guidance on the Childcare Voucher Scheme.

## **16. PENSIONS**

- 16.1 You will be paid full pay during your OPL. Your pension contributions and benefits
- 16.2 You can choose to pay pension contributions during the unpaid period of APL. The amount of pension contributions is based on the amount of pay received in last week of paid additional adoption leave and pension service will accrue at the same rate as if you had been paying full contributions. If you did not receive any additional paternity pay from the Council the contributions will be based on your contractual pay immediately prior to starting additional paternity leave.
- 16.3 You will need to decide whether you wish to pay contributions for your period of unpaid APL within 30 days of your return from additional paternity leave. The Payroll Team will calculate the amount due and will let the you know about different payment methods where appropriate.
- 16.4 If you decide not to pay pension contributions during this unpaid period of APL the time will not count towards your pensionable service and will therefore not be included in the calculation of pension benefits.
- 16.5 If you work any 'Keep in Touch' (KIT\_ days during your additional paternity leave you will be paid full pay for these days (you must submit a claim for payment). These payments will be disregarded when calculating contributions due for the remainder of your leave ie if you were on the flat rate ASPP when working a KIT day your contributions immediately before and after the KIT day will be based on the ASPP rate. If you work a KIT day during a period of unpaid leave and you decide not to make contributions up for the unpaid period the KIT day worked will be pensionable and will count towards pensionable service.

## **17. REDUNDANCIES DURING APL**

- 17.1 In the event that your post is affected by a redundancy situation occurring during paternity leave, we shall write to inform you of any proposals and shall invite you to a meeting before any final decision is reached as to your continued employment. Employees on APL will be among those given priority with regard to suitable alternative vacancies that are appropriate to their skills.

## **18. KEEPING IN TOUCH DURING ADDITIONAL PATERNITY LEAVE**

- 18.1 The employee and manager should discuss arrangements for keeping in contact during the paternity leave period before paternity leave starts. Managers should

ensure that the employee will receive his payslips and agree arrangements for communicating significant workplace developments and training opportunities. Employees may be sent council communications. We may make reasonable contact with you from time to time during your paternity leave.

18.2 You may work (including attending training) for up to ten days during paternity leave without bringing your leave to an end. The arrangements, are set by agreement with your line manager or People & Equalities Department, so pay will be made up to full pay for the hours worked. If an employee is in receipt of additional paternity leave payments that are equal to full pay at the time of working a KIT day they will not receive any additional pay. Conversely an employee in receipt of no pay at the time of working will receive full pay for the hours worked.

18.3 Shortly before you are due to return to work, we may invite you to have a discussion (whether in person or by telephone) about the arrangements for your return. This may cover:

- updating you on any changes that have occurred during your absence;
- any training needs you might have; and
- any changes to working arrangements (e.g. if you have made a request to work part-time; see final paragraph below, Returning to work part-time).

## **19. RETURNING TO WORK**

19.1 You are normally entitled to return to work following either OPL or APL to the same position you held before commencing leave. Your terms of employment will be the same as they would have been had you not been absent.

19.2 If you wish to return early from APL, you must give us at least six weeks' prior notice. Your ability to do so is subject to the matters set out in paragraph 10.

19.3 If you wish to postpone your return from APL, you should either:

- a) Request unpaid parental leave in accordance with our Parental Leave Policy, giving us as much notice as possible but not less than 21 days; or
- b) Request paid annual leave in accordance with your contract, which will be at our discretion.

19.4 If you are unable to return to work from APL as expected due to sickness or injury, this will be treated as sickness absence and our Attendance Management Policy will apply.

19.5 In any other case, a late return will be treated as unauthorised absence.

19.6 We will deal with any requests by employees to change their working patterns (such as working part-time) after paternity leave on a case-by-case basis, in

accordance with our Flexible Working Policy. We will try to accommodate your wishes unless there is a justifiable reason for refusal, bearing in mind the needs of the business. It is helpful if requests are made as early as possible.

- 19.7 If you do not intend to return to work or are unsure, it is helpful if you discuss this with us as early as possible. If you decide not to return you should submit your resignation in accordance with your contract. Once you have done so you will be unable to change your mind without our agreement. This does not affect your right to receive SPP.

**20. MONITORING AND REVIEW OF THE POLICY**

- 20.1 This policy is reviewed by People & Equalities in consultation with the Council's recognised unions. Recommendations for any amendments are reported to People & Equalities.
- 20.2 We will continue to review the effectiveness of this policy to ensure it is achieving its stated objectives.

**APPENDIX 1 - PATERNITY LEAVE FORM**

<b>Full Name</b>	
<b>Service Area</b>	
<b>Job Title</b>	
<b>Date of Commencement of Employment</b>	
<b>I hereby give notice of my intention to take locally agreed paternity leave as follows</b>	
<b>Length of leave (up to a maximum of 3 weeks as either 1 block of three weeks, or in multiples of complete weeks)</b>	
<b>Start and End Dates of period one</b>	
<b>Start and End Dates of period two</b>	
<b>Start and End Dates of period three</b>	
<b>I confirm that the leave requested relates to the birth of a child for whom I am eligible to take paternity leave and the baby is due on the date below</b>	
<b>Date on which baby which is due</b>	
<b>I confirm that my wife/husband and I were/my civil partner/my partner was* notified by the adoption agency of having been matched with the child on the date below. [*delete as appropriate]</b>	
<b>Date of notification of matching</b>	
<b>The expected date that the child is to be placed for adoption is as below</b>	
<b>Date on which child is expected to be placed for adoption</b>	
<b>Signature</b>	
<b>Date</b>	

*This form must be completed and returned at least 15 weeks before the expected week of the child's birth, or in the case of adoption, no later than 7 days after the date on which notification of the match with the child was given by the adoption agency*



**APPENDIX 2 - ADDITIONAL PATERNITY LEAVE REQUEST FORM**

<b>Name of employee:</b>	
<b>Job title:</b>	
<b>Service area:</b>	
<b>Date of commencement of employment:</b>	
I confirm that my wife, partner or civil partner gave birth to a child, or I am the biological father of the child, and I give notice of my intention to take additional paternity leave, and to receive additional statutory paternity pay (if applicable), in respect of that child as follows:	
<b>The expected week of childbirth was:</b>	
<b>The child's actual date of birth was:</b>	
<b>I wish to start my additional paternity leave on:</b>	
<b>I wish to end my additional paternity leave on:</b>	
<b>I expect the Council's liability to pay additional statutory paternity pay (if applicable) to begin on:</b>	
<b>I expect the Council's liability to pay additional statutory paternity pay (if applicable) to end on:</b>	
<b>Signed:</b>	
<b>Dated:</b>	

*This form must be completed and returned at least 8 weeks before the date the leave is requested is due to begin..*

**APPENDIX 3 - ADDITIONAL PATERNITY LEAVE SELF CERTIFICATION FORM**

<b>Name of employee:</b>	
<b>Job title:</b>	
<b>Date of commencement of employment:</b>	
<b>In respect of my written request to take additional paternity leave, and to receive additional statutory paternity pay (if applicable), dated [ _____ ], I confirm that (please tick one box):</b>	
I am the child's father	
I am not the child's father, but am married to, the partner or the civil partner of the child's mother	
<b>In addition, I confirm that (please tick each box):</b>	
I have, or expect to have, the main responsibility (apart from the mother's responsibility) for the upbringing of the child	
The purpose of the period of my additional paternity leave will be to care for the child, and I intend to care for the child during the additional statutory paternity pay period	
The information that I have provided in my written request to take additional paternity leave, and to receive additional statutory paternity pay (if applicable), dated [date] is correct	
<b>Signed:</b>	
<b>Dated:</b>	
<b>Notes</b> To qualify for additional paternity leave and pay, the employee must return this form to the People & Equalities department not less than eight weeks before the start date chosen by him/her for additional paternity leave and pay. A partner is a person, whether of a different sex or the same sex, who lives with the mother and the child in an enduring family relationship but is not a relative of the mother. A "relative" for these purposes includes the mother's parents, grandparents, sisters, brothers, aunts and uncles.	

**APPENDIX 4 - PARTNER'S DECLARATION OF ENTITLEMENT**

<b>Name of employee:</b>	
<b>Job title:</b>	
<b>Name of child's mother:</b>	
<b>Address of mother:</b>	
<b>Mother's national insurance number:</b>	
I have now given notice to my employer that I am returning to work from my maternity leave and the relevant details are as follows:	
<b>I became entitled, by reference to becoming pregnant with my child, to either statutory maternity pay or a maternity allowance.</b>	
<b>The start date of my statutory maternity pay period, or my maternity allowance period, in respect of my child was:</b>	
<b>I intend to return to work from my maternity leave on:</b>	
<b>I confirm that the employee named above is (please tick one box):</b>	
My child's father	
Not my child's father, but my spouse, partner or civil partner	
<b>In addition, I confirm that (please tick each box):</b>	
He/she has, or expects to have, the main responsibility (apart from my responsibility) for the upbringing of my child	
The employee is, to my knowledge, the only person exercising the entitlement to additional paternity leave, and is the sole applicant for additional statutory paternity pay, in respect of my child	

*Continues over.....*

**I consent to the Council processing such of my information as is contained in this form.**

**Signed:**

**Dated:**

**Notes**

To qualify for additional paternity leave and pay, the employee must return this form to People and Equalities not less than eight weeks before the start date chosen by him/her for additional paternity leave and pay.

A partner is a person, whether of a different sex or the same sex, who lives with the mother and the child in an enduring family relationship but is not a relative of the mother. A "relative" for these purposes includes the mother's parents, grandparents, sisters, brothers, aunts and uncles.

**OXFORD CITY COUNCIL**  
**PARENTAL LEAVE PROCEDURE**  
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## **1 Introduction**

- 1.1 There is a statutory provision for employees who meet the eligibility criteria to take parental leave of up to a maximum of 13 weeks (18 weeks for a child with a disability) for the purpose of caring for an eligible child.

## **2 Eligibility**

- 2.1 The scheme applies to all employees with at least one year's continuous service with Oxford City Council and who meets the criteria of having an eligible child.
- 2.2 The employee must:-
- Be the parent of a child who is under 5 years of age,
  - Be the adopter of a child under the age of 18,
  - Have acquired formal parental responsibility for a child who is under 5 years of age (as defined in the Maternity and Parental Leave etc Regulations 1999).

## **3 How Parental Leave can be taken**

- 3.1 Parental leave is unpaid.
- 3.2 Employees can take parental leave of up to a maximum of 13 weeks for each eligible child unless the child has disability (for the purposes of this entitlement 'disability' means in receipt of disability living allowance) in which case the maximum is 18 weeks.
- 3.3 Part time employees will be entitled to parental leave on a pro rata basis in the same way as annual leave.
- 3.4 Parental leave must be taken in blocks of one week or multiple weeks unless the child has a disability in which case it may be taken as single days or periods shorter than a week.
- 3.5 No more than 4 weeks leave can be taken in any one year for each eligible child.
- 3.6 Parental leave must be taken before the child's 5<sup>th</sup> birthday or 18<sup>th</sup> birthday in the case of a child with a disability. In the case of adoption the leave must be taken within 5 years from the date of adoption or until the child's 18<sup>th</sup> birthday, whichever is the sooner.
- 3.7 For parental leave purposes a year is the 12 month period beginning when the employee first becomes entitled to parental leave for the child in question, and each successive 12 month period on the anniversary of that date.
- 3.8 An application form for requesting Parental Leave is attached at Appendix A.

## **4 Notice to take Parental Leave**

- 4.1 You must give 21 days notice in writing to your line manager of your intention to take parental leave. You must specify the period when you will be away from work.
- 4.2 You may be required to provide documentary evidence of the child's date of birth or other confirmation of your entitlement to take parental leave.
- 4.3 Where the employee is the father of the child and he requests parental leave to begin when the child is born, this notice must specify the expected week of childbirth and the duration of the period of leave. The employee must give written notice at least 21 days before the expected week of childbirth.
- 4.4 Where the parental leave is for an adopted child and is to begin on the date of placement, the employee must give written notice at least 21 days before he beginning of the week in which the child is to be placed for adoption, or as soon as is reasonably practicable thereafter. It must specify the week in which the placement is expected to occur and the duration of the period of leave requested.
- 4.5 The Council will try to accommodate all requests for parental leave wherever possible, but we may postpone the period of parental leave (other than where the parental leave has been requested immediately after childbirth or placement for adoption) where it is considered that the service would be unduly disrupted if the employees were to take leave during the period requested. In this case the employee will be entitled to take an equivalent period of leave beginning no later than 6 months after the commencement of the original period requested. In this situation we will give written notice of the postponement, within 7 days of receipt of your written request, giving the reasons for it and suggesting alternative dates when the leave could be taken.

## **5 Return from Parental Leave**

- 5.1 At the end of parental leave, the employee will be entitled to return to the same job provided that the leave was for a period of four weeks or less (and did not follow on immediately from a period of additional maternity or adoption leave). If the period of parental leave was longer than four weeks (or followed on immediately from a period of additional maternity or adoption leave), then the employee will be entitled to return to the same job or, if that is not practicable, to a similar job that has the same or better status, terms and conditions as the previous job.

## **6 Rights during Parental Leave**

- 6.1 During parental leave the employee will remain employed, although pay and most contractual benefits will be suspended. The right to accrue holiday entitlement will, however, remain in place. Certain other terms of employment will remain in force, as follows. During parental leave employees will be entitled to the implied obligation of trust and confidence, and any terms and conditions of employment relating to:
  - notice of termination;
  - redundancy compensation; and
  - disciplinary or grievance procedures.

6.2 Employees taking parental leave will be bound by the implied obligation of good faith, and any terms and conditions of employment relating to:

- notice of termination;
- disclosure of confidential information;
- the acceptance of gifts or other benefits; and
- participation in any other business.

## **7 Review**

7.1 This procedure will be reviewed on a regular basis.





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# OXFORD CITY COUNCIL

## FLEXIBLE WORKING POLICY

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## **1. POLICY STATEMENT**

- 1.1 We are committed to providing equality of opportunity in employment and to developing work practices and policies that support work-life balance. We recognise that, in addition to helping balance work and personal lives, flexible working can raise staff morale, reduce absenteeism and improve our use and retention of staff.
- 1.2 This Flexible Working Policy gives eligible employees an opportunity to formally request a change to their working pattern and all employees an opportunity to do so. Managers are encouraged to facilitate requests unless they cannot be accommodated for one of the stated statutory business reasons set out in paragraph 8.6.
- 1.3 No-one who makes a request for flexible working will be subjected to any detriment or lose any career development opportunities as a result.
- 1.4 This policy and its implementation have been devised in consultation with the Council's recognised unions. We are committed to a programme of action to make this policy effective and to bring it to the attention of all staff.
- 1.5 This policy does not form part of any employee's contract of employment and it may be amended at any time.

## **2. SCOPE AND PURPOSE**

- 2.1 This policy applies to all employees. It does not apply to agency workers, consultants or self-employed contractors.
- 2.2 Employees with at least 26 weeks' continuous service who have caring responsibilities for certain children and adults have a statutory right to request flexible working, reflected in this policy. The criteria for deciding who is eligible to follow the statutory procedure are set out in paragraph 5.
- 2.3 Employees who do not meet the eligibility criteria for the statutory procedure, but who want to make either permanent or temporary changes to their working arrangements, may make a request under paragraphs 6 to paragraph 9 to their line manager who will consider the request according to the same business and operational requirements specifically paragraph 8.6.

- 2.4 Employees whose requests for flexible working are accepted under the statutory procedure will have **permanent** changes made to their contracts of employment to reflect their new working arrangements. If they do not want changes to be permanent, they can follow the same procedure, but clearly state that they are seeking a temporary change or subject to a trial period and state the desired duration of the changes instead, but this is likely to fall outside of the statutory procedure and rights attached.

### **3. IMPLEMENTING THE POLICY**

- 3.1 The Head of People & Equalities has overall responsibility for the effective operation of this policy and for ensuring compliance with the relevant statutory framework.
- 3.2 Those working at management level have a specific responsibility to set an appropriate standard of behaviour, to lead by example and to promote our aims and objectives with regard to flexible working. [To facilitate this process, managers will be given training on diversity awareness and best practice and encouraged to seek advice from People & Equalities].
- 3.3 All members of staff are responsible for the success of this policy and should ensure that they familiarise themselves with it and act in accordance with its aims and objectives. Those involved in management or recruitment may request training and address any questions about the content or application of this policy to the Head of People & Equalities (P&E).

### **4. FORMS OF FLEXIBLE WORKING**

- 4.1 Flexible working can incorporate a number of changes to working arrangements:
- (a) reduction or variation of working hours;
  - (b) reduction of the number of days worked each week; and/or
  - (c) working from a different location (for example, working from home for part of the week).

Such changes may involve working a set number of hours a year, rather than a week (annualised hours); part time working; working from home; working only during term-time (part-year working); working compressed hours; working flexi-time.

- 4.2 Employees should refer to the Council's other policies relevant to flexible working, such as home working, working hours, etc.

## 5. ELIGIBILITY FOR THE RIGHT TO REQUEST

- 5.1 All employees can make a request for flexible working under the procedure in paragraph 6 to paragraph 9. Statutory requests must satisfy the criteria below.
- 5.2 To be eligible to make a statutory request, you must:
- (a) be an employee;
  - (b) have worked for us continuously for 26 weeks at the date your request is made;
  - (c) have caring responsibilities for the child or adult in respect of whom the request is being made; and
  - (d) not have made a formal request to work flexibly during the last 12 months (each 12-month period runs from the date when the most recent application was made).
- 5.3 Employees who want to work flexibly to care for a child must:
- (a) be making the request in respect of a child who is under 17 (under 18 if the child is disabled)
  - (b) be responsible for bringing up the child and be making the request to enable them to care for the child; and
  - (c) be either:
    - (i) the mother, father, adopter, guardian or foster parent of the child or disabled family member; or
    - (ii) married to, or the partner of, the child's (or disabled family member's) mother, father, adopter, guardian or foster parent. In this context "partner" means a person who is not a relative but, whether of different sex or the same sex, who lives with the child and the mother, father, adopter, guardian or foster parent in an enduring family relationship.
- 5.4 Employees who want to work flexibly to care for an adult who is in need of care must be (or expect to be) the person who cares for that adult, and be:
- (a) married to, or the partner or civil partner of, the adult; or
  - (b) a relative of the adult; or
  - (c) neither of the above, but living at the same address as the adult.

## **6. MAKING A FLEXIBLE WORKING REQUEST**

- 6.1 You should submit a written application for your request to be considered by using the form attached at Appendix 1.
- 6.2 Your written and dated application should be submitted to your line manager. To meet the requirements of the statutory procedure and help your line manager consider your request, it should:
- (a) state the reason for your request, whether to care for a child or adult;
  - (b) provide as much information as you can about your current and desired working pattern, including working days, hours and start and finish times, and give the date from which you want your desired working pattern to start;
  - (c) address the effect the changes to your working pattern will have on the work that you do, that of your colleagues and on service delivery. If you have any suggestions about dealing with any potentially negative effects, please include these in your written application;
  - (d) provide information to confirm that you meet the criteria set out in this paragraph 5; state whether you have made a previous formal request for flexible working and, if so, when; and
  - (e) ideally be submitted at least two months before you wish the changes you are requesting to take effect.

## **7. MEETING**

- 7.1 Your line manager is required to meet with you within 28 days of your application being submitted. The meeting will also where possible be attended by a P&E representative. You may bring a colleague (who may be a trade union representative) to the meeting as a companion if you wish. Your companion will be entitled to speak during the meeting and confer privately with you, but may not answer questions on your behalf.
- 7.2 In most cases, the meeting will be held at your usual place of work. However, we will make reasonable efforts so that the meeting is held at a time and place that is convenient to you.
- 7.3 The meeting will be used to consider the working arrangements you have requested. You should be able to:
- (a) explain how the arrangements will accommodate your caring responsibilities.

- (b) discuss what impact your proposed working arrangements will have on your work and that of your colleagues.

7.4 If the arrangements you have requested cannot be accommodated, discussion at the meeting also provides an opportunity to explore possible alternative working arrangements.

7.5 Your line manager may suggest starting new working arrangements under an initial trial period to ensure that they meet your needs and those of your team **OR** your service area.

## **8. DECISION**

8.1 Following the meeting, your line manager will notify you of the decision in writing within 14 days.

8.2 If your request is accepted, or where we propose an alternative to the arrangements you requested, your line manager (in consultation with P&E) will write to you with details of the new working arrangements, details of any trial period, an explanation of changes to your contract of employment and the date on which they will commence. You will be asked to sign and return a copy of the letter. This will be placed on your employee file to confirm what's been agreed such as any permanent (or trial) variation to your terms of employment. There may also be some additional practical matters, such as arrangements for handing over work, that your line manager will discuss with you.

8.3 You should be aware that changes to your terms of employment will be permanent (unless subject to a trial period) and that you will not be able to make another statutory request until 12 months after the date of your original application.

8.4 If your line manager needs more time to make a decision, they will ask for your agreement to delay the decision for up to a further 14 days. A request for an extension is likely to benefit you. For example, your line manager may need more time to investigate how your request can be accommodated or to consult several members of staff.

8.5 There will be circumstances where, due to business and operational requirements, we are unable to agree to a request. In these circumstances, your line manager (in consultation with P&E) will write to you:

- (a) giving the business reason(s) for turning down your application;
- (b) explaining why the business reasons apply in your case; and



(c) setting out the appeal procedure.

8.6 The eight statutory business reasons for which we may reject your request are:

- (a) the burden of additional costs;
- (b) detrimental effect on ability to meet customer demand;
- (c) inability to reorganise work among existing staff;
- (d) inability to recruit additional staff;
- (e) detrimental impact on quality;
- (f) detrimental impact on performance;
- (g) insufficiency of work during the periods that you propose to work;  
and
- (h) planned changes.

NB Note that one or more of these statutory reasons **only** may be relied upon to reject a statutory request.

## 9. APPEAL

9.1 If your request is rejected, you have the right to appeal.

9.2 Your appeal must:

- (a) be in writing and dated;
- (b) set out the grounds on which you are appealing; and
- (c) be sent to the Head of People & Equalities within 14 calendar days of the date on which you received the written rejection of your request.

9.3 People & Equalities and your manager must arrange for a meeting to take place within 14 calendar days of receipt of your appeal. The meeting will be held at a convenient time for all those attending and, as at the meeting that considered your request, you may be accompanied by a colleague.

9.4 The appeal will be heard by a minimum of two managers who must not have been involved in the original decision. One will normally be the line manager's manager. You will be informed in writing of the Appeal decision within 14 calendar days of the date of the appeal meeting.

9.5 If your appeal is upheld, you will be advised of the same details set out in paragraph 8.2.

- 9.6 You should be aware that changes to your terms of employment will be permanent and you will not normally be able to make another statutory request until 12 months after the date of your original application. If your appeal is rejected, the written decision will give the business reason(s) for the decision and explain why the reason(s) apply in your case. We may, however, consider a further request within 12 months if there has been an unforeseen life changing event.

## **10. BREACHES OF THE PROCEDURE**

- 10.1 There will be exceptional occasions when it is not possible to complete a stage of the procedure within the expected time limits. Where an extension of time is agreed with you, your line manager (in consultation with P&E) will write to you confirming the extension and the date on which it will end.
- 10.2 If you withdraw a statutory request for flexible working, you will not be eligible to make another statutory request for 12 months from the date of your original request. In certain circumstances, a request made under the statutory procedure will be treated as withdrawn. This will occur if:
- (a) you fail to attend two meetings under the statutory procedure without reasonable cause; or
  - (b) you unreasonably refuse to provide information we require to consider your request.

In such circumstances, your line manager (in consultation with P&E) will write to you confirming that the request has been treated as withdrawn.

## **11 MONITORING AND REVIEW**

- 11.1 This policy is reviewed by People & Equalities in consultation with the Council's recognised unions. Recommendations for any amendments are reported to People & Equalities.
- 11.2 We will continue to review the effectiveness of this policy to ensure it is achieving its stated objectives.

## Oxford City Council

### APPENDIX 1 - REQUEST FOR FLEXIBLE WORKING

<b>Full Name:</b>			
<b>Service Area:</b>			
<b>Employment start date:</b>			
<b>Date form submitted:</b>			
<b>I wish to submit a request for flexible working as detailed below.</b>			
<b>Previous applications for flexible working</b>			
Have you submitted a previous request for flexible working? (If yes, please answer the next question.)	Yes	No	
When did you submit your last request for flexible working?			
<b>If you have made a request within the last 12 months please explain the reasons for this request</b>			
<b>Pattern of working</b>			
Please state the pattern of working you are seeking by providing information under one or more of the following three headings:			
<b>1. I would like to reduce my working hours from [current number of hours worked] hours to [the number of hours you would like to work] hours per week.</b>			

**2. I would like to alter the days I work and/or the timing of my working hours so as to work at the following times (please indicate the days/times of day you would like to work).**

--

**3. I would like to do all/some of my work from my home (please be precise about the number of hours and days/times of the week you would like to work at home).**

--

I would like the above change(s) to my working pattern to take effect on:

--

**Please state the effects that you think the changes you are requesting will have on the Council's ability to run its business and on your Service Area, your colleagues, etc.**

--

**Please state how you think any such effect might be dealt with.**

--

**I am making this request under the statutory procedure**

**YES/NO\***  
**\*Delete as appropriate**

<b>If you are making this request in relation to caring responsibilities please tick one box to confirm:</b>	
I wish to make a request to work flexibly in relation to my parental responsibilities (go to Section A)	
I wish to make a request to work flexibly in relation to my caring responsibilities (go to Section B)	
<b>Section A: Please tick boxes as appropriate:</b>	
I declare that I have a child who is currently under 17 years of age	
I declare that I have a disabled child who is currently under 18 years of age	
I declare that my spouse/civil partner/partner has a child under 17 years of age	
I declare that my spouse/civil partner/partner has a disabled child under 18 years of age	
I declare that I am the legal guardian of a child who is currently under 17 years of age	
I declare that I am the legal guardian of a disabled child who is under 18 years of age	
I declare that my spouse/civil partner/partner is the legal guardian of a child under 17 years of age	
I declare that my spouse/civil partner/partner is the legal guardian of a disabled child who is under 18	
I declare that I am currently fostering a child who is under 17 years of age	
I declare that I am currently fostering a disabled child who is under 18 years of age	
I declare that my spouse/civil partner/partner is currently fostering a child under 17 years of age	
I declare that my spouse/civil partner/partner is currently fostering a disabled child who is under 18	
I declare that I live with the child and have responsibility for the child's upbringing	
I declare that I am making this request in order to care for the child	
Please state the date on which the child in respect of which you are requesting flexible working was born:	

**Section B: Please tick boxes as appropriate (note: adoptive relationships are included):**

I declare that I have caring responsibilities for my spouse/civil partner/partner	
I declare that I have caring responsibilities for someone who lives at the same address as me	
I declare that I have caring responsibilities for my mother/father	
I declare that I have caring responsibilities for my guardian	
I declare that I have caring responsibilities for my parent-in-law	
I declare that I have caring responsibilities for my step-parent	
I declare that I have caring responsibilities for my son/daughter/step-son/step-daughter	
I declare that I have caring responsibilities for my brother/sister/step-brother/step-sister/brother-in-law/sister-in-law	
I declare that I have caring responsibilities for my uncle/aunt	
I declare that I have caring responsibilities for my grandparent	
I declare that I have caring responsibilities for my son-in-law/daughter-in law	

Once you have submitted a valid application for flexible working, your manager will contact you to arrange a meeting, which will take place within 28 days of the application, to discuss how the pattern of working you have requested might be made to work. If request is granted, it will mean a permanent change to the terms and conditions of your employment, unless agreed otherwise. It will help us to deal with your application if you provide as much information as you can about your desired working pattern. It is also important that you complete the questions about the effects that you think the changes you are requesting will have on the Council and your colleagues, as your application may otherwise not be valid.

Signature:		Date:	
------------	--	-------	--

## Initial screening EqIA template

*Prior to making the decision, the Council's decision makers considered the following: guide to decision making under the Equality Act 2010:*

*The Council is a public authority. All public authorities when exercising public functions are caught by the Equality Act 2010 which became law in December 2011. In making any decisions and proposals, the Council - specifically members and officers - are required to have **due regard** to the 8 protected characteristics defined under the Act. These protected characteristics are: **age, disability, race, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, religion or belief, sex and/or sexual orientation.***

*The decision maker(s) must specifically consider those protected by the above characteristics:*

- (a) to seek to ensure equality of treatment towards service users and employees;*
- (b) to identify the potential impact of the proposal or decision upon them.*

*If the Council fails to give 'due regard', the Council is likely to face a Court challenge. This will either be through a judicial review of its decision making, the decision may be quashed and/or returned for it to have to be made again, which can be costly and time-consuming diversion for the Council. When considering 'due regard', decision makers must consider the following principles:*

- 1. **the decision maker is responsible for identifying whether there is an issue and discharging it.** The threshold for one of the duties to be triggered is low and will be triggered where there is any issue which needs at least to be addressed.*
- 2. **the duties arise before the decision or proposal is made, and not after and are ongoing.** They require **advance** consideration by the policy decision maker with conscientiousness, rigour and an open mind. The duty is similar to an open consultation process.*
- 3. **the decision maker must be aware of the needs of the duty.***
- 4. **the impact of the proposal or decision must be properly understood first.** The amount of regard due will depend on the individual circumstances of each case. The greater the potential impact, the greater the regard.*
- 5. **Get your facts straight first!** There will be no due regard at all if the decision maker or those advising it make a fundamental error of fact (e.g. because of failing to properly inform yourself about the impact of a particular decision).*
- 6. What does 'due regard' entail?
  - a. **Collection and consideration of data and information;***
  - b. **ensuring data is sufficient to assess the decision/any potential discrimination/ensure equality of opportunity;***
  - c. **proper appreciation of the extent, nature and duration of the proposal or decision.****
- 7. **Responsibility** for discharging can't be delegated or sub-contracted (although an equality impact assessment ("EIA") can be undertaken by officers, decision makers must be sufficiently aware of the outcome).*
- 8. **Document the process** of having due regard! Keep records and make it transparent! If in any doubt carry out an equality impact assessment ("EIA"), to test whether a policy will impact differentially or not. Evidentially an EIA will be the best way of defending a legal challenge. See hyperlink for the questions you should consider  
<http://occweb/files/seealsodocs/93561/Equalities%20->*

1. Which group (s) of people has been identified as being disadvantaged by your proposals? What are the equality impacts?

There are no anticipated adverse effects for groups with protected characteristics. This is because the policies flow from statutory obligations and enshrine the consistent and lawful treatment of staff, e.g. female (Maternity Policy) employees throughout pregnancy, the maternity period and return (s) to work. However:

Those who are agency workers, or consultants or self-employed contractors can't benefit from these policies, as they're not employees. They can however apply for leave through their respective organisations or employers.

**Age** – the requirement for 26 weeks' continuous service is a universal statutory qualifying condition for the statutory rights. It has an adverse impact on probationers and new starters who have less than 26 weeks. However, because the Council's recruitment policy is to recruit on merit, regardless of background, this is unlikely to adversely affect any protected characteristic, including younger or older applicants.

No detrimental impact is envisaged by the removal of the fixed term policy because the principles are enshrined in the Council's standard contract and other policies such as the organisational change policy.

2. In brief, what changes are you planning to make to your current or proposed new or changed policy, strategy, procedure, project or service to minimise or eliminate the adverse equality impacts?

Please provide further details of the proposed actions, timetable for making the changes and the person(s) responsible for making the changes on the resultant action plan

The Flexible Working Policy will be updated to incorporate statutory changes. The policy has a slightly different focus and may sometimes be triggered by the other family friendly policies. Its primary aim is that it will provide equality of opportunity in employment and work practices to support work-life balance. Closely associated objectives are the positive influences on raising staff morale, reducing absenteeism and improving the recruitment and retention of staff, especially those with protected characteristics. The policy explicitly encourages managers to facilitate requests unless they cannot be accommodated for business or operational reasons.



The Family Friendly policy suite and the Flexible Working policy apply to full and part-time employees regardless of the number of hours worked. The only universal qualifying condition is the minimum statutory condition of employees having achieved 26 weeks' continuous service.

The Council also proposes to remove its current separate policies on Fixed-Term Contracts of Employment and Job Share on the basis that those areas will be comprehensively covered by other recruitment and retention policies.

Specific advice and guidance is available via the government website: [www.direct.gov.uk](http://www.direct.gov.uk) (see Work and Families section)

3. Please provide details of whom you will consult on the proposed changes and if you do not plan to consult, please provide the rationale behind that decision.

Please note that you are required to involve disabled people in decisions that impact on them

The Councils' Law & Governance team, Unite and Unison leads, OD Learning & Performance Consultant and Equalities & Diversity Business Partner were invited to comment on the proposed set of policies and reach agreement on the changes. At this point the policies will go before CEB for approval in February 2012.

The Parental Leave Procedure has been a statutory entitlement for a significant period but has now been formalised in a new policy. It impacts positively on staff with disabilities in line with the Equality Act 2010. The policy confirms that the entitlement for parental leave for staff for the purpose of caring for a disabled child is a maximum of 18 weeks (5 weeks more than standard parental leave). See Section 3.2. In addition, Section 5.3(a) of the Flexible Working Policy recognises that there can be positive discrimination in favour of parents caring for children with a disability and increases the eligibility to cover children under 18.

Disabled people have been involved by [ inviting Lynne Hooper, the Council's access officer, for suggestions], and involving the trade unions in the proposals by consulting them.

4. Can the adverse impacts you identified during the initial screening be justified without making any adjustments to the existing or new policy, strategy, procedure, project or service?

Please set out the basis on which you justify making no adjustments

There are no adverse impacts envisaged upon those with protected characteristics. For those agency workers who may not benefit from the policies, they are considered to be protected under commensurate legislation affording them statutory protection as employees of their agencies or their own companies.

It is considered that a negligible number of workers will lose out by being agencies employees or because of the 26 week qualifying criterion. Those that do may request equivalent rights directly through their employer, or by waiting 6 months.

5. You are legally required to monitor and review the proposed changes after implementation to check they work as planned and to screen for unexpected equality impacts.

Please provide details of how you will monitor/evaluate or review your proposals and when the review will take place

Policies will be subject to regular reviews of any changes made to legislation/directives by central government. Any challenges to the policy that result in gaps or irregularities being found will be amended following further review, agreement between the employer and the local trade unions, and subsequent sign off from CEB (if required).

All managers will receive training in these areas via policy bite briefings from February 2012 or through regular meetings with respective service area Business Partners.

Lead officer responsible for signing off the EqIA:

Role:

Date:

Note, please consider & include the following areas:

- Summary of the impacts of any individual policies
- Specific impact tests (e.g. statutory equality duties,)
- Post implementation review plan (consider the basis for the review, objectives and how these will be measured, impacts and outcomes including the “unknown”)
- Potential data sources

Key

RED RISK

CLOSED RISK

Risk ID	Risk						Corporate Objective	Gross Risk		Residual Risk		Current Risk		Owner	Date Risk Reviewed	Proximity of Risk (Projects/ Contracts Only)
Category-000-Service Area Code	Risk Title	Opportunity/Threat	Risk Description	Risk Cause	Consequence	Date raised	1 to 6	I	P	I	P	I	P			
SRR-007-PE	Employment Policy and Procedures	T	Failure to provide a suite of policies that fit for purposes of improving performance and managing risk	Managers not equipped with a revised policy and procedure	Effective employment policies not implemented, consistently and fairly applied	1.1.2010	6	3	3	2	2	3	2	Simon Howick	11.6.2010	

## Action Plans

Key

CLOSED ACTION/Risk

**ACTIONS MUST BE 'SMART'**

**Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Realistic and Time bound**

Risk ID	Risk Title	Action Owner	Accept, Contingency, Transfer, Reduce or Avoid	Details of Action	Key Milestones	Milestone Delivery Date	%Action Complete	Date Reviewed
SRR-007-PE	Employment Policy and Procedures	Simon Howick	R	Develop and agree policy through internal consultation process to produce final policy documents for approval by Council. To provide appropriate guidance and training to managers and employees on new policies and procedures.	Approval of family leave policies by CEB	8.2.12	95%	10.1.12

100

**Risk ID Categories**

CRR-000	Corporate Risk Register
SRR-000	Service Risk Register
CEB-000	CEB reports
PRR-000	Project/Programme Risk Register
PCRR-000	Planning Corporate Risk Register
PSRR-000	Planning Service Risk Register

**Service Area Codes**

PCC	Policy, Culture & Communication	CS	Customer Services
CD	City Development	FI	Finance
CHCD	Community Housing & Community Development	BT	Business Transformation
CA	Corporate Assets	PS	Procurement & Shared Services
OCH	Oxford City Homes	CP	Corporate Performance
CW	City Works	LG	Law and Governance
ED	Environmental Development	CRP	Corporate Secretariat
CL	City Leisure	PE	People & Equalities

**Corporate Objective Key**

- 1: More Housing Better Housing for all
- 2: Stronger & more inclusive communities
- 3: Improve the local environment, economy & quality of life
- 4: Reduce anti-social behaviour
- 5: Tackle climate change & promote environmental resource management
- 6: Transform OCC by improving value for money and Service performance

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## Action Plans

Key

CLOSED ACTION/Risk

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**Risk ID Categories**

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**Corporate Objective Key**

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# EXTRACT FROM THE MINUTES

## CITY EXECUTIVE BOARD

Wednesday 8 February 2012

### 70. EMPLOYMENT POLICIES

The Head of People and Equalities submitted a report (previously circulated, now appended) presenting, for approval and adoption, five new employment policies and procedures and seeking the removal of two policies.

