

# Agenda

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## City Executive Board

Date: **Wednesday 9 April 2014**

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Time: **5.00 pm**

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

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For any further information please contact:

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If you would like help to understand this document please call William Reed, Democratic Services Manager or in advance of the meeting.

# City Executive Board

## Membership

### Chair

<b>Councillor Bob Price</b>	Corporate Governance, Strategic Partnerships and Economic Development
<b>Councillor Ed Turner</b>	Finance, Efficiency and Strategic Asset Management
<b>Councillor Susan Brown</b>	Benefits and Customer Services
<b>Councillor Colin Cook</b>	City Development
<b>Councillor Steven Curran</b>	Youth and Communities
<b>Councillor Pat Kennedy</b>	Education, Crime and Community Safety
<b>Councillor Mark Lygo</b>	Parks and Sports
<b>Councillor Mike Rowley</b>	Leisure Services
<b>Councillor Scott Seamons</b>	Housing
<b>Councillor John Tanner</b>	Cleaner, Greener Oxford

The quorum for this meeting is three members. Substitutes are not permitted.

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# AGENDA

## PART ONE PUBLIC BUSINESS

Pages

### 1 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

The quorum for this meeting is 3 members. Substitutes are not permitted.

### 2 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Board Members are asked to declare any disclosable pecuniary interests they may have in any of the following agenda items. Guidance is contained at the end of these agenda pages.

### 3 PUBLIC QUESTIONS

When the chair agrees, questions from the public for up to 15 minutes – these must be about the items for decision at the meeting (excluding the minutes) and must have been given to the Head of Law and Governance by 9.30am on a day so that there is one clear working day before the meeting (email [executiveboard@oxford.gov.uk](mailto:executiveboard@oxford.gov.uk) or telephone the person named as staff contact). No supplementary questions or questioning will be permitted. Questions by the public will be taken as read and, when the Chair agrees, be responded to at the meeting.

### 4 SCRUTINY COMMITTEE REPORTS

The following scrutiny committee reports have been, or will be, submitted to this meeting:-

- Fusion Lifestyle Annual Service Plan

### 5 COUNCILLOR ADDRESSES ON ANY ITEM FOR DECISION ON THE BOARD'S AGENDA

When the Chair agrees, addresses by members of Council – these must be about the items for decision at the meeting (excluding the minutes) and must have been given to the Head of Law and Governance by 9.30am on a day so that there is one clear working day before the meeting (email [executiveboard@oxford.gov.uk](mailto:executiveboard@oxford.gov.uk) or telephone the person named as staff contact).

An address may last for no more than 3 minutes. The Board Member who has political responsibility for the item for decision may respond, or the Board will have regard to the points raised in reaching its decision.

<b>6</b>	<b>FUSION LIFESTYLE - ANNUAL SERVICE PLAN 2014/15</b>	7 - 86
	<p>Lead Member: Councillor Rowley, Executive Board Member for Leisure Services</p> <p>Report of the Head of Leisure, Parks and Communities</p> <p>The report presents Fusion Lifestyle's Annual Service Plan for the management of the Council's leisure facilities for 2014/2015.</p> <p>The Board is asked to endorse the plan.</p>	
<b>7</b>	<b>OXFORD STADIUM, SANDY LANE - DESIGNATION AS A CONSERVATION AREA</b>	87 - 136
	<p>Lead Member: Councillor Cook, Executive Board Member for City Development</p> <p>Report of the Head of City Development</p> <p>At its meeting on 10<sup>th</sup> July 2013, the City Executive Board resolved to include the Oxford Stadium on the Oxford Heritage Asset register as a "locally designated heritage asset".</p> <p>The report explains the purpose of the conservation area designation and sets out the reasons for proposing to designate Oxford Stadium as a conservation area. The extent of the area is shown on the plan attached as Appendix 1 of the report.</p> <p>The Board is recommended to designate Oxford Stadium, Sandy Lane, as a Conservation Area.</p>	
<b>8</b>	<b>SAVING COMMUNITY PUBLIC HOUSES</b>	137 - 146
	<p>Lead Member: Councillor Cook, Executive Board Member for City Development</p> <p>Report of the Head of City Development</p> <p>At its meeting on 3<sup>rd</sup> February 2014, Council approved the following motion:-</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">"Oxford City Council notes the possibility of submitting the following proposal to the government under the Sustainable Communities Act:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 'That the Secretary of State help protect community pubs in England by ensuring that planning permission and community consultation are required before community pubs are allowed to be converted to betting shops, supermarkets and pay-day loan stores or other uses, or are allowed to be demolished.'</li> <li>• This Council notes that if this power was acquired it would allow the Council to determine if pubs should be demolished or converted into other uses and could save many valued community pubs.</li> <li>• This Council resolves to ask City Executive Board to consider and submit the proposal to the government under the Sustainable Communities Act and to work together with Local Works and the Campaign for Real Ale to gain support for the proposal from other</li> </ul>	

councils in the region and across the country.”

The report has been produced in response to this motion.

The Board is recommended to:-

- (1) Approve the preparation and publication of a Technical Advice Note to support Policy RC 18 on public houses;
- (2) Support officers in working with amenity bodies and the local community to ensure public houses of heritage significance are included on the Local Heritage Assets Register, and to increase awareness of listing public houses as Assets of Community value;
- (3) Support Kirklees submission under the Sustainable Communities Act;
- (4) Note that Officers will also continue to monitor and review the operation of the Sustainable Communities Act's effectiveness in bringing forward new proposals for measures that would help to protect community public houses in other local authority areas.

## **9 FUTURE ITEMS**

This item is included on the agenda to give members the opportunity to raise issues on the Forward Plan or update the Board about future agenda items.

## **10 MINUTES**

147 - 154

Minutes of the meeting held on 12<sup>th</sup> March 2014

## **11 MATTERS EXEMPT FROM PUBLICATION**

If the Board wishes to exclude the press and the public from the meeting during consideration of any of the items on the exempt from publication part of the agenda, it will be necessary for the Board to pass a resolution in accordance with the provisions of Paragraph 21(1)(b) of the Local Authorities (Executive Arrangements) (Access to Information) (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.

The Board may maintain the exemption if and so long as, in all the circumstances of the case, the public interest in maintaining the exemption outweighs the public interest in disclosing the information.

### **PART TWO** **MATTERS EXEMPT FROM PUBLICATION**

## **DECLARING INTERESTS**

### **General duty**

You must declare any disclosable pecuniary interests when the meeting reaches the item on the agenda headed "Declarations of Interest" or as soon as it becomes apparent to you.

### **What is a disclosable pecuniary interest?**

Disclosable pecuniary interests relate to your\* employment; sponsorship (ie payment for expenses incurred by you in carrying out your duties as a councillor or towards your election expenses); contracts; land in the Council's area; licences for land in the Council's area; corporate tenancies; and securities. These declarations must be recorded in each councillor's Register of Interests which is publicly available on the Council's website.

### **Declaring an interest**

Where any matter disclosed in your Register of Interests is being considered at a meeting, you must declare that you have an interest. You should also disclose the nature as well as the existence of the interest.

If you have a disclosable pecuniary interest, after having declared it at the meeting you must not participate in discussion or voting on the item and must withdraw from the meeting whilst the matter is discussed.

### **Members' Code of Conduct and public perception**

Even if you do not have a disclosable pecuniary interest in a matter, the Members' Code of Conduct says that a member "must serve only the public interest and must never improperly confer an advantage or disadvantage on any person including yourself" and that "you must not place yourself in situations where your honesty and integrity may be questioned". What this means is that the matter of interests must be viewed within the context of the Code as a whole and regard should continue to be paid to the perception of the public.

\*Disclosable pecuniary interests that must be declared are not only those of the member her or himself but also those of the member's spouse, civil partner or person they are living with as husband or wife or as if they were civil partners.

**To:** City Executive Board

**Date:** 10 April 2014

**Report of:** Head of Leisure, Parks and Communities

**Title of Report:** Fusion Lifestyle's 2014/ 2015 Annual Service Plan for the management of the council's leisure facilities

## **Summary and Recommendations**

**Purpose of report:** The report recommends that the City Executive Board endorse Fusion Lifestyle's Annual Service Plan for the management of the Council's leisure facilities for 2014/15.

**Key decision:** Yes

**Executive lead member:** Councillor Mike Rowley

**Policy Framework:** - Leisure Facilities Review 2009 to 2013  
- Sport & Physical Activity Strategy 2009 to 2014

**Recommendation(s):** That the City Executive Board endorses Fusion Lifestyle's Annual Service Plan for 2014/15.

Appendix One – Fusion Lifestyle's 2014/ 2015 Annual Service Plan

Appendix Two – Fusion Lifestyle's Annual Service Plan summary 2013/2014

Appendix Three – Risk register

Appendix Four – Initial Equality Impact Assessment

## **Introduction**

- 1.1 In March 2009 the council entered into a contract with Fusion Lifestyle (Fusion) a social enterprise with charitable status to manage the Council's Leisure Facilities. The contract was for ten years, with a five year extension clause.
- 1.2 The contract with a social enterprise whose sole focus and extensive expertise is operating leisure facilities has greatly improved the user experience, alongside achieving savings of around £660,000 per year. Over this period the facilities that we are keeping have been greatly improved with around £4.6 million of investment, which has in the main been funded by the contract savings.

1.3 In February 2014 the City Executive Board agreed to extend the contract to for the development, management and operation of the City's leisure centres for a five year period to April 2024.

1.4 By progressing with the extension at this midway stage of the contract, the Council are able to bank significant revenue saving alongside advancing further contract improvements such as:

**Staffing and Young People:**

- Improved opportunities for apprenticeships
- Improved work experience opportunities
- Continued commitment to the Oxford Living Wage

**Facility Improvements:**

- Fusion will carry out and present an annual facility review of the Oxford Leisure Service to assist the parties to create an options plan, fully recognising current and changing market trends and best practice.

**Competition Pool Development:**

- Fusion will review all existing timetable arrangements at Temple Cowley and Blackbird Leys (old) Pool and draw up action plans to incorporate change for stakeholder engagement
- Fusion will engage with partner organisations to implement a sport and community development plan
- On completion of the development a multi-use games areas will be created in the existing construction compound.

**Social Impact:**

- Fusion will commission an independent study of the social impact of the provision of the Oxford leisure service.

1.5 Fusions 2014/15 Annual Service Plan (Plan) builds on the Council's approach to delivering world class leisure provision to Oxford residents.

1.6 Leisure provision in the city is continuously improving since the collaboration with Fusion in 2009 and supports the Council's strategic aims. The achievements to date can be summarised as:

- Usage has increased by 40 per cent on pre contract levels, now totalling around 1.3 million visits a year.
- The main increase in usage is in our target groups, which have increased by 118 per cent.
- The net subsidy per user has reduced from over £2 to 60 pence per user including utilities - a zero subsidy by 2016 is now forecast.



- Customer satisfaction levels of 96% (excluding those sites that are been replaced with the new pool in 2014).
- Quest (the sport and leisure industries quality assurance scheme) has been achieved and maintained at five centres.

1.7 The 2014/15 Plan is focused on delivering the Council's priorities in the most effective and efficient way and places significant focus upon:

- Accessible and affordable leisure opportunities through pricing structures at appropriate and inclusive levels.
- Improving health and well-being by positively promoting and delivering the benefits of healthy living and active lifestyles.
- Supporting the council's Youth Ambition Programme
- Tackling climate change and promote sustainable environmental resource management providing quality through continuous improvement.
- Driving value for money by ensuring that the leisure offering is of a high standard and innovative.

### **Development of the Annual Service Plan**

2.1 The Plan was developed between Fusion and council officers and agreed by the Leisure Partnership Board. The Board consists of representatives from the following groups:

- Executive and opposition member for leisure
- Customers
- Health
- Older people
- Senior Council and Fusion Officers

The function of the Board is to oversee the delivery of the city's corporate objectives through the leisure contract.

2.2 Preparation of the 2014/15 Plan has incorporated:

- Review of performance from contract commencement
- Review of achievements in respect of national and industry relevant benchmarks
- Commitments and intentions set out in Fusion Lifestyles tender submission
- Liaison with stakeholders
- Linkage to the Council's corporate plan

2.3 A summary document will clearly set out the Plan headlines and be available to customers, staff and other key stakeholders. The document will be printed in a format consistent to previous contract years. (Appendix Two, Fusion's 2013/14 Summary Plan).

## 2014/15 Performance Targets <sup>1</sup>

3.1 Key targets committed to in the 2014 /15 Plan include:

Key 2013/ 2014 objectives	2013/14 target	2014/15 estimated target
To reduce the subsidy per user in leisure facilities	65 pence	44 pence <sup>2</sup>
year-on-year increase in participation by users resident in the most deprived wards in the city	114,300 visits	117,700 visits
year-on-year increase in participation by users aged over 50 years of age	84,400 visits	86,500 visits
year-on-year increase in participation by Women and girls.	398,000 visits	410,000 visits
year-on-year increase in participation by users aged under 16 years.	128,000 visits	131,840 visits
year-on-year increase in participation by users from Black, Minority and Ethnic groups.	77,300 visits	79,600 visits
year-on-year increase in participation by disabled users.	15,700 visits	16,000 visits
Maintain Customer satisfaction levels above 95%.	96 per cent	96 per cent
To retain Quest accreditation at five facilities at least "good" level	5 facilities	5 facilities
Reduce utility consumption against the 2013/14 baseline.	2 per cent	2 per cent

### Performance management

4.1 There will be an on-going review and monitoring process for the plan. This will incorporate management scrutiny, monthly client performance reports, monthly meetings between key representatives of the Council and Fusion, quarterly Leisure Partnership Board meetings and a formal review in advance of the 2015/16 planning process.

### Level of risk

5.1 There is a medium level of risk to service provision. Descriptions and mitigation for this level of risk are demonstrated in the Risk Register, (Appendix Three).

### Climate change / environmental impact

6.1 The Plan has targets and actions that will have a positive environmental impact. These contribute to the Council's commitment

<sup>1</sup> Based on April 2013 to January 2014 visits

<sup>2</sup> Based on the extended contract financial schedule

for tackling climate change, promoting sustainable environmental resources, and to the reduction of carbon and water. Actions within the Plan support the Council's Carbon Management Plan,

### **Equalities impact**

- 7.1 Targets and actions within the Plan ensure equitable access to improved facilities and encourage increased usage for underrepresented and concessionary groups. , in accordance with the equalities impact assessments and action plan, (Appendix Four).

### **Financial implications**

- 8.1 Savings from the contract with Fusion are already reflected in the council's budget and the risk for achieving these is Fusions. The management agreement also contains provisions to share profits that are made above those agreed when the contract was agreed.

### **Legal Implications**

- 9.1 The Council has a contractual relationship under which the council's leisure facilities are managed by Fusion. The Leisure Management Agreement sets out the range of contractual requirements with which Fusion must comply. Fusion's delivery of the Plan is a contractual commitment.

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

Name: Ian Brooke

Job title: Head of Service

Service Area / Department: Leisure, Parks and Communities

Tel: 01865 252707 e-mail: [ibrooke@oxford.gov.uk](mailto:ibrooke@oxford.gov.uk)

**Version number:** Final

### Appendix Three: Fusion Lifestyle 2014/ 2015 Annual Service Plan for the management of the Council's leisure facilities.

#### Risk Implications

Risk				Gross Risk		Current Risk		Residual Risk		Owner	Control Description
Description	Cause	Consequence	Date raised	I	P	I	P	I	P		
Dissatisfaction with delivery of leisure provision	Lack of intrinsic linkage within the Plan to enable delivery of the Council's Corporate Plan; Poor development of objectives and targets in respect of achieving the council's aspirations and vision.	Stakeholder dissatisfaction, loss of income, reputation damage, loss of future opportunity	21 Feb 14	2	2	2	2	1	1	Head of Service	Establishment of a detailed Annual Service Plan that sets out the strategic objectives and required actions; with a comprehensive on-going monitoring of performance in respect of key service criteria.
The 2014/ 2015 Annual Service Plan strategic aims do not reflect corporate priorities	Lack of assimilation with the Councils Corporate Plan	Value for money not achieved; failure to provide the aspiration of a World-Class leisure service.	21 Feb 14	3	3	3	3	2	1	Head of Service	Strategic direction from the Leisure Partnership Board and Council Leisure Delivery Board; Effective engagement with representatives of the Leisure Partnership Board and other internal and external officers; Robust development process for the delivery of the 2014/ 2015 Fusion Lifestyle Annual Service Plan.
Failure to achieve the commitment to accessible savings	Lack of financial consideration and planning within the delivery strands of the 2014/ 2015 Annual Service Plan.	Value for money not achieved.	21 Feb 14	3	3	3	3	3	1	Head of Service	Robust performance and financial monitoring procedures to detect variations and put in mitigating actions.
Business Continuity Planning	Failure to maintain an up to date Business Continuity Plan.	Leisure centres being unable to operate for a period of time.		3	2	2	2	2	2		Regular review of current Business Continuity Plan and annual testing of plan.

Reputational Risk	Failure to manage repercussions following a serious event at a centre	Reputation loss of Oxford City Council		2	3	1	2	1	2		<p>Emergency Plan for control of media exposure.</p> <p>Health &amp; Safety monitoring and reporting regime in place and externally audited.</p>

**Appendix Four: Fusion Lifestyle 2014/ 2015 Annual Service Plan for the management of the Council's leisure facilities.**

**Initial Equalities Impact Assessment**

<b>Service Area:</b> Leisure, Parks and Communities	<b>Section:</b> Leisure management contract	<b>Key person responsible for the assessment:</b> Leisure and Performance Manager	<b>Date of Assessment:</b> 21 February 2014
<b>Is this assessment in the Corporate Equality Impact assessment Timetable for 2013-2015?</b>	Yes	No	
<b>Name of the Policy to be assessed:</b> 14 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Leisure Facility Review 2009/2013</li> <li>• Sport &amp; Physical Activity Strategy 2009/2014.</li> </ul> Fusion Lifestyle's 2014/ 2015 Annual Service Plan for the management of the Council's leisure facilities.	<b>Is this a new or existing policy</b>	Existing	

**1. Briefly describe the aims, objectives and purpose of the policy**

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The overriding objectives of the leisure management contract are:

- To develop world-class leisure facilities and to improve the value for money they offer;
- To reduce the overall subsidy for leisure services, prior to 2009 the subsidy per user was one of the most expensive in the country;
- Alongside the benefits of a successful contract such as increased participation, an upward cycle of continued improvement, and an improved public realm, there is also a surplus share arrangement that encourages the Council to support Fusion Lifestyle to exceed their contractual financial targets and provide further leisure investment.

The quality and service standards are high and facilities will be accessible with diverse and with inclusive programmes.

- Charging at market rate for those that can afford and running a highly cost effective service so that a surplus is created to fund a progressive concessions programme.
- Central part of the Corporate Plan for 2014-2018

The vision for delivery of leisure facility provision is to:

- Continuously improve the service for all users
- Reduce the subsidy per user
- Have greater energy efficiency from the leisure facilities
- Provide modern world-class leisure facilities to enhance the quality of life for everyone.

<p><b>2. Are there any associated objectives of the policy, please explain</b></p>	<p>The Leisure Facility Review (May 2009) detailed the Councils strategic approach to developing a city wide leisure offer that includes all facilities irrespective of ownership across the city. The review detailed a sustainable way forward for our leisure facilities, of which two are in poor condition.</p>
<p><b>3. Who is intended to benefit from the policy and in what way</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Users of all leisure facilities in Oxford;</li> <li>• Local tax payers;</li> <li>• Target Groups: Those under the age of 16 and over the age of 50 years; Black, Minority and Ethnic groups; those with disability; Women and girls; Those resident in the most deprived areas of the City; those on a low income (and their dependants).</li> <li>• City communities.</li> </ul>
<p><b>4. What outcomes are wanted from this policy?</b></p> <p>The policy is intrinsically linked to enabling the delivery of the Council’s Corporate Plan, and has been developed to clearly set the objectives and targets in respect of achieving the council’s aspirations and vision for delivering modern world-class leisure services.</p> <p>→ The vision for delivery of leisure facility provision is to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Continuously improve the service for all users</li> <li>• Reduce the subsidy per user</li> <li>• Provide greater energy efficiency from the leisure facilities</li> <li>• Offer modern world-class leisure facilities to enhance the quality of life for everyone.</li> <li>• Targeted improvements in use by under-represented groups, women, older people, BME.</li> </ul>	
<p><b>5. What factors/forces could contribute/detract from the outcomes?</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The general economic climate.</li> <li>• Competition from the wider leisure industry.</li> </ul>



<p><b>6. Who are the main stakeholders in relation to the policy</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Oxford City Council;</li> <li>- Councillors;</li> <li>- Fusion Lifestyle;</li> <li>- Facility users;</li> <li>- Residents;</li> <li>- Partners</li> </ul>	<p><b>7. Who implements the policy and who is responsible for the policy?</b></p>	<p>Leisure, Parks and Communities; Executive Director Community Services</p>
<p><b>8. Are there concerns that the policy <i>could</i> have a differential impact on racial groups?</b></p>	<p style="text-align: center;">No</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">No</p>	
<p><b>What existing evidence (either presumed or otherwise) do you have for this?</b></p>	<p>A wide offer of inclusive membership options and concessionary prices are available supporting affordability and participation opportunity.</p> <p>Fusion Lifestyle shares the Council's commitment to equality and diversity ensuring that services are reflective and responsive to local need. Their core charitable objectives focus on the provision of recreational and sporting services in the interests of social welfare; special facilities for target groups; and promoting community participation.</p> <p>Key elements of Fusions sports and community development plan are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Research; Consultation; Programming; Pricing; Promotion; Partnerships.</li> </ul> <p>There is no pricing differentiation due to racial group.</p> <p>Fusion maintains association with "community ambassadors" with whom to work to promote accessibility to the leisure facilities for BME groups.</p>		

<p><b>9. Are there concerns that the policy <i>could</i> have a differential impact due to gender?</b></p>	<p>Yes</p>	<p>No</p>
<p><b>What existing evidence (either presumed or otherwise) do you have for this?</b></p> <p style="text-align: center;">10</p>	<p>A wide offer of inclusive membership options and concessionary prices are available supporting affordability and participation opportunity.</p> <p>Fusion Lifestyle shares the Council's commitment to equality and diversity ensuring that services are reflective and responsive to local need. Their core charitable objectives focus on the provision of recreational and sporting services in the interests of social welfare; special facilities for target groups; and promoting community participation.</p> <p>Key elements of Fusions sports and community development plan are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Research; Consultation; Programming; Pricing; Promotion; Partnerships.</li> </ul> <p>There is no pricing differentiation due to gender.</p> <p>Fusion Lifestyle has secured funding to employ an Oxford City Active Women coordinator. Active Women is a project being driven by Sport England to get more women from disadvantaged communities, and more women caring for children, playing sport. The sessions are specifically designed for local women and aim to make it as easy as possible to participate and provision includes tennis, jogging, football, netball, badminton, trampolining, basketball and swimming.</p>	

**10. Are there concerns that the policy could have a differential impact due disability?**

Yes

No

**What existing evidence (either presumed or otherwise) do you have for this?**

19

A wide offer of inclusive membership options and concessionary prices are available supporting affordability and participation opportunity.

Fusion Lifestyle shares the Council's commitment to equality and diversity ensuring that services are reflective and responsive to local need. Their core charitable objectives focus on the provision of recreational and sporting services in the interests of social welfare; special facilities for target groups; and promoting community participation.

Key elements of Fusions sports and community development plan are:

- Research; Consultation; Programming; Pricing; Promotion; Partnerships.

Those entitled to disability benefits, and their dependants are entitled to excellent discounts through the Bonus concessionary membership scheme.

Fusion Lifestyle has an active partnership with disability swimming group 'Oxford Swans' who hold sessions at Ferry Leisure Centre and Temple Cowley Pools.

Facilities comply with DDA legislation and development schemes progressed in partnership with Fusion Lifestyle give full consideration to needs of this target group.

**11. Are there concerns that the policy could have a differential impact on people due to sexual orientation?**

✓

**No**

**What existing evidence (either presumed or otherwise) do you have for this?**

20

A wide offer of inclusive membership options and concessionary prices are available supporting affordability and participation opportunity.

Fusion Lifestyle shares the Council's commitment to equality and diversity ensuring that services are reflective and responsive to local need. Their core charitable objectives focus on the provision of recreational and sporting services in the interests of social welfare; special facilities for target groups; and promoting community participation.

Key elements of Fusions sports and community development plan are:

- Research; Consultation; Programming; Pricing; Promotion; Partnerships.

There is no pricing differentiation due to sexual orientation.

**12. Are there concerns that the policy could have a differential impact on people due to their age?**

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**No**

**What existing evidence (either presumed or otherwise) do you have for this?**

A wide offer of inclusive membership options and concessionary prices are available supporting affordability and participation opportunity.

Fusion Lifestyle shares the Council’s commitment to equality and diversity ensuring that services are reflective and responsive to local need. Their core charitable objectives focus on the provision of recreational and sporting services in the interests of social welfare; special facilities for target groups; and promoting community participation.

Key elements of Fusions sports and community development plan are:

- Research; Consultation; Programming; Pricing; Promotion; Partnerships.

Concessionary fees and charges are available to these targeted groups. Additionally the Council continues to provide targeted free swimming and free swimming lessons for those aged under 17 years of age and resident in the City.

Fusion offer Primetime sessions for those aged 50 years and over.

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**13. Are there concerns that the policy could have a differential impact on people due to their religious belief?**

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**No**

**What existing evidence (either presumed or otherwise) do you have for this?**

A wide offer of inclusive membership options and concessionary prices are available supporting affordability and participation opportunity.

Fusion Lifestyle shares the Council’s commitment to equality and diversity ensuring that services are reflective and responsive to local need. Their core charitable objectives focus on the provision of recreational and sporting services in the interests of social welfare; special facilities for target groups; and promoting community participation.

Key elements of Fusions sports and community development plan are:

- Research; Consultation; Programming; Pricing; Promotion; Partnerships.

There is no pricing differentiation due to religious belief.

Fusion activity programming includes ladies only sessions and swimming lessons (i.e. Temple Cowley Pool and Ferry Leisure Centre).

<b>17. Are there implications for the Service Plans?</b>			<b>YES</b>	<b>No</b>	<b>18. Date the Service Plan will be updated</b>	April 2014	<b>19. Date copy sent to Equalities Officer</b>	TBC
<b>20. Date reported to Equalities Board:</b>			n/a		<b>Date to Scrutiny and CEB</b>	9 April 2014	<b>21. Date published</b>	TBC
<b>14. Could the differential impact identified in 8-13 amount to there being the potential for adverse impact in this policy?</b>	☒	<b>No</b>	<b>15. Can this adverse impact be justified on the grounds of promoting equality of opportunity for one group? Or any other reason</b>				☒	<b>No</b>
<b>16. Should the policy proceed to a partial impact assessment?</b>	☒	<b>No</b>	<b>If Yes, is there enough evidence to proceed to a full EIA:</b>				<b>No</b>	
			<b>Date on which Partial or Full impact assessment to be completed by</b>				n/a	

Signed (completing officer): Lucy Cherry Signed (Lead Officer) Ian Brooke

**Team members and service areas that were involved in this process:**

**Leisure, Parks & Communities:**  
Head of Service  
Leisure and Performance Manager

**People & Equalities:**  
Equalities & Diversity Business Partner

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# ANNUAL SERVICE PLAN

CLIENT:

**OXFORD CITY COUNCIL**

PERIOD:

From **April 2014**

To **March 2015**

SUBMITTED BY:

[Redacted Signature Box]

Divisional Business Manager



# SERVICE PLANNING EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

## INTRODUCTION:

This Annual Service Plan sets out Fusion's aims and objectives in respect of the delivery of leisure services on behalf of Oxford City Council in the year from April 2014 to March 2015.

The purpose of the Annual Service Plan is to describe the underpinning strategic objectives and to set out specific action plans in respect of those strategic objectives.

The Annual Service Plan incorporates an executive summary, a review of previous years, a description of the planning context, details of the strategic objectives for 2014/15, specific action plans in respect of those strategic objectives and a risk analysis;

The contents of the Annual Service Plan, once agreed with the Partnership Board, will be submitted to the City Council's Executive Board and then communicated to staff, customers and other stakeholders;

We recognise the importance of continual and consistent review and monitoring of the delivery and the impact of the Annual Service Plan.

The on-going review and monitoring process will incorporate on-going management scrutiny, monthly update reports, monthly meetings between key representatives of Fusion and the Council, quarterly Partnership Board meetings and a formal review in advance of the 2015/16 service planning process.

## FINANCIAL:

Two strategic objectives have been identified in respect of "financial" issues:

\* F1 To deliver a 10% year-on-year reduction in subsidy per user

Key actions include complete compliance with financial policies and procedures, the instigation of monthly trading (financial review) meetings and the introduction of new products and services;

\* F2 To ensure that pricing structures and levels across the leisure facilities are appropriate and inclusive

Key actions include implementation of 2014/15 pricing proposals, including general RPI increases across core prices and planning for 2015/16 pricing.

## PARTICIPATION:

Nine strategic objectives have been identified in respect of "participation" issues:

\* P1 To deliver a 3% year-on-year increase in participation by users resident in the most deprived wards in the City

Key actions include: review of target wards, direct mail campaigning, work with relevant local stakeholder groups and development of specific programmes and activities;

\* P2 To deliver a 3% year-on-year increase in participation by users aged over 50

Key actions include: review of literature and website marketing, work closely with relevant local stakeholder groups to include OCC sports development and PCT in the further development of the healthy living initiatives;

\* P3 To deliver a 3% year-on-year increase in participation by users aged under 16

Key actions include: development of children's party, aquatics and holiday programme products, work with relevant local stakeholder groups and improved work with schools;

\* P4 To deliver a 3% year-on-year increase in participation by users from BME groups

Key actions include: mail campaigning, work with relevant local stakeholder groups, development of community ambassadors and development of specific programmes and activities;

\* P5 To deliver a 3% year-on-year increase in participation by disabled users

Key actions include: development of specific access awareness, work with relevant local stakeholder groups IFI accreditation and development of specific programmes and activities;

\* P6 To deliver a 3% year-on-year increase in participation on junior swimming

Key actions include creation of a specific marketing plan, implementation of a revised aquatics product, development of a programme of relevant add-ons, and review of the free swimming hours;

\* P7 To deliver a 3% year-on-year increase in participation in 60+ swimming

Key actions include: implementation of revised aquatics product and development of a programme of relevant add-ons;

\* P8 To improve general access to all sites

Key action is delivery of action plans based on specific access surveys.

\* P9 To deliver a 3% increase in participation by female users

Key actions will be to work within the 'Active Women Project' supported by key partners and funded by Sport England

## CUSTOMER RELATIONS:

Three strategic objectives have been identified in respect of "customer satisfaction" issues:

\* CR 1 To maintain customer satisfaction levels at leisure facilities above 95%

Key actions include full compliance with all Fusion customer care procedures, consistent application of processes in respect of User Groups, customer forums, management surgeries and planned actions following completion of NBS surveys;

\* CR 2 To fully comply with Fusion's customer relations programmes

Key action is delivery of action plans based on a specific reviews and results of customer relations programmes;

\* CR 3 To deliver a reduction of 5% in annual attrition levels for Slice Card memberships

Key actions include full implementation of Fusion's customer relations management procedures, including the taking of appropriate action following results of cancellation surveys.

## HEALTH AND SAFETY:

One strategic objective has been identified in respect of "health and safety" issues:

\* HS1 To ensure 100% compliance with Fusion H&S policies and procedures

Key actions include continued review of compliance, regular audits and on-going improvement plans.

## FACILITY MANAGEMENT:

Seven strategic objectives have been identified in respect of "facility management" issues:

\* FM1 To achieve average Base Camp inspection scores of at least 95% across all facilities

Key actions include 100% compliance with procedures, regular review of failure trends, implementation of remedial plans and further development of the Base Camp inspections;

\* FM2 To engage fully with the Council's priority " To tackle climate change and promote sustainable environmental resource management" and to contribute the Council's delivery of a 5% reduction in carbon emissions year-on-year and 3% reduction in water usage

Key actions include review of target figures, implementation of ISO14001 policies and procedures, review and implementation of works in respect forward lifecycle and development works;

\* FM3 To reduce general refuse by 25% and to increase recycling waste by 25%

Key actions include establishment of baseline figures, implementation of ISO14001 policies and procedures and development of specific plans;

\* FM4 To ensure that high standards of cleaning are achieved at all times

Key actions include establishment and delivery of regular, deep and specialist cleaning programmes, regular review of effectiveness of cleaning and clear communication of cleaning standards;

\* FM5 To ensure that high standards of repair and maintenance are achieved at all times

Key actions include review of performance of FM subcontractors, delivery of programme of lifecycle works and management of the equipment inventory;

\* FM6 To maintain Quest accreditation at a minimum 'Good' at Ferry L. C, Blackbird Leys L.C, Hinksey Outdoor Pool, Oxford Ice Rink and Barton L. C. - To achieve Excellent at one centre

Key actions include: IMS audit, delivery of mystery shops and implementation of relevant continuous improvement plans.

\* FM7 To maintain quality ' Integrated Management Systems' (IMS) procedures across all sites.

Key actions include implementing improvement action plans to embed any updated systems of operation

## STAFFING:

Three strategic objectives have been identified in respect of "staffing" issues:

\* S1 To ensure that the Right People are in the Right Place at the Right Time

Key actions include implementation of standard management and staffing structures, full compliance with HR policies and procedures, delivery of training and personal development plans and implementation of succession plan;

\* S2 To demonstrate a year-on-year improvement in staff satisfaction across each equality strand and overall

Key actions include full compliance with HR policies and procedures, review of all job descriptions, specific promotion of Fusion as an employer of choice, and improved delivery of coaching and training programmes;

\* S3 To ensure that the Fusion workforce in Oxford is as representative as possible of the local community

Key actions include formal analysis of current workforce, development of specific action plans and delivery of relevant training.

## MARKETING:

Six strategic objectives have been identified in respect of "marketing" issues:

\* M1 To deliver a proactive and positive approach to PR, such that facility and service successes are communicated and celebrated

Key actions include establishment of clear protocols, identification of measurable KPIs re awareness, training to key managers and on-going liaison with representatives from Council comms department;

\* M2 To deliver a 5% increase in the total membership

Key actions include delivery of a calendar of sales activity; creation and implementation of specific action plan, targeted work in respect of deprived wards, 50+ age group and disabled people, work with relevant partners/stakeholders and review of core literature;

\* M3 To establish and maintain the highest standards of facility presentation

Key actions include delivery of specific action plan to include notice board presentation, and customer journey

M4 To establish and maintain the highest standards of web and social media promotion

Key actions to include: Websites and social media are kept up to date and are innovative

M5 To develop connections and outreach with local school, youth clubs and Under18's

To improve relationships with schools and youth groups and so promote health and fitness

M6 To launch new collateral designs and reduce print wastage

Launch new concept marketing designs and literature and reduce waste

## SPORTS AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT:

Seven strategic objectives have been identified in respect of "sports and community development" issues:

\* SCD1 To maintain positive and proactive partnerships with key local stakeholders and welcome new stakeholder opportunities

Key actions include the updating of the specific list of relevant stakeholders, development of planned consultation/liaison, work with the Council's sports development team and delivery of joint initiatives;

\* SCD2 To develop and maintain positive and proactive relationships with local sports clubs

Key actions include the review of the club register, delivery of calendar of liaison and on-going club support and exploration of potential new clubs;

\* SCD3 To ensure that all facility programmes are exciting, innovative and attractive to users and potential users

Key actions to include review of swimming pool, sports hall, studio, holiday programmes and ice rink programmes and delivery of improvements;

\* SCD4 To maximise the benefits of elite sport representation throughout the county and maximise the opportunities at the Oxford Ice Rink raised by the winter Olympics and the opportunities at other centres raised by the Commonwealth Games

Key actions include communication of BOA and FANS/FACS schemes and continued development of Oxford-specific 2013 plan;

\* SCD5 To proactively explore opportunities for external funding

Key actions include development of database of funding opportunities, delivery of relevant action plan and delivery of workshops to GMs;

\* SCD6 To positively promote the benefits of healthy living and active lifestyles

Key actions include use of SCD notice board and development of joint initiatives with key partners.

SCD7 Develop & maintain relationships with schools and educational groups

Key actions include: consultation and liaison with schools, colleges and educational groups; facilitating work experience and delivering taster sessions

## FACILITY DEVELOPMENTS:

One strategic objective has been identified in respect of "facility development" issues:

\* FD1 To develop a programme of other facility development proposals in the leisure facilities

Key actions include development of relevant business cases and progression of any agreed plans.

