

Agenda

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Scrutiny Committee

Date: **Tuesday 4 March 2014**

Time: **6.00 pm**

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

For any further information please contact:

Pat Jones

Telephone: 01865 252191

Email: phjones@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 Craig Simmons	St. Mary's;
	Councillor Val Smith	Blackbird Leys;
	Councillor Louise Upton	North;

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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

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

Background Information
<p>The Scrutiny Committee operates within a work programme which has been set for the year 2013-2014.</p> <p>The programme will be reviewed at every meeting so that it can be adjusted to reflect the wishes of the Committee.</p> <p>In addition, the Forward Plan is attached so that the Committee can decide if it wishes to pre-scrutinise any item.</p>
Why is it on the agenda?
<p>This report allows Committee to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Hear updates from Lead Members.• Consider forward agendas and issues. <p>In particular the Committee is asked to note:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• The consultation outcome for the Community Engagement Strategy was requested by the Committee. This has been delayed because of an agreed extension to the consultation period in an effort to increase participation. A renewed timetable was not available at the time of writing.• An action plan is being developed to deliver the recommendations made by the Committee on employment of staff from BME communities.• The evaluation of the Leadership Programme linked to the City's investment in educational attainment will be available to the Committee at the April meeting.• At the last meeting members asked to see further information

<p>on the reasons for the downward trend in targets for recycling and landfill. A copy of the report to the City Executive Board in September 2013 outlining changes in these targets is attached. Geoff Corps, the Service Manager, will be available to answer member's questions.</p>
<p>Who has been invited to comment?</p>
<p>Pat Jones, Principal Scrutiny Officer, will present the work programme, answer questions and support the Committee in its decision making.</p>
<p>What will happen after the meeting?</p>
<p>The work programme will be updated and republished.</p>

4 REPORT BACK ON RECOMMENDATIONS

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

<p>Background Information</p>
<p>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.</p>
<p>Why is it on the agenda?</p>
<p>The results of recommendations to CEB, 12th February 2014 on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Employment of staff from BME Groups (to the Board Member); • Educational Attainment Investment programme; • Covered Market Review; • Treasury Management Strategy 2014/2015 • Budget and Medium Term Financial Strategy 14/15 to 17/18 <p>are the latest items on the list.</p>
<p>Who has been invited to comment?</p>
<p>Pat Jones, Principal Scrutiny Officer will present the item.</p>
<p>What will happen after the meeting?</p>
<p>Any comments or follow up from the Committee will be included in the work programme.</p>

5 DISCRETIONARY HOUSING PAYMENTS - MONITORING REPORT

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Contact Officer: Paul Wilding, Benefit Operations Manager, 01865 252461
Email: pwilding@oxford.gov.uk

Background Information
<p>In June 2013 the Scrutiny Committee considered the Discretionary Housing Payments Scheme and made recommendations to the City Executive Board which were accepted.</p> <p>The Committee appointed Councillor Coulter as the Lead Member for this item.</p>
Why is it on the agenda?
<p>One of the accepted recommendations was for a monitoring report to be presented quarterly to the Scrutiny Committee; this is the third of these reports.</p> <p>The Committees has agreed the following aims in reviewing this information:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Is the current policy placing pressure on other vulnerable groups• Is there an unmet need• What are the profiles (human and geography) of those we help and those we turn away?• Cost profile – are we spending within budget.• What are the real effects of conditionality both in financial and behavioural terms?• Where should our priorities lie should a rethink of policy be necessary.
Who has been invited to comment?
<p>Councillor Brown, Board Member for Benefits and Customer Services, and Paul Wilding will attend to answer the Committee's questions.</p>
What will happen after the meeting?
<p>Any recommendations will be presented to the Board Member or City Executive Board at the next available meeting.</p>

Contact Officer: Robert Hetherington (Economic Development Manager);
01865 252012, rhetherington@oxford.gov.uk.

<p>Background Information</p> <p>As part of the 2013 Spending Review, the Government announced proposals for strengthening the role of Local Enterprise Partnerships by introducing the concept of Growth Deals which will be supported by a Single Local Growth Fund.</p> <p>Through Growth Deals, Local Enterprise Partnerships can seek freedoms and flexibilities from Government as well as a share of the new Single Local Growth Fund. Growth Deals (and access to the Single Local Growth Fund) will be based on the production of a Strategic Economic Plan.</p> <p>Discussions are continuing with the Local Enterprise Partnership and other partners to produce a final Strategic Economic Plan for delivery to the Government no later than 31st March 2014.</p> <p>The Government will undertake a formal assessment of the Strategic Economic Plan following its submission in March.</p> <p>The City Council continues to support the Local Enterprise Partnership to develop and finalise the Strategic Economic Plan by providing staffing support to work alongside County Council and other partners.</p>
<p>Why is it on the agenda?</p> <p>This report outlines the Draft Oxfordshire Strategic Economic Plan and the timetable for its submission to Government. It outlines the City Council commitments.</p> <p>It is presented here to allow pre-scrutiny before being presented to the City Executive Board on 12th March and Council on the 14th. April for agreement.</p>
<p>Who has been invited to comment?</p> <p>Robert Hetherington (Economic Development Manager) and David Edwards (Executive Director City Regeneration and Housing) will attend.</p> <p>The Board Member, Councillor Price, is unable to attend but has offered to come to a future meeting if Committee wish.</p>
<p>What will happen after the meeting?</p> <p>Any comments will be passed to the City Executive Board for consideration.</p>

7 MINUTES

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Minutes of the meeting held on 4th February 2014

8 DATES OF FUTURE MEETINGS

The following meeting date has been agreed:

1st April 2014

6th May 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.

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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.

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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.

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		<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> <p>Briefing meeting for the Panel happened on 30th. October. Scope agreed for progress in January.</p> <p>Panel Lead Member had an exploratory meeting with Thames Water in January. An Investment Priority list is being finalised by City Officers after which a meeting between Thames Water, the Panel and others to be confirmed to explore these investment priorities and timetables for action.</p> <p>Next Panel meeting 26th. February.</p>	
Discretionary Housing	Quarterly updates on spending,	Report to September meeting.	Lead: Councillor

Payments	claimant/property profiles, and issues and knock on effects.	<p>Committee asked for more information in subsequent reports. Councillor Coulter to pursue.</p> <p>Meeting with Board Member and Head of Service 8th. October.</p> <p>New framework agreed for presentation to December meeting.</p> <p>Next presentation in March.</p> <p>Continue to monitor.</p>	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 – Information reviewed Panel asked for 5% target to be increased.</p> <p>5/11/2013 meeting – more details on CH001, BV017a and BI002a called for to the 3/12/13 meeting. Information received set a new line of inquiry. See item below.</p>	Councillors Campbell, Simmons, Coulter and Darke.