#### Resolved to:-

- (1) Approve the following policies, agreed with Trade Unions and appended to the report with immediate effect:-

- Maternity Policy
- Adoption Policy
- Paternity Policy
- Parental Leave Procedure
- Flexible Working Policy

- (2) Remove the Fixed Term Contract Policy and Procedure and Job Share Policy because their contents were now included in other policies; and
- (3) Authorise the Head of People and Equalities to implement the approved policies and procedures and make changes to the policies and procedures if required to put right clerical mistakes or to reflect changes in the law.

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**To: City Executive Board**

**Date: 4<sup>th</sup> April 2012**

**Report of: Head of Housing and Communities**

**Title of Report: HOUSING STRATEGY AND ACTION PLAN 2012-15**

## **Summary and Recommendations**

**Purpose of report:** To consider consultation responses relating to the draft Housing Strategy 2012 to 2015 and associated Action Plan. To approve the Housing Strategy Action Plan and recommend the Housing Strategy to Council

**Key decision?** No

**Executive lead member:** Cllr Joe McManners

**Policy Framework:** Corporate Plan, Asset Management Plan, Regeneration Framework, Core Strategy.

**Recommendation(s):**

- i) That the Housing Strategy Action Plan 2012 to 2015 be approved and
- ii) That the Housing Strategy 2012-15 be recommended to Council

**Appendices to report:**

1. Results of consultation exercise December 2011 – February 2012
2. Housing Strategy 2012 to 2015.
3. Housing Strategy Action Plan 2012 to 2015
4. Risk Register
5. Equality Impact Assessment

**Background**

- 1) The City Executive Board (CEB) approved a Draft Housing Strategy, including an Action Plan, for consultation in December 2011

- 2) A Consultation Exercise took place between December 2011 and February 2012. A wide range of opinions were expressed on a variety of housing issues. There was a great level of debate about the high levels of need if not housing crisis in Oxford, priority being given to local people and many views on how and if new housing should be brought forward. Other opinions included conflicting views on regulation within the private rented sector (HMOs) and student accommodation. Much comment was made about our ability to deliver the level of housing needed to meet needs together with the necessity to consider new and innovative ways to bring forward new housing. An analysis of comments can be found within Appendix 1
- 3) The Draft Housing Strategy and Action Plan have been revised to take account of consultation responses. Details are set out in the introduction to each Strategic Objective in the Action Plan but include new council building, more actions on investigating new methods of bringing forward new affordable housing and reviewing new policy being brought forward as a consequence of Localism Act. Statistics and detail on new legislation and policy direction have been updated where needed.
- 4) The most important part of the final Housing Strategy is a forward looking Action Plan that sets out our future plans and how we will deliver improvements and projects. The original Action Plan has been further developed taking into account consultation responses and updated so it is fully up to date when adopted. .
- 5) The draft Housing Strategy 2012 to 2015 is attached as Appendix 2. The associated draft Housing Strategy Action Plan 2012-2015 is attached as Appendix 3.

#### **Level of risk**

- 6) a risk register is attached as appendix 4. It should be noted that risks associated with specific projects and work programmes identified in the action plan are identified and addressed in the relevant project documentation for those projects / programmes.

#### **Environmental Impact -**

- 7) The Housing Strategy 2012 to 2015 does not have any explicit environmental impacts in itself. Specific projects identified in the Housing Strategy Action Plan will have environmental impacts, specifically the provision of additional housing to meet housing needs. These environmental impacts associated with specific projects and work programmes identified in the action plan are identified and addressed in the relevant project documentation for those projects / programmes.

## **Equality Impact Assessment**

- 8) A EIA is attached as appendix 5. The Housing Strategy and Action Plan are very specifically targeted at meeting the housing needs of the most vulnerable people in Oxford and as such no adverse impacts on any equalities group are expected as a result of this strategy.

## **Financial implications**

- 9) Each element within the Action Plan references the financial implications. There are a number of strategic objective actions that have significant financial implications for the council. These projects are:
- a) Delivery of new housing and land at Barton.
  - b) Delivery of affordable housing on council owned land with or without HCA grant.
  - c) Implementing Self-Financing of the Housing Revenue Account and supporting improvements within the Councils housing stock

Detail on financial impacts for these actions and projects is identified in the relevant council reports for these projects and are acknowledged in the Housing Strategy Action Plan.

## **Legal Implications**

- 10) The Local Government Act 2003 requires local housing authorities to have in place a Housing Strategy for the district.

Meeting the Council's statutory housing obligations is reflected in the objectives of the housing strategy: statutory homelessness duty; provision of housing advice and landlord responsibilities.

## **Process**

- 11) It is intended that the Housing Strategy will be considered by Council in April 2012.

12) Following Council approval, the Housing Strategy and Action Plan 2012-15 will be promoted – primarily via the Council's website. The Action Plan will be regularly monitored. The Executive Director for Housing and Regeneration will be the monitoring officer for the Strategy and Action Plan. A refresh of the Action Plan will take place in 2013 in light of both progress by this date and changing circumstances

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

Name: Sheila Farley

Job title: Strategy & Enabling Manager

Service Area / Department; Housing & Communities

Tel: 01865 252449 e-mail:

**List of background papers: None**

**Version number: 2**



## **Draft Housing Strategy Feedback Consultation Report.**

We invited members of the public to comment on the Draft Housing Strategy 2012 2015 via e consult the Oxford City Council on line consultation tool. Invitations to join the consultation were automatically sent to those who had registered an interest in housing and related issues in their profiles. Further invitations to join the consultation were sent by post and email to Local Strategic Partner members, Tenant and Resident Associations, Landlord Forum members, Registered Providers and Oxford City Council staff. Deadline for responses was 13 February 2012.

There were 20 responses to the online consultation the analysis of which can be seen below

- 65% of respondents found the Draft Housing Strategy easy or very easy to understand
- 55 % of respondents agreed with the priorities which had been set for the DHS
- 70% of respondents said there were things we had missed out which were important to housing in Oxford.
- 35% of respondents agreed or strongly agreed that the DHS met the challenges for housing in Oxford over the next 3 years.
- 55% disagreed that we were meeting the challenge of housing in Oxford.

We also asked respondents to answer the following questions in more detail. A number of common themes were apparent.

**What, if anything in your opinion should we give greater priority to in the housing strategy?**

### **Building, Planning and Growth**

[“More affordable/social housing”](#)

“Building new council housing rather than focusing on private landlord rental. The council need to take ownership of the social housing not by farming it out to others.”

[“Include the concept that increased commercial development is directly linked to housing shortage since it attracts incoming workers. Disallow non-residential development in order to reduce the number of incoming workers who add to the demand for housing. This is very obvious in](#)

Headington where over-development of the University and health sector has given just this result - along with increased traffic and loss of green space.”

“Small clusters of around 200-250 homes all around the city “

“staying within the city boundary”

“Very high priority to 3 and 4 bedroom homes for rental.“

### **Private Sector and Legislation**

“availability of rented accommodation for the young and disadvantaged including students and business people seeking to work in the county. Removal of restrictive regulations on HMOs over and above that required by legislation. Remove the requirement for planning permission to use property as a non-licensable HMO as defined by legislation”

“The quality of HMOs - although we may need time for accreditation scheme to have effect.”

### **Empty Homes**

“Empty homes initiative - to make better use of what is already built without the need to gobble up more land with new build.”

“Getting empty homes available to be lived in, reducing the need for new builds”

### **Environment and Conservation**

Give greater protection to green space both in and around Oxford.  
Pay attention to the hydrological effects of development

“1)

Strong and Active Communities

2)

A Vibrant and Sustainable economy “ - ??

### **Other**

“Local people (ie. born in Oxford) should have housing priority.”

“The objectives in the draft housing strategy do not adequately address most of the strategic objectives set out at the beginning of the document. The strategy focuses on the social rented sector, which is an important but small part of housing in Oxford. The Council's housing strategy needs to go beyond the social rented sector. In particular it needs to include, actively promote and

normalise cohousing and in doing this would stand more chance of meeting many more of the city's strategic objectives.”

“Families living in temporary private, shared accommodation. “

“Consultation”

**What housing issues in Oxford, if any, do you think should be added to the draft Housing Strategy 2012-2015?**

### **Building, Planning and Growth**

“Oxford has a massive affordability housing crisis with a great deal of sub-standard housing. There is huge housing need identified in the evidence base and severe affordability problems across all tenures. We need bolder ideas, experimentation and innovation in the housing sector, not just for the homeless and social rented sector, but for key workers, professionals, and families on low to medium incomes. Co housing ([www.cohousing.org.uk](http://www.cohousing.org.uk)) is an innovative approach to housing that can provide a supportive community environment for all tenures and help to free up much-needed social housing.”

“Oxford is a small city and i believe the boundary should be pushed to find land around the city on which to build. Unless you build up you build out. Oxford's infrastructure cannot be improved sufficiently to make it sustainable for the long term.”

“Specifically disallow development which imports staff from other cities eg London, as on the Churchill site. Residents were actually told it would 'attract people from all over the world'.  
Re-consider the underlying assumption that Oxford must increase in size”

“I feel the council should be encouraging developers to build homes for rental to the young professional market. Currently, the rental market is very insecure - it seems to be made up of mostly individual private landlords who can terminate contracts with one month's notice. I have friends who have had to move because their landlady has split up with their boyfriend and needs to move back home. Others have to move because the landlord decides to sell. We need stable rental options as people can't afford to buy. As it is, individuals buy new-build flats and then rent them out, able to terminate the rental agreement at any point. There should be some set aside for rental and managed professionally. “

“Small clusters of around 200-250 homes all around the city “

### **Private Sector and Legislation**

“A sound appreciation of how the real world works. The strategy will put off investment in the private rented sector which is the only sector that is likely to have funds available to make a difference to the supply and quality of housing available for the homeless.”

“Inspect all HMOs and enforce regulations”

### **Student Housing**

“Reduce the number of students occupying residential accommodation to the 3,000 agreed with the Universities. The actual number is far higher. A reduction in student numbers would solve this.”

“Although a separate issue I don't think a Housing Strategy can be formed without mentioning purpose built student accommodation and the effect this could have on freeing up houses in the city “

“I feel that due to high tuition fees there should be a freeze on building student accommodation”

“Plans to limit number of HMOs in those areas of the city with large student populations”

### **Empty Homes**

“Prioritise the Empty Homes initiative. “

### **Environment and Conservation**

“Consequences of running out of any where to build any more houses. Green spaces and important wildlife sites must be preserved and protected within the city for the wildlife and the health and well being of the people living nearby. This is a big challenge which does not seem to be being adequately planned for. There will come a point when Oxford is 'full' and it seems not far off. What then?”

“Conservation of the city's character and a long-term view. 2012-2015 is short term and the pressure to meet short-term targets (particularly in the current economic climate) will not necessarily deliver long-term value. Has the city council delivered long-term value over the last 15 years when for the majority of that time, the economic climate was good?”

“The fact that green space IS very important.  
NO-ONE wants an ever spreading concrete jungle, thank you”

### **Other**

“Patients who are physically disabled or who have limited time left have no home to go to or cannot return home. More joined up working when patients admitted so more time to find more suitable accommodation. Possibly convert a sheltered block as interim accommodation, either to move to permanent or remain there until they die. Funding - bed blocking serious problem, adapting properties expensive therefore partnership between Oxford City and County

Councils and PCT. Better quality of life and more efficient with time and resource. “

“There is no mention of a strategy to deal with persons given social housing who then abuse that privilege. You should have a strong policy of removing social housing from those who indulge in anti social behaviour when living in it. “

“Capturing greater media attention - in national as well as local media - on the housing crisis in Oxford that the strategy seeks to address. That the housing crisis in Oxford also constitutes a social crisis - exacerbating poverty, social exclusion, and de facto class and wealth segregation - needs to be made clear to the public. It must be made clear to central government that a nationally coherent housing strategy is required - and has been lacking many, many years.”

“single people still living with parent due to unaffordability “

### **Further comments made**

#### **Building, Planning and Growth**

“There is patently not enough housing being provided by the council to help people on the waiting list. “

“Stop over-development as in Headington, swamped in recent years by the NHS and 2 universities. This has directly led to increased pressure on housing.

Ensure Council housing goes to Oxford 'locals' rather than incomers.

Ensure new build really does include (3.6.3 Point 4 in your document) improved infrastructure (none provided in Headington to my knowledge).

Section 106 payments are a token gesture and do not address the problems caused by the development in question. They are often used simply to implement a pre-existing Council policy eg on parking. Additional allotments, for example, are needed.

Re-open so-called 'disused' allotment sites to provide food-growing opportunities for the increasing population.

Accept the concept that Oxford is BIG ENOUGH and increased growth is detrimental, not advantageous to its citizens.” (see comment on Student housing below)

“The city centre and within the ring road is incredibly densely populated. Any further housing on infill sites is just going to place impossible burdens on infrastructure, parking, access to open and green spaces, etc. Please keep pushing for building on the land near Grenoble Road so we can have properly planned, large new housing area with bus services, churches, shops, schools, play areas, green spaces, etc. “

“I feel the number of houses planned to be built is too small in view of the large waiting list for social housing “

“Need to look at some brown field sites in the North Oxford area - which don't seem to feature in this plan - for new housing provision.”

“The focus is on buildings rather than community. Developing a sense of shared community, stewardship of the city and working for each other would be a positive approach that does not necessarily require huge resources. Building what has the potential to be a sink estate, cut off from the rest of the city by the ring road, is a huge gamble with resources and people's lives. Are communities such as Barton and Blackbird Leys considered to be model examples of what can be achieved and considered successes as judged by independent socio-economic measures? “

“I'm not convinced that the history of housing provision in the city over the last few decades fills one with confidence.”

### **Private Sector and Legislation**

“Over regulation will mean goals not achievable “

### **Student Housing**

“Need to acknowledge different patterns of home ownership. Reduce spread of student housing (even dedicated accommodation uses valuable space that could be used for social housing). “

“Student numbers in residential accommodation should be reduced to the agreed 3,000”

“By requiring both of Oxford's universities to have no more than 3,000 students each in private accommodation, the City Council will help to prevent a disproportionate amount of the city's private rented accommodation being made unavailable to other residents, including, importantly, **key workers on low incomes**. However, this requirement alone will not be sufficient to prevent an imbalance in communities, if the universities are allowed to expand unchecked provided each keeps within the 3,000 limit. **Already, according to the Key Facts statistics referred to (above), students account for 26% of the city's population. Although the universities offer benefits for the local economy, an unchecked growth in student numbers will lead to a weakening of the influence that long-term, Council-Tax-paying, residents have on their living environment.**”

### **Empty Homes**

“Increase resources for the Empty Homes initiative (in line with the point above ‘Stop over development in Headington’ under Building, Planning and Growth).”

## **Environment and Conservation**

“Given that a Core Strategy aim is to 'Help protect people and their property from flooding', an important target would be to make sure the infrastructure can cope or is upgraded before building any houses. This is particularly important as regards sewer capacity, to avoid sewage up welling over the city and flooding. In fact hydrological issues resulting from development need a much higher importance than has previously been given, in light of climate change predictions.”

“ ..... we believe the City Council – as well as the wider planning community - should give serious consideration to how much further development, of any kind, Oxford can take without giving rise to considerable problems with the adequate provision of services and a noticeable degradation in the quality of life of its inhabitants.”

## **Other**

“Housing is integral to many strategic issues and unless the housing strategy takes into account its broader context it will continue to fail not just the most vulnerable but also the city as a whole. Oxford cannot claim to be World Class when it has no examples of the kind of housing which will positively contribute to a wide range of strategic objectives and meet the government's definition of sustainable development (ref National Policy Planning Framework). “

“I think problems are highlighted but the 'solutions' often don't address the root cause of the issue. I think the strategy is a marked improvement though. “

“Too much clutter in the document, it should focus on housing and not on other council priorities as this creates confusion. Perhaps they should have been grouped in a section at the end.”

“I agree that tackling homelessness, especially rough sleeping should be the top priority. There should be a way for people and companies to contribute to hostel rooms for rough sleepers rather than people having to depend on begging. “

“At times it feels that decisions are made without real consultation.”

“There is no mention of a strategy to deal with persons who are given social housing who then go on to abuse this privilege. You should have a strong policy of removing social housing from those who engage in anti social behaviour when living in it.”

## Two further detailed responses were received

1. A response analysing key housing and wider issues and demonstrating the merits of co-housing opportunities to meet many objectives and aims
2. A response highlighting issues in relation to pressures on land in Oxford, impact of student accommodation, physical and community sustainability of any further development

In addition, a range of partners were invited to a meeting to discuss the draft Housing Strategy. Matters raised and discussed are set out below as brief bullet points – to be taken into account for new Housing and other Strategies.

### Affordable housing and private rented sector

- Supported housing and lack of move on accommodation eg private rented housing
- What can we offer private rented sector to encourage housing those in need
- Direct payment of Housing and Universal Benefit – Oxford CC OCHA taking part in Demonstration Project from June 2012 – will be rolled out nationally in 2013
- Impact of supported housing review on rent levels
- Challenges ahead – can focus on direction of travel but targets/current performance harder to attain
- Those providers delivering new homes funded by HCA have less grant, are obliged to offer Affordable Homes at up to 80% rent on new homes and a proportion of re lets and there is potential for disposals
- Need to monitor impact of enhanced RTB
- Potential enhanced role of the council as a developer/provider of new homes
- Issues of students living in the community, demand for Oxford as a University continues to be high – bucking national trends
- Impact of single room rent – more HMOs? Need to be able to access smaller private rented properties – which landlords etc
- HMO market – some getting out but others coming into market. Potentially more lucrative (capital gain) compared to a large family home.

### Homelessness

- Decisions will be taken on discharge of duty in private sector and offers of accommodation outside the area – New guidance anticipated in the summer
- Consultation on allocations review
- 80% of people on Housing Register in Band 5 – low priority and unlikely to be offered accommodation - need to focus on those in most need



- Issues with keeping families together – family unable to continue to house largest cause of homelessness presentations
- Need to debate policy on children sharing bedrooms
- Consider prioritisation for housing based on employment and community contribution
- No 2<sup>nd</sup> Night Out – faster pathways, could this de-prioritise sofa surfers and use on non accommodation based support
- Half a million pound reduction in homelessness services SP funding – Oxford largest reduction
- Need to retain Homelessness Prevention Funds and use of Discretionary Housing Payments
- Children’s services – impact of non-statutory homelessness opportunity for joint provision
- More information on homelessness analysis
- Role of Tenancy Relations Officer and illegal eviction – could be potential for more rises with high demands and diminished household income eg single room rent
- Access to external funding but some bids not taken forward eg social inclusion – need to seek further opportunities
- A Tenant Ready Scheme could be a low cost high impact project

### **Housing Support**

- Need to consider consultation outcomes on supported rents as well as furnished properties – big effect locally - potentially both SP and HB cuts
- Need to consider wider funding streams eg Health, DAAT

### **Improve housing conditions**

- Limited ability for OCC to fund – specifically essential repairs, targeted flexible loans, top up DFGs
- Increasing action to inspect HMOs – started Jan 2011 and phase 2 launched Jan 2012. 800 applications. About 20% of these were not previously known. Only a small number have been licensed without any extra works being required.
- Prosecution action is being taken and one house has been taken over
- Hopeful that impact will be more planned preventions and fewer complaints needing reactive action

Following the event one partner who could not attend asked for the following to be noted:

- Move on Planning
- Consider the needs of offenders
- Review inter-agency protocols and working on dealing with potentially dangerous clients

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**Oxford City Council  
DRAFT Housing Strategy 2012 – 2015.**

**Meeting Housing Needs**

DRAFT

## Contents

1. Executive Summary
2. Context - Strategic Framework
3. The past - review of the Housing Strategy 2008 – 2011
4. Identifying Housing Need in Oxford – Evidence Base
5. The future – legislative and policy context

Our future plans are detailed in the Housing Strategy Action Plan – 2012-15

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## **1 Executive Summary**

### **Housing in Oxford**

Oxford remains one of the least affordable areas of the country for buying housing. House prices have remained at historical highs in Oxford despite a national trend for a slowdown in the market.

There are continued problems of affordability of housing for many Oxford residents

Demand for housing in Oxford continues to grow, with over 6,000 households on the Housing Register for affordable housing. There are low levels of owner occupied housing and a high levels of property rented from private landlords compared to the national picture.. Demand is high for private rented property and rents are increasing. A large population of students places additional pressures on housing supply. According to the Cities Outlook 2012 report Oxford is the fourth fastest growing city in the UK. This will place increasing burdens on the restricted supply of affordable and private sector housing in the City

The recession and continuing economic slow-down are continuing to make their impact felt on housing in Oxford. There has been a marked drop in the level of new housing built in the City to just 200 in 2010/11. The amount of new affordable housing built has decreased as a consequence just 148 in 2010/11. It has been estimated that just under 2,000 new affordable homes are needed every year in Oxford.

Oxford City Council is the strategic housing authority for the City and, with over 7,500 homes, a major landlord

Levels of homelessness fell between 2004 and 2008 but there are worrying signs now as the effects of the recession and overall environment begin to become apparent.

There are vulnerable households who have specific needs for whom specialist housing and/or support is necessary to enable people to attain and retain a settled home.

Housing conditions within the council's own homes continue to improve and new financing arrangements will allow further investment and improvements to be made. The Council uses its powers to improve the quality of both housing conditions and management in the private rented sector.

As a service provider accountable to the public, the Council has a responsibility to ensure housing services are high quality, cost effective and efficient.

There are considerable challenges for the Council in tackling the ongoing housing crisis, This Strategy identifies our local issues and sets out actions to help address them

*More information on housing in Oxford can be found in Section 4*

## **Factors influencing the Housing Strategy**

A range of factors come into play in influencing housing policy and these are reviewed in this strategy. In summary the main influences driving this housing strategy are:

- Affordability of housing in all tenures (owner occupied, private rented and social rented):
  - House prices stagnant and market rents increasing.
  - Household incomes reducing.
- Supply of housing across all tenures and continuing restriction on this supply:
  - Availability of suitable land to build on;
  - State of the house building industry;
  - Condition of the mortgage lending sector;
  - Public confidence in the market.
- Demand for housing across all tenures:
  - Growing demand for social rented homes;
  - Increased demand for rented housing from different groups in society.
  - Increases in households at risk of homelessness.
- Economic conditions:
  - Employment markets particularly for younger and lower skilled people;
  - Financial services and construction.
- Government policy and legislation:
  - Localism Act 2011 including changes to tenure types, rent levels, access to housing and changes to social housing regulation.
  - Homelessness prevention legislation.
  - Welfare reform including the introduction of Universal Credit, changes to housing benefit, Local Housing Allowance and Council tax benefit

*More information on legislative and policy changes is included in section56*

## **The journey ahead 2012-15**

Much has been achieved since the last Housing Strategy to address our aims. However, with continuing demands and challenging circumstances, much more remains to be done

The Council will use the period of this Housing Strategy to respond to these challenges in order to continue to deliver on its corporate priority of meeting housing needs through the following objectives:

- 1) More affordable housing in the City to meet housing needs
- 2) Prevent homelessness
- 3) Address the housing needs of vulnerable people and communities
- 4) Improve housing conditions
- 5) Improve quality, cost effectiveness and efficiency of housing services

In developing this Strategy we consulted with public, partners and local stakeholders to listen to their views and concerns. This has helped us in developing a detailed Action Plan to support the Housing Strategy and respond to local needs.

### **By 2015 our Housing Strategy Outcomes will include:**

#### **More affordable housing in the City**

- Delivery programme and agreements in place to deliver 800 homes in Barton
- 372 new affordable homes
- New physical regeneration projects delivered in Blackbird Leys – creating new housing and jobs
- New housing developments and a post 2015 affordable housing programme brought forward
- New delivery models for affordable housing evaluated and introduced where feasible
- New council house building policy and programme
- Empty property brought back into use as affordable housing
- Robust planning policy to support new affordable housing – New Sites Plan, Local Investment Plan, New Affordable Housing Policy
- Housing opportunities for low to mid income households, key workers and first time buyers explored and introduced where feasible
- Up to date housing needs and market information
- Tenancy Strategy adopted

#### **Homelessness Prevented**

- Improvements in quality, supply and reduced use of temporary accommodation
- Continued challenge and improvements to the way homelessness services are delivered
- No Second Night Out for rough sleepers
- Effective debt and advice services maximised
- Annual Landlord Forum meetings
- Landlord/Lettings Agency Surveys undertaken
- Current and prospective private tenants surveys undertaken
- Consideration given to Tenant Ready schemes and a private tenants forum
- Homelessness Policy Review

- Revised Allocations Policy adopted and implemented
- New Homelessness Strategy and Action Plan

### **Needs of Vulnerable People and Communities addressed**

- Supporting People Finance Strategy delivered
- Re-commissioned Supporting People funded services
- Housing Strategies for specific groups prepared – young people, BME community, older people and families in difficulty
- Re-modelled hostel accommodation that provides sufficient bedspaces to meet needs and meaningful activity for clients
- Improved pathways through supported accommodation
- Effective hospital; discharge mechanisms in place

### **Improved housing conditions**

- Every HMO in the City inspected and accredited
- Improvements made in the quality of individual private rented properties
- Home Improvement Loans made available to improve standards in private housing
- 10 long term empty homes returned to use annually
- New Empty Homes Strategy adopted
- Fit for Purpose information on private sector housing
- Strategies exist to improve home energy and reduce carbon emissions and fuel poverty
- Retro-fitting strategy produced and implemented for council homes
- Zero carbon new Council homes
- Improved standards in council housing

### **Improved quality, cost effectiveness and efficiency of housing services**

#### **Council homes**

- Increased tenant satisfaction
- Increased tenant and leaseholder Involvement
- Local Offer agreed and implemented
- Co-regulation with tenants implemented
- Reduced under- occupation freeing up larger homes to families that need them
- Reduced over-crowding
- Tenancy Fraud tackled and minimised
- New style Tenants Newsletters, Tenant Handbooks, Repair Handbooks produced
- Landlord Operational Action Plan produced and delivered
- Improved rent and income collection
- Greater Value for Money is achieved in repairs service
- Direct payment of housing benefits to tenants project successfully completed



## **Strategic Housing**

- Housing Communications Plan delivers high quality and relevant housing information
- More effective temporary accommodation
- On line housing applications introduced
- Improved housing advice service
- Housing Strategy targets are reviewed and refreshed

*Our detailed Action Plan provides more information on meeting these objectives*

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## **2 Context - Strategic Framework**

2.1 Oxford City Council is both the strategic housing authority for the City and a major landlord providing over 7,500 homes. This Housing Strategy considers both of these roles and forms part of a network of complementary strategies and partnerships across the City of Oxford and the County. This Strategy replaces the Housing Strategy 2008 to 2011.

### **2.2 Oxford Strategic Partnership (<http://www.oxfordpartnership.org.uk/>) Oxford Sustainable Community Strategy 2008 – 2012:**

2.2.1 The housing strategy links into the sustainable community strategy for Oxford by, firstly, contributing directly to the first flagship priority of 'affordable housing', and secondly, by linking the provision of such housing to the overall delivery of a healthy, vibrant and equal city for all residents.

2.2.2 The aim of the community strategy is, 'A world class city for everyone'; with five flagship issues prioritised:

- 1) Affordable Housing
- 2) Health and Social Inclusion
- 3) Climate Change
- 4) Quality of the Public Realm for Residents and Visitors
- 5) Safer, Stronger, More Cohesive City.

### **2.3 Oxford City Council ([www.oxford.gov.uk](http://www.oxford.gov.uk)) Oxford Corporate Plan 2011 – 15:**

2.3.1 The Housing Strategy links into the Corporate Plan by contributing to the delivery of the key corporate priorities, principally 'Meeting Housing Needs' but also in supporting the economy through housing provision of current and future residents and workers and also, through ensuring communities have stable and safe places to live.

2.3.2 The aims of the corporate plan are 'Investing in Oxford's Future'; Corporate Priorities:

- 1) Vibrant, sustainable economy.
- 2) Meeting housing needs.
- 3) Strong, active communities.
- 4) Cleaner, greener Oxford.
- 5) An efficient, effective Council.

### **2.4 Medium Term Financial Strategy**

2.4.1 The Housing Strategy links to the MTFs through providing a focus on key front line housing services for some of the most vulnerable people and communities in the city.

2.4.2 The Council's financial strategy priorities are:

- 1) To safeguard front-line services as far as possible, and particularly those upon which the most vulnerable in our community rely;
- 2) To continue to improve our council's performance;
- 3) To develop a balanced four-year outline budget, based on realistic assumptions, rather than just planning year-by-year;
- 4) To minimise any job losses and work with staff through this difficult period;
- 5) To work with the voluntary sector and community groups, safeguarding funding in this area as far as possible.

## 2.5 Regeneration Framework for Oxford to 2026

2.5.1 Housing is a key component of regeneration and this strategy fully supports the aims and objectives of the Regeneration Framework. Housing is central to ensuring that people and communities are able to lead healthier lives, have access to employment opportunities (and employers access to potential employees) and improve the quality of life across the City and in particular neighbourhoods.

2.5.2 The regeneration objectives for Oxford are to:

- 1) reduce inequalities between citizens;
- 2) increase the supply of housing, particularly affordable housing;
- 3) create places where people wish to live;
- 4) increase skills and promote skills development;
- 5) provide sustainable jobs for all through economic growth in central Oxfordshire;
- 6) improve connectivity between employment, housing and those seeking employment.

## 2.6 Core Strategy

2.6.1 The Housing Strategy complements the Core Strategy for Oxford in setting strategic priorities for the delivery of housing to meet the specific needs of the most vulnerable people and communities in Oxford providing an appropriate framework for that process.

2.6.2 Key challenges of the Core Strategy are:

- 1) meeting development needs in the context of a shortage of land
- 2) protecting the built and natural environment
- 3) promoting social inclusion through regeneration
- 4) addressing climate change

2.6.3 The relevant Core Strategy Strategic Objectives are:

- 1) Maximise regeneration and the reuse of previously developed land and make full and efficient use of all land, having regard to the distinct character of each neighbourhood.
- 2) Provide the development required to meet Oxford's needs, ensuring an appropriate balance of housing and employment growth in the context of other competing land uses.
- 3) Help protect people and their property from flooding.
- 4) Ensure that all new development is supported by the appropriate infrastructure and community facilities.
- 5) Promote social inclusion and reduce inequalities in employment, healthcare and education.
- 6) Plan for an appropriate mix of housing tenures, types and sizes to meet existing needs and future population growth.
- 7) Strengthen and diversify the economy and provide a range of employment opportunities.

## 2.7 Asset Management Plan

2.7.1 The Asset Management Plan complements the Housing Strategy through linking the management of the Councils assets to the provision of additional housing to meet needs.

2.7.2 The objectives of the asset management plan are:

- 1) Supporting the economy of the city.
- 2) Creating stronger and more inclusive communities.
- 3) Improvement in the quality and quantity of housing generally and particularly affordable housing.
- 4) Financial prudence and improved value for money.
- 5) Support service delivery.
- 6) Increasing revenue and reducing expenditure.
- 7) Reducing the maintenance backlog.

## 2.8 Oxfordshire Local Investment Plan

(<http://www.oxford.gov.uk/Direct/OxfordshireLocalInvestmentPlan.pdf>)

2.8.1 The Local Investment Plan has four overall strategic objectives – to:

- 1) Deliver new housing, including affordable homes,
- 2) Support economic growth,
- 3) Achieve regeneration and tackle deprivation, and
- 4) Contribute to meeting strategic infrastructure needs.

The Local Investment Plan will be refreshed in 2012

## 2.9 Supporting People Partnership

([www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/supportingpeople](http://www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/supportingpeople))

2.9.1 The Objectives of the Supporting People Strategy 2011-16 are to:

- 1) Commission services that make best use of resources and funding available across the key partner agencies to deliver better outcomes for service users and carers.
- 2) Enable service users and carers to have more say about what services we commission and how they are delivered from start to finish.
- 3) Create and promote opportunities for self directed support.
- 4) Commission services that offer people a range of different support options and are able to adapt to changes in future requirements.
- 5) Invite and support innovation and best practice in service delivery.

## 2.10 Oxford's Sustainability Strategy 2011-2020

2.10.1 Oxford's Sustainability Strategy sets out how Oxford City Council will create a Low Carbon more Sustainable City principally delivering the Councils 'Cleaner Greener' objective. The strategy sets out the Councils material sustainability impacts and programmes and targets to address the following areas:

1. Climate Change and energy efficiency
2. Waste
3. Biodiversity
4. Air Quality
5. Land Quality

2.10.2 The Housing Strategy complements the Sustainability Strategy through setting out programmes which present the opportunity to influence the significant level of carbon emissions that domestic properties contribute to the City's carbon footprint. In particular this supports the aims of the Low Carbon Oxford initiative which seeks to reduce carbon emissions across the city by 40% against 2005/06 levels, domestic properties account for approximately one third of these emissions. Ensuring that carbon emissions as part of each of the strategies key objectives will ensure that the benefits of more energy efficient homes and city wide renewable energy sources are delivered directly to Oxford's residents.

2.10.3 The Housing Strategy will seek to enable the highest standard of environmental sustainability in new builds and developments and to ensure that opportunities for realising the benefits of fiscal measures.. In addition, the Strategy recognises the need to tackle fuel poverty..

### **3 Review of the Housing Strategy 2008 – 2011**

3.1 In 2008 Oxford City Council adopted a Housing Strategy for 2008 to 2011 to provide direction in the delivery of housing services across the city in order to meet the then corporate priority 'More Housing, Better Housing for All'.

3.2 Below is a review of that housing strategy action plan. Overall the Council considers the Housing Strategy 2008 – 2011 to have been successful given the high number of new affordable homes delivered; improvements in homelessness prevention; delivery of the decent homes standard and the introduction of new housing services including choice based lettings and additional HMO licensing.

#### **3.3 Strategic Objective 1: Provide more affordable housing to meet current and future needs in and around the City.**

##### **Objective met.**

- 1) 605 new affordable homes were built in Oxford between 2008/09 and 2010/11.
- 2) 58 new council homes were built, the first for over 20 years.
- 3) 27% of all new affordable homes are 3 bedroom or larger.
- 4) 76% of all new affordable homes provided were rented (the remainder shared ownership).

#### **3.4 Strategic Objective 2: Prevent and reduce homelessness;**

##### **Objective met**

- 1) Households in temporary accommodation reduced from 496 in March 2008 to 156 in March 2011.
- 2) Households accepted as homeless reduced from 196 in 2007/08 to 123 in 2010/11.
- 3) Independent housing advice service re-commissioned with Shelter
- 4) Places for Change funding secured which has resulted in the redevelopment of the Old Fire station redevelopment into a Crisis / Skylight centre due for completion during 2011.
- 5) Enhanced housing options services launched.
- 6) New homelessness survival guide and 'on your feet' worklessness guide published.
- 7) Tenancy sustainment support service developed.

However:

- 8) The number of people sleeping rough has increased from 13 in 2007/08 to 16 in 2010/11.

