

Agenda

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Scrutiny Committee

Date: **Tuesday 1 October 2013**

Time: **6.00 pm**

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

For any further information please contact:

Pat Jones

Telephone: 01865 252275

Email: lstock@oxford.gov.uk

Scrutiny Committee

Membership

Chair	Councillor Mark Mills	Holywell;
Vice-Chair	Councillor Gill Sanders	Littlemore;
	Councillor Mohammed Abbasi	Cowley Marsh;
	Councillor Mohammed Altaf-Khan	Headington Hill and Northway;
	Councillor Jim Campbell	St. Margaret's;
	Councillor Van Coulter	Barton and Sandhills;
	Councillor Roy Darke	Headington Hill and Northway;
	Councillor James Fry	North;
	Councillor Ben Lloyd-Shogbesan	Lye Valley;
	Councillor Michele Paule	Rose Hill and Iffley;
	Councillor Craig Simmons	St. Mary's;
	Councillor Val Smith	Blackbird Leys;

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AGENDA

Pages

1 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

The Quorum for this Committee is four Members and substitutes are allowed.

2 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

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

3 WORK PROGRAMME AND FORWARD PLAN

1 - 28

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

Background Information

The Scrutiny Committee operates within a work programme which has been set for the year 2013-2014.

The programme will be reviewed at every meeting so that it can be adjusted to reflect the wishes of the Committee.

Why is it on the agenda?

This report allows Committee to:

- Hear updates from Lead Members.
- Consider forward agendas and issues.
- Review the Forward Plan

In particular the Committee is asked to:

- Agree to add Councillor Hollick to the Flooding Panel in line with the request for additional members agreed at the last meeting;
- Note that Cllr. Paule is Standing down from the Committee (note from the councillor is attached).
- Note that a request for an additional Labour member for the Covered market Review has been made and there are no volunteers.
- Consider the explanation to performance measure LP106 requested at the last meeting (see attached note);
- Note the movement in items that have been called from the Forward Plan and request any additional items.

Who has been invited to comment?
Pat Jones, Principal Scrutiny Officer, will present the work programme, answer questions and support the Committee in its decision making.
What will happen after the meeting?
The work programme will be updated and republished.

4 REPORT BACK ON RECOMMENDATIONS

29 - 34

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

Background Information
The Committee makes a number of recommendations to Officers and decision makers. This item allows Committee to see the result of recommendations since the last meeting and the cumulative results of all its recommendations.
Why is it on the agenda?
<p>The results of recommendations on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Treasury Management. • Qtr. 1 Spending. • Customer Contact Strategy. • Allocations Strategy <p>are the latest items on the list.</p> <p>The Committees Finance Panel met on the 6th. September and made recommendation to the City Executive Board. Timing did not allow these recommendations to go via the Scrutiny Committee so in line with agreed protocols these were made directly. The recommendations are included here and full reports are available in City Executive Board papers.</p>
Who has been invited to comment?
Pat Jones, Principal Scrutiny Officer.
What will happen after the meeting?
Any comments or follow up from the Committee will be included in the work programme.

5 CITY DEAL

35 - 48

Contact Officer: Sebastian Johnson, Strategic Policy and Partnership Manager. Tel: 01865 252317, email: srjohnson@oxford.gov.uk

Background Information
A member of the Scrutiny Committee has asked to include this item on the agenda for pre decision scrutiny.
Why is it on the agenda?
This item is presented to the Scrutiny Committee in order to provide an update on progress on the City Deal Bid to Government and the commitments being asked of Oxford City Council, the proposed governance arrangements and the timetable for presentation to the Ad hoc Ministerial Group.
Who has been invited to comment?
Councillor Price, Board Member for Corporate Governance, Strategic Partnerships and Economic Development, and Sebastian Johnson will attend to answer the Committees questions.
What will happen after the meeting?
This item will be considered by the City Executive Board on the 9 th October. Any recommendations from the Scrutiny Committee will be presented at that meeting.

6 COMMUNITY SAFETY ISSUES - REPORT OF BOARD MEMBER

49 - 52

Contact: Councillor Pat Kennedy (Board Member for Education, Crime and Community Safety) cllrpkenedy@oxford.gov.uk; Richard Adams (Environmental Protection Service Manager); 01865 252783, radams@oxford.gov.uk

Background Information
The Board Member will attend the meeting and make a short presentation on her priorities and work to date as the Board member for Education, Crime and Community Safety. A short report from Councillor Kennedy is attached.
Why is it on the agenda?
The Scrutiny Committee will be able to discuss the report with Councillor Kennedy, and make any suggestions as appropriate.

Who has been invited to comment?
<p>Councillor Kennedy will attend the meeting.</p> <p>Alex Wrigley (Anti Social Behaviour Investigations Team Manager) and Laurie-Jane Taylor (Community Response Team manager) will also attend the meeting to assist with any issues that may require clarification.</p>
What will happen after the meeting?
<p>Observations and any recommendations from the Committee will be passed to the Board Member.</p>

7 GRANTS PROGRAMME COMMISSIONING REVIEW

53 - 74

Contact Officer: Julia Tomkins, Grants and External Funding Officer.
Tel: 01865 252685, email: jtomkins@oxford.gov.uk

Background Information
<p>The Scrutiny Committee has asked to include this item on the agenda for pre decision scrutiny.</p>
Why is it on the agenda?
<p>The report presents the review of the community & voluntary organisations grants programme.</p> <p>This item will be considered by CEB on 9th October, at which time agreement for the approach to commissioning from April 2014 will be sought. The Scrutiny Committee will consider this item at its meeting and make comments and recommendations as appropriate.</p>
Who has been invited to comment?
<p>Councillor Clack, Board member for Youth and Communities has been invited to attend the meeting.</p> <p>Ian Brooke, Head of Leisure, Parks and Communities will attend to answer the Committee's questions.</p>
What will happen after the meeting?
<p>This item will be considered by the City Executive Board on the 9th October. Any recommendations from the Scrutiny Committee will be presented at that meeting.</p>

8 COVERED MARKET - INTERIM PANEL REPORT

75 - 88

Contact Officer: Sarah Claridge, Tel 01865 252402, sclaridge@oxford.gov.uk

Background Information
<p>The Panel has been conducting an inquiry into the economic health of the covered market, and in particular the effects of rents on the diversity of traders.</p> <p>The Panel has refined this brief to also include the long term relationship between the Council and the Covered Market traders.</p>
Why is it on the agenda?
<p>To update the Scrutiny Committee on the progress of the Covered Market Panel and to present the findings so far.</p> <p>The Scrutiny Committee is asked to discuss the finding of the Panel and give any guidance on conclusion and recommendation for the Panel to consider.</p>
Who has been invited to comment?
<p>Councillor Campbell, Chair of the Panel will present the report and answer questions from the Scrutiny Committee.</p>
What will happen after the meeting?
<p>The Panel will pre-scrutinise the draft Covered Market Strategy in mid-October and report back to the Scrutiny Committee with its conclusions and recommendations, before presenting the report to CEB.</p>

9 MINUTES

89 - 96

Minutes of the meeting held on 5th September 2013.

10 DATES OF FUTURE MEETINGS

The following dates have been agreed:-

5th November 2013
3rd December 2013
14th January 2014
4th February 2014

4th March 2014
1st April 2014



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.

¹ 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.

Scrutiny Committee Work Programme 2013 - 2014

This programme represents the work of the Scrutiny Committee. It is divided between those items to be considered at:

- Full Committee Meetings – Agenda schedules at the end of this document.
- Standing Panels
- Review Panels in progress
- Potential Review Panels

Potential Review Panel items will only come forward for consideration as resources allow.

The programme also lists:

- Decisions called in.
- Councillor calls for action.
- New items suggested for scrutiny by councillors or residents.

Full Committee Meetings

Topic	Area(s) for focus	Progress	Lead and other Councillors
Thames Water investment to improve flooding and sewage issues in the City.	To consider the experience of Swindon Council in influencing Thames Water.	Committee agreed to extend the Panel membership to allow a group of councillors to meet officers in October to take a brief on: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The amount of investment already made by TW. • What further investment is needed. • Advice on our priorities for this 	Lead: Councillor Darke Councillors Pressel, Hollick and Jones.

		<p>investment.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What are the City Council responsibilities as riparian owners and what money is available to deliver on these responsibilities. • Any lessons that can be learnt from Swindon. <p>This Group will then advise the committee on the best focus for this item.</p>	
Discretionary Housing Payments	Quarterly updates on spending, claimant/property profiles, and issues and knock on effects.	<p>Report to September meeting.</p> <p>Committee asked for more information in subsequent reports. Councillor Coulter to persue.</p>	Lead: Councillor Coulter.
Performance monitoring	Quarterly report on a set of Corporate and service measures chosen by the Committee.	<p>Councillors met and agreed 2 performance sets:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Scrutiny Committee • Housing Panel <p>Qtrly meetings scheduled.</p> <p>5/9/2013 meeting – clarification on LP106 requested.</p>	Councillors Campbell, Simmons, Coulter and Darke.
Council Tax exemption for	Two councillors to talk to officers	November meeting to take issues.	Lead: Councillor

students. Is this being applied consistently and managed.	about the process and report back to the committee if there is an issue to follow up on.		Simmons.
Fusion Leisure Contract	Leisure centre usage and the engagement in all leisure activities across the City with a particular focus on engagement of residents from our most deprived wards.	April meeting.	Lead: Councillor Coulter. Councillor Fry has expressed an interest in this item.
Community Safety	Issue to be decided on after consultation with the Board Member.	Discussion with Board Member at the October meeting	All Committee. Councillor Jones has expressed an interest in this issue.
The method by which the scale of new buildings and extensions is indicated in planning applications, in particular an evaluation of the agreed pilot scheme based on the practice in Swiss Cantons.	Evaluation of the pilot in City development.	Date check needed	Lead: Councillor Fry. Councillor Jones has expressed an interest in this issue.
Use of Social Media by the Council	Review proposals within the Public Engagement Strategy.	October Meeting alongside the Public Engagement Strategy	Lead: Councillor Brett.
Any item called from the	To consider and comment on issues	The following have been considered by	Lead: Councillor Mills.

<p>Forward Plan for pre decision scrutiny.</p>	<p>to be decided by the City Executive Board.</p>	<p>the Committee:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discretionary Housing Payments Scheme – Recommendations made to CEB. • End of year integrated report – Issues raised for inclusion in the scrutiny programme. • Corporate Debt Management Policy – No actions. • Appointment of the main contractor for the Affordable Homes Programme – No actions. • Youth Ambition Strategy – Recommendations made to CEB. • Low Emissions Strategy and Air Quality Action Plan – Recommendations made to CEB. • Riverside Land – Acquisition – September meeting(delayed to November meeting). • Customer Contact Strategy – September meeting – recommendations made to CEB on the 11th. September. • Oxford Fund – (item delayed indefinitely). 	
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		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Grants Programme Commissioning Review – September meeting (delayed to October meeting). • City Deal – September meeting (delayed to October meeting). • Public Engagement Strategy – October meeting (delayed to November meeting). • Oxpens Master Plan consultation outcome – November meeting. 	
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07

Standing Panels

Topic	Area(s) for focus	Progress	Nominated councillors
Housing – All strategic and landlord issues considered within the Scrutiny Function.	<p>Issues:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Allocation Policies and how we communicate, give advice and take account of feedback. • Decent Homes Standard – where do we go next in investment in our stock? • Regeneration on estates – what are our ambitions and how do we deliver and engage communities. <p>Items for pre decision scrutiny:</p>		<p>No substitutions allowed. Lead: Councillor Smith.</p> <p>Co-opted Member – Linda Hill Councillor Hollick, Sanders and McCready.</p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Housing Strategy Action Plan periodic review – September meeting • Housing Strategy refresh – September meeting. • Long term affordable housing for homelessness prevention – September meeting. • Allocations review and changes to the Allocations Policy – September meeting. 		
Finance Panel – All finance issues considered within the Scrutiny Function.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Quarterly budget monitoring. • Medium Term Financial Strategy and budget review. • “Proper Body” for scrutiny of the Treasury Management Strategy and Function. 		<p>No substitutions allowed. Lead: Councillor Simmons.</p> <p>Councillors Fry, Darke and Fooks.</p>

Review Panels in progress

Topic	Scope	Progress	Nominated councillors
Covered Market Strategy and Leasing Strategy.	Scope: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pre-scrutiny and engagement with the developing Covered 	The Group is currently observing the Covered Market Stakeholder engagement.	No substitutions allowed.

	<p>Market Strategy and Leasing Strategy.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Independent engagement with the Covered Market Traders Association. • Review of the leasing decision for the unit formerly occupied by Palm's Delicatessen. • Consideration of comparative data from similar markets. 	<p>Alongside this:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Face to face consultation with Market Traders has taken place. • Visits to 4 London markets and Bristol market have happened. • Interviews with Officers and Board Members has taken place. <p>Interim findings to the October Scrutiny Committee. Final report expected in November.</p> <p>Programmed to finish in November</p>	<p>Lead: Councillor Campbell.</p> <p>Councillors Fooks , Van Nooijen (resigned), Clarkson and Benjamin</p> <p>Councillor van Nooijen resigned from the Panel. Labour members asked if they wished to replace him.</p>
<p>Recycling Rates – Are our targets ambitious enough.</p>	<p>Scope:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consider our current policies and their effects. • Review with service officers barriers to improvement alongside best practice and new initiatives. 	<p>The Group have identified a number of areas for potential improvement and are currently working with officers to explore these.</p> <p>The Group has agreed to focus its efforts around reward and penalty schemes taking in a broad range of suggestions.</p> <p>Data gathering is underway.</p>	<p>No substitutions allowed.</p> <p>Lead: Councillor Fry.</p> <p>Councillors Simmons and Jones</p>

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Information has been gathered on the incentives currently used by the Council and the effects of these. Information is being gathered from WRAP and other authorities on incentives and outcomes. <p>Programmed to finish no later than November.</p>	
<p>Enfranchisement and Empowerment.</p>	<p>Scope: As census data is published we begin to see the diverse and changing nature of Oxford and the number of people who failed to complete details without a least 1 reminder. Alongside this there are a number of properties with no one registered to vote.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> What effect does this have on our understanding of Oxford's communities? Do we understand why some households/communities choose not to engage? What is the extent of this democratic deficit? What does this mean for 	<p>Planning is underway for the Group to run 3 focus groups talking to the Somali, Pakistani and Polish communities to understand the extent of their knowledge of public services and issues they have with engagement. These will happen in September 2013.</p> <p>Programmed to finish in October.</p> <p>Focus groups delayed.</p>	<p>No substitutions allowed.</p> <p>Lead: Councillor Darke.</p> <p>Councillors Jones and O'Hara.</p>

	communities, services and funding?		
The effects and value of the City's investment in educational attainment at primary level.	<p>Scope: To partner with a participating school to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • See the on the ground effects of the KRM model. • Understand the effects for children of all ability types. • Hear and see how the school copes with the cultural and professional challenges. • See how school inspectors respond. • Understand the targets set by the school management team and the part KRM plays in this. <p>Latterly the group has also decided to look at absenteeism.</p>	<p>The Group has agreed continuing discussions with its partner school which will happen in July.</p> <p>Recent membership changes to the Group have slowed progress.</p> <p>Work with the school will continue for a third term.</p>	<p>No substitutions allowed.</p> <p>Lead: Not nominated</p> <p>Councillors Campbell, Jones, Coulter, Paule and Khan.</p>
Mutual Exchanges between Council Tenants.	<p>Scope: To consider the under occupancy in the Council's stock and the potential for mutual exchanges to support those tenants affected by the changes to benefits and in particular the "bedroom tax".</p>	<p>Interviews with tenants who are at various stages of the Mutual Exchange process have been completed.</p> <p>Interviews with scheme administrators have been completed.</p>	<p>No substitutions allowed.</p> <p>Housing Panel with Linda Hill (Lead) tenant.</p>

	<p>To consider what changes and support is needed to make mutual exchanges a more useful tool for tenants.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Interview a range of tenants who have just registered to move. <p>Interview a range of tenants at the point of swap within the mutual exchange system.</p>	Observation of mutual exchange events is underway.	
Budget Review	<p>Scope: Review of the budget and Medium Term Financial Plan – focus to be agreed.</p>		Members of the Finance Standing Panel.