		2/2/14 meeting – more details requested on the downward trend in indicators N191 and N192, schedules for presentation to the March meeting.	
Percentage of BME employees (performance measure BV017a)	<p>Analysis of the progress of BME applicants when they apply for job.</p> <p>Consideration of essential criteria for all entry level jobs to ensure there are no unnecessary barriers to employment.</p>	<p>Analysis information to Committee in February, recommendations to Board Member made.</p> <p>Talent Management Strategy proposals to Committee in April.</p> <p>Review of essential criteria progress to Committee in April.</p>	All Committee
Council Tax exemption for students. Is this being applied consistently and managed.	Two councillors to talk to officers about the process and report back to the committee if there is an issue to follow up on.	No progress.	Lead: Councillor 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.	<p>Lead: Councillor Coulter.</p> <p>Councillor Fry has expressed an interest in this item.</p>
Community Safety	Issue to be decided on after consultation with the Board Member.	Discussion with Board Member at the October meeting.	<p>All Committee.</p> <p>Councillor Jones has</p>

		<p>Asked Board Members to express concern to the Local Commander about the operation of NAGs since transfer of administrative responsibilities.</p> <p>Asked to see outcomes from the new ASB process in a year's time. Scheduled for April 2014 along with new ASB strategy.</p> <p>No further issues</p>	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.	No progress.	<p>Lead: Councillor Fry.</p> <p>Councillor Jones has expressed an interest in this issue.</p>
Use of Social Media by the Council	Review proposals within the Public Engagement Strategy.	<p>December meeting alongside the Public Engagement Strategy.</p> <p>Committee to consider a paper from Councillor Brett during the next cycle.</p>	Lead: Councillor Brett.
Any item called from the Forward Plan for pre decision scrutiny.	To consider and comment on issues to be decided by the City Executive Board.	<p>The following have been considered by the Committee:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Discretionary Housing Payments Scheme – Recommendations 	Lead: Councillor Mills.

		<p>made to CEB.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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 – recommendations to CEB 13th. November. • Customer Contact Strategy – September meeting – recommendations made to CEB on the 11th. September. • Oxfordfutures Fund – (item delayed indefinitely). • Grants Programme Commissioning Review – October meeting – 	
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		<p>recommendations to CEB on the 9th. October.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • City Deal – October meeting – recommendations to CEB on the 9th. October. • Community Engagement Plan – recommendations to CEB on the 11th. December 2013. • Oxpens Master Plan consultation outcome – recommendations to CEB on the 13th. November. • Waste and Recycling Strategy – Panel – recommendations to CEB on the 13th. November. • Educational Attainment investment update – recommendations to CEB 12th. February. • Community Engagement Plan consultation outcome and final proposals – waiting scheduling. 	
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Standing Panels

Topic	Area(s) for focus	Progress	Nominated councillors
Housing – All strategic and landlord issues considered	Issues: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Allocation Policies and how we 	All items for pre-decision scrutiny taken and recommendations made to CEB.	No substitutions allowed.

<p>within the Scrutiny Function.</p>	<p>communicate, give advice and take account of feedback.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Housing Strategy Action Plan periodic review – September meeting • Housing Strategy refresh – December meeting. • Long term affordable housing for homelessness prevention – September meeting. • Allocations review and changes to the Allocations Policy – September meeting. 	<p>Decent Homes Standard where next to be considered post stock condition survey to see options for the Asset Management Strategy. Suggestion that this is done in partnership with tenants.</p> <p>Estate regeneration – Focus on regeneration in the Leys and in particular:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How community capacity is built in preparation for this. • What community influence practically means for residents. <p>New Items added</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rent arrears analysis • Homelessness in particular “no second night out” and the effects of cuts on hostel accommodation in the City. • STAR survey results/comparisons to other providers/actions for improvement. • Improving quality in the private rent sector – a City Council 	<p>Lead: Councillor Smith.</p> <p>Co-opted Member – Linda Hill Councillor Hollick, Sanders and McCready.</p>
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		<p>Letting Agency.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Tenants and Residents Involvement Strategy – Implementation and opportunities for influence for tenants. 	
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>Recommendations made on Treasury Management.</p> <p>MTFS review scope and timetable agreed.</p>	<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.	<p>Scope:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Pre-scrutiny and engagement with the developing Covered Market Strategy and Leasing Strategy. Independent engagement with the Covered Market Traders Association. Review of the leasing decision 	<p>The Group is currently observing the Covered Market Stakeholder engagement.</p> <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 	<p>No substitutions allowed.</p> <p>Lead: Councillor Campbell.</p> <p>Councillors Fooks , Van Nooijen (resigned), Clarkson</p>

	<p>for the unit formerly occupied by Palm's Delicatessen.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consideration of comparative data from similar markets. 	<p>Bristol market have happened.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Interviews with Officers and Board Members have taken place. <p>Interim findings to the October Scrutiny Committee. Final report expected in November.</p> <p>Programmed to finish in November Delayed awaiting Strategy.</p> <p>Panel final report agreed at February meeting and recommendations agreed at City executive Board.</p>	<p>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 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> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Information has been gathered 	<p>No substitutions allowed.</p> <p>Lead: Councillor Fry.</p> <p>Councillors Simmons and Jones</p>

		<p>on the incentives currently used by the Council and the effects of these.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Information is being gathered from WRAP and other authorities on incentives and outcomes. <p>Panel asked and it was agreed that they pre-scrutinise the Waste and Recycling Strategy expected at CEB in November.</p> <p>Programmed to finish in December.</p> <p>Panel delayed scheduled to report in March.</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 	<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 October 2013.</p> <p>Programmed to finish in December.</p> <p>3 focus group dates agreed towards the end of October one more date still to</p>	<p>No substitutions allowed.</p> <p>Lead: Councillor Darke.</p> <p>Councillors Jones and O'Hara.</p>

	<p>choose not to engage?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What is the extent of this democratic deficit? • What does this mean for communities, services and funding? 	<p>secure. Delayed finish to December to accommodate this.</p> <p>Review report considered in December. Officers to respond to proposals before presentation to CEB.</p>	
<p>The effects and value of the City's investment in educational attainment at primary level.</p>	<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>Partnership school withdrawn from the KRM programme. Lead member to decide future progress and present to the committee.</p>	<p>No substitutions allowed.</p> <p>Lead: Not nominated</p> <p>Councillors Campbell, Jones, Coulter, Paule and Khan.</p>
<p>Mutual Exchanges between Council Tenants.</p>	<p>Scope: To consider the under occupancy in the Council's stock and the potential</p>	<p>Interviews with tenants who are at various stages of the Mutual Exchange process have been completed.</p>	<p>No substitutions allowed.</p>

	<p>for mutual exchanges to support those tenants affected by the changes to benefits and in particular the “bedroom tax”.</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>	<p>Interviews with scheme administrators have been completed.</p> <p>Observation of mutual exchange events is complete.</p> <p>Outcomes presented to the February Housing Panel. Consideration of recommendations underway.</p>	<p>Housing Panel with Linda Hill (Lead) tenant.</p>
Budget Review	<p>Scope: Review of the budget and Medium Term Financial Plan – focus to be agreed.</p>	<p>Meeting set to outline scope timetable for the 14th. October.</p> <p>Scope and timetable outlined by Chair for discussion and agreement at the Finance Panel 7th. November.</p> <p>Report presented to CEB on 12th. February.</p>	<p>Members of the Finance Standing Panel.</p>