**3.5 Strategic Objective 3: Address the housing needs of vulnerable people**

**Objective partially met**

- 1) New supported housing services provided at Emmaus and Littlemore Baptist schemes.
- 2) Range of Supporting People funded services re-commissioned across the City giving improved levels of service to vulnerable client groups including; homeless hostels; floating support; women's refuges; young people and teenage parents and services for people with mental health and substance abuse issues.
- 3) Funding for Temporary Accommodation in-house support service retained for 2 further years (2010/11 – 11/12).

However:

- 4) The City Council lost all contracts to provide mobile warden and alarm response support to older people in Supporting People commissioning process in 2009/10. All staff and operations transferred to new providers in October 2010.

**3.6 Strategic Objective 4: Improve the quality of the existing housing stock across the City;**

**Objective met.**

- 1) Decent Homes Standard target for Council homes met.
- 2) A total of 490 HMO licences and 46 variations to licences had been issued out of the estimated total of mandatory licensable HMO's of 650. An application for additional HMO licensing across the city has been approved by CLG.
- 3) Landlord accreditation scheme launched.
- 4) Decommissioned sheltered schemes being demolished and replaced (e.g. Alice and Margaret House, Rose Hill) or redeveloped (e.g. Cardinal House).
- 5) Redevelopment of defective Orbit houses on Rose Hill is progressing and will be complete by end of 2011/12.

**3.7 Strategic Objective 5: Improve housing services, choice and quality of life on estates.**

**Objective met**

- 1) Tenant satisfaction with landlord service is high (2009 STATUS survey 82% satisfied against 80% in 2006).
- 2) 99% satisfaction with repairs service (April 2010).
- 3) 99% satisfaction with contact centre (April 2010).

- 4) A total of 707 tenants and leaseholders were involved in activities during 2009/10.
- 5) City-wide Choice Based Lettings (CBL) launched in 2008 and county-wide (excluding West Oxfordshire) in 2009.
- 6) Strategic Housing service awarded 2 stars (good service) with excellent prospects for improvement by Audit Commission in 2008.
- 7) Regeneration service awarded 2 stars (good service) with promising prospects for improvement by Audit Commission in 2009.

### 3.8 **Strategic Objective 6: Improve our understanding of housing needs to develop and implement housing strategy.**

#### Objective partially met

- 1) Oxfordshire Strategic Housing Market Assessment completed and is used to inform strategic housing policy.
- 2) Oxfordshire Local Investment Plan completed by Spatial Planning and Infrastructure Partnership (SPIP) Board in 2010.
- 3) Strategic Housing Delivery Group established in 2009 to lead on ensuring the Council's affordable housing priority is delivered in joined up fashion.
- 4) The strategic partnership produced an Affordable Housing select committee report and action plan.

However:

- 5) Demise of the Regional Spatial Strategy and associated housing targets adversely affected large development plans, in particular that on the land south of Grenoble Road.

### 3.9 **Strategic Objective 7: Ensure housing services offer value for money.**

#### Objective met

- 1) Property relet times were on average 20.8 days in 2010/11 against target of 26.5.
- 2) Council 2012 reorganisation underway to improve efficiency and quality of housing services.
- 3) 2009/10 was the best ever end of year result for rent collection and arrears:
- 4) Rent collected: £33,315,700 (£1,039,041 more than 08/09)
- 5) Total current rent arrears were reduced by £169,271 to £689,012 – a 20% reduction.
- 6) Total former rent arrears were reduced by £22,029 to £99,144 – an 18% reduction.
- 7) Improvements in IT systems leading to more efficient working:
- 8) CRM in landlord services;
- 9) Housing Advice Module in Housing Needs
- 10) Choice Based Lettings in Housing Needs.



- 11) Participation in benchmarking for housing services using 'Housemark' for landlord services and the Housing Quality Network for strategic housing services.
- 12) Significantly reduced use of Temporary Accommodation (now down to less than 160 households) has reduced expenditure to the Council.

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#### 4 Identifying Housing Need in Oxford – Evidence Base

- 4.1 The Council has access to a wide range of data sets that help us identify housing needs in the city. The key findings on housing needs in Oxford are identified in the data below.
- 4.2 The Council has also undertaken two previous studies to identify the need for affordable housing in the city going forward into the future. These studies were:
  - 4.3 The **Housing Requirements Study** in 2003/04, which consisted of a detailed questionnaire of approximately 2000 households on their current housing situation and their housing aspirations for themselves and family members.
  - 4.4 The **Oxfordshire Housing Market Assessment** in 2007. This study, conducted across the whole of Oxfordshire, looked at trends in housing markets in the county by analysing available property data (e.g. house prices, rents, council's homelessness statistics, etc) rather than asking households specific information.
  - 4.5 Both studies concluded that there was a very significant need for affordable housing in Oxford and that this need would increase annually going forward.
  - 4.6 The HRS estimated that for the next five years (from 2004) there was a shortfall of affordable housing in Oxford of around 1,700-1,800 affordable homes per year. The affordable housing requirement worked out at around 35 additional homes required per 1,000 households.
  - 4.7 The HMA projected demand for affordable housing forward to 2026 and has identified that countywide the current shortfall is currently around 2,200 homes per year, and that this will rise to 7,500 pa by 2026. Oxford City accounts for 83% to 89% of this need.
  - 4.8 The council will undertake a review of housing information and evidence base including needs and market data in order to ensure relevant, up to date information is available.

4.9 Summary of Existing Housing Need and Market Evidence Base:

4.10 Housing Market Data in Oxford.

4.11 House Prices

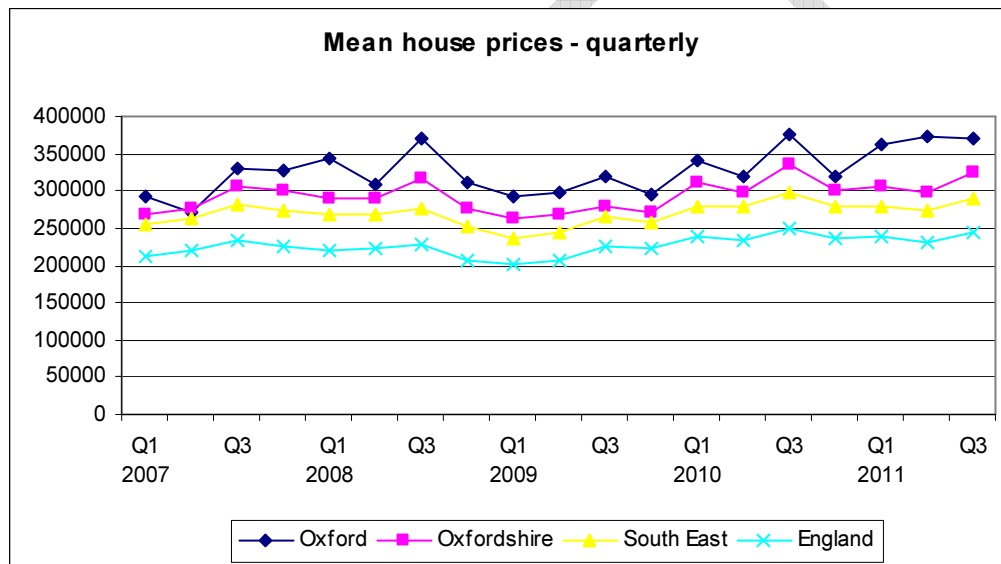
4.11.1 House prices in Oxford have reduced only slightly (-1.7%) with average house prices in Oxford in quarter 4 of 2010 at £321,634 compared to £327,114 in quarter 4 of 2007 (see table 1).

**Table 1: Average house prices in Oxford, 1997 to 2010.**

1997	2000	2003	2007	2008	2009	2010
£109,937	£179,301	£244,098	£327,114	£310,505	£294,262	£321,634

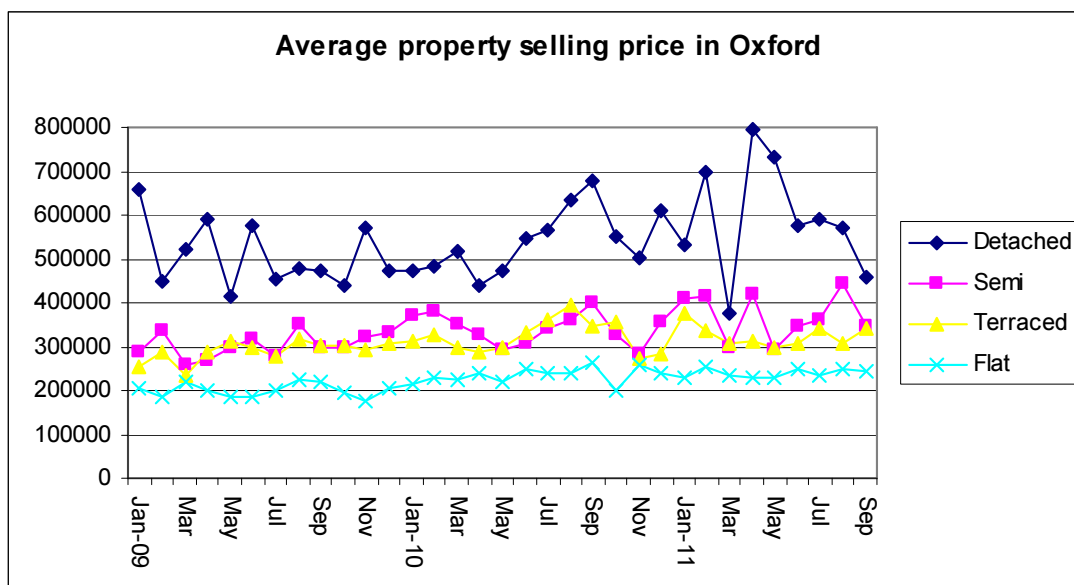
CLG, Q4 mean house prices based on Land Registry data

**Figure 1: Quarterly Mean House Prices 2007 – 2010.**



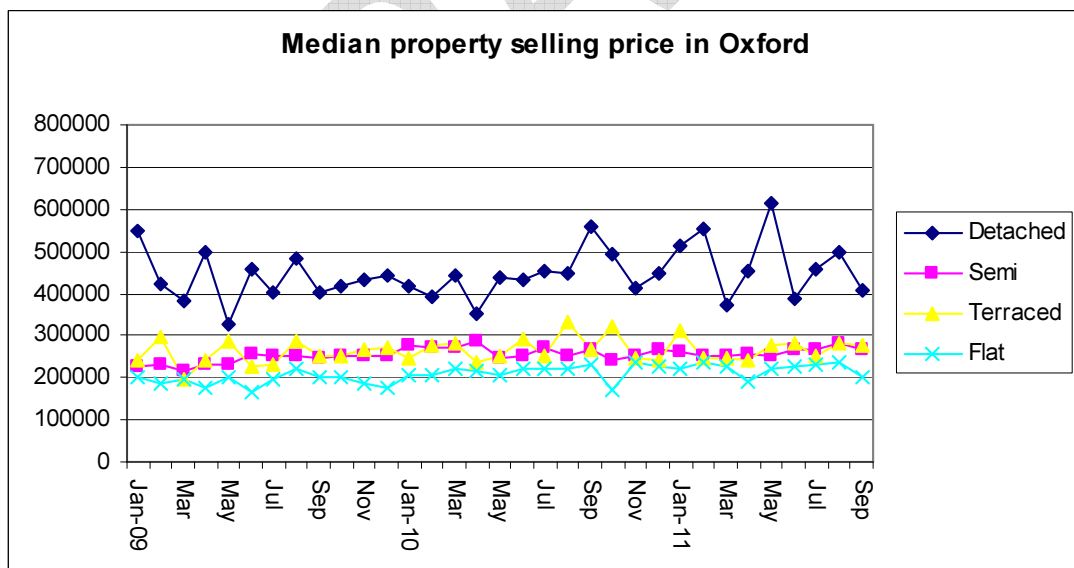
CLG Live table 581 - Land Registry data

**Figure 2: Average Selling Price in Oxford 2009 - 2011**



home.co.uk - uses Land registry data \*Note: The sold house prices for Oxford were calculated by averaging over all properties sold, as recorded by the Land Registry, within 4 miles of the centre of Oxford

**Figure 3: Median Property Selling Price in Oxford.**



home.co.uk - uses Land registry data \*Note: The sold house prices for Oxford were calculated by averaging over all properties sold, as recorded by the Land Registry, within 4 miles of the centre of Oxford

## 4.12 Affordability

4.12.1 Oxford remains one of the least affordable areas of the country for buying housing. The recent Cities Outlook 2011<sup>1</sup> study states that “Oxford was the city with the 11th highest wages in 2010 ranking just behind Swindon. However, Swindon residents’ wages go much further than those of Oxford residents, where house prices are almost double”. According to the same study Oxford is among the ten cities with the lowest earnings growth (55th of 63).

4.12.2 Despite some price falls due to the recession the ratio of lower quartile house prices to lower quartile earnings in 2009 was still 8.75 in Oxford compared to 6.28 for England. House prices have increased in Oxford since then and the ratio of lower quartile house prices to lower quartile earnings in 2010 had risen to 10.24 compared to 6.69 for England.<sup>2</sup>

4.12.3 Lower quartile annual earnings in Oxford is on par with lower quartile earnings in the South East and slightly higher than England. However, lower quartile house prices are much higher. This means that for those on low pay even properties in the cheapest price bracket are out of reach.

**Table 2: Ratio lower quartile house prices to earnings.**

2010	Oxford	Oxford-shire	South East	England
Lower quartile earnings, full-time employees <sup>1</sup>	20,422	20,859	20,034	18,577
Lower quartile house price <sup>2</sup>	£215,000	£190,000	£167,500	£125,000
Ratio lower quartile house price / lower quartile earnings <sup>3</sup>	10.24	9.16	8.51	6.69

1) ASHE annual earnings by place of residence, table 8.7a

2) CLG Live table 587 - Land registry data

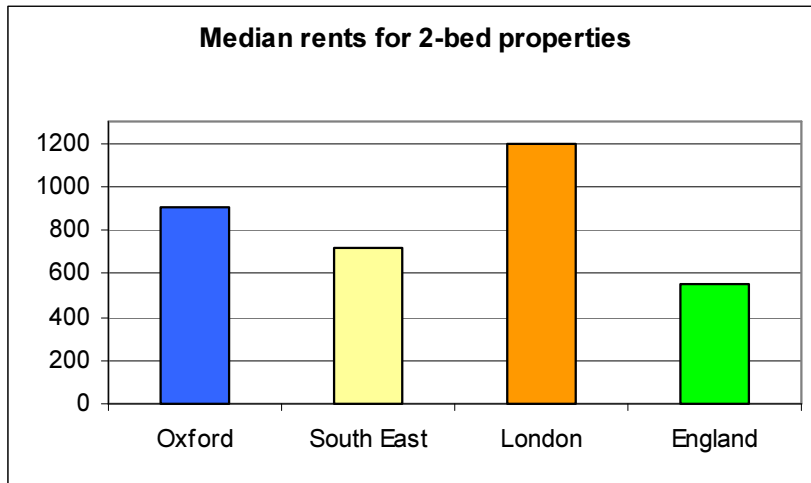
3) CLG Live table 576 (Note: Land registry data are for the first half of the year so that they are comparable to the ASHE data which is as at April. ASHE data used are workplace based full-time individual earnings.

4.12.4 Oxford has been identified as the most unaffordable location outside of London for private renting where median rents for two bedroom homes account for 55% of local median full-time earnings.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Cities Outlook 2011

<sup>2</sup> DCLG Live table 576

<sup>3</sup> Research Report, Shelter Private Rent Watch, Report one: Analysis of local rent levels and affordability, 2011



Valuation Office Agency, Summary of monthly rents recorded over the 12 months to the end of September 2011

4.12.5 Gross weekly pay for Oxford residents is low, compared to the regional averages. This contrasts with the picture when looking at the pay for jobs based in Oxford, where pay is relatively high. This suggests that many of the more highly paid jobs in Oxford are held by those who live outside the city.

**Table 3: Gross weekly median pay by residence, 2011.<sup>4</sup>**

	Oxford	South East	Great Britain
All full time	£525.70	£554.40	£503.10
Male full time	£561.00	£607.40	£541.70
Female full time	£467.00	£474.30	£446.30

**Table 4: Gross weekly median pay by place of work, 2011.<sup>5</sup>**

	Oxford	South East	Great Britain
All full time	546.80	528.10	502.60
Male full time	591.70	578.50	540.90
Female full time	474.50	454.00	445.70

<sup>4</sup> ONS annual survey of hours and earnings - resident analysis

<sup>5</sup> ONS annual survey of hours and earnings - resident analysis

## 4.13 Repossessions

4.13.1 Mortgage possession claims\* increased dramatically during 2008 with a 24.2% increase shown in Oxford 2007 to 2008. However, there has been a substantial reduction to 2009 (85.5% drop), and the figure has stayed low in 2010.<sup>6</sup>

\* Possession claims do not necessarily result in actual repossessions.

**Table 5: Mortgage possession claims issued in Oxford, 2001 to 2010**

	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010
Oxford	60	85	80	115	150	170	165	205	95	90
% change on previous year	-25	41.7	-5.9	43.8	30.4	13.3	-2.9	24.2	-85.4	-5.3

4.13.2 Landlord possession actions have recorded similar increases (2007 to 2008) but decreased in recent years (2008 to 2010).

**Table 6: Landlord possession claims issued in Oxford, 2003 to 2010**

	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010
Oxford	350	410	375	335	335	390	385	350
% change on previous year		17.1	-8.5	-10.7	0.0	16.4	-1.3	-9.1

<sup>6</sup> Ministry of Justice

## 4.14 Unemployment

4.14.1 In common with the rest of the UK, there has been a sharp increase in the number of people claiming unemployment benefit (Jobseeker's Allowance or JSA). In October 2008 there were 1,600 people claiming JSA, which had risen to 2,970 by May 2009 - however this decreased to 2,731 by December 2011. The proportion of people claiming in Oxford is lower than the national average (due to the large number of full-time students who are not working).<sup>7</sup>

4.14.2 The number of people unemployed is different to the number of people claiming JSA as some unemployed people choose not to claim or are not eligible to claim. The level of unemployment is estimated using a combination of the JSA count and population surveys. The most recent estimate of Oxford's unemployment rate is 6.1% for the period June 2010 to June 2011, slightly below the national average of 7.7%.<sup>8</sup>

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<sup>7</sup> Nomis

<sup>8</sup> Nomis



## 4.15 Population

4.15.1 The most up to date estimates of Oxford's population from the Office for National Statistics (ONS) are:

1. 2001 Census: 134,248
2. 2010 mid-year estimate: 153,700
3. 2020 population projection (2008-based): 154,500

4.15.2 Oxford is the fourth fastest growing city in the UK<sup>9</sup> and the growth in population will be compounded by a decrease in the number of people per household - further increasing pressure on the city's housing capacity.

4.15.3 Oxford has a large population of students. Around 30,000 full-time students attend the cities universities each year.<sup>10</sup> This places pressure on housing supply in the City, particularly in the private rented sector with many of the students living out of university provided accommodation for part of their study period. According to the Annual Monitoring Report 2010/11 there were over 6,800 students living outside of university accommodation at the end of 2010. Balancing the demands placed on housing by students and the needs of permanent residents (many of whom are former students or work for the universities) is a challenge for the City.

## 4.16 Households

4.16.1 The number of households in the City is increasing rapidly. In 1991 there were 48,000 households and this had increased to 54,000 by 2008.<sup>11</sup> The number of households in the City is projected to continue to increase placing huge pressure on housing.

4.16.2 Projected population growth does not match the growth in household formation as a result of trends for more single person households, which is a consequence of more younger people, more very elderly people and higher rates of divorce.

4.16.3 It is projected that the proportion of single person households in the Oxford will increase from 35% to 39% between 2008 and 2033.<sup>12</sup> This will add to the serious pressure of housing in the city. Smaller and single person households do not necessarily want or demand smaller homes and this is a particular challenge when planning for future growth.

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<sup>9</sup> Cities Outlook 2010

<sup>10</sup> HESA

<sup>11</sup> DCLG Live table 406

<sup>12</sup> DLGG live table 420

## 4.17 Tenure

4.17.1 Housing provision in Oxford is very diverse by tenure (see Table 7).

Oxford has a very large private rented sector (24%), it retains a sizable social rented sector (21%) and the level of owner occupation is among the lowest in the country (55%), which is very low for the South East of England region.

**Table 7: Housing Tenure**

	Oxford	South East	England
Owner Occupation	54.9%	74.0%	68.7%
Social rented	21.2%	14.0%	19.2%
Private rented	23.9%	12.0%	12.0%

Census 2001 Table KS18

## 4.18 Development

4.18.1 Affordable housing completions in Oxford have fallen back after a peak in 2008/09. The target set for 2009/10 was revised in the light of reduced development activity.

**Table 8: Affordable housing completions 2004/05 to 2010/11.**

	04/05	05/06	06/07	07/08	08/09	09/10	10/11
Completions	186	167	267	56	265	192	148

4.18.2 91% of all affordable housing delivered in 2009/10 was affordable rented against a target of 80%. This was an increase on the 70% delivered for rented in 2008/09.

**Table 9: Affordable Housing Against Policy Requirement<sup>13</sup>**

	03/04	04/05	05/06	06/07	07/08	08/09	09/10
Policy requirement	30%	30%	30%/50%	50%	50%	50%	50%
Average % of affordable housing permitted on all sites (including reserved matters)	43.3%	34.5%	42.6%	37.6%	47.6%	41.6%	39.0%

<sup>13</sup> Annual Monitoring Report

Average % of affordable housing permitted on sites (excluding reserved matters)

43.3%	34.2%	48.8%	48.9%	47.6%	50%	n/a
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4.18.3 The Council is targeting affordable housing development work on ensuring that affordable housing delivery on development sites is maintained and progressing development on strategic sites around the City that will deliver very large numbers of additional housing units.

#### 4.19 House building

4.19.1 In relation to general house building (market and affordable), Oxford’s Core Strategy includes a target of 8,000 dwellings to be built between 2006 and 2026. During the first five years 2,472 dwellings have been built which leaves a requirement for 5,528. This equates to 368 dwellings per year requirement.

**Table 10: Net Additional Dwellings**

Year	Net Completed Additional Dwellings
2001/02	439
2002/03	267
2003/04	578
2004/05	669
2005/06	943
2006/07	821
2007/08	529
2008/09	665
2009/10	257
2010/11	200

Annual Monitoring Report

4.19.2 The housing trajectory is published each December in the Annual Monitoring Report which demonstrates which sites are likely to come forward for new housing and to what extent they will contribute to the 8,000 target and the five-year housing land supply. The City Council is not expected to be able to identify all sites that will meet the 8,000 target.

4.19.3 The Annual Monitoring Report 2011 demonstrates that Oxford is just able to identify enough deliverable housing sites to meet the five-year target and enough developable and deliverable sites to meet the 10 year target. However, The City Council is producing a Sites and Housing Development Plan Document, part of the Local Development

Framework, which will allocate new sites for housing. It is anticipated that this will include enough sites to enable Oxford to significantly exceed its five-year housing supply target and almost meet the entire 8,000 dwelling target significantly reducing reliance on windfalls.

4.19.4 100% of housing completions in 2009/10 were on Brownfield land (see figure below).

**Table 11: Percentage of gross housing completions on Brownfield Land**

Year	Percentage of gross housing completions on Brownfield Land
2001/02	98.60%
2002/03	93.00%
2003/04	95.00%
2004/05	99.87%
2005/06	99.43%
2006/07	100%
2007/08	93.98%
2008/09	99.88%
2009/10	100%

Annual Monitoring Report

#### 4.20 Council house building

4.20.1 The Council successfully bid for Homes and Community Agency (HCA) funding in order to build new Council Homes in 2009. A total of £4 million was awarded in August 2009 for the provision of 58 new homes on two sites in the City. These homes at Lambourne Road, Rose Hill and at Cardinal House, Littlemore were completed and occupied during 2011.

4.20.2 In 2011 the Council successfully bid for affordable housing development funding for the 2011-16 four year programme. The HCA have offered a grant allocation of £2.42m for the development of 6 sites. The sites will produce 112 units of which 68 are social rented units and 44 are affordable rent.

#### 4.21 Private renting

4.21.1 Oxford has a larger private rented sector (representing almost 24% of all dwellings) and many people rely on this diverse sector for their housing needs. Rents are often high and may people on low incomes

rely on some support from benefits to help them live and work in the City. Changes to housing benefits will place significant pressures on these people in meeting their housing needs in the future.

4.21.2 Local Housing Allowance was introduced in April 2008 and has changed the way that Housing Benefit is calculated. It is for Private Tenants only and does not include tenancies with the Council or Housing Associations. A standard rate for property sizes is set monthly and is paid to claimants according to their accommodation needs. Payments are made direct to claimants. Applications for payments direct to landlords can be made if a vulnerability relating to an inability to make and maintain payments is demonstrated.

4.21.3 From 1st April 2011 the Local Housing Allowance (LHA) rates are based on the lowest 30 percent of rents in the Broad Market Rental area, not the median as previously. Housing benefit is now restricted to the LHA rate for a 4 bedroom property. The LHA rate for all sizes of property has been capped. At the moment the caps are higher than LHA rates in the Oxford area so this will not affect housing benefit entitlements. Any new claim for housing benefit made after 1 April 2011 will be worked out using the new rules. Any person who is already receiving housing benefit will be affected from when the benefit award is reviewed.

4.21.4 The Local Housing Allowance rates are set at the 30th percentile of rents in the Broad Market Area which covers most of Oxfordshire. Rents in the city are, however, generally higher than in the rest of Oxfordshire.

**Table 12: LHA rates and rents in Oxford**

Property Size	LHA Sep 2011*	Lower quartile rents <sup>14</sup>
Room in shared	£340	£350
1 bedroom	£650	£695
2 bedrooms	£775	£850
3 bedrooms	£915	£995
4 bedrooms	£1240	£1300

\*Rounded to nearest pound

4.21.5 From April 2011 LHA was capped at the 4 bedrooms level, meaning no additional allowance is payable for homes with 5 or more bedrooms which presents problems and challenges when finding housing for large families.

<sup>14</sup> Summary of monthly rents recorded over the 12 months to the end of September 2011, Valuation Office Agency

## 4.22 Homelessness

4.22.1 Homelessness remains a significant problem in Oxford though reductions in statutory homelessness acceptances and households in temporary accommodation continue thanks to the excellent prevention work undertaken by the Housing Needs team.

**Table 13: Homelessness Claims**

2004/05	2005/06	2006/07	2007/08	2008/09	2009/10	2010/11
637	635	538	501	571	477	456

**Table 14: Homelessness Acceptances**

2004/05	2005/06	2006/07	2007/08	2008/09	2009/10	2010/11
376	379	233	196	147	104	123

**Table 15: Temporary Accommodation**

2004/05	2005/06	2006/07	2007/08	2008/09	2009/10	2010/11
953	861	581	496	395	240	156

**Table 16: Rough Sleeping**

2004/05	2005/06	2006/07	2007/08	2008/09	2009/10	2010/11
7	11	11	13	8	16	16

(The rough sleeper count was 52 in 1998).

**Table 17: Homelessness statistics (collected from P1E return).**

<b>Acceptances</b>		<b>Oxford 2009/10</b>	<b>Oxford 2010/11</b>
Homeless acceptances		104	123
Decisions taken	Percentage accepted as homeless	22% (of 475)	27% (of 456)
Acceptances per 1,000 households		1.9	2.3
Acceptances by ethnicity BME percentage (England 12%, London 31%, South-East 8%, Oxford 17% ONS 2007)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• BME</li> <li>• White</li> <li>• None stated</li> </ul>	25% (26) 58% (60) 17% (18)	25% (31) 62% (76) 13% (16)
Acceptances by age	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 16-24</li> <li>• 25-44</li> <li>• 45-59</li> <li>• 60 and over</li> </ul>	49% (51) 41% (43) 10% (10) 0% (0)	58% (71) 29% (36) 11% (14) 2% (2)
Acceptances by household type	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lone female parent</li> <li>• Couple with children</li> <li>• Lone male</li> <li>• Lone female</li> <li>• Lone male parent</li> <li>• Other</li> </ul>	50% (52) 15% (16) 15% (16) 15% (16) 2% (2) 2% (2)	42% (52) 20% (25) 20% (24) 9% (11) 6% (8) 2% (3)
Acceptances by priority need category	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Dependent children</li> <li>• Pregnant woman</li> <li>• Young person</li> <li>• Mental illness</li> <li>• Physical disability</li> </ul>	49% (51) 17% (18) 14% (14) 10% (10) 4% (4)	50% (62) 19% (23) 12% (15) 4% (5) 7% (9)
Acceptances by reason for loss of last settled home	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Exclusions by parents, relatives, friends</li> <li>• Relationship breakdown</li> <li>• End of AST</li> <li>• Left institution/care</li> </ul>	44% (46) 16% (17) 15% (16) 7% (7)	49% (60) 15% (18) 8% (10) 15% (18)
<b>Households in temporary accommodation</b>		<b>Oxford 2009/10 to date</b>	<b>Oxford 2010/11</b>
Length of time spent in temp accom for households owed a main duty who left temp accom during quarter	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Less than 6 months</li> <li>• More than 2 years</li> </ul> <p>Note: includes those who have been housed, evicted, found own accom etc.</p>	8% (19) 51% (120) (Total 236)	30% (55) 35% (64) (Total 182)

4.22.2 The number of homelessness claims have steadily reduced from 2003/04 through to 2010/11 (with the exception of 2008/09) The number of acceptances decreased to 2010/11 when it increased 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.

4.22.3 The number of households living in temporary accommodation continues to fall and is now 156. This has been achieved through greater use of a variety of homelessness prevention measures, particularly by providing accommodation in the private sector.

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**Table 18: Reasons for Homelessness**

	2004/05	2005/06	2006/07	2007/08	2008/09	2009/10	2010/11
Family, friends no longer able or willing to accommodate	39.6%	36.4%	36.1%	42.3%	38.8%	44.2%	48.8%
Non-violent relationship end	5.3%	5.3%	2.2%	1.9%	4.8%	6.7%	5.7%
Violent relationship end	10.9%	11.1%	8.6%	9.6%	9.5%	9.6%	8.9%
Racial / other violence / harassment	1.3%	0%	0%	0%	8.8%	6.7%	0.8%
Arrears eviction (all tenures)	1.9%	1.1%	1.7%	0%	2%	1.9%	4.9%
Loss of private rented accom (Term of AST / Reasons other than term of AST)	18.1%	15.8%	15.5%	13.5%	15%	21.2%	13.8%
Left asylum support / prison / hospital	5.6%	2.4%	1.7%	0%	0%	3.8%	1.6%
Left other institution or LA care	2.7%	7.7%	15.5%	13.5%	13.6%	3.8%	13.0%
Other reason	14.4%	20.3%	18.9%	19.2%	7.5%	2.9%	2.4%

P1E return – households accepted as homeless

4.22.4 Reasons for homelessness acceptances remain relatively constant. Reasons for homelessness acceptances are parental eviction followed by loss of a private Assured Shorthold Tenancy. The third highest reason is domestic violence. The number of homelessness acceptances because of eviction over arrears has increased (the 4.9%% recorded in 2010/11 were 4 for rent arrears, and 2 for mortgage arrears). This will be monitored for any upward trend as a result of the recession.

4.22.5 Work on developing and improving housing options and homelessness prevention services has continued:

- Continued growth and use of the Homechoice rent deposit scheme and the Lord Mayors Deposit Guarantee Scheme.
- Capital investment in new and existing projects (e.g. the wet garden at O'Hanlon House and the forthcoming redevelopment of the Old Fire station)
- Development work for enhanced housing options services to tackle work related causes of homelessness.

#### 4.23 Issues for vulnerable groups in Oxford:

##### 4.24 Age: Older People: (over 60)

- Oxford has younger population profile than most locations (15% are aged over 60 compared to 22% across England).<sup>15</sup>
- None- the-less the proportion of older people is set to increase, with a 17% increase in over 65's by 2025 and a 28% increase in over 85s by 2025.<sup>16</sup>
- The number of people aged 75 plus living alone with limiting long term illness will increase by 17% to 2025.<sup>17</sup>

##### 4.25 Age: Young People (under 25):

- Up to 58% of all homelessness acceptances in Oxford are for young people (singles, couples and families).
- A quarter of Oxford's population are aged 15 to 24 (almost double the regional and national average).<sup>18</sup>
- Around 30,000 full-time students study in Oxford each year.<sup>19</sup>
- House prices in Oxford remain very high and access to this home ownership sector is very difficult for young people.

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<sup>15</sup> Mid-2010 population estimate, ONS

<sup>16</sup> Projecting Older People Population Information System, starting point 2011

<sup>17</sup> Projecting Older People Population Information System, starting point 2011

<sup>18</sup> Mid-2010 population estimate, ONS

<sup>19</sup> HESA

- There are significant concentrations of under 16s in Blackbird Leys, Rose Hill, Sandhills and Summertown which should be taken into account when planning future provision.<sup>20</sup>

#### **4.26 BME Communities**

- 12.8% of Oxford's population from a BME group in 2001, increased to 17.2% in the ONS mid-year estimate in 2007.
- 23% of households on the housing register are from BME groups.
- 25% of households accepted as homeless are from BME groups.

#### **4.27 Disabled People**

- 464 households on the housing register (8%) have a mobility need

#### **4.28 Gender**

- 42% of homeless acceptances are lone female parent households
- 6% are lone male parent households
- Domestic violence accommodation services provided in Oxford through by Supporting People funding.

#### **4.29 Sexual Orientation**

- No data or analysis is available on the possible impact of sexual orientation on homelessness or access to housing services.

#### **4.30 Faith / Culture**

- No data or analysis is available on the possible impact of faith on homelessness or access to housing services.

#### **4.31 People with Housing Support needs.**

- The Supporting People budget for Oxfordshire is £16.2M for 2010/11 but will reduce to £12.9M by 2014/15.
- 45% of this budget is spent on services provided in Oxford.
- There are 36 SP funded services in Oxford.
- These services have an annual capacity of 3265 'units'.

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<sup>20</sup> Mid-2005 population estimate by super output area, ONS

## 4.32 Housing Register

4.32.1 Demand for social housing in Oxford remains high with over 6000 households (6338 January 2012) registered on the housing register in Oxford. Average annual turnover of social housing properties in the city is around 700, so long waits are inevitable. Where certain types of property remain in short supply, such as large family homes, waits will be longer than average.

**Table 19: Housing Register by Breakdown**

<b>Age</b>	<b>%</b>
16-24	12.3
25-44	54.9
45-59	21.9
60-64	4.0
65+	6.9
	100.0
<b>Ethnicity</b>	<b>%</b>
White	60.9
BME	23.4
Not-Stated	15.7
	100.0
<b>Children</b>	<b>%</b>
Dependent Children / Expecting	43.4
No dep. Children	56.6
	100.0
<b>Household Type</b>	<b>%</b>
Couple with children	20.0
Lone parent	23.4
Single	44.2
Other	12.4
	100.0

**Table 20: Housing Register by Bedroom Requirement**

Bedroom group (Min. requirement)

	Bedsit/1 bed		2 bed		3 bed		4 bed+		TOTAL	
Black or Black British	452	14.1%	214	12.3%	142	17.5%	57	19.5%	865	14.3%
Asian or Asian British	112	3.5%	94	5.4%	81	10.0%	42	14.4%	329	5.4%
Mixed	70	2.2%	37	2.1%	21	2.6%	4	1.4%	132	2.2%
Chinese or Other Ethnic Group	43	1.3%	33	1.9%	19	2.3%	7	2.4%	102	1.7%
<b>BME: Total</b>	<b>677</b>	<b>21.1%</b>	<b>378</b>	<b>21.7%</b>	<b>263</b>	<b>32.3%</b>	<b>110</b>	<b>37.7%</b>	<b>1,428</b>	<b>23.6%</b>
White: British	1,803	56.1%	874	50.3%	368	45.3%	123	42.1%	3,168	52.3%
White: Irish / Other White	217	6.8%	229	13.2%	76	9.3%	22	7.5%	544	9.0%
<b>White: Total</b>	<b>2,020</b>	<b>62.9%</b>	<b>1,103</b>	<b>63.5%</b>	<b>444</b>	<b>54.6%</b>	<b>145</b>	<b>49.7%</b>	<b>3,712</b>	<b>61.3%</b>
<b>None stated</b>	<b>516</b>	<b>16.1%</b>	<b>257</b>	<b>14.8%</b>	<b>106</b>	<b>13.0%</b>	<b>37</b>	<b>12.7%</b>	<b>916</b>	<b>15.1%</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>3,213</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>1,738</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>813</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>292</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>6,056</b>	<b>100%</b>

4.32.2 In 2008 the Council introduced Choice Based Lettings replacing the old points based allocation system for social housing and in 2009 this was expanded to a sub-regional based scheme covering the City, Cherwell, South Oxfordshire and Vale of the White Horse district areas.