Potential Review Panels – to be taken when resources allow (no particular order)

Topic	Area(s) for focus	Nominated councillors
Tracking the experience of a few families affected by benefit changes to record the affects in a holistic way.	Initial scoping with Lead Councillor	Lead: Councillor Smith

Items Called in and Councillor Calls for Action

None

New suggestion from Councillors or Residents

None

Committee Agenda Schedules

Each agenda will have 2 standing items:

- Work programme and recommendation progress
- Forward Plan

Date	Agenda Item
4 th . June	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Scrutiny operating arrangements. 2. Forward Plan. 3. Pre-scrutiny – Discretionary Housing Payments. 4. Pre-scrutiny – End of Year Integrated Report. 5. Pre-scrutiny – Corporate Deb Management Policy. 6. Pre-scrutiny – Appointment of Main Contractor for Affordable Homes Programme.
2 nd . July	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Work programme selection and set up. 2. Fusion Contract End of Year Performance 2012 - 2013. 3. Pre-scrutiny – Emissions Strategy and Air Quality Action Plan. 4. Pre-scrutiny- Youth Ambition Strategy.
5 th . September	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Performance Monitoring – Qtr. 1. 2. Discretionary Housing Payments – Monitoring Report. 3. Pre-scrutiny - Riverside Land(item delayed at CEB). 4. Pre-scrutiny -Customer Contact Strategy. 5. Pre-scrutiny -Oxfutures Fund (item delayed indefinitely) 6. Pre-scrutiny – City Deal (item delayed at CEB)) 7. Pre-scrutiny -Grants Programme Commissioning Review (item delayed at CEB).
1 st . October	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Community Safety issues – Board Member. 2. Interim Covered Market – Panel report. 3. Pre-scrutiny – City Deal. 4. Pre-scrutiny – Review of the Community and Voluntary Organisations Grants Programme.
5 th . November	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Performance Monitoring – Qtr. 2. 2. Pre-scrutiny - Oxpens Master Plan – consultation outcome. 3. Discretionary Housing Payments – Monitoring Report. 4. Pre-scrutiny - Public Engagement Strategy. 5. Pre-scrutiny – Riverside Land 6. Use of Social Media by the Council. 7. Student Council Tax Exemptions – issues. 8. Enfranchisement and Empowerment – Panel

	<p>report.</p> <p>9. Recycling – Panel report</p> <p>10. Final Covered Market Report.</p>
3 rd . December	1. Panel advise on Thames Water investment.
14 th . January	1. Public Involvement Strategy (consultation outcome).
4 th . February	<p>1. Discretionary Housing Payments – Monitoring Report.</p> <p>2. Performance Monitoring – Qtr. 3.</p>
4 th . March	1. Education Attainment Panel report.
1 st . April	1. Leisure centre usage and the engagement in all leisure activities across the City with a particular focus on engagement of residents from our most deprived wards.

Finance Standing Panel

Dates	Agenda Items
6 th . September 5.00pm.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Quarter 1 spending against budget. 2. Treasury Management outturn 2012 – 2013. 3. Quarter 1 2013 – 2014 Treasury Management performance. 4. Panel work programme.
7 th . November 5.30pm	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Quarter 2 spending against budget. 2. Quarter 2 2013 – 2014 Treasury Management performance. 3. Budget review scope and timetable. 4. Contingencies detail 2008 to date. 5. Modelled effects of the agreed transfer of assets from the Housing Revenue Account to the General Fund.
6 th . February 2014 at 6.00pm.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Quarter 3 spending against budget. 2. Quarter 3 Treasury Management performance. 3. Draft Treasury Management Strategy 2014 - 2015

Housing Standing Panel

Outline –issues still to be developed by Panel

The Scrutiny Committee has asked that this Panel also take issues from the Forward Plan related to the Housing theme. Addition dates have been reserved to allow this to happen if necessary, these are:

- 3rd. October.
- 5th December (used).
- 15th. January 2014.
- 6th. March 2014.
- 3rd. April 2014.

Dates	Agenda Items
3 rd . September	1. Housing Strategy Action Plan.

5.00pm.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 2. Long term affordable housing for homelessness prevention. 3. Allocations review and changes to the Allocations Policy. 4. Performance monitoring – Housing Measures – Qtr. 1. 5. Allocation Policies and how we communicate, give advice and take account of feedback. 6. Panel work programme.
3 rd . October 5.00pm.	Provisional
4 th . November at 5.00pm.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Performance monitoring – Housing Measures- Qtr. 2. Item to include a report back on performance against CS002 and CS005 2. Outcome from review of the Mutual Exchange process. 3. Estate Regeneration – Scope 4. Communications Strategy for the Allocations Scheme 5. Management arrangements – Temporary Accommodation? 6. Follow up on benefits performance indicators.
5 th . December at 5.00pm.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Housing Strategy refresh. 2. Management arrangements – Temporary Accommodation?
15 th . January 2014 at 5.00pm.	Provisional <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Possible Asset Management Strategy – Oxford Standard
7 th . February at 5.00pm.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Performance monitoring – Housing Measures – Qtr. 3. 2. Possible Asset Management Strategy – Oxford Standard
6 th . March at 5.00pm.	Provisional
3 rd . April at 5.00pm.	Provisional

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Scrutiny Committee – 1st October 2013.

Agenda item 3; Work Programme and Forward Plan

1. Resignation of Cllr Paule from the Committee

Cllr Paule regrets that she must stand down from the Scrutiny Committee:-

I am having to withdraw from Scrutiny Committee because of a regular clash with the Tenant and Residents Association meeting on Rose Hill, which is also held on the first Tuesday monthly. I am sure you will appreciate the importance of the local councillors being present at the TRA

I'd be grateful if you could convey my thanks to committee members and officers for an interesting and helpful insight into this aspect of the council's work

Best wishes

Cllr Michele Paule

2. At its last meeting, members of the Committee expressed interest in finding out some further information on the following performance measure:

Performance measure LP106 'to increase participation (number of visits) at our leisure centres by our target groups'

Lucy Cherry (Leisure Manager) has provided the following information:-

The annual target is to increase the number of visits on the 2012/13 baseline by 5%. This is a year on year target established within the management agreement with the Councils leisure provider Fusion Lifestyle. In 2012/13 there was more than a 110 per cent increase in visits by this target group when compared with 2009/10.

Target groups are those established within the management agreement and are defined as those people

- *under 17 years of age*
- *50 years and over*
- *living within designated areas of deprivation*
- *with disabilities*
- *from ethnic groups.*

Fusion have improved marketing and promotion for facilities, introduced offers to encourage visits and are widely promoting schemes, activities and offers (including our Bonus Concessionary offer for those less able to afford to participate). More than 189,000 home page views have taken place on facility Webpages since April 2013 and outreach work with communities and community clubs is increasing.

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FORWARD PLAN FOR THE PERIOD OCTOBER 2013 - JANUARY 2014

The Forward Plan gives information about all executive decisions (including "key decisions") the City Executive Board and Single Board Members are expected to take over the forthcoming four-month period. It also contains information about all key decisions Council officers are expected to take over the forthcoming four-month period. A "key decision", except in special or urgent circumstances, cannot be taken unless it has appeared in the Forward Plan for 28 days before the key decision is made. The Forward Plan also contains information about matters that are likely to be taken in private.

Key decisions

A key decision as defined in Regulations means an executive decision which is likely:-

"(a) To result in the council incurring expenditure which is, or the making of savings which are, significant having regard to the council's budget for the service or function to which the decision relates; or

(b) To be significant in terms of its effects on communities living or working in an area comprising two or more wards in the council's area.

The guidance figures for significant items in financial terms as far as the City Council is concerned is £500,000.

Private meetings

Part or the whole or some or all of the items in this Forward Plan may be taken at a meeting not open in part or in whole to the press or public on one of the grounds in the Local Government (Access to Information) (Variation) Order 2006.

Making representations on matters or objections to taking matters in private

If you wish to make representations about any matter listed in the Forward Plan, or about taking any part of a matter in private then you must contact us at least 7 working days before the decision is due to be made. This can be done:-

- by email to forwardplan@oxford.gov.uk
- in writing to

William Reed
Democratic Services Manager
Town Hall
St Aldate's Street
Oxford
OX1 1BX
Email: wreed@oxford.gov.uk
Tel.: 01865 252230

Inspection of documents

Reports to be submitted to the decision-maker together with background papers to those reports as listed in the reports are available for inspection at the offices of the Council and appear on our website www.oxford.gov.uk 5 working days prior to the date on which the decision is due to be made.

The Council's decision-making process

Further information about the Council's decision making process (including key decisions) can be found in the Council's Constitution, which can be inspected at the Council's offices or online at www.oxford.gov.uk

CITY EXECUTIVE BOARD MEMBERSHIP AND RESPONSIBILITIES

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

NOTE: Key decisions can also be taken by Council officers.

OCTOBER

ITEM 1:	WESTGATE - TEMPORARY CAR AND COACH PARKING
This report will deal with the provision of temporary car and coach parking during redevelopment of the Westgate site.	
Target Date:	9 Oct 2013
Decision Taker	City Executive Board
Is this a Key Decision?:	Yes
Executive lead member:	Executive Board Member for Finance, Efficiency and Strategic Asset Management
Is this item to be taken in public?	Yes
Report of:	Head of Corporate Property
Contact:	Steve Sprason ssprason@oxford.gov.uk
Consultation:	
Scrutiny Committee Responsibility:	All Scrutiny Responsibility

ITEM 2:	CITY DEAL
This report will provide an update on progress on the City Deal Bid to Government and the commitments being asked of Oxford City Council, the proposed governance arrangements and the timetable for presentation to the ad hoc Ministerial Group.	
Target Date:	9 Oct 2013
Decision Taker	City Executive Board
Is this a Key Decision?:	Yes
Executive lead member:	Executive Board Member for Corporate Governance, Strategic Partnerships and Economic Development
Is this item to be taken in public?	Yes
Report of:	Executive Director City Regeneration and Housing
Contact:	David Edwards dedwards@oxford.gov.uk
Consultation:	
Scrutiny Committee Responsibility:	All Scrutiny Responsibility

ITEM 3:	PROPOSAL TO PROCEED WITH A CONTRACT TO UNDERTAKE COMMERCIAL WASTE COLLECTIONS AND ENVIRONMENTAL IMPROVEMENT SERVICES FOR AN EXTERNAL PUBLIC SECTOR CLIENT
This report will give details of contract negotiations to undertake commercial waste collections and environmental improvement services for an external public sector client.	
The report will have a not for publication appendix.	
Target Date:	9 Oct 2013
Decision Taker	City Executive Board
Is this a Key Decision?:	Not Key
Executive lead member:	Executive Board Member for Cleaner, Greener Oxford
Is this item to be taken in public?	Yes
Report of:	Head of Oxford Direct Services
Contact:	Jeff Ridgley jridgley@oxford.gov.uk
Consultation:	
Scrutiny Committee Responsibility:	All Scrutiny Responsibility

ITEM 4:	REVIEW OF THE COMMUNITY AND VOLUNTARY ORGANISATIONS GRANTS PROGRAMME
This report will inform the Board on the review of the grants commissioning programme and request support for the commissioning programme from 2014/2015.	
Target Date:	9 Oct 2013
Decision Taker	City Executive Board
Is this a Key Decision?:	Yes
Executive lead member:	Executive Board Member for Young People, Education and Community Development
Is this item to be taken in public?	Yes
Report of:	Head of Leisure, Parks and Communities
Contact:	Julia Tomkins jtomkins@oxford.gov.uk
Consultation:	
Scrutiny Committee Responsibility:	All Scrutiny Responsibility

ITEM 5:	BARTON AND NORTHWAY REGENERATION STRATEGY
This report will seek Board approval for a Barton and Northway Regeneration Strategy.	
Target Date:	9 Oct 2013
Decision Taker	City Executive Board
Is this a Key Decision?:	Yes
Executive lead member:	Executive Board Member for Corporate Governance and Strategic Partnerships
Is this item to be taken in public?	Yes
Report of:	Head of City Development
Contact:	Tom Morris tmorris@oxford.gov.uk
Consultation:	
Scrutiny Committee Responsibility:	All Scrutiny Responsibility

ITEM 6:	LANHAM WAY - COMPULSORY PURCHASE
This report will consider the compulsory purchase of property in Lanham Way. It is likely that the report will in part or in whole be not for publication to the public and the press.	
Target Date:	9 Oct 2013
Decision Taker	City Executive Board
Is this a Key Decision?:	Yes
Executive lead member:	Executive Board Member for Housing
Is this item to be taken in public?	Yes
Report of:	Head of Housing and Property
Contact:	Melanie Mutch mmutch@oxford.gov.uk
Consultation:	
Scrutiny Committee Responsibility:	All Scrutiny Responsibility

ITEM 7:	WEST END DEVELOPMENT - DESIGN REVIEW PANEL
This report is to refresh and expand the West End Design Panel in order to ensure that the City Council can receive improved independent challenge and assistance to secure the highest quality developments across the City. The proposal to be agreed by the City Executive Board is to expand the scope of design review of major planning applications to cover the whole City, to augment the current Panel Members with some additional nationally renowned architects and to hold an annual design symposium.	
Target Date:	9 Oct 2013
Decision Taker	City Executive Board
Is this a Key Decision?:	Not Key
Executive lead member:	Executive Board Member for City Development
Is this item to be taken in public?	Yes
Report of:	Head of City Development
Contact:	Michael Crofton-Briggs mcrofton-briggs@oxford.gov.uk
Consultation:	
Scrutiny Committee Responsibility:	All Scrutiny Responsibility

ITEM 8:	PLANNING ANNUAL MONITORING REPORT 2012/13
This report will seek approval to the publication of the planning annual monitoring report for 2012/13.	
Target Date:	9 Oct 2013
Decision Taker	City Executive Board
Is this a Key Decision?:	Not Key
Executive lead member:	Executive Board Member for City Development
Is this item to be taken in public?	Yes

Report of:	Head of City Development
Contact:	Mark Jaggard Tel: 01865 252161 mjaggard@oxford.gov.uk
Consultation:	
Scrutiny Committee Responsibility:	All Scrutiny Responsibility

ITEM 9:	OXFORD SUPER CONNECTED CITIES PROJECT
This report will concern the funding of £4.83 million allocated by Government and seek agreement on budget and resource commitments to deliver the project.	
Target Date:	9 Oct 2013
Decision Taker	City Executive Board
Is this a Key Decision?:	Yes
Executive lead member:	Executive Board Member for Corporate Governance, Strategic Partnerships and Economic Development
Is this item to be taken in public?	Yes
Report of:	Head of Policy Culture and Communications
Contact:	Sebastian Johnson srjohnson@oxford.gov.uk
Consultation:	
Scrutiny Committee Responsibility:	All Scrutiny Responsibility

ITEM 10:	TOWN HALL FEES AND CHARGES
This report will contain recommendations for changes to Town Hall fees and charges.	
Target Date:	9 Oct 2013
Decision Taker	City Executive Board
Is this a Key Decision?:	Not Key
Executive lead member:	Executive Board Member for Finance, Efficiency and Strategic Asset Management
Is this item to be taken in public?	Yes
Report of:	Head of Human Resources and Facilities
Contact:	Simon Howick Tel: 01865 252547 showick@oxford.gov.uk
Consultation:	
Scrutiny Committee Responsibility:	All Scrutiny Responsibility

NOVEMBER

ITEM 11:	COVERED MARKET STRATEGY
This report will deal with the development of a Covered Market Strategy which will outline the strategic development and management of the Covered Market for the next 5-10 years. The intention of the Strategy is to build the profile of the Market as a destination retail facility with a growing commercial performance.	
Target Date:	13 Nov 2013
Decision Taker	City Executive Board
Is this a Key Decision?:	Yes
Executive lead member:	Executive Board Member for City Development
Is this item to be taken in public?	Yes
Report of:	Head of City Development
Contact:	Gordon Reid Tel: 01865 252164

	greid@oxford.gov.uk
Consultation:	
Scrutiny Committee Responsibility:	All Scrutiny Responsibility

ITEM 12:	RIVERSIDE LAND - ACQUISITION
This report will deal with an application for adverse possession for land that the Council has maintained - to facilitate the enforcement of unlawful boat mooring. It will contain a not for publication appendix.	
Target Date:	13 Nov 2013
Decision Taker	City Executive Board
Is this a Key Decision?:	Not Key
Executive lead member:	Executive Board Member for City Development
Is this item to be taken in public?	Yes
Report of:	Head of Environmental Development
Contact:	
Consultation:	
Scrutiny Committee Responsibility:	All Scrutiny Responsibility