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

Topic	Area(s) for focus	Nominated councillors
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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. Councillor Calls for Action 4. Pre-scrutiny – Riverside Land 5. Recycling – Panel update and pre-scrutiny of the Waste and Recycling Strategy.
3 rd . December	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Panel advice on Thames Water investment. 2. Enfranchisement and Empowerment – Panel

	<p>report.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 3. Pre-scrutiny - Community Engagement Strategy. 4. Use of Social Media by the Council. 5. Discretionary Housing Payments – Monitoring Report. 6. Report back on performance Indicators- BI002a, CH001 and BV017a.
14 th . January Meeting cancelled.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Final Covered Market Report – deferred to February.
4 th . February	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Performance Monitoring – Qtr. 3. 2. Employment analysis – BME groups. 3. Covered Market Panel Report.
4 th . March	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Discretionary Housing Payments – Monitoring Report. 2. Pre-Scrutiny – Strategic Economic Plan.
1 st . April	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 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. 2. Education Attainment Panel report including Leadership programme Evaluation. 3. Progress and outcomes from revised Anti-Social Behaviour structure and processes including pre-scrutiny of the Anti-Social Behaviour Strategy. 4. Options under consideration for the Talent Management programme (particular emphasis on BME groups). 5. Review of essential criteria for entry level jobs (particular emphasis young people who are NEAT)
6 th . May	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Recycling Incentives – Panel Report.

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
3 rd . March 2015 at 6.00pm	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Qtr.3 Treasury Management Performance. 2. Qtr.3 Budget spending 2013/14.

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. Additional 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 5.00pm.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Housing Strategy Action Plan. 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 – not used.
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. Follow up on benefits performance indicators.
5 th . December at 5.00pm.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Housing Strategy refresh. 2. Estate Regeneration – Scope 3. Management arrangements – Temporary Accommodation? 4. Communications Strategy for the Allocations Scheme 5. STAR survey benchmarks and methodology. 6. Programme details producing results for PIs HC016, NI154 and NI155. 7. Current rent arrears profiles.
15 th . January 2014 at 5.00pm.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. No second night out detailed performance information. (confirmed) 2. Improving quality in the private rent sector – a City Council Letting Agency. 3. Satisfaction with Parks details of survey results.

	4. Current rent arrears profiles.
7 th . February at 5.00pm.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Performance monitoring – Housing Measures – Qtr. 3. 2. Outcome of the interviews with tenants who had been through the mutual exchange process. 3. Possible Asset Management Strategy – Oxford Standard 4. STAR survey validated benchmark results with demographic breakdowns.
6 th . March at 5.00pm. Meeting cancelled.	<p>Provisional</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Temporary Accommodation Management Arrangements – Dave Scholes 2. Oxfordshire County Council – Supporting People budget issues – Dave Scholes and Nerys Parry
3 rd . April at 5.00pm.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Tenants and Residents Involvement Strategy – Implementation and opportunities for influence for tenants. 2. Councillor Lygo on the satisfaction measure used for Parks. 3. Housing Service Improvements – proposed Panel visits.

Items for the 2014/15 Council Year

- (1) May/June - Rents arrears – continued monitoring with 6 monthly reports.
- (2) Continued monitoring of satisfaction with Parks Services.
- (3) Temporary Accommodation Management Arrangements.
- (4) The effects of Supporting People budget reductions on hostel accommodation and the homelessness pathway.
- (5) Continuation of the Asset Management Plan – The Oxford Standard.

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BRIEFING NOTE ON CHANGES TO THE RECYCLING RATE

1. Summary

- 1.1 In May 2012 Street Arisings materials which were previously considered as recycling materials were redefined by government legislation and as a consequence classified as landfill. This adversely affects the City Council's position regarding its recycling rate.

2. Introduction

Definition of Street Sweepings

- 2.1 Street Sweepings are the arisings collected by our automated mechanical sweeping vehicles during the process of Street Cleansing which includes leaves, grass cuttings, weeds, litter, road dressings, grit, detritus etc.
- 2.2 In the past the City Council's street sweepings have been used as a top fluff layer i.e. the metre of material underneath the clay cap of a landfill cell and thus has been included in our recycling material and have contributed to the recycling rate.
- 2.3 Oxford City Council was able to claim the tonnages of the treated waste as recycled for the purposes of Waste Data Flow contributing to our recycling target.

Change in Legislation

- 2.4 HMRC issued Briefing Note 15/12 on 18 May 2012 in relation to the types of materials that could be defined as Landfill Fluff Layer (which describes material used for basal landfill engineering to protect the integrity of the lining system). This change adversely affects the City Council's position as the arisings are no longer considered as recycling material. This has therefore had a significant effect on our overall recycling percentage. The effect is also "double edged" as the tonnage involved is now considered as landfill and as such it acts against the recycling calculation and also incurs greater costs, for which the Council has made provision in base budget from 2013/14.
- 2.5 During the same period, the Environment Agency issued Guidance for Recovery of Street Sweepings and Gully Emptyings on 1 May 2012, stating that these arisings are no longer acceptable for composting or Anaerobic Digestion and therefore these arisings will now need to be sent to landfill or placed into an incinerator.

- 2.6 These legislative and guidance changes affect all other local authorities including the local District Councils in the Oxfordshire Waste Partnership (OWP). In summary their street sweeping arisings will no longer count towards their recycling rates and their Oxfordshire Waste Partnership Financial Arrangement (OWP FA).
- 2.7 However, the effect on the City Council's recycling rate is much more pronounced than for our rural neighbours due to our high frequency street cleansing regimes that depend on mechanical sweeping to maintain the desired standard of cleanliness of our local streets, pavements and hard surfaces in an urban environment.

3 Current Position and Impact on Oxford City Council's Recycling Rate

- 3.1 At present all of the City Council's street sweepings are collected and taken to landfill.
- 3.2 We therefore anticipate that the impact on the City Council's recycling rate over the full year will be a reduction in the region of 6%, (2.5% from April to September and 3.5% from October to March due to the autumn leaf fall).

4 Mitigation Actions Investigated

- 4.1 We have worked closely with our OWP partners, specifically with Oxfordshire County Council and our contractors to attempt to mitigate the effect of the recycling rate reduction on Oxford City as follows:-
- Worked alongside the County Council and EA to carry out testing on our street arisings to explore if they were suitable for composting during the leaf fall season. This is an on-going process and while our results are within the permitted levels set by the EA, they have not provided us with a definitive answer as to whether they would be accepted and therefore, as yet, they have not been counted.
 - We have carried out our own extensive trials on our arisings to see if we could use the litter based material as dry recycle. This was not considered to be a viable option due to the inconsistency in the materials that could be recycled, both from a quality and quantity perspective.

5 Possible Future Mitigation

- 5.1 We continue to work with OWP regarding the future of street arisings to reduce the amount that enters landfill, and are currently doing the following:-
- Pilot scheme to send arisings to new technology in Warwickshire that washes the arisings to recover suitable materials which are then recycled for other uses, for example in the pipe laying industry. Officers from Oxford City, the County and our current contractor have visited a site in Essex in July which is already up and running.