## PARTNERSHIP DEVELOPMENT:

Five strategic objectives have been identified in respect of "partnership development" issues:

\* PD1 To ensure 100% compliance with all agreed meeting, reporting and performance monitoring requirements

Key actions include establishment and implementation of meeting schedules, full compliance with all client liaison procedures, full compliance with all reporting and positive contribution to the Partnership Board;

\* PD2 To explore opportunities for the Council and Fusion to extend their relationship in respect of other facilities in Oxford

Key actions include consideration of opportunities at Alexandra Park, Rose Hill and Horspath Track;

\* PD3 To support the Council in the delivery of a new competition standard pool and decommissioning of Temple Cowley Pools and Blackbird Leys Pool

Key actions include delivery of agreed plans;

\* PD4 To support the Council in exploring the possibility of developing a residents card in Oxford

Key actions include delivery of agreed course of action;

\* PD5 To optimise the development of the partnership between Fusion and Oxford City Council

Key actions include establishment and implementation of wider liaison between representatives of Fusion and the Council.

# INTRODUCTION

## INTRODUCTION TO THE ANNUAL SERVICE PLAN:

Fusion commenced management of the City Council's seven leisure facilities on March 30th 2009.

The management contract incorporates the delivery of services of the City Council's main seven leisure facilities, as follows: Barton Leisure Centre, Blackbird Leys Leisure Centre, Blackbird Leys Swimming Pool, Ferry Leisure Centre, Hinksey Outdoor Pool, Oxford Ice Rink and Temple Cowley Pools.

In establishing this management contract, the City Council's key aim is to facilitate the development of World Class facilities and World Class services within the City. The City Council and Fusion have entered into a ten-year relationship, during which both parties intend to deliver significant improvements in service levels, value for money and customer satisfaction with the City's leisure facilities. The emphasis in the early stages of the contract was on the delivery of significant investment in customer-facing areas throughout the leisure facility portfolio. Following the developments the emphasis will be to further increase usage of facilities.

This Annual Service Plan sets out Fusion's aims and objectives in respect of the delivery of leisure services on behalf of Oxford City Council in the year from April 2014 to March 2015.

The purpose of the Annual Service Plan is to describe the underpinning strategic objectives and to set out specific action plans in respect of those strategic objectives.

The intention is to carefully monitor the delivery and impact of the Annual Service Plan such that successes and areas for improvement are identified and acted upon.

## PREPARATION OF THE ANNUAL SERVICE PLAN:

The Annual Service planning process has incorporated the following elements:

- \* review of performance from contract commencement to date;
- \* review of achievements in respect of Sport England National Benchmarking Service and other relevant benchmarks;
- \* liaison with the City Council and the Partnership Board in order to understand any specific service requirements pertaining to the year ahead;
- \* assimilation of any specific and relevant elements of Fusion's corporate business plan;
- \* liaison with appropriate stakeholders in order to understand key issues and potential development opportunities;
- \* assimilation of staff and customer feedback in respect of current service levels and opportunities for improvements;
- \* analysis of the local market, potential key targets and relevant competition;
- \* establishment of primary service objectives for the next twelve months;
- \* creation of specific action plans, with defined accountabilities and timescales, to deliver these service objectives;
- \* establishment of clear and measurable ("SMART") targets in respect of all elements of the Plan;
- \* confirmation of monitoring and review systems and procedures for the Plan.

## CONTENTS OF THE ANNUAL SERVICE PLAN:

The key contents of this Annual Service Plan are as follows:

- \* an executive summary of the annual service plan;
- \* a review of performance from previous year;
- \* description of the context for the annual service planning process;
- \* details of the strategic objectives and detailed actions plans for a series of service elements as follows:
  - financial, participation, customer satisfaction, health and safety, FM, staffing, marketing, sports and community development, facility developments, partnership development;
- \* detailed calendars of activities in respect of specific strategic objectives;
- \* a description of how the contents of the annual service plan will be agreed and subsequently communicated to key stakeholders;
- \* a description of how the delivery of the annual service plan will be monitored, reported and, where relevant, updated through the course of the year;
- \* an analysis of the key risks associated with the delivery of the annual service plan.

## COMMUNICATION OF THE ANNUAL SERVICE PLAN:

The process for the initial agreement of the Annual Service Plan is as follows:

- \* September '13: Partnership Board initial discussion regarding primary service objectives;
- \* December '13: Presentation of draft Annual Service Plan to Partnership Board;
- \* April'14: Agreement of Annual Service Plan by OCC Executive Board.

The planned process for the communication of the key principles of the Annual Service Plan is as follows:

- \* January 2014: communication to City Council's City Executive Board;
- \* February 2014: communication to Fusion management team and staff;
- \* April 2014: communication to customers and key stakeholders.

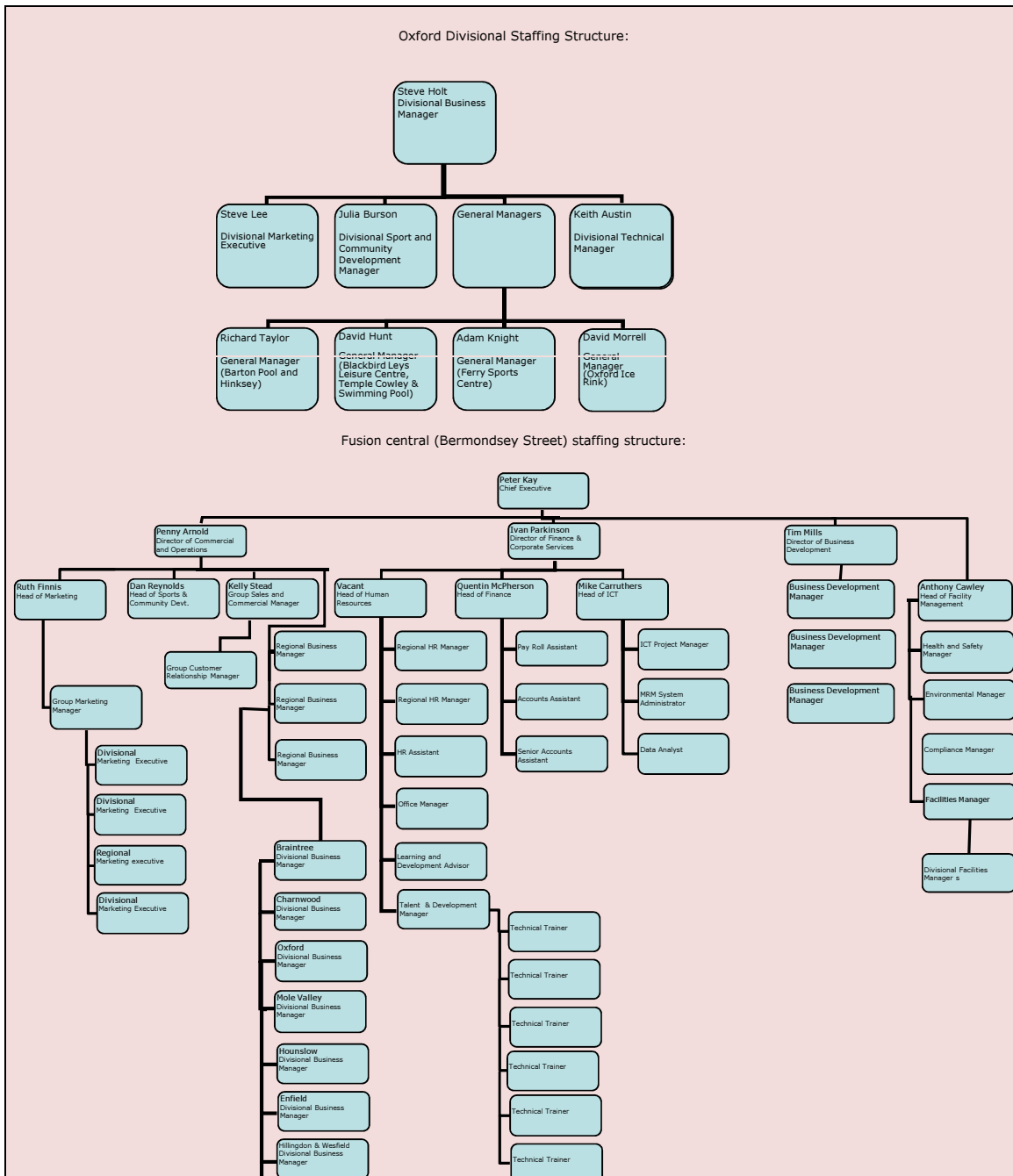
**REVIEW AND MONITORING OF THE ANNUAL SERVICE PLAN:**

We recognise the importance of continual and consistent review and monitoring of the delivery and the impact of the Annual Service Plan.

The on-going review and monitoring process will incorporate the following elements:

- \* on-going management scrutiny at site, divisional, Senior Management Team and Executive Management Team levels;
- \* monthly update reports delivered by Fusion to the Council;
- \* monthly meetings between key representatives of Fusion and the Council;
- \* quarterly meetings of the Partnership Board;

**KEY FUSION PERSONNEL INVOLVED IN THE DELIVERY OF THE ANNUAL SERVICE PLAN:**









# PERFORMANCE REVIEW 2013/14

## INTRODUCTION:

Fusion commenced management of the City Council's seven leisure facilities on March 30th 2009.

The Performance Review element of the Annual Service Plan will incorporate a review of performance against the Annual Service Plan for period to April 2013 to March 2014. This Performance Review incorporates each of the headed areas within the plan: Finance, Participation, Customer Satisfaction, Health and Safety Facility Management, Staffing, Marketing, Sport and Community Development, Facility Development & Partnership Development.

## FINANCIAL:

### **Delivery of Annual Service Plan actions/targets:**

#### **KEY ACHIEVEMENTS**

##### **F 1. To deliver a 10% year on year reduction in subsidy per user**

\* Subsidy per user has reduced by xx% on previous year 2012/13

\* Completed audit of all Fusion financial management policies and procedures and implemented action plans.

##### **F2. To ensure that pricing structures and levels across the leisure facilities are appropriate and inclusive**

\* 2012/13 prices reviewed in line with RPI and VAT increases.

## PARTICIPATION:

### **Delivery of Annual Service Plan actions/targets:**

#### KEY ACHIEVEMENTS

#### **P1. To deliver a 5% year on year increase in participation by users resident in the most deprived areas of the city**

- \* Identification and monitoring of deprived wards and targeted streets has been reviewed.
- \* Participation has increased by xx%.

#### **P2. To deliver a 5% year on year increase in participation by users over 50**

- \* A xx% increase in users aged Over 50

#### **P3. To deliver a 5 % year on year increase in participation by users under the age of 16**

- \* A xx% increase in users under the age of 16

#### **P4. To deliver a 5 % year on year increase in participation by users from BME groups**

- \* A xx% increase in BME users

#### **P5. To deliver a 5% year on year increase in participation by disabled users**

- \* a xx% increase in usage by disabled users

#### **P6. To deliver a 5% year on year increase in participation for junior swimming**

- \* a xx% reduction in the Junior free swim scheme

#### **P7. To deliver a 3% year on year increase in participation on the 60+ swimming scheme**

- \* A xx% reduction in 60+ swim participation

#### **P8. To improve general access to all sites**

- \* Brown road signage improved at Hinksey Outdoor Pool and revised audit and plan completed for other sites.
- \* Improvement works designed to ensure complete access

#### **P9. To deliver a 5% year-on-year increase in participation in Women and Girls Activities**

- \* A xx% increase in Women and Girls participation.

#### **KEY OUTSTANDING ACTIONS:**

## CUSTOMER SATISFACTION:

### **Delivery of Annual Service Plan actions/targets:**

#### **KEY ACHIEVEMENTS:**

##### **CR1 To improve customer satisfaction with the leisure facilities by 2%**

\* National Benchmarking Surveys (NBS) undertaken at Ferry Leisure Centre, Blackbird Leys Leisure Centre, Barton Leisure Centre, Hinksey Outdoor Pool and Oxford Ice Rink.

\* Overall customer satisfaction of leisure facilities decreased by xx% to xx%

##### **CR2 To fully embed customer care programmes for cultural change**

\* Customer care training embedded within the staff induction programme. Rolled out 'Delivering Customer Service Training' and 'Managing Customer Service Training' to managers and staff.

##### **CR3 To deliver a reduction of at least 5% in annual attrition levels for Slice Card Membership**

\* User groups, customer forums and management forums held at each site

\* Monitoring of membership attrition undertaken. Monitoring undertaken with 50% of those cancelled surveyed to establish reasons for leaving.

\* 2013 attrition levels increased by xx% compared to 2012

## HEALTH AND SAFETY:

<p style="text-align: center;"><b><u>Delivery of Annual Service Plan actions/targets:</u></b></p> <p style="text-align: center;"><u>KEY ACHIEVEMENTS:</u></p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b><u>HS1. To ensure 100% compliance with Fusion H&amp;S policies and procedures</u></b></p> <p>* Compliance scores: Barton Leisure Centre xx%, Blackbird Leys Leisure Centre xx%, Blackbird Leys Pool xx%, Ferry Leisure Centre xx%, Hinksey Outdoor Pool xx%, Temple Cowley Pools xx%.</p> <p>* All Oxford sites fully compliant with OHSAS audit of health and safety management.</p>
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## FACILITY MANAGEMENT:

<p style="text-align: center;"><b><u>Delivery of Annual Service Plan actions/targets:</u></b></p> <p style="text-align: center;"><u>KEY ACHIEVEMENTS:</u></p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b><u>FM1. To achieve an average Base Camp inspection scores of at least 95% across all facilities</u></b></p> <p>* Base camp score is xx%</p> <p>* Maintained ISO 14001 following external assessment</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b><u>FM2. To engage fully with the 10:10 challenge and to contribute to the Council's delivery of a 10% reduction to carbon emissions in 2010.</u></b></p> <p>* Maintained ISO 14002 accreditation in Oxford.</p> <p>* Reduced Gas consumption at Oxford Ice Rink by xx%</p> <p>* Reduced electricity consumption at Blackbird Leys Leisure Centre by xx%, Blackbird Leys Pool by xx%, Ferry Leisure Centre by x%, Oxford Ice Rink by x%, Temple Cowley by xx% and Hinksey Outdoor Pool by x%.</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b><u>FM3. To reduce general refuse by 25% and to increase recycling waste by 25%</u></b></p> <p>* Acton plans created and implemented to reduce the general waste and increase recycling</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b><u>FM4. To ensure that high standards of cleaning are achieved at all times</u></b></p> <p>* xx% of all scheduled cleaning tasks undertaken</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b><u>FM5. To ensure that high standards of repair and maintenance are achieved at all times.</u></b></p> <p>* Review of contractors performance reviewed on a quarterly basis with any remedial actions taken.</p> <p>* xx% of Planned Preventative Maintenance undertaken.</p> <p>* 2013/14 works undertaken.</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b><u>FM6. To maintain Quest accreditation at a minimum 'Good' at Ferry L. C. Blackbird Leys L.C. Hinksey Outdoor Pool, Ice Rink and Barton L. C.</u></b></p> <p>* Quest accreditation maintained at Barton Leisure Centre, Blackbird Leys Leisure Centre, Hinksey Outdoor Pool, Ferry Leisure Centre and Oxford Ice Rink at a rating of 'Good' and a direction of travel that is showing improvement</p> <p>* Service improvement plans maintained and actioned</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b><u>FM7. To maintain adherence to Fusion's quality ' Integrated Management Systems' (IMS) procedures across all sites</u></b></p> <p>* IMS audits and updates undertaken</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><u>KEY OUTSTANDING ACTIONS</u></p> <p>* Agreement of baseline waste measurement</p>
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## STAFFING:

<p style="text-align: center;"><b><u>Delivery of Annual Service Plan actions/targets:</u></b></p> <p style="text-align: center;"><u>KEY ACHIEVEMENTS:</u></p> <p><b><u>S1. To ensure that the Right People are in the Right Place at the Right Time</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>* Appraisals undertaken for staff within Oxford</li><li>* Rolled out 'Delivering Customer Service Training'</li><li>* Completion of all staff's full Training Needs Analysis</li></ul> <p><b><u>S2. To achieve 72% staff satisfaction across each equality strand and overall</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>* Full compliance with Fusion's HR policies and procedures</li></ul> <p><b><u>S3. To ensure that Fusion workforce in Oxford is as representative as possible of the local community</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>* Formal analysis undertaken to monitor equity and diversity of workforce</li><li>* Introduced new induction programme for all new staff</li></ul> <p style="text-align: center;"><u>KEY OUTSTANDING ACTIONS:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>* Completion of the Fusion colleague engagement survey</li></ul>
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## MARKETING:

<p style="text-align: center;"><b><u>Delivery of Annual Service Plan actions/targets:</u></b></p> <p style="text-align: center;"><u>KEY ACHIEVEMENTS:</u></p> <p><b><u>M1. To deliver a proactive approach to PR, such as facility and service successes are communicated and celebrated</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>* Established clear PR, branding &amp; communications working guidelines with Oxford City Council and reviewed KPIs</li><li>* Meeting schedules planned and undertaken with OCC communications and branding team.</li></ul> <p><b><u>M2. To deliver a 1% increase in concessionary membership</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>* xx% year-on-year reduction in bonus Slice members.</li><li>* List of targeted deprived wards and streets reviewed and agreed.</li><li>* Core literature reviewed and made available within sites and websites updated.</li><li>* Specific marketing plan aimed at deprived areas established with actions undertaken.</li><li>* Discount learn to swim schemes undertaken targeted at those in deprived wards.</li></ul> <p><b><u>M3. To deliver a 5% increase in total membership</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>* xx% increase in centre memberships &amp; xx% increase in Reward Card holders</li></ul> <p><b><u>M4. To ensure that the products and services offered by the leisure services are of a high standard, innovative and attractive</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>* Successfully re-launched refurbished facilities at the Oxford Ice rink, Spin Studio at Barton Leisure Centre and Café at Ferry Leisure Centre.</li><li>* Introduced new Children's Party product for Toddler World at Blackbird Leys Leisure Centre, Oxford Ice Rink and Ferry Leisure Centre</li><li>* Developed specific marketing plans for all centres</li></ul> <p><b><u>M5. To establish and maintain the highest standards of facility presentation</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>* Undertaken regular Audits and appropriate action plans against Fusion's 'Customer Journey' concept.</li></ul> <p><b><u>M6. To establish and maintain the highest standard of web and social media promotion</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>* Maintained internal protocols to ensure all website information is current and well presented</li><li>* Adhered to clear policies on the use of social media</li></ul> <p style="text-align: center;"><u>KEY OUTSTANDING ACTIONS:</u></p>
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SPORTS AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT:

**Delivery of Annual Service Plan actions/targets:**

KEY ACHIEVEMENTS:

**SD1 To develop positive and proactive partnerships with key local stakeholders**

- \* Register of Key stakeholders reviewed with initiatives established with Badminton England, England Squash, Amateur Swimming Association, Barton Obesity Project and Oxford Sports Partnership 'Go-Active'
- \* Initiatives established and maintained with Badminton England, England Squash, Amateur Swimming Association, Barton Obesity Project and Oxford Sports Partnership 'Go-Active'
- \* Meetings established with Oxford City Council development Officers with compatible objectives and action plan produced.
  - \* Representation made at Community Sport Network meetings

**SD2. To develop positive and proactive relationships with local sports clubs**

- \* Register of all Sports Clubs and groups using the leisure facilities reviewed.
- \* Quarterly meetings held with the City of Oxford Swimming Club.

**SD3. To ensure that all facility programmes are exciting, innovative and attractive to users and potential users**

- \* Swimming Pool timetables reviewed at Barton Leisure Centre, Ferry Leisure Centre, Blackbird Leys Pool, Hinksey pool and Temple Cowley Pool
- \* Reviewed sports hall programmes at Ferry Leisure Centre and Blackbird Leys Leisure Centre.
- \* Studio activities reviewed 3 times per year with changes to programme implemented
  - \* Ice Rink programme reviewed and action plan produced

**SD4. To continually update and implement a proactive action plan to ensure that maximum benefit is derived from the 2012 Olympics and Paralympics**

- \* Action plan created
- \* Reviewed FANS, BOA & FACS as part of the Olympic 2012 initiative and post Olympics
  - \* Supported event leading up to and beyond the Olympics 2012

**SD5. To proactively explore opportunities for external funding**

- \* 37K Funding continues with the Go-Active scheme for project aimed at increasing women participation

**SD6. To positively promote the benefits of healthy living and active lifestyles**

- \* GP referral Action Plan revised and developed
- \* Developed and promoted 'Active Women' activities utilising funded monies
  - \* Supported the Council's 'Youth Ambition Programme'
  - \* Cardiac Rehabilitation supported at Blackbird Leys Leisure Centre

KEY OUTSTANDING ACTIONS:

- \* Achieve ISPAL Sports Development Award 'Active Mark'

FACILITY DEVELOPMENTS:

**Delivery of Annual Service Plan actions/targets:**

KEY ACHIEVEMENTS:

**FD1. To develop a programme of other facility development proposals in the leisure facilities and where these are agreed deliver such developments**

- \* Delivered Phase 2 developments at Oxford Ice Rink and Barton Leisure Centre. Café development at Ferry Leisure Centre completed
  - \* Support given for the proposed development of the new swimming pool at Blackbird Leys Leisure Centre.

**KEY OUTSTANDING ACTIONS:**

- \* Agreement of final development plans for Ferry Leisure Centre soft play and spin studio

**PARTNERSHIP DEVELOPMENT:**

**Delivery of Annual Service Plan actions/targets:**

KEY ACHIEVEMENTS:

**PD1 To ensure 100% compliance with all agreed meetings, reporting and performance monitoring requirements.**

- \* All reporting dates agreed for Client/Contractor meetings
  - \* Client report format reviewed and amended.
  - \* 100% compliance with agreed report deadlines

**PD2. To explore opportunities for the Council and Fusion to extend their relationship in respect of facilities in Oxford.**

- \* Proposals issued to Oxford City Council for the possible operation of the tennis courts at Alexandra Park
  - \* Interest vested in the possible management of Horspath Athletics Stadium
- \* Interest vested in the possible opportunity to design, build and operate an indoor football facility

**PD3. To support the Council in the delivery of a new competition pool**

- \* Full liaison and support with Oxford City Council in respect of the new swimming Pool development at Blackbird Leys Leisure Centre

**PD4. To support the Council in exploring the possibility of developing a resident card in Oxford**

- \* Full support and consideration offered.

**PD5. To optimise the development of partnership between Fusion and Oxford City Council**

- \* Process reviewed to ensure good working relationships are maintained
- \* Strategic Management meetings and Partnership Board meetings held quarterly

















# SERVICE PLANNING CONTEXT

## INTRODUCTION:

The purpose of this section of the Annual Service Plan is to establish the context in which the planning activity will take place. This context incorporates a range of national, local and organisational factors, as follows:

- \* the objectives as set out by the Partnership Board;
- \* Fusion's corporate objectives as reflected in the company's 1 and 3-year Business Plans
- \* the analysis of contract performance to date;
- \* the commitments and intentions set out in Fusion's BAFO tender submission;
- \* the findings of the Sport England National Benchmarking Surveys undertaken in respect of 5 of the facilities;
- \* the analysis of the markets affecting the leisure facilities, including industry developments, national trends, regional and local market factors.
- \* the results and analysis of Fusion's Mystery Visit programme

In the notes that follow, we have set out the key principles within each of these factors. These principles are then summarised in the form of a SWOT analysis for the current service.

## PARTNERSHIP BOARD OBJECTIVES:

The over-riding objective of the Partnership Board is to ensure that the leisure facilities deliver a service that is "World Class for Everyone".

The specific themes identified for service performance in 2014/15 are as follows:

- \* continued engagement with reducing CO2 Emissions - delivery of 5% year-on-year reduction in carbon emissions and a 3% reduction in water (PB 1);
- \* continued engagement with and participation by the Council's target groups, as follows: 3% increase in participation by users resident in the most deprived wards in Oxford, 3% increase in participation by users who are members of BME groups, 3% increase in participation by users with disabilities, 3% increase in participation in the junior free swim scheme. 5% increase in under 16s participation; 5% increase in Women participation (PB 2)
- \* maintain a proactive and positive approach to PR, such that facility and service successes are communicated and celebrated (PB 3);
- \* improving access to the facilities (e.g. car parking) (PB 4)
- \* to explore opportunities for the Council and Fusion to extend their relationship in respect of other facilities in Oxford (PB 5).
- \* to improve the health and well-being of local communities by engaging people in physical activity (PB 6)
- \* to provide diversionary activities to reduce crime and anti-social behaviour (PB 7)

## OXFORD CITY COUNCIL CORPORATE OBJECTIVES:

The Annual Service Plan is also influenced by the City Council's broader corporate objectives. The relevant objectives are incorporated into the Corporate Plan 2013-2017 and those objectives with specific relevance to the leisure facilities are as summarised below:

- \* **Vibrant, sustainable economy:** "...Over the next 4 years, the city council will address 3 key issues to build a vibrant sustainable economy and jobs: 1. Promote the growth of enterprise, the knowledge based economy, and jobs. 2. Improve the skills of the workforce; 3. Increase the availability of land for commercial development. Oxford City's to invest around £68m into the local economy creating 900 new jobs - building new houses and improving the city's leisure facilities, .... OCC will increase the proportion of apprenticeships created through £50,000 Council investment, invest £400,000 over next 4 years in education and leadership programmes and encourage commercial development e.g. Northern Gateway... (OCC 1).
- \* **Meeting Housing Needs:** Deliver a programme of building new homes and community facilities across the city. (OCC 2);
- \* **Strong, Active Communities:** Communities that are socially cohesive and safe, and citizens who are actively engaged in pursuing their own well-being and that of their communities. We will "... *promote youth ambition*, offering young people to share their experiences with others, and help to build social cohesion; *support older people*, working with other agencies Age UK and the over 50's group to improve services for older people; *encourage our communities promote health living*, continue to improve leisure provision by progressing the build of a new competition standard swimming pool in Blackbird Leys, working in partnership to deliver the GO Active programme to get more people active in the city; *build safer communities*, investing in the Positive Futures Programme to offer alternative activities to other people who might otherwise be drawn into various forms of anti-social behaviour; *celebrate One City Oxford*, leading a partnership based approach to developing and improving cultural life of the city. (OCC 3);
- \* **Cleaner, Greener Oxford:** The City Council's ambition is a cleaner, greener Oxford: in the city centre, in our neighbourhoods and in all public spaces. The city council is addressing five key issues: 1. recycling and refuse collection; 2. Improving cleanliness in the streets, neighbourhoods and open spaces; 3. Reducing the council's carbon footprint; 4. Reducing the city's carbon footprint; and 5. Transport. (OCC 4);



\* **Efficient, Effective Council:** Oxford City Council's ambition is "...to be a flexible and accessible organisation, delivering high quality, value for money services." The Council is focusing on 5 key areas to drive further efficiency: 1. *The Customer First programme*; seeking to improve customer excellence and gain accreditation 2. *Improving our processes*; undertaking fundamental whole-service reviews and introducing quality management systems. 3. *Better procurement and contract management*; developing a corporate approach to managing contracts. 4. *Trading and business development*; to grow external revenue by seeking to bring in additional revenues from the provision of services to other external agencies; and 5. Organisational development, restructuring services to integrate and align teams....develop and retain high performing and motivated workforce. (OCC 5).

**Further, the Council has drawn up a specific Sports Strategy which seeks to achieve the following objectives:**

- \* to crystallise the Council's role in providing a Sport & Physical Activity offer;
- \* to show how the Council links in to the Sport & Physical Activity national & local priorities and agendas;
- \* to identify and evidence the key Focus Sports for the Council (confirmed as swimming, football, skating & StreetSports, with other prioritised sports being badminton, dance, tennis, rugby, cricket & athletics);
- \* to identify key challenging sporting projects within the City leisure service area and prioritise them accordingly;

**The Sports Strategy incorporates a Sports and Physical Activity Action Plan with the following key elements:**

- \* to deliver key projects (e.g. competition-standard-pool, Barton pavilion, five-a-side facility);
- \* to improve governance (e.g. chair CSN, attendance at relevant stakeholder meetings);
- \* to review focus sports;
- \* to improve performance management;
- \* to increase participation;
- \* to ensure City Leisure is resourced effectively;
- \* to ensure effective access to leisure facilities.

## FUSION CORPORATE OBJECTIVES:

Fusion's corporate vision is "to be the first choice leisure organisation, delivering a new standard in healthy active leisure", and this vision is reflected in the company's three core values of "We put the Customer First", "We make it happen" and "We only want the best".

Fusion's five-year and annual corporate business plans reflect this vision and these core values and incorporate five strategic strands as follows: "Sustainable Growth and profitability", "Customer First", "Efficiency, Effectiveness and the Highest Quality Service", "Fusion People" and "New Business Development", as well as financial targets.

The specific targets specifically established for 2013 are as follows:

- \* to deliver a 5% year-on-year increase on like-for-like income (Fus 1);
- \* to deliver all facility redevelopments on time and on budget and to deliver the projected uplifts (Fus 2);
- \* to deliver a surplus margin of 5% (Fus 3);
- \* to ensure 97% "good"/"excellent" for overall customer satisfaction and 100% "good"/ "excellent" for staff (Fus 4);
- \* to reduce attrition of subscription memberships to less than 50% per annum (Fus 5);
- \* to deliver a 5% year-on-year increase in like-for-like general participation (Fus 6);
- \* to deliver a 5% year-on-year increase in like-for-like participation by target groups (Fus 7);
- \* to ensure 100% compliance with Basecamp inspection regimes and to deliver an average score of at least 95% on Basecamp inspection scores (Fus 8);
- \* to deliver Quest accreditation rating of "Good"; Mystery Visit scores to be 100% and EFQM Committed to Excellence (Fus 9);
- \* to deliver a 2% year-on-year reduction on like-for-like energy consumption (Fus 10);
- \* to win 1 new partnerships with turnover of £3 million per annum (Fus 11).
- \* Achieve turnover of 72 million pounds (Fus 12)

## PERFORMANCE TO DATE:

The notes below provide a summary of the information provided on the "Performance Review" tab:

- \* mixed financial performance - good income performance on membership direct debits, improved performance on payroll management, year-to-date performance below tender expectations;
- \* average participation performance - forecast to achieve above last years numbers in participation but down against target. Continued good increase in centre memberships.
- \* good customer satisfaction performance - good response to PTUWYT comment slips, improvement in staffing, variety of activities, condition of buildings and website
- \* good health and safety performance - continued improvements in internal and external H&S audits;
- \* good FM performance - maintained compliance of Base Camp, cleaning undertaken and PPM systems, Introduced asset management to improve maintenance performance and monitoring;
- \* good marketing performance - Good communication links with OCC and local media; Continued improved communications with customers through the "Rewards Card". Improved usage of social media - Facebook and twitter.
- \* improved sports and community development performance - dedicated SCD resource, links established with key stakeholders and local groups and schools and colleges, good participation with CSN and National governing bodies;
- \* good facility development performance - commencement of the development of new competition pool, soft play and new studio at Blackbird Leys well received.
- \* good partnership development performance - meeting, reporting and communication systems established, Partnership Board meeting held quarterly, annual service planning process embedded.

## AGREED COMMITMENTS WITHIN THE BUSINESS PLANNING PROCESS:

Key commitments agreed within the business planning process are:

- \* to maintain overall satisfaction above 95%
- \* to increase participation in adult sport by 2%
- \* to increase total usage of the Council's leisure facilities by 2%
- \* to increase Bonus card membership by 3%
- \* to increase the total number of members by 5%

\* to contribute to the delivery of the Council's targets of reducing carbon emissions from Council buildings by 5% year-on year;

\* to provide leisure facilities which provide excellent value for money measured by subsidy per user that reduces year on year;

- \* to maintain Quest accreditation score of at least 'Good'.

## SPORT ENGLAND NATIONAL BENCHMARKING SURVEYS:

Sport England Benchmarking Surveys are undertaken on a bi-annual basis. During the first part of 2013, Sport England National Benchmarking Surveys were undertaken at Barton Pool, Blackbird Leys Leisure Centre, Ferry Sports Centre, Hinksey Pool. The Survey processes involved an analysis of financial and usage statistics for the facilities (in year 2012/13) and sample surveys of customer satisfaction undertaken in the summer 2013. Oxford Ice Rink was surveyed in September 2012 and utilised financial information from 2011/12. The findings are summarised as follows:

- \* "Strong" financial performance at; Ferry, Ice Rink, Blackbird Leys Leisure Centre. "Weak" performance at Barton. Subsidy per user in the top quartile at Ferry and Oxford Ice Rink.
- \* "Improved" access performance at Ferry Leisure Centre and Hinksey Pool Oxford Ice Rink and Blackbird Leys Leisure Centre, particularly 11 - 19 year olds. Generally poor performance for 20 - 59 year olds and unemployed. Good performance for deprived/disadvantaged users
- \* Areas of good satisfaction across all sites for; helpfulness of staff, standards of coaching, general cleanliness and activity range. Areas of poor satisfaction include quality and value for money of food and drink.
- \* "Above industry average" customer satisfaction performance at Barton Pool, Blackbird Leys Leisure Centre, Hinksey Pool and Ferry Leisure Centre. OIR was perceived to be below industry standards due mainly to poor food and drink, poor equipment and activity charge/fee.

## MARKET ANALYSIS:

**National Context:**

**General Consumer trends:**

- \* less money in their pockets may put consumers off joining a health and fitness club or steer them towards less expensive options;
- \* the key 25-34 age band is set to increase most significantly, along with the 45-54 age group, which could also prove to be a lucrative market if targeted correctly;
- \* consumers view keeping fit as more important than many other leisure activities and are less willing to cut back spending on this area than many others;

**Users from BME groups:**

- \* with the exception of Hinksey Outdoor Pool participation levels are generally higher than that of the wider population (NBS)
- \* the gap between participation by men and women is greater amongst certain BME groups (e.g. "Black Other");
- \* typical sport preferences amongst BME groups include weight training, martial arts, badminton, cricket and basketball. Swimming is typically not preferred;

**Disabled Users:**

- \* approximately 10.6million disabled people in the country;
- \* Sport England market segmentation research shows that disabled users are spread across all segments, such that targeted marketing is difficult;

**Disadvantage users**

- \* Disadvantage usage is significantly above NBS benchmark average, though there is less use from those unemployed

#### Oxford-specific Context:

##### **General Population:**

- \* Population growth of 12% (2001 - 2011); 4% higher than the England average
- \* 24% (30,000) of the city's adult population are full time students
- \* 25% population turnover each year
- \* 32% of the population are aged between 18 and 29 years
- \* 22% of residents from a black or ethnic group compared to 13% for England and Wales
- \* wards with particularly high projected population increases include Barton & Sandhills (46%), Cowley Marsh (26%) and Carfax (24%);
- \* slight decrease (0.7%) projected in Blackbird Leys;
- \* Oxford is reporting an aging population for the first time in recent history
- \* Unemployment is 5.7% compared to England average of 7.8%

##### **Active People Surveys:**

- \* Oxford participation (3 x 30 minutes per week) KPI increased from 25.5% to 29%; (ranked 2nd in Oxon)
- \* participation (1 X 30minutes per week) kpi increased to 39.1% (ranked 3rd in Oxon);
- \* Oxfordshire volunteering KPI at 6% ) 0.1% better than national average;
- \* Oxfordshire club membership KPI increased by 0.6% to 21.6%;
- \* Oxfordshire tuition KPI increased by 2.1% to 17.9%;
- \* Oxfordshire competition KPI increased by 2.1% to 13.3%;
- \* Oxfordshire satisfaction KPI at 65%; (New KPI)

##### **Deprived Wards:**

- \* a review has been undertaken of the key deprived wards within Oxford and how those wards might be better served by Oxford's leisure facilities. The key wards for focus are as follows: Barton and Sandhills, Headington Hill and Northway, and Quarry and Risinghurst (all directly served by Barton Pool), Rose Hill and Iffley, Littlemore, Northfield Brook, Blackbird Leys and Cowley (all directly served by Temple Cowley Pools, Blackbird Leys Leisure Centre and Blackbird Leys Pool) and Carfax (served to some extent by Ferry Sports Centre).