ITEM 13:	PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT STRATEGY
To approve a Public Involvement Strategy for public consultation.	
Target Date:	13 Nov 2013
Decision Taker	City Executive Board
Is this a Key Decision?:	Not Key
Executive lead member:	Executive Board Member for Corporate Governance, Strategic Partnerships and Economic Development
Is this item to be taken in public?	Yes
Report of:	Executive Director Community Services
Contact:	Peter McQuitty Tel: 01865 252780 pmcquitty@oxford.gov.uk
Consultation:	
Scrutiny Committee Responsibility:	All Scrutiny Responsibility

ITEM 14:	WASTE AND RECYCLING STRATEGY
This report will propose the adoption of a waste and recycling strategy for Oxford.	
Target Date:	13 Nov 2013
Decision Taker	City Executive Board
Is this a Key Decision?:	Yes
Executive lead member:	Executive Board Member for Cleaner, Greener Oxford
Is this item to be taken in public?	Yes
Report of:	Head of Environmental Development
Contact:	John Copley Tel: 01865 252386 jcopley@oxford.gov.uk
Consultation:	
Scrutiny Committee Responsibility:	All Scrutiny Responsibility

ITEM 15:	FINANCE, PERFORMANCE AND RISK - QUARTER 2 PROGRESS 2013/14
This report will present the Council's Quarter 2 financial and non-financial performance and an update on corporate risk	
Target Date:	13 Nov 2013
Decision Taker	City Executive Board

Is this a Key Decision?:	Not Key
Executive lead member:	Executive Board Member for Finance, Efficiency and Strategic Asset Management
Is this item to be taken in public?	Yes
Report of:	Executive Director Organisational Development and Corporate Services
Contact:	Nigel Kennedy Tel: 01865 252708 nkennedy@oxford.gov.uk, Jane Lubbock Tel: 01865 252708 jlubbock@oxford.gov.uk
Consultation:	
Scrutiny Committee Responsibility:	All Scrutiny Responsibility

DECEMBER

ITEM 16:	MEDIUM TERM FINANCIAL STRATEGY 2014/15 - 2017/18 AND BUDGET 2014/15 - CONSULTATION
The Strategy and Budget will be presented to the Board for approval to go out to public consultation.	
Target Date:	11 Dec 2013
Decision Taker	City Executive Board
Is this a Key Decision?:	Not Key
Executive lead member:	Executive Board Member for Finance, Efficiency and Strategic Asset Management
Is this item to be taken in public?	Yes
Report of:	Head of Finance
Contact:	Nigel Kennedy Tel: 01865 252708 nkennedy@oxford.gov.uk
Consultation:	
Scrutiny Committee Responsibility:	All Scrutiny Responsibility

ITEM 17:	TREASURY MANAGEMENT - MID-TERM REVIEW 2013/14
This report will present the mid-term review of the Council's treasury management function.	
Target Date:	11 Dec 2013
Decision Taker	City Executive Board
Is this a Key Decision?:	Not Key
Executive lead member:	Executive Board Member for Finance, Efficiency and Strategic Asset Management
Is this item to be taken in public?	Yes
Report of:	Head of Finance
Contact:	Nigel Kennedy Tel: 01865 252708 nkennedy@oxford.gov.uk
Consultation:	
Scrutiny Committee Responsibility:	All Scrutiny Responsibility

ITEM 18:	LEISURE PROVISION IN THE SOUTH OF THE CITY
This report will look at future leisure provision in the south of the City depending on forthcoming occurrences.	
Target Date:	Not before 11 Dec 2013
Decision Taker	City Executive Board
Is this a Key Decision?:	Yes
Executive lead member:	Executive Board Member for Leisure Services
Is this item to be taken in public?	Yes

Report of:	Head of Leisure, Parks and Communities
Contact:	Ian Brooke Tel: 01865 252705 ibrooke@oxford.gov.uk
Consultation:	
Scrutiny Committee Responsibility:	All Scrutiny Responsibility

ITEM 19:	HOUSING STRATEGY REFRESH
This report will present an update to the Council's Housing Strategy	
Target Date:	11 Dec 2013
Decision Taker	City Executive Board
Is this a Key Decision?:	Yes
Executive lead member:	Executive Board Member for Housing
Is this item to be taken in public?	Yes
Report of:	Head of Housing and Property
Contact:	Dave Scholes Tel: 01865 252636 dscholes@oxford.gov.uk
Consultation:	
Scrutiny Committee Responsibility:	All Scrutiny Responsibility

ITEM 20:	JERICO CANALSIDE SUPPLEMENTARY PLANNING DOCUMENT - CONSULTATION OUTCOME
This report will present the outcome of consultation on this Supplementary Planning Document and recommend approval of it.	
Target Date:	11 Dec 2013
Decision Taker	City Executive Board
Is this a Key Decision?:	Not Key
Executive lead member:	Executive Board Member for City Development
Is this item to be taken in public?	Yes
Report of:	Head of City Development
Contact:	Laura Goddard lgoddard@oxford.gov.uk
Consultation:	
Scrutiny Committee Responsibility:	All Scrutiny Responsibility

ITEM 21:	AIR QUALITY ACTION PLAN - CONSULTATION OUTCOME
This report presents the outcome of consultation on a draft Air Quality Action Plan issued for consultation by the City Executive Board in July.	
Target Date:	11 Dec 2013
Decision Taker	City Executive Board
Is this a Key Decision?:	Yes
Executive lead member:	Executive Board Member for Cleaner, Greener Oxford
Is this item to be taken in public?	Yes
Report of:	Head of Environmental Development
Contact:	Roger Pitman rpitman@oxford.gov.uk
Consultation:	
Scrutiny Committee Responsibility:	All Scrutiny Responsibility

JANUARY

BEYOND THE LIFE OF THIS PLAN

ITEM 22:	FINANCE, PERFORMANCE AND RISK - QUARTER 3 PROGRESS 2013/14
This report will present the Council's Quarter 3 financial and non-financial performance and an update on corporate risk	
Target Date:	12 Feb 2014
Decision Taker	City Executive Board
Is this a Key Decision?:	Not Key
Executive lead member:	Executive Board Member for Finance, Efficiency and Strategic Asset Management
Is this item to be taken in public?	Yes
Report of:	Executive Director Organisational Development and Corporate Services
Contact:	Nigel Kennedy Tel: 01865 252708 nkennedy@oxford.gov.uk, Jane Lubbock Tel: 01865 252708 jlubbock@oxford.gov.uk
Consultation:	
Scrutiny Committee Responsibility:	All Scrutiny Responsibility

ITEM 23:	PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT STRATEGY - CONSULTATION OUTCOME - ADOPTION OF STRATEGY
Target Date:	12 Mar 2014 14 Apr 2014
Decision Taker	City Executive Board Council
Is this a Key Decision?:	Not Key
Executive lead member:	Executive Board Member for Corporate Governance, Strategic Partnerships and Economic Development Executive Board Member for Corporate Governance, Strategic Partnerships and Economic Development
Is this item to be taken in public?	Yes
Report of:	Executive Director Community Services
Contact:	Peter McQuitty Tel: 01865 252780 pmcquitty@oxford.gov.uk
Consultation:	
Scrutiny Committee Responsibility:	All Scrutiny Responsibility

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Scrutiny Recommendation 2013 – 2014

All recommendations

29

Customer Contract Strategy		
Scrutiny Committee – 5th. September 2013		
Recommendation	Outcome	Considered by
To ensure that separate arrangements for consultation with the Business Community are included in the information gathering to inform the final Strategy.	Agreed	City Executive Board 11 th . September
To explore the use of Skype as a communication tool within this Strategy.	Agreed with Amendment Will explore Skype as a communication tool along with other methods rather than in isolation.	
To ensure that any service developments are evaluated financially around clear value for money principles.	Agreed	
Budget Spending – Qtr. 1		
Finance Scrutiny Panel – 6th. September 2013		
Recommendation	Outcome	Considered by

To express concern about the availability of resources to deliver the Capital Programme.	Noted – arrangements already being considered	City Executive Board 11 th . September
To reconsider the reporting of the Commercial Property rental measure using dates that align to produce a more accurate picture of performance.	Agreed	
That the City Executive Board bring forward their strategy for the provision of contingencies with the forthcoming medium Term Financial Strategy to the next meeting of the Panel in November.	Noted – will happen as part of the MTFS in December	
Treasury Management – Qtr. 1		
Finance Scrutiny Panel – 6th. September 2013		
Recommendation	Outcome	Considered by
To raise the non-specified investment limits from their current levels and redefine what is grouped in this area to manage risk, in an effort to encourage investment diversity and higher rates of return.	Refused	City Executive Board 11 th . September
Wherever it provides for good value for money to consider using investment funds for internal borrowing in order to avoid prudential borrowing.	Noted this is already done	
Allocation Scheme Review		
Housing Scrutiny Panel – 3rd. September 2013		

Recommendation	Outcome	Considered by
A Communication Strategy should be in place to explain the scheme as agreed, what it means for applicants alongside some general information on the likelihood of being housed. Communication should include the opportunity for feedback on the scheme itself and the understandability of it.	Agreed	City Executive Board 11 th . September
Youth Ambition Strategy		
Scrutiny Committee – 2nd July		
Recommendation	Outcome	Considered by
To provide now a set of concrete outcome measures focused on the direct effects on the ambitions and pathways of the young people involved in this work.	Agreed	City Executive Board 10 th . July
To monitor and revisit regularly the type of activity provided to ensure that it is flexible, contemporary and engaging the right numbers, in the right place, at the right time.	Agreed	City Executive Board 10 th . July
To express the need for the provision of safe spaces for young people to express themselves as an overarching priority for all the schemes, actions and outcomes within this Strategy.	Agreed	City Executive Board 10 th . July
Low Emission Strategy and Air Quality Action Plan		
Scrutiny Committee – 2nd. July		

Recommendation	Outcome	Considered by
To support the setting of the Low Emissions Strategy and ambitions but for the City Executive Board to require early reference of the document to the Carbon and Natural Resources Members Board so that gaps on data, resources and financing can be discussed and a robust action plan produced.	Agreed	City Executive Board 10 th . July
Discretionary Housing Payments		
Scrutiny Committee – 4th. June 2013		
Recommendation	Outcome	Considered by
To organise a general campaign of clear advice through as many agencies, partnerships and offices as possible making it clear the temporary nature of Discretionary Housing Payments and the requirements to engage in more sustainable solutions.	Agreed	City Executive Board 12 th . June 2013
To extend current out reach work to include benefit take-up to maximise benefits to current and potential claimants.	Agreed with amendment. Clarity in some aspects of Welfare reform is needed.	City Executive Board 12 th . June 2013
To keep the Discretionary Housing Payment Policy under review and in particular to revisit it once regulations on further Welfare Reform are clear.	Agreed	City Executive Board 12 th . June 2013

For the Scrutiny Committee to be included in the monitoring arrangements for this policy in both financial and outcome terms. To see this at the September Scrutiny Committee.	Agree	City Executive Board 12 th . June 2013
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To: City Executive Board

Date: 9th October 2013

Report of: David Edwards, Executive Director, Regeneration and Housing

Title of Report: City Deal Bid

Summary and Recommendations

Purpose of report: To provide an update on progress on the City Deal Bid to Government and the commitments being asked of Oxford City Council, the proposed governance arrangements and the timetable for presentation to the Ad hoc Ministerial Group.

Key decision? Yes

Executive lead member: Cllr Bob Price

Policy Framework: No

Recommendation(s):

- To note this report;
- To formally support the overarching focus of the City Deal Bid;
- To agree in principle to the commitments being asked of Oxford City Council;
- To note the governance arrangements in principle, and to receive future reports which will provide the detail of what the Joint Statutory Committee will be carrying out and what delegations will need to be made to it;
- To delegate authority to the Chief Executive to lead on negotiations with partners and Government

Appendices to report:

Appendix One – Risk Register

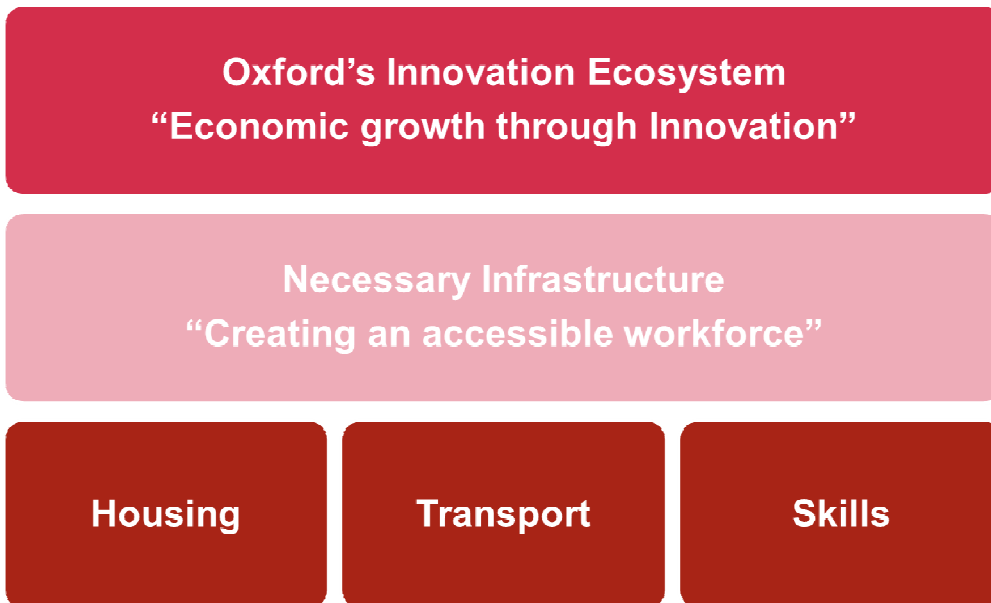
Appendix Two - Initial Equalities Impact Assessment

Introduction

1. In July 2012 Government agreed the first wave of city deals with the eight largest cities outside London and their wider economic areas. These agreements were bespoke to reflect the different needs of individual places, but every deal aimed to:
 - Give cities additional powers and tools to drive local economic growth;
 - Unlock projects or initiatives that would boost their economies; and
 - Strengthen the governance arrangements dealing with economic development.
2. In October 2012 Government invited a further 20 cities, including Oxford, to submit expressions of interest for a second wave of City Deals. This group consisted of the next 14 largest cities and the six fastest growing cities, of which Oxford is one.
3. The Expression of Interest submission from Oxford focused on transformational growth through stimulating the local knowledge economy. The combination of the two world class universities and 'Big Science' in the Science Vale are central to the bid.
4. The bid brought together a partnership of business, research institutions, local authorities and the LEP to collaborate and accelerate the growth of the city region's knowledge based economy by creating a new 'knowledge economy spine'. This is based on a network of centres supported by new enterprise and innovation centres and development in the city regions principal economic nodes of Oxford City, Bicester and Science Vale
5. In February 2013 Government announced that all 20 submissions had been successful and were invited to go through to the next stage of the process by completing a Negotiation Document and preparing a presentation to an Ad hoc Ministerial Group.
6. A City Deal Bid Team comprising representatives from the six local authorities, the Local Enterprise Partnership, University of Oxford and Oxford Brookes Universities and representatives of Science and Research organisations at Harwell and Culham has been overseeing the development of the bid. The County Council has chaired the Bid Team and been leading on co-ordination with support provided by the City Council.

Overview of the ambition of the Oxford and Oxfordshire City Deal

7. The ambition is summarised as follows:



8. The ambition is based on the common understanding that the Oxford and Oxfordshire economy has the greatest potential of any location in the UK to deliver world leading technology and business innovation building upon our academic research
9. Furthermore, our central location, with transport links to London, Heathrow and the Midlands, as well as the South Coast and West Country provides us with the foundation of a transport infrastructure that enables our businesses and universities to compete in a global market

The City Deal Proposal

10. In summary the proposal is focused on the delivery of an ambitious Knowledge Economy centred on the major economic growth centres: Bicester, Oxford and Science Vale including the Enterprise Zone (Harwell Oxford and Milton Park).
11. The City Deal represents an opportunity to ensure Oxford and Oxfordshire overcomes the historic barriers to innovation and enterprise through a transformational network of connected hubs, creating an ecosystem where research, innovation, investment and enterprise meet and flourish.
12. The City Deal projects have been divided into those that are priorities for delivery in Phase 1, with a committed start before the end of 2015, and those that are in later stages.
13. Discussions are taking place with partners and Government civil servants advising the Bid Team and will continue through to submission of the final Negotiation Document in October 2013.