- We are working with the County Council and EA to adapt a bund at the Marsh Road Depot to allow a dewatering action to be undertaken, which will reduce the weight of arisings that would then go to landfill. A cost benefit analysis will be undertaken in due course, once approval has been granted from the EA.
- To continue our work lobbying the EA to accept sweeper arisings leaf fall as a suitable compostable material.

6 Impact on Performance Indicators

- 6.1 Up until now we have had a strong focus to achieve the psychologically important 50% recycling rate. This was a huge challenge for Oxford and, national performance data shows that this target is rarely achieved by urban district councils. Due to challenges to the EA and HMRC in the first 6 months of 2012/13, the custom and practice arrangements for quantifying allowable recycling rates continued. This arrangement closed on 30 September 2012 and therefore the Council's final indicator for 2012/13 was adversely affected by 3.5% (see paragraph 3). Without this, our final outturn was 44.58%. On a like for like comparison with 2011/12, the 2012/13 result was 48.08% (44.58% + 3.5%), an improvement of 3.2% from the 2011/12 result of 44.88. This is a particularly good improvement given the significant reduction of garden waste collected in the final quarter of 2012/13 due to the exceptionally prolonged period of bad weather (extreme cold and heavy rain) which prevented gardening. Oxfordshire County Council estimates that garden waste recycling reduced by up to 30% in this quarter which would have had an adverse effect of at least 1% on the Council's annual recycling rate. Therefore as a true like for like comparison, without these factors, the 2012/13 improvement would have taken the Council's recycling rate for the year very close to 50%. A significant part of the 2012/13 improvement was the result of the Council's investment in introducing recycling arrangements for Council owned flats.
- 6.2 Realistically with these changes to the definitions of recycle, achieving a 50% recycling rate is no longer possible in the near future, and it's difficult to see how we could achieve it economically even in the longer term. Based on the evidence so far this year, future predictions put this to be in the region of 44%.
- 6.3 This provides us with the opportunity to refocus our efforts on the arguably more important figure which is the amount of waste that goes to landfill. We have been hugely successful in reducing this in recent years and in many respects it is a better measure of the Council's success at recycling and waste stream management. For the current year we will endeavour to contain the weight per household within last years' target levels. Nevertheless, it remains a recommendation that in future this should be the key indicator used by the Council to measure waste management performance. The 2012/13 and 2013/14 target is 445kg per household.

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FORWARD PLAN FOR THE PERIOD MARCH - JUNE 2014

The Forward Plan gives information about all executive decisions (including "key decisions") the City Executive Board is expected to take over the forthcoming four-month period. It also contains information about key decisions, and decisions of significance to be taken by other council committees, and by Council itself, that 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 matters 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. Where a matter is likely to be taken in whole or in part in private, this is indicated in the details about that matter.

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>Steve Curran</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>

MARCH

ITEM 1:	FINANCE, PERFORMANCE AND RISK - QUARTER 3 PROGRESS 2013/14
Target Date:	12 Mar 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

ITEM 2:	GRANT ALLOCATION - PREVENTING HOMELESSNESS AND HOMELESSNESS SERVICES
This report will recommend the allocation of grants from the Government under the Preventing Homelessness programme and the City Council's own grant funding for homelessness services.	
Target Date:	12 Mar 2014
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:	Nerys Parry nparry@oxford.gov.uk

ITEM 3:	FINANCIAL INCLUSION STRATEGY
This report will set out a strategy defining the Council's approach to financial inclusion including an action plan to achieve objectives in the strategy. The Strategy will be subject to public consultation.	
Target Date:	12 Mar 2014
Decision Taker	City Executive Board
Is this a Key Decision?	Yes
Executive lead member:	Executive Board Member for Benefits and Customer Services
Is this item to be taken in public?	Yes
Report of:	Head of Customer Services
Contact:	Paul Wilding Tel: 01865 252461 pwilding@oxford.gov.uk

ITEM 4:	CUSTOMER CONTACT STRATEGY
The draft Customer Contact Strategy was considered by the City Executive Board in September 2013. The Board agreed to consult upon it. This report will contain the outcome of the consultation and recommend the adoption of a Strategy.	
Target Date:	12 Mar 2014
Decision Taker	City Executive Board
Is this a Key Decision?	Not Key
Executive lead member:	Executive Board Member for Benefits and Customer Services

Is this item to be taken in public?	Yes
Report of:	Head of Customer Services
Contact:	Helen Bishop Tel: 01865 252233 hbishop@oxford.gov.uk

ITEM 5:	CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE'S PLAN 2014-2017
This report will present an updated Children and Young People's Plan, following consultation, for adoption by the Board. The primary aim of the Plan is to set out the services the Council will provide for children, young people and families to achieve the Council's vision for young people in the City.	
Target Date:	12 Mar 2014
Decision Taker	City Executive Board
Is this a Key Decision?	Yes
Executive lead member:	Executive Board Member for Education, Crime and Community Safety, Executive Board Member for Parks, Sports and Events
Is this item to be taken in public?	Yes
Report of:	Head of Policy Culture and Communications
Contact:	Val Johnson vjohnson@oxford.gov.uk

ITEM 6:	CHILD SEXUAL EXPLOITATION
This report will concern the Council's involvement in safeguarding against child sexual exploitation.	
Target Date:	12 Mar 2014
Decision Taker	City Executive Board
Is this a Key Decision?	Not Key
Executive lead member:	Executive Board Member for Education, Crime and Community Safety
Is this item to be taken in public?	Yes
Report of:	Head of Policy Culture and Communications
Contact:	Richard J Adams Tel: 01865 252283 rjadams@oxford.gov.uk

ITEM 7:	INDEPENDENT REVIEW OF OXFORD CITY COUNCIL'S SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN - SECTION 11 SELF-ASSESSMENT
This report will represent the independent review of the outcome of its self-assessment of its Safeguarding Children arrangements.	
Target Date:	12 Mar 2014
Decision Taker	City Executive Board
Is this a Key Decision?	Not Key
Executive lead member:	Executive Board Member for Education, Crime and Community Safety
Is this item to be taken in public?	Yes
Report of:	Head of Policy Culture and Communications
Contact:	Val Johnson vjohnson@oxford.gov.uk

ITEM 8:	OXFORDSHIRE STRATEGIC HOUSING MARKET ASSESSMENT 2014
The purpose of this report is to set out the implications of the new Oxfordshire Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA). The report will outline what impact the SHMA may have on adopted planning policies in Oxford and on the wider implications for housing land supply across the County.	
Target Date:	12 Mar 2014
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:	Adrian Roche Tel: 01865 252165 aroch@oxford.gov.uk

ITEM 9:	LOCAL ENTERPRISE PARTNERSHIP - STRATEGIC ECONOMIC PLAN
Target Date:	12 Mar 2014
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:	Robert Hetherington rhetherington@oxford.gov.uk

APRIL

ITEM 10:	COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT PLAN 2014-2017 - ADOPTION OF PLAN
Target Date:	9 Apr 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