#### **4.33 Housing Conditions**

4.33.1 All Oxford City Council homes have attained the Decent Homes Standard and less than 2% of housing association homes failing to meet the standard.

4.33.2 The Council continues to work with landlords and tenants in the large private rented sector to ensure that homes in that sector meet legal standards. The Council has introduced a city-wide additional licensing scheme for HMOs and continues to take a firm line in pursuing prosecutions where landlords fail to ensure homes meet legal standards.

4.33.3 The council is implementing its Empty Homes Strategy to ensure that long term empty properties in the private sector are returned to use. 17 were returned to use in 2009/10 and 10 in 2010/11 through the work of the Empty Property Officer. During 2010/11 the Council was successful in obtaining its first empty dwelling management orders. One property affected was immediately sold on the open market and rapidly returned to use by the new owner.

## **The future – legislative and policy context**

The Housing Strategy for Oxford has been developed within wider contextual, policy and legislation changes. These set major challenges as to how Oxford City Council and its partners are able to deliver new affordable housing, improve housing conditions and services

### **International context**

- Uncertain international economic climate, recession and increasing unemployment
- Downturn in housing markets, limited borrowing, lack of confidence in housing investment and reduced levels of housebuilding including affordable housing
- Environmental issues – the need to reduce energy consumption and risk of flooding
- An ageing population

### **National context**

There is a changing national context with new policy drives

- Local Growth – creating a more market driven approach to allow the economy and business to grow
- Welfare that Works – reducing disincentives to work, simplifying benefits and reducing benefit dependence
- Localism – aiming to empower local communities to have more say over their local area
- Deficit reduction – planning to reduce the national deficit and debt including reductions in public sector spending
- Challenging Red Tape – seeking to reduce unnecessary regulation, including private sector landlords, building regulations and planning

### **'Laying the Foundations: A Housing Strategy for England 2011'**

recognised the need to a new approach including

- Increasing supply: more homes, stable growth
- Social and affordable housing reform
- A thriving private rented sector
- Strategy for Empty Homes
- Quality of housing experience and support
- Quality, sustainability and design

## **Localism Act 2011**

The Localism Act included a number of elements which affect the Housing Strategy

### **Access to housing**

- Opportunity to grant a new 'Flexible Tenancy' for new social tenants instead of a 'Lifetime Tenancy' and a duty for local councils to develop a Tenancy Strategy
- Power to local authorities to limit who can apply for social housing and review of allocations policies
- Improve the ability of social tenants to move to a different area
- Allow local authorities to meet their legal responsibilities towards homeless households by using private sector accommodation

### **Changes to social housing**

- Reform the Housing Revenue Account (Council housing) financial regime to enable 'self financing'
- Abolish the Tenant Services Authority and transfer regulation of social housing to Homes and Communities Agency
- Co-regulation and scrutiny by tenants

### **Planning system**

- Abolish Regional Spatial Strategies
- Abolish the Infrastructure Planning Committee and return to a position where the Secretary of State takes the first decision on major infrastructure proposals of national interest
- Amend the Community Infrastructure Levy which allows Councils to require developers to fund infrastructure

### **Community involvement and empowerment**

- Provide for Neighbourhood Plans which would be approved if they received 50% of the votes cast in a referendum
- Provide for neighbourhood development orders to allow communities to approve development without requiring planning consent

The Housing Strategy Action Plan responds to issues arising from changes to social housing and access.

## **Homes and Communities Affordable Housing Framework 2011-15**

This 4 year programme will deliver up to 170,000 affordable homes for rent and low cost home ownership nationally by 2015, Funding of £4.5 billion will be made available for Registered Providers including Housing Associations and Council Housing – albeit with an overall reduction in funding per property. The programme introduces Affordable Rents requiring Registered Providers to let property at up to 80% of local market rents. This is likely to impact greatly within Oxford where there is wide gap between rent levels of existing Registered Providers and the Council as opposed to private rents



Registered Providers who are awarded funding under the Affordable Rent Programme are expected to convert a proportion of relets of existing homes to Affordable Rents.

The Strategy Action Plan addresses the need to review new delivery models to bring forward new affordable housing and development of a Tenancy Strategy to define a policy on Affordable Rents in the area.

### **New Homes Bonus**

The New Homes Bonus was introduced in April 2011. It is an incentive paid to councils to match fund the additional Council Tax raised for new homes and empty properties brought back into use to enhance Council spending. Oxford's grant allocation for 2011 was determined as £472,960.

### **Health and Social Care Bill 2012**

The Health and Social Care Bill proposes the abolition of Primary Care Trusts in April 2013. These would be replaced by GP Consortiums who will be responsible for commissioning most healthcare.

Each Council will be required to set up a Health and Well Being Board to oversee the quality of services, represent the views of local people and draw up Health and Well Being Strategy – building on Joint Strategic Needs Assessments.

All Hospital Trusts are planned to become independent foundation hospitals by 2014 with a competition element for patients and costs.

There are strong links between Housing, this Strategy and Health and Well Being. Poor housing conditions and homelessness can have a detriment on the health, safety and wellbeing of households. Cold, hard and expensive to heat homes are a particular problem linked to excess winter deaths and other health issues underpinning the need for a Home Energy and Fuel Poverty Strategy. Access to suitable housing can be a significant issue in patients being able to regain health and independence with delays to hospital discharge and bed blocking. The Home Improvement Agency and the Council as landlord undertake adaptations and improvements to enable people to gain and sustain independent living. Through planning powers new housing can be designed to meet a household's changing lifetime needs.

Actions related to poor quality and unsuitable homes are included in the Housing Strategy Action Plan. Further issues arising will be considered when the Strategy Action Plan is refreshed in 2013

### **Changes to the Council's Landlord Role**

The reform of Council House Financing is a major change that will affect affordable housing in Oxford. The principle is to give local councils the

resources, flexibility and incentives needed to manage the housing stock for the long term and drive efficiency and economy. Changes will also give tenants the information they need to hold their landlord to account by establishing a clear relationship between the rent collected and services provided.

From April 2012 there will be a re-adjustment of council housing stock debt. A 30 year Business Plan has been developed to ensure the Council can support repayment of debt whilst managing, maintaining and improving its housing stock. The financial changes will lead to the Council borrowing around £200 million pounds to support investment in the Council's housing stock and may also enable the establishment of more new council house building programmes. The 30 year Business Plan will be supported by an Operational Plan which will set detailed tasks and objectives

The Decent Homes Standard will be maintained as a minimum with a goal to improve housing standards even higher including to blocks of flats. Opportunities will exist for development of new Council homes in the future.

Changes to the Landlord Role include regulatory changes; greater tenant involvement and empowerment, co-regulation with tenants; a Local Offer for tenants. There is an increased emphasis on tenancy fraud; tackling under-occupation and overcrowding; increased mobility and enhanced Right to Buy.

Welfare benefit changes including direct payment of housing benefit to tenants will impact on collection of rent and rent arrears.

All these are being taken forward through actions identified in the Housing Strategy Action Plan and Housing Revenue Account Business Plan

## **Welfare Reform**

The Government is introducing a range of welfare reforms intended to reduce dependency and provide incentives to work through its Welfare Reform Bill which was passing through the legislative process at the time this Strategy was prepared. Changes to Housing Benefit and Local Housing Allowance are also gradually being implemented. The combination of these changes are likely to adversely affect the household budgets of many and restrict their ability to access and retain housing.

### **Universal Credit:**

From October 2013 a single benefit is planned to be introduced to replace Income Support, Jobseekers Allowance, Employment Support Allowance, Tax Credits and Housing Benefit. Plans include support for Housing costs being delivered by the Department for Work and Pensions, rather than Local Authorities.

The Government is proposing to introduce a cap on the total amount of out of work benefits that a household can receive. The cap is proposed to be set at £350 per week for singles / couples and £500 per week for families (with dependent children). This capped amount will form the total benefits income of any household claiming the relevant benefits. All household expenditure including rent will have to be made from within the amount.

Department of Work and Pensions will pay the housing component of Universal Credit to individuals, not landlords. It is anticipated that Universal Credit will be developed in a way which protects social landlords' financial position (e.g. some direct payment to landlords, direct debits, and a "protection mechanism which safeguards landlords' income"). Oxford City Council will be part of the Demonstration Project for this change. Discussions will "include considering whether there may still be a role for local authorities in dealing with non-mainstream Housing Benefit cases (for example, people living in supported or temporary accommodation). Local authorities may also have a role to play in delivering face-to-face contact for those who cannot use other channels to claim and manage their Universal Credit.

By 2017, all Working Age claimants to be claiming Universal Credit. The government has said that no-one will lose out at the point of transition to Universal Credit, but changes since the June 2010 budget mean that £18 billion in cuts to welfare benefits will be made before Universal Credit comes in. According to the Centre for Economic & Social Inclusion, all households working full time on minimum wage will be worse off under Universal Credit in 2014 than in April 2011.

## **Local Housing Allowance, Housing Benefit**

### **In 2011 and 2012**

Changes were made to the calculation of Local Housing Allowance now only covers the cost of the cheapest 30% of private rents rather than the median (average) cost

Payments are no longer paid for 5 bedrooms and are capped at 4 bedroom rate

Changes to on-dependant allowances (which affect households containing other adults eg grown up children, elderly parents) are being introduced in stages up to 2014

### **Shared accommodation rate**

For many years single people living alone, aged 18-24, have only received the Shared Accommodation rate for LHA (£80.77 per week) rather than the rate for a one bedroom property (£150 per week). This has been extended to people aged 25-34 from January 2012. This means that LHA payable to single people aged under 35 who do not live with partners or children will be restricted to the cost of a room in a shared house or bedsit. The change applies to new claims from January 2012, and will be extended to existing claimants under transitional protection arrangements applying to LHA claims which started in April 2011. Exemptions from the change include some disabled people, people in some types of supported accommodation, ex-offenders whose case is being managed by MAPP, and those who have spent three months or more in homeless hostels giving support to enable resettlement in the community.

## **Uprating of Rents by CPI:**

In April 2012, LHA rates will be frozen for a year and it is expected that, from April 2013, LHA rates will rise in line with the Consumer Price Index rather than with local rents. The detail will be in amended Housing Benefit regulations and Rent Officer Orders and applies to LHA cases only. The Secretary of State is to be permitted to reset LHA rates without reference to Rent Officer if rates need to be adjusted to reflect local rents.

**Size Restriction in Social Rented Sector:**

It is planned that this change will apply to working age households only and seek to reduce under occupation of homes. It will also take into account room requirement for non-resident carer. It is estimated to impact on 32% of working age claims in social rented sector (1600 in Oxford). Average reduction will be £13 per week, £11 for one room, £20 for two rooms. Reduction will be a percentage based on the number of unoccupied rooms. There are two definitions of under occupation, Department for Communities and Local Government allow for a spare bedroom and this definition would impact an additional 80,000..

**Localisation of Council Tax Benefit:**

From April 2013, the Government plan to give Council's responsibility for the replacement to Council Tax Benefit. The proposals are that Council's will be given a fixed budget, reduced by 10% to spend how they wish. However pensioners must receive the same level of support as they do currently. In practice there is little flexibility in operating a local policy, as many recipients are only in receipt of Income Support or Jobseekers Allowance. As the support will be provided by way of a fixed budget, there is a significant financial risk to councils if their caseload increases significantly during the year.

**Other welfare reform measures include**

- it is planned that Child Benefit will not be paid to families with higher rate taxpayer from 2013
- migrating single parents on Income Support onto Jobseekers Allowance once their youngest child turns five, and migrating sick and disabled people previously on incapacity benefits onto Jobseekers Allowance or Employment and Support Allowance. These changes require claimants to be actively looking for work and will, in many cases, mean a reduction in benefits entitlements;
- restricting eligibility for working tax credits by reducing the childcare element, introducing stricter work eligibility conditions and freezing payment rates;
- ending financial support for 16-19 year olds in further education by abolishing the Education Maintenance Allowance from 2011/12; and
- taking all welfare benefits and most housing and debt cases outside the Legal Help (legal aid) scheme. This could directly affect access to justice for people who are homeless or in housing need, increasing demand for Citizens Advice Bureau and other non-legal aid advice

services, and contributing to a rise in homelessness if people cannot access advice over issues that underpin homelessness.

Welfare reform changes impact on household income and are anticipated to have major repercussions on housing affordability, mortgage and rent arrears leading to potential homelessness. This will be kept under review and any further actions need will be brought forward in the new Homelessness Strategy (to be adopted by April 2013) and/or the review of the Housing Strategy Action Plan (September 2013)

Details as to how we will respond to the challenges brought forward as a consequence of new legislative and policy changes are contained within the Housing Strategy Action Plan 2012-2015

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# Housing Strategy 2012-15

## Action Plan

This Action Plan is a summary of key issues and actions for the future. It is a tool for delivering our Housing Strategy 2012-15 by determining clear actions, responsibilities and resources. It will be regularly monitored .

From April 2013 the Housing Strategy Action Plan will be reviewed with partners and actions refreshed in September 2013 – the mid point of our Strategy. This will ensure effective planning and actions that are delivered.

Also noted in the Action Plan are supporting strategies and plans – where actions contribute to the delivery of our Housing Strategy objectives

## Strategic Objective 1: Provide More Affordable Housing in the City to Meet Housing Needs

There is a high need for affordable housing in Oxford. The physical constraints of the City and high costs combine to create an extremely tough environment to bring forward new housing which is affordable for local people. The Council will lead and facilitate new and affordable housing by making best use of the planning system and Council assets including land. It will investigate new models for delivery of new affordable homes including expanding the role of the Council in building new Council homes.

Our consultations with partners and public showed a high level of support for more new affordable housing, including council housing. However, respondents also felt the Strategy needed to look beyond the needs for social housing and homelessness – considering the needs of lower to middle income households who cannot find affordable homes – including young people and key workers. As a consequence, more actions relating to this have been included within our Action Plan. However, social rented housing will remain a priority as the need for it so great in Oxford. Respondents recognised that in spite of our efforts the level of new homes being brought forward will not meet the housing needs of everyone who wishes to live in Oxford. Feedback also mentioned to issue of student accommodation which puts demands on private rented accommodation. Some respondents wished to see higher levels of house building and even disallowing non residential developments to lead to greater community and physical sustainability. These issues are more pertinent to the Council's Planning role and have been considered as part of previous planning consultations eg Core Strategy. These have been noted and forwarded to planning teams. Targets in relation to bringing forward more affordable housing using planning policies have been included in the Action Plan.. Bringing empty homes back into use was considered important and actions relating to this have been included in the Action Plan. Responses to issues relating to private landlords and student accommodation in the city are found in Strategic objective 4.

Key Action	Outcomes	Milestones	Resources	Responsibility
Preparation for delivery of the new housing development at Barton	Delivery programme and agreements in place to develop c.800 new homes, including 320 new affordable  (Affordable element during this Strategy is outlined below)	Area Action Plan adopted Dec 2012.  Outline planning permission by early 2013  Commence on-site in early 2014.	Council owned land at Barton.  £995K in fees in project development (mix of OCC and HCA)	Head of Asset Management



			funding)	
Deliver 3 year affordable housing programme	Deliver 372 affordable homes from 1 April 2012 - March 2015			Head of Asset Management; Head of City Development, Head of Housing & Communities
A provided by Oxford City Council	of which 112 new Council homes	20 homes at Barton 46 homes at Bradlands 46 homes on Miscellaneous City Sites	HCA affordable housing grant funding of £2.42million, £15 million council borrowing, Council owned land.	
B through partnership with Housing Associations	184 affordable homes by March 2015	New homes at Shotover View (55) , Lake St (8) , Lamarsh Road (4), Manor Ground(27), Lanham Way (8), Balfour Rd (9), , Luther Court (42), Butler House (14), Lawn Upton House (8), Leiden Rd (9),	HCA Cross subsidy utilising OCC land	
C through physical regeneration projects at Cowley Northway, to deliver new housing and jobs	76 affordable homes by March 2015	Barns Rd (18), Westland Drive (28) Dora Carr Close (30)	Cross subsidy utilising OCC land	
Develop physical regeneration projects at Blackbird Leys to deliver new housing and jobs	New physical regeneration projects developed at Blackbird Leys	Consultation and involvement with Neighbourhood Management Groups and Area Forums to shape Regeneration Strategy by Autumn 2012	In house officer activity to identify projects and priorities.	Head of Housing and Communities

		<p>Develop Leys Area Action Plan by December 2012</p> <p>Review results of maisonettes options appraisals by December 2012</p> <p>Undertake feasibility analysis and develop schemes by April 2013</p>	Project funding to be identified	
Bring forward new housing schemes and develop a post 2015 programme	New developments and a post 2015 programme are brought forward	<p>Working with developers and landowners, identify and bring forward potential sites as funding and economic circumstances allow</p> <p>Bring forward new affordable housing opportunities in any new transformational projects in the City eg West End sites, Grenoble Road and new allocated sites</p> <p>Development of a post 2015 affordable housing programme.</p>	In house officers , developers and landowners	Head of Housing and Communities, Head of City Development
Review new delivery models to bring forward new affordable housing to meet needs	<p>New models evaluated and introduced where feasible</p> <p>New Council Building House programme evaluated and produced</p> <p>Bring empty property back into use as affordable housing</p>	<p>Review new opportunities and best practice models with partners and communities including Revitalised Right to Buy, Buy Back, Temporary to permanent social housing project, use of New Homes Bonus, new private sector rented property, Community Land Trusts, Community Infrastructure Levy, Community Right to Acquire by Sept 2013</p> <p>Review the role of Oxford City Council in developing new homes by reviewing funding opportunities</p>	Officer time to evaluate. Development of new policies and programmes to be evaluated as part of the reviews	Head of Housing and Communities. Head of City Development, Head of Asset Management

		<p>and flexibilities allowed under new HRA funding regime by September 2012</p> <p>Develop a building programme and development process by April 2013</p> <p>Evaluate potential for schemes to bring empty property back into use as affordable housing</p>		
Ensure robust planning policy exists to drive new social housing including via s106 agreements and deliver sustainable homes	<p>New Sites Plan Document</p> <p>Local Investment Plan</p> <p>New Affordable Housing SPD adopted</p> <p>Policies adopted requiring financial contribution to affordable housing</p>	<p>Submission following consultation by My 2012 for examination Sept/Oct 2012. Adopt and implement the Sites and Housing Development Plan. Document building on SHLAA by Feb 2013</p> <p>Refresh Local Investment Plan for adoption in June 2012</p> <p>Review consultation by Dec 12, adopt April 2013</p> <p>Adopt policies requiring a financial contribution to support affordable housing (4-9 dwellings, student accommodation) by Dec 12, adopt April 2013</p>	Officer time and existing resources	Head of City Development, Head of Housing and Communities
Review intermediate housing products including those for First Time Buyers and those on lower and middle incomes	Housing opportunities for low to mid income households, key workers and first time buyers are explored	Evaluate potential and impact of Shared ownership, lower cost home ownership opportunities, Rent to Buy Intermediate, market and new	In house officer activity plus support from developers, Registered	Head of Housing and Communities

	and brought forward where feasible	private sector rented accommodation with developers, registered providers, purchases and potential purchasers by April 2014	Providers and Private Landlords	
Ensure understanding of current and future housing needs is kept up to date and is fit for purpose	Up to date housing needs and market information	Analyse and provide data from Oxford Housing Register to inform needs data including demand and availability of specialist accommodation and to ensure new housing meets the aspirations of home seekers by Sept 2012 Review current housing market data by Sept 2012 Review census data as it becomes available Explore opportunities for commissioning research, including joint commissioning to improve and update by April 2013	in-house officer activity to consider options  Any commissioning costs to be identified. and funded	Head of Housing & Communities, Head of City Development
Develop a Tenancy Strategy to set out the Council's Policy incorporating tenure and rent policy for affordable housing in the City	Tenancy Strategy adopted	Consultation Draft Tenancy Strategy approved – July12 Consultation - Summer 12 Tenancy Strategy adopted by end 2012	Officer time, within existing resources	Head of Housing and Communities/Strategy and Enabling Manager

**In addition to actions being developed and delivered through Other Strategies and Plans:**

Strategy or Plan	Main aims	Lead	Timescale
Local Investment Plan	To outline and integrate housing, economic development and infrastructure plans for Oxfordshire – to deliver new housing as part of sustainable communities	Oxford City Council with other Oxfordshire Councils	In place – to be refreshed

## Strategic Objective 2: Prevent Homelessness

Homelessness is a significant problem in Oxford as people struggle to attain a home of their own. In recent years, the Council has been successful in preventing homelessness through dedicated teams using a range of housing options and solutions to meet needs. However, increasing pressures on all types of housing but particularly private rented sector are starting to reverse that trend. These pressures are likely to continue and potentially be exacerbated by changes to welfare benefits which will limit household income for housing and other expenses. In addition to Housing Benefit changes, changes to Council Tax benefit will also impact on both individual households and council funding. The main causes of homelessness acceptances are people becoming homeless as a result of family exclusion, loss of a private assured shorthold tenancy followed by domestic violence. The Council is leading on new ways of working and improved pathways as part of the No Second Night Out Policy and these will continue.. Changes to homelessness and allocations legislation will be addressed. A review of homelessness services was undertaken in early 2012 and any actions arising will be developed and brought forward in the new Homelessness Strategy, which will consider both statutory and non statutory homelessness, to ensure we are taking all possible steps to prevent homelessness wherever possible and to provide a range of services and accommodation when households become homeless.

In our consultations, discussions took places about Allocations and Homelessness changes being brought forward via Localism Act. And actions related to this have been included in the Action Plan, Concerns were raised about Impacts of both Supporting People funding reductions and changes to Housing Benefit scope and payments. It is possible that this could risk the viability and operation of some front line hostels and services. These will continue to be kept under review via Strategic Objective 3 to this Strategy and also the new Homelessness Strategy due for 2013. There was also discussion on pathways for rough sleepers and move on accommodation and actions on these have been included within the Action Plan

Key Action	Outcomes	Milestones	Resources	Responsibility
Reduce the number of households in temporary accommodation	Households in temporary accommodation reduced to 120 – 2012/13 100 – 2013/14	Prepare planning and implementation of new forms of temporary accommodation by June 2012	In house resources	Head of Housing & Communities; Housing Needs Manager

	87 – 2014/15			
Develop services to tackle rough sleeping	No Second Night Out for rough sleepers	Implement new working arrangements for street services for more presence out hours – linked to supported provision.	Within current budgets	Head of Community Services/Housing Need Manager
Ensure effective debt and welfare advice services are available to the public debt	Effective debt, welfare advice, services are provided and taken up	Review need and provision of debt and welfare advice/training by April 2013 Develop action plan to address any gaps, unmet needs and maximise take up by Sept 2012	Within existing resources	Head of Housing & Communities Head of Customer Services.
Develop the role of private rented sector housing in meeting housing needs including homeless households or those threatened with homelessness	Annual meeting of landlord forum  Undertake landlord/lettings agencies consultations  Undertake consultations with current and prospective private tenants	Undertake a landlord/lettings agencies survey consultation to understand expectations of private landlords by Sept 2012  Develop information and incentives to encourage private landlords to offer accommodation to homeless households or those threatened with homelessness by April 2013  Undertake consultation with prospective and current private sector tenants to undertake their expectations and barriers to investment and attaining a settled home in the private rented sector. by Dec 2012  Consider introducing a private tenants forum by April 2013	Officer time and consultation within existing resources	Head of Housing & Communities; Head of Environmental Development Housing Needs Manager

	Homelessness Policy reviewed	Develop information and education current and prospective tenants and Investigate the use of Tenant Ready Schemes by November 2013 Review homeless policy in relation to re-housing in private sector and discharge of duty following legislative change and new guidance by September 2012		
Review of allocations policy	New Allocations Policy approved and implemented	Review to commence April 2012 Consultations planned to be completed by Sept 2012 (subject to Government Guidance issued) Completed by December 2012	Officer time within existing resources	Head of Housing and Communities/Housing Needs Manager
Research, consult and adopt a new Homelessness Strategy and Action Plan	New Homelessness Strategy, targets and Action Plan	Review progress since last Strategy – May 2012 Produce evidence base and issues by July 2012 Consultation – July - Sept 2012.. Adopt Dec 2012 Publish – by 31.3.13	Staffing resources	Head of Housing and Communities; Housing Needs Manager; Strategy & Enabling Manager

**In addition to actions being developed and delivered through Other Strategies and Plans:**

Strategy or Plan	Main aims	Lead	Timescale
Oxford City Council Homelessness Strategy	To address the specific homelessness issues in Oxford including how to prevent homelessness, respond where households do become homelessness and to increase housing opportunities	Housing and Communities – Oxford City Council	Current Homelessness Strategy ends in March 2013. New Strategy to be developed to take forward from April 2013

### Strategic Objective 3: Address the Housing Needs of Vulnerable People and Communities

Housing is about more than bricks and mortar. For some people, the keys to the door are not enough and they need support to help them live independent lives and attain a settled home. Much of the housing support is delivered and funded by the Supporting People Programme. This is a challenging time - subject to ongoing change and reductions as the impact of reduced funding, specifically the Supporting People funding, is brought forward. Sensitive reviews and re-modelling of services are underway and will continue throughout 2012-2015. Other households need specialist accommodation suitable for the needs of older and disabled people. For others, issues relate to social inclusion and access to skills, training in and employment. There are other vulnerable groups who have specific housing needs and these will be explored in more detail between 2012-15.

Our consultations identified concerns in relation to move on accommodation – allowing people to move through specialist housing to gain independence – thus freeing up transitional accommodation for those who need it. The need to ensure people could return to suitable independent housing on hospital discharge was also identified. Actions to review these are included in the Action Plan.

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Key Action	Outcomes	Measures	Resources	Responsibility
Ensure commissioning of services for vulnerable people is co-ordinated across agencies and partnerships to ensure the preservation and most effective use of resources and meets identified need	Supporting People Finance Strategy is delivered  Re-commissioning of SP funded services is undertaken  Options analysis of potential reductions of grant is undertaken	Review and implement Supporting People Financial Strategy. by March 2013 .Review and re-commissioning of main SP funded services in City 2012-14. Identify and evaluate options reflecting possibility of reductions	OCC share of funding expected to reduce from £7.29 M to £5.8M by 2015 Grant of £1.042M to be awarded again in 2012/13, and expected to be similar in 2 subsequent years, but need to keep under review	Head of Housing & Communities; Strategy & Enabling Manager (within SP partnership)
Develop housing strategies for specific vulnerable groups	Strategies developed, adopted and are implemented	Young People by April 2013 BME Community by Sept 2013	In house plus any research	Head of Housing & Communities; Strategy & Enabling Manager



		Older People by June 2014 Families in difficulty by December 2014		
Produce housing guides for older and young people.	Older Persons Housing Guide published. Young persons housing guide published	Review existing guides with service users and partners by Dec 2012	Development and consultation - officer time. Production costs within existing resources	Head of Housing & Communities; Strategy & Enabling Manager
Re-model hostel to incorporate assessment centre, new referral and move on pathways	New pathways for rough sleepers implemented	Work with Supporting People Team to review existing provision with providers with the aim of remodelling services within diminished budgets whilst retaining sufficient bedspaces to meet needs and meaningful activity for clients throughout 2012-14	Officer time within existing resources. Implications following review unknown and will need evaluation	Head of Housing and Communities/Housing Needs Manager
Ensure supply of wheelchair adapted housing to meet needs	Wheelchair accessible housing is available for households that need it	Improved knowledge, analysis of need for and provision of fully wheelchair adapted social housing by Sept 2013 Develop plan to meet any shortfall or gaps in provision by Sept 2014	Analysis and understanding within existing officer resources Any need for new provision to be determined	Head of Housing and Communities/Head of Environmental Development/Housing Needs Manager
Ensure housing options are available for people	Supported housing is available for people who	Review Move on Plan Protocol, identify	Review within existing officer resources	Head of Housing and Communities

moving through and from supported housing	need it and clients are enabled to attain independent living	barriers and actions to deal annually		
Ensure hospital discharge is facilitated to reduce 'bed blocking'	Effective hospital discharge mechanisms in place	Review existing hospital discharge protocols, systems and promote awareness – including early warning	Within existing resources	Head of Housing and Communities

In addition to actions being developed and delivered through Other Strategies and Plans:

Strategy or Plan	Main aims	Lead	Timescale
Oxfordshire Supporting People Strategy	To deliver a programme of housing related support throughout Oxfordshire meeting local priorities to allow people to attain or retain independent accommodation	Oxfordshire County Council working with Oxfordshire 2 <sup>nd</sup> tier councils	Current Strategy 2011-16

## Strategic Objective 4: Improve Housing Conditions

Oxford City Council is both the strategic housing authority in the area and a landlord so has an important role to play in improving conditions in all housing in Oxford. There is an extremely high level of private renting in the City and attention is being directed to Houses in Multiple Occupation (HMO) where hazards to households can be most serious and the transient nature of this form of housing can negatively impact on the quality of life for residents and community sustainability. The Council has introduced the most comprehensive HMO strategies in the Country requiring HMOs to be licensed and restrictions placed on new HMOs – enforced by planning regulation. The scheme is intended to take pro-active preventative work to reduce reactive action dealing with individual complaints. There are, however, many families and households living in private rented sector in individual homes and consideration needs to be given to measures to improve standards in the private rented sector as a whole

As a landlord, Oxford City Council has invested in its own homes – undertaking improvement works which have resulted in all homes meeting the Decent Homes Standard. As well as properties being structurally sound and in good repair, bathrooms and kitchens are now modern and homes enjoy good heating and insulation standards. In 2012, changes to funding will unlock new finances for continued improvements to provide even higher standards in council homes.

Our consultations brought forward a debate about the level of intervention and regulation of the private rented sector – some respondents opposed to regulation of HMOs and private rented sector but other supportive of the measures introduced. There were also concerns about student accommodation within the City and the impact of high levels of student housing could have on both other households seeking housing in Oxford and the local communities. The use of planning and housing legislation to manage the level and quality of Houses in Multiple Occupation is intended to help address these issues. Actions have been added to consult further with private landlords and tenants to fully understand issues prior to considering actions to address problems and developing a Tenant Ready Scheme.

Key Action	Outcomes	Milestones	Resources	Responsibility
Increase the number of individual HMOs subject to agreed licence provisions Baseline = 1100 (2011/12)	Every HMO in the City is inspected and accredited	2180 by 2012/13 2950 by 2013/14 3540 by 2014/15	Self-funding scheme form licence fee income costing £3.4 million over 6 years but reducing tackling reactive complaints	Head of Environmental; Development
Improve the quality of	Improvements are made	Review landlord and lettings	Review utilising in	Head of

individual private rented properties including those used via the Homechoice scheme.	to the quality and management of individual private rented properties	agencies accreditation schemes by December 2012 Implement new schemes from April 2013 Consider targeted interventions to tackle specific problems eg Hit Squad activities by November 2012	house officer activity Implementation costs to be identified.	Environmental; Development. Head of Housing & Communities
Maximise take up and impact of Home Improvement Loans.	Home Improvement Loans made available to improve standards in private housing	Ongoing publicity and promotion including partner organisations eg social services, health	Within existing resources and self-financing loan scheme	Head of Environmental Development
Work with owners and communities to bring long term empty homes back into use.	10 long term empty homes returned to use annually  New Empty Homes Strategy adopted	Review progress to date and barriers/opportunities to increase success by Sept 2012 Investigate procedures and if necessary implement the use of Compulsory Purchase Orders by Nov 2012 Undertake consultation and surveys by December 2012 Development new Empty Homes Strategy by April 2013	Officer time for strategy development recycled budget for security works. Capital costs for effecting repairs to homes (recoverable via rental costs) Income via New Homes Bonus	Head of Housing and Communities; Head of Asset Management Empty Property Officer
Ensure knowledge of private housing stock and conditions is fit of purpose enabling strategies and investment to be effective	Fit for Purpose knowledge of housing stock and standards	Review existing date and gaps by Dec 2012 Review available census data by Dec 2012 Recommend methodology to improve by April 2013	In house officer costs  Commissioning and research costs to be identified	Head of Environment Development  Head of Housing and Communities
Improve energy efficiency and reduce carbon emissions in	Develop integrated Home Energy/Fuel Poverty/Retrofitting	Develop officer group and assess current standards, baselines and issues by Sept 2012	Officer time to assess strategy, information needs	Head of Housing & Communities.

homes in Oxford and address fuel poverty for households	<p>strategy/ies</p> <p>Improved energy ratings, lower carbon emissions in housing in the City</p> <p>Retro-fitting strategy and implementation for council housing stock. Including external cladding for 5 tower blocks</p> <p>Zero carbon new build council homes</p>	<p>Consult with partners, residents, energy companies etc by Dec 2012</p> <p>Develop a Strategy to cover issues of home energy, carbon emissions, fuel poverty and retrofitting of homes by April 2013</p> <p>Publicity and awareness Promote Green Deal</p> <p>Develop specific retrofitting element and programmes for Council stock including external cladding for 5 tower blocks (400 homes)</p> <p>Set zero carbon target for all new council homes</p>	<p>and future schemes to be identified</p> <p>Green Deal for existing private homes</p> <p>Housing Revenue Account and borrowing for council homes</p> <p>£8.4 million investment in tower blocks</p> <p>HCA grant plus borrowing for new Council homes</p>	<p>Head of Corporate Assets.</p> <p>Head of Environmental Development.</p> <p>Head of City Planning</p>
Sustain improvements in the condition of council homes	Condition of council housing is continually improved	Evaluate progress made following attainment of Decent Homes Standard, aspirations of tenants, availability of funds to set a Local Oxford Standard for Council homes	Officer time plus any commissioning costs for research/works within HRA and borrowing	<p>Head of Housing Development</p> <p>Head of Housing and Communities</p>

**In addition to actions being developed and delivered through Other Strategies and Plans:**

Strategy or Plan	Main aims	Lead	Timescale
HRA Asset Management Plan	A plan to inform the medium to long term priorities in maintaining and improving the Councils landlord assets – primarily homes but also assets such as land, garages, shops and community facilities	Oxford City Council	In place by September 2013

**Strategic Objective 5: Improve Quality, Cost effectiveness and efficiency of Housing Services.**

With high demands on services and tough financial targets to be met, improving the quality, cost effectiveness and efficiency of our housing services underlines all that we do. Our services will be subject of continued review – endeavouring to cut administration and to offer modern methods of accessing services. Tenant and community involvement will be increasingly important as we review services to council tenants, determining local standards of service and performance and increasing the role of tenants in regulation.