##### **Users over 50:**

- \* recognised that this remains a significant potential market, with up to 121,000 potential users aged over 50 in the wider catchment for the leisure facilities;
- \* current penetration/participation rates have improved (based on NBS reports)

##### **Users under 16:**

- \* penetration/participation rates are very good particularly the 11 - 19 year olds (based on NBS reports) ;

##### **Users from BME groups:**

- \* relatively large BME population (22%)
- \* increased diversity in recent years, through influx of people from new EU countries;
- \* people of Black and Bangladeshi ethnic origin are at particular risk of unemployment;

#### Findings from non-user survey:

Non-user surveys are undertaken on a bi-annual basis. A street survey was undertaken in October 2011. A total sample of 300 people were surveyed in the Summertown, Headington and Templars Square areas. The research was designed to investigate attitudes and behaviour around exercise and to find out what the residents of the area think about the leisure facilities. The key findings were as follows:

- \* The majority of the sample thought that regular exercise/activity was important with 68% stating very important (national benchmark 61%).
- \* 52% strongly agree that physical activity is good for your health even if moderate, 32% strongly agree it's good for your health even if only for 10 minutes at a time. 43% strongly agree physical activity is better for you if you keep it up for at least 30 minutes and 16% strongly agree it's better if you get out of breath. 38% either agree or strongly agree you can get enough in your daily life without doing sport or exercise.
- \* 42% thought that they were regularly undertaking at least 5 x 30 minutes of moderate exercise (national benchmark 39%).12% said they had done no sessions, (national benchmark 15%).
- \* Of those that did exercise regularly, 18% used a leisure centre/health club Esporta and College/University facilities seem to be the main competitor at 25% each, followed by LA Fitness at 11%. The most popular form of independent activity was walking/jogging in the street/parks at 74%.
- \* 62% of respondents are wanting to do more activity, slightly lower than the national benchmark of 67%), the main reason for this being "wanting to improve their health" at 62%. Slightly under half (47%) thought that not enough time due to work was the major factor in preventing them doing more, (national average 50%), followed by not enough time due to home at 11%.
- \* Of those who do not want to do more the main reason is "no need" at 56% (higher than the national average at 44%), followed by not enough time due to work at 13%.
- \* The key factors to be addressed according to non-users are lack of time, which has the highest importance factor at 49% stating very important. Direct costs (17%); lack of personal motivation (11%); indirect costs (9%).
- \* 52% of the sample would consider using Oxford Fusion Lifestyle facilities slightly higher than our national average of 60%.
- \* The main reasons they don't currently use were 'No time' (31%), 'Cost' (17%), and 'No need' (12%).
- \* The main thing, according to our respondents, that the facility could do to encourage usage amongst these non-users, would be to 'Lower costs' at 28% (lower than the national benchmark at 44%), followed by 'more information' (8%).



## SWOT ANALYSIS:

### Strengths:

- \* variety and geographical spread of facilities within portfolio;
- \* improved facilities through developments and substantial maintenance programme
- \* delivery of consistent increases in direct debit memberships;
- \* higher than industry average performance in respect of customer satisfaction (cf. NBS surveys);
- \* maintained improvements in cleaning standards;
- \* consistent meeting, reporting and monitoring regimes with the Council;
- \* staffing establishment ensuring right people right place right time
- \* strong financial performance, particularly subsidy per user
- \* Maintained high customer satisfaction and Mystery Visit results

### Opportunities:

- \* impact of a major wet/dry facility at Blackbird Leys;
- \* continued delivery of cultural change within management and staffing teams;
- \* continued partnership working between Fusion and the Council;
- \* high population turnover within the city

### Weaknesses:

- \* age and condition of some facilities (TCP, BBLSP);
- \* potential over-supply of pool water;
- \* high and variable staff costs (as a percentage of income);
- \* poor customer perception of the quality and value for money for food and drink
- \* poor customer perception of the quality of fitness equipment at Blackbird Leys Leisure Centre.

### Threats:

- \* facilities offered by the colleges and universities at a lower rate
- \* challenge of delivering significant increases in income and participation;
- \* increased car park charges at Ferry Leisure Centre and Oxford Ice Rink
- \* the emergence of the budget gym market in Oxford

### Supporting Documentation:

Leisure Net Solutions "street Focus" non-user research 2011  
Index of Multiple Deprivation Map (Department of Communities and Local Government, 2007)  
Active England Survey Results 2013  
Target Market Report - Deprived Wards (Hatrick Marketing, November 2009)  
Target Market Report - Users over 50 (Hatrick Marketing, November 2009)  
Target Market Report - Users under 16 (Hatrick Marketing, November 2009)  
Target Market Report - Users from BME Groups (Hatrick Marketing, November 2009)  
Oxford Profile 2013 (Oxford City Council)  
Target Market Report - Disabled Users (Hatrick Marketing, November 2009)

# FINANCIAL

<b>F1 To deliver a 10% year-on-year reduction in subsidy per user</b>				
Action Ref.	Action	Timescale	Target / KPI	Lead Manager
1	To complete audit of compliance with all Fusion financial management policies and procedures and to create a relevant remedial action plan.	April - May 2014	Audit completed and action plan created.	DBMgr (with GMs)
2	To implement the remedial action plan in respect of Fusion financial management policies and procedures.	June 2014 onwards	Action plan implemented.	DBMgr (with GMs)
3	To undertake weekly trading reviews with centre managers.	weekly	Weekly trading meetings instigated at each site.	DBMgr (with GMs)
	Meetings to incorporate review of previous week's income, membership sales and cancellations.			
4	To prepare draft business plan projections for 2015/16	September - December 2014	Business plan projections prepared.	DBMgr (with team)
5	To finalise detailed business plan projections for 2015/16	December 2014	Business plan projections finalised.	DBMgr (with team)
6	To communicate detailed business plan targets and budgets to all relevant managers and staff.	January 2015	Business Plan targets and budgets communicated to all relevant staff.	DBMgr (with team)

<b>F2 To ensure that pricing structures and levels across the leisure facilities are appropriate and inclusive</b>				
Action Ref.	Action	Timescale	Target / KPI	Lead Manager
1	To apply RPI increases to all core prices at each of the leisure facilities and to undertake relevant customer communication.	Jan/Apr 2014	Increases applied and customer communication undertaken.	DBMgr (with GMs)
2	To formally review all pricing structures and levels and develop specific pricing proposals for the 2015/16 annual service plan.	September - December 2014	Pricing structures and levels formally reviewed and proposals developed for 2015/6	DBMgr
	To specifically incorporate consideration of concessionary options, the breadth of membership offers and application of community/club concessionary rates; and increases to legacy memberships			
3	To agree pricing proposals for 2014/15	December 2014	Pricing proposals agreed.	DBMgr
4	To agree process of consultation and communication in respect of 2014/15 pricing	December 2014 - January 2015	Process agreed.	DBMgr
5	To implement agreed process of consultation and communication in respect of 2014/15 pricing	January - March 2015	Process implemented.	DBMgr (with GMs)

**Abbreviations:**

DBMgr Divisional Business Manager

GM General Manager

ME Marketing Executive

## PARTICIPATION

<b>P1 To deliver a 3% year-on-year increase in participation by users resident in the most deprived wards in the City</b>				
Action Ref.	Action	Timescale	Target / KPI	Lead Manager
1	To review target wards within the City and update target streets and estates within those target wards that require inclusion/omission	April 2014	Target wards and streets/estates reviewed and mapped	DSCDMgr
2	To establish all relevant participation targets for 2015/16	Dec 2014	Participation targets established	DBMgr
3	To review programmes at all facilities 3 times per year and identify opportunities for any further targeted sessions in each case	April 2014	Review undertaken and revised programme produced	DSCDMgr (with DMMgr & GMs)
		Aug 2014	Review undertaken and revised programme produced	DSCDMgr (with DMMgr & GMs)
		Dec 2014	Review undertaken and revised programme produced	DSCDMgr (with DMMgr & GMs)
4	To implement targeted campaigns, promoting existing benefits of the bonus card and specific activities	May 2014	Direct mail implemented	DMMgr
5	To review previously identified key community groups within each of the target wards	April 2014	List of up-to-date community groups created	DSCDMgr (with GMs)
6	To maintain links with appropriate community groups within each of the target wards	On-going	At least two communications made over the year	DSCDMgr (with GMs)
7	To deliver discounted holiday swimming crash courses targeted at those living in deprived wards.	On-going	Courses promoted and delivered.	DSCDMgr (with DMMgr & GMs)

<b>P2 To deliver a 3% year-on-year increase in participation by users aged over 50</b>				
Action Ref.	Action	Timescale	Target / KPI	Lead Manager
1	To establish all relevant participation targets for 2015/16	Dec 2014	Participation targets established	DBMgr (with DSCDMgr)
2	To ensure that specific core literature in centre around activities for 60+ customers is available and up to date	On-going	Full set of literature permanently available	DMMgr
3	To ensure that information for 50+ target group is reviewed and readily accessible on the website	On-going	Information ever present and up to date online	DMMgr
4	To review and update partners who support the development of activities and increase in participation by people aged over 50. likely to include Older Peoples Network, Age Concern, Neighbourhood Care, Civic centres, surgeries, Veterans Sports Clubs	April - June 2014	Up-to-date partners identified and reviewed.	DMMgr (with DBMgr & GMs)
5	To review Primetime programmes at all facilities 3 times per year and identify opportunities for any further targeted sessions in each case	April 2014	Review undertaken and revised programme produced	DSCDMgr (with DMMgr & GMs)
		Aug 2014	Review undertaken and revised programme produced	DSCDMgr (with DMMgr & GMs)
		Dec 2014	Review undertaken and revised programme produced	DSCDMgr (with DMMgr & GMs)



<b>P3 To deliver a 5% year-on-year increase in participation by users aged under 16</b>				
Action Ref.	Action	Timescale	Target / KPI	Lead Manager
1	To establish all relevant participation targets for 2015/16	Dec 2014	Participation targets established	DBMgr (with DSCDMgr)
2	Revise Junior Aquatics Action Plan Plan to include: Swim School, School swimming programme, development of other aquatic activities such as, mini polo, and competition swimming, free swimming	April 2014	Revised Plan Produced	DSCD Mgr
3	Implement the Aquatics action plan	April 2014 onwards	Plan implemented.	DSCDMgr (with GMs)
4	To review stakeholder partners who can support the development of activities and increase in participation by people aged under 16.	Apr-14	Stakeholder partners reviewed.	DSCDMgr (with GMs)
5	To develop and implement a specific joint initiative re increasing under 16 participation with at least one identified stakeholder. To include consideration of support for Oxford Youth Games, Children and Young Person Agencies. Also refer to SCD Objective 1 tasks 11&12	April 2014 onwards	At least 1 new initiatives/activities identified and implemented.	DSCDMgr
6	To review all junior development activities and create centre specific action plans for improvement and change.	April 2014	Review undertaken and revised programme produced	DSCDMgr (with DMMgr & GMs)
	Review to incorporate specific consideration of sports coaching offers, school holiday programmes, junior gym provision, exercise to music, Toddler World, Soft Play etc.	Aug 2014	Review undertaken and revised programme produced	DSCDMgr (with DMMgr & GMs)
		Dec 2014	Review undertaken and revised programme produced	DSCDMgr (with DMMgr & GMs)
7	To undertake member and user analysis to identify participation and penetration rates	April 2014	Participation and penetration rates established	DSCDMgr (with GMs)
9	Review school use of all facilities and draw up a programme of activity linked with relevant local schools and colleges so as to encourage improvement in educational attainment. Opportunity for programme development to include: management of schools swimming programmes; schools fit club involving taster sessions; educational visits to Oxford Ice Rink/Hinksey pool with free sessions; development of 'Sports Inspired' and 'National School's Sports Week'; adoption of 'work experience programmes with schools and colleges; undertaking of cycling proficiency and free swimming sessions for school children in deprived areas. (See SCD objective 7)	July - September 2014	Programme created.	DSCDMgr (with DMMgr & GMs)
9	To undertake agreed programme of school outreach activity. (see SDC 7 objective)	September 2014 - March 2015	Programme undertaken.	DSCDMgr (with DMMgr & GMs)

<b>P4 To deliver a 3% year-on-year increase in participation by users from BME groups</b>				
Action Ref.	Action	Timescale	Target / KPI	Lead Manager
1	To establish all relevant participation targets for 2015/16	Dec 2014	Participation targets established	DBMgr (with DSCDMgr)
2	To review stakeholder partners who can support the development of activities and increase in participation by people from BME groups.	April - June 2014	Stakeholder Partners reviewed	DSCDMgr (with GMs)
3	To develop and implement a specific joint initiative re increasing BME use with at least one identified stakeholder.	July-December 2014	Joint initiatives identified. And implemented	DSCDMgr
4	To maintain association with "community ambassadors" with whom to work to promote accessibility to the leisure facilities for BME groups.	On-going	Ambassadors identified.	DSCDMgr (with GMs)
5	To review and implement a revised programme of work with the community ambassadors.	October 2014 - March 2015	Programme reviewed and implemented.	DSCDMgr (with GMs)
6	To undertake direct a campaign to relevant wards and streets, promoting relevant activities at the leisure facilities.	October - December 2014	Campaign undertaken.	DMMgr (with DSCDMgr & GMs)

<b>P5 To deliver a 3% year-on-year increase in participation by disabled users</b>				
Action Ref.	Action	Timescale	Target / KPI	Lead Manager
1	To establish all relevant participation targets for 2015/16	Dec 2014	Participation targets established	DBMgr (with DSCDMgr)
2	To review stakeholder partners who can support the development of activities and increase in participation by disabled people.	April - June 2014	Stakeholder partners reviewed.	DSCDMgr (with GMs)
3	To develop and implement a specific joint initiative to increase disabled usage with at least one identified stakeholder.	July 2014- December	Joint initiatives identified and initiated.	DSCDMgr
	To include consideration of International Disabled People's Day and Oxfordshire Disabled School Sports			

<b>P6 To deliver a 3% year-on-year increase in participation on junior swimming</b>				
Action Ref.	Action	Timescale	Target / KPI	Lead Manager
1	To refresh the specific marketing plan in respect of the junior free swimming scheme.	April - June 2014	Marketing plan created.	DMMgr (with DSCDMgr & GMs)
2	To implement the agreed marketing plan for promotion of junior free swimming scheme.	July 2014 - March 2015	Marketing plan implemented.	DMMgr (with DSCDMgr & GMs)
3	To review the allocated hours for free swimming	April 2014	Review undertaken and revised programme produced	DSCDMgr (with DMMgr & GMs)
		Aug 2014	Review undertaken and revised programme produced	DSCDMgr (with DMMgr & GMs)
		Dec 2014	Review undertaken and revised programme produced	DSCDMgr (with DMMgr & GMs)
4	In partnership with OCC deliver funded free swimming lessons targeted at children in high areas of deprivation having low rates of physical activity	Apr-14	Swimming lessons undertaken	DSCDMgr (with DMMgr & GMs)
5	To develop and implement a programme of promotion of appropriate add-on / sell-on activities for free swimming participants.	April - June 2014	Policies and procedures implemented.	DMMgr (with GMs)
6	To implement the policies and procedures of Fusion's aquatic product (including the promotion and management of free swimming initiative).	April 2014 - March 2015	Programme developed and implemented	DMMgr (with GMs)
	Programme to incorporate access to swimming lessons, PR campaign including testimonials, coaching of other aquatic disciplines, Swimathon participation, swim-fit etc. Implementation of initiatives and plans through joint working with ASA and the City of Oxford Swimming Club, e.g. talent spotting			

<b>P7 To deliver a 3% year-on-year increase in participation in 60+ swimming</b>				
Action Ref.	Action	Timescale	Target / KPI	Lead Manager
1	To create a specific marketing plan in respect of swimmers aged 60+	April - June 2014	Marketing plan created.	DMMgr (with DSCDMgr & GMs)
2	To implement the agreed marketing plan for promoting 60+ swimming	July 2014- March 2015	Marketing plan implemented.	DMMgr (with DSCDMgr & GMs)
3	To implement the policies and procedures of Fusion's aquatic product	April 2014	Policies and procedures implemented.	DMMgr (with GMs)
4	To develop and implement a programme of promotion of appropriate add-on / sell-on activities O'60 swimming participants.	April 2014 - March 2015	Programme developed and implemented	DMMgr (with GMs)
	Programme to incorporate free swimming loyalty card, access to swimming lessons, PR campaign including testimonials, coaching of other aquatic disciplines, Swimathon participation, swim-fit, ladies only etc. Initiatives to include liaison and joint working with ASA.			

<b>P8 To improve general access to all sites</b>				
Action Ref.	Action	Timescale	Target / KPI	Lead Manager
1	Review and update access/customer journey surveys	April - June 2014	Plan reviewed and updated	DSCDMgr & DMMgr (with GMs)
	To incorporate car parking arrangements, directional signage, entrance signage, designated adult and child spaces, car parking signage and charging, bicycle racks etc.			
2	Create and implement access/customer journey surveys	July 14 - March 15	Plan created and implemented	DMMgr (with DSCDMgr & GMs)
3	Revised previous years plan for new external signage	May 2013	Revised Plan created	DMMgr
4	To implement revised plan for provision of external road signage	June 2013 - Dec 2014	Revised Plan implemented	DMMgr

<b>P9 To deliver a 5% year-on-year increase in participation in Women and Girls Activities</b>				
Action Ref.	Action	Timescale	Target / KPI	Lead Manager
1	To establish all relevant participation targets for 2014/15	April 2014 to March 15	Participation targets established	DBMgr (with DSCDMgr)
2	To develop and implement at least 4 new outreach activities for women and girls that sign posts future participation to leisure centre facilities	April 2014 - March 2015	4 outreach activities established	DSCDMgr (with Dev for)
3	To review stakeholder partners who can support the development of activities and increase in participation in women and girls activities.	April - June 2014	Stakeholder Partners reviewed	DSCDMgr (with GMs)

# CUSTOMER RELATIONS

<b>CR 1 To maintain customer satisfaction levels at leisure facilities above 95% GSE</b>				
Action Ref.	Action	Timescale	Target / KPI	Lead Manager
1	To ensure 100% compliance with Fusion's policies and procedures regarding customer care, including customer forums and management surgeries.	April 2014 and on-going.	Policies and procedures implemented.	GM
2	To ensure that all facilities maintain an up-to-date "Customer Care" notice board.	On-going	Notice boards provided and maintained with relevant information displayed.	GM
	Notice board to present information including customer care policies, PTUWYT statistics, detailed "you said, we did" feedback, details of customer forums and management surgeries, customer rules and etiquette.			
3	To reaffirm composition and roles of User Groups at each of the leisure facilities and establish a calendar of meetings in each case.	April 2014	User Group composition and roles reaffirmed and calendar of meetings established.	GM
4	To maintain relevant mechanisms for providing customer information re pool water temperatures.	On-going	Mechanisms implemented.	GM
5	To hold monthly 'Meet the Manager' surgeries at each leisure facility.	April 2014 to March 2015	Management surgeries held.	GM

<b>CR 2 To fully undertake Fusion's customer relations programmes</b>				
Action Ref.	Action	Timescale	Target / KPI	Lead Manager
1	To ensure full compliance to the principles and practices of Fusion's customer relations initiatives and programmes. ..... to include timely Responses to PTUWYT complaints, undertaking cancellation surveys, mystery visit programme, etc.	On-going	Policies and procedures implemented	GM
2	To ensure all staff receive customer care training within their induction programme.	On-going	Inductions complete	GM
3	To undertake the Bi-annual NBS at Oxford Ice Rink and Hinksey Outdoor Pool	July - October 2014	Surveys complete	DBMgr
4	To undertake the bi-annual Non user surveys at 3 designated areas within the city of Oxford	April - June 2015	Surveys complete	DBMgr

<b>CR 3 To deliver a reduction of at least 5% in annual attrition levels for Slice Card memberships</b>				
Action Ref.	Action	Timescale	Target / KPI	Lead Manager
1	To maintain mechanisms for measuring baseline membership numbers and attrition levels.	On-going	Mechanisms are maintained	DBMgr (with GMs)
3	To implement Fusion's Customer Relations Policies and procedures.	On-going	Policies and procedures implemented.	DBMgr, DMMGR (with GMs)
4	To develop a calendar of retention activity for members.	April - May 2014	Calendar developed.	DBMgr, DMMGR (with GMs)
5	To implement agreed calendar of retention activity.	June 2014 - March 2015	Calendar implemented.	DBMgr (with GMs)

**Abbreviations:**

DBMgr Divisional Business Manager  
GM General Manager

## HEALTH AND SAFETY

HS1				
To ensure 100% compliance with Fusion H&S policies and procedures				
Action Ref.	Action	Timescale	Target / KPI	Lead Manager
1	To undertake an internal audit at each site of compliance with all elements of Fusion's health and safety policies and procedures and to establish a relevant remedial action plan.	Monthly	Audit undertaken and action plan established.	DBMgr, DBM (with GMs)
	Audit to specifically incorporate review of compliance with procedures regarding risk assessment review, control of subcontractors, control of access to storage areas.			
2	To implement the action plan re H&S compliance.	on-going	Action plan implemented.	DFMgr, (with GMs)
3	To ensure relevant attendance at quarterly Health and Safety Working Party.	Quarterly	Working Parties attended.	DBMgr (with GMs)
4	To maintain a health and safety notice board at all leisure facilities	On-going	Notice boards up to date.	DBMgr (with GMs)
	Notice boards to provide information re accident stats, safety tips etc.			
5	To undertake reviews of accident and incident trends and to draw up any relevant remedial action plan within the CIP.	monthly	Reviews undertaken and action plan established.	DBMgr (with GMs)
6	To implement any remedial action plan in respect of accident and incident trends.	As required	Action plan implemented.	DBMgr (with GMs)
7	To facilitate formal audit by Fusion H&S Manager or Facilities Maintenance Manager.	each site twice yearly	Audit undertaken	DBMgr, DFMgr (with GMs)
8	Update CIP and implement relevant action plan in response to formal H&S audit.	6 monthly	Action plan implemented.	DBMgr (with GMs)
9	To facilitate formal external (OHSAS) audit of health and safety management policies and procedures.	April 2014 - March 2015	OHSAS audit undertaken.	DBMgr (with GMs)
10	To draw up and implement relevant action plan in response to OHSAS audit.	April 2014 - March 2015	Action plan implemented.	DBMgr (with GMs)
11	To undertake formal training with relevant managers in Health and Safety	twice yearly	Training undertaken	DBMgr (with GMs)

Abbreviations:

DBMgr Divisional Business Manager  
GM General Manager

## FACILITY MANAGEMENT

<b>FM1 To achieve average Base Camp inspection scores of at least 95% across all facilities</b>				
Action Ref.	Action	Timescale	Target / KPI	Lead Manager
1	To ensure 100% compliance with Base Camp inspection regime.	On-going.	100% of scheduled Base Camp inspections undertaken.	GMs
2	To review nature of Base Camp failures quarter yearly and develop relevant remedial action plans.	April; July; Oct & Jan 2014	Review undertaken and action plan created.	DBMGr (with GMs)
3	To implement relevant remedial action plans re Base Camp failures.	April; July; Oct & Jan 2015	Action plan implemented.	DBMGr (with GMs)
4	To instigate weekly Facility Management communication with each of the sites	April 2014	Communications instigated at each site.	DBMGr (with GMs)
	Communication to incorporate review of Base Camp scores and failures, rectifications, response times and TABs logs			
5	To work with key client representatives to review and agree any relevant revisions to the Tables of Standards for each facility (in light of Base Camp implementation).	June 2014	Revised Tables of Standards agreed.	DBMGr (with GMs)
6	To work with key client representatives to review and agree any relevant revisions to the Tables of Standards for Blackbird Leys Leisure Centre (in light of planned facility developments).	Upon completion of developments	Revised Tables of Standards agreed.	DBMGr (with GMs)

<b>FM2 To engage fully with the Council's priority "To tackle climate change and promote sustainable environmental resource management" and to contribute to the Council's delivery of a 5% reduction in carbon emissions year-on-year and 3% year-on-year reduction in water usage.</b>				
Action Ref.	Action	Timescale	Target / KPI	Lead Manager
1	To implement and maintain all ISO14001 environmental management systems and procedures in Oxford.	On-going	Systems and procedures implemented.	DFMGr (with GMs)
2	To review and maintain a formal energy action plan in respect of each of the leisure facilities.	May 2014	Plan reviewed.	DFMGr (with GMs)
	To specifically engage with and assist in the delivering the Council's "Carbon Reduction at the Heart of Everything we do" carbon management programme and to incorporate renewal of DEC's, utilities monitoring, (including acting on findings from OCC energy teams 'Energy excess' consumption reports, submitting monthly reads) green travel plans for customers and staff, supplier and contractor management, carbon champion network, education of customers and staff etc. Also, to incorporate the aim to quantify the monetary value of any savings generated as a result of the action plan.			
3	To implement formal energy and water reduction action plans.	July 2013 March 2014	Plan implemented.	DFMGr (with GMs)
4	To maintain ISO14001 accreditation in Oxford.	April 2013 and on-going	Accreditation maintained	DFMGr (with GMs)
5	To undertake formal review of BMS systems in relation to facility usage and make required adjustments.	April 2014	Review undertaken and adjustments completed.	DFMGr (with GMs)
6	To agree a calendar of meetings with key representatives of OCC energy and technical team and agree a programme of joint working in respect of achieving utility reductions and implementing SALIX funded energy reduction measures.	April 2014	Meeting dates agreed.	DFMGr (with DBMGr)
	Key representatives include Carbon Champion, Divisional Facilities Manager, Fusion's Environmental Manager and Divisional Business Manager.			
7	To implement agreed programme of joint working initiatives with OCC technical team.	May 2014 - March 2015	Programme implemented.	DFMGr (with DBMGr)
8	To implement relevant CRC Energy Efficiency compliance programme.	July 2014 - March 2015	Programme implemented.	DFMGr (with GMs)
9	To incorporate appropriate works into programme of lifecycle works.	October - December 2013	Relevant works incorporated into programme.	DFMGr
	Works to include replacement of inefficient air conditioning units, replacement of boilers, installation of CHP modular units.			
10	To ensure all environmental management notice boards are maintained displaying relevant information.	On-going	Notice boards in place and displaying relevant information.	DFMGr (with GMs)
	Information to include energy management certificates, trends in utility consumption and details regarding carbon reduction / recycling initiatives.			
11	To ensure green travel plans are revised and in place at each site and communicated effectively to customers.	April - June 2013	Green travel plans revised in place and communicated.	DBM, DFMGr (with GMs)
12	To monitor effectiveness of Green Travel Plans	July - September 2013	Green Travel Plans evaluated	DBMGr (with GMs)
	Monitoring of Green Travel Plans to be taken from NBS results			

<b>FM3 To reduce general refuse by 25% and to increase recycling waste by 25%</b>				
Action Ref.	Action	Timescale	Target / KPI	Lead Manager
1	To continue to implement all ISO14001 environmental management systems and procedures in Oxford initiating any suggested improvements following reassessments	On-going	Systems and procedures implemented	DFMGr (with GMs)
2	To ensure all environmental management notice boards in place and displaying relevant information.	On-going	Notice boards in place and displaying relevant information.	DFMGr (with GMs)
	Information to include energy management certificates, trends in utility consumption and details regarding carbon reduction / recycling initiatives.			
3	To create a specific action plan to reduce general refuse and increase recycled waste	April - June 2014	Action plan created.	DFMGr (with GMs)
4	To implement action plan to reduce general refuse and increase recycled waste	July 2013 - March 2014	Action plan implemented.	DFMGr (with GMs)

<b>FM4 To ensure that high standards of cleaning are achieved at all times</b>				
Action Ref.	Action	Timescale	Target / KPI	Lead Manager
1	To establish programme of high level and deep cleans across all of the facilities.	April 2014	Programme established.	DBMGr (with GMs)
2	To implement high level and deep clean schedule.	April 2014 - March 2015	Programme implemented.	DBMGr (with GMs)
3	To review effectiveness of cleaning schedules and revise as necessary (in light of customer feedback and Base Camp inspection scores).	Monthly	Cleaning schedules reviewed and revised.	DBMGr (with GMs)
4	To implement revised cleaning schedules.	As required	Cleaning schedules implemented.	DBMGr (with GMs)
5	To implement system of communicating required cleaning standards and systems of inspection to customers	April - June 2014	System implemented and communicated.	DBMGr (with GMs)



<b>FM5 To ensure that high standards of repair and maintenance are achieved at all times</b>				
Action Ref.	Action	Timescale	Target / KPI	Lead Manager
1	To review performance of FM subcontractors in Q4 2013/14 and draw up relevant remedial action plan.	April 2014	Performance reviewed and action plan drawn up.	DFMgr
2	To implement remedial action plan for FM performance.	April - June 2014	Action plan implemented.	DFMgr
3	To maintain consistent system to reporting and communicating equipment failures to customers (cf. "Out of Order" signage).	on-going	System established and implemented and maintained.	DBMgr (with GMs)
4	To review full property database for all leisure facilities in light of any developments.	April - June 2014	Database created.	DFMgr
5	To approve programme of lifecycle maintenance works for 2014/15.	April 2014	Lifecycle maintenance programme established.	DFMgr
9	To implement equipment replacement programme for 2014/15. (CAPEX)	April 2014	Programme implemented.	DFMgr (with GMs)
6	To implement lifecycle maintenance programme on time and on budget.	April 2014 - March 2015	Lifecycle maintenance programme implemented.	DFMgr
7	To review full equipment inventory for all leisure facilities.	Oct - Dec 2014	Equipment inventory reviewed	DFMgr (with GMs)
8	To approve a capex programme of equipment replacement/renewal for 2014/15.	Dec-14	Replacement programme created.	DFMgr (with GMs)
10	To review performance of FM subcontractors in Q1 2014/15 and draw up relevant remedial action plan.	July 2014	Performance reviewed and action plan drawn up.	DFMgr
11	To implement any remedial action plan for FM performance.	July - September 2014	Action plan implemented.	DFMgr
12	To review performance of FM subcontractors in Q2 2014/15 and draw up relevant remedial action plan.	October 2014	Performance reviewed and action plan drawn up.	DFMgr
13	To implement any remedial action plan for FM performance.	October - December 2014	Action plan implemented.	DFMgr
14	To review performance of FM subcontractors in Q3 2014/15 and draw up relevant remedial action plan.	January 2015	Performance reviewed and action plan drawn up.	DFMgr
15	To implement any remedial action plan for FM performance.	January - March 2015	Action plan implemented.	DFMgr

<b>FM6 To maintain Quest accreditation at a minimum 'Good' at Ferry L. C, Blackbird Leys L.C, Hinksey Outdoor Pool, Ice Rink and Barton L. C.</b>				
Action Ref.	Action	Timescale	Target / KPI	Lead Manager
1	To maintain relevant continued service improvement plan.	on-going	Plan drawn up and maintained.	GMs (with DBMgr)
2	To implement updated service improvement plan.	April 2014 onwards	Actions implemented and updated	GMs (with DBMgr)
3	To undertake programme of mystery shops and to update the service improvement plan accordingly.	April 2014 - March 2015	Mystery shops undertaken and plan updated.	GMs (with DBMgr)
4	To implement updated service improvement plan.	April 2014 and on-going	Action plan implemented.	GMs (with DBMgr)
5	To undertake formal assessments and Quest 12 monthly update visits at all accredited centres.	As required	Health check undertaken and Quest maintained.	DBMgr (with GMs)

<b>FM7 To maintain adherence to Fusion's quality ' Integrated Management Systems' (IMS) procedures across all sites</b>				
Action Ref.	Action	Timescale	Target / KPI	Lead Manager
1	Undertake an audit check of compliance and create any remedial action plan	June 2014	Programme established.	DBMgr (with GMs)
2	To implement any remedial actions	June - July 2014	Programme implemented.	DBMgr (with GMs)

## STAFFING

<b>S1</b>				
<b>To ensure that the Right People are in the Right Place at the Right Time</b>				
Action Ref.	Action	Timescale	Target / KPI	Lead Manager
1	Review of Fusion's staffing structures is undertaken to ensure sites continue to have 'Right People, Right Place at the Right Time. Review to incorporate staff plans for the new pool and decommissioning of Temple Cowley Pools and Blackbird Leys Pool.	April - October 2014	Staffing structures in place	DBMgr (with GMs)
2	To ensure the completion of formal annual appraisals for all staff within Oxford.	April - June 2014	Appraisals completed.	DBMgr (with GMs)
3	To draw up a specific training and development plan for Oxford staff (in conjunction with Fusion's central HR team). Plans to include staff succession planning	April - June 2014	Training and development plan drawn up.	DBMgr (with GMs)
4	To ensure full staff compliance for compulsory mandatory training	April 2014 - March 2015	Compliance training 100%	DBMgr (with GMs)
5	To implement agreed training and development plans.	July 2014 - March 2015	Training and development plan implemented.	DBMgr (with GMs)
6	To ensure compliance with Fusion's new integrated HR/payroll operating system I-trent	April 2013 and on-going	System effectively introduced	DBMgr (with GMs)
7	Commit to the principles of the Investors In People programme	April 2013 - March 2014	Actions mirror IIP principles	DBMgr(with GMs)

<b>S2</b>				
<b>To achieve 72% staff satisfaction across each equality strand and overall</b>				
Action Ref.	Action	Timescale	Target / KPI	Lead Manager
1	To ensure 100% compliance with all Fusion policies and procedures, specifically in respect of recruitment, initial induction and internal communication.	April 2013 and on-going.	100% compliance achieved.	DBMgr (with GMs)
2	Develop and implement action plan to maximise participation in Fusion Colleague Engagement Survey 2014.	April 2013 - May 2013	Minimum of 60% participation achieved.	DBMgr (with GMs)
3	To ensure maximum participation in the Fusion Colleague Engagement Survey.	May 2012 - June 2012	Action plan created and implemented.	DBMgr (with GMs)
4	To reaffirm and clarify calendar of operational HR meetings across the Oxford contract and to implement	April 2013	Calendar of meetings confirmed and implemented	DBMgr (with GMs)
5	Set-up and implement a calendar of communication meetings with Union representatives and Fusion HR and contract management	April 2014 - March 2015	Calendar of meetings confirmed and implemented	DBMgr (with Rgn HR)

<b>S3</b>				
<b>To ensure that the Fusion workforce in Oxford is as representative as possible of the local community</b>				
Action Ref.	Action	Timescale	Target / KPI	Lead Manager
1	To undertake formal analysis of workforce by each equality strand and to create specific action plans to increase representation should this falls below Oxford's population make-up.	May 2014	Analysis completed and action plans created.	DBMgr (with GMs)
2	To implement the specific action plans re equality strands.	May - December 2014	Action plans implemented.	DBMgr (with GMs)
3	To create a programme of promotion to establish Fusion as an employer of choice in Oxford.	April 2014	Programme created.	DBMgr (with DMMgr)
	Plan to include attendance at job fairs and school careers events			
4	To implement the programme of promotion of Fusion as an employer of choice.	April - December 2014	Programme implemented.	DBMgr (with DMMgr)
5	To collect and analyse management information on recruitment and related issues in respect of diversity profile within the workforce.	April 2014 and on-going.	Information collected and analysed.	DBMgr (with GMs)
6	To deliver induction training for staff in respect of equality and diversity.	April 2014 and on-going	Training delivered.	DBMgr (with GMs)
7	Commit to hosting at least 2 work experience placements/work apprentices.	April 2013 - March 2014	Placements/Apprentices hosted	DBMgr (with GMs)

**Abbreviations:**

DBMgr Divisional Business Manager  
GM General Manager



## MARKETING

<b>M1 To deliver a proactive and positive approach to PR, such that facility and service successes are communicated and celebrated</b>				
Action Ref.	Action	Timescale	Target / KPI	Lead Manager
1	To establish a clear PR communications approach in respect of the proposed new pool development at Blackbird Leys Leisure Centre and the closure of Temple Cowley Pools and Blackbird Leys Pool	April 2014	PR approach established.	ME (with DBM)
2	To implement the agreed approach to PR communications in respect of the proposed pool development	April 2014 - March 2015	PR approach implemented.	ME (with DBM)
5	To review and update the KPIs relating to the general awareness of the Oxford leisure facilities; increasing web hits by 10% on 2013/14 and achieve 28 press releases.	April 2014	Measurable KPIs reviewed.	ME (with DBM)
7	To establish an indicative programme of general PR communications across the Oxford contract, with a specific aim of increasing awareness of the facilities. With focus and key target areas: 1) health 2) employment (apprentices) 3)schools 4) Environment -energy/waste	April 2014	Programme established.	ME (with DBM, DSCD, GM's & CRM's)
8	To implement the programme of general PR communications.	April 2014 - March 2015	Programme implemented.	ME (with DBM, DSCD, GM's & CRM's)
9	To agree a calendar of meeting dates with key representatives of OCC Communications and Branding team and agree a programme of Joint working .	Apr-14	Meetings held and programme agreed.	ME (with DBM)
10	To implement agreed programme of Joint working with OCC Communications and Branding team	June 2014- March 2015	Programme implemented.	ME (with DBM)

<b>M2 To deliver a 5% increase in total membership</b>				
Action Ref.	Action	Timescale	Target / KPI	Lead Manager
1	Develop membership marketing plans for each centre.	April 2014	Plan created.	ME (with GMs, CRM's)
2	To implement the agreed centre marketing plans.	April 2014 - March 2015	Plan implemented.	ME (with GM's , CRM's)
3	To create a specific action plan to increase deprived usage.	Apr-14	Plan created.	ME (with GM's , CRM's)
	Plan to targeted work in respect of deprived wards, 50+ age group and disabled people, work with relevant partners/stakeholders and review of core literature;			
4	Implement Plan to increase deprived usage	May 14 - March 15	Plan implemented	
5	Implement Plan for the introduction of the Phase 2 Loyalty Card (Bounts)	Apr-14	Plan implemented.	ME (with DBM)