ITEM 11:	DIGITAL PATHWAYS TO SOCIAL INCLUSION
This report will be an impact study of home internet access and integrated support strategies for workless households	
Target Date:	9 Apr 2014
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:	Val Johnson vjohnson@oxford.gov.uk

ITEM 12:	SAVING COMMUNITY PUBS
This report will respond to a Motion adopted by Council on 3 February 2014. It will set out the actions that may be available to protect community pubs and how effective those actions are likely to be.	
Target Date:	9 Apr 2014
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:	Tom Morris tmorris@oxford.gov.uk

ITEM 13:	HORSPATH ROAD SPORTS PAVILION - REMODELLING OPTIONS
This report will review the options for remodelling the Horspath Road sports pavilion and for improving sports provision at Horspath Road.	
Target Date:	9 Apr 2014
Decision Taker	City Executive Board
Is this a Key Decision?	Not Key
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

ITEM 14:	PARKING ON HRA LAND
This report will present options for the control of resident parking on HRA land.	
Target Date:	9 Apr 2014
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:	Alison Dalton adalton@oxford.gov.uk

ITEM 15:	FUSION LIFESTYLE - ANNUAL SERVICE PLAN 2014/15
This report will ask the City Executive Board to endorse Fusion Lifestyle's 2014/15 Annual Service Plan for the management of the Council's leisure facilities.	
Target Date:	9 Apr 2014
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:	Lucy Cherry Tel: 01865 252707 lcherry@oxford.gov.uk

ITEM 16:	OXFORD STADIUM, SANDY LANE - DESIGNATION AS A CONSERVATION AREA
This report addresses the designation of the Oxford Stadium as a Conservation Area.	
Target Date:	9 Apr 2014
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:	Nick Worlledge Tel: 01865 252147 nworlledge@oxford.gov.uk

ITEM 17:	OXFORDSHIRE STRATEGIC HOUSING MARKET ASSESSMENT
This report to Council will set out the extent of Oxford's unmet housing need up to 2031 and will seek approval to request the other Oxfordshire districts to allocate land to meet that need under the duty to cooperate.	
Target Date:	14 Apr 2014
Decision Taker	Council
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:	Adrian Roche Tel: 01865 252165 aroch@oxford.gov.uk

ITEM 18:	CONSTITUTION REVIEW - FINANCIAL CHANGE PROPOSALS
This report will contain the outcome of the 2013 review of the Council's Constitution and will recommend changes to it.	
Target Date:	14 Apr 2014
Decision Taker	Council
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:	Head of Law and Governance
Contact:	Emma Griffiths egriffiths@oxford.gov.uk

MAY

ITEM 19:	HEADINGTON NEIGHBOURHOOD AREA - NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN
This report will seek Board approval formally to designate a Headington Neighbourhood Area as the first step towards the development of a Headington Neighbourhood Plan.	
Target Date:	14 May 2014
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:	Sarah Harrison sbharrison@oxford.gov.uk

ITEM 20:	LAND QUALITY STRATEGY
This report will propose the adoption of a land quality strategy for Oxford.	
Target Date:	14 May 2014
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 Environmental Development
Contact:	John Copley Tel: 01865 252386 jcopley@oxford.gov.uk

JUNE

BEYOND THE LIFE OF THIS PLAN

ITEM 21:	FINANCE, PERFORMANCE AND RISK - END OF YEAR REPORT
Target Date:	2 Jul 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

Scrutiny Recommendation 2013 – 2014

All recommendations

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Employment of staff from BME groups		
Scrutiny Committee – 4th. February 2014		
Recommendation	Outcome	Considered by
To support the use in job adverts of a variety of brandings and styles, rather than the rigorous application of the “Corporate Brand”, in an effort to engagement widely with target groups. To provide money within the Human Resources budget to support this and test the effectiveness of these methods.	Refused – will provide little added value.	Board Member
For the Council to offer a greater number of meaningful work experiences places focused on BME groups to allow potential applicants to build a better understanding of the Council and be better prepared for selection processes.	Agreed	Board Member
To build on the success of appointing a significant number of apprentices from BME groups and use these staff as mentors and ambassadors. For this work to be part of the training offer as a development opportunity.	Agreed	Board Member
To consider and bring forward ideas to break down the perception of some BME groups that “the City Council is not for	Agreed	Board Member

us". To consider within this how current employees can be used within outreach.		
To show our commitment to addressing the anomalies within the selection process by providing some initial investment money to prepare candidates or potential candidates from BME groups for the selection process. To consider outcomes from this to support future investment in this area.	Agreed	Board Member
Educational attainment Investment Progress		
Scrutiny Committee – 4th. February 2014		
Recommendation	Outcome	Considered by
To welcome the continued investment and work in this area and to see both the evaluation of the Leadership programme and the Key Stage results as soon as they are available.	Noted	City Executive Board 12 th . February 2014
Covered Market Review		
Scrutiny Committee- 4th. February 2014		
Recommendation	Outcome	Considered by
Recommendation 1 The Council should articulate its role in the Covered Market. The Panel believes that this should provide for greater emphasis on the civic importance of the Market and its	Agreed	City Executive Board 12 th . February 2014

contribution to the City.		
<p>Recommendation 2 The Council should appoint a Market Manager who will be based in the Market and accessible to the traders. The role should include the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Working with the Council and traders to develop the Market for the future, including discussions on the leasing structure and strategy, and the balance of trades • Spending the Councils allocated budget for the Market and commissioning services delivered within that • Promoting the market • Offering training and support for traders • Reviewing the website and keeping it up to date. 	Agreed	City Executive Board 12 th . February 2014
<p>Recommendation 3 In the longer term to evaluate all the options for the management of the market around criteria to be developed by the Market Manager, traders and the City Council.</p>	Agreed	City Executive Board 12 th . February 2014
<p>Recommendation 4 That early negotiations take place between the Council and traders to determine the best rental and licensing structure with the aim of moving as quickly as possible to a clearer and more flexible leasing and licensing arrangement needed to improve relationships and provide the flexibility needed for success.</p>	Agreed	City Executive Board 12 th . February 2014
<p>Recommendation 5 That the Council moves as quickly as possible to</p>	Agreed	City Executive Board 12 th . February 2014

<p>improvements to the Market Street entrance to the Market, and begins negotiations with traders on their loading and unloading requirements with the aim of freeing space for the extension of outdoor trading. This should also include discussions on the provision of extra cycle parking.</p>		
<p>Recommendation 6 To come forward with temporary arrangements for more visible signage for the Market on High Street including options using the buildings above and free standing signs.</p>	Agreed	City Executive Board 12 th . February 2014
<p>Recommendation 7 To provide money as soon as possible for the improvement of the Market Avenues from High Street.</p>	Agreed	City Executive Board 12 th . February 2014
<p>Recommendation 8 The Council move to commission design options for changes to the Covered Market and for these to include better use of the service yard.</p>	Agreed	City Executive Board 12 th . February 2014
<p>Recommendation 9 That Council actively promotes and includes the Covered Market in their communications and event planning to take the opportunity to highlight the Market as a key destination and also attract a more diverse range of people into it.</p>	Agreed	City Executive Board 12 th . February 2014
<p>Budget and MTFS Review 14/15 to 16/17</p> <p>Scrutiny Finance Panel – 27th. January 2014</p>		