Innovation

14. At the heart of the proposal is the world class Science and Innovation for which Oxfordshire is known. The ambition is to deliver a number of key innovation schemes across the City Deal area. These will enable the development of start-up business' to spin out from the Universities across a range of sectors; they will then join up those companies with other business' who can provide them with support, enabling small companies to find the right skills to grow within the county, with differing projects each focussing on specific innovation areas.
15. At the time of writing this report the Phase 1 projects that are the core of the City Deal bid are:
- Begbroke Accelerator Building
 - Harwell Open Innovation Centre
 - Oxford Bio Escalator
 - Science Vale (Culham) Advanced Manufacturing Hub
 - Business Support for Innovation (County wide)
 - Science Vale (Culham) High Tech Skills Hub
 - One Stop for Information / Advice / Guidance / Apprenticeships and Educational Development (County wide)
 - Oxford Housing projects – Barton, West End, Northern Gateway and Accelerated Housing Programme
16. With public sector investment of nearly £10m already identified, and twice as much private sector investment, the City Deal looks to secure in the order of £60m of investment from Government to enable this network of innovation hubs and the corresponding support system to be delivered.

Skills

17. The skills projects have been prioritised on the basis of those that are mostly closely aligned with the innovation priorities and that can be delivered without delay.
18. In support of our ambition to deliver the network of innovation hubs, the City Deal looks to secure locally agreed priorities for how funding from the Skills Funding Agency is invested. It also looks to develop a one stop shop for information, advice and guidance on apprenticeships and education development.
19. In seeking genuine devolution of control from Whitehall to the local community, the proposal will help ensure that the investment in skills equips us to unlock the potential that exists within our economy.

Infrastructure

20. The infrastructure schemes are prioritised in terms of their relationship to delivering the innovation priorities and include key A40 Northern Gateway infrastructure and lead the preparation of a longer term strategy for the A34 and to work with the private sector to begin delivering the Oxford Science Transit – a truly integrated multi-modal transport system that

builds upon the investment in rail and bus services and delivers a high quality, high frequency service linking our core areas of economic growth.

21. It should be noted that since the programme started the Government announced changes to the way it was planning on funding infrastructure projects, with the creation of the Local Growth Deals. We have therefore had to separate out the City Deal proposals into two phases, one which remains part of the City Deal, and the other which will form part of the wider funding from the Local Growth Fund.

Housing

22. The housing schemes for Oxford are Barton, West End (Westgate and Oxpens), Northern Gateway and an accelerated housing programme. This will result in just over 3000 new houses over a ten year period.
23. As part of the deal we are asking Government to increase the borrowing cap on the Housing Revenue Account to enable Oxford City Council to raise £121m funding for this housing to meet demand created by new jobs.

Timetable and Next Steps

24. Discussions are continuing with partners through the City Deal Bid Team alongside liaison and feedback from Government civil servants and advisers.
25. The Negotiation Document will be finalised together with a presentation that will be delivered to an Ad hoc Ministerial Group. Both of these will be signed off by the City Deal Bid Team, the Local Enterprise Partnership and the Oxfordshire Local Authority Leaders Group.
26. The Negotiation Document will be formally submitted to Government no later than 11th October 2013.
27. The following group will deliver the presentation to the Ad hoc Ministerial Group which has been provisionally set for 24th October 2013:
- Cllr Ian Hudspeth, Leader, Oxfordshire County Council
 - Cllr Bob Price, Leader, Oxford City Council
 - Adrian Shooter CBE, Chair, Oxfordshire Local Enterprise Partnership
 - Professor Ian Walmsley, Pro Vice Chancellor, University of Oxford
 - Professor Steven Cowley, Chief Executive Officer, United Kingdom Atomic Energy Authority (Culham)
28. Following the presentation, further negotiation will take place with Government with a view to the City Deal being agreed by the end of the year.

Financial and Resource Implications

29. If the City Deal bid is agreed, the key financial implications relating to Oxford City Council will be the increased borrowing cap on the Housing Revenue Account to allow us to borrow £121 million.
30. The City Council will continue to support the City Deal bid process and has provided project management staffing support to work alongside County Council staff to co-ordinate the development of the City Deal Bid. The City Council will continue to provide this staffing support.
31. The City Council will ensure that adequate resources are in place to undertake any necessary work on specific project development and project management relating to key City Council projects and commitments that form part of the City Deal.

Legal Implications

32. The Local Authority Chief Executives and Leaders Group have reviewed governance arrangements and have agreed a model based on a Joint Statutory Committee (JSC). This is, in effect a joint Executive Committee which carries out defined functions on behalf of the constituent bodies.
33. A JSC is a model often adopted for working with a range of Local Authorities, as in the context of waste partnerships or police authorities. The JSC powers would be limited to delivering the City Deal and would not have any general powers of competence. Specifically, planning powers would remain with the Local Authorities as at present. There may be potential to agree with Government streamlined planning powers, but this would only be considered in relation to strategic sites which are already allocated for development in Development Plans, and would be subject to individual consideration
34. It is proposed that the JSC is made up of the six Local Authorities plus a representative from each of the Local Enterprise Partnership, University of Oxford, Oxford Brookes University and Harwell Oxford
35. If the bid is successful binding agreements will be developed. Legal advice will be provided to the City Executive Board by the City Council's in-house legal team on the legal implications or issues arising from the work of the JSC. In the event that specialist legal advice is required at any stage, the Council will obtain it.

Risks

36. A Risk register has been prepared and is appended.

Climate Change / Environmental Impact

37. All projects that come out of the City Deal will have due regard to climate change and environmental impact. New buildings, including new homes,

will be built to appropriate environmental and sustainable standards.
These homes are already identified in approved Development Plans.

Equalities Impact

38. The benefits to Oxford and the city region will be significant and very positive to all through economic growth, new employment, higher skills attainment, improved inward investment, stronger infrastructure and increased housing delivery.

39. An initial Equalities Impact Assessment is attached as Appendix Two.

Name and contact details of author:-

Name: David Edwards

Job title: Executive Director, Housing and Regeneration

Service Area / Department: City Development

Tel: 01865 252394 e-mail: dedwards@oxford.gov.uk
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List of background papers:

Version number: v5.1

Appendix One - Risk Register

No.	Risk Description Link to Corporate Obj	Gross Risk		Cause of Risk	Mitigation	Net Risk		Further Management of Risk: Transfer/Accept/Reduce/Avoid		Monitoring Effectiveness				Current Risk	
		I	P			I	P	Action: Action Owner:	Outcome required: Milestone Date:	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	I	P
					Mitigating Control: Level of Effectiveness: (HML)			Action: Action Owner:	Outcome required: Milestone Date:	Q1 ☹	Q2 ☹	Q3 ☹	Q4 ☹		
1	Challenges of partnership and governance	3	3	Progress with delivery of City Deal dependencies on partnership working and governance	Mitigating control: Active role in Bid Team, negotiations and governance through the Joint Statutory Committee 1.2.1 dialogue outside formal meetings with partners Level of Effectiveness: M	2	2	Action: Exec Director (Hsg and Regen) to monitor risk level and agree action. Action Owner: Economic Development Team leader Mitigating Control: Head of Service Control owner: Director	Outcome required: Milestone Date:						
42															
2	Government rejects bid	5	3	Bid not focussed enough, asks and offers too vague or not in line with Government guidelines / requirements	Mitigating control: Active role in Bid Team and input into bid and project list. Providing feedback on proposed presentation to Govt. Listening to feedback from Govt officials and acting on it Level of Effectiveness: M	5	1	Action: Chief Executive to monitor risk level and agree action. Action Owner: Exec Director (Hsg and Regen) Mitigating Control: Head of Service Control owner: Director							

3	Commitments made by partners (e.g. funding, land, staffing) are unable to be met or financial modelling is incorrect	3	3	Commitments not checked or signed off by Chief Executives and S151 Officers or equivalents	<p>Mitigating control: Bid Team is being rigorous in approach to project identification and financial information and modelling. Consultants have been engaged to undertake modelling. Chief Execs and S151 Officers are signing off project financials. Leaders are signing off the final bid</p> <p>Level of Effectiveness: M</p>	2	1	<p>Action: Chief Executive to monitor risk level and agree action. Action Owner: Exec Director (Hsg and Regen) Mitigating Control: Head of Service Control owner: Director</p>								
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45	Challenge of staffing and resource	3	2	Not having resource or staff required to deliver the projects and overall ambitions of City Deal	<p>Mitigating control: Each partner committing resource to support the City Deal Board and the individual projects</p> <p>Level of Effectiveness: M</p>	2	1	<p>Action: Chief Executive to monitor risk level and agree action. Action Owner: Exec Director (Hsg and Regen) Mitigating Control: Head of Service Control owner: Director</p>								
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Equality Impact Assessment

Equality Impact Assessment

Service Area: City Development	Section: Economic Development	Key person responsible for the assessment: Sebastian Johnson	Date of Assessment: 5 th August 2013
Name of the Bid to be assessed: City Deal Bid			
1. Briefly describe the aims, objectives and purpose of the bid	<p>To deliver economic growth in Oxford and Oxfordshire through the delivery of an ambitious Knowledge Economy centred on the major economic growth centres: Bicester, Oxford and Science Vale including the Enterprise Zone (Harwell Oxford and Milton Park). The City Deal represents an opportunity to ensure Oxford and Oxfordshire overcomes the historic barriers to innovation and enterprise through a transformational network of connected hubs, creating an ecosystem where research, innovation, investment and enterprise meet and flourish.</p> <p>Supporting this growth will be necessary transport infrastructure, housing and skills development.</p>		
2. Who is intended to benefit from the bid and in what way	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This is a bid that will benefit the local and national economy through the creation of jobs and economic growth • Residents and people who work in the city and county will benefit through creation of more jobs, more housing, improved transport and improved skills and educational attainment 		

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3. What outcomes are wanted from this bid?			
Increased employment and improved infrastructure, increased housing supply and improved skills and education and employability of the local workforce Making Oxford and Oxfordshire more attractive to investors and businesses Economic competitiveness with other cities nationally and globally			
4. What factors/forces could contribute/detract from the outcomes?		<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Failure with the bid 2. Withdrawal of commitment from partners 3. Change of Government policy and cancellation City Deals 4. Failure to deliver 	
5. Who are the key partners in relation to the bid?	<p>Oxford City Council Oxfordshire County Council South Oxfordshire DC Vale of White Horse DC Cherwell DC West Oxfordshire DC Oxfordshire Local Enterprise Partnership University of Oxford Oxford Brookes University Harwell Oxford and Science Vale</p>	6. Who is responsible for the bid and who will lead the project if successful?	<p>The bid is led by a Bid Team coordinated and chaired by Oxfordshire County Council</p> <p>Oxfordshire County Council will be the Accountable Body.</p> <p>Governance proposals are for a Joint Statutory Body to be created made up of the 6 local authority leaders plus representatives from the LEP, Oxford University, Oxford Brookes University and Harwell Oxford</p>
7. Could the bid have a differential impact on racial groups?		No	No. If successful the bid will provide economic growth and infrastructure improvements that will benefit all
8. Could the bid have a differential impact due to gender?		No	No. If successful the bid will provide economic growth and infrastructure improvements that will benefit all

9. Could the bid have a differential impact due disability		No	No. If successful the bid will provide economic growth and infrastructure improvements that will benefit all
10. Could the bid have a differential impact on people due to sexual orientation?		No	No. If successful the bid will provide economic growth and infrastructure improvements that will benefit all
11. Could the bid have a differential impact on people due to their age		No	No. If successful the bid will provide economic growth and infrastructure improvements that will benefit all
12. Could the bid have a differential impact on people due to their religious belief?		No	No. If successful the bid will provide economic growth and infrastructure improvements that will benefit all
13. Could the negative impact identified in 7-12 create the potential for the bid to discriminate against certain groups?		No	<p>Please explain</p> <p>No – No negative impacts have been identified.</p>
14. Can this negative impact be justified on the grounds of promoting equality of opportunity for one group? Or any other reason		No	<p>Please explain for each equality heading (question 8-13) on a separate piece of paper</p> <p>There are no negative impacts identified.</p>
15. Are there implications for the Service Plans?	YES if the bid is successful the work will need to be inserted into service plans		<p>16. Date the Service Plan will be updated</p> <p>The Plan will be updated January 2014</p>

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Report to Scrutiny Committee: October 2013

My Priorities

- Implement an OSCP plan to raise awareness and develop resilience in respect of the sexual abuse and trafficking of vulnerable people.
- Continue to implement the Positive Futures programme for young people at risk of offending.
- Extend the CCTV system to include Rose Hill and Headington.
- Implement the action plan to minimise anti-social behaviour associated with visiting students and implement stay safe, safe havens for them.
- Tenants 'Local Offer' for ASB.
- Student safety plan refresh.
- Extend the universities' warden scheme.
- Implement a refreshed Noise Out of Hours service and Weekend Operations to tackle anti-social behaviour that occurs overnight.

The work of the Neighbourhood Action Groups

I have discussed the NAGs with Superintendent Christian Bunt and he expresses himself fully supportive of the NAGs. However, even though there has been an extensive handover, the recent transfer of the secretariat from the City [Ben Smith] to the Police has not run smoothly. I had hoped to attend NAGs across the City but I have been given very short notice of meetings, papers have not arrived and email lists used by the Police are not up-to-date. I shall continue to press Supt Bunt on these problems. Ben's new role is to develop ASB prevention projects, thus he will continue to support the NAGs in their delivery, rather than their administration.

The Cowley Police team is recruiting as it is under strength. However, the team do attend the Cowley NAG and take note of concerns in the area. The attendance of councillors, both city and county, is patchy so that might be improved.

The Police also attend Tenants Association meetings but I have noticed that police have not attended recently in my ward, perhaps because of shortage of staff.

The Police organise 'meet the people' sessions throughout the City so that is another example of police engagement on a less formal basis.

The PCC

The Police and Crime Commissioner Anthony Stansfeld visited Oxford at my invitation on 11 July to speak to the Crime and Community Safety Team. The aim was to explain to him the important work that the City does in crime prevention, community safety and the co-operation between the police, youth workers, the Community Response Team and the Anti-Social Behaviour Investigation Team (previously CANAcT). The PCC funds an element of

this work so we aimed to show him that the money was well spent in preventing crime and anti-social behaviour.

There were short presentations from members of the team and that was followed by an interesting discussion about the issues facing the City.

PCC Scrutiny Panel

On 12 July Oxford City hosted the Scrutiny Panel. Tim Sadler gave an overview of the City's profile. Many members of the Scrutiny Panel were surprised by the aspects of the City that were very different from their own areas-ethnic diversity and the young population, for example.

This was followed by some wide ranging questions to Anthony Stansfeld, including CCTV and preventative policing.

The Chairman of the Scrutiny Panel congratulated the Oxford team for its work and the useful discussion that followed from the questions. The 'Oxford' format is to be copied by future scrutiny panels.

There had been an issue about Anthony Stansfeld's expenses but he repaid a small sum and there is a newly established procedure for his expenses claims.

PCC Scrutiny Panel Conference on 19 July

This first annual conference was held and one of the aims was to try to generate interest in the work of the PCC and the Scrutiny Panel. In future, Councillors could raise questions for the Portfolio member to pass onto the Panel for future meetings of the Scrutiny Panel.

General Points

Closure of Wood Farm Police Station

This will close and there will be a police room at the Churchill hospital.

Blackbird Leys

A new police room is being organised.

Police Cells at St Aldates

These are being closed and prisoners will be charged/detained in Abingdon. I raised this with Sara Thornton at the Scrutiny Panel meeting. Since then Tim Sadler has received a reassuring reply to his letter which explained that many councillors are concerned about the closure of these cells.

Language School Students

The Language School Forum meets to co-ordinate work with the Police, Language Schools, Bus companies, Parks department and City Council ASB team.

Out of Hours Service and Weekend Operations

The new service builds upon the existing noise service. From Sunday to Thursday evening the service will continue to on a Duty Officer call-out basis with calls for assistance routed through our out of hours call centre. The Weekend Operations has two council officers, usually one Environmental Health Officer and one from an asb team, working in the city between 11 p.m. and 4 a.m. They are tasked with a range of proactive and reactive works with noise complaints taking priority. Other activities include the licensing of free printed material, street trading issues, asb cases, taxi infringements, trade waste presentations, litter dropping and any other requests from teams across the council. This is an exciting development in our approach to tackling and resolving anti-social behaviour.