<b>M3 To establish and maintain the highest standards of facility presentation</b>				
Action Ref.	Action	Timescale	Target / KPI	Lead Manager
1	Audit the Customer Journey presentation against the Fusion IMS guidance and develop any appropriate action plan for improvement.	April 2014	Audit undertaken and plan developed.	ME (with DBM & GMs)
2	Implement customer Journey action plan	April 2014 - March 2015	Action plan implemented.	ME (with DBM & GMs)

<b>M4 To establish and maintain the highest standards of web and social media promotion</b>				
Action Ref.	Action	Timescale	Target / KPI	Lead Manager
1	Ensure the website for the Oxford leisure facilities remains current and up-to date, website to be fully updated	April 2014- March 2015	Website redesigned and live	ME (with HoM)
2	To create and implement an action plan in respect of utilising social media to reach members and general public. Including Facebook, Twitter and YouTube	April 2014 - March 2015	Action plan implemented.	ME (with DBM ,GMs & CRM's)

<b>M5 To develop connections and outreach with local school, youth clubs and Under18's</b>				
Action Ref.	Action	Timescale	Target / KPI	Lead Manager
1	Work with SCD to develop plan to improve relationships with schools and youth clubs to promote health and fitness	April 2014- March 2015	Plan completed and implemented	ME (with DBM ,DSCM, GMs & CRM's)
2	To create and implement an action plan in respect of utilising social media to reach members and general public. Including Facebook, Twitter and YouTube	April 2014 - March 2015	Action plan implemented.	ME (with DBM ,GMs & CRM's)

<b>M6 To launch new collateral designs and reduce print wastage</b>				
Action Ref.	Action	Timescale	Target / KPI	Lead Manager
1	Design and launch new collateral designs for core literature and sales materials	April 2014-	New materials launched and on site	ME (with HoM)
2	Reduce amount of print wastage by replacing print materials with on-line, electronic, social media, apps etc. wherever possible.	April 2014- March 2015	Waste reduced.	ME (with HoM)

Abbreviations:

DBM Divisional Business Manager  
GM General Manager  
ME Marketing Executive  
DSCDM Divisional Sports and Community Development Manager  
HoM Head of Marketing

## SPORTS AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

SCD 1 To maintain positive and proactive partnerships with key local stakeholders and welcome new stakeholder opportunities				
Action Ref.	Action	Timescale	Target / KPI	Lead Manager
1	To review and update the list of key local stakeholder organisations and contacts within Oxford.	April 2014	List specified.	DSCDMgr
	List to include Social Care Brokers, PCT, OSP, SSCo, OCC			
2	To establish a calendar of consultation/liaison with all specified stakeholders.	April - May 2014	Calendar established.	DSCDMgr
3	To agree a calendar of meeting dates with key representatives of OCC Sports Development team to initiate joint working .	April 2014	Dates arranged	DSCDMgr
4	To agree joint sport and community development objectives and action plan with OCC Sports Development team for 2014/15.	April - May 2014	Objectives/action plan agreed.	DSCDMgr
5	To implement joint Sport and Community Development action plans	June 2014 - March 2015	Plan delivered	DSCDMgr
7	To review work plan for the delivery of the Sport England funded 'Active Women' project and agree changes.	April 2014	Plan agreed	DSCDMgr
8	Implement the agreed work plan for the delivery of the Sport England funded 'Active Women' project; Feed back on statistics.	April 2014- March 2015	Plan delivered	DSCDMgr
9	Evaluate 'Active Women' sessions and look to increase sustainability with joint partner sessions	Quarterly	Evaluation complete	DSCDMgr
10	To ensure attendance at all meetings of the Oxford Community Sports Network.	April 2014 and on-going	All relevant meetings attended.	DSCDMgr
11	Develop a work plan with OCC and other key partners for the further development of a 'Youth Ambition and Attainment Programme'	April 2014	Plan agreed	DSCDMgr
	key partners/stakeholders to include; Police, Positive Futures, Schools, social services, PCT, Bounts, universities			
12	To implement the agreed work plan for the Youth Ambition and attainment programme	April 2014 onwards	Plan delivered	DSCDMgr
13	To develop and implement specific joint initiatives with at least two new stakeholders.	July 2014 - Feb 2015	Joint initiatives identified and implemented.	DSCDMgr

SCD 2 To develop and maintain positive and proactive relationships with local sports clubs				
Action Ref.	Action	Timescale	Target / KPI	Lead Manager
1	To review and maintain an up to date register of all sports clubs, and community groups and relevant organisations currently using the leisure facilities. Register to incorporate names, contact details, approximate numbers of adult and junior participants, any relevant business or development plans, Clubmark accreditation, broader objectives.	On-going	Register up-to-date	DSCDMgr (with GMs)
2	To establish a calendar of regular consultation/liaison with all registered clubs.	April 14	Calendar established.	DSCDMgr (with GMs)
3	To establish a programme of on-going support for registered clubs, based on the outputs of consultation/liaison.	On-going	Programme established.	DSCDMgr (with GMs)
	Support likely to include notice board information, inclusion on website, administrative support, coach education Clubmark processes, concerted "Open Day" etc.			
4	To maintain a continuous improvement plan in relation to sports club development.	On-going	Programme implemented.	DSCDMgr (with GMs)
5	To maintain links with other key sports clubs within Oxford and to establish a list for consultation/liaison.	July 2014	Links maintained/created	DSCDMgr
6	To establish a process of consultation/liaison with other key sports clubs.	July - September 2014	Programme established.	DSCDMgr
7	To implement process of consultation/liaison with other key sports clubs.	October 2014 - March 2015	Programme implemented.	DSCDMgr

SCD 3 To ensure that all facility programmes are exciting, innovative and attractive to users and potential users				
Action Ref.	Action	Timescale	Target / KPI	Lead Manager
1	Review and revise the Aquatics Development Plan	April 14	Strategy and Plan Produced	DSCDMgr
	Review to include: programme development opportunities, budgeting & attendance registers if applicable			
2	Implement the Aquatics development plan	April 14 onwards	Plan implemented.	DSCDMgr (with GMs)
3	To review centre programmes at all facilities 3 time a year and identify opportunities for any further sessions in each case	April 14	Reviews undertaken and revised programmes implemented	DSCDMgr (with GMs & ME)
	Review to include effectiveness and impact of activities	August 14	Reviews undertaken and revised programmes implemented	DSCDMgr (with GMs & ME)
		December 14	Reviews undertaken and revised programmes implemented	DSCDMgr (with GMs & ME)
4	To formally review opening hours at all leisure facilities and prepare proposals for change.	April 2014	Review undertaken and any proposals prepared.	DSCDMgr (with GMs)
5	To formally review bank holiday opening hours at all leisure facilities and prepare proposals for OCC agreement	April 2014	Opening hours agreed	DBM (with GMs)
6	To implement agreed proposals for change to opening hours.	May 2014	Agreed proposals implemented.	DSCDMgr (with GMs)

SCD 4 To maximise the benefits of elite sport representation throughout the county and maximise the opportunities at the Oxford Ice Rink raised by the winter Olympics and the opportunities at other centres raised by the Commonwealth Games				
Action Ref.	Action	Timescale	Target / KPI	Lead Manager
1	To ensure the established BOA, FANS and FACS schemes are well communicated both inside and outside of leisure facilities.	April 2014	Schemes implemented and communicated.	DSCDMgr (with GMs)
2	Review the BOA, FANS & FACS to monitor its impact	July 2014	Review completed	DSCDMgr
3	Develop an implement any remedial action plan for the FACS, FANS & BOA schemes	August 2014	Action plan implemented	DSCDMgr

4	To produce a winter Olympics' Plan for the Oxford Ice Rink	Jan-14	Review completed	DSCDMgr (with DBMgr)
5	To implement the winter Olympic plan at the Oxford Ice Rink	February 14 - March 15	Plan implemented.	DSCDMgr (with GMs)

SCD 5 To proactively explore opportunities for external funding				
Action Ref.	Action	Timescale	Target / KPI	Lead Manager
1	To update and maintain the database of potential external funding sources, at national, regional and local levels.	June 2014	Database updated.	DSCDMgr
2	To identify specific opportunities and to develop relevant action plans.	May - July 2014	Opportunities identified and action plans developed.	DSCDMgr
3	To implement relevant action plans.	July 2014 - March 2015	Action plans implemented.	DSCDMgr
4	To communicate to GMs the funding opportunities and the utilisation of any funding obtained.	September 2014	Communications delivered.	DSCDMgr

SCD 6 To positively promote the benefits of healthy living and active lifestyles				
Action Ref.	Action	Timescale	Target / KPI	Lead Manager
1	To ensure that all facilities provide an up-to-date "Sports and Community Development" notice board.	On-going	Notice board provided.	DSCDMgr
2	To review stakeholder partners for potential new partnerships who can support the promotion of healthy living. Partners to include PCT, Health Centres, Age Concern	April - June 2014	Partners identified.	DSCDMgr (with GMs)
3	To develop and implement at least one new specific 'Healthy living' joint initiative with one identified stakeholder.	July 2014	New initiative developed	DSCDMgr
4	Create and deliver a programme for International Disability Awareness Day	Jul-14	Plan created	DSCDMgr
5	Create and deliver a programme for National Obesity week	Jan-15	Plan created	DSCDMgr
6	Create and deliver a programme for National Older Peoples Day	Oct-14	Plan created	DSCDMgr
7	To support GO Active Get Healthy project, work together on programmes to get people active	On-going	Plan created	DSCDMgr
8	Attend events such as Race for Life, Oxford Half Marathon and community events to promote healthy living and active lifestyles	On-going	Attend Events	DSCDMgr
9	Create and deliver a programme of activities utilising funding opportunities available Such funding includes the Over 50s scheme 'Fit as a Fiddle'/Aged UK, Active women, Go-active Get Healthy/Lets Get Moving/Get health get into Sport	May 2014	Programme created	DSCDMgr
10	Working with key partners review/develop a plan to improve participation for social care users in leisure facilities	April 2014	Plan Created	DSCDMgr
11	To implement the plan for increasing social care participation in leisure facilities	May 2014 - March 2015	Plan implemented	DSCDMgr
12	Monitor & evaluate and review the GP Exercise Referral Programme, recommending changes to partners at County referral meetings	on-going	Evaluations and reviews undertaken with meetings attended	DSCDMgr
13	To attend health sub group meetings	On-going	Attend Meetings	DSCDMgr
14	To actively develop links with GP surgeries to increase Exercise on Referral numbers To arrange surgery visits - at least one at each Oxford surgery in the year. Increase GP patient sign-ups by 30% in 2014/15	On-going April 2014 - March 2015	Plan created Visits made and sign-ups increased	DSCDMgr DSCDMgr
15	To establish cardiac rehabilitation phase 4 activities through the commissioning bodies	April - July 2014	Evaluation complete & cardiac Rehabilitation implemented	DSCDMgr & GM's
16	To continue to support Cardiac phase 3 rehab and Pulmonary rehab at BBLC	On-going	work in partnership	DSCDMgr & GM's

## FACILITY DEVELOPMENTS

<b>FD1</b>	<b>To develop a programme of facility development proposals in the leisure facilities, and where these are agreed deliver such developments</b>			
Action Ref.	Action	Timescale	Target / KPI	Lead Manager
2	To develop business cases for potential facility developments to be incorporated into 2014 business planning / annual service planning processes.	October 2014	Business cases developed.	DBMgr
3	To fully support for the development of the competition standard pool maximising the benefits of the complementary developments	April 2014-March 2015	Support given	DBMgr

Abbreviations:

DBMgr Divisional Business Manager

GM General Manager

## PARTNERSHIP DEVELOPMENT

<b>PD1 To ensure 100% compliance with all agreed meeting, reporting and performance monitoring requirements</b>				
Action Ref.	Action	Timescale	Target / KPI	Lead Manager
1	To fully agree the dates, agendas and required attendees for all client-contractor meetings in 2014/15 to include Fusion client forums	April 2014	All details agreed.	DBMgr
2	To ensure 100% compliance with agreed client-contractor meeting arrangements	April 2014 and on-going	100% compliance.	DBMgr
3	To ensure 100% compliance with Fusion policies and procedures in respect of client liaison, including client forums	April 2014 and on-going	100% compliance.	DBMgr
4	To fully agree the format, content and timing of all reporting arrangements for 2014/15	April 2014	All details agreed.	DBMgr
5	To ensure 100% compliance with agreed reporting arrangements.	April 2014 and on-going	100% compliance.	DBMgr
7	To contribute positively and proactively to the Partnership Board meeting.	April 2014 and onwards	Partnership Board meeting held with demonstrable contribution.	DBMgr
9	To submit and present draft Annual Service Plan to Partnership Board.	December 2014	Draft Annual Service Plan submitted.	DBMgr
10	To agree final Annual Service Plan for 2014/15 and prepare for implementation.	January - March 2014	Final Annual Service Plan agreed and implementation preparation underway.	DBMgr

<b>PD2 To explore opportunities for the Council and Fusion to extend their relationship in respect of other facilities in Oxford</b>				
Action Ref.	Action	Timescale	Target / KPI	Lead Manager
1	To liaise with the Council to agree a specific list of potential opportunities to be considered (likely to include Alexandra Park tennis courts and Horspath Athletics Track) and agree appropriate course of action.	April 2013 onwards	List identified and course of action agreed.	DBMgr
2	To implement any agreed course of action in respect of additional opportunities.	April -2013 onwards	Course of action implemented.	DBMgr
3	To continue discussions on the submitted business case for the possible management of Alexandra Park tennis courts	2013/14	Business case developed/amended.	DBMgr

<b>PD3 To support the Council in the delivery of a new competition standard swimming pool</b>				
Action Ref.	Action	Timescale	Target / KPI	Lead Manager
1	To continue to liaise with the Council to agree a specific course of action in supporting the project.	April 2014 onwards	Course of action agreed.	DBMgr
2	To implement agreed course of action in respect of new pool.	April 2014 onwards	Course of action implemented.	DBMgr

<b>PD4 To support the Council in exploring the possibility of developing a residents card in Oxford</b>				
Action Ref.	Action	Timescale	Target / KPI	Lead Manager
1	To liaise with the Council to confirm the objectives and potential scope of the residents card and to agree a relevant course of action.	April 2012 onwards	Course of action agreed.	DBMgr
2	To implement agreed course of action in respect of residents card.	April 2012 - Onwards	Course of action implemented.	DBMgr

<b>PD5 To optimise the development of the partnership between Fusion and Oxford City Council</b>				
Action Ref.	Action	Timescale	Target / KPI	Lead Manager
1	To review formal processes for the development of relationships/communications/liaison between representatives of Fusion and the Council to include regular meetings between mutual representatives in respect of marketing/communications, technical issues, equality and diversity, HR etc.	April - June 2013	Processes reviewed.	DBMgr
2	To implement agreed changes to formal processes	July 2013 - March 2014	Processes implemented	DBMgr

**Abbreviations:**

DBMgr Divisional Business Manager  
GM General Manager

# LINKS WITH OBJECTIVES

<b>STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES</b>	
<b>Partnership Board Objectives</b>	
<b>PB1</b>	delivery of the various service and facility improvements set out in Fusion's tender submission
<b>PB2</b>	To engage fully with the Council's priority "To tackle climate change and promote sustainable environmental resource management" and to contribute to the Council's delivery of a 5% reduction in carbon emissions year-on-year.
<b>PB3</b>	Increasing engagement with and participation by the Council's target groups, as follows: 5% increase in participation by users resident in the most deprived wards in Oxford, 5% increase in participation by new users, 5% increase in participation by users who are members of BME groups, 5% increase in participation by users with disabilities, 5% increase in participation in the junior free swim scheme, 3% increase in participation in the 60+ free swim scheme
<b>PB4</b>	delivery of the major facility development schemes
<b>PB5</b>	a proactive and positive approach to PR, such that facility and service successes are communicated and celebrated
<b>PB6</b>	improving access to the facilities (e.g. car parking)
<b>PB7</b>	to explore opportunities for the Council and Fusion to extend their relationship in respect of other facilities in Oxford
<b>Oxford City Council Corporate Objectives</b>	
<b>OCC1</b>	Vibrant Sustainable Economy
<b>OCC2</b>	Meeting Housing Need
<b>OCC3</b>	Strong Active Communities
<b>OCC4</b>	Cleaner Greener Oxford
<b>OCC5</b>	Efficient Effective Council
<b>Fusion Corporate Objectives</b>	
<b>Fus 1</b>	to deliver a 5% year-on-year increase on like-for-like income
<b>Fus 2</b>	to deliver all facility redevelopments on time and on budget and to deliver the projected uplifts
<b>Fus 3</b>	to deliver a surplus margin of 5%
<b>Fus 4</b>	to ensure that customer satisfaction "good"/"excellent" ratings exceed 95%; 100% for staff
<b>Fus 5</b>	to deliver measurable improvements in like-for-like National Benchmarking Survey results
<b>Fus 6</b>	to reduce attrition of subscription memberships to less than 50% per annum
<b>Fus 7</b>	to deliver a 5% year-on-year increase in like-for-like general participation
<b>Fus 8</b>	to deliver a 5% year-on-year increase in like-for-like participation by target groups
<b>Fus 9</b>	to ensure 100% compliance with Basecamp inspection regimes and to deliver an average score of at least 95% on Basecamp inspection scores
<b>Fus 10</b>	to deliver a Quest accreditation rating of 'Good'
<b>Fus 11</b>	to ensure 100% compliance with health and safety audit regimes and to deliver an average score of at least 90% on relevant audit scores
<b>Fus 12</b>	to deliver a 2% year-on-year reduction in staff turnover
<b>Fus 13</b>	to deliver a cross-company ratio of staff costs/income of 50%
<b>Fus 14</b>	to deliver a 2% year-on-year reduction on like-for-like energy consumption
<b>Fus 15</b>	to deliver a 20% reduction in waste production and a 20% increase in recycling

<b>Fus 16</b>	To win 2 new partnerships at 5-10 million and to achieve contract extensions at Tunbridge Wells and Milton Keynes.
<b>FUS 17</b>	To achieve turnover of 58 million pounds

<b>SERVICE PLAN AIMS</b>	
<b>F1</b>	To deliver a 10% year-on-year reduction in subsidy per user
<b>F2</b>	To ensure that pricing structures and levels across the leisure facilities are appropriate
<b>P1</b>	To deliver a 5% year-on-year increase in participation by users resident in the most deprived wards in the City
<b>P2</b>	To deliver a 5% year-on-year increase in participation by users aged over 50
<b>P3</b>	To deliver a 5% year-on-year increase in participation by users aged under 16
<b>P4</b>	To deliver a 5% year-on-year increase in participation by users from BME groups
<b>P5</b>	To deliver a 5% year-on-year increase in participation by disabled users
<b>P6</b>	To deliver a 5% year-on-year increase in participation on the junior free swimming scheme
<b>P7</b>	To deliver a 3% year-on-year increase in participation on the 60+ swimming scheme
<b>P8</b>	To improve general access to all sites
<b>P9</b>	To deliver a 5% year-on-year increase in participation in Ladies Activities
<b>CR 1</b>	To improve customer satisfaction with the leisure facilities by 2%
<b>CR 2</b>	To fully embed Fusions "Customer Relations Programmes" for cultural change
<b>CR 3</b>	To deliver a reduction of at least 5% in annual attrition levels for Slice Card memberships
<b>HS 1</b>	To ensure 100% compliance with Fusion H&S policies and procedures
<b>FM 1</b>	To achieve average Base Camp inspection scores of at least 95% across all facilities
<b>FM 2</b>	To engage fully with the Council's priority "To tackle climate change and promote sustainable environmental resource management" and to contribute to the Council's delivery of a 5% reduction in carbon emissions year-on-year.
<b>FM 3</b>	To reduce general refuse by 25% and to increase recycling waste by 25%
<b>FM 4</b>	To ensure that high standards of cleaning are achieved at all times
<b>FM 5</b>	To ensure that high standards of repair and maintenance are achieved at all times
<b>FM 6</b>	To maintain Quest accreditation at a minimum 'Good 'at Ferry L. C, Blackbird Leys L.C, Hinksey Outdoor Pool, Ice Rink and Barton L. C.
<b>S1</b>	To ensure that the Right People are in the Right Place at the Right Time
<b>S2</b>	To demonstrate a year-on-year improvement in staff satisfaction across each equality strand and overall
<b>S3</b>	To ensure that the Fusion workforce in Oxford is as representative as possible of the local community
<b>M1</b>	To deliver a proactive and positive approach to PR, such that facility and service successes are communicated and celebrated
<b>M2</b>	To deliver a 5% increase in Bonus Slice card membership
<b>M3</b>	To deliver a 10% increase in total Slice card membership
<b>M4</b>	To ensure that the products and services offered by the leisure facilities are innovative and attractive
<b>M5</b>	To establish and maintain the highest standards of facility presentation
<b>SCD 1</b>	To develop positive and proactive partnerships with key local stakeholders



<b>SCD 2</b>	To develop positive and proactive relationships with local sports clubs
<b>SCD 3</b>	To ensure that all facility programmes are exciting, innovative and attractive to users and potential users
<b>SCD 4</b>	To create and start to implement a proactive action plan to ensure that maximum benefit is derived from the 2012 Olympics
<b>SCD 5</b>	To proactively explore opportunities for external funding
<b>SCD 6</b>	To positively promote the benefits of healthy living and active lifestyles
<b>FD 1</b>	To develop a programme of other facility development proposals in the leisure facilities
<b>PD 1</b>	To ensure 100% compliance with all agreed meeting, reporting and performance monitoring requirements
<b>PD 2</b>	To explore opportunities for the Council and Fusion to extend their relationship in respect of other facilities in Oxford
<b>PD 3</b>	To support the Council in the delivery of a new competition pool at Blackbird Leys Leisure Centre
<b>PD 4</b>	To support the Council in exploring the possibility of developing a residents card in Oxford
<b>PD 5</b>	To optimise the development of the partnership between Fusion and Oxford City Council

<b>RELEVANT SERVICE PLAN AIMS</b>
F1, F2, P1, P2, P3, P4, P5, P6, P7,P9, CR 1, CR 2, FM 2, FM 3, FM 4, FM 5, FM 6, S1, S2, S3, M2, M3, M4, SCD 1, SCD 2, SCD 3, SCD 4, SCD 5, SCD 6, FD 1, PD 1, PD 2, PD 3, PD 4, PD 5
FM2, FM3
F2, P1, P2, P3, P4, P5, P6, P7,P9, M1, M2, M4, SCD 1, SCD 2, SCD 3, SCD 6
FD 1,
M1
P8
FD 4, PD 2, PD 3, PD 4, PD 5
F1, F2, F3, P1, P2, P3, P4, P5, P6, P7, P8, P9, CR 1, CR 3, FM 6, M2, M3, M5, SCD 1, SCD 3, SCD4, SCD 6, FD 1,
FM 3, FM 5
P1, P2, P3,P4, P5, P6, P7, P8, P9.
FM 2, FM3
F1, F2, F3 CR 1, CR 2, CR 3, FM6, S1, S2, M5, SCD1, SCD2, SCD5, PD1, PD3, PD5
F1, F2, S1, M2, M3
F1,
F1
CR 1, CR 2, CR 3, S1, M2, M3
P1, P2, P3, P4, P5, P6, P7, P8, P9, CR 1, CR 2, CR 3
CR 3
P1, P2, P3, P4, P5, P6, P7, P8,P9
P1, P2, P3, P4, P5, P6, P7, P8,P9
FM 1
FM 6
HS 1
S1, S2, S3
F1, S1
FM 2
FM 3

PD 2, PD 3, PD 5

PD 2, PD 3, PD 5

**RELEVANT STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES**

PB 1, OCC 1, OCC 5, Fus 1, Fus 2, Fus 3, Fus 13

PB 1, PB 3, Fus 1

PB 1, PB 3, OCC 1, OCC 3, Fus 5, Fus 8

PB 1, PB 3, OCC 1, Fus 5, Fus 8

PB 1, PB 3, OCC 1, OCC 3, Fus 5, Fus 8

PB 1, PB 3, OCC 1, Fus 5, Fus 8

PB 1, PB 3, OCC 1, Fus 5, Fus 8

PB 1, PB 3, OCC 1, OCC 3, Fus 5, Fus 8

PB 1, PB 3, OCC 1, Fus 5, Fus 8

PB 6, OCC 1, Fus 5, Fus 8

PB 1, PB 3, OCC 1, OCC 3, Fus 5, Fus 8

PB 1, OCC 1, OCC 5, Fus 4, Fus 5

PB 1, OCC 1, OCC 5, Fus 4, Fus 5

OCC 1, OCC 5, Fus 4, Fus 5, Fus 6

Fus 11

Fus 9

PB 1, PB 2, OCC 4, Fus 14

PB 1, OCC 2, Fus 15

PB 1

PB 1, PB 2, OCC 2

PB 1, OCC 1, Fus 10

PB 1, Fus 1, Fus 4, Fus 12, Fus 13

PB 1, Fus 12

PB 1, Fus 12

PB 3, PB 5

PB 1, PB 3, OCC 1, Fus 1, Fus 4

PB 1, OCC 1, Fus 1, Fus 4

PB 1, PB 3

OCC 1

PB 1, PB 3, OCC 1

PB 1, PB 3
PB 1, PB 3, OCC 1
PB 1
PB 1
PB 1, PB 3, OCC 1
PB 1, PB 7, OCC 1
PB 1
PB 1, PB 7, Fus 16
PB 1, PB 7, Fus 16
PB 1, PB 7
PB 1, PB 7, Fus 16

# RISK ANALYSIS

## INTRODUCTION:

As part of strategic business planning at a corporate and divisional level, potential risks to Fusion's business likelihood is analysed and informs operational, resource and financial planning. At Fusion's corporate level, risk analysis is conducted on a monthly basis by Board committees and by the Executive Management Team. The plans are also reviewed on a regular basis. High-risk areas (e.g. health and safety and financial management) are also subject to specialist management on a regular basis.

At a divisional level, the Divisional Business Manager is responsible for creating and maintaining a division-specific risk register. Divisional colleagues to continually monitor the implementation and effectiveness of mitigating actions.

The risk analysis set out below represents an amalgam of relevant organisational risks as identified within Fusion's business plan, identified directly in respect of Fusion's delivery of services with

## RISK ANALYSIS:

POTENTIAL RISK	POTENTIAL IMPACT	SEVERITY	LIKELIHOOD	WEIGHTING
Operational health and safety	Staff or customer injury, product or service liability, reduced ability to operate	4	3	12
Cash flow sensitivity	Inability to meet commitments, lack of liquidity to cover variance, impact on operational activities	4	2	8
Poor service provision	Client and customer dissatisfaction, loss of income, financial penalties, reputational damage, loss of future opportunity	4	2	8
Increased competition	Reduced use of facilities, loss of income, reduced development potential	3	3	9
Non-compliance with relevant legislation and regulations	Fines, contractual penalties, default, censure	4	1	4
Failure of ICT systems	Loss of data, loss of income, interruption of business, contractual default, client and customer dissatisfaction	4	2	8
Damage to buildings or equipment through fire, flood or similar	Loss of data, loss of income, interruption of business, contractual default, client and customer dissatisfaction	4	2	8

Fraud or financial error	Financial loss, reputational damage, regulatory action, client dissatisfaction	3	2	6
Lack of direction, strategy and forward planning	Financial loss, reputational damage, client and customer dissatisfaction	3	2	6
Loss of key staff	Negative impact on operational and financial performance, loss of divisional and corporate knowledge, damage to relationships with client partners	2	4	8
Employment disputes	Staff dissatisfaction, loss of income, disruption of business, client and customer dissatisfaction, reputational damage	3	2	6
Poor relationship with Oxford City Council	Client dissatisfaction, contractual dispute, negative impact on staff and customer service	3	3	9
Delays in delivery of major facility redevelopments	Client and customer dissatisfaction, loss of income, financial penalties, reputational damage, loss of future opportunity	3	3	9
Deterioration of facilities	Client and customer dissatisfaction, loss of income, financial penalties, reputational damage, loss of future opportunity, unplanned facility closure	3	2	6

**Key:**

Severity of impact:

5 is "high" impact: i.e. will cause shutdown of the business leading to significant loss of money and surplus  
3 is "medium" impact: i.e. will cause interruption of a critical part of the business that results in significant loss  
1 is "low" impact: i.e. will cause interruption that leads to no material loss.

Likelihood of occurrence:

5 is "high" likelihood: i.e. it is likely that the threat will occur in the next year;  
3 is "medium" likelihood: i.e. it is possible that the threat will occur in the next year;  
1 is "low" likelihood: i.e. it is highly unlikely that the threat will occur in the next year;

less are identified and assessed. Their impact and these plans are kept under review and monitored on a d formerly at each quarterly Board meeting. Specific t, internal compliance monitoring and external audit on

pecific risk analysis and for working in conjunction with ns identified within the risk analysis.

Fusion's corporate risk analysis and specific risks as in Oxford.

MITIGATING ACTIONS	RESIDUAL SEVERITY	RESIDUAL LIKELIHOOD	RESIDUAL WEIGHTING
Board member with specific responsibility for H&S	4	2	8
Specialist H&S Manager in post			
Comprehensive H&S management policies and procedures in place			
Regular monitoring and on-going reporting of relevant H&S KPIs			
Comprehensive H&S training undertaken			
System of internal audit			
External accreditation with associated audits and inspections			
Full-year cash flow projections included in financial plans with prudent assumptions	4	1	4
Major sensitivities identified with mitigating actions			
Formal monthly monitoring of income and expenditure			
Weekly monitoring of all income streams and staffing costs			
Daily monitoring of cash balances and key income streams			
Reserves policy established and reserves in place to ensure some downturn can be accommodated pending corrective action			
Continual monitoring of market trends			
Robust operational and quality management systems established	4	1	4
Comprehensive customer feedback systems established to gather and analyse customer opinions			
Comprehensive on-going monitoring of performance in respect of key service criteria			
Establishment of detailed annual service plans setting out strategic objectives and required actions			
Robust operational and quality management systems established	3	3	9
Comprehensive customer feedback systems established to gather and analyse customer opinions			
Comprehensive on-going monitoring of performance in respect of key service criteria			
Regular review of relevant competition on a local, regional and national basis			
Expert support from key advisors, including legal, HR, H&S etc.	4	1	4
Robust operational and quality management systems established			
On-going external and internal audit and inspection regimes			
Specialist ICT Manager in post, with expert off-site third party organisations providing support	4	2	8
Corporate ICT recovery plan established as part of business continuity plan			
All data backed up daily			
Corporate ICT systems housed in a secure environment			
Corporate business continuity plan in place and regularly reviewed	3	2	6
Division-specific business continuity plan to be developed			
All data backed up daily			
Corporate ICT systems housed in a secure environment			
Fire and related risk assessments in place on a site-by-site basis and regularly reviewed			
Emergency Action Plans in place on a site-by-site basis and regularly reviewed			

Financial control procedures established and audited regularly	3	2	6
Scheme of delegation established with separation of duties, authorisation limits and regular board reporting			
Insurable risks covered where possible	3	2	6
5-year strategic plan in place with 5-year objectives and targets reviewed and set on an annual basis			
Annual business plan in place setting out key aims, objectives and policies with defined financial plans and budgets			
Annual service plans established on a divisional basis, setting our objectives, targets and planned actions			
Comprehensive monitoring of financial and operational performance			
Clear client liaison policies and procedures in place to ensure that forward strategy continues to be shaped by the objectives and requirements of client partners	2	3	6
Established and properly resourced Executive Management Team, Senior Management Team and Divisional teams.			
Clear policies and procedures in respect of internal communication, knowledge management and quality management systems			
Proactive recruitment policies in order to identify and appoint relevant staff.			
Comprehensive training, appraisal and personal development policies and procedures to ensure appropriate progression of staff.			
Comprehensive succession planning across the business	3	2	6
Establishment of appropriate notice periods to ensure that sufficient time is available for recruitment and replacement			
Appropriately resourced central HR team, supported by relevant specialist advisors			
Comprehensive recruitment and staff management procedures			
Comprehensive training programmes for all line managers, with published training and development plan			
Staff Partnership and Consultative committee established together with regular dialogue with staff representatives	3	2	9
Formal recognition of key unions and regular dialogue with relevant representatives			
Clear and comprehensive client liaison procedures including establishment of agreed meeting and reporting schedules			
Establishment of Partnership Board to provide guidance and support in relationship			
Establishment of an agreed Annual Service Plan, with shared objectives, agreed actions and timescales			
Regular performance monitoring, including service standards and compliance with the annual service plan.	3	3	9
Multi-faceted relationship between Fusion and Oxford City Council			
Professional project team and Project Manager employed to oversee delivery of works			
Establishment of Project Board to meet regularly to assess progress against agreed timescales and to address issues arising			
Development of risk logs in respect of each proposed development in order to pre-empt and mitigate potential risks			
Comprehensive programme of consultation with customers and key stakeholders	3	2	6
Appropriately resourced central FM team, supported by relevant specialist advisors			
Relevant and dedicated divisional resource			
Employment of specialist FM contractor to provide support in delivery of PPM and reactive maintenance			
Establishment of an agreed programme of backlog and lifecycle (substantive) works			
Regular monitoring and inspection of facility condition and maintenance processes			

to 5, where:  
which is capable of bankrupting the business;  
ut containable loss;



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# Towards world class leisure facilities for everyone...

Annual Service Plan 2013/14



Fusion Lifestyle is a registered charity working in partnership with Oxford City Council to manage your local leisure facilities.

## Annual Service Plan

Oxford City Council and Fusion Lifestyle have a clear vision for a world class leisure service for everyone in the City. We aspire to ensure that the City's leisure facilities are available to everyone and offer the highest possible standards.

In March 2009, Fusion Lifestyle commenced the management of the City Council's seven leisure facilities - **Barton Leisure Centre, Blackbird Leys Leisure Centre, Blackbird Leys Swimming Pool, Ferry Leisure Centre, Hinksey Outdoor Pool, Oxford Ice Rink and Temple Cowley Pools.**

Fusion has developed an Annual Service Plan that describes the organisation's performance against 2012/13 objectives and sets out Fusion's targets for the delivery of leisure services in the year from April 2013 - March 2014.

This leaflet summarises Fusion's Annual Service Plan and gives our customers, staff and stakeholders a clear idea of our objectives for the year ahead.

## Performance Review 2012/13

The Performance Review element of the Annual Service Plan is a review of performance against the 2012/13 Annual Service Plan. The highlights of the year's performance have been an increase in participation of 139,691 (12%) and an increase in membership of 808 (15%).