Recommendation	Outcome	Considered by
<p>Recommendation 1 To welcome the changes in the methodology for calculating contingencies for the non-achievement of savings, efficiencies and income and change the ratings as proposed in the tables above. To leave the overall total as currently proposed in the budget.</p>	Agreed	City Executive Board 12 th . February 2014
<p>Recommendation 2 To adjust the budget as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Remove the £110k pressure for additional waste disposal costs because the Head of Service is no longer expecting these to be incurred. • To add an additional saving line for Housing and Property of £35k for supplies and services which is available to replace a saving that is very likely to be achieved. • To add an amount of at least £25k to the new investment “Low Carbon Oxford” budget line. • To reinstate at least half of the total of deleted community development grants to provide confidence of funding for the expected new initiatives in 14/15. • To keep under review the expected self-financing of the Design Review Panel. 	Agreed with the exception of the first bullet point which is refused. The low carbon omission is £50k.	City Executive Board 12 th . February 2014
<p>Recommendation 3 For City Executive Board to require the Chief Executive to set a</p>	Agreed	City Executive Board 12 th . February 2014

<p>clear process, criteria and expectation for invest to save bids and challenge the organisation to be more imaginative in this area.</p>		
<p>Recommendation 4 Investment is made in a market analysis of trading opportunities and the skills needed to take advantage of these. For the Trading Group to use this information to refocus the Council's trading and investment work.</p>	Agreed	City Executive Board 12 th . February 2014
<p>Recommendation 5 That the impact of budget proposals on jobs is set within agreed criteria and then reconsidered within this MTFS.</p>	Refused. Only 1 omission which will be amended in the final budget proposals.	City Executive Board 12 th . February 2014
<p>Recommendation 6 The reporting and control of post reductions is reconciled more effectively to provide an accurate picture of the effects of budget changes in our establishment now and for the future.</p>	Agreed	City Executive Board 12 th . February 2014
<p>Recommendation 7 That a strategic "health check" is provided to ensure that the staff skill and experience level across the whole authority is maintained at high levels. For this to be reported at the beginning of each year.</p>	<p>Not agreed This Isn't the best strategic measure are we delivering against objectives? Operationally this is something management are constantly appraising through the Council's performance management system.</p>	City Executive Board 12 th . February 2014
<p>Recommendation 8 To express concern at the absence of good quality outcome</p>	Agreed with amendment. Has already been recognised by	City Executive Board 12 th . February 2014

monitoring from the Council's investment in Youth Activities. To note that some better quality information is expected but, as this programme goes into its third year, to require this before the end of 13/14.	officers.	
Recommendation 9 That the Council to take the Council Tax Freeze Grant should the Council Tax increase referendum trigger be set below 1.49%.	Refused. Would erode the base budget.	City Executive Board 12 th . February 2014
Recommendation 10 That the prudent approach to the likely withdrawal of Revenue Support Grant is applied to the Housing Benefit Administration Grant and judgements are made and reflected in the budget of the likely loss of some grant between 15/16 and 17/18.	Refused. Specific grant so will reduce spending within the same profile as reducing grant.	City Executive Board 12 th . February 2014
Recommendation 11 During the coming year to reappraise the current and likely trends within homelessness and related issues, to provide a clearer view of the capital and revenue effects and the need for and scale of reserves.	Agreed	City Executive Board 12 th . February 2014
Recommendation 12 To review procurement within the Capital Programme to remove some risk and ensure value for money. In particular to consider the merits of Framework Contracts.	Refused Framework Contracts are already used. Slippage is more about project management.	City Executive Board 12 th . February 2014
Recommendation 13 As investment with property funds increase to keep under	Agreed	City Executive Board 12 th . February 2014

review the need for provisions in the accounts for increases and reductions in property values.		
Treasury Management Strategy 14/15		
Scrutiny Finance Panel – 27th. January 2014		
Recommendation	Outcome	Considered by
Recommendation 1 To include a commentary on Community Infrastructure Levy income and spending within the Treasury Management Strategy.	Refused Too early to state the CIL level. A report will be coming forward to CEB but this is not a matter for the Treasury Management Strategy.	City Executive Board 12 th . February 2014
Recommendation 2 To adjust the reporting of Prudential Borrowing between internal and external borrowing.	Agreed with amendment. This can be determined from the report but clearer labelling will be provided in future.	City Executive Board 12 th . February 2014
Recommendation 3 To provide for the Scrutiny Committee in March information on the risks and opportunities presented by the upward trend of accumulated balances within the HRA.	Agreed with amendment. Will provide but not until end of year reporting.	City Executive Board 12 th . February 2014
Recommendation 4 To keep under review provisions reflecting increasing and reducing property values and report to the Scrutiny Committee the “triggers” for a change in the current approach.	Agreed.	City Executive Board 12 th . February 2014
Improving Quality in the Private Rented Sector		

Scrutiny Housing Panel 15th. January 2014.		
Recommendation	Outcome	Considered by
That it is not appropriate for the Council to establish a Local Lettings Agency with the purpose of driving up housing standards in the Private rented Sector in the City.	Agreed	Board Member.
That the Council should further consider alternative approaches to this, that would seek to achieve the same policy objective through different means.	Agreed	Board Member
Satisfaction with Parks		
Scrutiny housing Panel 15th. January 2014		
Recommendation	Outcome	Considered by
That actual users of the Parks should be consulted rather than using the Talk Back Panel, for example football clubs.	Agreed with amendment. This is done once a year	Head of Leisure Parks and Communities.
That Parks Friends/User groups should be surveyed on their satisfaction with their parks, groups that were established to work with the Council to improve parks and green spaces in the City.	Agreed with amendment. They have the opportunity to complete the annual satisfaction survey and sometimes volunteer to interview customers. Friends are also involved in the annual review of Park Management plans and help to set	Head of Leisure Parks and Communities.

	priorities for improvement.	
That following the increased investment in parks, especially in play areas, this should be monitored to ensure that these facilities are maintained.	Agreed with amendment. This is monitored through CORVU	Head of Leisure Parks and Communities.

Community Engagement Plan		
Scrutiny Committee – 3rd. December 2013.		
Recommendation	Outcome	Considered by
To provide a clear statement in the Plan, supported by guidance to services, of the need for all engagement to link in order to deliver the overall aims of the Community Engagement Plan.	Agreed	City Executive Board 11 th . December 2013.
To ensure that the guidance and Tool Kit are fit for purpose for the many diverse groups the Council is seeking to engage with.	Agreed	City Executive Board 11 th . December 2013.
To consider in the Community Engagement Plan the role played by councillors, how this is supported through advice and training and is linked into democratic processes.	Agreed	City Executive Board 11 th . December 2013.
In order to improve engagement in the consultation process of this document to include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A simple questionnaire built around the main areas of consideration. 	Awaiting	City Executive Board 11 th . December 2013.