Pat Kennedy

September 2013

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To: City Executive Board

Date: 9th October 2013 **Item No:**

Report of: Head of Leisure, Parks & Communities &
Head of Customer Services

Title of Report: Review of the Community & Voluntary Organisations
Grants Programme

Summary and Recommendations

Purpose of report: To inform the committee of the review of the community & voluntary organisations grants programme, and request agreement for the approach to commissioning from April 2014

Key decision? Yes

Executive lead member Councillor Bev Clack
Councillor Susan Brown

Policy Framework: Oxford City Council Corporate Plan &
Oxford's Sustainable Community Strategy

Recommendations (s):-

Members of City Executive Board are recommended:-

1. To approve the programme for the (one-year) annual open bidding grants programme, youth ambition grants programme and the social inclusion programme for 2014/2015.
2. To continue the 3 year commissioned funding approach from April 2014 for all themes except the advice and money management theme, which for a transition year will be a one year programme from April 2014, subsequently reverting to a three year cycle.
3. To approve the funding themes and commissioning approach as outlined in Appendix 2

Appendices to report

- Appendix 1: Overview of the voluntary sector in Oxford, by theme, funded from April 2011 to March 2014
- Appendix 2: Specification of funding themes and the approach to commissioning of advice from April 2014
- Appendix 3: Risk Register

Background

1. Oxford City Council runs a substantial voluntary and community sector funding programme to support its corporate priorities. These are:
 - A vibrant, sustainable economy
 - Meeting housing needs
 - Strong, active communities
 - Cleaner, greener Oxford
2. In 2011-12, the programme had a budget of £1,403,759 of which £1,320,460 (94%) was committed on a three-year basis to organisations delivering activities which were identified by the council as making a substantial contribution to the achievement of our corporate goals. The remaining £83,299 (6%) is available for organisations to bid for on an annual basis for small scale projects (up to a maximum of £10k) that meets the council's corporate priorities.
3. By 2013-14 the budget increased to £1,463,465. This is due to:
 - One off additional funding of £29,000 for Oxford Community Work Agency to assist with increased demand due to changes within the legal aid system.
 - £30,706 which was approved in 2012/13 as a permanent budget increase for the annual open bidding grants programme. From the total budget of £1,463,465, nearly ninety three per cent of the budget (£1,355,738) is allocated for the commissioning programme
4. In addition to the above two new funding programmes were introduced by the Council this year, they are:-
 - The youth ambition grants programme – 2013-14 budget £107,000 and
 - The social inclusion fund – 2013-14 budget £100,000
5. Funding for the voluntary and community sector grant programme is from the Council's core budget, and subject to annual review as part of the annual budgeting process, with the formal announcement of funding to voluntary and community organisations from the annual open bidding and commissioning programmes, happening after the completion of the budget process but before the start of the new financial year every year.
6. The current commissioning period commenced on 1 April 2011 and ends on 31 March 2014. The services delivered by organisations commissioned by Oxford City Council in this commissioning period fitted into the following themes:

Table 1

Commissioning Theme	Lead Officer (s)
Advice and money management	Helen Bishop, Head of Service for Customer Services Paul Wilding, Benefits Operations Manager
Inclusive Arts and Culture	Ceri Gorton, Cultural Development Manager
Community Safety	Liz Jones, Domestic and Sexual Abuse Coordinator Linda Ludlow, Drug and Human Exploitation coordinator Neil Holman, Positive Future Programme Manager
Community & Voluntary Sector Infrastructure	Julia Tomkins, Grants Officer
Homelessness	Nerys Parry, Rough Sleeping and Single Homelessness Manager
Inclusive Leisure and Play for disabled children and young people	Julia Tomkins, Grants Officer Caroline Robbins, Youth Engagement Officer

7. Table 2 below shows the value to which commissioned organisations were funded in 2012/13 and the number of people benefiting from their service.

Table 2

Advice and Money Management		
Organisation	Amount awarded	Number of beneficiaries
Blackbird Leys Neighbourhood Support Services (Agnes Smith Advice Centre)	£85,290	2,356
Oxford Citizens Advice Bureaux	£200,000	6,337
Oxford Community Work Agency	£122,611	2,183
Rose Hill and Donnington Advice Centre	£90,478	2,089

Inclusive Arts & Culture		
Organisation	Amount awarded	Number of beneficiaries
Fusion Community Arts	£36,923	9,836
Modern Art Oxford	£70,000	100,000
Oxford Contemporary Music	£2,500	4,726
Film Oxford	£29,304	27,540
Oxford Inspires	£45,735	49,560
Oxford Playhouse	£24,675	153,296
Oxfordshire Theatre Company	£2,500	0 (company

		closed)
Arts at the Old Fire Station	£15,500	10,555
Pegasus Theatre	£26,459	15,219
Oxford International Links	£5,000	0 (failed to report back – no longer funded)

Homelessness		
Organisation	Amount award	Number of beneficiaries
Aspire	£122,690	170
Elmore Community Service	£52,067	119
Emmaus Oxford Furniture Store	£25,000	23
Oxford Homeless Pathways	133,432	434
Simon House	£11,596	3
One Foot Forward	£42,992	148
The Gatehouse	£9,502	53
The Porch Steppin Stones Centre	£55,000	149

Community Safety		
Organisation	Amount awarded	Number of beneficiaries
As Dominion Group	£35,082	125
Asylum Welcome	£8,000	31
Oxford Sexual Abuse and Rape Crisis Centre	£15,000	423

Community & Voluntary Sector Infrastructure		
Organisation	Amount awarded	Number of beneficiaries
Oxfordshire Community and Voluntary Action (OCVA)	£48,736	120 groups

Inclusive Play for Disabled Children and Young People		
Organisation	Amount awarded	Number of beneficiaries
Parasol Project	£15,000	138

8. Unlike traditional grants to the voluntary sector, a commissioning process enables the funding organisation to specify the nature of the services which it would like to be provided and secures the services that most appropriately address those needs. This is done by making use of the specialist knowledge that officers gain from working in the specific fields of the funding themes above.
9. Notification will be sent to all funded groups to remind them that their funding is coming to an end. The report is coming to the board now so that early discussions can be held with each of the commissioned organisations about how we plan to go forward.

Reviewing funding programmes to the voluntary and community sector

- 10 The current three-year commissioned programme is due to end in March 2014. It is prudent therefore to review how effective this programme has been and to consider how best to take forward the City Council's support for voluntary organisations in the city in the light of the current economic climate and the learning from the Council's welfare reform pilots regarding the scope and nature of customer's needs going forward.
11. The City Council is committed to working in partnership with the voluntary sector to meet our shared objectives, so it is appropriate to review our past programmes and set out a rationale for our support to the community and voluntary sector in the future.
12. Oxford City Council is a signatory to the Local Compact for Oxfordshire (http://portal.oxfordshire.gov.uk/content/public/oxfordshirepartnership/Partnerships/stronger_communities/Signatories_to_the_Oxfordshire_Compact_160608.pdf) which sets out commitments by the voluntary and statutory sector to improve the way in which we work together for the benefit of communities and citizens of Oxford and Oxfordshire. We wish to continue to work with community and voluntary organisations in the spirit of the Compact ethos

One-year open-application grant funding round

13. The annual open bidding grant programme enables small organisations with small-scale, new or innovative projects to apply for small amounts of funding on an annual basis. No changes are proposed to the open bidding programme, funding to organisations will be confirmed following the budget process.
14. Allocations to individual community and voluntary organisations from the annual open-bidding grant programme will be the subject of a further report to the City Executive Board in February 2014.
- 15 Oxford City Council recognises the challenges facing young people and has placed a priority on helping young people to reach their potential. The youth ambition grants programme supports community and voluntary groups working with children and young people across the city with a focus on:
 - More active, engaged young people
 - Fewer young people either involved in crime and antisocial behaviour or being victims
 - Helping to get young people into work
- 16 From April 2014 it is anticipated a budget of £50,000 a year will be available until 31.03.2016 for community and voluntary groups to apply for projects and activities that fit the criteria.

17. Through the social inclusion fund the Council wants to support community projects that help people of all ages feel more included in their community, build their skills and increase their sense of achievement. Community and voluntary groups applying for funding from this programme need to show how their projects fit one or more of the following criteria:-
- Link to community plans in key areas of deprivation
 - Promote and support access to internet/social networks that benefit communities
 - Address transport issues to prevent social isolation
 - Build links with community projects, community centres and schools
 - Create opportunities for people to access skills / training development
 - Capacity building initiatives to develop skills and confidence.
- 18 From April 2014 it is anticipated a budget of £50,000 a year will be available until 31.03.16 for community and voluntary groups to apply for projects and activities that meet this criteria.

Three-year commissioned funding round

19. The three-year commissioned funding round has provided security and sustainability for a number of key organisations delivering important services across the city. It has enabled these organisations to provide high quality services that are complementary or additional to, Council-run services and lever more resources and funding in from other sources. Funding for periods longer than one financial year is a preferable approach to providing one-year or rolling one-year funding this is particularly the case in the current financial environment. Appendix 1 provides an overview of the voluntary sector, by funding theme, in Oxford which has informed the recommendations.
20. However, for 2014/2015 we are recommending that funding for the advice and money management theme is for one year, subsequently reverting to a three year cycle. This transition year will enable the council to work with the advice sector in Oxford to commission services that reflect the way this area is changing and developing.
21. In each theme, community and voluntary organisations need to demonstrate how their projects promote social inclusion. Officers use the principles outlined in the Regeneration Framework and other core strategies when making recommendations to fund organisations, as well as looking at issues of organisational robustness, sustainability and quality of provision.
22. It is also important that the funding allocated by Oxford City Council provides value for money. It is appropriate to expect voluntary organisations in receipt of funding to show how they are reducing their cost base and finding better ways to work together with partners.

23. During the year we want to work in partnership with the currently commissioned advice centres so that by April 2015 we are confident our funding arrangements reflect our collective customers' needs and how they wish to engage with us. Appendix 2 sets this out in more detail.

Themes

24. For the period 2014-18, the overall themes within which voluntary organisations will be commissioned to deliver services are recommended to be:
- Independent advice and money management services
 - Inclusive arts and culture provision that promotes social inclusion
 - Services to reduce crime and support victims of crime
 - Community and voluntary sector infrastructure
 - Services to reduce homelessness
 - Inclusive play and leisure for children and young people with disabilities
25. Allocations to individual community and voluntary organisations through the commissioning programme will be the subject of a further report to the City Executive Board in February 2014, prior to the Council's budget meeting on 24.02.14.

Joint commissioning

26. Joint commissioning is furthest advanced in the homelessness theme. The performance of organisations funded through the homelessness theme is monitored by a strategic steering group which meets every quarter. Representatives on this group include Oxford City Council, Oxfordshire County Council and Oxfordshire Drugs Action Team. In partnership with Supporting People at Oxfordshire County Council we have jointly commissioned two organisations through the homelessness theme - Bournemouth Churches Housing Association (BCHA) to deliver an accommodation based service for young people at One Foot Forward, Iffley Road (previously known as The Bridge) and O'Hanlon House, Oxford Homeless Pathways which is the City's direct access hostel.

Climate change / environmental impact

27. There are no significant climate change or environmental impact issues related to this report; however organisations funded through the grants programme are encouraged to be responsible when considering any impact on the environment.

Risk

28. Please see risk register attached at Appendix 3.

Equalities impact

29. Each organisation funded through the grants programme has to provide their equal opportunities policy or statement to confirm they comply with this legislation.
30. Grant funding awarded to community and voluntary organisations has a significant and positive impact on equalities and promotes community cohesion. In particular, some grants actively support the achievement of equality by otherwise marginalised groups.

Financial implications

31. This report sets out the rationale for a programme to be carried out from 2014 to 2018. The City Council expects to run the annual open bidding grants programme, youth ambition grants programme, social inclusion fund and a commissioned funding programme; the value of each of these rounds will be confirmed following the budget-setting process. In common with all public sector bodies and following decisions taken by national government, the Council expects to have less funding in future, and so will need to make decisions about the size of resource allocated to the programme of support for the voluntary and community sector in that context. Nonetheless, the current administration is clear that this area remains a priority for the Council.
32. Community and voluntary organisations funded by the City Council are monitored to ensure funding awarded to them is spent for the purpose it was given.

Legal implications

33. Oxford City Council considers it reasonable and appropriate in exercising its powers pursuant to the provision of s.2 Local Government Act 2000, the Localism Act 2011 and all other relevant enabling legislation to offer grant assistance to community and voluntary organisations through its community and voluntary sector grants programme (commissioning, annual open bidding, youth ambition and social inclusion fund).
34. Oxford City Council will be taking steps to notify all community and voluntary sector funding recipients that their funding is coming to an end and that future funding for the coming financial years is not guaranteed or secure, so there are no legal implications arising from this.
35. Oxford City Council offers grant aid to community & voluntary organisations through the grants programme for services delivered against the Councils core priorities. Grant funding is not subject to EU procurement law.

Name and contact details of author:-

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List of background papers: none

Version number: 10

Appendix 1

Overview of the voluntary sector in Oxford, by theme, funded in 2011-14

Advice & money management

A diverse range of independent advice is essential to ensure equality of access, provision and community cohesion. Oxford City Council has therefore prioritised the area of work and increased its funding over recent years.

On 8th March 2012 the Welfare Reform Act 2012 was passed. Major changes are being rolled out such as the benefit cap, localised council tax and social fund support, including reforms to housing benefit and a crack down on fraud and error. The introduction of Universal Credit is predicted by the government to commence in April 2015.

Along with the changes to the welfare system there have been some significant changes to the civil legal aid system that came into effect on 1 April 2013. The changes mean that some types of case work will no longer be eligible for public funds; this includes divorce, child contact, welfare benefits, employment, clinical negligence, and housing law except in very limited circumstances.

These changes have meant that the independent advice centres across the city are much busier. Generally by 9am clients are already queuing outside and they are seeing 20 plus people at each drop in session.

Clients looking for help with debt problems continue to increase for all of the Advice Centres. Each centre reports that non priority debt (catalogues, friends and family etc.) is now the biggest problem

Arts (includes twinning)

Arts and culture contributes significantly to economic, educational and community wellbeing, as well as offering huge benefits to individuals.

Organisations funded through this theme have delivered a substantial increase in audience attendance, participation levels in theatre, dance and film, presented events, off site shows and the creation of new shows. Community and youth outreach work is at the core of the work of many of these organisations, contributing to wellbeing, social inclusion and skills development.

These organisations offer a wide range of employment and training opportunities for emerging artists and other local communities. Cultural activities build connections within communities and enable the exchange of ideas around issues of identity and pride in localities.

In addition to contributing to cultural community work, Oxford City Council's funding enables these organisations to leverage in large amounts of funding from other sources including Arts Council England. A reduction in funding from Oxford City Council would therefore have an economic impact on the city, as well as putting innovative and collaborative cultural projects around the city at risk.

As a result of the spending review, Arts Council England faces a 29.6% cut to its grant in aid for 2011-15. This has already had, and will continue to have, a significant impact on funding of cultural organisations nationally. As a result of these cuts, Arts Council England has changed its suite of funding programmes. There is more emphasis on organisations needing to raise income from other sources, and the funding agreements for National Portfolio Organisations all feature KPIs linked directly to Arts Council's strategy, Achieving Great Art for Everyone.

Oxford City Council's Cultural Development Manager has adopted this approach in funding agreements with cultural organisations from April 2013. As a result, all these funding agreements have performance indicators linked to delivery against objectives in the city's Culture Strategy. There is also a standard performance indicator in these agreements regarding using City Council investment to leverage in funding from other sources.

Environmental sustainability: Arts Council England is the first arts funding body in the world to introduce the requirement for its regularly funded organisations to develop Environmental Action plans in order to minimise their environmental impact. Oxford City Council has also followed this example and is believed to be the first Local Authority to include this stipulation in its funding agreements with cultural organisations from April 2013. Support will be provided to these organisations by Julie's Bicycle (who provide the support to Arts Council England) and this initiative is a joint project between the Culture and Environmental Development teams at the city council.

Community safety

The Oxford Safer Communities Partnership (OSCP) is responsible for producing and delivering actions plans that tackle Oxford's community safety priorities. The partnership includes the Oxford Local Police Area, Oxford City Council, Oxfordshire County Council, Thames Valley Probation Service, the Clinical Commissioning Group, Oxfordshire Drug and Alcohol Action Team, Oxfordshire Fire and Rescue Service, Brookes University, the University of Oxford and the Oxford University Student Union.

The introduction of the newly elected Police and Crime Commissioner (PCC) has affected some of the funding streams. Over the next three years funding stream priorities will change to reflect the decision by the PCC and the PCC Panel. In 2014-15, funding might be cut to such an extent the partnership will no longer be able to fund activities to support its priorities.