### Financial:

- Subsidy per user has reduced by 19% on 2011/12
- Fees and charges reviewed in line with inflation
- Bonus concessionary membership offer was held for a fourth consecutive year

### Participation:

- Overall participation has increased year on year by 12% resulting in a total additional circa 139,691 participants
- 212 (1%) increase in users aged over 50
- 28,026 (23%) increase in users under the age of 16
- 11,586 (16%) increase in black, minority and ethnic users
- 1,273 (8%) increase in usage by disabled users

## Performance Review 2012/13

- 2,067 (8%) increase in 60+ swim participation
- 25,187 increase in women and girls participation
- 7,152 increase in concessionary users

### Customer Satisfaction:

- Overall customer satisfaction of leisure facilities 96%
- User groups, customer forums and management forums embedded at each site

### Health and Safety:

- Compliance scores: Barton Leisure Centre 95%, Blackbird Leys Leisure Centre 90%, Blackbird Leys Pool 94%, Ferry Leisure Centre 96%, Hinksey Outdoor Pool 87%, Oxford Ice Rink 91%, Temple Cowley Pools 71%
- All Oxford sites fully compliant with Occupational Health and Safety Advisory Services audit of health and safety management

### Facility Management:

- Maintained International Standards ISO 14001, 14002 and 9001 following external audit assessment
- Installed heat recovery at the Oxford Ice Rink resulting in 4% reduction in gas and a 47% reduction in water
- 97% of Planned Preventative Maintenance undertaken, a 1% improvement on previous year
- Leisure industry quality standard Quest accreditation maintained at Barton Leisure Centre, Blackbird Leys Leisure Centre, Oxford Ice Rink and Ferry Leisure Centre at a rating of 'Good', and at Hinksey Outdoor Pool, a rating of 'Satisfactory'

### Staffing:

- Appraisals undertaken for staff within Oxford leisure facilities
- Training plans created for all staff
- Over 3,000 hours training delivered in all centres

## Performance Review 2012/13

### Marketing:

- Established clear public relations, branding & communications working guidelines with Oxford City Council
- Website visits up over 70% now average 30,000 visits per month
- 808 (15%) increase in memberships
- Successfully delivered communication and promotion plans for new developments at Oxford Ice Rink, Ferry Leisure Centre and Barton Leisure Centre
- 34% increase in Reward Card holders (Pay As You Go loyalty reward members.)
- Introduced social media policies and developed use of Facebook and Twitter

### Sports And Community Development:

- Positive and proactive partnerships developed with key stakeholders including; Badminton England, England Squash, Amateur Swimming Association, Barton Obesity Project, Oxford Sports Partnership and local sports clubs
- Exercise and pool programmes reviewed, refreshed and implemented
- Healthy living and active lifestyles promoted through; GP referral action plan, 'Active Women' programme, Cardiac Rehabilitation at Blackbird Leys and support of the council 'Youth Ambition Programme'

### Facility Developments:

- New café completed at Ferry Leisure Centre
- Ice rink improvements completed with new reception, meeting rooms, café and upgraded sound and lighting systems
- Indoor cycling introduced at Barton Leisure Centre

## 2013/14 Objectives and Targets

### Partnership Development:

- Full liaison and support with Oxford City Council in respect of the new swimming pool development at Blackbird Leys Leisure Centre
- Agreed partnership funding to maintain Go Active programme in Oxford
- Supported many partnerships including; GO Active, Get Health, Active Women, Youth Ambition, Sportivate

### Financial:

- to deliver a 10% year-on-year reduction in subsidy per user
- to ensure that pricing structures and levels across the leisure facilities are appropriate and inclusive to support target groups

### Participation:

- to deliver a 5% year-on-year increase in participation by target groups:
  - users from black, minority and ethnic groups
  - users resident in the more deprived wards in the City
  - users aged over 50
  - users aged under 16 with increased emphasis on encouraging educational attainment
  - users with disabilities
  - women and girls
- to deliver a 5% year on year increase in U17 swimming
- to deliver a 3% year on year increase in over 60 swimming
- to improve general access to all sites

### Customer Satisfaction:

- to maintain customer satisfaction levels at leisure facilities above 95%
- to fully embed Fusion's customer care programmes
- to deliver a reduction of at least 5% in annual cancellation of memberships

### Health and Safety:

- to ensure 100% compliance with Fusion health and safety policies and procedures



## 2013/14 Objectives and Targets

### Facility Management

- to ensure that high facility presentation standards are maintained at all times
- to achieve average facility inspection scores of at least 95% across all facilities
- to engage fully with the Council's priority, "to tackle climate change and promote sustainable environmental resource management," and to contribute to the Council's delivery of a 5% reduction in carbon emissions year-on-year
- to reduce general refuse by 25% and to increase recycling waste by 25%
- to ensure high standards of cleaning at all times
- to ensure high standards of repair and maintenance at all times
- to maintain Quest accreditation at a minimum 'Good' at Ferry Leisure Centre, Blackbird Leys Leisure Centre, Oxford Ice Rink, Barton Leisure Centre and Hinskey Outdoor Pool
- to maintain quality 'Integrated Management Systems' procedures across all sites

### Staffing:

- ensure that the right people are in the right place at the right time
- to demonstrate a year-on-year improvement in staff satisfaction
- to ensure that the Fusion workforce in Oxford is as representative as possible of the local community

### Marketing:

- to deliver a proactive and positive approach to PR, such that facility and service successes are communicated and celebrated
- to deliver a 5% increase in Bonus Concessionary memberships
- to deliver a 5% increase in total memberships
- to ensure that the products and services offered by the leisure facilities are innovative and attractive
- to establish and maintain the highest standards of facility presentation

## 2013/14 Objectives and Targets

### Sports and Community Development:

- to develop positive and productive partnerships with key local stakeholders
- to develop closer relationships with local sports clubs and community centres and groups
- to ensure that all facility programmes are exciting, innovative and attractive to users and potential users
- to maximise the benefits of sport participation following the 2012 Olympics and Paralympics
- to explore all opportunities for external funding
- to positively promote the benefits of healthy lifestyles

### Facility Developments:

- produce programme of leisure facility development proposals

### Partnership Development:

- to ensure 100% compliance with all meeting, reporting and performance monitoring requirements
- to explore opportunities for the Council and Fusion to extend their relationship in respect of other facilities in Oxford
- to support the council in the delivery of a new competition pool
- to support the council in exploring the possibility of introducing a residents card in Oxford
- to optimise the benefits of the partnership between Fusion and Oxford City Council



## HEALTH • VITALITY • WELLBEING

In presenting this summary of the Annual Service Plan for 2013/14, we are keen to gain as much feedback as possible from customers, staff and other key stakeholders.

We want to know if you think we are trying to do the right things, whether or not we are achieving our objectives and what key targets we should be considering when we start to prepare our next Annual Service Plan for 2014/15.

**All feedback is gratefully received and there is a range of ways in which you can tell us what you think:**

- talk to our staff
- complete one of our “Please Tell Us What You Think” comment cards, available at each of the leisure facilities
- attend one of the Customer Forums that will be organised across the facilities through the course of the year
- pass your comments to a representative of the User Groups that meet at each facility
- attend one of our regular management surgeries that will be held through the course of the year
- contact us by e-mail at [blackbird@fusion-lifestyle.com](mailto:blackbird@fusion-lifestyle.com)
- write to Fusion’s Divisional Business Manager, Steve Holt, c/o Blackbird Leys Leisure Centre, Pegasus Road, Blackbird Leys, Oxford, OX4 6JL

Thank you for taking the time to read this leaflet. Your opinion is valued and we look forward to hearing from you.

If you need a translation, a **LARGE PRINT** version or a copy of this publication in another format, please contact us.



Fusion Lifestyle is a registered charity working in partnership with Oxford City Council to manage your local leisure facilities.

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To: City Executive Board 9<sup>th</sup> April 2014

Item No:

Report of: Head of City Development

Title of Report: Oxford Stadium, Sandy Lane,  
Proposed Conservation Area

## Summary and Recommendations

**Purpose of report:** To explain the purpose of conservation area designation and to set out reasons for proposing to designate Oxford Stadium a conservation area

**Key decision:** No

**Report Approved by:**

**Finance:** David Watt

**Legal:** Michael Morgan

**Policy Framework:** National Planning Policy Framework  
Adopted Oxford Local Plan 2001-2016  
Core Strategy 2006-2026

**Legislative Framework:**

Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 (as amended)  
Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) Order 1995 (as amended)

**Recommendation(s):**

**To designate Oxford Stadium, Sandy lane a Conservation Area. The extent of the area to be as shown on the plan attached as Appendix 1.**

## Background

1. At its meeting on the 10<sup>th</sup> July 2013 City Executive Board resolved to include the Stadium on the Oxford Heritage Asset Register as a 'locally designated heritage asset'. Having identified the heritage significance

the site holds officers have been considering how to best manage the area so that its heritage values can be enjoyed by present and future generations.

2. In this respect the question of its suitability for designation as a conservation area falls to be considered.

### **The Council's Duty to Consider Areas for Designation as Conservation Areas**

3. The Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 identifies the statutory responsibilities of local planning authorities with regard to the designation and management of the historic environment. Section 69 of the Act states:

*(1) Every local planning authority—*

*(a) shall from time to time determine which parts of their area are areas of special architectural or historic interest the character or appearance of which it is desirable to preserve or enhance, and*

*(b) shall designate those areas as conservation areas.*

*(2) It shall be the duty of a local planning authority from time to time to review the past exercise of functions under this section and to determine whether any parts or any further parts of their area should be designated as conservation areas; and, if they so determine, they shall designate those parts accordingly.*

4. English Heritage explains (Understanding Place, 2010) that identification of areas suitable for designation can arise in a number of ways:
  - Studies in response to development threats;
  - For masterplanning and as a part of evidence gathering for the local development plan;
  - Via local communities and neighbourhood planning.
5. It explains (Understanding Place, 2010) that there are many different types of special architectural and historic interest that can lead to designation of an area such as:
  - A part of a town;
  - An area linked to a particular industry or philanthropist;
  - Areas that have a particular local interest;
  - An area reflecting a particular architectural style or traditional building material;



- public realm, parks and gardens (though not the wider landscape);
  - open areas particularly where character and appearance relates to historic fabric.
6. As part of the process towards such designation there is a requirement to prepare a detailed analysis of the special interest of the area to inform and justify any council decision to formally designate a conservation area. This analysis has been carried out following English Heritage's advice<sup>1</sup> and has been prepared in order to understand the heritage significance of the study area and how it is valued (see **Appendix 2**). It describes the history and role of greyhound stadia and the history of the development of Oxford Stadium, its architecture, character of buildings and spaces, its current condition and assesses its heritage significance.
  7. It has been prepared with assistance from local community members, who have provided access to historical information and photographic archives.
  8. A draft document was issued for consultation on the 10th March 2014, at the time of writing this report, for a two week period.

### **National context**

9. The physical survivals of our past are important. They hold archaeological, historic, architectural and aesthetic interest that people recognise and value – our historic towns and villages, country houses, historic parks and gardens. The C20th (ironically, as much of it is within living memory) is often the most undervalued and vulnerable period of building and landscaping (English Heritage: Understanding Place 2012). It thus is less well recorded and understood than other areas, which may be of earlier periods in history.
10. English Heritage comments (Sports and Recreation Buildings: Designation Selection Guide, 2012) that sport and recreation play a major role in modern life and that historic buildings in these categories can therefore elicit strong emotional and sentimental responses. *'At best, buildings for sport and recreation can be structures of architectural elegance, imbued with considerable social history interest. More commonly they are merely functional in appearance. Yet many of*

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<sup>1</sup> English Heritage Conservation Principles 2008

'English Heritage – Understanding Place, an introduction 2010

'English Heritage – Understanding Place: Historic Area Assessments in a Planning and Development Context , 2010

*those that survive – and the losses have been considerable – transcend mere utility, and have a character all of their own’.*

11. English Heritage explains that following recent studies (*‘Played in Britain’* EH) sports and recreation buildings are only now beginning to be better understood and facilities such as swimming pools, drill halls, lidos and spectator stands are reasonably well researched to help determine benchmarks for understanding significance, though other sites, particularly those that incorporate more ephemeral and short lived structures remain less well understood.
12. The Greyhound stadium is a nationally loved building type expressive of developments in interwar mass culture and entertainment (Walthamstow Greyhound Stadium- list descriptions, **Appendix 3**), which with Speedway was for a period the 2<sup>nd</sup> most popular leisure pursuit. Nevertheless, their numbers have seen a sharp decline in recent years with only 25 licensed stadia remaining within the UK, of which by no means all have a historic pedigree or profile that compares with Oxford Stadium. As such the stadium should be considered as an important representative of a form of development that is at risk nationally.

### **Oxford context**

13. There are currently 17 conservation areas in Oxford, covering the historic core of the city, the medieval and C19th suburbs, and the medieval ring of villages around the city. These areas capture nearly 1000 years of architectural and social history and include an unusually high proportion (relative to the national context) of listed post-war buildings.
14. The 20th century and the coming of the motor industry represents a significant period of change and growth in Oxford and the development of suburbs to provide housing for workers in the motor and associated industries. This period of Oxford’s history is not represented to any significant extent as part of the existing regime of heritage protection. A basic premise for protection is the concept of a site or buildings holding ‘special interest’. Because survival rates of examples of the 20th century period are higher, and the lack of architectural distinction more prevalent, there has to be a greater degree of selection to ensure that the principles of heritage management are not devalued and this explains why these parts of Oxford are not protected in the same way as other historic periods. However, where appropriate in the identification of elements of our built environment that hold special interest it is desirable to ensure cross cultural representation.

15. The areas of interwar suburban housing are supported by a range of entertainment and leisure facilities that provide evidence of the way those communities lived and spent their leisure time.
16. The stadium is one such facility that holds interest in part because of the rudimentary and ephemeral nature of the buildings – this represents so effectively the attraction of both greyhound racing and Speedway as a high thrill short-lived leisure experiences for those working in the motor and associated industries. The nature of the materials also reflects the central consideration of the speculative commercial developer where expediency and speed of construction were essential in securing a financial return. The simplicity of the structures is part of the modernist ideal of absence of elaboration and decoration. The surviving structures embody the collective memory of those communities and how the site has adapted to changing circumstances. This adaptability to changing audiences and local community needs is reflected in the way the site is valued by present communities.

### **Summary of Assessment of the Suitability of the Area for Designation as a Conservation area**

17. Features that contribute to the area's special historic and architectural interest
  - The site has been used by the community for greyhound-racing and Speedway with a history of use since 1939 (opened by Lord Denham and evidence of an earlier unregulated flapping track in the same location).
  - The location and character of the stadium illustrate the socio-economic character of Oxford's eastern suburbs during the C20th and, therefore, have historical interest through their associations with its community.
  - The area is representative of inter-war sport and entertainment within the city as part of Oxford's early C20th growth in response to development as a manufacturing centre, representing an important stage in the development of the city as a whole.
  - The area is unique in the city as an early C20th stadium used by the public and with strong associations with the local residential community (two other stadia White Hart Lane and the Manor Ground have been lost).
  - The area provides association with Speedway teams (Oxford Cheetahs among others) and competitors that were/are nationally

renowned and with their supporters contributing to local identity and providing historical interest.

- The area provides association with national level Speedway competitions and is seen as an internationally prestigious venue within the sport providing historical interest.
- Association with supporters of Greyhound Racing and with nationally and regionally significant competitions and competitors (Greyhounds and their trainers).
- Association with particular neighbourhoods and communities of Oxford (East Oxford, Cowley and Blackbird Leys).
- The types of building in the area as a group illustrate the use, but also the development and evolution of the site and activities.
- The number of stadia for both greyhound racing and Speedway has fallen dramatically in the late 20th century and early 21st century. The Oxford Stadium is now a rare example and is unique in the City and County, in terms of the historic sports it represents. As such, the historic and architectural interest of the stadium would be considered as special in the local and national context.
- Use for other sport: The area also has associations with other sports including flat track racing, stock car racing, American Football and go-cart racing which add to its historical interest.

18. Character and Appearance: A stadium for Greyhound Racing, Speedway and other Sports

- The survival of original structures of the stadium (or representative replacements) provides evidence of the greyhound and speedway activities that have taken place since, at least, 1939 and help in understanding the site and how it was used.
- The surviving Tote building is one of only 9 such structures remaining in the country and preserves its historic form as constructed in the 1930s and its relationship with the track, albeit with alterations to enable its use as office space. As such it contributes considerable architectural interest to the area. The use of the Totalisator or Tote was unique to Greyhound Stadia and represents a feature that contributed to the early success of the sport. As such, its survival adds to the historic interest of the area as an historic venue for Greyhound Racing.
- The Stadium Grandstand building frames the racetrack space and is built on the site of the two former grandstands, illustrating both

the continuity of the site's use and the evolution of facilities to serve the changing needs of the sport and the spectators.

- Terraces survive. These provide an immediate connection with the early days of both main sports and are essentially unchanged since the late 1930s preserving the closeness of spectators to the action of races and shared experience with spectators past, providing considerable historic interest. Their long sweeping curves and use of concrete reflect the utilitarian and unadorned modernist ideals of the inter-war period contributing to the area's architectural interest. The covered tunnel to the speedway pits is a distinctive feature of the stadium creating a point of drama as competitors enter from the pits beyond and shares the materials and simple forms of the terraces and therefore also contributes to the area's architectural and historic interest.
- Ancillary buildings survive. Ancillary buildings including turnstiles, the sheds of the greyhound paddocks and the Directors' Bar are evocative of the development of the site and its long history of use as a sporting venue, including both surviving early structures and appropriate later replacements that have preserved the character of the stadium as a sporting venue. These contribute to the historical interest of the stadium, whilst the former Directors' Bar contributes architectural interest by illustrating the historic materials and building forms that characterised the early days of the stadium and its 'ephemeral' architecture.
- Speedway sheds survive. The sheds of the Speedway pits are both an element of the functional infrastructure of the stadium and have been a focus for both the team members and supporters who commonly interacted in this area providing historical interest.
- Open central area framed by buildings and ancillary activities and preserving the alignments of racetracks that have been used since the 1930s. This feature provides a connection with the past sporting events that have taken place which is evocative for past competitors and supporters, as well as providing present users with a connection to this past and therefore contributes to the historic interest of the stadium
- The ephemeral nature of the buildings, often using prefabricated, low cost elements is representative of buildings associated with the sport historically and their adaptability to changing circumstances, which also heightens the rarity value if any of the earlier structures survive.

- The location and character are closely comparable to those of other similar stadia elsewhere, which are (or were) generally located near to or within working class residential areas or manufacturing districts, providing workers access to sports that were affordable for both spectators and participants and requiring relatively small spaces for venues (compared to horse racing), as well as the attraction of potential prize-money.
- The stadium's architectural character, made up of simple structures reflects the general ephemeral nature of sporting buildings throughout the 20<sup>th</sup> century with a general absence of architectural pretension.
- The character of the space of the track and surrounding stands reflects the close setting of spectators to racing that, historically, was a key attraction of the stadia. This is well preserved in the surviving 1930s stands and the space of the tracks, albeit with renewed surfaces.

#### 19. Character And Appearance: Location and context

- The historic context provides understanding of medieval routes out of the city and Enclosure Act changes, development of railway connections and the process of development of the industrial suburb of Cowley over the countryside beyond the edge of the city.
- Watlington Road; this is an historic route from Oxford to Henley and London, reduced in importance in the late C18<sup>th</sup> by reorganisation of the regional road network, which made this area a backwater until industrialisation in the late 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> century.
- Sandy Lane; a straight route forming the frontage to the stadium complex with an alignment that was established as a consequence of enclosure of open fields in 1817 and providing a remnant of the rural landscape that the industrial uses and later suburbs expanded across.
- Branch railway line; the railway line and embankment to the north were established in 1864 attracting industrial development and associated activity to the villages just outside the city.
- Industrial development from 1860s; The site lies on the edge of a district of former and current heavy manufacturing associated with car manufacturing including both Morris Motors and Pressed Steel and now Unipart and BMW Mini. The site of the Oxford Bus Company Depot, to the east of the stadium was previously a small iron works. The site is one of a number of sites with sports and

recreation uses that formed a fringe to this manufacturing area, either supported by the factories or exploiting the potential market of workers.

- Blackbird Leys; – The first houses of the Blackbird Leys suburb faced onto the stadium site and were built in 1958. As an existing social venue the stadium has provided a focus for the social interaction of the estate and contributes to the local sense of identity and the character of the wider suburb. This has been supported by the variety of community uses that the stadium has served.

20. The Desirability of Preserving or Enhancing the Character and Appearance: The following factors are considered to make the preservation and enhancement desirable:

- Sustaining community value: The stadium is valued by both the local community of Oxford and a wider, national and international community of supporters of both greyhound racing and Speedway as a source of their community cohesion and identity.
- Local distinctiveness and identity: As an important historic site of sporting competitions with strong associations for the local community, but also providing connections with teams who have represented Oxford and as a focus for visitors to the city the area, including its use, its historical and architectural interest and the character and appearance that flow from them makes an important contribution to the distinctiveness and identity of Blackbird Leys and Oxford as a whole. It is representative of the development of Oxford and its communities in early and later 20th century.
- Rarity: The area is an example of a nationally rare form of development and retains an example of a totalisator or tote building that is one of only 9 original examples in the UK which preserves its historical association with the track and surrounding stands.
- Importance of spatial character to understanding of significance: The ability to understand the area as a heritage assets is dependant on preserving its spatial character including not only the individual buildings but also the spaces between them such as the tracks, pits and greyhounds paddocks that illustrate the purpose of the buildings and contribute to the special historic interest and character and appearance of the area.

## **Justification**

21. The architectural and historic interest of the site has already been recognised in its designation as a local heritage asset. This has been assessed as being of special historic interest locally and, indeed, nationally.
22. The collective interest of the buildings, illustrating the past use and development of the site as a regionally and at times nationally important sporting venue is considered to cumulatively provide a special architectural interest.
23. The site is not a single building but a group of buildings around a central open space. This needs to be recognised as an area rather than a single object, with a character that is largely a result of the relationship between the buildings and spaces reflecting the past history of use.
24. The area sustains features of character and appearance that flow from the special historic and architectural interest and are considered desirable to preserve and enhance due to the importance of the spatial relationship between the features of the area to understanding their individual and cumulative historic and architectural interest, their rarity, their contribution to local distinctiveness and identity and their value to the local community as a heritage asset.
25. The proposed conservation area boundary is shown on the plan attached as Appendix 1. Appendix 2 contains an historical account of greyhound racing, the history of Oxford Stadium and analysis of heritage significance.
26. Designation means that when the City Council considers a planning application it must pay special regard to the desirability to preserve or enhance the character or appearance of the area. It does not presume that change must not happen and the National Planning Policy Framework explains that a proposal that would harm the character or appearance may be acceptable if the public benefits that would flow from a development are sufficient to outweigh that harm.

## **Consultation**

27. On line consultation with the local community and site owners, inviting comments on the draft appraisal and proposal to designate a conservation area commenced on 10th March 2014 for a period of two weeks. The results of this consultation are not available at the time of preparing this report, but will be reported at the meeting.



## **Conclusion**

28. Oxford Stadium has intrinsic historic interest as a rare survival of a greyhound and speedway stadium that represents the collective memory of the local communities, past and present. This interest has already been recognised with the site's inclusion on the Oxford Heritage Asset Register. Further analysis and research carried out has increased our understanding of the site and its role as a leisure and sporting venue. Assessed against the legislative framework for conservation area designation and best practice and guidance officers are satisfied that the special architectural and historic interest the site holds is sufficient for designation as a conservation area. Designation of the site as a representative of Oxford's C20th social and economic history would fulfil the objectives of conservation area legislation, complementing the other parts of Oxford already designated.

## **Recommendation**

**To designate Oxford Stadium, Sandy Lane a Conservation Area, the extent of the area to be as shown on the plan attached as Appendix 1 to this report**

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**Background papers:**

**Version number: 1.3**

**15<sup>th</sup> March 2014**

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# OXFORD STADIUM

CONSERVATION AREA APPRAISAL

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## INTRODUCTION

### REASON FOR THE REPORT AND CRITERIA FOR CONSERVATION AREA DESIGNATION

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This assessment of the suitability of Oxford Stadium, Sandy Lane for designation as a conservation area has been prepared by the Oxford City Council Planning Department. It follows the addition of the stadium to the City Council's Heritage Assets Register. The Heritage Assets Register provides a means of recording features of the historic environment that merit consideration in planning decisions as a result of their heritage interest and that are considered to make a special contribution to the character or identity of the city or particular neighbourhoods within it. The register provides a level of official recognition of the importance of the site as a part of the city's heritage, provides understanding of the significance of these assets and indicates where the City Council consider planning policies relating to heritage assets should apply.

Nevertheless, the register provides only a first step in managing our heritage assets and, where appropriate, the City Council will consider additional management measures to sustain and enhance the significance of heritage assets. As such, the City Council have assessed the significance of Oxford Stadium as a potential area of special historic or architectural interest, the character and appearance of which it is desirable to preserve or enhance, otherwise termed a conservation area.

The Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 identifies the statutory responsibilities of local planning authorities with regard to the designation and management of the historic environment. Section 69 of the Act states:

*(1) Every local planning authority—*

*(a) shall from time to time determine which parts of their area are areas of special architectural or historic interest the character or appearance of which it is desirable to preserve or enhance, and*

*(b) shall designate those areas as conservation areas.*

*(2) It shall be the duty of a local planning authority from time to time to review the past exercise of functions under this section and to determine whether any parts or any further parts of their area should be designated as conservation areas; and, if they so determine, they shall designate those parts accordingly.*

The definition set out in the Act provides four tests that a potential conservation area must meet to require designation. It must be an area, it must have either or both historic or architectural interest, it must have a character and appearance that is the result of this interest, and this character and appearance must be considered desirable to preserve and enhance.

English Heritage (Understanding Place, 2010) explains that identification of areas suitable for designation can arise in a number of ways:

- Studies in response to development threats;
- For masterplanning and as a part of evidence gathering for the local development plan;
- Via local communities and neighbourhood planning.

It further explains (Understanding Place, 2010) that there are many different types of special architectural and historic interest that can lead to designation of an area such as:

- A part of a town;
- An area linked to a particular industry or philanthropist;
- Areas that have a particular local interest;
- An area reflecting a particular architectural style or traditional building material;
- Public realm, parks and gardens (though not the wider landscape);
- Open areas particularly where character and appearance relates to historic fabric.

As part of the process towards such designation there is a requirement to prepare a detailed analysis of the special interest of the area to inform and justify any council decision to formally designate a conservation area. This assessment report has been carried out following English Heritage's advice<sup>1</sup> and has been prepared in order to understand the heritage significance of the study area and how it is valued. It describes the history and role of greyhound stadia and the history of the development of Oxford Stadium, its architecture, character of buildings and spaces, its current condition and assesses its heritage significance.

It has been prepared with assistance from local community members, who have provided access to historical information and photographic archives. It has been informed by a Heritage Assessment prepared by Montagu Evans LLP on behalf of Galliard Homes in support of a planning application affecting the study area<sup>2</sup>. A draft document was issued for consultation on the 6th March 2014, for a period of two weeks.

## LOCATION AND CONTEXT OF THE STUDY AREA

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Oxford Stadium lies on the north side of Sandy Lane on the northern edge of the Blackbird Leys Estate. The estate was developed in the late 1950s in response to demand for housing in the city. It is characterised by a mixture of two and three storey houses and maisonettes set around a planned street grid, with the large green open spaces of Blackbird Leys and former school playing fields south of Pegasus Road. Distinctive features of the estate are the twin tower-blocks of Evenload Tower and Windrush Tower. The estate contains a local centre, including a parade of shops, church, library, pub and community centre, which, with the campus of Oxford and Cherwell Valley College forms a focus of commercial and social activity. The estate is distinctive for its green character, with green open space studded with trees running along street frontages and between developments.

To the north and east the study area adjoins the extensive area of commercial and industrial uses that have developed from the industrial suburb of Cowley, which has its origins in the development of industrial sites in the villages outside Oxford in the late 19<sup>th</sup> century, following enclosure of open fields and development of railway connections. This suburb expanded massively following the establishment of Morris Motors and, later, Pressed Steel in Cowley. Historically, the stadium lies on the southern edge of this area, preceding the development of Blackbird Leys by at least 20 years. Industry remains a key feature of the Cowley Suburb, notably including the BMW Mini and Unipart factories and the depot of the Oxford Bus Company (directly adjacent to the site). North of the southern by-pass the suburb is characterised by large and medium sized office developments of the Oxford Business Park, whilst between the stadium and by-pass the Oxford Retail Park occupies a large area with both large shed buildings and car park.

The northern west boundary of the study area is defined by a branch railway line that currently serves the larger industrial sites north east of Watlington Road. The east boundary of the study area is formed by the Oxford Bus Company Depot and a small residential development north of Sandy Lane. To the south, the study area is defined by the course of Sandy Lane.

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<sup>1</sup> English Heritage Conservation Principles 2008

<sup>1</sup> English Heritage – Understanding Place, an introduction 2010

<sup>1</sup> English Heritage – Understanding Place: Historic Area Assessments in a Planning and Development Context , 2010

<sup>2</sup> Montagu Evans LLP, Oxford Stadium, Sandy Lane: Heritage Assessment 2013



Fig1: Photograph highlighting the newly built kennels at Oxford Stadium. This was the first inter-track race at Oxford against Wembley in 1940. Left to Right Mr CJ V Bellamy, Mayor of Oxford 1939-1940, F Wise, J. P Young, Mrs Bellamy Bill Davis, Miss Rice, Bill Higgins, Mr Blanch (veterinary surgeon), Miss Wakelin, Mrs Gomershall, Percy East, Miss Fright and Jim Tanner (Newbigging et al 1995: 91)



Fig2: The "The correct uniform for a Kennel Lad was tight black boots with riding breeches and yellow polo neck shirts for men, white shirt and tie with a riding cap for girls. Wages for a kennel Lad was £1 for a seven day week (ibid). The tote building (c 1939) is visible in the background)

## HISTORICAL SUMMARY

### LEISURE AND MODERN LIFE: A BRIEF HISTORY OF GREYHOUND RACING

- Greyhound racing has its antecedents in the more ancient sport of coursing, a popular pastime in the nineteenth century, which involved the pursuit of live hare. The earliest account of greyhounds following a mechanical lure was recorded on the 11<sup>th</sup> of September 1876 at a meeting at the Welsh Harp Hendon which involved dogs chasing a dummy hare set on a straight grass track (Genders 1975:60).
- By 1890, a patent had been taken out for a circular racing track however the idea was not put into immediate practice due to the inventor's lack of financial backing (Clarke 1934:15). It wasn't until 1912 in fact that racing in its modern form - involving six greyhounds chasing a mechanical hare set on an oval track – was first enacted by the American Owen Patrick Smith (Genders 1975:60). Smith, like the numerous other figures who were to become active in the promotion of 'modern' track racing, had been a well-known personality amongst coursing circles before going on to become instrumental to the 'new' sport's commercial success in the US.
- The sport was introduced to Britain in this modern format by another American business man, C.A. Munn, who having witnessed its growing popularity back home realised its commercial potentials in Europe. With the backing of Major Lyne-Dixon, a well-known figure in British coursing circles, and Brig.-General A. C. Crotchet, he set up the Greyhound Racing Association (GRA) which went on to construct the first purpose built greyhound stadium in the Gorton area of Manchester. The *Belle Vue* as the latter was called held its first meeting on the 24<sup>th</sup> of July 1926 to an opening audience of 1700 people. In the course of only a few weeks these figures were to rise to a substantial crowd of 11,000 spectators per meeting.
- This growth proved only the beginning of a much wider period of expansion for the new pursuit whose rising popularity throughout the 1920s and 30s was directly linked to the concomitant expansion of the British entertainment industry. The rise of the latter during the interwar years, arguably amongst the great cultural phenomena of the twentieth century, had depended on a number of key factors amongst them; the exploitation of new technologies; the growing consumerism; and perhaps most significantly on the increasing democratization of leisure. A new strain of philosophical thought had emerged during this period to argue that "pleasure was a deep seated and integral part of human experience" (Peter 2007: 32). To this end, social reformers had worked to

achieve a gradual whittling away of the number of working hours freeing a space for leisure to generate its own distinctive patterns of activity (ibid: 30).

- The new entertainments that took root during this period tended to reflect the general experiences of modern life characterised as it was, throughout the twentieth century, by a constant state of flux and movement and the rapid expansion of cities (c.f. David Harvey 1987). In these urban environments, “there was an unprecedented maelstrom of traffic and pedestrians, mingling with the nascent signs of consumerism” that helped create “a kind of *hyperstimulus* in the city dwellers as they attempted to...respond to their surroundings” (Peter 2007: 15). This ‘hyped up’ sensorial experience of modernity led many to search for corollary stimulus in their leisure hours that would match or outdo those of the everyday city. The public, it seemed, “wanted to extract the maximum possible sensation from every free moment” and although they knew that such instances “would pass quickly and that a return to the daily grind was inevitable” this fact only served to “redouble the desires of thrill-seekers to search out the latest and most stimulating diversions” (ibid: 16). Thus mass- spectator sports expanded rapidly, “taking their place alongside radio, the cinema, and the dance-hall as the main component of a more commercialized entertainment industry (Jones 1988: 44).
- Few spectator sports captured these ‘modern desires’ perhaps as completely as greyhound racing. Not only were the latter meetings quick, short-lived events that could be easily adapted to busy work schedules, but it was moreover a sport that provided a hitherto unprecedented access to the ‘main action.’ As Roy Genders (1946:8), a greyhound racing historian, has observed, the added attraction to the sport lay in the heightened sense of intimacy that it exuded. In contrast to other pursuits such as horseracing, greyhound events provided the paying public with a previously unknown access to the animals whose every movement could be easily observed from the moment they left the kennels to the point that they were returned. This fact owed much to the open nature of most terracing which, having being built quite closely to the tracks, enabled crowds to maximise their racing experience. Over time in fact, the sport came to be collectively remembered as being embodied in the image of a chap in a “raincoat and cloth cap standing near the rails in the pouring rain...down among the greyhounds” as it were (Genders 1981:8).
- The sport also came to be closely associated with the working classes with whom it achieved its greatest success. As Humphrey Jennings highlights in his 1939 documentary *Spare Time*, attendances at greyhound events were among the key ways in which the working classes “produced their own culture (Peter 2007: 34, Jennings 1939 (<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jNXSPDk3n7k>)). Several factors made it especially appealing. The price of admission (as low as 1s in the 1930s) for instance, meant that the sport was “well within the range of many working-class spectators” (Jones 1988: 45). Moreover, in contrast to many pursuits, the relative affordability of greyhounds, made it possible for anyone wishing to do so to take an active part in racing. It is this affordability that arguably went a long way in sustaining the sport through periods of general economic decline. Despite the economic downturn of the early 1930s for instance (1929-1933), greyhound racing experienced its most significant period of growth witnessing a notable rise of stadia attendances from an already quite substantial 5,656 686 spectators in 1927 to 20,178 260 in 1932 (Genders 1946: 23). This growth was sustained throughout the war years (1939-1945). Where most leisure pursuits had been significantly affected by the war – with some activities such as county cricket and league football being all together halted - the popularity of greyhound racing seemed little curtailed and by end of the 1940s, a remarkable 50 million people paid to attend greyhound meetings each year (Genders 1981: 7-8).
- Growth continued into the post war period with greyhound racing coming second only to football as a national spectator sport. Many people now “flocked to the stadiums, happy to be out and enjoying themselves in the open air following the bleakness of blackouts and air raid shelters” ([www.gbgb.org.uk/HistoryofGreyhoundRacing.aspx](http://www.gbgb.org.uk/HistoryofGreyhoundRacing.aspx)). This popularity continued to characterise the sport throughout the 1950s and 60s when the liberalisation of gambling laws in 1963 encouraging casinos, bingo halls, betting shops (etc.) eventually began to significantly impact on stadia



attendances. This often negative impact of legislative reforms was, however, not something new to the sport which appears to have a ready established economic safety net by way of its association with other activities. As *The Economist* had observed of the sport in late 1920s and early 30s, greyhound racing has always “attempted to secure its operations through contact with other sports” (cited in Jones 1988: 48). In particular, the Betting and Lotteries Act of 1934 which restricted greyhound racing to two nights a week led to the dependence of greyhound stadia on that other ‘modern pursuit’ of speedways imported from Australia in the late 1920s. The latter was first introduced as second sport to the earliest greyhound stadia (at Belle Vue, Wimbledon and Haringey) before shortly spreading to other provisional tracks across the country. It developed into a major attraction in its own right drawing crowds of up to 60,000 spectators at its peak. To this end, speedway riders “helped to maintain the crowds and advertise stadia” and owners continued to turn their attentions to the sport during periods of slow growth in greyhound racing (ibid: 48). It is for instance significant that the 1960s and 70s, years of relative decline for greyhound racing marked the glory days of speedways. Subsequent amendments to gambling laws have further necessitated this reliance on other activities. For example, whilst greyhound racing experienced a boom in the 1980s (and to a lesser extent 1990s) leading to an increased level of investment in the sport, the introduction of new laws as set out in the 2005 gambling act has resulted in declining numbers at the tracks thus ensuring that stadia continue to exploit the commercial potential of their assets through their use of facilities to host various other sports and social events.

- The greatest impact of the 2005 act has been its expansion of gambling opportunities. Where betting shop opening hours had for instance been previously restricted to evening periods in the months of May and August, the new legislation now enables them to be open until 10pm throughout the year. It is also further possible to place bets on greyhounds online and even via one’s digital television box or mobile phone. The resulting decline in track attendance that these opportunities have engendered has also led to a reduction in the number of stadia. Existing stadia have responded to their altered circumstances in a number of ways. Some venues such as those of Sutherland, Nottingham, Kinsely, Great Yarmouth and Wolverhampton, just to mention a few, “have recently completed six-figure refurbishment projects” ([www.gbgb.org.uk/HistoryofGreyhoundRacing.aspx](http://www.gbgb.org.uk/HistoryofGreyhoundRacing.aspx)). These plans, as *The Economist* (2008) has reported, appear to be working with a notable crowd increase being observed in the 11 tracks where owners have invested in new facilities. Most tracks have generally fallen back on their historic reliance on a combination of leisure activities to draw an income. Expanding beyond speedways, many tracks have also become associated with other motor sports such as stock car, quad bike, and motorcycle racing amongst others. Stadia have also adapted their facilities to cater to the desires of new audiences ranging from work parties to hen and stag groups who are increasingly frequent visitors to racing tracks for evening entertainment. Indeed, in the context of marketing firms such as Mintel attributing the sport’s downturn to the fact that most people now increasingly perceive themselves as middle class (c.f. *The Economist* 2008), this adaptation of stadia has meant that the sport has to a certain extent began to cross the class divide with ever diversifying audiences visiting tracks today than at any other time in recent decades ([www.gbgb.org.uk/HistoryofGreyhoundRacing.aspx](http://www.gbgb.org.uk/HistoryofGreyhoundRacing.aspx)). In fact “research conducted for the horse racing industry” highlights that “greyhound racing remains Britain’s third most attended spectator sport” and furthermore that, as a betting product it “has never been more popular with some £2.5bn being staked on the outcome of greyhound races each year” (ibid)
- Despite these positive indications however, the number of stadia has fallen further in the first decades of the 21<sup>st</sup> century with high profile closures such as Wembley (Greyhound Racing ceased in 1998) Walthamstow (closed 2008), Catford (closed 2003) and Portsmouth (closed 2010). There are now only 34 greyhound tracks currently in operation in the UK, 25 of which are licensed greyhound stadia (2013).