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Examples of good and poor engagement activities. 		
To emphasis and give more weight in the Plan to looking for and encouraging engagement at a very local level to ensure communities can help shape decisions and issues that matter to them.	Agreed	City Executive Board 11 th . December 2013.
To recognise within the Plan and Tool Kit the importance of defining what might constitute a Hard to Reach Group as broadly as possible and on a case by case basis.	Agreed	City Executive Board 11 th . December 2013.
Housing Strategy – Refresh		
Scrutiny Housing Panel – 5th. December 2013.		
Recommendation	Outcome	Considered by
That the implementation of a new Landlord and Lettings Agencies Accreditation Scheme be publicised as widely as possible to achieve the greatest impact and that the number of Landlords in the scheme be maximised.	Agreed	City Executive Board 11 th . December 2013.
Opportunities for young people that are NEAT		
Scrutiny Committee – 3rd. December 2013.		
Recommendation	Outcome	Considered by
To look at the essential requirements for entry level jobs to	Agreed	Head of Human

<p>ensure that there are no barriers to employment that aren't necessary or could be delivered through training, support or mentoring . When we are doing this to be prepared to take some chances in an effort to provide employment opportunities to those who would otherwise not be considered.</p>	<p>Will review essential criteria and report results to April meeting.</p>	<p>Resources and Facilities.</p>
<p>Treasury Management – Qtr. 2</p> <p>Scrutiny Finance Panel – 7th. November 2013.</p>		
<p>Recommendation</p>	<p>Outcome</p>	<p>Considered by</p>
<p>The Finance Scrutiny Panel has serious concerns about the Co-operative Banks current position and their recent statements. The Panel wishes to see an urgent review of their position as the Council's in-house bank to allow for more informed choices to be made.</p>	<p>Agreed with amendment.</p> <p>Will retender at the end of the current contract – April 2015</p>	<p>City Executive Board 11th. December 2013.</p>
<p>Should a change of in house bank prove prudent or necessary; to ensure that ethical standards and investment remain part of the specification.</p>	<p>Agreed</p>	<p>City Executive Board 11th. December 2013.</p>
<p>To provide to the Panel in 6 months time a review of the performance of the Council's non specified investments considering in particular, diversity and mix, returns and a benchmark across the public sector for the percentage of funds</p>	<p>Agreed</p>	<p>City Executive Board 11th. December 2013.</p>

allocated to this type of investment. To provide options based on this to increase returns. <input type="checkbox"/>		
Oxpens Site Master Plan Scrutiny Committee 5th. November 2013.		
Recommendation	Outcome	Considered by
To support the Oxpens Site Master Plan noting the concerns made by some committee members.	Agreed with amendment. The Board commented that this an outline Master Plan and these concerns will be considered in more detail as we move forward through the planning process.	City Executive Board 13 th . November 2013.
Riverside Land Aquisition Scrutiny Committee 5th. November 2013		
Recommendation	Outcome	Considered by
To support the proposals in the report and ask the City Executive Board to note the offer of residents.	Agreed. Officer will talk directly to residents about their offer.	City Executive Board 13 th . November 2013.
Waste and Recycling Strategy Scrutiny Committee 5th. November 2013		

Recommendation	Outcome	Considered by
That the strategy reflects in its vision the view that waste is a resource and a commodity from which the Council can generate income, and that the Council should continually be looking for further opportunities to benefit financially from the waste that the City produces.	Agreed	City Executive Board 13 th . November 2013.
That CEB investigate and cost opportunities to pre-sort and divert recyclables from household waste collection before sending it to landfill.	Refused The Board Member agreed that this was needed within the County but the County Council has decided on incineration. Any consideration of an MRF provided by the City would be unaffordable. We are tackling these issues using other solutions.	
That the City Executive Board provide to the Scrutiny Committee more detailed information on the costing and feasibility for the options to recycle food from flats that have been considered alongside the details of the current capital bid	Agreed	
That CEB more actively use the penalty at its disposal to convince residents who do not present waste in the manner required.	Agreed	
That CEB investigate, through the Oxfordshire Waste Partnership, local opportunities to reduce excess packaging and reduce the use of plastic bags.	Agreed	

That CEB take all opportunities to promote the benefits of food waste separation to commercial customers and investigate opportunities to offer incentives to new business customers.	Agreed	
Performance Indicator LP106 Scrutiny Committee – 1st. October 2013		
Recommendation	Outcome	Considered by
<p>The Committee is pleased to see improvements in participation amongst target groups and looks forward to reviewing this data in more detail at the end of the year. The overall target improvement of 5% is consistently overachieved so the Committee want to see a more challenging target set to ensure that we are challenging the provider to do the best they can in this important community development area. The target should be at least that achieved in the previous year.</p>	<p>Refused</p> <p>RESPONSE: "While leisure usage by target groups continues to increase, we'd like to do better still. We're looking at why the increase in usage by target groups appears to have slowed down last quarter, including the way usage is measured, the effect of weather conditions, and the deteriorating state of Temple Cowley Pool, as well as what more we could do to publicise what's available and make it more attractive.</p> <p>"The Council and Fusion remain determined to meet and exceed the 5% target, as we have in previous</p>	<p>Board Member for Leisure Services.</p> <p>Recommendation sent 8th. October 2013.</p>

	years. However, until the reasons for last quarter's performance have been determined and we have a slightly longer indication of trend to work with, I don't think it would be helpful to adjust the target. We will of course keep this under review."	
Operation of Neighbourhood Action Groups (NAGs)		
Scrutiny Committee – 1st. October 2013		
Recommendation	Outcome	Considered by
As a follow up, I have been asked to remind you that members of the Scrutiny Committee would be very grateful if you could reflect their views when next you contact the local Police Commander; and in particular if you could ask the Commander where he/she sees the role of NAGS – what is their priority in Police work?	Agree. Response from Cllr. Kennedy on the agenda.	Board Member for Education, Crime and Community Safety. Recommendation sent 2 nd . October 2013.
Grants Commissioning Review		
Scrutiny Committee – 1st. October 2013		
Recommendation	Outcome	Considered by
That a member of the Scrutiny Committee has a seat on the Welfare Reform Members Panel. This would be Councillor	Agreed with amendment.	City Executive Board 9 th . October

Coulter until May 2014.	Scrutiny Councillor to have observer status on the Welfare reform Members Panel.	
City Deal Bid		
Scrutiny Committee – 1st. October 2013		
Recommendation	Outcome	Considered by
For the expected future reports (recommendation 4 in the report) to establish the principle of public scrutiny through Local Authority Scrutiny Committees and discuss how this might work.	Agreed	City Executive Board 9 th . October
In developing the ambitions and programmes within the “Skills “ heading for Joint Committee Members to ensure that education, training and apprenticeship programmes are accessible to all through local schools and other educational bodies with an emphasis on early advice and guidance to young people so they are “work ready” for real jobs. For the emphasis of these programmes to be in areas of highest deprivation.	Agreed	
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: Scrutiny Committee

Date: 4 March 2014

Report of: Head of Customer Services

Title of Report: A report on the monitoring of Discretionary Housing Payments

Summary and Recommendations

Purpose of report: To provide an update on the monitoring and expenditure on the Discretionary Housing Payments budget

Report Approved by:

Finance:

Legal:

Policy Framework: Efficient, Effective Council

Recommendation(s): To note the monitoring arrangements in place, and expenditure to date.