In our consultations, concern was expressed about tenancy fraud and, whilst Oxford City Council already tackles this, it is now specifically noted within the Action Plan

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<b>Key Action</b>	<b>Outcomes</b>	<b>Milestones</b>	<b>Resources</b>	<b>Responsibility</b>
Improve the percentage of council tenants satisfied with our landlord services	82% tenants satisfied 2012/13 84% tenants satisfied 2013/14 86% tenants satisfied 2014/15	Undertake annual survey	Survey costs contained within Housing Revenue Account	Head of Housing & Communities
Develop and improve opportunities for tenants and leaseholders to get involved in managing the delivery (?) of the council's housing services.	Tenant and Leasehold Involvement Strategy adopted  Local Offer agreed and implemented	Develop Tenant and Leaseholder Involvement Strategy by September 2012  Draft Local Offer prepared with tenants representatives including Local Offer Planning Day to define services and set standards by May 2012	£180K annual involvement budget (including staff).	Head of Housing and Communities; Communities and Neighbourhoods Manager/Tenancy Services Manager

		<p>Consultations with all tenants during Spring 2012 Local Offer adopted by September 2012, implemented and reviewed annually in September</p> <p>Tenants trained in co-regulation by Summer 2012 Detailed implementation including role of member and tenant scrutiny by September 2012</p>		
<p>Manage council housing to ensure it best meets the needs of individual households and tenants and the community as a whole</p>	<p>Reduce under occupation freeing up homes for larger households</p> <p>Overcrowding is reduced in council homes</p> <p>Actions to tackle and minimise Tenancy Fraud are up to date and effective</p>	<p>Review under-occupation policies and incentive schemes by December 2012</p> <p>Review over-crowding and allocations/transfer policies by October 2012</p> <p>Review use of pods/extensions to provide enlarge homes for larger households for tenants and prospective tenants by June 2013</p> <p>Review the implications of new Government guidance or legislation on the policies</p>	<p>In house officer time to investigate and new schemes to be funded within the Housing Revenue Account</p>	<p>Head of Housing and Communities/Housing Needs Manager, Tenancy Services Manager</p>

		and work of Tenancy Fraud Team within 4 months of release Publicise		
Review, update and improve housing communications provided by the council.	<p>Housing Communications Plan</p> <p>High quality and relevant housing information is available</p> <p>New style tenants newsletters produced annually</p> <p>New Tenants Handbooks produced</p> <p>Information and on line reporting of repairs is reviewed</p>	<p>A housing communications plan is developed by July 2012 with publications, publicity and website reviewed on rolling programme</p> <p>New tenants and leaseholders newsletter trailed and reviewed with tenants by June 2012</p> <p>Tenants Handbooks reviewed with tenants and new version/s published by April 2013</p> <p>Review use and production of Repairs Handbook, information on website and on line reporting of repairs following fundamental review</p>	Within existing resources - HRA and General Fund Revenue	Head of Housing & Communities; Strategy & Enabling Manager
Develop detailed Landlord Operational Plan to support HRA Business Plan	A detailed Operational Action Plan exists for Council housing	An Operational Action Plan is prepared by Sept 2012 and adopted by Dec 2012	In house officer activity	Head of Housing and Communities
Improve performance in	Improve rent and income	Review income collection by	Within existing	Head of Housing and



tenancy services	collection performance  Reduce rent arrears  Achieve greater VFM for repairs (cost and quality)	November 2012  Undertake fundamental review of repairs service by Dec 2012	resources	Communities/ Tenancy Services Manager
Deliver the Demonstration Project for direct payment of benefits to council tenants	Direct payment of housing benefit to council tenants project successfully completed and lessons learnt	Scoping of project with DWP and partners by May 2012 Tenants contacted and supported with information and assistance Spring 2012 and beyond ICT issues resolved and system live by June 2012 Completion of project by Oct 2013 Roll out to all tenants April 2014	Within agreement with DWP and existing resources	Head of Housing and Communities/Tenancy Services Manager
Review policies and services to reduce administration to secure VFM efficiency savings in housing services	Better access to and lower cost of temporary accommodation  Lower administration costs for low priority housing applications	Implement new temporary accommodation by June 2012  Online housing applications by April 2013  Reduced validation processes for applicants in low housing need by April 2013	Within existing resources	Head of Housing and Communities/Housing Needs Manager

		Improved info on housing advice by April 2014		
Review Housing Strategy targets mid term to ensure they are being delivered and refreshed in light of changing circumstances	Housing Strategy targets are monitored and refreshed	Review performance at end of financial year by July 2013 Consider policy, performance, trends and wider changes by July 2013 Produce progress information, any proposed revisions and consult with partners April to September 2013 Adopt September 2013		Head of Housing and Communities/Strategy and Enabling Manager

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**In addition to actions being developed and delivered through Other Strategies and Plans:**

Strategy or Plan	Main aims	Lead	Timescale
HRA Business Plan 2012-2042	A fully costed and funded 30 year Business Plan setting out overarching objectives and targets for Oxford City Council Housing	Oxford City Council	To be adopted by April 2012
Housing and Communities Service Plan	An annual plan for the Housing and Communities Service at Oxford City Council reviewing past performance, analysing this and future issues and setting out annual tasks and targets	Oxford City Council	Prepared annually





### Housing Strategy (CEB Report 4<sup>th</sup> April 2012): Risk Register

No.	Risk Description Link to Corporate Obj	Gross Risk		Cause of Risk	Mitigation	Net Risk		Further Management of Risk: Transfer/Accept/Reduce/Avoid	Monitoring Effectiveness				Current Risk		
Risk Score <b>Impact Score:</b> 1 =Insignificant; 2 = Minor; 3 = Moderate; 4 = Major; 5 = Catastrophic Almost Certain						<b>Probability Score:</b> 1 = Rare; 2 = Unlikely; 3 = Possible; 4 = Likely; 5 =									
		I	P		Mitigating Control: Level of Effectiveness: (HML)	I	P	Action: Action Owner:  Mitigating Control: Control Owner:	Outcome required: Milestone Date:	Q 1	Q 2	Q 3	Q 4	I	P
1.	Failure to meet the objectives of the Housing Strategy and Action Plan 2012 to 2015.	4	3	Ineffective monitoring of the strategic objective action plans.	Establish clear monitoring process within the Council's structure through relevant Board, Scrutiny and Tenant Involvement Structures	3	2	.							
2.	Changes to housing policy or context and, local, regional and national, making objectives invalid or inappropriate.	3	3	Economic circumstances, government policy and legislation, political changes.	In addition to regular monitoring, review of the strategy and objectives in 2013 to ensure it remains relevant to current circumstances.	3	3	Establish regular and robust monitoring arrangements Strategy and Enabling Manager	Mid point review completed by September 2013						
3.	Negative public understanding / perceptions of housing strategy objectives.	3	3	Failure to communicate objectives and impacts on housing in Oxford.	Establish clear communication strategy for the housing strategy for when it is adopted.	2	3	Ongoing communication and engagement of housing strategy objectives and in particular of individual projects and programmes. Strategy & Enabling Manager	Communication Strategy in place by May 2012.						

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## Equality Impact Assessment: Housing Strategy and Action Plan 2012-15

1. Which group (s) of people has been identified as being disadvantaged by your proposals? What are the equality impacts?

No groups have been identified as being disadvantaged by the Housing Strategy 2012 – 2015 and Action Plan. The strategy and action plan are very specifically targeted at meeting the housing needs of those most vulnerable in Oxford.

2. In brief, what changes are you planning to make to your current or proposed new or changed policy, strategy, procedure, project or service to minimise or eliminate the adverse equality impacts?

Please provide further details of the proposed actions, timetable for making the changes and the person(s) responsible for making the changes on the resultant action plan

As no negative impacts are predicated no changes are being proposed.

3. Please provide details of whom you will consult on the proposed changes and if you do not plan to consult, please provide the rationale behind that decision.

Please note that you are required to involve disabled people in decisions that impact on them

As no changes are proposed because no negative impacts are predicted, no additional consultation relevant to such changes is required.

4. Can the adverse impacts you identified during the initial screening be justified without making any adjustments to the existing or new policy, strategy, procedure, project or service?

Please set out the basis on which you justify making no adjustments

Not applicable as no adverse impacts are predicated.

5. You are legally required to monitor and review the proposed changes after implementation to check they work as planned and to screen for unexpected equality impacts.

Please provide details of how you will monitor/evaluate or review your proposals and when the review will take place

Not applicable

Lead officer responsible for signing off the EqIA: Sheila Farley  
Role: Strategy & Enabling Manager  
Date: March 2012

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# **EXTRACT FROM THE MINUTES**

## **CITY EXECUTIVE BOARD**

**Wednesday 4 April 2012**

### **91. HOUSING STRATEGY - CONSULTATION OUTCOME**

The Head of Housing and Communities submitted a report (previously circulated, now appended).

Resolved:-

- (1) To RECOMMEND Council to adopt into the Council's Policy Framework the Housing Strategy for 2012-2015 that forms Appendix 2 to the report;
- (2) Subject to the adoption by Council of the Housing Strategy, to approve the Housing Strategy Action Plan for 2012-2015 that forms Appendix 3 to the report to deliver the Strategy.

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**To: City Executive Board**

**Date: 4<sup>th</sup> April 2012**

**Report of: Head of Service, Housing and Communities**

**Title of Report: ALLOCATION OF PREVENTING HOMELESSNESS  
GRANT AND OXFORD CITY GRANT FOR  
HOMELESSNESS SERVICES**

### Summary and Recommendations

**Purpose of report:** Oxford City Council has been awarded £1,042,000 Preventing Homelessness Grant from Communities and Local Government's (CLG) Homelessness Directorate for inclusion in its budget allocation for 2012-2013. This is in addition to the Council's own homelessness grant budget of £442,279. This report outlines the allocation of both the Preventing Homelessness Grant funding and the Council's homelessness grant budget to a variety of voluntary sector agencies, with the purpose of meeting the objectives of the Homelessness Strategy.

**Key decision:** No

**Executive lead member:** Councillor Joe McManners

**Policy Framework:** Homelessness Strategy 2008-2013

#### **Recommendation(s):**

1. Recommend Council agree the allocation of the Preventing Homelessness Grant for 2012 – 2013 as follows:

a) Street Services and Reconnection Team (Broadway Homelessness and Support) - £235,000

b) Reconnection and Referral Co-ordinator (Under 25s) (In the process of assigning it to a provider) - £37,245

c) Reconnection Rent (O'Hanlon House) - £512

d) 6 Subsidised Beds for Under 25s (Simon House) - £4,243

e) 6 Subsidised Beds for Under 25s (Lucy Faithful House) - £4,179

f) Mental Health Practitioner at Luther Street – £25,000

g) 2 Education, Training and Employment Workers (Aspire) - £60,519

h) 1 Specialist Alcohol Worker (O'Hanlon House) - £8,555

i) 1 Multiple Needs Hostel worker (Elmore Community Services) - £40,757

j) Service Broker – Big Issue Foundation - £25,000

- k) Homelessness Liaison Police Officer (for two years with an operating budget of £5,000 for each year) - £90,000
- l) Elmore Team ASB Services - £8,690
- m) Additional Home Choice Gold Top-up - £20,000
- n) Continuation of Enhanced Options - £50,000
- o) Fraud Investigation - £80,000
- p) Supplementing Discretionary Housing Payments - £100,000
- q) Unallocated £252,300

2. Recommend the allocation of Oxford City Council's homelessness grant budget for 2012-2013 as follows:

- a) O'Hanlon House Day Centre – homeless hostel for 25+, jointly commissioned with Supporting People - £133,432
- b) One Foot Forward – homeless hostel for 16-25 year olds, jointly commissioned with Supporting People - £42,992
- c) Elmore Community Services – Complex Needs Floating Support Service for clients in Oxford City Council temporary and permanent stock - £40,757
- d) Elmore Community Services, Anti Social Behaviour Service – £11,310
- e) The Gatehouse – café for the homeless - £9,502
- f) Steppin' Stone – day centre providing emergency provision and meaningful activity - £55,000
- g) Simon House Hostel – provision of respite beds at an abstinence based hostel - £11,596
- h) Emmaus Oxford Furniture Store – recycling store attached to the Emmaus Community £25,000
- i) Aspire Oxfordshire – social enterprise providing work opportunities for homeless and ex-homeless people - £112,690
- k) Unallocated – nil

3. Recommend to Council to approve delegated authority to the Head of Service, Housing and Communities to allocate the balance of the Preventing Homelessness Grant (£252,300) and any amendments to the homelessness grants budget

## **Appendices**

Appendix 1 – Risk Register

## **Background**

### **Supporting People Review and No Second Night Out (NSNO)**

1. On 20<sup>th</sup> of February 2012 the Specialist advisor from CLG confirmed our grant funding of £1,042,000. Oxford Council's figure is the same as last year. This is likely to be slightly different in years 2013/14 and 2014/15. However, it is worth noting that there is a possibility in 2013/2014 and 2014/2015 that a formula may be applied nationally to the funding which could impact adversely for Oxford City. The grant will be paid to the Authority as an Area Based Grant entitled "Homelessness Prevention".

2. This is part of the ongoing commitment from CLG to enable work in the field of rough sleeping and homelessness prevention to continue.
3. This additional funding will allow the Oxford City Council to explore certain gaps in the City's provision and further develop our work in the field of No Second Night Out (NSNO), Housing First / Clearing House, assertive outreach continue our sustained drive to reduce rough sleeping to as close to zero as possible by 2012.
4. Supporting People team started their strategic review in June 2011 and have since concluded parts of it which involved supported accommodation within the City boundaries. As a result of their review it has been highlighted that they need to make savings in excess of half a million pound over the next two years. This will leave gaps within services and a high possibility of reduction in beds. Due to this we feel that we need to hold some unallocated funds to assess how changes will impact rough sleeping within the City and commission services accordingly.
5. A further commissioning budget of £442,279 is also currently available from the City Council's own grant funds.
6. In order to deliver all this work, the City Council will explore the strategically relevant opportunities to jointly commission with our partners at Supporting People, the DAAT and the future GP consortia. We have been working with Supporting People over the last year with their strategic review of homelessness services; this ensured that we kept the City Council's interests high on the agenda.
7. In light of the cross-commissioning agenda and cross-strategy advantages, a multi-agency steering group is responsible for advising on and monitoring these budgets. The group comprises of representatives from Oxford City Council, Oxfordshire County Council's Joint Housing Team, Primary Care Trust, Drug and Alcohol Action Team and Oxfordshire County Council's Supporting People Team.

### **Strategic Framework for Commissioning and Funding in 2012-2013**

8. Significant consideration is given to the national rough sleeping strategy entitled "No One Left Out – Communities Ending Rough Sleeping" and "Vision to end rough sleeping: No Second Night Out Nationwide" which signalled a new energy and renewed focus to end rough sleeping by 2012. This document forms the framework for the Council's commissioning and is combined with specific local issues and need in Oxford.
9. Therefore, key objectives for the next 2 years are:-
10. Reduce and sustain the reduction in rough sleeping numbers
  - Assertive outreach

- Reconnection
  - Intensive, targeted and multi-disciplinary services
  - Personalisation and further modernisation of services
  - Focus on young people
  - Tackling rough sleeping amongst new migrants
  - Prevention
  - Enhanced Options
  - Access to the private rented sector for those with lower or no support needs
  - Implement the changes of the Supporting People strategic review and restructure supported accommodation into a Pathway model.
  - Development of a new Internet based database called CHAIN for rough sleepers, which will be accessible by the whole of the homelessness network.
11. Development of a NSNO / Assessment centre (four pledges)
- Identifying and helping rough sleepers off the streets before a second night out
  - The general public and students can alert services if they see anyone sleeping rough on a telephone hotline
  - Rough sleepers can go to a place of safety where their needs can be assessed
  - Rough sleepers can access services they need; rough sleepers from outside can be reconnected with their community and be near family and friends
12. Improving positive activities
- Positive activities that empower and motivate to give hope, build skills, increase confidence and self-esteem and strengthen positive relationships
  - Day centres should be places of engagement, inspiration and involvement drawing on:-
    - neighbourhood links
    - Partnerships with local learning providers
    - Theatre, football and sport
    - Improving skills such as soft skills
    - Managing time and working in teams
    - Information adult learning
    - Formal training and education
13. Tackling worklessness
- Raising expectations and supporting people to get a job
  - Promoting social enterprise
  - Jobs in homelessness services
  - Working hostels/accommodation
14. Improve access to health and social care
- Access to health and social care services
  - Tackling severe, complex and multiple health needs amongst the homeless population

- Joint working between outreach / mental health workers/nurses/addiction nurses
  - Reducing health inequalities and reaching out to excluded groups
  - Childhood trauma and complex needs
15. Service user involvement is an integral part of all services that we fund and commission.
16. Therefore, in terms of commissioning, the following priorities have been identified:-
- An assertive outreach service that incorporates reconnection (including Accession States Migrants (A10s)) and Personalisation
  - A development of No Second Night Out / Assessment centre
  - Further development of social enterprise, education, training and employment opportunities, positive activities and enhanced options
  - Prevention and advice services
  - Continued investment in move-on and the private rented sector.
  - Development of community participation through mentoring and befriending

### **Allocation of the Homelessness Prevention Grant 2012-2013**

17. It is proposed that the following specialist services and posts be funded from the 1<sup>st</sup> April 2012 until 31<sup>st</sup> March 2013:
18. **Street Services and Reconnection Team (Broadway Homelessness and Support)**  
**One FTE Manager, 4 FTE Outreach Workers and 1 FTE Reconnection Worker - £235,000**  
 On 1<sup>st</sup> April 2012 a 3-year contract will be awarded Broadway Homelessness and Support. This contract ends on 31<sup>st</sup> March 2015 but has the option for an additional two years for 2015/16 - 2016/17. There is a break clause within the contract to say that if we fail to secure the Preventing Homelessness Grant than the council have the right to terminate the contract.
19. **One FTE Referral and Reconnection Worker for Under 25s (In the process of assigning it to a new provider)**  
**£37,245**  
 This post has been historically based within the Street Services Team but has not been effective recently. We have decided that this contract would be better suited within a Young person's hostel. The County council will further explore this option. This contract is coming to an end at the end of March 2013 after which we will review on going funding.
20. **Reconnection Rent (O'Hanlon House)**  
**£512**  
 To cover the rent of the Street Services Team's Reconnection Worker who is based at O'Hanlon House.

**21. Two FTE Education, Training and Employment Workers (Aspire Oxfordshire)**

**£60,519**

We are continuing to fund these two posts to further develop Aspire's social enterprises, work placements, employment opportunities and benefits' advice to Oxford's homeless network in order to develop progression pathways into sustainable independent living. Aspire were set a target of becoming self sustaining by the end of March 2013 when funding would be stopped. This allocation is on a yearly basis and the council have the right to terminate funding if the grant is stopped or reduced beyond March 2013.

**22. One FTE Alcohol Specialist Worker (O'Hanlon House) for one quarter £8,555**

Based at O'Hanlon House, this post is to assess the support and resettlement needs of street drinkers accessing the day centre and especially the wet room. The service specification for this post has been refreshed and looks to deliver low threshold work including motivational interviewing, preparation for treatment, identification of training needs, group work development and the identification of best practice in the field of alcohol. We are planning to fund this post for the first quarter of the year and after that O'Hanlon House will incorporate the future costs within their restructure.

**23. One FTE Multiple Needs Worker Hostel Worker (Elmore Community Services)**

**£40,757**

This post is to concentrate on in-reach work with clients placed in the City's hostels to help keep them in accommodation and prevent them from returning to rough sleeping. Elmore Community Services was successful in their bid for the Complex Needs Service, part of the Supported to Independent Living Mental Health Pathway and it is therefore recommended that this post continues with the Elmore. This allocation is on a yearly basis and the council have the right to terminate funding if the grant is stopped or reduced beyond March 2013.

**24. Mental Health Practitioner (Luther Street Medical Centre)**

**£25,000**

This post has continued to be a success and it is recommended that funding in partnership with the Primary Care Trust is continued for this post. We will, however, request that this post is based with the new Street Services Team for 2 days a week. This allocation is on a yearly basis and the council have the right to terminate funding if the grant is stopped or reduced beyond March 2013.



- 25. 6 subsidised beds for under 25s (Simon House)**  
**£4,243**  
To cover the shortfall in service charge for 6 young people who are under 25 years old at Simon House. This allocation is on a yearly basis and the council have the right to terminate funding if the grant is stopped or reduced beyond March 2013.
- 26. 6 subsidised beds for under 25s (Lucy Faithful House)**  
**£4,179**  
To cover the shortfall in service charge for 6 young people who are under 25 years old at Lucy Faithful House. This allocation is on a yearly basis and the council have the right to terminate funding if the grant is stopped or reduced beyond March 2013.
- 27. One FTE Service Broker (Big Issue Foundation)**  
**£25,000**  
This post tackles the lack of engagement of Big Issue sellers with accommodation offers and to improve the partnership working with this organisation. This allocation is on a yearly basis and the council have the right to terminate funding if the grant is stopped or reduced beyond March 2013.
- 28. Specialist Homelessness Liaison Police Officer (Thames Valley Police) £90,000**  
The current post holder is resigning and we are in the process of recruiting another officer in conjunction with TVP. This post is crucial in reducing street numbers, liaising closely with the Street Services Team and other partners within the single homelessness and rough sleepers' network to identify and tackle problematic rough sleeper hot spots, to prevent rough sleeping and anti social behaviour. This post holder will play a major role in the new project No Second Night Out.
- 29. Elmore ASB services - £8,690**  
This project is funded from two different grants, both the Preventing Homelessness Grant and the Oxford City Council grant. This project works with offenders, sex workers and others who are likely to cause anit-social behaviour.
- 30. Development of Enhanced Options - £50,000**  
This will enhance the work that the Housing Options Team can provide and in particular be Debt and EET work & welfare reform impact mitigation
- 31. Fraud Investigation - £80,000**  
This sum is automatically deducted from our total to contribute towards the Fraud Investigation.
- 32. Discretionary Housing Payments - £100,000**  
This money has been allocated to ensure that we can mitigate for the welfare changes.

**33. Additional Home Choice Gold top up - £20,000**

This will provide additional money for the Home Choice scheme. This will allow for better move from within Supported accommodation. This will also allow families and individuals to take up an offer of accommodation without hitting the streets.

**34. Additional Proposals being considered**

Other proposals that are to be considered and further developed in 2012 -2013 are funding for:-

- NSNO / Assessment centre – we are aiming to open up an assessment centre which will double up as a NSNO hub. This will allow the SST to refer clients off the streets rapidly. This will also act as the gateway to access non-statutory supported accommodation.
- Scoping of further social enterprise schemes – we will be keen to explore ideas and schemes with both Aspire and other organisation. The schemes will need to prevent or help sustain tenancies but also allow individuals to learn new skills.

35. Given the uncertainty the changes of the SP review will bring about for supported accommodation projects it is recommended that we do not allocate the full Preventing Homelessness Grant. The remainder (£252,300) will allow the City to respond to these uncertainties. There is a projected savings target of £500k for Supporting People.

36. Where there is opportunity, the funding will be directed to the areas needing development which are referred to in paragraph 31.

**Oxford City Council's Homelessness Grant**

37. A grant allocation of £442,279 has been allocated for the commissioning of homelessness services in 2012-2013.

38. In line with the City Council's prospectus and strategic objective "safer communities/homelessness", OCC are committed to the provision of accommodation, day centre support, a full range of day centre activities and meaningful occupation as well as tenancy sustainment from this grant.

39. It is recommended that the grant allocation be made as follows for 2012 - 2013:-

<b>Organisation and Purpose of Grant</b>	<b>Allocation for 12/13</b>
<b>Young Peoples' Project – One Foot Forward (Bournemouth Churches Housing Association)</b> This grant jointly commissions the service with the County council. The hostel works with young people aged between 18 – 23 years old who are homeless or about to become homeless.	£42,992

<p><b>O'Hanlon House (Oxford Homeless Pathways)</b>  This grant jointly commissions the service with the Supporting People team in the County council. The money specifically commissions the day service that works with vulnerable adults who present with needs such as substance misuse, mental health and alcohol needs. The day service aims to provide a bridge between the services users and other meaningful services such as the GP, Social services, DAAT teams and mental health teams.</p>	<p>£133,432</p>
<p><b>Elmore Community Services</b>  This funds one post within the Elmore team; the post is called a Tenancy Sustainment officer. The officer works with residents of OCC who are finding it difficult to manage their tenancies.</p>	<p>£40,757</p>
<p><b>Elmore Anti-Social Behaviour Services</b>  This amount is in addition to the £8,690 from the Preventing Homelessness Grant. The joint amount provides half a post to work with offenders and sex workers in the community. It aims to reduce the offending level by directing them towards meaningful activities.</p>	<p>£11,310</p>
<p><b>The Gatehouse Café</b>  This provides some core funding to the Gatehouse daycentre. It allows them to open up six evening out of seven to engage with the hard to reach clients that traditionally do not use mainstream services.</p>	<p>£9,502</p>
<p><b>Steppin Stone Day Centre</b>  This provides core funding to the Steppin Stones daycentre. It allows them to work with vulnerable adults who are aiming to get back into training, education and employment. Steppin Stones also provide individuals with an opportunity to train in their social enterprises; their allotment, the daycentre kitchen or the pickle shop. The daycentre is based away from the city centre, which allows for individuals to move away from the street activities such as begging, drinking and other anti-social behaviour.</p>	<p>£55,000</p>

<p><b>Simon House (Respite Beds)</b>  This money allows Simon House to run respite beds, which the County council use to pay for. It allows services users to acclimatise before moving into more settled beds within the hostel.</p>	£11,596
<p><b>Emmaus Oxford Furniture Store</b>  This money supports Emmaus to take in vulnerable individuals into accommodation but also gives them an opportunity to work in their social enterprise.</p>	£25,000
<p><b>Aspire Oxfordshire</b>  Aspire's social enterprises, work placements, employment opportunities and benefits' advice to Oxford's homeless network in order to develop progression pathways into sustainable independent living. Aspire were set a target of becoming self sustaining by the end of March 2013 when funding would be stopped or reduced.</p>	£112,690
	<b>£442,279</b>

### Level of Risk

40. Please see attached matrix (Appendix 1)

### Climate Change/environmental impact

41. There are no significant climate change or environmental impact issues related to this report.

### Equalities Impact

42. All services in receipt of funding are subject to rigorous monitoring which includes equality and diversity.

### Financial Implications

43. The funding allocation for both grants has to be spent by the end of the financial year 2012-2013.

44. This is budget neutral as the line in the budget for the grant will be equal to the allocated spend.

45. There are no other financial implications for the Council arising from this report.

## **Legal Implications**

46. In distributing these grants the Council should ensure that the organisations are clear as to the outcomes that the Council expects to achieve.

## **Staffing Implications**

47. All external staff are employed by external organisations for whom the Council has no liability.
48. There will be quarterly performance monitoring meetings with Oxford City Council's Preventing Homelessness Grant Steering Group to review and ensure the delivery of services, and that outcomes and targets are achieved
49. The Preventing Homelessness Grant funding programme and OCC's homelessness grant will be managed by the existing Rough Sleeping and Single Homelessness Manager in Housing and Communities.

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

Shaibur Rahman

Rough Sleeping and Single Homelessness Manager

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### **List of background papers: None**

**Version number: 4.0**

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<b>2010/2011 Underspend / Carry Forward</b>	<b>£74,309.00</b>
SST Personalisation Pilot	£5,000.00
OCC Community Safety	£16,500.00
OHH additional funding	£11,415.36
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>£52,809.00</b>

Big Issue Carry Forward 6000

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## Preventing Homelessness Grant Allocation 2012 - 2013

£1,042,000	Committed Allocation	Comments
<b>£1,042,000</b>		
<b>Assertive Outreach, Reconnection, Personalisation and Move On</b>		
Street Services Team & Reconnection Team	£235,000.00	plus one contract. May need to claw back because of YP worker
Under 25 Reconnection and Referral Worker	£37,245.00	Transfer to County to pay for YP role for 2010-2013.
Reconnection Pot - O'Hanlon House	£512.00	
6 Young Person Beds at Simon House	£4,243.00	
6 Young Person Beds at Lucy Faithful House	£4,179.00	
Elmore Team ASB Services	£8,690.00	Together with the OCC grant makes £20k.
Homelessness Police officer	£90,000.00	
<b>Improving Mental Health/Complex Trauma</b>		
Mental Health Practitioner	£25,000.00	
Elmore Team In-Reach Hostel Worker	£40,757.00	
<b>Improving Positive Activities</b>		
Big Issue Service Broker Oxford	£25,000.00	
<b>Tackling Worklessness</b>		
ETE Workers - Aspire	£60,519.00	
<b>Improving Access to Health and Social Care</b>		
Specialist Alcohol Worker - O'Hanlon House	£8,555.00	Payment for the 1st quarter only in line with the SP review
<b>Other</b>		
Additional Home Choice Gold Top-up	£20,000.00	
Continuation of Enhanced Options	£50,000.00	Debt and EET work & welfare reform impact mitigation
Fraud Investigation	£80,000.00	Deducted automatically
Supplementing Discretionary Housing Payments	£100,000.00	
<b>Unallocated</b>	<b>£252,300.00</b>	

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## CEB Risk Register – Homelessness Revenue Allocation

No.	Risk Description Link to Corporate Obj	Gross Risk	Cause of Risk	Mitigation	Net Risk	Further Management of Risk: Transfer/Accept/Reduce/Avoid	Monitoring Effectiveness	Current Risk	
Risk Score <b>Impact Score:</b> 1 =Insignificant; 2 = Minor; 3 = Moderate; 4 = Major; 5 = Catastrophic <b>Probability Score:</b> 1 = Rare; 2 = Unlikely; 3 = Possible; 4 = Likely; 5 = Almost Certain									
1.	Reduction in funding to homelessness services due to cuts to the Supporting People budget	4	4	Cuts to the Supporting People budget	On-going input at SP commissioning body.  Withholding a significant allocation of the Preventing Homelessness grant to potentially cover essentially gaps	2	2	Action: Reduce. Action Owner: Shaibur Rahman  Mitigating Control: Reduce Control Owner: Shaibur Rahman  Outcome required: Funding guaranteed.  Milestone Date: 1 <sup>st</sup> April 2012	Q1 Q2 Q3 Q4 I P
2.	Inability to spend the large amount of unallocated funding	3	3	Money is being held back pending SP budget settlement.	Should SP budget not be cut then there is a list of areas of development in the single homeless field that needs addressing	2	2	Action: Reduce. Action Owner: Shaibur Rahman  Mitigating Control: Reduce Control Owner: Shaibur Rahman  Outcome required: Funding allocated.  Milestone Date: March 2013	

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# EXTRACT FROM THE MINUTES

## CITY EXECUTIVE BOARD

Wednesday 4 April 2012

### 91. PREVENTING HOMELESSNESS GRANT ALLOCATIONS TO COMMUNITY AND VOLUNTARY ORGANISATIONS - 2012/13

The Head of Housing and Communities submitted a report (previously circulated, now appended).

Resolved:-

- (1) To RECOMMEND Council to allocate the Communities and Local Government's Homelessness Directorate grant and to decide in the Board's own right to allocate the Council's budget for the purpose of meeting the Council's homelessness objectives as follows:-

#### Communities and Local Government's Homelessness Directorate grant

- (a) Street Services and Reconnection Team (Broadway Homelessness and Support) - £235,000
- (b) Reconnection and Referral Co-ordinator (Under 25s) (in the process of assigning it to a provider) - £37,245
- (c) Reconnection Rent (O'Hanlon House) - £512
- (d) Six subsidised Beds for Under 25s (Simon House) - £4,243
- (e) Six subsidised Beds for Under 25s (Lucy Faithful House) - £4,179
- (f) Mental Health Practitioner at Luther Street – £25,000
- (g) Two Education, Training and Employment Workers (Aspire) - £60,519
- (h) One specialist Alcohol Worker (O'Hanlon House) - £8,555
- (i) One Multiple Needs Hostel worker (Elmore Community Services) - £40,757
- (j) Service Broker – Big Issue Foundation - £25,000
- (k) Homelessness Liaison Police Officer (for two years with an operating budget of £5,000 for each year) - £90,000
- (l) Elmore Team ASB Services - £8,690
- (m) Additional Home Choice Gold Top-up - £20,000
- (n) Continuation of Enhanced Options - £50,000

(o) Fraud Investigation - £80,000

(p) Supplementing Discretionary Housing Payments - £100,000

City Council's Homelessness Grants budget

(a) O'Hanlon House Day Centre – homeless hostel for 25+, jointly commissioned with Supporting People - £133,432

(b) One Foot Forward – homeless hostel for 16-25 year olds, jointly commissioned with Supporting People - £42,992

(c) Elmore Community Services – Complex Needs Floating Support Service for clients in Oxford City Council temporary and permanent stock - £40,757

(d) Elmore Community Services, Anti Social Behaviour Service – £11,310

(e) The Gatehouse – café for the homeless - £9,502

(f) Steppin' Stone – day centre providing emergency provision and meaningful activity - £55,000

(g) Simon House Hostel – provision of respite beds at an abstinence based hostel - £11,596

(h) Emmaus Oxford Furniture Store – recycling store attached to the Emmaus Community £25,000

(i) Aspire Oxfordshire – social enterprise providing work opportunities for homeless and ex-homeless people - £112,690

(2) That the Head of Housing and Communities be given delegated authority to allocate the £252,300 unallocated balance of the Communities and Local Government grant money and to make changes if necessary to the allocations of the City Council's homelessness grants budget.

To: City Executive Board

Date: 4<sup>th</sup> April 2012

Report of: Head of Service, Housing and Communities

Title of Report: ANNUAL LETTINGS PLAN – ALLOCATIONS PERCENTAGES  
2012/13

## Summary and Recommendations

**Purpose of report:** To recommend the approval of the proposed percentage targets for the allocation of social housing in 2012/13.

**Key decision?** No

**Executive lead member:** Councillor Joe McManners

**Policy Framework:**

Corporate Plan strategic priority of “Meeting Housing Needs”

**Recommendation(s):**

1. Note the performance against the Lettings Plan in Appendix 1 for 2011/12 (1<sup>st</sup> April 2011 to 31<sup>st</sup> January 2012)
2. Recommend the proposed Annual Lettings Plan in Appendix 2 for 2012/13 for approval by Full Council

Appendices to report:

Appendix 1: Community Housing – Allocation Percentages & Performance April 2011 to January 2012

Appendix 2: Proposed Lettings Plan for 2012/13

Appendix 3: A *guide* of the Housing Need Priority Bands

Appendix 4: Risks reviewed

## **Introduction & background**

1. The Annual Lettings Plan is designed to set allocation percentages, which are targets, set by the Council, to determine the proportion of social housing offered to different lists within The Council's Housing Register. The current Lettings Plan was agreed on 18/4/11 by full Council and is shown in Appendix 1 together with performance up to the 31/1/12.
2. The performance against the annual lettings plan is monitored each month by the Allocations Manager. These figures are reported quarterly to the Communities and Partnership Scrutiny Committee with an explanation of any variance from expected performance.
3. Factors taken into account in setting the targets for the Annual Lettings Plan for 2012/13 include:-

### **Supply:**

- The number of properties that are expected to become available to let during the year (consisting of re-lets and new build properties)
- The proportion of properties expected to become available to let for single-applicants and couples, including designated elderly (55+) and sheltered accommodation
- The proportion of two-bedroom, three-bedroom and four-bedroom properties or larger that are expected to become available to let

### **Demand:**

- The number of applicants in assessed housing need on each Housing List waiting for one-bed, two-bed, three-bed and four-bedroom properties or larger

### **The Council's Corporate Priority of:**

- "Meeting Housing Needs"

### **The Council's Objective To:**

- "Reduce the number of households in Oxford temporary accommodation to 130 by the end of 2011/12"

4. Although the Annual Lettings Plan does not produce more affordable housing stock it is concerned with the effective allocation of social housing. The total stock expected to become available to let during 2012/13 is estimated to be around 550 properties (see Appendix 2) around 100 properties less than in 2011/12. This total consists of the expected number of re-lets, based on past lettings performance over the last year, and the total number of new properties expected to be built during the forthcoming year. The number of properties



becoming available to let during 2012/13 will be lower than in previous years because only 87 properties (10 general needs, 55 Extra Care Sheltered and 22 shared ownership properties) are expected to be built in Oxford during the year 2012/13. Only the general needs properties consisting of 4 one-bedroom flats and 6 two-bedroom flats are included in the 550 properties becoming available in 2012/13 because only these properties will be let through the Allocations Scheme. The Extra Care sheltered properties will be let through an accommodation panel and the shared ownership properties will be let through Catalyst the zone agent for Shared Ownership.

5. There are many factors affecting the number of new properties being built in the City, including the current economic climate and the lack of space within the city boundaries. The Council is currently consulting on the Sites and Housing Development Plan regarding a number of sites in the City that have been identified as potential development opportunities for the future.
6. Based on the estimated number of properties expected to become available in 2012/13, approximately:
  - 45% of the properties will be allocated to families in housing need
  - 17% of the properties will be allocated to single applicants or couples in housing need who are under 55
  - 38% of the properties will be allocated to single applicants or couples in housing need requiring designated elderly accommodation (for applicants aged 55+) or requiring sheltered accommodation

### **Demand – Housing Register Waiting Lists**

7. During 2011/12, over 600 households in housing need, will be re-housed by the Council through the Allocations Scheme. However, despite this success, the number of households on the Housing Register still remains high and due to the number of applicants joining the Housing Register since last year the number on the Housing Register has increased to almost 6000.