Fig3: original floodlighting (c1939) at Oxford Stadium. These lights (now replaced) were both a projection of the modernism of the stadium -a significant aspect of the servicing of 'pleasure buildings' more broadly- and a crucial aspect of the 'drama' of a racing event. The stadium was darkened before a race and a switch (still present) would swing the lights onto either the dog or speedways track depending on the event. An aspect of this is visible on the image with some lights focused on the dog track in the foreground and others on the speedways track adjacent to the central green. The southern grandstand (since rebuilt) is also visible on the right with the tote building across the central green on the far left corner.



Fig 4: The concrete western terraces (built c 1939) are in many ways exemplary of their time both in their design and materiality (i.e. form). Their location in quite close proximity to the dog tracks catered to the 'modern desires' of their audiences who increasingly sought more heightened sensorial stimulation through greater contact with the 'main action'. Their curving design following the general line of the track enable spectators to view the unfolding of a race from start to finish without the need for binoculars as was often the case with other sports such as horse racing. Their material construction – consisting primarily of large expanses of moulded concrete - embody the modernist movement's preoccupation with ephemeral as well as catering to the need for expedience that was generally necessitated in the construction of pleasure buildings.

## MODERNISM AND THE ARCHITECTURE OF PLEASURE: BUILDING FOR GREYHOUND RACING

- Most greyhound stadia were built in the fifteen year period between the *Exposition Internationale de Arts Decoratifs et Industriels Modernes* (the Parisian Exhibition of 1925) and 1940 when the imposition of rationing during the Second World War prevented further development. Their construction and design throughout this period largely coincided with the Modern Movement which was having a profound impact on twentieth century architecture particularly in its manifestation in the planning of recreational environments or what has been referred to as “the *architecture of pleasure*” (Peter 2007: 12). The latter phrase was coined by Shand and Leathart – key architectural writers during the interwar years – to refer to the built responses to the need for mass entertainment. They believed that as new forms of pleasure and entertainment, pursuits such as the cinema, rollercoaster and electric greyhound racing required new forms of architectural expression that was in keeping with the ‘Modern Spirit’ (ibid: 26).
- Architects of pleasure had to find appropriate modes of expression to convey the senses of modernity, excitement and anticipation that these pursuits embodied. The new building types were not only required to address often unprecedented needs “in terms of their reliance on technology and scale” but also to reflect and respond to the impermanence of their modern context (ibid: 15). To this extent, buildings for pleasure were often ephemeral and obsolete structures, subject to continual re-invention in accordance with the passing desires of their paying publics. For Leathart - a leading cinema architect in the early 1930s - this ephemerality was particularly advantageous as it allowed for experimentations with new built types whose outstanding characteristic he perceived to be represented by their “gradual process of simplification” (ibid: 27). Places “devoted to the pursuit of pleasure” he argued, had to differ markedly both in their “main forms” and in their “superficial or applied decorations” from neighbouring buildings whose functions were perhaps more serious and their intentions less capricious (ibid: 28). The public, it was in other words believed, would generally enjoy and respond more positively to non-historicist forms when they were being entertained.
- **Greyhound Stadia:** Unlike cinemas and other pleasure buildings such as zoos and pavilions, “only around a dozen large greyhound stadia that were developed during the 1935-39 period” actually “demonstrated the application of the new architecture”. “One reason for this can be found in the origin and subsequent regulation of greyhound

racing” (Peter 2007: 43). The pursuit’s early beginnings the coursing clubs of nineteenth century rural Lancashire, where the sport was established by local mill owners, merchants and other prominent locals, meant that facilities often evolved with little aesthetic coherence. The involvement of such local elites continued well into the 1920s by which time the sport had “become infused with bookmaker, licensees, trainers and other business entrepreneurs” whose central concern was the money that could be made from dog racing (ibid). Over time, the advent of regulatory bodies such as the National Greyhound Racing Society (founded in 1928 to regulate large urban stadia) began to have the overall effect of raising the standards of stadia facilities. National legislative reforms also had an effect on the evolution of stadia design. The 1934 Betting and Lotteries Act for instance introduced the totalisator (or Tote for short), which gathered all the money from bets, distributing it by percentage to the stadium owner, dog owners and winning punters .This meant that greyhound stadia, at the very least, “now required secure offices with ticket windows and sheltered spaces to queue to place bets.” Concomitantly, the increased revenues brought about as a result of the tote meant that stadia owners now also had a stable and lucrative source of income which they could draw upon to expand and improve their premises. Within a short period, a number of well-appointed and architecturally fashionable stadia had indeed developed in the London suburbs (ibid: 44)

- **‘Respectable design’:** The stadia that did directly apply modernist architecture did so as a calculated attempt to address greyhound racing’s wider issue of respectability. A certain negative view of the sport that manifested itself the form of betting and gambling legislation had persisted throughout the twentieth century. While some entertainments such as the theatre ,could, even in their “most populist form,... assume a degree of respectability” by presenting themselves as art forms, greyhound racing “as a predominantly working class pursuit...faced a more intractable image problem.” Not only were its origins in the rural sports of hare and rabbit coursing the focus of quite intense criticism from the Humanitarian League and other similar reforming groups, but the subsequent involvement of gambling from the 1890s onwards provoked further distaste from critics in whose opinion the sport was merely a ploy to draw money from the pockets of the poor. The latter, often described as a ‘lumpen, spendthrift and unhappy’ proletariat were themselves not seen any more positive a light, being perceived as truly ‘going to the dogs’ in both the literal and metaphoric sense. As the greyhound historian Robert Rowe has argued, “the adoption of modern architecture was therefore an attempt to glamorise the industry as well as to attract a wider clientele” (Peter 2007: 44). In addition to its predominantly working class clientele, stadia also began to attract business entrepreneurs and self-made men, “for whom architectural modernity presumably symbolised wealth, glamour and socio economic advancement” (ibid: 44-45).The advent of salubrious purpose built stadia in the 1930s were exerted attempts by entertainment providers to further expand these demographics by demonstrating that their venues were in fact wholesome places fit for the entire family and community.
- Where they may have generally lacked an aesthetic coherence as exemplars of Modernist architecture, greyhound stadia did however succinctly capture the ‘spirit of modernism’ both in their spatialization and material construction. Structures were especially designed in order to maximise the senses of excitement and anticipation that symbolized the sport. Seen particularly in the “context of industrialisation and...regulation of work and leisure time” greyhound stadia, provided a kind of “social ‘safety valve’ through which the public could perhaps ‘let off steam’ by behaving in ways considered not quite decorous of bourgeois society” such as smoking, drinking and gambling etc. while within the confines of an entertainment venue (ibid: 31). To this end, the planning of spectator stands, built in quite close proximity to the dog tracks, was of special consideration. Stands tended to combine a mixture of enclosed and open terracing in order to not only provide the heightened sensorial stimulation audiences desired but also to create a sense of intimacy that enable patrons to fully immerse themselves in the activity. The enclosed facilities consisted largely of terraced bars and restaurants “attracting couples for a mixture of romance, spectacle, dining, drinking and the odd flutter”(ibid: 44).Their hermetic character helped to both contain these activities as well as ensuring that they took place away from the disapproving gaze of mainstream society. Those

“terraces adjacent to the home straight were of more perfunctory design” and comprised primarily of unseated outdoor space. These largely attracted more “serious punters” whose primary concern was betting and who therefore did not wish to be “distracted by the chattering of diners and drinkers” (ibid 45).

- **Construction and architectural servicing:** It was in their material construction however that greyhound stadia most fully reflected the tenets of the modernist movement. In particular, stadia embodied the preoccupation with the transient deemed to be of such central significance to the innovative capacity of modernist architecture. To this extent greyhound stadia tended to be relatively simple structures requiring little investment to establish and with quite rudimentary often pre-fabricated buildings. As commercial venues, time was perhaps the most significant element in their construction. Indeed “the sooner a project was completed, the sooner the developers could begin to recoup their investment.” To cater to these unprecedented demands for expedience, a new architectural language was simultaneously emerging in Britain. The most progressive buildings of the 1930s began using “newly designed off the shelf components for speed and ease of construction.” By the close of the decade in fact, “a whole lexicon of new building materials” whose suppliers liked to promote for “their speed and efficiency” had been developed. Some of these new materials such as reinforced concrete - which was robust and malleable-proved particularly popular in the construction of stadia as did asbestos cement sheeting. The appeal of the latter in particular lay in the fact that it was a lightweight, fireproof and malleable material which when “pressed into corrugated sheets and bolted into light steel framework...enabled large span structures to be rendered waterproof inexpensively and quickly.” These materials however were also “primitive”, “imprecise in detail,” “prone to weathering badly – particularly in dirty urban air” – and in the case of asbestos sheeting, subsequently proven to be quite dangerous to health (ibid: 152-156).
- That the quest for speed and efficiency nevertheless remained central to the construction of stadia is evident in the example of the redesign and extension of Hendon Stadium by Messrs Harringtons in 1939. The whole work, including demolition, “was carried out during the short closed season from the beginning of November until the start of February.” In order to facilitate a “speedy construction, steel framing with concrete slabs infill was used and the project was completed on time and within budget- a considerable achievement” (ibid: 158). A close inspection of the Stadium’s tower however shows the concrete construction to be of “slightly crude detailing and badly spaced construction” illustrating the haste in which the project was carried out. However despite this haste, special consideration was given to architectural servicing. For instance, since many spectators were expected to be smokers much attention was paid to ventilation. The floors were also covered in large slabs of vulcanised rubber which was impervious to spilled drinks and cigarette burns (ibid: 157-158).
- Lighting was however perhaps the most significant aspect of stadia architectural servicing. “As works of the German expressionist architects have shown, lighting in entertainment venues was of crucial importance to their projection of modernism and modernity.” Brilliant night illumination was moreover “the most obvious and effective means of signalling to potential customers that venue was anything but dismal” (ibid: 160). Indeed it was for this very reason– as Charles Munn (who introduced greyhound racing to Britain) explained- that floodlighting began to be used in stadia. One of the first tracks in the US laid out in Miami had been performing quite poorly and was in fact on the verge of closure when the owner decided to install powerful arc lamps around the track as a last desperate bid to attract crowds. After what proved to be the great success of the Miami stadium, there followed a comprehensive introduction of lighting to greyhound stadia across the board. This extensive use of floodlighting transformed racing events into truly magnificent nightly spectacles (Cardew 1928: 8). For stadia audiences, these illuminations added a certain sense of drama. Not only did the darkening of stadia before the start of a race coupled with the positioning of lights along the perimeter of track help focus one’s attention to the central stadium space, but it also strongly highlighted the track thus showing up the greyhounds up in bold relief (ibid: 8-9)





Fig5: Speedways riders (c1970s) emerging from the tunnel into the main stadium space to be paraded in front of the general public. The car was supplied by Hertford Motors and had a trailer attached to the back on which the riders were stood.



Fig 6: The leisure pursuits at the stadium were quite intrinsically connected. The above image for instance shows speedways riders on and watching the go-karting. The team used the latter activity as part of their pre-season bonding session which also included watching the dog racing.

## OXFORD STADIUM

### AN OVERVIEW OF INDUSTRY AND LEISURE IN THE COWLEY COMMUNITY

- As with most stadia, the Oxford Greyhound Stadium is located within an urban context, fitting into an irregular space situated between the wider Cowley works and the residential Blackbird Leys estate.
- At the outset of the 19<sup>th</sup> century the area surrounding and including the Stadium site consisted of open fields associated with the hamlet of Littlemore in the Parish of St. Mary's, Oxford. The medieval villages of Cowley and Temple Cowley lay a short distance to the North West. The open fields of Littlemore were enclosed by Act of Parliament in 1817. Sandy Lane has the characteristic straight alignment of a road established within the enclosure of open fields and is recorded on the inclosure award map as the Littlemore and Garsington Road. The inclosure map records that it met the more sinuous course of the Oxford and Watlington Road just to the east of the site. This is likely to be of more ancient origin and forms part of the historic route from Oxford to London via Henley, which was diverted to run further to the west (through Iffley) in 1771. The G.W.R. Thame Branch Railway was constructed in 1864 as an extension to the Princes Risborough to Thame line and runs along the northern boundary of the stadium site.
- Development of the area as an industrial suburb began in the 1860s with the establishment of the Eddison and Nodding Company (later renamed the Oxford Steam Plough Company) manufacturing agricultural machinery on land between Cowley and Temple Cowley. The Morris Motors Ltd. motorcar works was moved into a former Military College at Temple Cowley by William Morris (later Lord Nuffield) in 1912. This expanded into a larger building in 1914 and further southward over the following decades. By 1925 Morris Motors had emerged as the leading car maker in Britain, a position it maintained until the Second World War. Soon after, and on Morris's initiative, the Pressed Steel Company of Great Britain was constructed in 1926 thereby extending the Cowley works and industrial area southward as far as the railway line. A small iron foundry also stood on the west side of Watlington Road on the south side of the railway line.
- The continued growth of the works during the interwar years had a significant impact on both the local economy and that of the broader city. Not only did the existence of these industries help contribute to the development of Cowley's identity as distinct from that of historic Oxford but it also signalled the wider expansion of the city. On the one hand, the industries were a powerful force in "shaping social cohesion (and) reinforcing the links of family, neighbourhood and locality" as well as in playing a central role in "the creation of Oxford's labour movement" which added "a

working-class authenticity to the university radicalism” (Hayter & Harvey ed. 1993: 7). On the other hand, their shifting of the labour force from the city and surrounding provinces had the attendant effect of expanding the city scape. Oxford became “one of the fastest growing cities in the interwar years with a massive 42 per cent population increase from 67,290 in 1921 to an estimated 95, 600 by 1939 (ibid).

- To account for this population boom, a large area of suburban housing developed between the hamlet of Littlemore and the village of Cowley. This was further supported by Oxford City Council’s plans in the 1950s to develop the Blackbird Leys area as a large housing estate to replace cramped and unhygienic residential areas in the city centre and to house the growing population of car plant workers. The estate’s first houses were built on Sandy Lane in 1958, just to the south of the stadium, with the first and second phases of development being completed by the early 1970s. Families moved from across Oxford and surrounding regions with the area proving particularly popular with workers in the Cowley Factories. It was particularly prosperous in the 1960s and 1970s but began to suffer somewhat from the decline in car manufacturing in the late 1980s and early 1990s culminating in the demolition of the Morris Motors buildings (owned by British Leyland in 1992). The works have since been largely redeveloped as a “new economy of research services, science parks and rustic superstores” in which the many of displaced workers from the car and steel plants have found employment (ibid: 3)
- The position of the stadium near the Cowley works and its relative proximity to the dwellings of the factory workers meant that it has historically attracted great patronage from these latter groups. To a certain extent in fact, the greyhound stadium can be considered as part of the wider milieu of leisure facilities catering to the local working class communities. Companies such as the Pressed Steel had made significant changes to the working week reducing it from 47.5 hours over five and a half days between 1926 and 1934 to 47 hours over five days (with extended lunch breaks of 75 minutes) between 1947 and 1960 (Allmond 2012: 30-31). These changes in work patterns ran concurrent with factories’ investment in leisure facilities for their workers. It had become general practice for 20<sup>th</sup> century industrial employers to provide facilities for their work force and both the Pressed Steel and Morris Motors Company sponsored a wide range of leisure and sporting activities for their workers from football, to cricket and bowls amongst other activities. The 1937-39 Ordnance Survey map for instance records that land south of the railway line and east of Watlington Road was used as recreation grounds, presumably associated with the factories as an amenity for workers
- A small greyhound racing track is also recorded on this 1937-39 map as existing near the works. Although not directly initiated by the factories, Oxford Stadium, as the track later became, had special links with these local industries. Not only was the owner, L. V. Calcutt, a former employee of Morris Motor, but various local companies were also significantly involved in the sponsorship of particular events held at the stadium. Promoters included Hartford Motors - whose managing director (Pete Cundy) was also in fact the chairman of the speedways supporters club – and the family run Humphries Garages (at one point Oxford’s largest independent motor retailers) who were sponsors of the Speedways team. While some these arrangements with industry were done as favours – for example it is believed that Ronald Amey of the Amey Roadstone Company (involved in such constructions as motorways and airports) and who rode at Oxford, was responsible for laying out the speedways and dog tracks on a largely voluntary capacity – most arrangements were however often of mutual benefit. For instance the international lager company Skol, in conjunction with the Oxford based Hall’s Brewery, were not only one of the biggest sponsors of speedways but also had arrangements to be the exclusive supplier of beer at the stadium. Similarly, the sponsorship of the dog racing by companies such as Blanchford Builders and Build Base involved a corporate aspect where the sponsors would also often invite their staff and clients to race meetings. More direct links with the wider Cowley works are evidenced by the fact that events at the stadium were also often organised around factory work schedules. Speedways fixtures for instance were organised to fit around the working week and races were themselves advertised along the road from the Cowley works to maximise their impact on the workers.

- Apart from their draw to the local factory employees, these sports also developed strong identities that went beyond those of the local Cowley area. Speedways which held its first meeting in 1938 and continued (with some intermittent breaks) until its final meeting in 2007, proved especially popular with people from the wider Oxford region. The name of the speedways team – *The Oxford Cheetahs* – had in fact come from the Oxford public themselves following a competition in the local paper. A later name change to *The Rebels* and attempt to franchise them failed due to a lack of connection with the local community. The ‘Oxford Brand’ proved quite central and the name was subsequently changed to *The Oxford Rebels* (between 1972-5) and again to *The Oxford Silver Machine* (between 2003-2005). The stadium has also been a site linked to other local sporting identities. It was here for instance that American football was first introduced to Oxford in 1992. This Oxford Team (the Oxford Eagles, later the Oxford Bulldogs) was amongst the first such teams to be incorporated into the professional American football league in England and is one of the oldest teams in the UK. The sport continued to be held in front of the paying public for the next four years until the merger with a local team led to its relocation to Abingdon in 1997.
  
- Throughout its history Oxford Stadium has also been associated with other significant national and international sport events. It has for instance been the stage for the speedways world championship qualifications rounds; the British Finals and the International Championships. It has also been the site of pre-season training camps for Danish and Australian International speedways teams. In the 1990s, three riders from Oxford (Mike Coombes, Manual Hughes and Andrew Cooper) further extended the sport beyond its professional boundaries to include the first armature speedways event in the sport’s 90 year history. First held at the stadium, armature speedways became a significant route through which riders could hone their skills before turning professional. The stadium has also hosted other motor sports such as quad bike, dirt track and side car racing. The vintage Motorcycle club has used the stadium on several occasions to host vintage speedways championships and to give demonstrations of vintage bikes often driven by celebrity riders. Many fans for instance fondly recall Simon Wigg and Hans Nielsen’s match race on two rare dirt track Douglas bikes. However biggest regular motor sport attendances were perhaps those of stock car racing which proved particularly popular in the 1960s and 70s attracting up to 6000 spectators at its peak. Many famous drivers raced at Oxford including Formula 1 aces Derek Warwick and Martin Brundle. Local hero Fred Mitchell also won the World Championship twice. The sport was eventually suspended in 1977 owing to Oxford’s lack of the high safety fences necessary to guard against increasing racing speeds. In more recent years the stadium has become associated with go-kart racing which had taken up the central green previously occupied by American football. Although the latter has been primarily run as a commercial enterprise providing entry level karting for the general public, it has produced a number of distinguished drivers, the most notable being Ross Gunn who went on to become a double National Championship winner before becoming a professional racing car driver.
  
- In recent decades, the stadium has also been used as a venue for a variety of events such as circuses, travelling stunt shows, sheep dog trails, dart tournaments, car auctions, markets and car boot sales. As with other stadia, it has also witnessed a change in its demographics. Increasing numbers attending the stadium in the latter twentieth and early twenty first century have done so as part of ‘a night’s-out’ entertainment. To this end, the stadium has responded by adapting its facilities to host various private functions, discos night clubs dance studio amongst others. As with early greyhound racing and speedways these recent leisure pursuits (particularly that of the dance studios) have remained intrinsically linked both to the stadium and wider community.

- Prior to the stadium's development, the current site at Sandy Lane was, in 1938, "generally regarded as a 'flapping' track where owners...could turn up and run their greyhounds around an oval on the days selected for racing" (Baiden 2009: 3). The grounds, track and buildings of this older unregulated course are recorded on the Revised 3rd Edition Ordnance Survey Map published in 1937-39, which shows an oval track aligned north – south in the triangle of land between Sandy Lane and the G.W.R. Thames Branch Railway. Facilities at this time were quite basic consisting primarily of a small café. The lure itself was mounted on the rear wheel of a jacked up motor which was used to drive it around this track.
- The land was owned by a Mr Johnson who in 1938 leased it to Leslie Victor Calcutt for 99 year period. It was Calcutt, who at the time also owned building firm in Kidlington, along with his business partner a Mr Harold Brown, who began work on a new stadium in late 1938 completing it a year later in 1939. The new track was officially opened by Lord Denham (from the National Greyhound Racing Club) on 31<sup>st</sup> March 1939 at an inaugural race night which "was hailed as a milestone for Oxford and was covered heavily in the local news papers" (Baiden 2009: 3).
- Although it continued to grow in popularity with the local community, the Second World War was to have a notable effect on racing at the stadium. For instance whilst new kennels had been constructed at this time, greyhound training suffered as a result of staff shortages. Only two trainers (Bill Davis and Bill Higgins) were available in 1940 and many dog owners had themselves been called up to fight in the war (ibid: 4). By 1941, the racing manager and most of the older kennel lads had also been called to serve in the war further reducing the staff levels at the stadium. Matters were little improved little the following year when the stadium also lost Bill Davis to a local factory in March of 1942. The war also affected other aspects of the stadium's management. Black out restrictions for instance resulted in changes to meeting times. Previously held on Friday evenings, racing events were switched to Saturday afternoons in the autumn and winter months to account for nights' drawing in and the restrictions on the use of floodlights
- However despite the bleakness of war, the Stadium, as has been observed of the history of greyhound racing more broadly (c.f. Genders 1946; 1981), was quite active in its support of the war effort. Baiden (2009) has noted that fundraising events in aid of charity frequently took place throughout the war years. In 1940 for instance, a successful auction was held in aid of the Red Cross. Other events included Mr Calcutt's raising of funds in aid of the 'Salute the Soldiers' week – efforts in which he was acknowledged by the then editor of the Oxford Mail (Mr G r Hardacre). Races were also held in aid of the Airborne Forces. Moreover, furthering their support of the war effort, remaining stadium staff formed the Local Defence Volunteers – a unit that was equipped with a rifle, bullets and a pair of binoculars – and whose duties included watching over the nearby Cowley airfield from the lofty position of the stewards box (ibid:4).
- This was also the time when the first 'superstar' arrived at Oxford. "The 'Gunner', a £400 acquisition by Leslie Calcutt", became an instant success helping to ensure large crowds levels despite the wider depressed economic outlook (ibid: 5). In fact, some controversies that arose over the stadium's compliance with wartime rationing are further revealing of the continued popularity of the greyhound racing at Oxford during these war years. A key issue for instance arose over the use of free buses to transport spectators to and from the Swan Hotel, with claims being made that they were using too much rationed petrol. Calcutt's response to the criticism, perhaps the clearest testament of the sport's continued growth in the period was that the buses in question were essential due to the large crowds that were attending the stadium. This popularity continued to characterise greyhound racing in early to mid 1940s with 1944 in particular proving an especially busy year witnessing the arrival of American service men who attended the stadium to watch 'Yankee Doodle' a favourite greyhound at the time (ibid: 8).. Having begun in the



United States, it was perhaps unsurprising that greyhound racing proved popular with these latter service personnel many of whom were in fact undergoing rehabilitation at the Churchill hospital.

- The end of the war marked a return to evening meetings and races were once more held on Tuesday and Friday nights. However, although Calcutt had hoped that the end of blackouts would attract in even larger crowds, this potential was curtailed by the fuel shortages which continued well into late 1940s eventually resulting in a temporary government banning of greyhound racing in the February of 1947. Although the ban was lifted a short while later in March of the same year, matters were further exacerbated by the fact that Oxford was facing its worst winter. Nevertheless despite these being years of some relative financial difficulty for the stadium, the funds resulting from the first meeting of the year (1947) were given in aid of the Mayor's Oxford Food Relief with another charity meeting being held at the end of the year in aid of the Printers Pension Corporation Day thus continuing in the pattern of fundraising that stadium staff, owners and patrons had participated in during the war years (ibid 11).
- 1947 was also the year that Calcutt was appointed director of the Bristol Greyhound Racing Association Ltd resulting in Bristol taking over the Oxford stadium. Although "the exact relationship between Calcutt and the Bristol company at this time was not known" he is thought to have "sold some of his interests in greyhound racing" at Oxford to them. This followed a period of some investment in the modernisation of greyhound racing equipment at the stadium and the subsequent year a new photo finish system was also installed resulting in new racing distances. This investment in greyhound racing was to however be promptly curtailed by the introduction of new tax legislation in the autumn of 1948. Whilst racing continued, its running costs were clearly having a notable effect on Calcutt who steadily turned his attentions to speedways. To this end, Calcutt was exemplifying a wider approach employed by stadia owners in their bid to secure their facilities during periods of slow growth in greyhound racing. As it turned out, this was a particularly productive period for Oxford speedways which despite its position at the bottom of the league was experiencing a huge boom in both attendance and general popularity within the community. In fact such was the rise of speedways during this period that greyhound racing was moved to Tuesday and Friday nights in order to accommodate speedways on the popular Saturday night slot (ibid: 13).
- The tax situation continued to have a negative effect on greyhound racing which was further reduced to single meeting on Friday evenings. By 1951, matters had worsened to the point where Calcutt began to contemplate the closure of the stadium. Criticizing what in his view was the discriminatory nature of the new tax laws -enabling the public to gamble freely in betting shops yet confronting them with considerable taxation if they attended the tracks - Calcutt continued in endeavours to find new ways to boost crowd levels. He attempted to raise attendances by increasing racing days and by introducing races where owners could train their own greyhounds in graded races. However despite these attempt and the fact that the budget of April the following year brought welcomed news in the form of reduced taxes for greyhound racing, Oxford Stadium as Baiden has noted, continued to be "truly in a time of depression" (ibid:16). Tote figures dropped by £100, 000 compared to the previous two years a situation that was further affected by the death Calcutt in August of 1952.
- Following his death, the management of the stadium was assumed by the Bristol Greyhound Racing Association, later to become Bristol Stadium Ltd. Their ownership precipitated a period of some investment in the stadium which included the introduction of ray timing systems installed later that year and the introduction of automatic starting a short while later. Attempts were also made to re-introduce open racing between 1953 and 54, however the National Greyhound Racing Club's annual report for 1954 concluded that "greyhound racing continued to suffer from the 10% tax imposed on totalisator at greyhound race courses" (ibid: 20). Despite this general economic downturn in greyhound racing, the stadium continued to trade into the late 50s .New events were introduced in a bid to boost attendance levels and profits. Oxford first major competition - the 'Two Year Produce Stakes' - was introduced to the

racing schedule in 1957 and went to prove to be quite popular provincially. Other changes also occurred to stadium facilities. The tracks in particular, which had until this point remained of grass, were also re-turfed that year (ibid: 21).

- By 1959, the “local Blackbird Leys estate was experiencing a population boom and many other changes which were to have a beneficial effect on the stadium were taking place to the wider area. The construction of the petrol garage in Sandy Lane, for instance was considered a much welcomed addition by greyhound racing patrons” (ibid :23). Indeed the 1960s, in contrast to the economic downturn that had generally characterised the stadium in the previous decade, were to inaugurate a new era of prosperity for Oxford Stadium. This began with the broadcasting of greyhound racing by the BBC on national television in 1960 followed by local coverage of the stadium by ATV Today a few years later (ibid: 23). In 1964 the Oxfordshire Stakes, an event carrying a £1000 prize, was introduced. It went on to overshadow the produce stakes attracting participation by some of the fastest greyhound in the country. The ‘good times’ continued throughout the 1960s which proved to be particularly productive years for the stadium. This success was reflected in development of stadium facilities. 1968 for instance marked the opening of the new supporter’s club by the Lord Mayor. Built at a cost of £20,000, Baiden has noted that “the building was state of the art at the time and was to hold a great place for the punters to frequent” (ibid: 33)
- The 1970s proved to be years of relatively slow growth. 1971 in particular was a lean year with the announcement by the company that no BAGS (Bookmakers Afternoon Greyhound Service) contract was to be awarded to the stadium. The latter in fact did not return until 1987 without which the stadium had to rely on large crowds. By 1975, it was announced that the stadium would be closing for good with Bristol Stadium Ltd selling it to the Oxford City Council housing committee. This resulted in the formation of the Save our Stadium campaign, a large group of Oxford Stadium supporters who objected to its re-development for housing. With a 27, 000 strong petition to keep the stadium, SOS were given the opportunity by the city council to find an alternative buyer. In the interim, and under new management, the stadium was re-named Cowley Stadium and both speedways and greyhound racing events continued well into 1976. A buyer– Northern Sports Ltd – was eventually found for the stadium in 1977. The same year also brought a boost to stadium in the form of TV coverage by ATN Today. Northern Sport officially took over management in 1978 with the proviso that the stadium would be used solely for recreation activities until 1983.
- Once again renamed Oxford Stadium, the ensuing years commencing with 1980, marked another boom period for the stadium a fact which was reflected in the extensive re-development of the some of its facilities. In 1980 for instance the general manager authorised the demolition of the long standing stadium stone kennels, later to be re-built as a modern complex. Two years later in 1982, Northern Sport Ltd, announced further plans to build a new £ 1.5 million complex to be constructed over the course of the ensuing five years. This followed a similar phase of investment into Oxford’s sister track at Ramsgate. Exerted efforts were also made to improve the Oxford Stadium’s national reputation. A new competition for instance – the Oxfordshire Gold Cup – with a prize of £2000 was introduced in 1985. Other improvements to the stadium also included the replacement of the Bell punch totalisator (a system used since its inception in 1939) with new computerised tote switches (Baiden 2009:46).
- Northern Sport finally unveiled their investment plans in 1986 and it was remarked at the time that “everyone in the greyhound industry was highly impressed with the brand new 150 seat Grandstand restaurant which took Oxford Stadium into the realm of a major professional track.” This new stand consisted of “four squash courts, six snooker tables, a gymnasium, sun beds and a sauna” (ibid: 51). Top jockey John Francombe was the guest of honour on opening night and a new video company – P.R Productions – was also brought in to record all races at the track.“The upward trend continued” into 1987 with “more great news for the stadium” in the form of a new BAGS contract which brought further financial security to the business (ibid: 52). Yet another coup for the stadium came in the form of its selection as the venue of choice for the 1987 BBC Television Trophy. The following year Pall Mall was held at Oxford for the first time, going on to become Oxford’s premier event.“The feel good factor” continued into

1989 when “Oxford was chosen to host the prestigious National Trainers Championship” (ibid: 57). This was also the year that the “most famous greyhound in history, Ballyregan Bob, made his final appearance in Britain at Oxford on the 3<sup>rd</sup> of October 1989 before leaving for the United States” (ibid: 58). To a great extent in fact, the stadium was generally characterised by a strong betting market and a “considerable amount of money was seen around the track during the late eighties” (ibid 55).

- By 1991, five years after the construction of the new grandstand restaurant, attendances were good and crowd levels continued to rise in the early 90s precipitated perhaps by the victory of an Oxford greyhound at Pall Mall for the first time in the event’s history. This was followed by the fact that Oxford also had a winner at the English Derby in 1993. However, despite the stadium’s success during these years, it became increasingly obvious that its parent company-the builder’s Hawkins Of Harrow- had begun to experience financial difficulties owing largely to the decline in the construction industry – a sector in which the latter had invested heavily (ibid: 64). The mid 90s saw a huge decline in the building trade, signalling disaster for Northern Sport (ibid: 65). “Further problems with their portfolio of garden centres resulted in Hawkins of Harrow going into receivership” (ibid). The sister track at Ramsgate was closed down for good.
- Oxford Stadium continued running with relative success and in 1995 the BBC Television Trophy was held here for a second time. It was eventually sold by the receiver to new owners Oxford Stadium Ltd in 1996. This new period of ownership marked some changes to the stadium. The chromatography labs were discontinued and the process replaced by random sampling. A new computerised photo-finish that could transmit results throughout the stadium was also installed. Moreover, by the late 1990s a new offer called ‘five good things’ had taken root helping to draw huge numbers of newcomers through the gates (ibid:69). Further developments included the construction of the go-karting track on the central green in 1998.
- In 1999, the stadium was once again sold to the Greyhound Racing Association Ltd. The latter was at the time the largest greyhound racing association in Britain and already owned five other stadia including the famous Belle Vue track. Their purchase of the Oxford Stadium led to a further investment in the improvement of its facilities. In 1999, the GRA began work on a new extension completed in March of 2000 which included executive suites and increased restaurant capacity. It also included a huge investment in the form of £130,000 spent on new track surfaces and a hare system. Further developments to greyhound racing included the introduction of another prestigious event to Oxford in 2001 – the Cesarewitch – an event which had started in 1928 and since held at famous tracks such Belle Vue and Catford. In 2002, GRA allowed Sky to televise the Pall Mall stakes which was regarded as Oxford’s biggest competition. This led to some reduction in attendances as punters stayed home to watch the event on television rather than attend the stadium. However, despite this, 2003 generally proved a great year for the stadium with attendance levels remaining reasonably high.
- By mid 2000 however, this mini-boom was generally slowing down with the GRA group experiencing some financial difficulties eventually resulting in their sale of some assets including Wembley stadium. At Oxford BAGS racing continued every week including some Sunday fixtures. This increased racing schedule saw a change in the demographic of stadium goers. The ‘regular race punter’ could no longer keep up with the form of greyhound and this type of race-goer was steadily replaced by a more diverse clientele who frequented the stadium as an evening/ weekend’s ‘night out’ venue. Saturday nights in particular became quite popular with this new crowd.
- In 2006, GRA Ltd and its remaining assets including Oxford Stadium were eventually bought by Risk Capital Partners, a venture capitalist business. Although the following few years proved bad ones for the industry as a whole, with the closure of stadia such as Walthamstow precipitated no doubt by the economic crisis that ensued, attendances at Oxford continued to be satisfactory (ibid: 82).

## CHARACTER ASSESSMENT

### SPATIAL ANALYSIS

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The Study Area is made up of a number of distinct spaces each of which makes a different contribution to the historic interest of the area and have a different relationship with the buildings of the stadium and surroundings.

#### [The racetracks and centre of the stadium](#)

The race tracks preserve the space and alignments of the tracks that were created in 1939. The tracks have been continually renewed throughout the use of the stadium, whilst the fences between tracks and the infrastructure of the mechanical hare, fencing and lights have been updated over time to maintain the functionality of the venue. Nevertheless the continued focus of the stadium on this space reflects its past use as a circuit for racing, flanked by stands and terraces for spectators. The openness of the space illustrates the historic function of the stadium as a venue for spectator sports and is important to this continued function. The centre of the area included a floral display in the past, making an important contribution to the aesthetic value of the stadium. Subsequently it has had a number of functions, including an American Football pitch. It is now occupied by a go-cart racing circuit adding to the historic uses of the stadium as a motorsports racing circuit and sustaining the significance of the central space as the focus of sporting activity.

#### [The greyhound paddock](#)

The paddock is a triangular space, enclosed on two sides by the kennels, which are set behind a covered walkway, and partly on the third, south western side by another covered walkway framing views across the open space of the racing circuits to and from the stands to the west and south. The preparation, parading and entrance of greyhounds from the paddock have formed an important element of the excitement of races in the past. The enclosure of the paddock provides some separation from the wider space of the racetracks, which is an important element of the experience of greyhounds arriving from the enclosed space within the central space of the stadium.