OSCP and the county wide Oxfordshire Safer Communities Partnership will continue to work closely with the PCC to support delivery of its work to reduce crime and anti-social behaviour in Oxford, and ensure that OSCP's partnership working continues to be robust and effective.

The priorities for OSCP for 2013-14 are:

- Inter-personal abuse, including domestic and sexual abuse, human trafficking, sex working and child sexual exploitation.

- Violent crime, including alcohol-related disorder, serious youth violence, hate crime and robbery.
- Anti-social behaviour, including neighbourhood nuisance, environmental concerns, drug misuse and rough sleeping.
- Priority theft offences, including burglary of people's homes, theft from cars and metal theft.

There is a growing need for specialist support for victims of violence, intimidation and abuse. Domestic abuse (including Honour Based Violence) and sexual abuse reports have increased in recent years, reflecting the significant amount of work undertaken by agencies to increase reporting before they get to crisis point. These offences do not only affect the victim but has a significant impact on their children and extended families. This requires outreach support to victims of domestic and sexual abuse as many victims do not want to report to the police or the police are not appropriate to provide the necessary intensive support for such victims. The vast majority of children tell no one of the sexual abuse until adulthood. It is imperative that people who have experienced sexual abuse or violence receive specialist support to enable them to come to terms with what has happened

Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE) has until recently been a largely hidden problem. Now it has been brought to the forefront in Oxfordshire through Operation Bullfinch there is a need to tackle it with determination and resources. The multi-agency Kingfisher team identify and work with vulnerable children who are 'at risk' of CSE. There is a need for specialist support for victims, parent & carers, other family members as well as the wider preventative and early intervention work. The impact of this crime has an immediate and lasting effect on all of these individuals. It is important for their future safety and wellbeing that all those affected by CSE should receive specialist support to help them come to terms with what has happened

Community and voluntary sector infrastructure

The total number of community and voluntary organisations in Oxfordshire is estimated to be 3,783, of which 598 known groups are located and work in OxfordCity.

In this difficult economic climate cuts to the public sector has had implications for the voluntary sector. Voluntary and community groups are experiencing an increased demand for services, often from the most vulnerable people in the city, at the same time they are facing significant reductions in funding.

The sector has been looking at new and innovative ways of delivering services because funding has not been available. Volunteers have played a bigger role in the delivery of services. However, it must still be understood that there is a cost involved and even voluntary effort does not come free.

Investment in community and voluntary sector infrastructure will support the community and voluntary sector while it continues to go through this difficult time, with access to up to date information helping to increase their

effectiveness and ensuring those group at risk of exclusion are empowered to findsolutions.

Homelessness

The City Council manages its homelessness grant of £442,279 alongside the annual Preventing Homelessness grant that it receives from the Department of Communities and Local Government. The grant has been confirmed for the next two years, (2013/14 and 2014/15) at £957k for each year. It is unclear at present if any funds will be made available from Communities and Local Government thereafter.

The Preventing Homelessness grant is not ring fenced, but there continues to be an expectation that it should be used to help tackle all aspects of homelessness within the district. It is an expectation that Oxford City Council will have due regard for Government targets when deciding how and when to spend this money, with specific regard to rough sleeping and non-statutory services as well as pump priming initiatives aimed at preventing and responding to homelessness and rough sleeping.

The current main national initiative is the delivery of No Second Night Out and the commitment that no new rough sleeper should have to spend a second night on the streets. This involves a rapid and assertive outreach service and access to emergency beds. This has been established in Oxford.

Oxfordshire County Council is currently reviewing all its Homelessness and Substance Misuse services with a view of having new services in place by March 2015. The City Council is working as part of this Project Team to establish a new pathway of services. The City Council's funding as well as the Preventing Homelessness Grant funding will continue to support and enhance this pathway.

A review of the Young People's pathway by Oxfordshire County Council is also due to commence imminently with a strategic needs analysis leading to new services coming on line in April 2015.

The Supported to Independent Living Pathway (Mental Health) is established and likely to have a contract extension over the next year whilst the new Oxfordshire Clinical Commissioning Group and Oxfordshire County Council establish a new outcomes-based model of commissioning.

Inclusive play and leisure for children and young people with disabilities

Significant research has been undertaken over the last twenty years about the barriers for disabled children and young people to access mainstreamservices. The Government have recognised that additional resources need to be invested in order to improve outcomes for disabled children and children with additional needs.

With the number of disabled children and young people increasing more play and leisure organisations are being asked to support them. Disabled children are often excluded from their local provision as a result of the level of support

they need and the fear that many have of working and interacting with disabled people.

The reality of being a disabled young person is that whilst there are many organisations offering leisure opportunities most are segregated and few are truly inclusive. It is acknowledged that all organisations have equality policies in place to support these individuals however they are unlikely to take them on without additional resources Disabled teenagers interactions with their peers are often restricted to school or college.

Core funding is reducing in all organisations, which in turn is reducing their capacity to provide this essential support.

Appendix 2

Specification of funding themes and the approach to commissioning of advice

1. Independent advice and money management services

Oxford City Council supports advice centres in the city, in order to make free, independent welfare advice, including debt and general advice, available to residents, with a particular emphasis on deprived groups and areas. Breaking down barriers to work, supporting people into work or training, increased take up of entitlements and managing debt can make a considerable contribution to improving the financial situation of a household, deliver an increase in living standards and a reduction in deprivation and poverty experienced. In addition, given that many people in more deprived areas experience financial exclusion, Oxford City Council supports money management services, including advice.

The impact of the Government's welfare reforms may require a different approach to advice and support for some clients going forward. For many people affected by the benefit changes the only sustainable way to resolve their situation will be by moving into employment. Although, it should be noted, for many people affected by these changes they will have childcare responsibilities which make it difficult to get a full time job. Part time jobs are often low paying and there are more people looking for part time work than full time jobs.

However, work we have undertaken in the Universal Credit pilot evidenced that some type of employment is the way forward for many of those affected by these changes. The pilot has involved a caseworker approach and close joint working with a number of relevant providers in the City to facilitate 'warm handovers'. This approach has been well received by customers and crucial to the successes we have had, as it enables customers to experience a single joined up process, as opposed to a series of apparently unrelated interventions. We currently have a caseload of 156 people we are working with who have been affected by the welfare reforms this year, of those 22 have entered work.

In order to maximise and share the learning from the welfare reform pilots, and work positively with the City's advice sector to better understand existing provision and customer needs we are recommending that funding for advice and money management services is allocated on a one year basis for 2014/15, with a three year commissioning cycle being reintroduced from 2015/16 based on an agreed model for the future.

To ensure a cohesive and customer focussed approach to advice commissioning it is recommended that officers work with the advice sector to:

- map current provision within the City and
- explore how Service Level Agreements can be developed to reflect the positive learning from the Council's welfare reform pilot,

respond most effectively to government policy developments and leverage the experience and skills of the advice sector in order to reduce the impact on poverty. It is proposed that a working group is

established with representation from those organisations currently commissioned by the Council, to inform the process.

Dialogue with the advice sector, prior to April 2014, will also include issues such as referring cases, management information requirements, data sharing, provision of specialist advice, training and governance arrangements.

The work needs to start now so that any revised arrangements can be trialled and the implications fully understood prior to new service level agreements taking effect in April 2015. It is recommended that progress is monitored by the existing Welfare Reform governance panel, which includes officers and members with respective portfolio responsibilities and that the membership is extended to include officers and members with responsibility for commissioning.

Detailed specifications of what is to be funded will be agreed with individual organisations as part of the formal commissioning process. Organisations will need to show value for money and meet agreed customer requirements.

Funding of Services

Services have been categorised into two tiers. The first tier includes those services which link directly to key Council priorities. The second tier relates to services that are primarily the responsibility / priorities of other organisations (such as County Council and NHS Trust) As such we would expect the majority of funding from the City Council to be targeted at the Tier One services.

a. Independent advice services

Outcomes required:

- Reduce debt, improve money management and increase awareness of the dangers of unaffordable credit among socially excluded and vulnerable people and those on a low income.
- Increase the uptake of welfare benefits and tax credits for those not working or on a low income.
- Identify areas where failures in the provision of Council and other Government services have generated requests for help from the advice sector.
- Enable the City Council through the monitoring of advice centres' work to build up a picture of clients and their problems in order to make or facilitate, where within its powers, improvements to services and access to advice.
- Break down barriers to work including issues relating to skills, confidence, childcare, security of tenure and perceived lack of employability. This may be through services provided directly or in partnership with other organisations

Services required:

Tier 1

- Debt advice, budgeting and money management
- Welfare benefits and tax credits
- Housing, helping residents with sustainable housing solutions

- Crime and community safety
- Employment and Training, including confidence building, interview guidance, and help with CV writing

Tier 2

(this list is not exhaustive):

- Community care
- Consumer and general contract issues
- Education
- Family and relationship issues
- Healthcare issues
- Immigration and nationality
- Mental health

Commissioned organisations will make onward referrals as appropriate where another organisation is deemed to be better able to meet the needs of the client. They should also demonstrate how they will avoid duplication of effort where other organisations are providing similar services.

Settings required:

X hours per week of free one-to-one advice across the city, including in (but not limited to) the following locations:

- City centre
- Blackbird Leys
- Rose Hill
- Barton
- Cowley (in city council's one-stop-shop)

X hours per week of one-to-one advice in primary care settings

b. Money management services

A money management service reducing dependency on door step lenders and loan sharks.

To offer access to affordable financial services such as low cost loans and a saving facility to the residents of Oxford.

To offer preventative debt advice including how to maximise income, and promoting the benefits of saving and insurance.

The service should be locally based and accessible to all of the residents in Oxford.

Providing X hours a week of affordable financial services.

The advice and money management services links into the following strategies and plans:-

- Oxford City Councils Corporate Plan 2013-17
- Council priority – Strong and active communities
- Regeneration framework

2. Inclusive arts and culture provision that promotes social inclusion

Oxford City Council supports the arts because they have a crucial and unique role to play in delivering our vision for the city. The benefit to the community is to enable wide access to high-quality performing arts and cultural activities in various forms including film, dance, theatre and culture that help to provide a 'sense of place' and pride in the community, whilst throughout supporting social inclusion and economic development objectives.

Outcomes required:-

- To be an advocate of arts and heritage in Oxford, the region, nationally and internationally
- To maintain and sustain community and youth outreach activity
- To provide an infrastructure for high quality community arts and heritage activity
- Promote Oxford's international twinning links and develop cultural collaborations with these twin cities

Services require:-

- Providing strategic support, advice, expertise and advocacy for culture and arts in Oxford.
- Identify opportunities for umbrella marketing to promote the arts in the city
- Delivering world class, large scale public cultural events in the city.
- Promoting, brokering and consulting on externally-run events and filming in the city
- Focus on creating and brokering new partnerships and collaborations
- To develop, increase and challenge audiences who find it difficult to access culture
- Provide general support, advice and guidance for cultural development in the city, supporting emerging artists and organisations
- Developing links with Oxford's twinned cities
- Developing the Museum of Oxford through community-led curation and managing its capital development to meet demand for the expansion of this offer

Inclusive arts and culture theme links into the following strategies and plans:-

- Oxford City Council Culture Strategy 2012-2015
- Museum Development Plan 2013-2017
- Council priorities
 - Stronger communities
 - Vibrant, sustainable economy

3. Services to reduce crime and support victims of crime

The commissioning of community safety services supports Oxford City Council in meeting its duty to help reduce the fear of crime which has an adverse effect on all our communities. This funding aims to increase access to support services for victims of sexual or domestic violence and vulnerable young people. The benefit to the local community is that this work may help lead to a reduction in anti-social behaviour and will enhance support for victims of domestic and sexual violence.

Service required:-

- Delivery of a helpline to support victims of sexual abuse
- Provide a full time domestic violence outreach worker post to work with both male and female victims.
- Deliver a programme to support young people, parent & carers who are at risk of child sexual exploitation and sexual violence.

The community safety theme links into the following strategies and plans:-

- Oxford City Council Corporate Plan 2013-17
- Council priority – reducing crime and anti-social behaviour
- Oxford safer communities partnership strong and active communities
- Social inclusion strategy
- Oxfordshire domestic violence strategy
- Oxfordshire sexual violence strategy
- Regeneration framework
- Oxford Safeguarding strategy

4. Community and voluntary sector infrastructure

Investment in community and voluntary sector infrastructure builds the capacity of all of Oxford's voluntary and community organisations. The benefit to community groups is support to look for funding and help with funding applications, access to specialist knowledge about governance and management and changes in government and local authority strategies and policies.

Outcomes required:-

- To enable voluntary and community groups across the city to access up to date information in order to increase their effectiveness, by:
 - Producing and distributing a newsletter available to all community & voluntary groups in Oxford.
 - Groups having access to a resource centre
 - Updating Oxnet with policy and strategic news.
- To support the development of voluntary and community organisations across the city so that they deliver consistently high quality activities and services to their beneficiaries, ensuring that groups at risk of exclusion are empowered to develop their own solutions, by:
 - Providing 1 to1 support on funding advice, business planning, constitutions, legal structures, policies including health and safety, insurance HR and employment etc.
 - Provide training workshops on good practice and funding issues
- Enable the 'voice' of community and voluntary sector in Oxford to be strengthened and increase the number of voluntary and community groups involved in partnerships and forums

- Active representation from the community and voluntary sector at all 7 neighbourhood partnerships across the city.
- Increased number of community groups attending forums and actively engaged.
- Proactively build and develop relationships and project between voluntary and statutory sectors
- Proactively participating in the community engagement network, sharing good practice and forward plan activities and projects
- Voluntary sector voice is heard at a strategic level.

The community and voluntary sector infrastructure theme links into:-

- Oxford City Councils Corporate Plan 2013-2017
- Council priority – Strong, active communities

5. Services to reduce homelessness

In the councils homelessness strategy, significant consideration is given to the national rough sleeping initiative “Vision to end Rough Sleeping – No Second Night Out” which is based on the work of the Ministerial Working Group on Homelessness which brings together 8 government departments to tackle the complex causes of homelessness – not only housing but also health, work and training.

Specifically Oxford City Council grant assistance and the Preventing Homelessness Grant are used to deliver against the City Council’s Homelessness Strategy objective to – Prevent and Respond to Rough Sleeping.

In terms of commissioning the following priorities have been identified and used as a framework to deliver the above outcomes and allocate funding:-

- Deliver and review the impact of No Second Night Out
- Develop services to tackle the issue of entrenched rough sleepers
- Improve pathways through supported specialist accommodation for former rough sleepers
- Ensure sufficient specialist accommodation and support to meet the needs of single homeless clients in the City
- Review anti-begging campaign and messages and support organisations who work to get people off the streets.

The homelessness theme links into the following strategies and plans:-

- Oxford City Council corporate plan 2013-2017
Meeting housing needs
- Oxford city councils housing strategy
- Oxford city councils homelessness strategy

6. Inclusive play and leisure for children and young people with disabilities

Oxford City Council recognised the importance and value of play in the development of children and young people. Oxford City Council has just

completed a £3 million investment over 3 years to improve 70 play areas across the city. The benefit to Oxford's children and young people will be easy access to quality play opportunities. But children and young people with complex needs require specific support to enable them to benefit from play opportunities; this theme will help Oxford City Council achieve that aim and contribute to equality of access to leisure for young people with disabilities

Service required:

The provision of facilities for recreation and other leisure time occupation for children and young people with physical or learning difficulties

- To work with at least 5 other supervised play providers in the City providing suitability qualified worker(s) to support the specialist needs for disabled children and young people.
- Run specific activities eg choice days for disabled teenagers during school holidays
- Work with at least 22 disabled children (5-12 years) during the course of the year
- Work with at least 17 disabled teenagers (13-19 years) during the course of the year

Outcomes

- Provide trained CRB checked staff to support disabled children and young people
- Support disabled children and young people to access mainstream activities.