The Housing Register consists of three-separate housing lists:-

- **The Homeless List** for applicants to whom Oxford City Council has accepted a statutory homeless duty and placed in temporary accommodation who are waiting an offer of permanent accommodation
- **The Transfer List** for Council and eligible Housing Association Tenants living in Oxford applying for a move to alternative accommodation
- **The General Register List** for all other households applying for social housing in Oxford

8. The table below compares the total number of applicants on the Housing Register currently compared to the same time last year by housing list and shows the number of applicants on the Housing Register has increased. However, the number of applicants on the homeless list has decreased due to the number of homeless applicants being re-housed during 2011/12 and the homeless prevention work undertaken by the Housing Needs Team and other stakeholders.

	<b>General Register List</b>	<b>Homeless List</b>	<b>Transfer List</b>	<b>Total</b>
<b>January 2011</b>	<b>3710</b>	<b>126</b>	<b>1515</b>	<b>5351</b>
<b>January 2012</b>	<b>4297</b>	<b>106</b>	<b>1590</b>	<b>5993</b>

9. The table below shows a profile of the Housing Register by waiting list and minimum housing requirement in January 2011 and shows the number of:
- Single applicants and couples under 40 waiting for one-bedroom (non-family) accommodation
  - Single applicants and couples aged 40 years or older eligible for one-bedroom (non-family) designated elderly or sheltered accommodation
  - Families requiring a minimum of a two-bedroom, three-bedroom or four-bedroom or larger property

#### **January 2011**

<b>Minimum Bedroom Size*</b>	<b>General Register List</b>	<b>Homeless List</b>	<b>Transfer List</b>	<b>Total</b>
<b>Non-Family (Singles/Couples)</b>				
One-Bed	1242	26	89	<b>1357</b>
One-Bed Designated Elderly/Sheltered	1033	2	422	<b>1457</b>
<b>Family Accommodation</b>				
Two-Bed	968	76	510	<b>1554</b>
Three-Bed	347	19	367	<b>733</b>
Four+Bed	120	3	127	<b>250</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>3710</b>	<b>126</b>	<b>1515</b>	<b>5351</b>

10. The table below shows a profile of the Housing Register by waiting list and minimum housing requirement in January 2012 and shows the number of:
- Single applicants and couples under 55 waiting for one-bedroom (non-family) accommodation
  - Single applicants and couples aged 55 years or older eligible for one-bedroom (non-family) designated elderly or sheltered accommodation

- Families requiring a minimum of a two-bedroom, three-bedroom or four-bedroom or larger property

## January 2012

Minimum Bedroom Size*	General Register List	Homeless List	Transfer List	Total
<b>Non-Family (Singles/Couples)</b>				
One-Bed (Aged Under 55)	2059	23	227	<b>2309</b>
One-Bed (Aged 55+ eligible for Designated Elderly & or Sheltered Accommodation)	475	0	310	<b>785</b>
<b>Family Accommodation</b>				
Two-Bed	1185	69	515	<b>1769</b>
Three-Bed	426	9	403	<b>838</b>
Four+Bed	152	5	135	<b>292</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>4297</b>	<b>106</b>	<b>1590</b>	<b>5993</b>

### Minimum Bedroom Size\*

11. The figures above are based on the minimum bedroom size a household requires. For example households shown as requiring a minimum of a two-bedroom property often have two children and so are eligible to request a move to a three-bedroom property. So although the Transfer List shows 515 tenants as requiring a minimum of a two-bedroom property, around 150 are also eligible for a three-bedroom property and wanting to move to larger accommodation.

### Demand V Housing Need

12. The demand for social housing in Oxford continues to greatly exceed the number of properties that will become available. Despite there being almost 6000 households on the Housing Register waiting lists only around 550 properties will become available to let during 2012/13. Consequently, many applicants on the housing register are unlikely to be allocated a property in the foreseeable future and are actively encouraged to consider other housing options such as securing alternative accommodation in the private sector.

13. Although the number of applicants on the Housing Register clearly demonstrates there continues to be a high demand for affordable housing in Oxford these figures cannot be looked at without considering the degree of housing need on each waiting list.

## Housing Need

14. Due to the high demand for affordable Housing in Oxford and the limited amount of properties that become available it is necessary for the Council to prioritise applications for housing based on applicants housing need. The Council's Allocations Scheme uses Priority Bands, to assess applicants housing needs and to prioritise applicants for housing. There are five priority Bands, ranging from Band 1 (high housing need) down to Band 5 (low or no housing need). The table below shows a summary of the number of applicants in each priority band on each Housing List. Appendix 3 shows a guide to the housing need priority bands (full details are shown in the Allocations Scheme).

Housing Need Priority Band	The Number of Applicants In Each Band By Housing List (January 2012)		
	General Register List	Homeless List	Transfer List
Band 1	6		24
Band 2	77	106	262
Band 3	1019		456
Band 4	64		109
Band 5	3131		739
<b>Total</b>	<b>4297</b>	<b>106</b>	<b>1590</b>

## Homeless List

15. Applicants to whom Oxford City Council has accepted a statutory homeless duty and placed in temporary accommodation, waiting an offer of permanent accommodation, are all considered to be in high housing need. The Council currently has 140 households in temporary accommodation (as of 31<sup>st</sup> January 2012) and has accepted a statutory homeless duty to 106 of these households.
16. The Corporate Plan states the Council will aim to "reduce the number of households in temporary accommodation to 130 by the end of 2011/12". This is a challenging target in the current economic climate, particularly with the changes to the Broad Market Rental Area used to calculate local housing allowance levels in the City and reductions in housing benefit levels that are coming into affect this year. However, despite these factors the Housing Needs Team has successfully reduced the number of households in temporary accommodation since 31/1/11 by 15 households (against national trends) and continues to work closely with households and families threatened with homelessness. By reducing the number of households in temporary accommodation the Council will be able to produce budget savings through reductions in temporary accommodation costs

## Allocation Percentages to the Homeless List

17. As part of a planned reduction, the number of properties allocated to the homeless list has been gradually reduced over previous years as the numbers

of households in homeless temporary accommodation have been reduced. However, although the number of applicants on the Homeless List has decreased it is still necessary to ensure that sufficient properties are allocated to this list. The Council must ensure that the housing needs of the applicants remaining in temporary homeless accommodation are met and sufficient properties will be available for applicants who cannot be prevented from becoming homeless over 2012/13, and this is reflected in the recommendations of this report. Due to the current economic climate and challenges faced by the housing needs team in preventing homeless against the back ground of changes nationally to welfare benefits and housing benefits it is not proposed that the percentage of properties allocated to homeless applicants is reduced further during 2012/13. However, if the number of households in homeless temporary accommodation with a one-bedroom housing need continues to fall it should be possible to allocate more one-bedroom properties to single applicants or couples in housing need on the Transfer and General Register waiting lists.

### **The Transfer List**

18. There are over almost 1600 tenants on the Transfer List applying for re-housing and although over half are in Bands 4 and 5, and are considered to be in no or low housing need and to be adequately accommodated. There are still almost 800 households in high or significant need in Band 1 to 3 high housing that would benefit from a move to more suitable accommodation.

### **Allocation Percentages to the Transfer List**

19. There are 510 tenants on the transfer list with a minimum of a one-bedroom housing need, 227 tenants are under 55 and 310 are aged over 55. However, 80% of the tenants aged under 55 and 65% of the tenants aged 55 years or older are considered to have no or low housing need and are in Bands 4 or 5. Although there are tenants in high housing need that would benefit from a move due to health or welfare reasons or because they are seeking to downsize from accommodation which they are under-occupying, the current percentage of properties allocated to the Transfer List is considered to reflect this need. Balanced against the needs of applicants with a one-bedroom housing need on the Homeless and General Registers there are no proposed changes to the percentage of properties allocated to tenants on the Transfer List with a one-bedroom housing need.

20. There are currently plans underway to re-develop Luther Court a block owned by A2Dominion in the City Centre. The block currently consists of mainly one-bedroom flats but A2Dominion is planning to re-develop the block into a mix of one-bedroom and two-bedroom properties. The re-development of the block will mean A2Dominion will need to decant the existing tenants from the block. This has already started and A2Dominion have re-housed a number of tenants already into their own stock. However, if the plans for the re-development are agreed during 2012-13 this will require a number of tenants be awarded high priority to move via the Transfer List and more

properties to be offered to applicants with a one-bedroom need than currently planned.

21. There are around 170 households on the Transfer List considered to be in high or significant housing need (Bands 1 to 3) waiting to move to a two-bedroom property because their current accommodation no longer meets their housing requirements. The percentage of properties allocated to applicants on the Transfer List with a two-bedroom housing need was increased by 5% last year to help meet this housing need. However, due the low number of two-bedroom properties becoming available there is still much unmet on the Homeless and General Register lists for applicants waiting for two-bedroom properties. So it is not proposed the percentage of properties allocated to tenants on the Transfer List for two-bedroom properties is changed this year.
22. Overcrowding is an issue for many families on the Transfer List, particularly those waiting for larger three and four-bedroom family accommodation. There are currently over 290 families in significant or high housing need (Bands 1 to 3) waiting to move to a three-bedroom property and over and 120 families waiting for a four-bedroom property on the Transfer List. However, this level of need is already reflected in the current targets of allocating 45% of all three-bedroom properties and 50% of all four-bedroom properties to Transfer applicants. It is therefore proposed that the percentages of such properties offered to the Transfer list remain unchanged.

### **The General Register List**

24. There are currently almost 4300 households on General Register waiting list. Although around 75% are considered to be in no or low housing need (Bands 4 and 5) currently, 25% of the households on the General Register List, around a 1000 households are considered to be in high or significant housing need (Bands 1 to 3) and require alternative accommodation.

### **Allocation Percentages to the General Register List**

25. The General Register List currently has the highest proportion of single applicants and couples who are under fifty five and waiting for a one-bedroom (non-designated elderly) property. This includes over 440 single applicants & couples who are in significant or high housing need (Bands 1 to 3). There are also over 60 single applicants, and some couples, who are aged 55 years or older in significant or high housing need (Bands 1 to 3) on the General Register List. However, the current targets are considered to reflect the housing need on the General Register List when balanced against the needs of applicants on the Homeless and Transfer Lists so no changes are proposed.
26. The General Register List has around 352 households, in high or significant housing need (Bands 1 to 3), waiting for two-bedroom accommodation. However, the current allocation target of 50% accurately reflects the proportion of such households on the General Register when compared to the housing need across all three waiting lists, and consequently there are no proposed changes to alter these percentages in 2012/13.

27. The demand for three and four-bedroom accommodation remains high across all three housing lists. Based on the limited number of properties expected to become available during 2012/13 the current allocation percentages for such properties considered to accurately reflect the spread of need across the three lists, and there are no proposed changes to the existing targets.

### **Sub-Regional Allocations**

28. Since July 2009, The Council, in partnership with The Vale of the White Horse, Cherwell and South Oxfordshire District Councils, has participated in a Sub-Regional Allocations Scheme called Oxfordshire Home Choice. The aim of the partnership is to give households in housing need more choice about where they can live within the Sub-Region. Through Choice-Based Lettings, applicants in each District can bid for some properties advertised as available from outside of their own District.

29. Each participating Council, uses the same priority bands to assess applicants' housing needs, to ensure that applicants in similar circumstances will have their housing needs assessed in a consistent way, irrespective of which Council's Housing List an applicant is registered on.

30. The sub-regional partners have previously agreed to advertise a proportion of available properties through the scheme each year, and it is proposed that this proportion remains unchanged in 2012/13 (see appendices 1 & 2). The number of households being housed by each District through sub-regional moves is reviewed regularly, and where necessary, the number of properties advertised sub-regionally can be reduced to ensure that a balance is kept between the number of households moving into Oxford compared with the number being housed elsewhere in the Sub-Region. The current agreement expires in July 2012. All four Council's in the sub-regional partnership will review whether to continue the scheme by this date. Due to the low number of applicants who have moved sub-regionally an option the Council may need to consider is whether to withdraw or partially withdraw from the sub-regional allocations scheme and only use the scheme for high needs such as place of safety cases who need assistance in moving out the area they are currently living in to elsewhere in the sub-region.

### **Level of risk**

31. The risks identified in Appendix 4 will be recorded in the risk register and monitored closely throughout the year.

### **Climate change/ environmental impact**

32. It is expected around 87 new units of affordable housing will be built during 2012/13 (only 10 will be social housing) to help meet the demand for affordable housing in Oxford. The Development Team has confirmed all the

new build properties will achieve the standard of housing required by the Housing and Communities Agency and some Registered Providers will achieve a higher level than required (Sustainable Homes Level 4).

### **Equalities impact**

33. The Housing Needs Team will continue to seek to identify housing applicants within BME groups and with disabilities that are in high housing need. Effective monitoring systems will ensure any shift in allocations do not indirectly discriminate against BME groups and/or applicants with disabilities. Currently, around 23% of the households on the Housing Register state they are in a BME group, although 19% of the General Register list have not stated their ethnicity, based on those that have stated their ethnicity the number of households in BME groups is similarly reflected across all three housing lists.
34. The Allocations Team will continue to monitor applicants in high housing need who are “not bidding” to ensure they receive the support necessary to use the Choice-Based Lettings (CBL) scheme. The development team will continue to seek to ensure that when new properties are built within Oxford that a proportion, are suitable for applicants with disabilities.

### **Financial implications**

35. The current targets for allocations to the Transfer List will ensure that there continues to be social housing becoming available to re-let each year and seeks to make the best use of available stock. Although there will be associated costs with turning around void properties, as tenants move to more suitable accommodation and vacate their current accommodation, these will be offset by the properties becoming available and costs of private sector alternatives being reduced. Any properties that are re-let will be let at target rent levels and this will maximise the revenue into the Housing Revenue account and benefit all tenants.
36. The cost to the Council of homeless temporary accommodation will be reduced by continuing to allocate a large proportion of properties to the General Register List, including allocations to households who might otherwise have become homeless and been placed in homeless temporary accommodation provided by the Council. However, despite homeless prevention measures that are being put in place the likelihood of an increase in the number of applicants presenting as homeless, and subsequently being accepted as homeless and placed in temporary accommodation, cannot be totally discounted resulting in increased costs. Should this be the case, the Lettings Targets can be reviewed during the year to respond to the new situation.

### **Legal implications**

37. Whilst a Council can decide its own allocations policy it must give ‘reasonable preference’ to certain groups such as homeless people, people in temporary or insecure accommodation, people in overcrowded or unsanitary conditions,



and those with medical/welfare needs). (See Housing Act 1996 S.167). How it meets these 'reasonable preferences' and the mechanics of the scheme are up to each Council.

38. Allocations can only be made in accordance with the published policy. The annual lettings plan forms part of Oxford City Council's overall allocations scheme. The Allocations Scheme will be reviewed during 2012/13 to take into account the new changes in legislation introduced by the Localism Act and the new code of Allocations code of guidance currently being drafted by the Government.

**Name and contact details of author:**

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Housing & Communities

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**Background papers:**

None

**Version number:**

4th

**Appendix 1: Community Housing – Allocation Percentages & Performance (1)  
of (2)**

**1<sup>st</sup> April 2011 to 31<sup>st</sup> January 2012**

**Family and Non-Designated Accommodation**

<b>Family Accommodation</b>							
<b>Property Size</b>		<b>Homeless</b>		<b>Transfer</b>	<b>General</b>	<b>TOTAL</b>	
<b>Two Bed</b>	Percentage	40.6%	0.0%	15.0%	44.4%		
	Target	30%	0	20%	50%		
	Let	54	0	20	59	<b>133</b>	
	Expected lets	57	0	38	95	<b>190</b>	
<b>Three Bed</b>	Percentage	35.0%	0.0%	42.5%	22.5%		
	Target	30%	0	45%	25%		
	Let	28	0	34	18	<b>80</b>	
	Expected lets	28	0	42	24	<b>94</b>	
<b>Four Bed+</b>	Percentage	0.0%	0.0%	72.7%	27.3%		
	Target	30%	0	50%	20%		
	Let	0	0	8	3	<b>11</b>	
	Expected lets	3	0	5	2	<b>10</b>	
<b>Non-Family (Non-Designated) Accommodation</b>							
<b>Property Size</b>		<b>Homeless</b>	<b>Move-on 1</b>	<b>Move-on 2</b>	<b>Transfer</b>	<b>General</b>	<b>TOTAL</b>
<b>Studio flat / One Bed</b>	Percentage	15.6%	22.1%	9.1%	22.1%	31.2%	
	Target	25%	30%	10%	10%	25%	
	Let	12	17	7	17	24	<b>77</b>
	Expected lets	27	32	11	11	27	<b>108</b>

**Appendix 1: Community Housing – Allocation Percentages & Performance (2) or (2)**

**Designated Elderly and Sheltered Accommodation;**

Designated Elderly Accommodation (55+)							
Property Size		Homeless	Move-on 1	Move-on 2	Transfer	General	TOTAL
Any Size	Percentage	4.6%	3.7%	0.0%	91.7%		
	Target	5%	15%	0%	80%		
	Let	5	4	0	99		108
	Expected lets	6	18	0	96		120
Sheltered Accommodation							
Property Size		Homeless	Move-on	Transfer	General	TOTAL	
Any Size	Percentage	3.4%		96.6%			
	Target	no target		no target			
	Let	2		56			58
	Expected lets	0		60			60
<b>Total allocations:</b>		<b>532</b>	+17 CBL sub-regional* = 549				
<b>Expected allocations:</b>		<b>603</b>	at year end				

**Summary of the Target for Properties Advertised Sub-Regionally\* through Oxfordshire Homechoice:**

- Up to 10% of all general needs housing vacancies
- Up to 100% of sheltered vacancies
- Most properties adapted for disabled people (Including up to 100% of all properties with adaptations to mobility 3 or 4 levels)

**Appendix 2: Proposed Lettings Plan for 2012/13 (1) of (2)**

<b>Family Accommodation</b>						
<b>Property Size</b>	<b>Expected Lets</b>	<b>Proposed Target % (Expected households housed)</b>				
		<b>Homeless</b>	<b>Move-on</b>	<b>Transfer</b>	<b>General</b>	
<b>Two Bed</b>	160	30% (48)	0	20% (32)	50% (80)	
<b>Three Bed</b>	78	30% (23)	0	45% (35)	25% (20)	
<b>Four Bed+</b>	9	30% (3)	0	50% (4)	20% (2)	
<b>Non-Family (Non-Designated) Accommodation</b>						
<b>Property Size</b>	<b>Expected Lets</b>	<b>Proposed Target % (Expected households housed)</b>				
		<b>Homeless</b>	<b>Move-on</b>	<b>Move-on 2</b>	<b>Transfer</b>	<b>General</b>
<b>One Bed</b>	95	25% (23)	30% (29)	10% (10)	10% (10)	25% (23)

## Appendix 2: Proposed Lettings Plan for 2012/13 (2) of (2)

Designated Elderly Accommodation & Bungalows					
Property Size	Expected Lets	Proposed Target % (Expected households housed)			
		Homeless	Move-on	Transfer	General
Any Size	115	5% (6)	15% (17)	80% (92)	
Sheltered Accommodation					
Property Size	Expected Lets	Proposed Target % (Expected households housed)			
		Homeless	Move-on	Transfer	General
Any Size	90	0%		100% (90)	

### Summary Target for Properties Advertised Sub-Regionally through Oxfordshire Home Choice:

- Up to 10% of all general needs housing vacancies
- Up to 100% of sheltered vacancies
- Most properties adapted for disabled people (Including up to 100% of all properties with adaptations to mobility 3 or 4 levels)

## **Appendix 3: A guide of the Housing Need Priority Bands**

### **BAND 1**

- 1.1 Exceptional circumstances, where there is an immediate risk to health and safety, complex needs, 'place of safety' cases or other emergency needs
- 1.2 Council or housing association tenants in the sub-region under-occupying by two or more bedrooms
- 1.3 Decants and other housing management moves
- 1.4 Successor tenants who need to move to a more suitable property
- 1.5 A Prohibition/demolition notice has been issued by the Environmental Health department
- 1.6 Households where the level of overcrowding exceeds the statutory limit

### **BAND 2**

- 2.1 Urgent social or welfare needs
- 2.2 Urgent health or disability needs
- 2.3 Council or housing association tenants in the sub-region under-occupying by one bedroom
- 2.4 Applicants who have been assessed as ready to move on from supported accommodation
- 2.5 Applicants found to be homeless, in a priority need group and a duty to offer housing has been accepted
- 2.6 Families assessed as being 2 or more bedrooms short of their needs
- 2.7 Any applicant with two or more compoundable categories in Band 3

### **BAND 3**

- 3.1 Significant social or welfare needs
- 3.2 Significant health or disability needs
- 3.3 Applicants living in unsatisfactory housing: Level 1
- 3.4 Families assessed as being one bedroom short of their needs
- 3.5 Insecure tied accommodation
- 3.6 Insecure private rented accommodation
- 3.7 Homeless and not in a priority group\*
- 3.8 Any applicant who qualifies for at least two categories in Band 4

### **BAND 4**

- 4.1 Moderate social or welfare needs
- 4.2 Moderate health or disability needs
- 4.3 Applicants living in unsatisfactory housing: Level 2

### **BAND 5**

- 5.1 Applicants who are adequately housed
- 5.2 Applicants who have sufficient income or other financial resources
- 5.3 Nil priority (Applicants who are the subject of sanctions because of their behaviour)

*\*This category is not compoundable*

(The details listed above are only intended as a guide – full details are shown in the Allocations Scheme).

Appendix 4:

Risk ID	Risk						Corporate Objective	Gross Risk		Residual Risk		Current Risk		Owner
Category-000-Service Area Code	Risk Title	Opportunity/Threat	Risk Description	Risk Cause	Consequence	Date raised	1 to 6	I	P	I	P	I	P	
CEB-001-HC	A shortfall in new affordable housing	T	Less affordable housing being built during 2012/13 than expected.	Housing Developments not being completed on time during 2012/13	Less properties becoming available to let during 2012/13 than expected	28/2/2012	Meeting Housing Needs	2	1	1	1	2	1	The Affordable Housing Team

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Risk ID	Risk						Corporate Objective	Gross Risk		Residual Risk		Current Risk		Owner
Category-000-Service Area Code	Risk Title	Opportunity/Threat	Risk Description	Risk Cause	Consequence	Date raised	1 to 6	I	P	I	P	I	P	
CEB-002-HCD	Homeless acceptances are higher than expected	T	The Council accepts a homeless duty to more homeless households than expected during 2012/13	A continued decline in the economic climate	(1) Temporary accommodation costs are higher than expected for 2012/13 (2) Impacting on the likelihood of meeting 2013 Corporate temporary accommodation target	28/2/2012	Meeting Housing Needs	2	3	2	2	2	3	The Affordable Housing Team



# **EXTRACT FROM THE MINUTES**

## **CITY EXECUTIVE BOARD**

**Wednesday 4 April 2012**

### **91. ANNUAL LETTINGS PLAN - ALLOCATIONS PERCENTAGE 2012/13**

The Head of Housing and Communities submitted a report (previously circulated, now appended).

Resolved:-

- (1) To RECOMMEND Council to agree the Housing Lettings Plan for 2012/13 as set out in Appendix 2 to the report;
- (2) To note performance against the Housing Lettings Plan for 2011/12 as set out in Appendix 1 to the report;
- (3) To ask the Strategic Director, City Regeneration and the Head of Housing and Communities to brief Oxford's MPs on the effect of Government housing policies on housing need in Oxford, and so to advise those local organisations offering housing advice.

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**To:** City Executive Board

**Date:** 4 April 2012

**Report of:** The Head of Business Improvement

**Title of Report:** Revised Corporate Plan Targets 2012 - 2016

## Summary and Recommendations

**Purpose of report:** To determine suitable corporate plan targets for 2012-2016 for adoption by Council.

**Key decision?** Yes

**Executive lead member:** Cllr Bob Price

**Policy Framework:** Corporate Plan 2012-2016

**Recommendation(s):** To agree the proposed amendments to Corporate Plan targets for 2012-2016 and recommend their adoption by Council

## Appendices to report

- 1: Proposed Corporate Plan Targets
- 2: Rationale for Changes to Corporate Plan Targets
3. Risk Register

## Introduction

1. Council considered the draft Corporate Plan 2012-2017 on 20 February 2012 together with a supplementary report setting out proposed revisions to Corporate Plan targets. Council resolved to adopt the Corporate Plan for 2012-17, but to refer to Scrutiny the part of the Corporate Plan that covers targets and to receive back at the next full Council a recommendation via the City Executive Board setting out the corporate plan targets and any proposed revisions.
2. Members also considered proposed revisions to the corporate plan targets at a meeting on 15 March 2012, the outcomes of which are included in this report.

3. The Scrutiny Value and Performance Panel considered the draft corporate plan targets and their proposed revisions on 19 March 2012. This report sets out the main recommendations arising from the discussions and sets out recommended revisions to the corporate plan targets at Appendix 1.

### **Revisions to target wording**

4. Performance against the 2011/12 corporate targets has now been reported for Q3 and is now also available for January 2012. This information was not available at the time that the consultation version of the Corporate Plan was written and circulated. Some of the 2011/12 corporate targets were new and/or being measured for the first time with no reliable data for baseline performance. Others were being measured using a new mechanism, hence the variance from predicted performance.
5. The likely outturns for the end of 2011/12 have required amendments to be made to the wording of some targets as the predicted outturns have been included as the baseline. It is proposed that references to the baseline are removed from the target wording as these may change again before the end of the year. The targets affected are;
  - Spend with local business
  - Apprentices, jobs and training
  - Waste per household
  - HMO licensing
  - Cost of Council services
  - Efficiency savings
  - Satisfaction with neighbourhoods
  - Council tenant satisfaction
  - Holiday activities

### **Revisions to target performance**

6. As well as revised wording for targets, the variances in planned performance have required that some of the original target values be revisited in order to reflect both the new data and/or greater ambition of the Council. The changes and the rationale for them are set out in Appendix 2.
7. The targets affected are;
  - Spend with local businesses
  - Households in temporary accommodation
  - Satisfaction with neighbourhoods
  - Adult participation in sport
  - Carbon reduction
  - Waste per household
  - Street cleaning satisfaction
  - Customer service satisfaction

8. In addition, the two financial targets can now be revised with the latest budget data from the Medium Term Financial Plan

### **New and deleted targets**

9. It is proposed that some existing targets are deleted as they do not reflect the Council's ambition. The targets affected are;
- Local business satisfaction
  - Visitors to Oxford
  - Level of volunteering
  - Environmental enforcements
10. However, two new indicators reflecting the Council's environmental ambitions are proposed. These are for waste recycling/composting and water consumption. Targets for these new indicators have been drawn from 2012/13 service plan targets (currently in draft) and from the Sustainability Strategy (2011-2020)
11. The Scrutiny Value and Performance Panel discussed and agreed that the existing target for new jobs and apprenticeships be split into two new targets, one for new jobs created and one for the proportion of apprenticeships recruited from within Oxford City.

### **Risks and Opportunities**

12. Changes to targets do not impose any financial risk as they have been accounted for in current budgetary provision. Other risks and opportunities are set out in Appendix 3

<b>Name and contact details of author:-</b>
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### **List of background papers:**

**Version number: 5**

**Appendix 1: Proposed changes to Corporate Plan Targets**  
(~~strikeout text~~ = original targets **bold text** = amended targets)

Original Target wording	Amended Target wording	2012/13	2013/14	2014/15	2015/16
		<b>Vibrant and Sustainable Economy</b>			
Increase the number of apprenticeships, training places and jobs created through Council investment projects and other activities from 47 in 2011/12 to over 900 by 2014/15	<b>Increase the proportion of apprenticeships created through Council investment that live in Oxford City to 100% by 2015/16</b>	60%	70%	80%	100%
	<b>Increase the number of jobs created through Council investment projects and other activities to over 850 by 2015/16</b>	<del>264</del> <b>246</b>	<del>321</del> <b>586</b>	<del>900+</del> <b>856</b>	<del>900+</del> <b>856</b>
<del>Increase the percentage of top 20 employers in the city who agree that the City Council is business friendly.</del>	<b>TARGET DELETED</b>	<del>78%</del>	<del>82%</del>	<del>85%</del>	<del>the</del>
Increase City Council spend with local businesses from 40% in 2011/12 to 42% by 2014/15.	Increase City Council spend with local businesses to <b>48%</b> by 2015/16	42%	<del>42%</del> <b>44%</b>	<del>42%</del> <b>46%</b>	<del>43%</del> <b>48%</b>
<del>Attract 500,000 visitors annually to the Oxford Tourist Information Centre and use variations on this figure to track peaks and troughs and their causes.</del>	<b>TARGET DELETED</b>	<del>500,000</del>	<del>500,000</del>	<del>500,000</del>	<del>500,000</del>
<b>Meeting Housing Need</b>					
Improve the percentage of Council tenants satisfied with our landlord services from 80% in 2011/12 to 86% in 2014/15.	Improve the percentage of Council tenants satisfied with our landlord services to <b>90%</b> in 2014/15.	<del>82%</del> <b>85%</b>	<del>84%</del> <b>88%</b>	<del>86%</del> <b>90%</b>	<del>88%</del> <b>90%</b>
Increase the number of individual HMOs subject to agreed licence provisions from 1,100 in 2011/12 to over 3,500 in 2014/15.	Increase the number of individual HMOs subject to agreed licence provisions to over 3,500 in 2014/15.	2,180	2,950	3,540	3,890
Deliver a programme of new homes at Barton	<i>(as originally proposed)</i>	Get hybrid planning consent and agree phase 1 sale	50	150	300+
Ensure that the number of households in Oxford in temporary accommodation does not exceed 175.	<b>Reduce the number of households in Oxford in temporary accommodation to 75 by 2015/16</b>	<del>175</del> <b>120</b>	<del>175</del> <b>100</b>	<del>175</del> <b>87</b>	<del>175</del> <b>75</b>
<b>Strong and Active Communities</b>					
Improve satisfaction with our neighbourhoods from 90% in 2011/12 to 92% in 2014/15.	Improve satisfaction with our neighbourhoods <b>by 1% every year</b>	<del>91%</del> <b>88%</b>	<del>91%</del> <b>89%</b>	<del>92%</del> <b>90%</b>	<del>92%</del> <b>90%</b>

**Appendix 1: Proposed changes to Corporate Plan Targets**  
(~~strikeout text~~ = original targets **bold text** = amended targets)

Original Target wording	Amended Target wording	2012/13	2013/14	2014/15	2015/16
		<del>Increase the percentage of Oxford's population volunteering from 27% in 2011/12 to 30% in 2014/15.</del>	<b>TARGET DELETED</b>	<del>28%</del>	<del>29%</del>
Increase the percentage of adults taking part in sport as measured by Sport England's Active People Survey by 1% each year	Increase the percentage of adults participating in sport (as measured by the Annual Sport England Active People Survey)	<del>27.7%</del> <b>26%+</b>	<del>28.7%</del> <b>26%+</b>	<del>29.7%</del> <b>27%+</b>	<del>30.7%</del> <b>27%+</b>
Increase the number of young people attending our Holiday Activity programme from 1,000 in 2011/12 to more than 1,200 in 2012/13	Increase the number of young people attending our Holiday Activity programme to more than <b>1,600 in 2015/16</b>	1,200	<del>1,200</del> <b>1,400</b>	<del>1,200</del> <b>1,500</b>	<del>1,200</del> <b>1,600</b>
<b>Cleaner, Greener Oxford</b>					
Reduce the City Council's carbon footprint by 235 tonnes (CO <sub>2</sub> ) each year	<b>Reduce the City Council's carbon footprint by 5% each year</b>	<del>235</del> <b>5%</b> reduction	<del>235</del> <b>5%</b> reduction	<del>235</del> <b>5%</b> reduction	<del>235</del> <b>5%</b> reduction
Reduce the amount of residual household waste collected per household per annum and sent to landfill from 464kg in 2011/12 to 440kg in 2014/15.	Reduce the amount of residual household waste collected per household per annum and sent to landfill to <b>430kg in 2014/15</b>	450kg	445kg	<del>440kg</del> <b>430kg</b>	<del>435kg</del> <b>tbc</b>
Increase satisfaction with our street cleaning from 70% in 2011/12 to 75% in 2014/15.	Increase satisfaction with our street cleaning to 75% in 2014/15.	<del>tbc</del> <b>71%</b>	<del>tbc</del> <b>73%</b>	75%	76%
<del>Increase the number of enforcements carried out as a result of environmental offences from 660 in 2011/12 to 760 in 2014/15.</del>	<b>TARGET DELETED</b>	<del>700</del>	<del>730</del>	<del>760</del>	<del>790</del>
<b>NEW TARGET</b>	<b>Increase the percentage of waste collected sent for reuse, recycling or composting to 52%</b>	<b>50%</b>	<b>51%</b>	<b>52%</b>	<b>52%</b>
<b>NEW TARGET</b>	<b>Reduce the Council's water consumption by 3% per annum</b>	<b>tbc</b>	<b>3% reduction</b>	<b>3% reduction</b>	<b>3% reduction</b>
<b>Efficient and Effective Council</b>					
Increase the percentage of customers satisfied at their first point of contact across all access channels (web, telephone, face to face) to 90%	Increase the percentage of customers satisfied at their first point of contact across all access channels (web, telephone, face to face) to 75%	<del>90%</del> <b>70%</b>	<del>95%</del> <b>75%</b>	<del>95%</del> <b>75%</b>	<del>95%</del> <b>75%</b>
Reduce the cost of delivering Council services per resident from £172 in 2011/12 to £162 in 2014/15.	<i>(as originally proposed)</i>	<del>tbc</del> <b>£168</b>	tbc	£162	tbc
Deliver efficiency savings of £6m by 2011/12 and over £9, by 2014/15.	<b>Deliver efficiency savings of £7m by 2012/13 and over £17m by 2015/16</b>	<del>tbc</del> <b>£7.182m</b>	<del>tbc</del> <b>£10.579m</b>	<del>£9m+</del> <b>£13.661m</b>	<del>tbc</del> <b>£17.242m</b>
Achieve IIP Gold by 2013/14	<i>(as originally proposed)</i>	Standard	Gold	Gold	Gold

## Appendix 2: Rationale for changes to Corporate Plan Targets

Indicator	2011/12 target	2011/12 performance (Jan 2012)	Original 2012/13 target	Revised targets	Rationale for target change
<b>Vibrant and Sustainable Economy</b>					
New jobs and apprenticeships	47	YTD = 40	261	<b>TARGET SPLIT INTO TWO NEW TARGETS</b>	The two new targets created will allow for greater clarity of performance for the two aspects of this area. The jobs creation target has been recalculated to exclude new apprenticeships created. The apprenticeships target reflects Scrutiny's wish to focus on the proportion of apprentices employed from within Oxford, and to see this rise as posts are created or replaced.
Local business satisfaction	75%	No data yet	78%	<b>TARGET DELETED</b>	Members propose that this target be deleted. The limitation of this target to the top 20 businesses does not provide sufficient feedback for the Council to determine changes to its approach to business.
Spend with local businesses	40%	41%	42%	Rising to 48% by 2015/16	Members propose that this target be increased. The Service has confirmed that this is achievable against plans to reduce the number of suppliers overall.
Visitor numbers to Oxford	500,000	YTD = 486,200	500,000	<b>TARGET DELETED</b>	Members propose that this target be deleted. The current indicator acts only as a proxy to the state of the visitor economy in the absence of any other suitable indicators, and relies on visitors to have visited the TIC in Oxford.
<b>Meeting Housing Need</b>					
Households in temporary accommodation	130	140	175	120 in 2012/13 Reducing to 75 in 2015/16	Original target was set at a time when levels of temporary accommodation were increasing and future government initiatives were predicted to have a further adverse effect on homelessness.  New targets reflect an improved local situation and the proposed targets in the draft Housing Strategy
<b>Strong and Active Communities</b>					
Satisfaction with Neighbourhoods	88%	86%	91%	88% in 2012/13 with a 1% rise each year thereafter	Members consider a 1% per annum rise to be in line with the Council's ambition set against these realities.
Level of volunteering	27%	41%	28%	<b>TARGET DELETED</b>	Members propose that this target be deleted unless it can be more sensibly measured. Performance against this was originally through the national Place Survey, which was discontinued by the new Government. The local Talkback survey was used to measure performance during 2011/12, but there are issues with how representative this panel actually is of the wider City population



## Appendix 2: Rationale for changes to Corporate Plan Targets

Indicator	2011/12 target	2011/12 performance (Jan 2012)	Original 2012/13 target	Revised targets	Rationale for target change
Adult participation in sport	21.7%	25.9%	27.7%	26%+ in 2012/13 and 2013/14  27%+ from 2014/15 onwards	Original target was based on 2006 survey. Performance has risen steeply in the last two years and so it is difficult to maintain a 1% increase per year as envisaged.  A revised target profile has been included which is more pragmatic but still seeks to increase participation still further.  A Members proposal to include "and fitness" as part of this target is not feasible as the Sport England Survey used to report on performance does not include questions on general fitness, only on sport participation.
Holiday Activities Programme	1,000	1,334	1,200	Increasing by 200 in 2012/13 and a further 100 in each subsequent year	The Holiday Activities programme is currently delivering close to capacity. The proposed target of 1,200 attendees in 2012/13 will need to be delivered from a budget that has been reduced from £150k to £120k due to efficiency savings - by definition delivering the same output for less cost. Some cross-over of activity between this programme and the Positive Futures programme is possible during 2012/13, but it will still be necessary to recruit and train staff to deliver the programmes. It is anticipated to be fully staffed by September 2012.
<b>Cleaner, Greener Oxford</b>					
Carbon reduction	300	YTD= 150	235 tonnes	5% reduction per annum	The original targets each year from 2013/14 onwards were given as 235 tonnes CO <sub>2</sub> . The commitment is to reduce the City Council's carbon consumption by 5% each year based on the previous year's performance. This will equate to a different tonnage as the reduction takes effect.
Waste per household	464kg	YTD = 345kg	450kg	Reducing to 430kg by 2014/15	Members consider a more ambitious target for 2014/15 is achievable
Street cleaning satisfaction	65%	69%	None	71% in 2012/13  73% in 2013/14	No targets were set in the original draft Corporate Plan for 2012/13 and 2013/14 as the results of the TalkBack survey were awaited. Now these have been obtained realistic targets for improvement have been set.
Environmental Enforcements	660	1,160 (predicted)	700	<b>TARGET DELETED</b>	Members propose that this target be deleted.