#### [The Speedway pits](#)

The Speedway pits space is enclosed by the surrounding maintenance sheds and changing room facilities used by competitors and the rear of the western terrace. The space is accessed from the stadium by the tunnel under the western terrace, which provides an important sense of drama for spectators as competitors enter from the hidden space (drawing on the historical imagery of gladiators arriving in the amphitheatre). Within the space the enclosed character creates an intimate character that has been greatly appreciated by supporters visiting the area in the past to meet teams and competitors and witness the activity of maintaining motorcycles and preparing for races. As such the character of the space is strongly representative of the stadium's historic interest, which reflects both its communal and historical value.

#### [The western car park](#)

This large open area is important for the function of the stadium and has some subsidiary value through supporting other activities that contribute to the vitality of the area, including motorcycle training. The car park is fringed by tall trees to the North West.

#### [The south car park](#)

The south car park fills the space between the entrance from Sandy Lane and the grandstand building. It is well maintained but otherwise a functional space that supports the wider function of the site as a sporting venue. Views across the space provide the first approach to the stadium for many.

### Sandy Lane

The stadium is largely hidden from Sandy Lane behind a high concrete post and plank fence in the east and by a high mixed hedgerow in the west. In places the hard line of the fence is softened by shrub planting within a grass verge. Sandy Lane is a surprisingly straight road within a suburb of generally curvaceous roads reflecting its earlier origins as a product of the inclosure of open fields during the early 19<sup>th</sup> century. On its south side housing is set back at varying distances with green verges between houses and the road creating separation between the later 20<sup>th</sup> century housing and the older features of the road and stadium complex.

BUILDINGS AND STRUCTURES: SITE SURVEY TABLE

Name & No.	Date	Materials	General description / Survival	Use	Contribution to Asset as a whole	Value of contribution
1 Grand-stand	C 1987/8 with an extension in 2000	<p>Faced with red brick</p> <p>With a grey synthetic roof</p> <p>The main elevation (facing the track) consists largely of glazed glass panels interrupted by courses of red brick work.</p>	<p>This is a three storey building located on southern end of site and is the first structure visible from Sandy Lane.</p> <p>Its back elevation (facing Sandy Lane) provides access to all three levels whilst that at front (facing the tracks) only offers access to the first two storeys.</p> <p>Although this front elevation is primarily characterised by its large glazed windows, an interesting feature (on the building's west side) is a row of small windows, behind which individual bookmakers would have originally been located.</p> <p>The rest of the building houses a restaurant with seating capacity for 300 people; 3 bars and executive suites.</p> <p>The building has been replaced and enhanced on a number of occasions maintaining its essential function as the primary viewing location for spectators but providing other uses and activity that support the overall function of the stadium as a centre for leisure and recreation that is fit for purpose.</p> <p>The building is in very good condition, being of relatively recent construction</p>	<p>At present, the building houses a number of leisure facilities. It is the venue of a dance and a taekwondo/karate school.</p> <p>Other uses also include its function as a meeting space for local church group. Some of its spaces are used to house office facilities for a security firm.</p>	<p>The original grandstand was destroyed in a fire c1944 and the current building (being a modern structure) is the fourth such structure built in this location, providing the latest in a continuing tradition of the use of this part of the area.</p> <p>The building lies between the main entrance from Sandy Lane and the racetrack, screening views of the activity of racing from passing pedestrians and motorists, but also using the architecture of the building to advertise the stadium's presence. Its position provides framing of the central space of the tracks illustrating their function as the central focus of activity within the stadium.</p> <p>The building has considerable communal and other associative (historical) value, contributing to the historic interest of the stadium.</p> <p>The presence of bookmakers within the main grandstand is a significant aspect of the history and development of gambling at the stadium. These 'bookies' were part of the tote system and stood in stark contrast – both from a legal and spatial perspective – from the local bookies. Not only were the latter's activities 'unregulated', but they were also spatially segregated and directly contrasted to the activities of the former by way of their positioning immediately opposite the windows of the 'official' bookies. With the distinction between the two groups being of importance, it was crucial that local bookies were not only set apart by some degree of distance but that they were also clearly identified. This was achieved through their positioning along the outer ring of the racing track. Their individual positions were marked by posts - suitably adapted for the purposes of 'bookkeeping' in three significant ways; firstly the planks (which were situated at equal distances) were individually spot lit; secondly, a wooden rest (about the size of an A4 notepad) was attached to each post at a suitable height for the purpose of placing bets; and finally a flag was mounted on each post to signal the individual bookie. (These posts are still present).</p> <p>The presence of large spans of glass also contributes to the building's significance. Apart from the great trackside views offered by the building, past users have commented that the idea of "putting people behind glass" was quite a significant</p>	Medium

<p>119</p> <p>Tote building</p>	<p>1939</p>	<p>Steel frame structure with walls flanked by yellow stock bricks.</p> <p>The front elevation is clad with profiled metal and incorporates signage.</p> <p>A metal staircase leads to the second floor.</p>	<p>It is a narrow three story structure with a mono pitched roof, located on the east side of the tracks.</p> <p>Modern windows – offering panoramic views of the go-kart and other tracks – have been added to the front elevation in the space that would have been previously designated for the totalisator display.</p> <p>Widows on the side elevations are original to the building while those to the back (date unknown) have been blocked up.</p> <p>The building was originally introduced as a consequence of wider government plans to regulate greyhound racing and housed the totalisator.</p> <p>Like others of its kind, it is cheaply built and designed. This uniformity in design reflected their general use. As the machinery that went in them was mass produced, so too were the buildings that housed them.</p> <p>This equipment would have been housed mainly</p>	<p>Aside from its original use to house the totalisator mechanism, the building has served various purposes over the proceeding decades.</p> <p>The second and third floors were used as administrative space for the stadium but were later adapted for office accommodation (c 1980).</p> <p>The ground floor level was originally partitioned horizontally. The back section (previously boarded up) housed the electrics for the stadium before its re-wiring in the 1970s at which point the copper wiring was sold and replaced by a sodium lighting system. The front section was open standing room for spectators who often used this space as a point for arrange meetings (during non-greyhound racing events).</p> <p>In the 1990s the building began to be used for the go-kart business, a purpose that continues to the present day. The second floor currently serves as a reception area for go-karting customers whilst the third floor is used as staff and office space. The lower ground floor has also been adapted for go-</p>	<p>aspect of their attraction to it. Whereas other spectator stands on the site are characterised by their open nature, the use of glass in the grandstand building added to its hermetic feeling. In setting some distance between the occupants and the main activity on the tracks, the glass served as a sort of 'diversion' from the latter activities, directing them instead to those taking place within the stand, including social activity.</p> <p>These activities were best suited to enclosed space. The building is associated by many as space of 'social consumption' (of food, drink and gambling) as well as a site of 'romance'. There are many who met there for the first time and who associate the building with various personal memories.</p> <p>The building has continued to facilitate interpersonal connections for its current users. In particular it has fostered the communities that have grown out of the dance studio and Karate school.</p> <p>From a commercial perspective, the secondary sale activities associated with the grandstand, particularly food and drink, were crucial to the stadium's success. Admittance into the stadium was free for some events with these secondary activities generating income.</p>	<p>High</p>
				<p>Despite the change in use and subsequent removal of machinery, the building remains of great significance as it contributes to the evidential value of the racing track and associated structures. It informs our understanding of the activities that took place at the stadium as well as charting wider developments in the history of gambling in the UK. Moreover, as one of a few such buildings left in the UK it has rarity value – it is estimated that of the remaining racing tracks in the country, only 9 have Tote buildings.</p> <p>It is cited by members of the community as being of great communal significance to them. As a space in which people would congregate, the building (in particular its ground floor space) has communal significance.</p> <p>Throughout their regular attendance of events at the stadium, people developed certain patterns. Regulars would for instance often stand on the same spot and as a consequence would get opportunities to form connections with other spectators. Over time, these connections developed into lasting bonds.</p> <p>Standing underneath the Tote building is cited as having been a "very communal thing to do" and the building forms a significant part in people's collective memories of the stadium.</p>		



<p><b>3</b></p> <p><b>East Terrace</b></p>	<p>C:1950</p>	<p>Concrete framed by wooden fencing</p>	<p>on the second floor with some other aspects of the mechanism being situated on the third floor.</p> <p>This equipment has since been sold and some alterations made to the internal structure. Apart from these changes the building survives in good condition and is currently used for other functions that support the continued use of the stadium for racing and motorsports in particular.</p> <p>Concrete structure adjacent to the Tote building. It is designed as a series of steps, rising to offer good views of the tracks to the front and kennels to the back.</p> <p>It survives in relatively good condition</p>	<p>karting purposes – it has since been opened up and is used as storage space for go-karts and other related equipment.</p> <p>Given its location next to the kennels, the stand is likely to have been used by dog owners - rather than members of the public - during greyhound meetings. The fact that the front elevation of the tote building (on which would have been displayed the scores) is not visible from this point would also have de-valued the space as a viewing post for greyhound spectators.</p> <p>Indirectly, this fact would also have served as preventative measure guarding against possible interference with the dogs.</p> <p>The stand was however quite popular with speedways spectators. For speedways, standing here would have been important because it is the first turn of the circuit.</p> <p>A second terrace – a wooden structure constructed on a metal frame – now demolished c1990, would have previously stood some distance from this stand to the right. It is visible in photographs c1970 illustrated in Baiden's (2009) book.</p> <p>The stand is no longer in use as a greyhound or speedways viewing post owing to the fact that these activities have since discontinued. It does however offer good views of the go-kart track which is still active.</p>	<p>It holds some social value for certain 'groups' connected to the stadium. In particular, its location (next to the kennels) and its positioning across the first turn of the speedways track makes it a structure of some significance for dog trainers and speedways supporters.</p> <p>As a feature in the wider 'landscape' it illustrates the development and past uses of the site.</p> <p>As with other terraces for spectators it directs attention on the central space of the tracks as the focus of activity in the stadium.</p>	<p>High</p>
<p><b>4</b></p> <p><b>Ancillary kennel building (Grading room)</b></p>	<p>c. 1987/88</p>	<p>Walls constructed of red brick</p> <p>Has a flat 'tin' roof</p> <p>Glass window in the front elevation.</p>	<p>This is a small flat roofed rectangular building, prominently situated in the middle of the triangular 'kennel complex' on the far east side of the tracks.</p> <p>It is framed by the row of kennels constructed along the perimeter of the 'complex' and is accessed through a long, narrow and sheltered walkway that leads on to the tracks.</p>	<p>Dogs had to be graded before each race and the building would have housed the scales used to weigh them. It is also the place where the dogs would have been individually brought out from the kennels to be fitted with their jackets.</p> <p>The walkway that connects it to the tracks served as an assembly point where the dogs would be lined up before a race meeting.</p>	<p>The building contributes to the overall historic value of the site as a physical reminder of the development of greyhound racing at the stadium.</p> <p>The walkway is of particular significance as a space collectively remembered as one of 'great anticipation'. The dogs' positioning on the painted slabs marked the beginning of a racing event. Announcements were often made about individual dogs before they were led onto the tracks and briefly paraded in front of spectators in the stands. In this regard, the communal significance of the walkway is comparable to that of</p>	<p>High</p>



5 <b>Kennels</b>	c.1987/8	Made of block work Asbestos roof Timber doors	Although its walkway is in need of maintenance, the building survives in good condition being of fairly modern construction.  A row of single height flat roofed structures forming a triangular shape that follows the line marking the outer perimeter of the stadium.  They are air-conditioned and were quite modern at the time of their construction.  They survive in generally good condition.	The floor surface – comprised of concrete slabs – is characterised by a series of numbers that are painted on it. These would have served as markers, correlating to a dog's individual position on the starting traps.	the speedways tunnel which is situated directly opposite on the west side of the tracks.  It is also here – at one end of the walkway – that a camera man would have stood, capturing each individual dog as it took its position on its marker. These first images of the dogs as they left the kennels (beamed across the stadium) were of significance for those wishing to gamble on the dogs as they often based their bets on such ephemeral signs as 'how a dog looked' as it stood before the race.  The complex contributes to the overall historic and communal value of the site as a reminder of past activities performed at the stadium.	Medium
6 <b>Net office and quarantined kennels</b>		Painted brickwork Wooden doors	This is a double height flat roofed structure adjacent to the tote building. It is built at a right angle on the far east corner of the 'kennel complex.'  The outer aspect of the building remains intact; however there is much damage to it internally. Certain facilities – such as the washing area (for the dogs bedding) – have been removed as have some the internal doors.	The building (comprising of four enclosed rooms, accessed via an open central area) was originally used to house a small veterinary office along with quarantine kennel spaces and a washing area.	Although the building is not considered to have any special historic, communal or other associative value in its own right, it is however of utilitarian significance particularly in view of its relation to the wider functioning of the 'kennel complex'.	Low
7 <b>Registration office</b>	c1987/8	Timber-framed, clad in wooden panels Wooden door Window on the side elevation	This is a small flat roofed cubic building, situated at the entrance of the 'kennel complex'. It is of rudimentary construction and expedient design.  Nevertheless it survives in relatively good condition.	It was originally used as a registration office for the dogs before the latter went on to be housed in the kennels.	Whilst in isolation the building appears to be of little value – given that it is of very basic construction – it does, in actual fact, hold some associative significance for greyhound racing supporters as a general spatial signifier of the performative aspects of greyhound racing. To this extent, the process of registering can be viewed as one in a series of 'preparatory acts' (that included weighing, jacket fitting, parading amongst others) that together formed the whole experience of a greyhound racing event.	Medium
8 & 9 <b>Starting traps</b>	c1948	Concrete base Framed by low timber fencing	These rectangular shaped starting boxes, located north of the tracks, survive today merely as empty recessed spaces signifying areas that would have originally housed the steel framed mechanisms that constituted the dog traps.  These would have supported a strong steel post about two metres high which would have been bolted onto a concrete slab adjacent to the	The space was originally used as the resting position for the starting trap.	Though much altered, the starting boxes make some contribution to the historic value of the stadium as whole. They form a significant aspect of the wider narrative of greyhound racing at the site and help inform our understanding of the evolution of a greyhound racing event.  Each box position marks a specific distance and the latter would have varied over the years. Gary Baiden (2009) for instance has noted how the installation of the photo finish	High

<p>10 North Terrace</p>	<p>1939</p>	<p>Concrete</p>	<p>starting box. A large beam would have extended from it, under which, the starting traps would have been suspended for the greyhounds.</p> <p>This mechanism was operated by compressed air and electricity and would swing across onto the track at the start of a race and swing back into the recessed space when the traps were released.</p> <p>The latter were released when the mechanical hare, travelling past along a steel rail that ran along the edge of the track, triggered the electrics – opening the doors as result.</p> <p>These mechanisms and part of the steel rail have since been removed and the electrics disabled. In fact, to a lay person, the present condition of the boxes gives little indication of their original purpose.</p> <p>This is a concrete structure positioned on 'a straight' at north end of the tracks. It is designed as a series of concrete steps which rise to give good views of the dog racing starting traps along with the speedways track. Its back elevation is faced with wooded cladding onto which advertising materials would have been affixed in the recent past.</p> <p>The structure is as much defined by the empty spaces that surround it on either end of its side elevations as it is by its material elements. It exudes an air of isolation being sharply cut off from other structures at both ends. These empty spaces are, to a great extent, visual echoes the forms that would have stood there in the past.</p> <p>What is now an empty space separating this northern terrace from others situated on the west for instance, previously marked the position of a timber and metal framed terrace that existed well into the 1970s. The latter is thought to have been removed at this time in order to provide access to the railway company for the purposes of maintenance. The railway most likely had the right of way since this is the only accessible point on the track in the sense that it is the only place that the ground is level—as one goes east from here, the railway drops off into a cutting, while to the west the height of the embankment increases.</p> <p>The stand is currently in bad condition. The</p>	<p>Originally used as a viewing position as it offers good views of the greyhound and Speedway tracks. However it is currently is a state of maintenance.</p>	<p>system in 1948 resulted in the institution of new racing distances.</p> <p>It is possible that the boxes date to this late 1940s period.</p>	<p>High</p>
<p>As an original structure, it provides connection with the early history of the stadium. As a space where supporters of the sports have congregated and socialised it has communal value.</p> <p>By continuing the lines of the terraced stands from the western terraces it also helps to emphasise the shape of the race track in the centre of the stadium with simple lines in an unpretentious structure that reflects the modernist principles of the stadium's functional 'pleasure architecture'.</p> <p>Its position draws attention to and encloses the central space of the race tracks illustrating their importance as the focus of activity in the stadium</p>						

11	Shed		Painted brickwork Wooden door	concrete steps have weathered badly and parts of it are eroding. Weeds have also begun to encroach onto the structure	This is a small flat roofed cubic structure situated on the north end of the track between the northern and western terraces.  Access to it is partly blocked by the extensive overgrowth of weeds that surround it. The structure is also generally in a bad state of repair.	It was originally used as a toilet block servicing spectators on nearby terraces.  In recent years however, it has been used as a shed primarily for storing the salt used on the tracks.	As an isolated structure, the building appears to add little to the overall significance of the site.  It is however arguable that it may be of some very limited historic value due to its position and association with neighbouring terraces.		Low
12	Western terraces	1939	Concrete and timber with metal fencing	These are two stands following the general curve of the track separated by a concrete 'tunnel structure' that runs between them.  Both terraces are in need of maintenance.	The stands were particularly associated with Speedway supporters given their location on a crucial racing bend.  The first terrace (to the north west) was an important Speedway viewing area. It is partially divided by a medium sized picket fence. Like the eastern terrace at the opposite end of the stadium, this space would have been restricted from members of the public and specially designated for Speedway riders and their managers. The unenclosed area was popular with children who gained an opportunity both to meet their heroes and get autographs, as well as to observe some of the preparatory activities taking place in the speedway sheds at the back ( by peering through the metal fencing).	The stands were particularly associated with Speedway supporters given their location on a crucial racing bend.  The first terrace (to the north west) was an important Speedway viewing area. It is partially divided by a medium sized picket fence. Like the eastern terrace at the opposite end of the stadium, this space would have been restricted from members of the public and specially designated for Speedway riders and their managers. The unenclosed area was popular with children who gained an opportunity both to meet their heroes and get autographs, as well as to observe some of the preparatory activities taking place in the speedway sheds at the back ( by peering through the metal fencing).	Being original structures, the stands (despite their present condition) contribute to the connection with the early history of the stadium.  They are, furthermore, of great communal value for the Speedway community who reflect upon them as spaces associated with valued personal and local memories.  The materiality (i.e. form) of the north western stand in particular, coupled with its positioning on a crucial bend and the important views it offers to the front and back, are factors that feature prominently in the collective memories of speedways supporters.  The curving lines of the stands echo the curves of the track and contribute simple, unpretentious structures that enclose the central space of the stadium, illustrating its function as the focus of racing activity and contribute to the overall aesthetic value of the stadium.		High
13	Speedways Tunnel Structure	c. 1949	Steel beams Painted block work	Situating on the western end of the site, the structure is flanked by concrete terraces on either end with a small, sloped roofed, cubic building constructed on top.  The passage that emerges at the centre is primarily characterised by its painted block work and exposed steel beams.  It survives in relatively good condition	The tunnel connects the secluded speedways sheds to the back with the central stadium space at the front.  It also housed a telephone which facilitated communication between speedways competitors and the referee who was located in the main grandstand building. Since riders were only paid according to their performance and would often dispute a referee's ruling, distance between the two parties was considered a vital technique of avoiding conflict.  The cubed structure above the tunnel originally housed a ticket office from which Speedway programmes were sold. It is open	The tunnel connects the secluded speedways sheds to the back with the central stadium space at the front.  It also housed a telephone which facilitated communication between speedways competitors and the referee who was located in the main grandstand building. Since riders were only paid according to their performance and would often dispute a referee's ruling, distance between the two parties was considered a vital technique of avoiding conflict.  The cubed structure above the tunnel originally housed a ticket office from which Speedway programmes were sold. It is open	As a structure that has been used throughout the history of Speedway at Oxford, the tunnel makes a significant contribution to the overall historic value of the site, helping to convey the general development of the sport at the stadium.  To this extent, it serves as an important illustration of physical and metaphorical connections between speedways and other stadium structures as well as with the wider community.  Moreover, as a space of great anticipation and excitement (analogous to the kennel walkway), the tunnel structure occupies a prized position in the collective memories of generations of stadium goers. As such, it makes an important contribution to the historic interest of the stadium through its association with the drama of past races whilst it adds to the architectural interest of the terraces to either side as a structure that illustrates the activity of the stadium in the past.		High

<p><b>14</b> <b>Speedways sheds</b></p>	<p>c.1949</p>	<p>Painted blockwork  Painted render  Corrugated iron roof</p>	<p>The Speedway sheds are a series of structures situated on the west side of the tracks. They comprise a mixture of sloped roofed open sheds; a pitched roofed rectangular building; and small mono pitched shed.  The structures are designed as two parallel rows facing each other creating a sense of seclusion comparable to that of the 'kennel complex' at the opposite end of the site.  They have suffered a degree of vandalism and survive in a state of some disrepair.</p>	<p>at both its side elevations, providing public access from the uppermost steps of the western terraces. In 2005 a hole was opened through its front elevation enabling the space to also serve as a commentary box.</p> <p>The structures were used as preparation and maintenance areas for Speedway motorbikes for competing teams.</p> <p>The open bays, which are designed opposite each other, would have housed opposing teams. Each rider was allocated a particular position within the bay.</p> <p>The rectangular building originally housed changing rooms; shower and toilet facilities and a medical room.</p>	<p>The small building at the top arguably holds some special significance in its own right both as a space associated with the valued ephemera of speedways (i.e. the programmes) and as a signifier communicating the symbolic links between speedways fans to their 'heroes'.</p> <p>The sheds are of great communal value both to the people associated with Speedway and the wider community who attended the stadium.</p> <p>They are also of historical significance as they help illustrate the development and past uses of the site.</p>	<p>High</p>
<p><b>15</b> <b>Kiosk</b></p>		<p>Painted brick and blockwork  Steel  Wooden shutters</p>	<p>This is a rectangular, flat concrete roof structure with hatches on the front elevation located next to the 'Director's Bar' at the south western end of the site.  It is strategically situated to be both near the original main stadium entrance to the south and the western terrace stands which were popular with Speedway spectators.  It has some cosmetic damage to the blockwork on its front elevation and a hatch is missing.</p>	<p>Designed next to the original main entrance, the building was originally intended to serve crowds as they entered and exited the stadium and was to this end used to sell food and other refreshments to spectators.</p> <p>When this entrance ceased to be used, the kiosk's position across from the western terraces led to its change of use to a shop selling Speedway merchandise.</p>	<p>The structure contributes to the overall significance of the site as one of a collection of buildings that communicate its history of development.</p> <p>As a space associated with various consumptive practices (of food etc.) it has positive associations as a formerly communal space.</p> <p>Apart from holding special significance for Speedway fans, it also likely to feature in the memories of the wider community given its original prominence as the first and last structure spectators would have encountered as they passed through the stadium.</p>	<p>Medium</p>
<p><b>16</b> <b>Nissen Hut</b></p>	<p>Before 1955 with extension by 1971</p>	<p>Concrete  Glazed glass panels  Corrugated iron</p>	<p>This is a long concrete structure with a curved corrugated iron roof and a glazed lean-to extension to the front.  It is typical of other Nissen huts dating to the inter-war years in its simple design and economic use of materials which would have been scarce during this period.  Though the external fabric of the building survives in relatively good condition, its internal layout has been altered and is presently in a state of disrepair.</p>	<p>Nissen huts were originally associated with army barracks and were designed as cheap, easily portable prefabricated buildings that readily lent themselves to a variety of uses. The existence of the hut at the stadium and its lean-to extension reflects the wider history of these huts, highlighting their subsequent popularity as public buildings.</p> <p>The Oxford Stadium hut, referred to as the 'Director's Bar', was originally used as bar/restaurant space during the post-war period and continued to serve this purpose until the construction of the modern grandstand building.</p>	<p>As a structure associated with various social activities and an important viewing post for the start of the race, the building contributes to the communal significance of the wider site.</p> <p>It is also of historic and architectural significance as an illustrative marker of the development of 'pleasure architecture' in Britain more broadly. The latter were often characterised by their cheap and simple a-historic/modernist designs, intended to distinguish 'pleasure' spaces from those associated with 'more cerebral' activities.</p> <p>To this extent the nature of the bar as a mass produced building type exemplifies the great preoccupation in stadia architecture with simplicity, utility and expedience of design.</p>	<p>High</p>

<p><b>17</b> <b>Toilet block</b></p>	<p>C 1987/8</p>	<p>Red brick Wooden doors Corrugated iron roofs</p>	<p>This is a rectangular shaped building of red brick construction with a flat corrugated iron roof. It survives in a generally good state, being a structure of relatively modern construction.</p>	<p>The wide expanses of glass characterising its front elevation coupled with its position along southern end of the stadium made it a prime viewing position for the start of greyhound racing events.  At present the building is used as storage facility for various machinery related to the maintenance of the tracks.  It was used as a toilet block serving spectators on the western terraces and nissen hut.</p>	<p>The orientation of the bar to provide overlooking of the track space helps to illustrate the focus of activity within the stadium towards the tracks and contributes to the enclosure of this focal space.  Apart from its utilitarian purpose, it is not considered to make any other significant contributions to the overall value of the site</p>	<p>Low</p>
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## ASSESSMENT OF SUITABILITY FOR DESIGNATION AS A CONSERVATION AREA

### SPECIAL HISTORIC OR ARCHITECTURAL INTEREST

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The following features contribute to the area's special historic and architectural interest:

- The site has been used by the community for greyhound-racing and Speedway with a history of use since 1939 (opened by Lord Denham) and evidence of an earlier unregulated flapping track in the same location.
- The location and character of the stadium illustrate the socio-economic character of Oxford's eastern suburbs during the 20<sup>th</sup> century and, therefore, have historical interest through their associations with its community. The area is representative of inter-war sport and entertainment within the city as part of Oxford's early 20<sup>th</sup> century growth in response to development as a manufacturing centre, representing an important stage in the development of the city as a whole. The area is unique in the city as an early 20<sup>th</sup> century stadium used by the public and with strong associations with the local residential community (two other stadia White Hart Lane and the Manor Ground have been lost).
- The area provides association with Speedway teams (Oxford Cheetahs among others) and competitors that were/are nationally renowned and with their supporters contributing to local identity and providing historical interest.
- The area provides association with national level Speedway competitions and is seen as an internationally prestigious venue within the sport providing historical interest. Association with supporters of Greyhound Racing and with nationally and regionally significant competitions and competitors (Greyhounds and their trainers). Association with particular neighbourhoods and communities of Oxford (East Oxford, Cowley and Blackbird Leys). The types of building in the area as a group illustrate the use, but also the development and evolution of the site and activities. The number of stadia for both greyhound racing and Speedway has fallen dramatically in the late 20<sup>th</sup> century and early 21<sup>st</sup> century. The Oxford Stadium is now a rare example and is unique in the City and County, in terms of the historic sports it represents. As such, the historic and architectural interest of the stadium would be considered as special in the local and national context. Use for other sport: The area also has associations with other sports including flat track racing, stock car racing, American Football and go-cart racing which add to its historical interest.

### CHARACTER AND APPEARANCE: A STADIUM FOR GREYHOUND AND SPEEDWAYS RACING

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- The survival of original structures of the stadium (or representative replacements) provides evidence of the greyhound and speedway activities that have taken place since, at least, 1939 and help in understanding the site and how it was used.
- The surviving Tote building is one of only 9 such structures remaining in the country and preserves its historic form as constructed in the 1930s and its relationship with the track, albeit with alterations to enable its use as office space. As such it contributes considerable architectural interest to the area. The use of the Totalisator or Tote was unique to Greyhound Stadia and represents a feature that contributed to the early success of the sport. As such, its survival adds to the historic interest of the area as an historic venue for Greyhound Racing.
- The Stadium Grandstand building frames the racetrack space and is built on the site of the two former grandstands, illustrating both the continuity of the site's use and the evolution of facilities to serve the changing needs of the sport and the spectators.
- Terraces survive. These provide an immediate connection with the early days of both main sports and are essentially unchanged since the late 1930s preserving the closeness of spectators to the action of races and shared experience with spectators past, providing considerable historic interest. Their long sweeping curves and use of concrete reflect the utilitarian and unadorned modernist ideals of the inter-war period contributing to the area's architectural interest. The covered tunnel to the speedway pits is a distinctive feature of the stadium creating a point of drama as competitors enter from the pits beyond and shares the materials and simple forms of the terraces and therefore also contributes to the area's architectural and historic interest.
- Ancillary buildings survive. Ancillary buildings including turnstiles, the sheds of the greyhound paddocks and the Directors' Bar are evocative of the development of the site and its long history of use as a sporting venue, including both surviving early structures and appropriate later replacements that have preserved the character of the stadium as a sporting venue. These contribute to the historical interest of the stadium, whilst the former Directors' Bar contributes architectural interest by illustrating the historic materials and building forms that characterised the early days of the stadium and its 'ephemeral' architecture.

- Speedway sheds survive. The sheds of the Speedway pits are both an element of the functional infrastructure of the stadium and have been a focus for both the team members and supporters who commonly interacted in this area providing historical interest.
- Open central area framed by buildings and ancillary activities and preserving the alignments of racetracks that have been used since the 1930s. This feature provides a connection with the past sporting events that have taken place which is evocative for past competitors and supporters, as well as providing present users with a connection to this past and therefore contributes to the historic interest of the stadium
- The ephemeral nature of the buildings, often using prefabricated, low cost elements is representative of buildings associated with the sport historically and their adaptability to changing circumstances, which also heightens the rarity value if any of the earlier structures survive.
- The location and character are closely comparable to those of other similar stadia elsewhere, which are (or were) generally located near to or within working class residential areas or manufacturing districts, providing workers access to sports that were affordable for both spectators and participants and requiring relatively small spaces for venues (compared to horse racing), as well as the attraction of potential prize-money.
- The stadium's architectural character, made up of simple structures reflects the general ephemeral nature of sporting buildings throughout the 20<sup>th</sup> century with a general absence of architectural pretension.
- The character of the space of the track and surrounding stands reflects the close setting of spectators to racing that, historically, was a key attraction of the stadia. This is well preserved in the surviving 1930s stands and the space of the tracks, albeit with renewed surfaces.

## CHARACTER AND APPEARANCE: LOCATION AND CONTEXT

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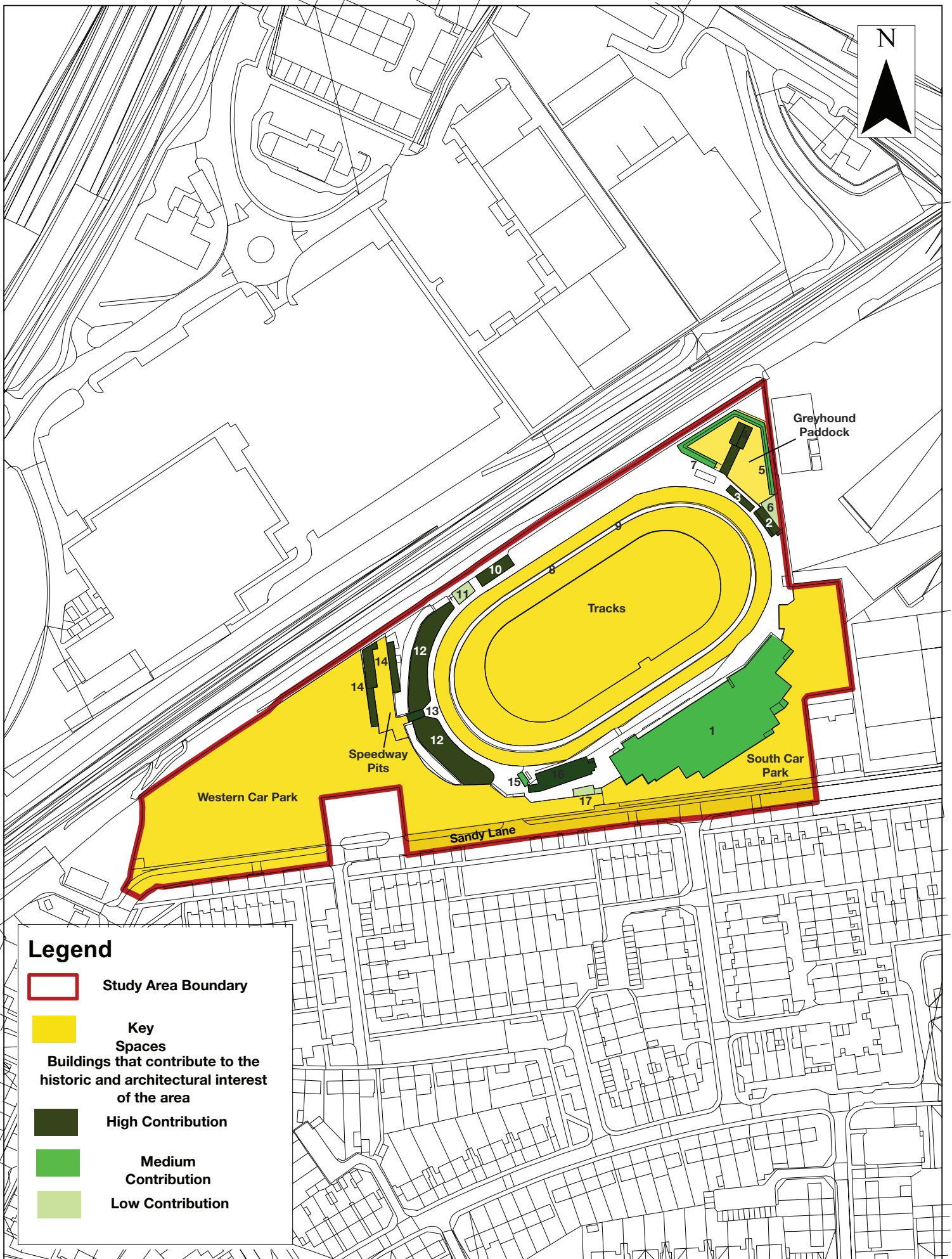
- The historic context provides understanding of medieval routes out of the city and Enclosure Act changes, development of railway connections and the process of development of the industrial suburb of Cowley over the countryside beyond the edge of the city.
- Watlington Road; this is an historic route from Oxford to Henley and London, reduced in importance in the late 18<sup>th</sup> century by reorganisation of the regional road network, which made this area a backwater until industrialisation in the late 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> century.
- Sandy Lane; a straight route forming the frontage to the stadium complex with an alignment that was established as a consequence of enclosure of open fields in 1817 and providing a remnant of the rural landscape that the industrial uses and later suburbs expanded across.
- Branch railway line; the railway line and embankment to the north were established in 1864 attracting industrial development and associated activity to the villages just outside the city.
- Industrial development from 1860s; The site lies on the edge of a district of former and current heavy manufacturing associated with car manufacturing including both Morris Motors and Pressed Steel and now Unipart and BMW Mini. The site of the Oxford Bus Company Depot, to the east of the stadium was previously a small iron works. The site is one of a number of sites with sports and recreation uses that formed a fringe to this manufacturing area, either supported by the factories or exploiting the potential market of workers.
- Blackbird Leys; – The first houses of the Blackbird Leys suburb faced onto the stadium site and were built in 1958. As an existing social venue the stadium has provided a focus for the social interaction of the estate and contributes to the local sense of identity and the character of the wider suburb. This has been supported by the variety of community uses that the stadium has served.



The site is an area suitable for area protection, containing buildings, structures and spaces enclosed by those buildings. The analysis of the history of the site and the contextual analysis provide sufficient evidence to determine the heritage significance the site holds. This shows that character and appearance of the area derives from this interest and provides physical evidence that represents the collective memory of those working communities and their leisure pursuits. The area does hold sufficient historic and architectural interest to be considered for designation as a conservation area. The following factors are considered to make the preservation and enhancement of the area's character and appearance desirable:

- Sustaining community value: The stadium is valued by both the local community of Oxford and a wider, national and international community of supporters of both greyhound racing and Speedway as a source of their community cohesion and identity.
- Local distinctiveness and identity: As an important historic site of sporting competitions with strong associations for the local community, but also providing connections with teams who have represented Oxford and as a focus for visitors to the city the area, including its use, its historical and architectural interest and the character and appearance that flow from them makes an important contribution to the distinctiveness and identity of Blackbird Leys and Oxford as a whole. It is representative of the development of Oxford and its communities in early and later 20<sup>th</sup> century.
- Rarity: The area is an example of a nationally rare form of development and retains an example of a totalisator or tote building that is one of only nine original examples in the UK which preserves its historical association with the track and surrounding stands.
- Importance of spatial character to understanding of significance: The ability to understand the area as a heritage asset is dependent on preserving its spatial character including not only the individual buildings but also the spaces between them such as the tracks, pits and greyhounds paddocks that illustrate the purpose of the buildings and contribute to the special historic interest and character and appearance of the area.