Inclusive play and leisure for children and young people with disabilities link into the following strategies and plans:

- Oxford City Council Corporate Plan 2013-2017
- Corporate priority – Strong, active communities.
- Oxford City Councils Children & Young Peoples Plan
- Oxford's young person's needs assessment 2013
- Oxfordshire Play Strategy

Appendix 3 – Risk register

Risk Score: Impact Score: 1=insignificant; 2=minor;3=moderate;4=major;5=catastrophic

Probability Score:

1=Rare;2=Unlikely;3=Possible;4=Likely;5=Almost Certain

No	Risk description link to corp. obj..	Gross risk		Cause of risk	Mitigation	Net risk		Further Management of Risk Transfer/Accept/Reduce/Avoid		Monitoring Effectiveness				Control Risk	
1	Loss of budget. (strong,active communities)	4	4	Savings approved against grants budget	Ensure senior management are aware of impact M	3	3	Avoid City Executive Board & Full Council Clear report to CEB Julia Tomkins	Keep budget intact: Milestone date: Feb 2014						
2 74	Risk to reputation (strong,active communities)	4	3	Community & voluntary orgs loss or have a reduction in the amount of their grant. None compliant with COMPACT	Keep community & voluntary org. informed about any changes that may beneeded and impact on their org.	3	2	Reduce Julia Tomkins Give funded organisation early notification about any loss or reduction in grant funding. Julia Tomkins	Lessen risk to reputation On going						

To: The Scrutiny Committee

Date: 1 October 2013

Report of: The Covered Market Scrutiny Panel

Title of Report: Covered Market Panel's Progress Report

Summary and Recommendations

Purpose of the report: To update the Scrutiny Committee on the progress of the Covered Market Panel and to present the findings so far.

Report Approved by: Cllrs Campbell, Benjamin, Clarkson and Fooks

Recommendations: The Scrutiny Committee is asked to:

- 1. Discuss the finding of the Panel so far and give any guidance on conclusion and recommendation for the Panel to consider.**
- 2. Decide when recommendations from this review should be presented to the City Executive Board.**

Introduction

1. This report outlines the progress the Covered Market Scrutiny Panel (Panel) has made since it last reported to the Value and Performance Scrutiny Committee (VAP) in November 2012. Since then, the Panel has aligned its inquiry to fit with the drafting of the Covered Market Strategy (strategy), has surveyed traders, met with officers and executive members and visited 5 other markets in London and Bristol.
2. At the November 2012 meeting of the VAP, it was agreed to extend the membership of the Panel from Councillors Fooks and Van Nooijen to include Councillors Benjamin, Campbell and Clarkson. Councillor Campbell was appointed the Chair of the Panel as the only Councillor who is a member of the Scrutiny Committee. In the last month, Cllr Van Nooijen has withdrawn from the Panel and so the Panel now consists of 4 members.

3. In February 2013, the Council commissioned external consultants called The Retail Group, to draft the strategy. They are expected to present their draft strategy to the Covered Market Steering Group in early October. The strategy will then be presented to the City Executive Board in November or December 2013. The Panel expects to pre-scrutinise the draft strategy in mid-October. The Panel will present a final report to the Scrutiny Committee in line with the strategy timetable to enable the City Executive Board to consider all proposals together.

Scope

4. The Panel's overarching scope is:

To consider the economic health of the covered market and in particular the effects of rents on the diversity of traders.

The Panel has refined this scope to also include the long term relationship between the Council and the Covered Market traders.

At the November meeting of the VAP Committee, it was agreed that the Panel's brief should include the following lines of enquiry:

- Pre-scrutiny and engagement with the developing Covered Market Strategy and Leasing Strategy
 - Work to engage with representatives of the Covered Market Traders' Association;
 - Review the leasing decision in respect of the unit formerly occupied by Palm's delicatessen;
 - Consideration of comparative data from similar markets elsewhere
5. The Panel has decided not to explore the leasing decision of the unit formerly occupied by The Palm's Deli as they feel there is little more they could add. The other 3 lines of enquiry have all been progressed and are detailed below.

Methodology

6. The Panel used a mix of consultation, visits and observations to gather evidence. These methods have allowed a better understanding of the views of stakeholders and the Council, and have also uncovered potential and possibilities. The Panel has:
 - a) Interviewed on a 1-2-1 basis Market Traders.
 - b) Held discussions with officers and Board Members
 - c) Visit 5 markets (4 in London and 1 in Bristol)
 - d) Observed the consultation events run by the Retail Group.

The final line of enquiry is to pre-scrutinise the draft Covered Market Strategy, which will be an all-encompassing strategy and will provide a list of actions to implement for management of the market. The Panel has successfully aligned its inquiry alongside the development of the draft strategy, and has participated in two stakeholder workshops and attended the visit to London Markets which was organised by the consultants. The draft Strategy is expected early October, and the Panel will be able to pre-scrutinise it then.

Findings

a) Interviews with Covered Market Traders

7. In July, the Panel surveyed traders in the Covered Market to understand their views on the market. Panel members went door to door in the market asking traders three questions:
 - What they thought of the balance of trades in the market,
 - How they viewed the relationship with council and
 - What they thought of the rent review process.

The Panel surveyed 28 traders out of 53 from a wide range of trades. The views expressed by the traders are below. Full notes are available.

Balance of Trades

8. The leasing strategy needs to be tightened in terms of the trades allowed to lease in the market to improve the character and the offering of the market. More emphasis should be given to raw food, traditional services and food products and less on stores that sell generic goods which can be bought elsewhere.
9. The strategy needs to put more weight on the diversity of the market rather than the financial gains to the Council. A weighted scale which encourages Independent traders over multiples should be introduced, charity stores discouraged and chain stores not allowed.
10. The number of stores one individual can lease needs to be reviewed. Traders need to be encouraged to sell goods that complement each other rather than the same good. Change of use requests need to consider the effects they may have on other traders and the market as a whole.
11. Opening hours should be extended to allow traders to stay open past 5pm to accommodate evening customers.

12. Council needs to follow and enforce its leasing strategy.

Relationship with Council

13. There is mutual mistrust between traders and Council, with traders feeling that the Council does not communicate enough and has an underlying agenda. Many traders perceive the Council to be solely financially driven and does not care who leases the stalls as long as they can get as much money as possible. Several traders feel the recent lettings of Palms and Fruitsticks were clearly designed to push up rental values to use at the rent review.
14. Although the proposed strategy sounds great to many traders, they don't believe it will result in any meaningful actions as they have participated in similar consultation processes in the past which have resulted in nothing.
15. Council needs to communicate better with the traders. Many traders felt there is no relationship between traders and Council because of lack of real dialogue to build an effective working relationship. Many traders have no direct communication with officers responsible for the Covered Market and therefore have not been included in any council consultations.
16. Many traders also feel that maintenance issues are not dealt with by the Council effectively. Maintenance is slow and things take too long to get repaired, because there is no market manager it appears that "it's always another department's responsibility".
17. Many traders feel that Council doesn't understand the pressures of working in retail and are making decisions that affect traders without fully knowing the effect these decisions will have. The whole way the rent review process has been run reaffirms this belief, as it is nearly 2 years on from when the rents increases were suppose to start and the process has not been resolved yet.
18. Rather than fighting with the traders the Council should be supporting them and promoting the market so that it can prosper.

Rent review Process

19. The whole rent process is taking too long to complete which makes it very difficult to plan for the future as traders now have rent arrears of 18 months. Traders feel that there is a total lack of commitment or sense of urgency on the officers' part to bring or start negotiations to a successful conclusion with or without arbitration. The process could be shortened if council consulted the traders well before the rent review is due.

20. Traders feel that Council is only interested in financial gains and wants to receive as much money from the rents as possible, regardless of whether traders can afford it. Small traders feel they are being priced out of the Covered Market, they believe the calculation and proportions used to determine rent is unfair – as the traders do not have the revenue of chain stores on the High Street. Traders feel that the Covered Market is a unique attraction that should be subsidised by Council to protect its future. Some traders also feel there is a lack of transparency in how the figure is reached.
21. Council appointing an external operator to run the rent review process has not improved the relationship with traders. Successive agents for the Covered Market Trading Association (CMTA) have consistently complained about the difficulty of dealing with the Council. These difficulties have only arisen and got progressively worse since the lease renewal in 2000. Prior to then although there were disputes they were settled amicably without court or arbitration. These earlier reviews were handled “in house”.
22. If Council had a proper understanding of the current business environment it would help in the negotiations.

b) Meeting with Officers

23. The Panel met with officers from the three different service areas involved in the day to day running of the Covered Market. This included the Porters from City Direct Services, Maintenance Officers from Housing, and Officers from the Regeneration and Major Projects team (who are responsible for change of use applications and the rent review process). The Panel also met with David Edwards, Director of City Regeneration and Housing and City Development and Gordon Reid, City Centre Manager separately. Officers were asked similar questions to the traders and their views have been bought together below.
24. Questions were on:
- Vision of the market
 - How the Council can improved the Council/traders relationship.

Vision of the Market

25. The Covered Market could be a niche, high quality shopping destination so that it can distinguish itself from the new Westgate and Oxford Castle. It should sell goods and services that are not available on the High St.
26. Would like to see a more tightly managed user clause which would regulate the quality of the food being sold. ie Borough Market has a tightly controlled approach to permitted uses. In Borough, traders are

interviewed and their products taste tested before they are given a licence/lease to sell it. Change of Use are rarely given, traders have to re-apply to sell alternative goods.

27. More promotion and marketing of the market needs to occur, shop fronts need more identity and cohesion, work needs to be done to improve the lighting, signage and visibility of the market.

Improving the relationship between Council and Traders

28. Traders are too quick to blame the Council for everything - ie footfall drops and its Council's fault. The Council has quarterly meetings with the Covered Market Traders Association (CMTA) and consults with them on change of use applications. We rely on the CMTA being the voice of the market and it should communicate with all traders more.
29. Changing the leasing structure would improve the relationship between Council and traders. The current leases all start and finish on the same day which has meant that 50 rent reviews all take place at the same time. The tension between traders and the Council occurs because the rent review affects the whole market at the same time. When the leases expire in 2017, the tenants are legally entitled to a new lease however it may be possible to agree different lease patterns at renewal ie stagger the leases so they don't all start and end (and require rent review) at the same time.
30. When the leases end in 2017 the Council could adopt a more flexible approach. It doesn't need to be constrained by tenure - any empty units could be changed to licences as long as we are fair to all tenants.
31. It will be possible to change the fixtures and fittings in the market, however there is a cost to changing the structure. The tenants will need to agree to the change, as a lot of tenants have spent a lot of money on upgrading their shop fronts.

b) Meeting with the Executive

32. The Panel spoke with Cllr Bob Price, Leader of the Council and Cllr Colin Cook, Board member for City Development on their vision of the market. It was felt important to speak to Executive Members to get their vision for the future of the market.

Vision of the Market

33. Covered market traders must accept that market trends are evolving. For the majority of shoppers, price and convenience has more influence over shopping habits than quality does. This can be seen through the growth of chain stores and the decline in independents throughout Britain.

34. In order to prosper, Covered Market traders need to concentrate on offering niche goods and services that are unavailable elsewhere in town. They can't compete with the chain stores on price, but they can offer better quality, unique goods that cannot be bought in shopping malls.
35. Council has a role to play in encouraging this transformation as we have a responsibility to enhance the retail sector in Oxford.

Improving the relationship between Council and Traders

36. Traders cannot blame the Council for all of their problems they must take responsibility for their own success.
37. The overall relationship between the Council and traders has suffered because there is not one person or forum responsible for the Covered Market. Delegating the everyday running of the market to officers has meant that traders deal with many officers for different things and so relationships have fragmented. A sub-committee of councillors responsible for overseeing the Market could be established which would give the traders a single forum to direct their problems to and would give councillors responsibility for building and maintaining the relationship.
38. The current rent review process needs to change as it is too adversarial to build a meaningful relationship with the traders.

c) Visits to Other Markets

39. The Panel visited 4 London Markets (Covent Garden, Spitalfields, Borough and Brixton) and the St Nicholas Market in Bristol. The point of the trip was to observe how other markets function and decide what aspects could possibly work in the Covered Market. The visit to London markets was organised by the Covered Market Strategy Group and was attended by Covered Market traders and Council officers.
40. The Panel also visited Bristol's St Nicholas' market with Council officers. The trip to Bristol was valuable as the St Nicholas market is owned and operated by Bristol City Council which made it more relevant to Oxford.
41. A table that outlines the 5 markets visited is attached as **Appendix 1**. The observations below for each market highlight areas which could be considered for the Covered Market

Covent Garden

42. The focus of Covent Garden stallholders is quality British goods. The manager controls and monitors what is sold and by whom. He

understands the customers the market sells to and focuses on maintaining the level of quality to meet the customers' needs.

43. The licence system is flexible and allows the management team to change and adapt what is sold at the market. Having a daily licence, means the manager can select performers and different products to entice a new audience into the market easily.
44. The manager has the autonomy to monitor and change things without having to get approval from others which means changes can happen quickly and trading is not disrupted.
45. Understanding the importance of a brand and promoting it is vital, Covent Garden is a world-recognised brand yet the brand is not sold in the market, souvenirs for Covent Garden are sold in the Jubilee market next door. Covent Garden is missing out on customers because they are not exploiting their brand.

Spitalfields Market

46. Management actively promotes the market through pamphlets and a website. Clear signage in the market explains where things are.
47. The range of events, stalls and restaurants complement each other and encourages people to come and spend a few hours at the market, by offering a range of things to do. Offering a range of events encourages new people into the market and new shoppers.
48. The market encourages independent stalls and food places, offering consumers something that they can't get elsewhere.
49. The flexibility of opening hours means traders are still open when people are finishing work and are able to entice them to spend on their way home.

Borough Market

50. Borough Market's management demands high quality and unique products to set it apart from other markets and to strengthen its reputation. Their vision is to celebrate the diversity of British food and is backed up by procedures such as the rigorous traders' application process (outlined in Appendix 1), which means that quality is not sacrificed. If a trader's goods do not meet management's quality standards then the trader is not given a licence to trade.

Brixton Market

51. The Brixton market focus is on providing goods that the local community wants. It sells a wide range of authentic products that are

unique to the culinary cuisine of the community and affordable. It fills a need which is not widely available.

St Nicholas Market, Bristol

52. The St Nicholas Market consisted of several different rooms which all provided a different offer, ie food, giftware, services. Most of the food traders were in one part of the market which meant that it was easy for consumers to see what was on offer and the aromas complemented each other. It has an amazingly diverse range of cooked food which provided many options for the lunch time rush.
53. Having one manager on site seemed to work very well as all the traders knew who to approach if they had an issue and he appeared to have a good rapport with the traders.
54. The flexible weekly licence encourages entrepreneurship, as traders only have to pay for a weekly licence and can 'test' out their product on the market. If it doesn't sell well they can walk away, if it does they can renew the licence.
55. The Council is very transparent with the prices – they have a flat rate per sq ft, irrespective of the size of the stall.
56. Unlike Oxford, Bristol doesn't seem to have a problem with mistrust between traders and Council. This might be due to the market manager being responsible for all traders and therefore communication between the two groups is better or because the licences allow for more flexibility than the leasing structure does in Oxford.

d) The Draft Covered Market Strategy

57. The Panel have been running their inquiry alongside the development of the draft Covered Market Strategy so that effective pre-scrutiny can be conducted before the draft strategy is reviewed by CEB.
58. The Covered Market Strategy is "a 5-10 year business plan for the covered market's strategic development and management". The aim is "to build its [the covered market] profile as a destination retail facility with a growing commercial performance." (Covered Market Strategy Brief)
59. In February 2013, The Retail Group were appointed to draft the strategy.

The strategy will consist of 3 stages –

- Vision
- Revitalising the short/medium term performance of the Market

- Long term strategic outlook

It is expected that an action plan will accompany each stage, which outlines issues that both the Council and traders can implement.

60. Each stage has been discussed at a stakeholder workshop with ideas being incorporated into the draft strategy by The Retail Group. The Panel took part in the stakeholder workshops which consisted of traders, councillors and officers brainstorming the three stages of the strategy.

61. It is expected that The Retail Group will present their draft strategy to The Covered Market Steering Group (officers, Cllr Cook, Board Member for City Development and trader representatives) in early October 2013. The Steering Group is responsible for reviewing the initial draft strategy and making recommendation to CEB. This will include a further consultation stage, after which a decision will be made. This is expected to be the November or December CEB meeting.

62. The Panel will have an opportunity to pre-scrutinise the draft strategy once the Covered Market Steering Group has approved it. The Panel and Committee need to decide if it wishes to present all its recommendations at this stage or to present some at an earlier stage. A pre-scrutiny report from the Panel will be presented to CEB at the same meeting that CEB receives the draft strategy for consultation.

Conclusion

63. The Panel is progressing well with its inquiry and hopes to agree on final recommendations from the work it has done with stakeholders (traders, officers and executive) and the market visits in the next month.

64. The Panel expects to be able to pre-scrutinise the draft Covered Market Strategy within the next month and will brief the Scrutiny Committee on its findings and recommendations.