## Appendix 2: Rationale for changes to Corporate Plan Targets

Indicator	2011/12 target	2011/12 performance (Jan 2012)	Original 2012/13 target	Revised targets	Rationale for target change
<b>NEW TARGET</b> Waste sent for recycling and composting	48%	YTD = 45.3%	50%	As per Service Plan targets	The inclusion of this target was on a recommendation by Members  The proposed targets used here are those already set by Direct Services for 2012/13 onwards
<b>NEW TARGET</b> Water consumption	Not known	Not known	Not known	3% per annum reduction	The inclusion of this target was on a recommendation by Members.  The proposed targets used here are from the Sustainability Strategy where set a 3% reduction per annum relative to the 2008/09 baseline
<b>Efficient and Effective Council</b>					
Customer Service satisfaction	90%	YTD = 80.6%	90%	70% in 2012/13  Rising to 75% from 2013/14 onwards	Original target was set with no national benchmark data and was too ambitious by comparison with the Top Ten data from GovMetric. Low customer response rates have led to a weighted calculation on the scores to date rather than the actual performance reported across all channels  Revised target places Oxford mid range in the top ten for 2011/12 and will be measured in future as per other GovMetric sites.
Deliver efficiency savings	£3.2m	£2.74m	tbc	£7.182m rising to £17.242m in 2015/16	This target has been re-profiled as a cumulative figure and to match the ambitions of the Medium Term Financial Strategy

**Revised Corporate Plan Targets 2012 – 2016**  
(As agreed by CEB 4 April 2012)

<b>Corporate Target</b>	<b>2012/13</b>	<b>2013/14</b>	<b>2014/15</b>	<b>2015/16</b>
Increase the proportion of apprenticeships created through Council investment that live in Oxford City to 100% by 2015/16	60%	70%	80%	100%
Increase the number of jobs created through Council investment projects and other activities to over 850 by 2015/16	246	586	856	856
Increase City Council spend with local businesses to 48% by 2015/16	42%	44%	46%	48%
Improve the percentage of Council tenants satisfied with our landlord services to 90% in 2014/15.	85%	88%	90%	90%
Increase the number of individual HMOs subject to agreed licence provisions to over 3,500 in 2014/15.	2,180	2,950	3,540	3,890
Deliver a programme of new homes at Barton	Get hybrid planning consent and agree phase 1 sale	50	150	300+
Reduce the number of households in Oxford in temporary accommodation to 75 by 2015/16	120	100	87	75
Improve satisfaction with our neighbourhoods by 1% every year	88%	89%	90%	91%
Increase the percentage of adults participating in sport (as measured by the Annual Sport England Active People Survey)	26%+	26%+	27%+	27%+
Increase the number of young people attending our Holiday Activity programme to more than 1,600 in 2015/16	1,200	1,400	1,500	1,600
Reduce the City Council's carbon footprint by 5% each year	5% reduction	5% reduction	5% reduction	5% reduction
Reduce the amount of residual household waste collected per household per annum and sent to landfill to 430kg in 2014/15	450kg	445kg	430kg	tbc
Increase satisfaction with our street cleaning to 75% in 2014/15.	71%	73%	75%	76%
Increase the percentage of waste collected sent for reuse, recycling or composting to 52%	50%	51%	52%	52%
Reduce the Council's water consumption by 3% per annum	tbc	3% reduction	3% reduction	3% reduction
Increase the percentage of customers satisfied at their first point of contact across all access channels (web, telephone, face to face) to 75%	70%	75%	75%	75%

**Revised Corporate Plan Targets 2012 – 2016**  
 (As agreed by CEB 4 April 2012)

<b>Corporate Target</b>	<b>2012/13</b>	<b>2013/14</b>	<b>2014/15</b>	<b>2015/16</b>
Reduce the cost of delivering Council services per resident from £172 in 2011/12 to £162 in 2014/15.	£168	tbc	£162	tbc
Deliver efficiency savings of £7m by 2012/13 and over £17m by 2015/16	£7.182m	£10.579m	£13.661m	£17.242m
Achieve IIP Gold by 2013/14	Standard	Gold	Gold	Gold

**To: City Executive Board and Council**

**Date: 4<sup>th</sup>. April 2012 – City Executive Board  
23<sup>rd</sup>. April 2012 - Council**

**Report of: Finance and Performance Panel**

**Title of Report: Corporate Plan Measures and Targets 2012 - 2016**

### **Summary and Recommendations**

**Purpose of report:** To present comments from the Finance and Performance Panel on the proposed measures and targets within the Corporate Plan 2012 - 2016

**Key decision? No**

**Scrutiny Lead Member: Councillor Seamons**

**Executive lead member: Councillor Price**

**Policy Framework:**

**Recommendations:**

**The Finance and Performance Panel has been requested to review targets by Council. This report will be sent to Council as written unless change is agreed by the Panel Chair.**

**Recommendations are reported alongside conclusions in the body of the report.**

### **Introduction**

1. The Finance and Performance Panel (Panel) have been asked by Council to review the measures and targets that appear in the Corporate Plan 2012 to 2017. The opinion of the Panel is included below.
2. Throughout the last year the Panel has also been looking at the targets and measures at "Service Level" and has had the opportunity to review

the proposals for these for the coming year. A separate report will be sent to the Leader of the Council once conclusions have been reached.

## **Conclusions and Recommendations**

### **Increase the number of apprenticeships, training places and jobs created through Council investment projects and other activities to over 900 by 2014/15.**

3. Work and investment in this area provides real opportunities to boost the local economy and improve the outlook and opportunities for City residents. In particular the investment in apprenticeships both existing and newly funded has been agreed to "...help reduce youth unemployment and support local young people to get experience and qualification."
4. The Panel would like to see an adjustment in the measure and target to reflect the stated local ambition of the Council. It is accepted that apprenticeships in place that are not taken by City young people will take time to adjust but the ambition to work harder to attract and engage City young people should begin in earnest and apply to all newly created posts.

#### **Recommendation 1**

That the measure relating to the creation of jobs, training and apprenticeships is split into 2 – training and apprenticeships and jobs. That within these 2 the number provided is shown between those taken up by City residents and those coming from elsewhere.

That the target for apprenticeships being taken by City young people to read across the life of the plan as 50%/60%/70%

### **Increase the percentage of top 20 employers in the city who agree that the City Council is business-friendly.**

5. It is not clear what this target is driving towards and more importantly how it could be successfully measured, defined or targeted.

#### **Recommendation 2**

To delete the corporate target relating to a business friendly Council.

### **Increase City Council spend with local businesses to 43% by 2015/16**

6. This represents the direct spending by the Council with local employers and is therefore one important measure of our contribution to the local economy. The Panel wants to see a challenging target here but had little information to judge what would represent a stretch target.
7. It is understood that the total of all direct spend across revenue and capital is £55m deprived from invoices paid. The 2% increase

proposed by 2015/2016 from the current year performance of 41% amounts to about £1.1m. This should be reconsidered.

### **Recommendation 3**

To adjust the target set against the measure – “Increase City Council spend with local businesses” to 48% by 2015/2016.

### **Attract 500,000 visitors annually to the Oxford Tourist Information Centre and use variations on this figure to track peaks and troughs and their causes.**

8. The Panel are unhappy with this target. The improvement looked for via tourism is economic with the drive to keep tourists in the City for longer and increase the amount they spend and contribute to the local economy. Counting the number of tourists does not represent a good measure and should be deleted.
9. Tourism is an important industry and one that the Council supports through investment in the DMO. The Panel would like to see this target replaced with an economic development target reflecting the value of tourism to the City. The suggestion from the Panel is that we consider the Business Plan targets within the DMO but other suggestions around bed occupancy and the number of nights spent in hotels may prove just as useful.

### **Recommendation 4**

To delete the current tourism target and replace this now with a more appropriate target that reflects the significant economic development opportunities within tourism focusing on the benefit derived from the City's investment through direct spending and support for partnerships

### **Improve the percentage of Council tenants satisfied with our landlord services to 86% in 2014/15.**

10. This is an important target, the Council is a significant landlord in the City and we must be ambitious for this service. No baseline data is presented and the survey for the current year is happening now with reporting in May. The Panel wants this target to reflect the ambition for upper quartile performance as soon as possible and certainly within 2 years.
11. The HRA Business Plan places tenant satisfaction currently at 84% which is higher than the target set and the Housemark data details top quartile performance at 88%.

### **Recommendation 5**

That the target for tenant satisfaction is adjusted to guarantee upper quartile performance (88%) by 2013/2014. The ambition for 2012/2013 to be adjusted to above the 84% stated as achieved in the HRA Business

Plan. Should the current survey place us close to 88%, for this target to be amended to reflect the ambition of performance within the top 10 of social landlords.

**Increase the number of individual HMOs subject to agreed license provisions to over 3,500 in 2014/15.**

12. This target is disappointing showing a slowing of the increase in the agreed license target with the likelihood of completing the task years away.

**Recommendation 6**

To recast this target to achieve the first round of licensing within the life of this Corporate Plan.

**Deliver a programme of new homes at Barton**

13. The Panel agree with this target.

**Ensure that the number of households in Oxford in temporary accommodation does not exceed 175.**

14. This target does not match that detailed in the current draft Housing Strategy where it is currently no more than 130 households in temporary accommodation. The Panel heard that a significant rethink had happened on this target since the Council meeting and that targets were to be significantly reduced across the years in the Corporate Plan to 120/100/87/75 respectively. This is good news.

**Recommendation 7**

That the target in the Corporate Plan reflects those adjusted in the draft Housing Strategy.

**Improve satisfaction with our neighbourhoods to 88% in 2014/15.**

15. The ambition for this target has been reduced for 2 reasons:

- The council underachieved against the current target of 88% (result 86%).
- MORI's view is that Oxford, amongst 5 district councils, has residents whose perceptions are difficult to change.

16. The Panel want to see targets and measures in the Corporate Plan that:

- Measure the important things.
- Give reliable and meaningful results to provide for improvement.

17. The satisfaction with neighbourhood target is measured by questions in the Talkback survey conducted amongst the Council's Panel of residents which is recruited to be demographically balanced and then



refreshed every 2 years. Those responding from the Panel are then self selecting.

18. Satisfaction with neighbourhoods by definition is likely not only to differ amongst demographic groups but also amongst geographic groups. To use this measure meaningfully to improve we must understand the differing opinions across the neighbourhoods in our City.
19. The Panel was provided with data from the last Talkback survey for this measure that gave an analysis of opinions by Area (Area Forum grouping) and also the percentage representation of panel members by Areas against the percentage that responded for those Areas. This data was not clear and did little to tell the Council the neighbourhood issues that needed to be tackled to improve perception.
20. The Panel accepts that this is a difficult area to measure but would like to see thought given to complimentary exercises to improve on the usefulness of the results.
21. The Place survey in 2008/09 gave a result for Oxford of 83% satisfied and the Talkback survey last year a result of 87%. This shows a 4% improvement in less than 2 years. Whilst these 2 surveys use different methods (one is a weighted survey the other is not) officers reported that opinions were similar. This suggests to the Panel that the target of 91% might be too ambitious but 87% is too low.

#### **Recommendation 8**

That satisfaction with neighbourhoods is measured using the refreshed Talkback Panel and this is complemented with a focus group run yearly in each of the Area Forum areas.

That the target is adjusted to 88% for 2012/2013 and then up by 1% each year.

#### **Recommendation 9**

That the refresh of the Talkback Panel gives not only a demographic balance but also a geographic one.

#### **Maintain the percentage of Oxford's population volunteering at 41%.**

22. The Talkback Panel is currently used to measure against this target. This is likely to produce an unreliable result (asking volunteers if they volunteer). Officers could not suggest any alternative measurement methods that might prove to be more reliable and it was also clear that the usefulness of this measure within the corporate set is questionable. The Panel would like to see a change here.

#### **Recommendation 10**

That the measure is changes to "Increase the percentage of Oxford City Council staff volunteering to 35% in 14/15 and for this to be placed in the service measures.

**Increase the percentage of adults participating in sport (as measured by the Annual Sport England Active People Survey).**

23. The Panel would have liked to see this measure changed to include all activities rather than just sport. It is understood that this will give difficulties in terms of national comparison.
24. There is a measure in the Leisure and Parks Service Plan to increase participation at our leisure centres by target groups which is an important element within the council's regeneration agenda and will complement the existing target. This should be placed in the corporate set.

**Recommendation 11**

To place the measure "Increase participation at our leisure centres by target groups" in the Corporate set. To further define these target groups and ensure the increase is no less than 5% yearly for each.

**Increase the number of young people attending our Holiday Activity programme to more than 1,200 in 2012/13.**

25. This target is not ambitious enough currently and particularly so considering the new investment provided for youth service provision in the budget. In 2010/2011 the Council provided 1505 places in play schemes and it is not clear why at least this number cannot be achieved next year.
26. The Panel recognise that an efficiency saving was made against this budget but this should not reduce places. Proposals for the spending of the new investment in the budget were not available to the Panel so any additional focus here is unclear.

**Recommendation 12**

That the target relating to young people's holiday activities is changed now to read 1500 for 2012/2013 with the opportunity to review this upwards for the current year and future years once details of the new investment spending is available in May.

**Reduce the City Council's carbon footprint by 3% (tonnes CO<sub>2</sub>) each year.**

27. The ambition of the Council is high in this area and we have made significant improvements. The Panel would like to keep this ambition high.

**Recommendation 13**

To increase the target reduction of CO<sub>2</sub> to 5% each year.

Reduce the amount of residual household waste collected per household per annum and sent to landfill to 440kg in 2014/15.

28. The ambition of the Council here is clear – to be the best in the country. This target needs to be more ambitious and also include the matching recycling target which currently appears at service level.

**Recommendation 14**

To change the target for residual household waste to 430 kilos in 2014/15 and include in the corporate set the “Household waste recycled and composted” measure with a target of 50% by 2013/2014.

**Increase satisfaction with our street cleaning to 75% in 2014/15.**

29. The Panel would like to see the current measurement of this target to be accompanied by a view from a range of area based focus groups. See comments for satisfaction with neighbourhoods target.

**Recommendation 15**

To complement the measurement of this street cleaning target with area based focus groups.

**Carry out 730 enforcements as a result of environmental offences in 2012/13.**

30. This measure seemed of little use in providing for improvement at a high level.

**Recommendation 16**

To remove this target from the corporate level to the service level.

**Increase the percentage of customers satisfied at their first point of contact across all access channels (web, telephone, face to face) to 75%.**

31. The Council has made a significant investment in Customer Services across all channels; it has been one of the flagship programmes of Council 2012. The Panel was disappointed to see a downward shift in our ambition as expressed through the number of people satisfied with the service.

32. When discussing the reasons for this downward shift with officers a number of things were clear:

- We don't have a complete understanding of top or very good performance. We know how the top 10 councils who use GovMetric perform (80 Councils in total use this method).

- We don't know or haven't considered how the other 250+ authorities in England perform or measure this performance.
- We don't know or haven't considered how other sectors providing similar customer service front ends perform and measure that performance.
- We don't know or haven't considered what the national benchmark across all sectors is.
- The use of GovMetric as a measurement tool is not working well currently and this has to improve for results to be meaningful.
- There are differences (some significant) between the results we have on satisfaction across the 2 channels measured.
- Averaging out or weighting results across all channels to produce 1 target will reduce the worth and meaning of both the target and the result.

33. There is a plan to consider this target more thoroughly during the coming year, more likely the first 6 months of the year.

34. The result we have for quarter 3 of the current year is 80.6% which officers have produced by weighting GovMetric results from face to face and telephone contact. To reduce this ambition down to 70% without a complete review is not acceptable to the Panel.

#### **Recommendation 17**

That the satisfaction target for Customer Services is split across the 3 channels of communication with the Council. For the planned review of performance in this field to happen now to provide Council with a complete understanding of the performance of the best, how we fit against this and what our targets should be to be able to perform at least alongside the best.

Until this happens the 2012/2013 target is set at 81% to match the quarter 3 result for 2011/2012.

#### **Reduce the cost of delivering Council services per resident from £172 in 2011/12 to £162 in 2014/15.**

35. The Panel agree with this target.

#### **Deliver efficiency savings of £6m by 2011/12 and over £9, by 2014/15.**

36. The Panel agree with this target.

#### **Achieve IIP Gold by 2013/14.**

37. The Panel agree with this target.

38. The Panel was disappointed not to see measures and targets for the 2 new investment areas produced at the corporate level. The significant investment the Council is making in educational attainment and services for young people are welcomed but must be targeted and

used to produce good outcomes. Heads of Service responsible for delivery in these areas have expressed to the Panel their desire to detail measures and targets and a set for educational attainment appear at service level.

**Recommendation 18**

That the target that appears at service level for educational attainment is reconsidered to reflect the work we are doing and placed at the Corporate Level.

**Recommendation 19**

That the Head of Housing and Communities is asked to provide a measure and target for the investment in youth services.

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

Pat Jones on behalf of the Finance and Performance Panel  
Principal Scrutiny Officer  
Law and Governance  
Tel: 01865 252191 e-mail: [phjones@oxford.gov.uk](mailto:phjones@oxford.gov.uk)

**List of background papers:**

**Version number: 2**

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# EXTRACT FROM THE MINUTES

## CITY EXECUTIVE BOARD

**Wednesday 4 April 2012**

### 91. CORPORATE PLAN 2012 - 2016 - TARGETS

The Head of Business Improvement and the Head of Policy, Culture and Communications submitted a report (previously circulated, now appended).

Resolved:-

- (1) To RECOMMEND Council to agree the proposed Corporate Plan targets for 2012-2016 as set out in Appendix 1 to the report;
- (2) In relation to the recommendations in the Scrutiny Committee report, to decide as follows:-
  - (a) Recommendation 1 – agreed but with a higher target for apprenticeships
  - (b) Recommendation 2 – agreed
  - (c) Recommendation 3 – agreed
  - (d) Recommendation 4 – agreed insofar as deletion of the target was concerned and to consider what target, if any, might replace it
  - (e) Recommendation 5 – not agreed because in all the circumstances the target was considered realistic
  - (f) Recommendation 6 – not agreed because the target was considered to be sufficiently realistic
  - (g) Recommendation 7 – agreed
  - (h) Recommendation 8 – agreed but with different revised targets to those suggested
  - (i) Recommendation 9 – agreed that the nature of the target needed to be refreshed
  - (j) Recommendation 10 – agreed insofar as deletion of the target was concerned but not to set a revised target at this stage
  - (k) Recommendation 11 – not agreed insofar as the nature and place of the target was concerned but to agree to change the targets themselves over the four year period of the Plan
  - (l) Recommendation 12 – not agreed at the target levels recommended

- (m) Recommendation 13 – agreed
- (n) Recommendation 14 – agree to change the 2014/15 residual household waste target from 440kg to 430kg and to introduce a new target for household waste recycled and composted
- (o) Recommendation 15 – agreed
- (p) Recommendation 16 – agreed
- (q) Recommendation 17 – not agreed because the target was considered to be realistic
- (r) Recommendation 18 – not agreed because there had been insufficient time to consider and respond to this recommendation but to record that once the Council’s educational attainment work was more fully formed a target would be appropriate
- (s) Recommendation 19 - not agreed because there had been insufficient time to consider and respond to this recommendation



## CITY EXECUTIVE BOARD

**Wednesday 4 April 2012**

**COUNCILLORS PRESENT:** Councillors Price (Leader), Cook, Coulter, McManners, Smith, Tanner and Timbs.

### **91. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Councillors Lygo and Turner.

### **92. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

The following declarations of interest of the type mentioned were made by the councillors referred to below:-

Councillor Smith – personal interest – homelessness grants insofar as any grants were for the benefit of the Night Shelter – Council appointee to various related outside bodies – minute 97 refers

### **93. PUBLIC QUESTIONS**

As provided for in Constitution Procedure Rule 12.7 questions from members of the public were received, taken as read and answers given. The questions and answers are attached to the signed copy of the minutes.

### **94. SCRUTINY COMMITTEE REPORTS**

Two Scrutiny reports (previously circulated, now appended) as follows were submitted:-

- (1) Scrutiny Select Committee report on public health
- (2) Scrutiny report on Corporate Plan targets (minute 97 refers)

Resolved, on the Scrutiny Select Committee report on public health:-

- (1) To endorse each of the recommendations of the Select Committee, namely:-
  - (a) To support the expansion of the “Tweenager” project (costings to be explored further) initially in regeneration areas across the City, utilising Community Centres as well as Leisure Centres wherever possible, and that this be linked to the budget proposal for a 3 year post to deliver greater use of Oxford City Council facilities by schools;
  - (b) To actively and financially support a further extension of outreach work and free taster sessions by Fusion within Community Centres and other community facilities, including the provision of information on leisure and well-being initiatives and further to explore concessions at leisure

centres for those people who wished to progress further following a taster session;

- (c) To agree the principle of supporting communities to help themselves and to explore further through the Council's partnerships the possible establishment of a community health project run by a local community for the benefit of that local community;
- (2) To invite the Select Committee to draw up an action plan containing timescales for taking forward the recommendations;
- (3) To thank all of the officers and councillors who had been involved in the project to date.

## **95. HOUSING STRATEGY - CONSULTATION OUTCOME**

The Head of Housing and Communities submitted a report (previously circulated, now appended).

Resolved:-

- (1) To RECOMMEND Council to adopt into the Council's Policy Framework the Housing Strategy for 2012-2015 that forms Appendix 2 to the report;
- (2) Subject to the adoption by Council of the Housing Strategy, to approve the Housing Strategy Action Plan for 2012-2015 that forms Appendix 3 to the report to deliver the Strategy.

## **96. HOUSING BENEFIT RISK BASED VERIFICATION POLICY**

The Head of Customer Services submitted a report (previously circulated, now appended).

Resolved to adopt the process of risk based verification for housing benefit and Council Tax benefit claims in accordance with the policy the report describes.

## **97. PREVENTING HOMELESSNESS GRANT ALLOCATIONS TO COMMUNITY AND VOLUNTARY ORGANISATIONS - 2012/13**

The Head of Housing and Communities submitted a report (previously circulated, now appended).

Resolved:-

- (1) To RECOMMEND Council to allocate the Communities and Local Government's Homelessness Directorate grant and to decide in the Board's own right to allocate the Council's budget for the purpose of meeting the Council's homelessness objectives as follows:-

### Communities and Local Government's Homelessness Directorate grant

- (a) Street Services and Reconnection Team (Broadway Homelessness and Support) - £235,000
- (b) Reconnection and Referral Co-ordinator (Under 25s) (in the process of assigning it to a provider) - £37,245
- (c) Reconnection Rent (O'Hanlon House) - £512
- (d) Six subsidised Beds for Under 25s (Simon House) - £4,243
- (e) Six subsidised Beds for Under 25s (Lucy Faithful House) - £4,179
- (f) Mental Health Practitioner at Luther Street – £25,000
- (g) Two Education, Training and Employment Workers (Aspire) - £60,519
- (h) One specialist Alcohol Worker (O'Hanlon House) - £8,555
- (i) One Multiple Needs Hostel worker (Elmore Community Services) - £40,757
- (j) Service Broker – Big Issue Foundation - £25,000
- (k) Homelessness Liaison Police Officer (for two years with an operating budget of £5,000 for each year) - £90,000
- (l) Elmore Team ASB Services - £8,690
- (m) Additional Home Choice Gold Top-up - £20,000
- (n) Continuation of Enhanced Options - £50,000
- (o) Fraud Investigation - £80,000
- (p) Supplementing Discretionary Housing Payments - £100,000

### City Council's Homelessness Grants budget

- (a) O'Hanlon House Day Centre – homeless hostel for 25+, jointly commissioned with Supporting People - £133,432
- (b) One Foot Forward – homeless hostel for 16-25 year olds, jointly commissioned with Supporting People - £42,992
- (c) Elmore Community Services – Complex Needs Floating Support Service for clients in Oxford City Council temporary and permanent stock - £40,757
- (d) Elmore Community Services, Anti Social Behaviour Service – £11,310
- (e) The Gatehouse – café for the homeless - £9,502

- (f) Steppin' Stone – day centre providing emergency provision and meaningful activity - £55,000
  - (g) Simon House Hostel – provision of respite beds at an abstinence based hostel - £11,596
  - (h) Emmaus Oxford Furniture Store – recycling store attached to the Emmaus Community £25,000
  - (i) Aspire Oxfordshire – social enterprise providing work opportunities for homeless and ex-homeless people - £112,690
- (2) That the Head of Housing and Communities be given delegated authority to allocate the £252,300 unallocated balance of the Communities and Local Government grant money and to make changes if necessary to the allocations of the City Council's homelessness grants budget.

#### **98. ANNUAL LETTINGS PLAN - ALLOCATIONS PERCENTAGE 2012/13**

The Head of Housing and Communities submitted a report (previously circulated, now appended).

Resolved:-

- (1) To RECOMMEND Council to agree the Housing Lettings Plan for 2012/13 as set out in Appendix 2 to the report;
- (2) To note performance against the Housing Lettings Plan for 2011/12 as set out in Appendix 1 to the report;
- (3) To ask the Strategic Director, City Regeneration and the Head of Housing and Communities to brief Oxford's MPs on the effect of Government housing policies on housing need in Oxford, and so to advise those local organisations offering housing advice.

#### **99. PLAYING PITCHES AND OUTDOOR PITCHES STRATEGY - CONSULTATION OUTCOME**

The Head of Leisure and Parks submitted a report (previously circulated, now appended).

Resolved to approve the Playing Pitches and Outdoor Sports Strategy that forms Appendix 4 to the report for immediate implementation.

#### **100. CULTURE STRATEGY - CONSULTATION**

The Head of Policy, Culture and Communications submitted a report (previously circulated, now appended).

Resolved:-

- (1) To approve for consultation in the way and to the timescale referred to in paragraphs 11 and 12 of the report the draft Culture Strategy appended to the report;
- (2) To record the Council's thanks to Laura Worsfold, Culture Team Leader who had recently left the Council's employ and who had played an instrumental part in the draft Strategy now before the Board and who had developed arts and culture partnerships to mutual benefit.

### **101. FUSION ANNUAL SERVICE PLAN 2012/13**

The Head of Leisure and Parks submitted a report (previously circulated, now appended).

Resolved:-

- (1) To endorse Fusion Lifestyle's 2012/13 Service Plan for the management of the Council's leisure facilities as set out in Appendix 2 to the report;
- (2) In relation to paragraph 3.1 of the report, and the standard references to 5% increases in participation for various target groups, to ask the Head of Leisure and Parks to establish benchmarks for participation by those groups in order that the Council could gauge progress against informed targets.

### **102. ENVIRONMENTAL DEVELOPMENT ENFORCEMENT POLICY**

The Head of Environmental Development submitted a report (previously circulated, now appended).

Resolved to approve the Environmental Development Enforcement Policy that forms Appendix 1 to the report for immediate implementation.

### **103. THE GREEN DEAL - DELIVERY**

The Executive Director, City Services submitted a report (previously circulated, now appended).

Resolved:-

- (1) That the Council should take a partnership approach to the implementation of the Green Deal and work with partners to form what Green Deal Plus arrangements for the reasons referred to in paragraph 3.5 of the report;
- (2) To authorise officers to make grants available from Green Deal funding in the Council's budget in line with the criteria set out in paragraph 3.7.1 of the report.

#### **104. RAMSAY HOUSE, ST EBBE'S STREET - LETTING**

The Head of Corporate Assets submitted a report (previously circulated, now appended).

In relation to paragraphs 8-12 of the report the Executive Director, City Services reported that the £300,000 capital budget for the replacement comfort cooling system could be met from planned maintenance and that there was therefore no need for the Board to make a capital bid to Council.

Resolved to:-

- (1) Agree to the proposed letting of the second floor of Ramsay House, 10 St Ebbe's Street to Natural Motion Limited on the terms contained in the not for publication appendix to the report and otherwise on terms and conditions to be approved by the Head of Corporate Assets:
- (2) Grant authority to the Head of Corporate Assets to vary the proposed tenant terms provided the transaction continued to represent best consideration;
- (3) Agree that the £300,000 cost of a replacement comfort cooling system be met from the planned maintenance programme.

#### **105. LOCAL DEVELOPMENT SCHEME 2011-2014 - AMENDMENTS**

The Head of City Development submitted a report (previously circulated, now appended).

Resolved to :-

- (1) Approve the amendments to the Oxford Local Development Scheme 2011-14 for submission to the Secretary of State as referred to in 6 – 13 of the report;
- (2) Agree that the Local Development Scheme 2011-14 (as amended) will take effect four weeks after submission unless the Secretary of State intervenes and requests more time or more work to be done;
- (3) Authorise the Head of City Development to make any necessary editorial corrections to the document prior to submission to the Secretary of State.

#### **106. CORPORATE PLAN 2012 - 2016 - TARGETS**

The Head of Business Improvement and the Head of Policy, Culture and Communications submitted a report (previously circulated, now appended).

Resolved:-

- (1) To RECOMMEND Council to agree the proposed Corporate Plan targets for 2012-2016 as set out in Appendix 1 to the report;
- (2) In relation to the recommendations in the Scrutiny Committee report, to decide as follows:-
  - (a) Recommendation 1 – agreed but with a higher target for apprenticeships
  - (b) Recommendation 2 – agreed
  - (c) Recommendation 3 – agreed
  - (d) Recommendation 4 – agreed insofar as deletion of the target was concerned and to consider what target, if any, might replace it
  - (e) Recommendation 5 – not agreed because in all the circumstances the target was considered realistic
  - (f) Recommendation 6 – not agreed because the target was considered to be sufficiently realistic
  - (g) Recommendation 7 – agreed
  - (h) Recommendation 8 – agreed but with different revised targets to those suggested
  - (i) Recommendation 9 – agreed that the nature of the target needed to be refreshed
  - (j) Recommendation 10 – agreed insofar as deletion of the target was concerned but not to set a revised target at this stage
  - (k) Recommendation 11 – not agreed insofar as the nature and place of the target was concerned but to agree to change the targets themselves over the four year period of the Plan
  - (l) Recommendation 12 – not agreed at the target levels recommended
  - (m) Recommendation 13 – agreed
  - (n) Recommendation 14 – agree to change the 2014/15 residual household waste target from 440kg to 430kg and to introduce a new target for household waste recycled and composted
  - (o) Recommendation 15 – agreed
  - (p) Recommendation 16 – agreed
  - (q) Recommendation 17 – not agreed because the target was considered to be realistic

- (r) Recommendation 18 – not agreed because there had been insufficient time to consider and respond to this recommendation but to record that once the Council's educational attainment work was more fully formed a target would be appropriate
- (s) Recommendation 19 - not agreed because there had been insufficient time to consider and respond to this recommendation

## **107. REGULATION OF INVESTIGATORY POWERS ACT - CHANGES TO ARRANGEMENTS**

The Head of Law and Governance submitted a report (previously circulated, now appended).

Resolved to:-

- (1) Approve the appointment of the Head of Law and Governance as the Council's Senior Responsible Officer for the purposes of the regulation of investigatory powers under the Regulation of Investigatory Powers Act;
- (2) Authorise the Head of Law and Governance to appoint a co-ordinating officer for the purposes of the regulation of investigatory powers under the Regulation of Investigatory Powers Act;
- (3) Note the Council's amended Regulation of Investigatory Powers policy document as set out in the Appendix to the report.

## **108. FUTURE ITEMS**

Nothing was raised under this item.

## **109. MINUTES**

The minutes of the meeting held on 8<sup>th</sup> February were approved as a correct record.

## **110. MATTERS EXEMPT FROM PUBLICATION**

Resolved to exclude the press and public from the meeting during consideration of the items in the exempt from publication part of the agenda in accordance with the provisions in Paragraph 21(1)(b) of the Local Authorities (Executive Arrangements) (England) Regulations 2000 on the grounds that their presence could involve the likely disclosure of exempt information as described in specific paragraphs of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972 and that, in all the circumstances of the case, the public interest in maintaining the exemption outweighed the public interest in disclosing the information.

Summary of business transacted by the Board after passing the resolution contained in minute 110



The Board received and noted the contents of not for publication appendix to the report on the letting of Ramsay House, 10 St Ebbe's Street (minute 111 refers). It agreed to the letting of the premises to Natural Motion Limited.

**111. RAMSAY HOUSE, ST EBBE'S STREET - LETTING**

Resolved to note the contents of the not for publication appendix to the report on the letting of Ramsay House, 10 St Ebbe's Street (minute 104 refers) and to agree to the letting of the premises to Natural Motion Limited.

**The meeting started at 5.00 pm and ended at 6.25 pm**

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# DELEGATED DECISIONS OF THE BOARD MEMBER, HOUSING NEEDS

**Wednesday 15 February 2012**

**COUNCILLOR PRESENT:** Councillors McManners.

**OFFICERS PRESENT:** Alec Dubberley (Democratic and Electoral Services Officer), Rob Kindon (Corporate Assets) and Steve Sprason (Head of Corporate Assets)

## **16. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

None.

## **17. PUBLIC ADDRESSES**

None.

## **18. COUNCILLOR ADDRESSES**

Councillor Gotch had submitted five questions after the deadline for receipt of questions. The Board Member advised Councillor Gotch that a written response would be provided after the meeting.

*Following the meeting the questions are now included with the minutes:*

- (1) Is the Portfolio Holder aware that planning applications for housing on council owned garage sites have been submitted without due consideration of necessary replacement car parking? This problem applies to at least 19 of the applications. If parking cannot be provided, how would withdrawal of the applications [as has happened at David Walter Close] affect the total of affordable houses?*

*Answer: Applications for outline planning permission were submitted on 4 sites within the City based upon information available at that time. Further information has since become available resulting in a review of some applications and possible revisions.*

*In respect of the Affordable Homes Programme (AHP) 2012-15 the sites referred to form Phase 2. OCC are committed to providing 46 units under this phase from a potential 93 already identified. This does not include 12 unappraised garage sites and other possible sites that may become available.*

*As stated in s28 and Appendix 3 of the report the intention is to avoid inclusion of such sites in the AHP if possible.*

*Appraisal work is continuing on a number of potential development opportunities.*

*The final selection of Phase 2 sites will take place towards the end of 2012.*

(2) At 14 and 15 David Walter Close there are 14 garages of which 10 are occupied by 9 cars and 2 motorbikes, and a similar scenario applies at 33 David Walter Close where 12 garages are proposed to be demolished. It is possible to provide replacement parking, but at some cost, and with some residents' opposition.