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## KENNELS AT WALTHAMSTOW STADIUM, CHINGFORD ROAD

**Grade:** II

**Date first listed:** 23-May-2007

II Kennels to Walthamstow Greyhound Stadium. 1930s. Concrete construction with steeply pitched red tiled roofs. A splayed linear arrangement sited at the east end of the track. EXTERIOR: To the centre is the tall tote board, which has a later face, flanked by original tall walls that curve down to the rear. Flanking and in front of this is the lower kennel range comprising individual kennels under pitched roofs. In front is a colonnade on single posts, those to centre with a pair of curved braces, and under corrugated roofs. At the end of each side wing that splays slightly forward, are end pavilions, these with steeply pitched octagonal roofs that kick out at the bottom and have prominent ribs with flashing. The windows in these are late-C20 replacements. The plinth has horizontal fluted detailing. Linking the end pavilions and enclosing the yard in front, is a low concrete wall. INTERIORS: Not inspected, but the interiors appear to consist only of kennels, which open directly to the open courtyard. HISTORY: The stadium was first built in 1931, on the site of the former Walthamstow Grange football club, by the Chandler family, who still own the successful enterprise. The complex has had a number of improvements and additions since it first opened, such as rebuilt spectator stands in the years just after construction, new glazed-in stands in 1965, and a new main entrance (to the north side) in 1969, but the notable frontage range (which is listed separately) remains as built in 1931. The kennels were built as part of this first phase. A license was obtained under the Parliamentary Totalisator Betting Act in 1934. The stands were rebuilt in 1934 and again in 1938, the latter being the date of the concrete south stand that survives, albeit altered. A photograph of 1952 for the Coronation shows the front lit up with neon lights in the same design as now, but with additional swags and reading, 'Long live Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II'. The complex underwent considerable updating in the 1980s, its second heyday. This is when the post-modern red tubular detailing was added, and the hospitality suites updated.

Greyhound racing evolved as a sport from the 1920s, out of hare and rabbit coursing, a much older leisure pursuit. It was the invention of an Oklahoma entrepreneur, O.P. Smith who invented the mechanical hare, and the idea came to England in 1925. The Belle Vue Greyhound Stadium in Manchester was the first facility established here, and another followed at White City in London. By 1939, there were 100 tracks in Britain, and London had at least ten. It was a hugely popular activity, and in 1946, attendance numbers rivalled those for football. The

number of surviving tracks is much lower, and 56 operate in Britain today.

**ASSESSMENT OF IMPORTANCE:** These kennels form an integral part of the first phase of construction at Walthamstow Stadium, the best surviving and most architecturally interesting vintage greyhound stadium in the country. The kennels have special interest as purpose-built kennels that feature a mini tote board and eccentric pavilions, altogether in a similar Art Deco-inspired style and materials of the Entrance Range with Tote Board, which is listed separately. The stadium has special historic interest as the best surviving and most celebrated Inter-War greyhound stadium, **a nationally loved building type expressive of developments in Inter-War mass culture and entertainment.**

ENTRANCE RANGE INCLUDING TOTE BOARD AT WALTHAMSTOW STADIUM,  
CHINGFORD ROAD

**Grade:** II

**Date first listed:** 23-May-2007

II Entrance range and totaliser board for greyhound stadium. 1932 with later-C20 alterations. Architect unknown. Concrete construction in Art Deco Style.

**EXTERIOR:** Landmark frontage to Chingford Road has tall central parapet (the tote board to the reverse) with stepped detailing to top and central clock. This carries the prominent lettering with WALTHAMSTOW slightly cambered over a racing greyhound over STADIUM. This is even more visible at night when the neon lights of 1951 (installed for the Coronation) illuminate the lettering and greyhound. In front of this is a wide low concrete range used for parking, but also Art Deco in its detailing. The open ground floor has wide bays with a splayed arch, then a fluted entablature, then tapered obelisks holding the upper, open air parking deck. There are horizontal tube railings, and the curved balustrade is a 1980s red tubular affair. There are integral car park ramps through the end bays to the upper deck, and all this is set on a low plinth with similar fluted detailing. Deep beams run back the depth of the car park range, which is open at the ends, and the fluted detailing continues to the return. Set back to right is a two storey entrance range with first floor offices that have a parade of single windows with three panes arranged vertically, and then a continuous horizontal band that takes the curved corner, in a streamlined manner. The entrance, marked 'Popular' is at the far right. To the left, the plinth curves round to the front into a low wall with fluted detailing. The rear of this prominent parapet is the tote board. This faces the track and the stands, and was computerised in the 1980s, but is otherwise as it appears in early photographs. Attached and to the southwest is the former stand, converted to a restaurant 'Classic Diner' in the 1990s, but this is of lesser interest. Not of special interest are

the separate north and south spectator stands, which while of some interest as parts of the larger complex, they are not special in terms of technological innovation, and both stands have been altered later in the C20, particularly the north stand which carries the main entrance of 1969 and which has been much altered and extended to the east in the later-C20. INTERIOR: There are few interiors of significance in the front section. 'Popular' entrance to south has metal turnstiles. HISTORY: The stadium was first built in 1931, on the site of the former Walthamstow Grange football club, by the Chandler family, who still own the successful enterprise. The complex has had a number of improvements and additions since it first opened, such as rebuilt spectator stands in the years just after construction, new glazed-in stands in 1965, and a new main entrance (to the north side) in 1969, but the notable frontage range (which is listed separately) remains as built in 1931. The kennels were built as part of this first phase. A license was obtained under the Parliamentary Totalisator Betting Act in 1934. The stands were rebuilt in 1934 and again in 1938, the latter being the date of the concrete south stand that survives, albeit altered. A photograph of 1952 for the Coronation shows the front lit up with neon lights in the same design as now, but with additional swags and reading, 'Long live Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II'. The complex underwent considerable updating in the 1980s, its second heyday. This is when the post-modern red tubular detailing was added, and the hospitality suites updated.

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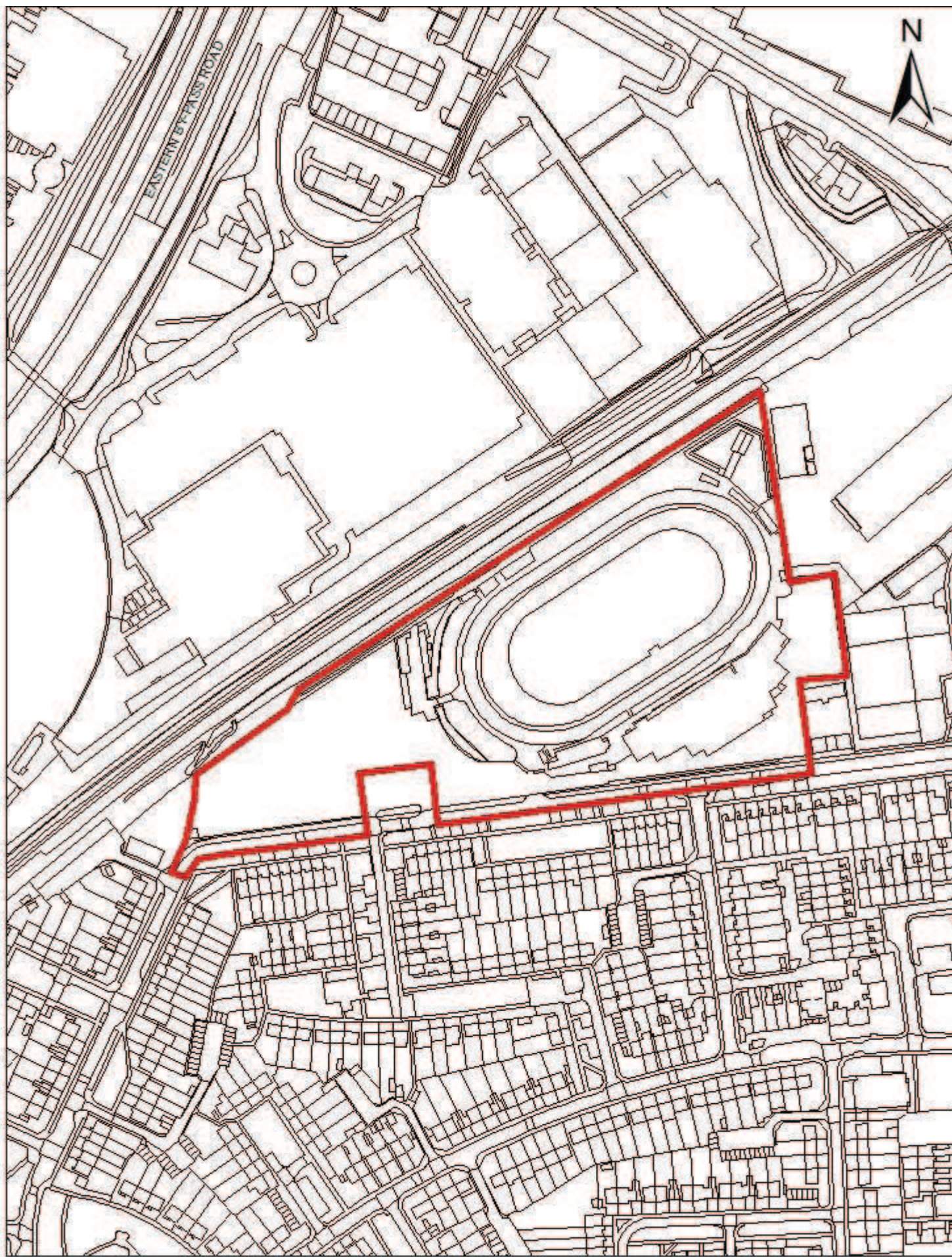
SUBSIDIARY: The east entrance from Chingford Road is flanked by a pair of slightly tapered pylons, with fluted detailing to plinth and top. The Kennels are listed separately.

SOURCES: Historic photographs in the collection of the Vestry House Museum, LB Waltham Forest. 'The Gamble that paid off' in *The Walthamstow Guardian*, 1st April 1955. 'The Stow is beating slump in dog racing' in *Walthamstow Guardian*, 21st Nov. 1969. Genders, R. *National Greyhound Racing Club book of Greyhound Racing* (Pelham, 1990) Inglis, S. *Played in Manchester: The architectural heritage of a city at play*. (English Heritage, 2004. Cherry, B., O'Brien, C. and Pevsner, N.

Buildings of England London 5: East (Yale University Press, 2005)

**ASSESSMENT OF IMPORTANCE:** The Entrance Range and Tote Board at Walthamstow Stadium meets the listing criteria for its special architectural interest as the key component of the best surviving and most architecturally interesting vintage greyhound stadium in the country, with bold Art Deco influences in the stepped and streamlined detailing. It is also a major East London landmark, with the neon lighting of 1951 design on earlier lettering being a fitting use of such architectural advertising. Furthermore, it has special historic interest as the best surviving and most celebrated Inter-War greyhound stadium, a nationally loved building type expressive of developments in inter-War mass culture and entertainment.





**Oxford Stadium, Sandy Lane  
Proposed Conservation Area Boundary  
Appendix 1**

Scale: 1:2,500

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Ordnance Survey 100019348.





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**To: City Executive Board**

**Date:** 9<sup>th</sup> April 2014

**Report of:** Head of City Development

**Title of Report:** Saving Community Public Houses

## **Summary and Recommendations**

**Purpose of report:** To

**Key decision:** No

**Executive lead member:** Councillor Colin Cook

**Policy Framework:** Policy RC18 (Public Houses) which is a 'saved policy' from the Local Plan 2016 and forms part of the Development Plan.

**Recommendation(s):** That City Executive Board:

1. To approve the preparation and publication of a Technical Advice Note to support Policy RC.18 on public houses
2. To support officers in working with amenity bodies and the local community to ensure public houses of heritage significance are included on the Local Heritage Assets Register; and to increase awareness of listing public houses as Assets of Community Value.
3. To support Kirklees submission under the Sustainable Communities Act.
4. Officers will also continue to monitor and review the operation of the Sustainable Communities Act's effectiveness in bringing forward new proposals for measures that would help to protect community public houses in other Local Authority Areas.

**Appendix 1:** Present Local Plan Policy

**Appendix 2:** Risk Assessment

### **Introduction**

1. This report has been produced in response to a Council motion agreed in February, the details of which are set out in para. 2 below. City Executive Board is asked to endorse a range of measures and actions to help protect community pubs in Oxford. The report therefore sets out the present policy position and considers how it could be strengthened, together with an assessment of the options and implications for taking action under the Sustainable Communities Act.

### **Agreed Motion for Saving Community Pubs**

2. Full Council at its last meeting on 3<sup>rd</sup> February 2014 passed the following motion that:
  - “Oxford City Council notes the possibility of submitting the following proposal to the government under the Sustainable Communities Act:
  - ‘That the Secretary of State help protect community pubs in England by ensuring that planning permission and community consultation are required before community pubs are allowed to be converted to betting shops, supermarkets and pay-day loan stores or other uses, or are allowed to be demolished.’”
  - This Council notes that if this power was acquired it would allow the council to determine if pubs should be demolished or converted into other uses and could save many valued community pubs.
  - This Council resolves to ask City Executive Board to consider and submit the proposal to the government under the Sustainable Communities Act and to work together with Local Works and the Campaign for Real Ale to gain support for the proposal from other councils in the region and across the country.”

### **Sustainable Communities Act**

3. The Sustainable Communities Act is a piece of legislation introduced originally in 2007 which does give campaigners and local people the power potentially to make bids / proposals seeking Government action to local authorities who in turn will ask the Government to implement these proposals. Since the Sustainable Communities Act was originally introduced the Government has now made changes to the regulations to allow communities to use the Act on an on-going basis, submitting bids / proposals at any time.
4. Officers have undertaken some initial research to understand how the Sustainable Communities Act could be used to help to protect public houses. This suggests that the experience so far shows that the process can in practise be quite lengthy. It needs to be taken forward by the City Council submitting proposals for particular bids; which have to be subject to extensive consultation with the local community before being presented to Government. These ‘bids’ are not normally bids for funding, infact the term ‘bids’ could probably be described better as ‘proposals’ since these often relate to requests to Government to amend some element of existing legislation.
5. In relation to the process if the bid or proposal is initially rejected by Government it would then need to be presented to the Selector for Principal Council’s (the Local Government Association at present). The Selector will then resubmit to Government for their consideration. If the Selector resubmits to Government discussions will then take place between the Selector and Government where both sides will ‘try to reach an agreement’ on a compromise around the proposal.
6. Early experience has shown that during the first round of bids / proposals put forward under the Act a number of individuals and community groups

(including CAMRA) proposed ideas to Government. Since then, campaigners have faced delays of more than a year while the Government finalised the regulations to allow people on going involvement in the Act.

7. The types of proposals put forward during the first round included for example one by Islington London Borough Council to require full planning permission before any facility (such as a pub or shop) is demolished; but to date no action has been taken by Government. An alternative proposal by another Council has sought powers to remove restrictive covenants put on buildings such as pubs, which are closed by national chains to prevent them from re-opening as a public house. The Government are currently consulting on these restrictive covenants.
8. The new regulations do now mean that the Sustainable Communities Act can be used on a rolling basis so local people can make proposals to Government at any time to strengthen their communities. The process is however rather lengthy, potentially time consuming and requires a significant level of consultation to assess the amount of local support for any such proposal. The proposals put forward by a number of different Local Authorities have had limited success; since it needs to be clearly demonstrated to Government that there are no other methods or means of achieving the desired objective that could be pursued instead. In these circumstances officers do not consider the Sustainable Communities Act to be an appropriate mechanism to protect public houses.

#### **Present Planning Policy**

9. Policy RC.18 in the Oxford Local Plan 2016 is a 'saved policy' in the Local Development Plan (Appendix 1) that provides some protection to seek to prevent the loss of public houses within the City. The policy recognises the two distinct roles played by public houses, both as important community facilities and as part of the historic legacy of Oxford. It uses a criteria based approach to safeguard the existing stock of public houses in Oxford. It requires an assessment to be made of a particular proposal according to a range of criteria including: marketing; evidence on non-viability; and a demonstration that suitable alternative public houses already exist in the area.
10. The main weakness in the policy results from some changes made to the wording of the policy by the Inspector at the Local Plan 2001-2016 Examination, which means in practise that the applicant only needs to satisfy a minimum of one criterion to meet the requirements of the Policy. In these present challenging economic times the issue of 'non-viability' is often argued by the applicant and certainly public houses along with many other businesses are facing difficult times.
11. The Town and Country Planning General Development Order makes it possible through 'permitted development rights' to change the use of a public house (Class A4) to a restaurant (Class A3) without the need to apply for planning permission. If this takes place then clearly Policy RC.18 cannot be applied. More recently the Government has introduced some

further changes to the GDO which allows 'temporary' changes of use to occur to a range of uses for a period of two years irrespective of whatever local planning policies may be in place.

### **National Planning Policy Framework**

12. The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) provides some useful support for public houses in urban areas. It encourages Local Planning Authorities to, amongst other things, 'plan positively for community facilities'; and 'guard against the loss of facilities and services'.
13. So whilst the Development Plan and in particular Policy RC18 represents the starting point for the determination of any planning application, the NPPF does comprise an 'important material consideration' for the Local Planning Authority in seeking to assess the value of the public house to the local community and the case for resisting its loss.

### **Campaign for Real Ale (CAMRA) Viability Test**

14. CAMRA has promoted a 'viability test' for public houses for some time. The latest guidance uses a range of broad factors to assess the viability of a particular public house. This includes an assessment of the 'trade potential' which explores the population density (catchment area); visitor potential; competition; flexibility of the site; parking; public transport' and prospects for multiple use. It then considers other key aspects such as competition case studies; how the business operates at present; and the potential sale and marketing of the property.
15. Policy RC18 does already include a number of these key criteria requiring evidence of marketing; non-viability; and that suitable alternative public houses already exist in the area. The supporting text makes reference to examples of factors that should be taken into account when providing supporting evidence for a proposed change of use from a public house. The policy would however benefit from the support that could be provided by a Technical Note, which could offer further advice and guidance to explain how this assessment should be carried out.

### **Assets of Community Value**

16. Officers would seek to promote greater community awareness of the advantages that can be derived from listing public houses as Assets of Community value, which would include contacting ward members and amenity groups. This would then encourage the local community and amenity bodies to come forward with their suggestions. The procedure for nominating an asset of community value is already set out in a guidance note on the City Council's website.
17. The nomination has to be submitted to the Head of City Development and should be made by a community body (such as a charity or un-incorporated body with at least 21 individuals).
18. If a public house is designated as an 'asset of community value' this would make it necessary for the owner of the property to formally notify

the City Council of their intention to place the building on the 'open market' for sale. The community body would then have an opportunity to purchase the site within a six month period from the notification date.

### **Heritage Assets**

19. There are many locally valued heritage assets which do not meet the criteria for national designation. The City Council has a register of local value Heritage Assets, which can be viewed and assets 'nominated' on the City Council's website. Pilot studies are running in four areas of Oxford (West Oxford, East Oxford, Summertown and Blackbird Leys), working with the local communities to identify heritage assets. This has been undertaken through external funding.
20. The NPPF (Para. 131) requires Local Planning Authorities when dealing with planning applications to take account of, amongst other matters, the desirability of sustaining and enhancing the significance of heritage assets and putting them to viable uses; and an awareness that the conservation of heritage assets can contribute to sustainable communities and their economic viability.
21. Officers will email ward members with details of those public houses already identified as potential heritage assets from the pilot studies already undertaken. This would be important information that could be used to seek to support existing public houses and avoid their loss to other uses.

### **Proposals to strengthen protection of existing public houses**

22. Officers consider that the following key actions should be taken:
  - To prepare and publish a Technical Advice Note to support Policy RC.18, which would provide more details for the prospective applicants to explain how this policy should be applied and the factors that need to be considered. It offers the opportunity to provide further advice and guidance on the key aims of the policy which seeks to protect public houses both for their community use and their historic importance.
  - The Technical Advice Note, together with the Public House Viability Test (CAMRA) and the latest Government advice (NPPF) could then be used as a basis for reviewing the present policy in the future.
  - The City Council wish to fully support Kirklees submission under the Sustainable Communities Act. Officers will also continue to monitor and review the operation of the Sustainable Communities Act's effectiveness in bringing forward new proposals for measures that would help to protect community public houses in other Local Authority Areas.
  - As a matter of priority officers will explore any and all opportunities for reviewing, amending and strengthening the present policy at the earliest opportunity as part of a Local Plan document.
  - To work with amenity bodies and the local community to ensure that public houses of historic or architectural interest but without a statutory listing are considered for inclusion on the City Council's Heritage Assets Register;

- To promote greater community awareness of the advantages that can be derived from listing pubs as Assets of Community Value;
- To support the work of other Local Authorities to collectively seek Government changes for measures that would positively encourage public houses to be protected as important local community facilities and often buildings of heritage significance.

#### **Climate change / environmental impact**

23. The proposals seek to provide further advice and guidance (Technical Note) to an existing Development Plan Policy RC.18, which aims to protect public houses. This approach would effectively be to maintain the status quo and ensure that local facilities, such as public houses continue to be available for the local communities within the City. This links to other key strategic policies in the Core Strategy, such as the spatial strategy, which has as one of its key planks the aim to reduce the need to travel. The Core Strategy has been subject to a Sustainability Appraisal and Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA).

#### **Equalities impact**

24. Consideration has been given to the public sector equality duty imposed by Section 149 of the Equality Act 2010. Having paid due regard to meet the objectives of that duty and of the package of measures proposed to safeguard existing pubs the view is taken that the duty is met.

#### **Financial implications**

25. There are potentially some staff and resource implications for preparing a Technical Advice Note; assessing sites for inclusion in the Local Heritage list and publicising the opportunity to bring forward individual sites for inclusion in the list of Assets of Community Value; and processing applications for new Assets of Community Value. The proposal is for this to be taken forward using existing staff resources but may need to take place in a phased way to ensure that there is no conflict with existing work priorities that the Spatial Planning and Economic Development Team are already committed to.
26. According to the Regulations 2012 for listing Assets of Community Value the responsible authority is liable for costs incurred by a landowner as a result of listing a site as an Asset of Community Value. This could potentially include the possibility of the landowner asking for legal costs to be covered and also for any costs incurred.
27. The proposal to put forward a bid through the Sustainable Communities Act does appear to be a rather lengthy process and potentially both time consuming and could have significant resource implications.

#### **Legal implications**

28. The package of proposed measures will serve to support the adopted Local Plan policy RC18, which seeks to resist the loss of public houses; and as such serves to ensure the effective implementation and delivery of the Core Strategy.

29. The Sustainable Communities Act does offer an alternative opportunity for bringing forward other measures but at this stage officers do not propose to submit a proposal / bid.

**Risk assessment**

30. A risk assessment has been undertaken, which is set out in the Risk Register attached as Appendix 2. All risks have been mitigated to an acceptable level.

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

Name: Tom Morris

Job title: Principal Planning Officer

Service Area / Department: City Development

Tel: 01865 252143 e-mail: [tmorris@oxford.gov.uk](mailto:tmorris@oxford.gov.uk)

**List of background papers: No**

## Appendix 1

### Public Houses

12.9.9 Public houses have two distinct roles: firstly, in mainly residential areas as a community facility; and secondly as part of the historic legacy of Oxford. The City Council will prevent their loss to alternative uses unless a lack of viability can be clearly demonstrated over a reasonable time-scale, which is not due to operational or marketing practices. Viability should take into account a range of factors such as evidence of the property having been properly marketed for its existing use at a reasonable price, the catchment population, other facilities in the area serving the same market, and accessibility by modes other than the private car.

#### **POLICY RC.18 - PUBLIC HOUSES**

**Planning permission will only be granted for the change of use of a public house if one or more of the following criteria are met:**

- a. no other potential occupier can be found following a realistic effort to market the premises for its existing use;**
- b. substantial evidence of non-viability is submitted; and**
- c. it is demonstrated that suitable alternative public houses exist to meet the needs of the local community.**



## Appendix 2 Risk Register

Risk ID	Risk						Corporate Objective	Gross Risk		Residual Risk		Current Risk		Owner	Date Risk Reviewed	Proximity of Risk (Projects/Contract 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			
	Policy and other measures	Threat	The policy and other measures are not taken forward providing no additional support to save pubs	No authorisation to undertake measures	More public houses risk closure and or change of use	3.03.14	1, 3	1	3	1	3	1	3	Michael Crofton Briggs		
	Costs incurred by landowner	Threat	The Local Authority is potentially liable for costs incurred by a landowner as a result of listing.	ACV Regulations 2012	Liability for costs of listing, which could include legal costs but cases are few	3.03.14	1, 3	1	4	1	4	1	4	Michael Crofton Briggs		

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## CITY EXECUTIVE BOARD

Wednesday 12 March 2014

**COUNCILLORS PRESENT:** Councillors Price (Leader), Turner (Deputy Leader), Brown, Cook, Curran, Kennedy, Lygo, Rowley, Seamons and Tanner.

### **145. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

None given

### **146. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

No declarations of interest were received

### **147. PUBLIC QUESTIONS**

There were no public questions.

### **148. COUNCILLOR ADDRESSES ON ANY ITEM FOR DECISION ON THE BOARD'S AGENDA**

Councillors Fooks, Goddard and Simmons asked to address the Board.

It was agreed that they would be heard when the appropriate item on the agenda was reached.

### **149. SCRUTINY COMMITTEE REPORTS**

The following Scrutiny Reports were submitted:-

- Finance, Performance and Risk – Q3 progress;
- Local Enterprise Partnership – Strategic Economic Plan

It was agreed that they would be considered when the appropriate item on the agenda was reached.

### **150. FINANCE, PERFORMANCE AND RISK - QUARTER 3 PROGRESS 2013/14**

The Head of Finance and the Head of Business Improvement and Technology submitted a report (previously circulated, now appended) concerning Finance, Performance and Risk – Quarter 3 progress.

Councillor Ed Turner, Board Member for Finance, Efficiency and Strategic Asset Management, presented the report to the Board and provided some background and context.

Councillor Craig Simmons, on behalf of the Scrutiny Finance Panel, addressed the Board concerning the Panel's recommendation to explore the use of Framework Agreements to provide project management and delivery of Capital Programme schemes.

Councillor Jean Fooks addressed the Board concerning the provision of Dial-A-Ride services in Oxford and her views on the Budget underspend. In response, Councillor Turner indicated that discussions with Oxfordshire County Council about Dial-A-Ride services were ongoing, and that it was anticipated that the underspend would be used within the coming year. Councillor Price, added that Council services had in fact increased despite that fact that an underspend had been achieved.

Resolved to:-

- (1) Note the financial position and performance of the Council for the third quarter of 2013/14, and also the position of risks outstanding as at 31<sup>st</sup> December 2013;
- (2) Approve in principle the earmarking of any year-end General Fund savings specifically to fund the Council's Capital programme;
- (3) Note the response from the Director and Board Member to the Scrutiny recommendation concerning Framework Agreements.

## **151. GRANT ALLOCATION - PREVENTING HOMELESSNESS AND HOMELESSNESS SERVICES**

The Head of Housing and Property submitted a report (previously circulated, now appended) concerning the proposed allocation of Homelessness Prevention Funds, with the purpose of meeting the objectives of the Homelessness Strategy. Councillor Seamons, Board Member for Housing, presented the report to the Board and provided some background and context. He added that Oxfordshire County Council planned to cut 38% from their budget for this type of work in 2015/16 and 2016/17, and it was hard, at this stage, to say with certainty how this would impact on the quality and quantity of services for the homeless within Oxford.

Councillor Jean Fooks addressed the Board, observing that she found many good things within the report, particularly on the allocation of the budget, and she spoke also about maximising the use of Discretionary Housing Payments (DHP).

In response, Councillors Turner and Brown indicated that there was no predictability about year on year DHP funding from the Government. There was an issue too that people may not apply for DHP funding as soon as they needed it, and it was, in any case, supposed to be a temporary measure.

It was also observed that many private landlords were unwilling to accept as tenants people in receipt of benefits, and that many of them were unable to compete in the private rented sector as a result.

Resolved to:-

- (1) Allocate the Homelessness Budget for 2014-2015 referred to in paragraph 21 of the report;
- (2) Delegate to the Head of Housing and Property in consultation with the Board member the authority to allocate the balance of the Preventing Homelessness Funds.

## **152. FINANCIAL INCLUSION STRATEGY**

The Head of Customer Services submitted a report (previously circulated, now appended) concerning the Council's proposed strategy for financial inclusion. Councillor Susan Brown, Board Member for Benefits and Customer Services presented the report to the Board and gave some explanation of it. It was important for many reasons to develop a financial inclusion strategy, but especially so in the light of a rise in debt and the use of food banks within the City. It was intended that the report would go out for consultation, and then return to the Board in July, along with an Action Plan for its implementation.

It was noted, with concern, that Oxfordshire County Council probably would not continue its system of crisis loans beyond next year. It was further noted that the consultation had been informed by discussion with advice centres in Oxford, and that delivery of the strategy would be in partnership with others.

Resolved to approve the Financial Inclusion Strategy for consultation.

## **153. CUSTOMER CONTACT STRATEGY**

The Head of Customer Services submitted a report (previously circulated, now appended) concerning the Council's Customer Contact strategy. Councillor Susan Brown, Board Member for Benefits and Customer Services, presented the report to the Board and highlighted its key points. She thanked staff working at the Customer Contact Centre for their hard work, noting that responses about the service had been positive.

Councillor Brown informed the Board, in response to questions, that quite a high percentage of people would be happy to make and accept contact by telephone and email, however there was a view that the website could be much more user friendly. Internet contact was significantly cheaper than other methods. People were happy too with face-to-face contact, but there was no appetite at all for video conferencing (as previously suggested by the Scrutiny Committee), and therefore this option would not be pursued.

Resolved to approve the Customer Contact Strategy.

## **154. LOCAL ENTERPRISE PARTNERSHIP - STRATEGIC ECONOMIC PLAN**

The Executive Director, City Regeneration and Housing, submitted a report (previously circulated, now appended) that provided an update on the progress

of the Oxfordshire Strategic Economic Plan. Councillor Bob Price, Board Member for Corporate Governance, Strategic Partnerships and Economic Development, and Leader of the Council, introduced the report and explained the background to it.

Councillor Price indicated that timescales were tight, as bids for the Local Growth Deal had to be submitted by the end of March. Thanks were due to Mr Nigel Tipple, the Chief Executive of the Local Enterprise Partnership, for his work; and also to the University of Oxford which was now working much more closely with the City Council and the Local Enterprise Partnership.

Resolved to:-

- (1) Formally support the overarching focus of the Oxfordshire Strategic Economic Plan;
- (2) Delegate to the Executive Director, City Regeneration and Housing, in consultation with the Council Leader, authority to make any necessary editorial changes, and to endorse the final Strategic Economic Plan prior to its submission to Government;
- (3) Delegate to the Executive Director, City Regeneration and Housing, in consultation with the Council Leader, authority to lead on negotiations with partners and Government on any invitation to enter into a Local Growth Deal;
- (4) Thank Councillor Price and David Edwards (Executive Director, City Regeneration) for all their hard work on this issue;
- (5) Agree the recommendations from the Scrutiny Committee as follows:-
  - (a) For all members to see the finalised Oxfordshire Strategic Economic Plan as submitted to Government and kept in touch with the outcomes from this bid;
  - (b) To provide a “governance structure” below the Board Member representative on the Local Strategic Partnership that can deliver on the aim of keeping all members of Council informed and engaged in the detail of progress against selected projects and the likely outcomes for the City and its residents;
  - (c) The Board Member and Officers to do all they can to reflect the City’s ambition of reducing inequality in strategic planning for all themes;
  - (d) The Board member and Officers to do all they can within the Innovative Place theme to produce excellent links to schools at a very early stage to support good quality advice on educational choices and career planning;

## **155. OXFORDSHIRE STRATEGIC HOUSING MARKET ASSESSMENT 2014**

The Head of City Development submitted a report (previously circulated, now appended) concerning the Oxfordshire Strategic Housing Market assessment for 2014. Councillor Colin Cook, Board Member for Housing, presented the report to the Board and gave some background and context.

Councillor Cook observed that the housing need of the City is beyond the City's physical and environmental ability to accommodate it; and that the case for outward expansion becomes ever more compelling. While the local authorities in Oxfordshire have a legal duty to co-operate, they do not necessarily have to agree, and that has the potential to create problems.

Adrian Roche (Team Leader, Planning Policy) confirmed that the Council would obtain an independent consultant's verification of the Oxford Land Supply figure, and an indication of the constraints upon the City. Councillor Price agreed it was important that the City Council obtained an independent view of unmet housing need.

Councillor John Goddard addressed the Board on this issue. He stressed that Oxford City Council, Oxfordshire County Council and the other District councils needed to work together on this matter to ensure housing needs county-wide were met. Oxfordshire was a very rural county, and just 1% of the Oxford Green Belt could accommodate 13,000 houses.

Resolved to:-

- (1) Note that the City Council will continue to apply the housing requirement figure from Policy CS22 of the Core Strategy for the purpose of calculating Oxford's five-year housing land supply;
- (2) Endorse the general approach to accommodating Oxford's unmet housing need set out in the report;
- (3) Note that a further report will be presented to council setting out the forecast level of Oxford's unmet housing need that will need to be met by the other Oxfordshire districts.

## **156. CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE'S PLAN 2014-2017**

The Head of Policy, Culture and Communications submitted a report (previously circulated, now appended) concerning the Children and Young People's Plan for 2014-17. Councillor Curran, Board member for Youth and Communities presented the report to the Board and provided background information to it.

Councillor Curran explained that it was important to ensure that the voice of young people was heard in the City. Oxfordshire County Council had cut its expenditure on services for the young, but Oxford City Council wanted to make this a world-class city for young people. However he was aware that the City Council needed to work with partners to broaden the scope of activities for young people. Councillor Curran was especially pleased to report that a number of activities aimed at young women were going very well. He praised City Council staff for stepping in, often at the last moment, when County Council staff were

unable to attend events for the young. Councillor Curran asked that the Board approve his signing off a forward to the report written by some young people, as he felt that their input into the report was very important.

Councillor Jean Fooks addressed the Board. She was in favour of the five priorities outlined in the report but asked that Cutteslowe be included more often when any activities were planned.

Resolved to:-

- (1) Approve the Oxford City Council Children and Young People's Plan 2014-17;
- (2) Thank Val Johnson and City Council staff for their hard work with this report, and for the young generally;
- (3) Agree that Councillor Curran can sign off an introduction to the Children and Young People's Plan that is written by young people.

## **157. CHILD SEXUAL EXPLOITATION**

The Head of Policy, Culture and Communications submitted a report (previously circulated, now appended) concerning the Council's involvement in safeguarding against child sexual exploitation. Councillor Pat Kennedy, Board Member for Education, Crime and Community Safety presented the report to the Board and explained the background to it.

Councillor Kennedy explained that the prevention of child sexual exploitation was priority for the Health and Wellbeing Board. Oxford City Council had been one of the first to produce a plan concerning this topic, now other Councils were doing so too. Oxfordshire County Council had produced a report to its Cabinet on this issue.

Councillor Susan Brown observed that the play "Chelsey's Choice" had been seen by many young people during the last year, and had been useful in that it had raised awareness of the issue and had brought forward some young people who felt they were at risk. She asked what was being done this year. Tim Sadler, Executive Director, Community Services, explained that colleagues at Oxfordshire County Council were considering a continuation of this work, and as it was important to get into schools early, would be looking at a wider package of measures. The Board felt that it was important to keep up to date on this issue.

Resolved to note the report.

## **158. INDEPENDENT REVIEW OF OXFORD CITY COUNCIL'S SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN - SECTION 11 SELF-ASSESSMENT**

The Head of Policy, Culture and Communications submitted a report (previously circulated, now appended) concerning the independent review of the outcome of the Council's self-assessment of its Safeguarding Children arrangements. Councillor Pat Kennedy, Board Member for Education, Crime and Community



Safety, presented the report to the Board and provided some background and context.

Councillor Kennedy commented that, overall, the outcome of the independent review is good news for the City Council. An action plan has now been drafted and is shown in the report.

Councillor Curran observed that the sexual exploitation of minors, and their safeguarding, was not just a City issue – it was one for the District Councils as well.

Val Johnson, Policy and Partnerships Manager, suggested that the City Council should now carry out a review of safeguarding for vulnerable adults, for which the Board expressed support.

Resolved to:-

- (1) Note the findings of the Independent Review of Oxford City Council's Safeguarding Children Section 11 self-assessment;
- (2) Agree the proposed action plan as set out in Annexe;
- (3) Congratulate Councillor Kennedy and Council Officers for their achievements in this important area.

## **159. FUTURE ITEMS**

Nothing was raised under this item.

## **160. MINUTES**

Resolved to confirm as a correct record the minutes of the meeting held on 12th February 2014.

## **161. MATTERS EXEMPT FROM PUBLICATION**

None.

**The meeting started at 5.00 pm and ended at 6.45 pm**

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