Name and contact details of author:
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Market Comparison						
Market	Ownership	Speciality	Lease/License	Management	Appearance	Customer base
Covent Garden Opening hours: Stalls 10-5pm	Privately owned and operated.	High end Restaurants retail and events	<u>Leases:</u> Permanent Retail stalls/stores <u>Daily Licenses</u> Selection process: focus on the quality of goods, must be UK handmade. Constantly looking at the tenant mix – don't want everyone selling same goods. If tenant passes selection process can book a stall on a daily basis.	Manager responsible for tenants, leases, daily licenses, maintenance and website. Manager in charge of a team of maintenance staff responsible for cleaning and security. The website is run inhouse and the Manager has access to update it.	Clean, tidy and bright. Stores are chainsbut are presented uniformly ie same signage/colour scheme to show consistency.	Tourists/ locals
Spittlefields Gates open 8am-11pm Stalls open 9.30 to 6pm week, 11-5 Sat, 9-5 Sun.	Privately owned and operated.	Stalls and events.	<u>Leases</u> New stallholders get a 1-2 month lease. Experienced stallholders are guaranteed space as long as they are there before 9.15am. <u>Licenses</u> Daily, prices vary week/weekend Slightly selective of product	One manager and 4 staff responsible for dealing with traders, promotion and events. <u>Promotion</u> Vouchers have been used to entice people into the market –vouchers put in newspapers, for people to use at market stalls, stall holders can use vouchers to pay their rent.	Clean and bright, Good range of different food shops (mostly independents or small multiples), Communal dining area Uniform shop fronts and signage	Locals/tourists

			Specialist days ie Antiques fair, Record fair	A range of pamphlets produced to show upcoming events/ outline of market. Gates in entranceway are each named to event/person from local history – link to past. Website managed inhouse.		
Borough Open Thursday 10-5 to Saturday 8-5	Owned and managed by the Borough Market Charitable Trust	Food	<u>Leases</u> Store holder – 3 year lease <u>Licenses</u> Umbrella/ casual licence – daily or monthly Balance of Trades There are no ‘change of use’ applications. If traders wish to change what they sell they must apply for a new licence and go through the application process again.	Run by a Management team. Responsible for issuing licenses, traders’ application process. Rigorous traders’ application process 1.Application form – must offer a special/ unique product to sell 2.Interview with management 3.Testing panel – test product to check quality – appearance, aroma, taste Management regularly surveys market – ie number of products sold for £1 for value as well as quality.	Traditional bustling market, Umbrellas uniform Very busy Aromatic huge selection of diverse products – at a cost. Special occasion food rather than weekly grocery shop	Locals/ tourists

<p>Brixton</p> <p>SHOPS: 8am – 7pm seven days a week.</p> <p>Outside markets Friday 10am-5pm Themed Saturday Markets 10am – 5pm Sunday Farmers' Market 10am – 2pm</p>	<p>Run by the Brixton Market Traders' Federation Community Interest Company</p>	<p>Specialist Caribbean food, Restaurants</p>	<p>Leases For shops in the arcade</p> <p>Licenses For stall holders for the weekly street market(s)</p> <p>Daily licenses offered at affordable prices for stallholders. Specialist markets throughout the month.</p>	<p>Any profit made goes back into the community.</p> <p>Market pitches kept affordable, so all kinds of traders can take part.</p>	<p>Light and bright market with a relaxed atmosphere but tired looking shops.</p>	<p>Local community/ students</p>
<p>St Nicholas, Bristol</p> <p>Monday – Saturday trading 9.30- 17.00</p>	<p>Owned and run by Bristol City Council</p>	<p>Mix of stalls.</p>	<p>Licenses All traders on weekly licenses Flat rate per sqft over 50 weeks (2 weeks rent free) License fee includes utility costs but not business rates</p> <p>In 1994 Traders lobbied Council on the license price and got a 6 year</p>	<p>Run by a manager + 3 FT market officers (promotion, marketing, clerical) and 7 FT maintenance attendants. All Council employees.</p> <p>Responsible for collecting license fee, maintenance and promotion.</p>	<p>Market is made up of several different sections. Each section sells different types of products – ie food hall, which gives each section its own unique feel.</p>	<p>Locals, Tourists</p>

			price freeze, since 2000 – the license goes up by the Retail Price Index (PRI) each year			
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Note: Councils in London are restricted in how they can manage their markets due to the London Local Authorities Act 1990 which gives traders a lot more power to retain sites, and prohibits licenses being given to business. This tends to mean that in London, Council-run markets are not as prosperous as other run markets.

SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Thursday 5 September 2013

COUNCILLORS PRESENT: Councillors Mills (Chair), Sanders (Vice-Chair), Abbasi, Brett, Campbell, Fry, Lloyd-Shogbesan, Paule, Pressel, Simmons and Smith.

OFFICERS PRESENT: Pat Jones (Principal Scrutiny Officer), Lois Stock (Democratic and Electoral Services Officer), Helen Bishop (Head of Customer Services) and Paul Wilding (Customer Services)

23. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies were received from Councillor Altaf Khan (Councillor Brett substituted), Councillor Coulter (Councillor Pressel substituted), and Councillor Darke.

24. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

None made

25. WORK PROGRAMME AND FORWARD PLAN

Pat Jones (Principal Scrutiny Officer) introduced the current work programme and Forward Plan.

Scrutiny Minutes 5/9/2013.

Work Programme

The Principal Scrutiny Officer presented the current Work Programme and Forward Plan to the Committee and provided some background and context.

The Committee noted that the following items were now expected to be taken by City Executive Board (CEB) in October, and as a result they were not on the current Scrutiny agenda:-

- Riverside Land;
- City Deal;
- Grants Commissioning.

The Committee resolved to:-

- (1) Note that Councillor McCreedy had joined the Housing Standing Panel;
- (2) Note that Councillor Brett had agreed to lead the debate on the Council's use of social media when this is considered at its October meeting;

- (3) Note that the Oxfutures item which the Committee had requested, is in abeyance and that the County Council is not moving this forwards at present;
- (4) Agree that Councillor Jones could take part in the Committee's debates on flooding, Community Safety and building scale when they take place;
- (5) Note that Councillor Van Nooijen has left the Covered Market Review Group.. It was agreed that a substitute Labour member would be sought to take his place, although the Committee did not that the work of this review group was well advanced;
- (6) Agree that Councillor Mills would leave the Finance Standing Panel, and that his place would be taken by Councillor Fooks;
- (7) Agree that the following recommendation from the Housing Panel (concerning the Allocations Scheme Review) should be forwarded to CEB on 11th September:-

A Communications Strategy should be in place to explain the scheme as agreed; what it means for applicants alongside some general information on the likelihood of being housed. Communication should include the opportunity for feedback on the scheme itself, and the understandability of it.

Covered Market Review – update

Councillor Jim Campbell provided a short update concerning the work of this group. So far the group had:-

- Visited markets in London and Bristol;
- Carried out a survey of traders in the Covered Market; producing 30 written responses and many oral comments;
- Held discussions with many Council Officers, including the City centre Manager;
- Met with Board members Councillor Price and Councillor Cook.

The strategy produced by the Retail Group will not be available until October 2nd, and the Review Group would like to see this before finalising its recommendations. It would prefer to report to the Scrutiny Committee's November meeting.

The Committee asked that an interim report be presented at the October meeting, noting that Councillor Campbell would be unable to present it (but another group member would).

Other updates

- (1) It was noted that the Recycling Review has stalled owing to lack of time, but it was hoped to revive it.
- (2) There is an item in the work programme concerning Thames Water's investment in sewage treatments and flooding alleviation in Oxford. The Principal Scrutiny Officer suggested that a group be formed (two

Councillors have already volunteered for this) to meet with officers who regularly deal with Thames Water, agree a firm brief with them, and seek information from Thames Water concerning its investment so far. Information about the City Council's responsibilities (where it is the riparian owner) would also be sought.

It was agreed that Councillor Wilkinson should be invited to join this group, as this was her original suggestion. The Principal Scrutiny Officer will circulate all members in case anyone else wished to join.

Forward Plan

It was noted that the Public Engagement Strategy would be on the November agenda. The Committee did not wish to add anything else from the current Forward Plan.

26. REPORT BACK ON RECOMMENDATIONS

Pat Jones (Principal Scrutiny Officer) introduced the report back on recommendations from the Scrutiny Committee.

Resolved to note the recommendations and their outcome as shown in the report.

27. DISCRETIONARY HOUSING PAYMENTS - MONITORING REPORT

The Head of Customer Services submitted a report (previously circulated now appended)

Susan Brown, Board Member for Customer Services, attended the meeting, introduced the report and provided some background and context to it.

Councillor Brown clarified paragraph 26 of the report. This related to unsuccessful claims by applicants for Disability Living Allowance. The Oxford Welfare Rights (OWR) group had a good reputation for winning appeals on this – 9 out of 10 appeals it represented were successful. Where OWR thought an applicant had a good case, the City Council would assist them to represent a client. The Council was keen to ensure that those entitled to Disability Living Allowance could get it.

Paul Wilding (Revenues and Benefits Manager) and Helen Bishop (Head of Customer Services) guided the Committee through the report and provided some background and context.

Questions and issues raised by the Committee

The Committee raised the following :-

Applicant profiles

The Committee was keen to see more hard data in future monitoring reports. It would like to know more about applicants' profiles and any reasons for refusal of DHP.

It noted concerns expressed about digging too deep into applicants' profiles. This was not the intention of the Committee – it did not wish to know personal details, but rather information about numbers affected by the benefit cap, bedroom tax and other reforms; and how many and what sort of households were affected (people with children? Older people? Couples?)

The Committee noted an offer to provide case studies next time. It felt this could be helpful to its understanding of this complex subject. It wished to know how DHP worked in practice for people living in Oxford.

Conditionality

There was interest in any conditions attached to grants of DHP. What would happen if any conditions imposed on applicants were not met? What happens if applicants cannot meet any conditions within 3 months?

Of especial interest was a requirement to find smaller and/or cheaper accommodation, which was particularly difficult in Oxford. Perhaps this condition should say "look for" such accommodation rather than "find" it within 3 months. Paul Wilding agreed that in reality people had to try to find alternative accommodation, by bidding on other properties, for example.

The Committee felt that for some people the chances of finding somewhere else to live would be almost impossible. There were big decisions for the Council leading from this, as the Council was not going to be able to top up payments forever.

The Committee noted that officers had to make judgements about who was and who was not likely to apply for and receive another award. Officers were aware that for some people there was no other option, and that there was likely to be a small number of people who would need on-going support.

The Council could suspend awards if conditions were not met; or the applicant would simply not receive another award.

Reasons for refusal of an award of DHP

The Committee noted that there were 2 reasons for the refusal of an award:-

- (1) Where people have a shortfall which is affordable within their current budget;
- (2) Where people are unwilling to work with the Council in finding a solution to their difficulty.

There was an appeals process if an application was unsuccessful.

Utility Bills

The Committee was concerned that many people were hit by high utility bills. It noted that there were many reasons for this. They could be on too high a tariff, or they could be paying back past arrears. They could be helped find a smaller tariff, or perhaps agree smaller arrears payments with their utility provider.

Publicity for DHP

The Council promoted DHP through many channels, including Housing Associations, face to face with customers, home visits to those affected by the benefits cap and hand delivered letters. People affected by the bedroom tax had also been contacted by letter. All options were tried in order that potential applicants were informed of this – the Council sought to be proactive.

Future grants

The Council expected to receive further DHP funding for next year, but it expected it to be less than at present. This should be known in November.

Further information

The Committee appreciated that this scheme was quite new, that it was at an early stage and that this was the first monitoring report. It accepted that it was currently within budget, but it needed to know what would happen if that budget ran out. The Committee did not wish to explore people's personal circumstances, but it did need to know who (in general terms) was using the scheme and if it was focussed in the right direction. For that, it would like to see more data as well as case studies.

The Committee agreed that it would like the following information in future

- Information about applicant profiles, family make-up, where they live and the type of property in which they live;
- Information on the benefits cap – most difficult cases and how many may need to be paid on a continuous basis;
- Reasons for non-payment of DHP by the Council;
- Information about the number of payments withdrawn because of failure by the applicant to meet conditions;
- Case studies;

It welcomed the offer from Helen Bishop to see an overview of the processes behind DHP and the type of conversations that officers were having; so that it could see how the Council dealt with its clients.

The Committee further agreed that the Principal Scrutiny Officer should talk with Councillor Coulter (Scrutiny Lead member on DHP), Paul Wilding, Helen Bishop and Councillor Susan Brown in order to formulate future reports that would provide the depth and scope of information that the Committee required.

The Committee thanked Councillor Brown, Paul Wilding and Helen Bishop for their attendance and useful input.

28. CUSTOMER CONTACT STRATEGY

The Head of Customer Services submitted a report (previously circulated, now appended) concerning the draft Customer Contact strategy for Consultation. Helen Bishop attended the meeting to present the report and answer questions.

Questions and issues raised by the Committee

The Committee raised the following issues:-

Abandoned / “no option” calls

The Committee noted that 76,000 calls had been logged as “no option selected by the customer”; and wondered what that meant in practice. In response, it was explained that these were calls where the customer held the line and waited to speak to an advisor. A proportion of those calls would actually be for other services, but they were not shown as such.

New telephony was in the pipeline which would offer only four options and which would encourage the caller to make a more active choice.

The abandoned call rate had slipped slightly in recent weeks; possibly as a result of recent staff turnover and the need to train new people. Seven new team members had joined, and exploration of a staff retention policy was under consideration.

“Channel shift” and customer satisfaction

The Committee noted that Customer Services was seeking to find out how people wanted to do business with the Council, and what methods would best suit customers’ needs. There was a desire to find out how best to serve customer expectations and in turn make best use of Council resources. It was most cost effective for the Council to use the Internet, however, surveys had shown that customer satisfaction with this method was low, compared with other methods.

Customer satisfaction was highest with telephone contact – 91%, putting the council in the top 10 comparators in Govmetric (a body that compares and benchmarks the Council’s performance against others). Satisfaction level with face to face contact has increased. Staff were encouraged to maximise customer engagement when meeting face to face. It should be noted, however, that people who express unhappiness with contact with the Council may not be unhappy with the standard of service, but rather with the answers that they receive.

The Committee observed that the Council’s unit costs for each method of access were quite high when compared with the average, especially face to face contact. It noted that Oxford has two face to face enquiry centres, in the areas of greatest need, and that telephone costs are not hugely out of line with comparators. The most vulnerable people must have easy access to Council services.

The Committee also asked that the business community should be included, separately, in any consultation, as this was a key group for consultation.

A significant part of the cost is employment costs.

Benchmarks are sourced from SOCITM and PriceWaterhouseCoopers.

Other means of contact

It was noted that some organisations (for example Children's Centres) made use of Skype sessions. This enables customers to have a virtual meeting with an advisor, but at a time and place which suits the customer. This might be something for the Council to consider.

The Committee commented that 43% of internet access was by mobile phone and mobile apps, and this level was increasing. This was something that deserved to be explored further, provided that mobile use could be made efficient. There was awareness that there was a digital divide on Oxford, and the Committee was concerned that those without certain forms of electronic access should not be excluded.

Recommendations to CEB on 11th September

The Committee resolved to make the following recommendations:-

- (1) That the business community should be consulted separately on the draft Customer Contact Strategy;
- (2) The costs of any options for contact should be evaluated, as the Scrutiny Committee recognises that this is a high-cost service;
- (3) Consideration should be given to holding Skype sessions in locations such as the Children's Centres.

The Committee also congratulated Helen Bishop and Customer Services for recently gaining a Customer Excellence award.

29. PERFORMANCE MONITORING - QUARTER 1

The Principal Scrutiny Officer presented the report to the Committee.

She reminded the Committee that the housing data had been examined by the Housing Panel, and that therefore the Committee should focus on the other data.

Councillor Mills asked for further explanation of performance measure LP106 – Participation at leisure centres by target groups. The Principal Scrutiny Officer would obtain this and circulate it. Should any further details be sought on any measure, members of the Committee were reminded that they could raise it after the meeting.

Resolved to note the current position.

30. MINUTES

Resolved to confirm as a correct record the minutes of the meeting held on 2nd July 2013.

31. DATES OF FUTURE MEETINGS

Resolved to note the dates of future meetings:-

1st October
5th November
3rd December
14th January 2014
4th February
4th March
1st April

All meetings start at 6pm.

The meeting started at 6.00 pm and ended at 7.52 pm