Answer: Following receipt of feedback for the two David Walter Close sites the applications have been withdrawn pending scheme reviews and possible revisions.

(3) Of the 19 extra garage plots [appendix 3] 7 have been considered to date, and yield "only" 12 houses. Has replacement parking been considered for all or any of these sites? And was such parking provision considered at Leiden Road?

Answer: Appraisal of numerous sites including garage sites is ongoing and parking provision is just one of a number of issues considered.

(4) Who briefed the application surveyor to ignore replacement parking, and at what cost in abortive fees?

Answer: Applications were submitted based on then currently available information. Applications withdrawn can be resubmitted without incurring further fees.

(5) Since smaller plots-- planned for 2/3 bed houses -- can often provide for 4/5 bed houses, at proportionately less cost, and there is an urgent demand for larger social houses, should at least some of these smaller sites be proposed for council retention -- not open market sale. I know of one family at Cuttleslowe, with 5 children, living, disgracefully, in a 2 bed social house. Can a financial analysis be ordered quickly to retain some smaller sites to be used for social houses? And the effect on the budget overall and affordability?

Answer: The type and tenure mix of the properties in the AHP was agreed with the Homes & Communities Agency (HCA) as part of the bid process. Grant funding was awarded on that basis of that mix with the AHP running to March 2015.

This report relates to the AHP only and to properties that will be supported by the Affordable Homes Grant awarded by HCA under their 2011-15 grant regime.

The Housing Revenue Account Business Plan may permit additional affordable homes to be developed in the years following the AHP. The need for new build will have to be balanced against the requirement to generate capital receipts.

Option appraisals are continuing to take this matter forward.

## **19. AFFORDABLE HOME PROGRAMME 2012-2015**

The Head of Corporate Assets submitted a report (previously circulated, now appended) setting out information on the Council's affordable homes programme for 2012-15

Resolved to:-

- (1) Approve the proposed Affordable Homes Programme 2012-15 as detailed in the report.
- (2) Authorise the Head of Corporate Assets to negotiate and complete the New Framework Delivery Agreement with the Homes and Communities Agency.
- (3) Authorise the Head of Housing and Communities to undertake the decant process of Bradlands under Phase 1.
- (4) Authorise the Head of Corporate Assets, in consultation with the Executive Member for Housing Needs, to approve the final selection of sites for Phase 2 and Phase 3.

**The meeting started at 1.00 pm and ended at 1.25 pm**

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# DELEGATED DECISIONS OF THE BOARD MEMBER, CLEANER GREENER OXFORD

**Thursday 16 February 2012**

**COUNCILLOR PRESENT:** Councillor Tanner.

**OFFICERS PRESENT:** Alec Dubberley (Democratic and Electoral Services Officer) and John Copley (Head of Environmental Development)

## **10. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

No declarations of interest were made at the meeting.

## **11. PUBLIC ADDRESSES**

None received.

## **12. COUNCILLOR ADDRESSES**

None received.

## **13. LOW EMISSION ZONE IMPLEMENTATION**

Report of the Head of Environmental Development submitted a report (previously circulated, now appended) recommending the Board Member a traffic regulation condition to support the bus based Low Energy Emission Zone for central Oxford from 1st January 2014, and to authorise, for the City's part, submission to the Traffic Commissioners.

Resolved to:-

- (1) Support the application by the County Council to the Traffic Commissioner for a Traffic Regulation Condition to enforce the bus based Low Energy Zone, declared by the City Council in central Oxford from 1 January 2014;
- (2) Note that a similar report would be approved by the County Council following a meeting with the Office of the Traffic Commissioner;
- (3) Request the Head of Environmental Development to:-
  - (a) Review the future emission standards for taxis and private hire vehicles, in line with the Low Emission Zone standards.
  - (b) Develop and maintain a database for the purpose of certifying compliant vehicles, for as long as the Traffic Regulation Commissioner remains in force.

**The meeting started at 5.00 pm and ended at 5.15 pm**

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# **DELEGATED DECISIONS OF THE BOARD MEMBER, FINANCE AND EFFICIENCY**

**Monday 20 February 2012**

**COUNCILLORS PRESENT:** Councillors Turner.

**OFFICERS PRESENT:** Lois Stock (Democratic and Electoral Services Officer) and Steve Sprason (Head of Corporate Assets)

## **39. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

No declarations of interest were made at this meeting.

## **40. PUBLIC ADDRESSES**

None.

## **41. COUNCILLOR ADDRESSES**

None.

## **42. BARTON PAVILION - MANAGEMENT ARRANGEMENTS AND LEASE**

The Head of City Leisure and the Head of Corporate Assets submitted a report (previously circulated, now appended) concerning the granting of the lease at Barton Pavilion to the Phoenix Sports Association.

Having considered the contents of the report, Councillor Ed Turner resolved to approve the allocation of Barton Pavilion and the granting of a lease to the Phoenix Sports Association on the terms outlined in the report, and otherwise on terms and conditions approved by the Head of Corporate Assets.

## **43. MATTERS EXEMPT FROM PUBLICATION**

None.

**The meeting started at 4.43 pm and ended at 4.50 pm**

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# **DELEGATED DECISIONS OF THE BOARD MEMBER, HOUSING NEEDS**

**Monday 27 February 2012**

**COUNCILLORS PRESENT:** Councillor McManners.

**OFFICERS PRESENT:** Nicky Atkin (Business Improvement), Shaibur Rahman (Housing and Communities) and William Reed (Law and Governance)

## **20. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

None

## **21. PUBLIC ADDRESSES**

None

## **22. COUNCILLOR ADDRESSES**

Councillor McCready asked the following question:-

'When will the Council's reflections on practices in other areas and the resulting quality criteria for assessing tenders be available for scrutiny so that councillors may know what 'tough love' for rough sleepers will amount to?'

The Board Member responded as follows:-

'The tender had been scored on a 65:35 weighting, with 65% allocated to the quality of the tender and 35% to the price.

The tender followed the open procedure where the pre-qualification section and tender questions are contained in the same document. If any tenderer failed the pre qualification section (which assessed the organisations finances, health and safety, environmental, business continuity, equalities and CSR credentials) then they would not be progressed to the tender evaluation stage – in any event all tenderers passed.

The tender document comprised 29 qualitative questions. The majority of the scoring was centred around the questions requesting method statements that demonstrated the organisations approach to outreach and capacity to deliver a consistent service. It also included the submission of two case studies that could show where the organisation had delivered similar services before. The questions aimed to extract information about previous successes that the organisations had when working with entrenched rough sleepers with complex needs.

The second stage of the tender process involved the short listed organisations attending a clarification interview. The reason for the second stage was so that the panel could question the organisations on any element of their tender proposal. This approach always helped to get beneath the "slick bid writing"

façade that sometimes prevailed. The panel also got to meet the people who, if successful, would be delivering the service. Organisations were informed that the panel may choose to use any information that had been clarified to re-visit their previous scoring on the bid.'

The Board Member permitted supplementary questioning and Councillor McCready pressed for responses specifically on best practice and the application of quality criteria in assessing tenders. The Board Member responded by explaining that the new provider would adopt a similar approach, but more effectively, to the present provider. The street outreach team would seek out rough sleepers and encourage them at the time to move to overnight accommodation. The approach to be used had been probed in the course of the interview process.

### **23. STREET OUTREACH REPORT**

The Head of Business Improvement submitted a report (previously circulated, now appended).

Resolved to delegate authority to the Head of Housing and Communities to enter into a new Street Services and Reconnection Service contract for three years with the option of a two year extension at the complete discretion of the Council, it being noted that the contract would contain break clauses to terminate the contract early without penalties if that proved necessary.

**The meeting started at 5.30 pm and ended at 5.46 pm**

# **DELEGATED DECISIONS OF THE BOARD MEMBER, FINANCE AND EFFICIENCY**

**Friday 2 March 2012**

**COUNCILLORS PRESENT:** Councillor Turner.

**OFFICERS PRESENT:** William Reed (Law and Governance) and Helen Bishop (Head of Customer Services)

## **44. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

None

## **45. PUBLIC ADDRESSES**

None

## **46. COUNCILLOR ADDRESSES**

None

## **47. DEBT WRITE OFFS**

The Head of Customer Services submitted a report (previously circulated, now appended).

Resolved that the amounts shown in the body of the report be written off subject to the proviso that if new information or payments were received, the debts written off would be resurrected and credits applied.

**The meeting started at 5.00 pm and ended at 5.05 pm**

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# **DELEGATED DECISIONS OF THE BOARD MEMBER, FINANCE AND EFFICIENCY**

**Thursday 29 March 2012**

**COUNCILLORS PRESENT:** Councillor Turner.

**OFFICERS PRESENT:** William Reed (Law and Governance) and Richard Hawkes (Corporate Asset Manager)

## **48. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

Councillor McCready attended to ask a question (minute 50 refers). Councillor McCready declared a personal prejudicial interest in the subject of the meeting (minute 51 refers) because he lived in a property on the Sunnymead estate that was subject to a covenant in favour of the Council (Section 11 of Appendix 3 to the report refers). After Councillor McCready asked his question and received a reply he left the meeting and took no further part in it.

## **49. PUBLIC ADDRESSES**

Mr Mark Pitt submitted a question to the Board Member which, although received after the deadline for public questions, the Board Member agreed to take. Mr Pitt did not attend the meeting. Mr Pitt's question, in summary, concerned the retention of ownership and safeguarding of the barn at Bury Knowle Park (and other assets, for example Cheney Barn) that should be put to community use either by the Council or, if disposed of, by the acquiring organisation.

The Board Member replied by saying that Mr Pitt's comments would be considered when all comments as a result of the consultation were considered.

## **50. COUNCILLOR ADDRESSES**

Councillor McCready asked a question of the Board Member concerning covenants imposed by the Council. He referred in this regard to Section 11 of Appendix 3 to the Plan and to recommendation 16 of the scrutiny panel's recommendations. Councillor McCready elaborated on his question but, as submitted, it read as follows:-

"Recommendation 16 of the Value and Performance Scrutiny Committee's panel on the Asset Management Plan 2011-14 proposes that the City's enforcement of covenants should be proportional. Do you consider that it would make the policy clearer if it stated to what the enforcement should be proportional, such that paragraph 11.2 of appendix 3 read: In relation to covenants the Council has imposed, it will enforce such covenants where it is reasonable to do so, and, where the Council grants a release or partial release from a covenant, it will charge a reasonable payment proportionate to the administrative burden of issuing the release and proportionate to any injury the Council may suffer to its legitimate interests as a result of actions made permissible by the release." "

The Board Member replied by saying that he had some sympathy with Councillor McCready's points and that they would be considered when all comments as a result of the consultation were considered.

Councillor McCready then left the meeting.

## **51. ASSET MANAGEMENT PLAN - CONSULTATION**

The Head of Corporate Assets submitted a report (previously circulated, now appended). The Value and Performance Scrutiny Committee also submitted a report and so did Councillors Fooks and Van Nooijen who, as a panel had considered the Asset Management consultation draft in detail.

Resolved:-

- (1) To approve the Asset Management Consultation draft 2011-14 for consultation subject to the typographical corrections and other matters set out in paragraph 19 of the scrutiny panel's report:
- (2) Not to agree the recommendation in paragraph 1 of the scrutiny panel's report because the retrospective discussion of previous years achievements was not felt to affect clarity;
- (3) To defer consideration of the scrutiny panel's remaining recommendations and to consider them with all other comments after the consultation period had ended, and to note that the two panel members would meet with the Head of Corporate Assets to go through the recommendations;
- (4) On the Scrutiny Committee's recommendations:-
  - (a) That recommendation 1 be agreed and the change be made to the consultation draft before it was issued for consultation;
  - (b) On recommendation 2, that during the consultation period the Head of Corporate Assets should consider appropriate targets;
- (5) To note that the consultation period would last about three months.

**The meeting started at 5.00 pm and ended at 5.26 pm**



## 25. MOTIONS ON NOTICE

### (1) **Democratic Structures for Oxford City Council** – (Proposer – Councillor Nuala Young, seconder David Williams)

Oxford City Council recognises that the recent changes to decision making have been undemocratic and would seek (as made possible under the Localism Act) to return to a more open and fair system of local government that encourages participation and engagement by the Community.

The Council will.

- (1) No longer invest powers in a single 'Strong Leader'. Such powers will be devolved amongst service committees focused on specific Council functions.
- (2) Return to decision making focused on all party representative committees reflecting the political balance on the Council with committees reflecting service delivery with a central policy committee to set strategic objectives.
- (3) Restore the Area Committees with their officer support, devolved budget and planning powers along with other additional devolved powers.
- (4) The Council will return to a six week cycle with 8 meetings a year one of which will be a distinct budget setting Council.
- (5) Restore the duty on planning officers to inform those residents adjacent to and near to a proposed planning allocation.

A report on the Constitutional Changes required to implement these changes, to be brought to the present City Executive Board for implementation in the autumn period.

### (2) **Temple Cowley Pools** – (Proposer – Councillor David Williams, seconder Nuala Young)

Given the escalating cost of the project to build a new swimming Pool at Blackbird Leys, the growing public opposition to the proposal and the pending legal actions against the scheme, this Council will abandon the proposed development and will commence the refurbishment of Temple Cowley Pools and the existing Blackbird Leys pool.

The estimated cost of refurbishment and contract withdrawal being taken from the capital allocation set aside for the building of the proposed new pool at Blackbird Leys.

(3) **Ecocide – (Proposer – Councillor Matt Morton, seconder Nuala Young)**

The International Criminal Court was formed in 2002 to prosecute individuals for breaches of 4 Crimes against Peace. They are: Genocide, Crimes against Humanity, War Crimes and Crimes of Aggression. Ecocide has been proposed as the missing 5th crime against peace.

There is a proposed amendment, which if accepted will add Ecocide as a crime against peace. This will change the way the earth is exploited and allow big business to avoid harmful practice and still fulfill their legal obligations to shareholders. In order to pass a 2/3rd majority is needed, and the UK could play a major role in tipping the balance.

This council believes that this amendment is an important step in ensuring the future sustainability of Oxford city and the global environment. We ask the executive to contact the 2 MP's for Oxford to ask them to support the UK diplomatic service in supporting this amendment in the UN.

(4) **Boating Community – (Proposer – Councillor Matt Morton, seconder David Williams)**

The boating community and residential boaters are an integral part of the character of the City of Oxford yet, in a time of growing housing need, their welfare is often overlooked in City provision.

In light of this situation, Council resolves:

- (1) to re-direct the £44,000 allocated in the recent budget for an extra riverbank enforcement officer to a new welfare and support worker post dedicated to supporting residential boat dwellers.
- (2) that the welfare and support worker post will include an understanding of the needs and challenges residential boat dwellers face and what support is available to them.

(5) **Times Safer Cycling Campaigng – (Proposer – Councillor Val Smith)**

This Council supports the Times newspaper safer cycling campaign.

(6) **NHS PFI Loan Programme – (Proposer – Councillor David Williams, seconder Councillor Nuala Young)**

The NHS in Oxfordshire faces years of financial pressure which will inevitably affect the quality of health care for the people of Oxfordshire.

One of the larger elements of pressure comes from the need for Oxford University Hospitals NHS Trust to pay at least £53 million per years to the owners of its PFI facilities. PFI paymentst are inflated by the profits taken by the owners and the very higher interest rates required from private companies compared to public entities such as local councils.

Northumberland County Council, have recently provided a loan to Northumbria Healthcare Trust to secure savings from its PFI contracts and to help buy out part of the contractual obligations. The Government, although accepting that PFI deals are a crippling burden on local Health Carer Trusts, would appear to be making no provision to buy out PFI contracts or ease the burden on NHS Trusts. In view of this fact Oxford City Council would seek to investigate in conjunction with the County Council and other District Council if it could use its investment portfolio to formulate a loan scheme that would reflect the Northumbrian NHS investment programme.

This City Council therefore requests that the CEB appoint a working Party of appropriate members and officers to investigate with colleagues from the County Council and Oxford University Hospitals Trust, the potential for savings to be made through provision of a loan support investment package funded by the Oxfordshire local authorities to ease PFI burdens but still return a reasonable dividend to local council coffers.

**(7) Scrutiny – (Proposer – Councillor David Williams, seconder Councillor Dick Wolff)**

Oxford City Council, recognising that all of its members have been elected to play an active part in the formation and implementation of Council policies, believes that Scrutiny is an important part of the democratic process. This is especially true now that one-person committees have been introduced, extra powers given to the Council Leader and that decision-making has been concentrated in the hands of a small group of majority party councillors, thereby distancing 'backbench' and opposition councillors from discussion and decision-making. Now that Area Committees have been abolished and many powers such as planning centralised in fewer committees dominated by the majority party, it is especially important to ensure that a robust and effective system is in place for assessing Council performance across the whole city (not just those parts represented by the majority party), and for monitoring the impact of existing and proposed Council policies.

With this clear democratic need made more obvious by the continued centralization it is most important to resist moves to reduce the number, briefs and powers of the already reduced in number Scrutiny Committees and to make a commitment that this Council will maintain at least two existing major scrutiny panels with the present criteria for review undiminished along with the 'call in' principle for ward spend allocations, planning decisions and single members 'committees'.

**(8) Oxford Cycle City Project – (Proposer – Councillor Graham Jones, seonder Councillor Jean Fooks)**

This council applauds the work already done by officers and stakeholders on the Oxford Cycle City project;

asks officers to refine further the prioritised list of schemes through consultation with local communities and ward councillors as well as the excellent involvement of organisations such as Cyclox and Sustrans – not least on local infrastructure;

welcomes the many positive ideas set out in a letter to local authorities by the Cycling Minister, Norman Baker, and the moneys for encouraging and improving cycling earmarked by the Coalition government;

urges the inclusion of a city-centre cycle hub and more cycle stands further up the list of priorities;

notes the recent unanimous vote of the county council to work closely with districts on these issues;

and calls on the County Council, in consultation with Cyclox and the City Council, to take measures to implement in Oxford *The Times* eight-point plan for making "Cities fit for Cycling", and to respond to cyclists' concerns in relation to shared space proposals such as those for Frideswide Square.

**(9) Council Estate Management – (Proposer – councillor Stuart McCready, seonder Councillor Jean Fooks)**

Up until the start of the 2011/12 financial year, twelve estate managers provided a landlord presence that reached all Council housing in Oxford. The estate manager visited frequently and kept a constant pro-active eye out for problems and knew which department had the solutions. Tenants knew who their estate manager was and could depend on getting a reply when they asked their estate manager to visit, see what a given problem was, and provide advice, help and advocacy in identifying and dealing with the City departments that had the solutions.

For the past year we have had only five estate managers for the whole City, and the emphasis has been on tenants identifying and contacting for themselves the specialist team most likely to help with a given problem - and then they cannot be sure of dealing with the same person twice in a row. This has meant that tenants are faced with a more fragmented, and consequently less effective, landlord service. There is a sense on some estates that cases that were progressing when an estate manager was on the case have stalled and even very simple matters sometimes seem a bewildering challenge to get seen to.

The Council therefore requests officers to investigate restructuring the landlord function to ensure that every tenant has a single familiar officer to whom they can reliably turn for a home visit and advice when they need help or service from the Housing Department.

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**Report of: Head of Law and Governance/Monitoring Officer**

**To: Council**

**Date: 23<sup>rd</sup> April 2012**

**Subject: SENIOR MANAGEMENT RESTRUCTURES - DELEGATION**

## **Summary and Recommendations**

**Purpose of report:** To propose an amendment to the constitution that would have the effect of granting the Chief Executive authority to implement organisational changes at senior levels of the Council.

**Policy Framework:** not applicable

**Report approved by: Leader of Council  
Finance**

**Recommendation(s):** That the constitutional provisions proposed at Paragraph 4 of this report be adopted with immediate effect and that the Monitoring Officer be authorised to amend the Constitution accordingly.

## **Introduction**

1. The Chief Executive is the Head of Paid Service and is responsible on behalf of Council for the organisation of the council's staff and how the Council co-ordinates its work and carries out its functions.
2. Council has given delegated authority for staffing matters below the Head of Service level to the Heads of Service, but has reserved the appointment of Heads of Service and Directors to the Appointments Committee, which is a politically balanced Committee of Council. The Appointments Committee also determines the pay of the Chief Executive and the Directors. Council has reserved to itself the appointment of the Chief Executive and the designation of the Statutory Officers. This report does not propose any changes to these arrangements.
3. The proposed amendment aims to clarify the extent of the Chief Executive's delegated powers in relation to the senior management roles within the organisation of Directorates and Service Areas in order

to fulfil the overall responsibility of maintaining an effective structure to deliver the Council's objectives.

#### Proposed Constitutional Provisions

4. It is proposed that the following amendments are made to the Constitution:
- a) That the Chief Executive should have the delegated authority to amend the senior management structure of the Council (which consists, at present, of Directors and Heads of Service) in order to deliver the Council's objectives in the most effective and efficient manner, subject to the following conditions –
    - i That the Chief Executive shall consult with all political group leaders prior to the implementation of any changes;
    - ii That no changes may be implemented which results in an increase in the overall number of senior management posts or an increase in the overall salary costs of senior management;
    - iii That the Chief Executive will maintain on the Council's website an up to date senior management structure chart showing post titles and the broad functional responsibilities of each post.
  - b) That the references to the senior management structure throughout the Constitution shall be a reference to the structure chart published by the Chief Executive under 4 (a) (iii) above.

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

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**To: Council**

**Date: Monday 23<sup>rd</sup> April 2012**

**Report of: Head of Law & Governance**

**Title of Report: Regulation of Investigatory Powers Act 2000 – 1<sup>st</sup> April 2011 to 31<sup>st</sup> March 2012**

## **Summary and Recommendations**

**Purpose of report: To report the Council's application of its powers under the Regulation of Investigatory Powers Act 2000**

**Key decision? No**

**Executive lead member: Councillor Price**

**Report approved by:**

**Policy Framework: Not applicable**

**Recommendation: Council is asked to note the Council's use of its powers under the Regulation of Investigatory Powers Act 2000 (RIPA) during the period 1<sup>st</sup> April 2011 to 31<sup>st</sup> March 2012;**

**Appendix 1:** The Council amended RIPA policy document.

## **Introduction**

1. This report provides information on the Council's use of the Regulation of Investigatory Powers Act 2000 (RIPA) during the period 1<sup>st</sup> April 2011 to 31<sup>st</sup> March 2012. There are three investigatory powers regulated by RIPA which are available to local authorities, these are directed covert surveillance, the interception of communications data and the use of Covert Human Intelligence Sources (CHIS). The Council has never exercised either of these latter powers.

### **The Council's use of Covert Surveillance**

2. The Council did not issue any authorisations for directed covert surveillance during the period 1<sup>st</sup> April 2011 and 31<sup>st</sup> March 2012.
3. The Council's policy and procedure relating to the use of RIPA (Appendix 1), has recently been reviewed and amended. The procedure is available on the Council's website.

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

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# OXFORD CITY COUNCIL

www.oxford.gov.uk



## Regulation of Investigatory Powers Act 2000

# Policy and Procedure

OXFORD CITY COUNCIL  
LAW AND GOVERNANCE

FEBRUARY 2012

## **1. INTRODUCTION**

- 1.1 Any covert surveillance conducted by the Council can constitute an interference with the right protected by Article 8 of the European Convention on Human Rights, which provides that every individual has a “right to respect for his private and family life, his home and his correspondence”. Section 6 of the Human Rights Act 1998 provides that it is unlawful for the Council to interfere with those rights unless it is in accordance with the law, proportionate and necessary in a democratic society.
- 1.2 As the Council has a number of functions to undertake which involve the enforcement of laws and regulations, officers will need to conduct investigations and where appropriate take legal proceedings. The Council will not normally make use of covert surveillance and similar activities unless it is necessary for an investigation. The covert surveillance method requested must also be the least intrusive available.
- 1.3 The Regulation of Investigatory Powers Act 2000 (RIPA) regulates the way in which the Council conducts surveillance for the purposes of law enforcement. The fundamental requirement of RIPA is that when the Council considers undertaking directed surveillance or using a covert human intelligence source it must only do so if:
  - a) the activity has been authorised by an officer with appropriate powers, and
  - b) the relevant criteria are satisfied.
- 1.4 Some activities of Council enforcement officers (e.g. environmental health officers, benefit fraud investigators, planning enforcement officers, licensing officers) are covered by the provisions of this Act. Also covered by the Act, and less obviously, are activities, which involve surveillance for purposes, which, might be said to be internally focussed.
- 1.5 Compliance with RIPA will ensure any interference is in accordance with domestic law. Compliance with RIPA assists to defend complaints against the Council and officers of interference with the right to respect for private and family life protected by Article 8 of the Convention. The Council can thus claim any interference is “in accordance with the law”. Provided the activities undertaken are also necessary and proportionate there will be no contravention of human rights legislation.
- 1.6 All investigations or enforcement actions involving covert surveillance or the use of a covert human intelligence source must comply with the provisions of RIPA.

- 1.7 This policy applies to all staff and agents working for the Council. The purpose of this guidance is to advise Council enforcement officers and their managers of the procedure that should be followed where surveillance activities are contemplated, to ensure compliance with RIPA.
- 1.8 The Council will from time to time issue further guidance and procedures to staff.
- 1.9 The Council will ensure adequate training takes place for authorising and investigating officers.

## **2. RIPA REGULATED ACTIVITIES**

- 2.1 If an investigating officer identifies a contemplated surveillance activity as regulated by RIPA, a written authorisation in accordance with this guidance should be obtained, before the activity commences. If enforcement officers, or their managers are in any doubt, they should contact the Head of Law & Governance.

Activities covered by RIPA:

### **2.2 The Interception of Communications**

Where interception of the communication has not been authorised, or agreed by the sender and addressee of the communication. These guidance notes do not cover this activity, as the Council is extremely unlikely to undertake this activity. Please contact the Head of Law & Governance.

### **2.3 The Use of Covert Human Intelligence Sources**

This is defined as the use of an individual to create a relationship with a subject, for the purposes of obtaining information, where the purpose of the relationship is not disclosed to the subject. Interaction with the subject of surveillance is therefore required in order for an individual to be regarded as a covert human intelligence source (CHIS). Activities of an undercover officer could fall within this definition.

- 2.3.1 Examples might include an undercover police officer who, attempts to infiltrate a drug smuggling ring. Another example might be the use of a professional witness or private investigator to obtain information and evidence where that individual interacts with the subject of surveillance.
- 2.3.2 Members of the public who volunteer information as part of their civic duty i.e. they voluntarily disclose to the Council observations which they have made during the normal course of their lives, will not normally be regarded as a Covert Human

Information source. It will be otherwise if they have obtained the information in the course of a friendship or other relationship with the suspect. In case of any doubt, legal advice should be sought from the Head of Law and Governance

2.3.3 An authorising officer must consult with the Head of Law & Governance before authorising the use of a CHIS.

## 2.4 Directed Surveillance

As this activity is the most likely to be carried out, this policy addresses this activity in more detail. Where there is to be directed surveillance written authorisation must be obtained in accordance with the provisions of RIPA before the surveillance commences. Directed surveillance is defined as surveillance which is covert, but not intrusive and which is undertaken for the purposes of a specific investigation, and which is likely to result in obtaining private information about a person and which is carried out otherwise than as an immediate response to events where it would be impracticable to obtain prior authorisation.

2.4.1 Therefore investigating officers need to consider a number of key questions to determine whether a proposed activity falls within this definition of directed surveillance:

- i) **Is the proposed activity surveillance?**  
Surveillance is defined in wide terms as: any activity involving the monitoring, observing or listening to persons, their movements, their conversations or other activities or communications; the recording of anything monitored, observed or listened to in the course of surveillance; and the surveillance by or with the assistance of a surveillance device.
- ii) **Is the surveillance covert?**  
Surveillance is covert where it is carried out in a manner calculated to ensure that the subjects of the surveillance are unaware that it is, or may be taking place. It is therefore the intention of the officer carrying out the surveillance, which is relevant to this issue of covertness.
- iii) **Is the surveillance for the purposes of a specific investigation?**  
General observation, not forming part of any investigation into suspected breaches of the law and not directed against any specific person or persons is not directed surveillance e.g. CCTV cameras in Council car parks are readily visible and if they are used to monitor the general activities of what is happening within the car park, it falls

outside the definition. If, however, the cameras are targeting a particular known individual, the usage will become a specific operation, which will require authorisation.

iv) **Is the surveillance undertaken in such a manner that is likely to result in the obtaining of private information about a person?**

“Private Information” is any information concerning a person’s private or family life. Whether information is personal in nature is relevant when deciding whether information is private. The fact that observation of individuals occurs from the public highway will not prevent the discovery of private information. When officers consider this question they should give due weight to the probability of discovering such information, as authorisation is not required if there is only a slight possibility of discovering private information.

v) **Is the surveillance otherwise than by way of an immediate response to events or circumstances where it is not reasonably practicable to obtain prior authorisation?**

If the surveillance were an immediate response to something happening during the course of an officer’s work, it would not be reasonable to obtain prior authority. If this occurs, the officer must report the incident back to an authorising officer so a note can be made on the relevant department file and the central register.

vi) **Is the surveillance intrusive?**

The Council is not authorised to carry out intrusive surveillance however it is extremely unlikely the Council would contemplate undertaking this activity. Directed surveillance turns into intrusive surveillance if it is carried out in relation to anything taking place on residential premises or in a private vehicle, and involves the presence of an individual on the premises or in the vehicle. If a surveillance device is used and if the device is not on the premises or in the vehicle, it is only intrusive if it consistently produces information of the same quality as if it were.

### 3. **AUTHORISATION**

- 3.1 No authorising officer shall grant an authorisation for the carrying out of directed surveillance or the use of a CHIS **unless** he/she is **satisfied**:

- a) that an authorisation is necessary for the purpose of preventing or detecting crime or of preventing disorder, and
  - b) that the authorised activity is proportionate to what is sought to be achieved by carrying it out.
- 3.2 The contemplated activity must be considered necessary in the particular circumstances of the case.
- 3.3 When considering whether the proposed activity is proportionate, factors to be considered include whether the activity is excessive in the circumstances of the case or if the information sought could reasonably be obtained by other less intrusive means.

#### 4. **AUTHORISING OFFICERS**

- 4.1 The Regulation of Investigatory Powers (Directed Surveillance and Covert Human Intelligence Sources) Order 2003 No. 3171 prescribes the authorising officer must be at least an Assistant Chief Officer, Assistant Head of Service, Service Manager or equivalent.
- 4.2 The Council's authorising officers are the Chief Executive, The Executive Director (City Services), The Executive Director (Housing and Regeneration), the Corporate Director for Finance and Efficiency), the Head of Law and Governance, the Head of Finance.
- 4.3 Authorising officers should not be responsible for authorising investigations or operations in which they are directly involved, although it is recognised that this may sometimes be unavoidable in cases where it is necessary to act urgently. Where an authorising officer authorises such an investigation or operation a note of the authorisation should be placed on the central record of authorisations (see paragraph 8.3).
- 4.4 Authorising officers must be aware of the requirements of RIPA and how to properly consider requests for authority. Authorising officers must demonstrate that these requests have been properly considered when they complete the authorisation form.
- 4.5 Where the surveillance is likely to lead to the obtaining of confidential information, a RIPA authorisation can only be given by the Chief Executive. In these circumstances the power to issue RIPA authorisations cannot be delegated. For these purposes confidential information is:
- (a) legally privileged information e.g. communications between a professional legal adviser and a client



(b) confidential personal information, which is information kept in confidence and relating to a person's physical or mental health or relating to spiritual counselling given to a person e.g. consultations between a health professional and a patient, information from a patient's medical records or conversations between an individual and a Minister of Religion

(c) confidential journalistic information, which is any information, held for the purposes of journalism on the basis that it or its source would not be revealed.

4.6 If any such information is obtained during surveillance legal advice should be sought immediately.

4.7 Chapter 3 of both Codes of Practice referred to at paragraph 9.1 below provide further guidance relating to confidential material.

## 5. **FORMS OF AUTHORITY**

5.1 The Act does not contain prescribed forms of authority. The Home Office model forms should be used. This will ensure a consistent approach is adopted across the Council and ensure all relevant issues are addressed during the decision-making process. Forms relating to directed surveillance and the use of covert human intelligence sources are available from the Home Office at <http://www.homeoffice.gov.uk/counter-terrorism/regulation-investigatory-powers/ripa-forms/>

## 6. **DURATION OF AUTHORISATIONS**

6.1 A written authorisation for directed surveillance lapses, if not renewed, three months from the grant or last renewal. Officers should ensure authorisations only last for as long as is considered necessary and proportionate. Regular reviews of authorisations should be undertaken to assess the need for continued surveillance.

6.2 Any time before the authorisation would cease to have effect, the authorising officer may renew, in writing, if he/she still considers it necessary and proportionate.

6.3 Authorisations may be renewed more than once provided they continue to meet the criteria for authorisation. The renewal does not have to be authorised by the same authorising officer who granted the original authorisation.

- 6.4 The authorising officer who granted the authorisation or last renewed the authorisation must cancel it if he is satisfied the directed surveillance no longer meets the criteria upon which it was authorised.

## **7. ORAL GRANTS OF AUTHORITY IN URGENT CASES**

- 7.1 A request for authorisation can be made orally, and authority granted orally, only in cases of urgency where there is insufficient time to make a written application and to grant a written authority. The authorising officer must consider that the time, which would elapse before the written authority could be granted, would jeopardise the investigation.
- 7.2 The Authorising Officer must still consider all relevant circumstances, and be satisfied that the covert surveillance is necessary for the purpose of preventing or detecting crime or of preventing disorder and that the surveillance requested is proportionate to what is sought to be achieved.
- 7.3 Oral authorities subsist for no more than 72 hours. They can be renewed (for periods not exceeding 72 hours) but further oral renewals are unsatisfactory, as the original urgency will pass giving time for a full written request to be made and a written grant issued, if continued surveillance is necessary.
- 7.4 If oral authority is granted, the Authorising Officer should prepare a memorandum detailing the request made to him/her, the details of the oral authority granted, and the reasons why the matter was considered so urgent that the grant of oral authority was justified. A copy of this memorandum must be sent to Legal Services for inclusion in the central register of authorisations.

## **8. RETENTION AND SECURITY OF FORMS AND RECORDS**

- 8.1 Requests for authorisations, renewals, cancellations, and any memoranda recording the oral grant of urgent authorisations or renewals are confidential material. The documents and any information contained therein must not be disclosed to any person who has no legitimate need to have access to the document, or to the information that it contains. Authorising Officers must ensure that there are proper arrangements within their departments or services for the retention and security of such documents.
- 8.2 Such documents may need to be securely kept for a period (considered appropriate by the relevant Head of Service) following the completion of any surveillance, as they may have to be produced in Court, or to the other party in Court proceedings as part of legal disclosure requirements. Superfluous copies should not be made or kept.

- 8.3 The Head of Law & Governance maintains a central register of all authorisations, reviews, cancellations and renewals. Authorising officers should ensure that hard copies of these documents are sent to the Head of Law & Governance as soon as is practicable.
- 8.4 The central register will be “weeded” of information that is more than six years old, unless there are relevant outstanding Court proceedings. All documentation that is no longer needed will be shredded.

9. **CODES OF PRACTICE**

- 9.1 The Covert Surveillance Code of Practice is available at <http://www.homeoffice.gov.uk/publications/counter-terrorism/ripa-forms/code-of-practice-covert>
- 9.2 The Code of Practice is admissible as evidence in criminal and civil proceedings. The Council will follow the requirements of any Codes of Practice issued by the Home Secretary unless there are exceptional circumstances justifying a departure from the recommended approach.

10. **SENIOR RESPONSIBLE OFFICER**

- 10.1 The Council’s Senior Responsible Officer for the purposes of RIPA is the Head of Law and Governance.

11. **RIPA COORDINATING OFFICER**

The Council’s RIPA Coordinating Officer is Jeremy Franklin (Ext. 2412).

Jeremy Thomas  
Head of Law & Governance  
Oxford City Council

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