APPENDICES:

Appendix 1 – Summary of DHP Expenditure

Appendix 2 – Case studies of customers not meeting conditionality requirements

INTRODUCTION

1. On 12 June 2013 The City's Executive Board agreed a new Discretionary Housing Payment (DHP) policy. This policy was inspected by the Scrutiny Committee at its meeting of 4 June 2013. One of the recommendations of the Committee was that they be involved in the on-going monitoring arrangements regarding the implementation of the DHP policy, and that reports be brought back to the Committee on a quarterly basis. This report provides the second update on DHP activity under the new policy.
2. Discretionary Housing Payments (DHP's) are monies allocated by local authorities under legislation set out in the Child Support, Pensions and

Social Security Act 2000 and The Discretionary Financial Assistance Regulations 2001 (SI2001/1167). In summary, the funds can be used to meet eligible rent for people already in receipt of Housing Benefit. The customer must make an application for the payment, and the Council must consider the applicants financial need if an award is to be made. In effect, the fund allows some local discretion to meet the needs that are not covered by the national Housing Benefit Scheme.

3. DHP is not a sustainable solution for people who have a shortfall between their Housing Benefit and rent costs. To this end the policy provides for awards to be: a) limited to three months in duration in most cases and b) for conditionality to be applied to the majority of awards.
4. The policy also makes provision for awards to be withdrawn if conditionality is not met. It is intended that any conditionality is designed to promote effective financial management, help support people into work, and or assist with reducing rent liability. Examples provided in the policy include attending work related coaching and seeking assistance to manage debts.

DHP PROCESS

5. The key determination in making a DHP award is whether someone is able to afford their HB shortfall, and this is done with reference to a detailed income and expenditure form which the customer fills in. The officer assessing the application will go back to the customer with any queries about the income and expenditure before making a decision.
6. When making an award, one or more conditions will usually be applied requiring the customer to take some specific actions in order to find a sustainable solution to their problem. The conditionality will relate to finding work, finding affordable accommodation and/or reducing expenditure.
7. Conditionality related to finding work usually requires engaging with one of our partners to deal with the barriers to work, provide access to training or ultimately find work. Our main partners are Prospect (formerly known as Skills (Training) UK), Jobcentre Plus, Aspire, Crisis Skylight and the CAB. They are helping customers overcome barriers of debt, security of tenure, lack of skills, perceived lack of employability and access to affordable childcare.
8. Conditionality relating to finding affordable accommodation involves registering on the housing list and bidding for properties, or actively participating in the mutual exchange scheme. Conditionality relating to reducing expenditure will involve obtaining debt advice, or taking action to reduce specific items of excessive expenditure identified on the Income & Expenditure form.
9. Customers are made aware that awards are for a short, defined period and may be cancelled if the agreed actions are not undertaken and that

repeat awards will not be made if conditionality has not been met. Awards are normally made for three months but each case is determined on its own merits.

10. Repeat applications may be made but will only be awarded if the conditions attached to the first award have been met. Customers requesting a repeat award must also have an interview with the person assessing their application. More repeat awards have been made in the second half of the year as initial awards have expired. Many customers have multiple support needs, and for such people short awards of 4-6 weeks are typically made. This is to allow them to deal with one issue at a time. Earlier in the year, providing such people with multiple actions to undertake in one go, led to a failure in many of the actions being achieved.
11. Consistency is achieved in two ways. An officer has been appointed who will deal with all new DHP applications. Secondly a 10% check of cases is made by a manager to ensure the DHP policy is being followed.
12. The aim of the DHP policy is to ensure sustainable solutions are found for people facing reductions in their Housing Benefit. However, during the year twelve cases have been identified which have no immediate prospect of finding a sustainable solution. Due to the vulnerability, and the high risk of homelessness in these cases DHP's will continue to be applied whilst support is provided. These cases are closely monitored and are discussed in case review meetings with colleagues in Community Housing.

DHP BUDGET

13. As at the end of January forecast expenditure to the end of the year is £368,252.33 against a budget of £625,369. This budget includes £100,000 provided from Housing to top up our government grant. Appendix 1 attached provides further details of the expenditure.
14. Whilst additional DHP expenditure will be incurred up until the end of March, annual expenditure will be significantly less than our grant. This is due to the budget being managed in a prudent and consistent manner. Applications for support have only been turned down, if the customer had sufficient income to pay their Housing Benefit shortfall, or if they would not undertake any conditions attached to their award. This latter group is very small in number, and is detailed in paragraph 18 below.
15. The Department of Work & Pensions has advised the Council that our DHP grant for 2014/15 will be £514,496.

DATA ANALYSIS

16. The data in Appendix 1 shows that nearly half of all DHP applications (377) made cite the Under Occupancy Regulations as the reason for the application. In comparison, there have only been 192 applications due to the reduction in Local Housing Allowance rates, from a potential claimant population of nearly 3,500. The Welfare Reform Team will be undertaking more work with private sector tenants from April, which will increase the number of applications from this sector or illuminate the reasons as to why applications are so low.

17. As at the end of January there are 337 cases where repeat awards have been made:
 - 84 cases have had 2 awards
 - 31 cases have had 3 awards
 - 10 cases have had 4 awards
 - 6 cases have had 5 awards
 - 1 case has had 6 awards

18. Since the new DHP policy was approved in June this year, conditionality has been applied to nearly every successful DHP application. So far there have only been five cases where we have not been able to provide further support due to conditionality not being kept. In addition there are 10 cases where an award was not initially made because the customer would not accept any conditions to an award. Overwhelmingly, the application of conditions to DHP awards is promoting positive action on behalf of recipients.

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Background papers:

Version number: 0.2

Appendix 2

Case Studies of people who have not met the conditions placed on their Discretionary Housing Payment awards.

Case Study 1:

Claimant is a Council Tenant who lives by herself, whose main income is Employment & Support Allowance. She is affected by the Bedroom Tax, which means her eligible rent is reduced by 25%. This has left her with a shortfall in her Housing Benefit of £26.12 per week.

A Discretionary Housing Payment was awarded in May 2013 for the period 1 April 2013 to 30 June 2013. The conditions applied were to look for a smaller property and to engage with the CAB for help with her debts. On 12 August 2013, an application for a repeat award was declined as these conditions had not been met. The tenant then advised us they couldn't downsize as her tenancy was in joint names, and she was trying to get this dissolved and put into her sole name. As such a further DHP award was made until the beginning of September, with the condition of looking for smaller accommodation again. When the case was reviewed in September, the condition had still not been met. The tenant had not bid for any properties and so no further DHP has been paid.

Case Study 2:

Claimant is a private tenant who is a single mother and lives with her 5 children (2 of whom are aged 16-19). She is affected by the Benefit Cap which has left her with a shortfall in her Housing Benefit of £178.40 per week. A DHP was awarded for three months from when the Benefit Cap was implemented in August. The condition applied was to learn English, as her inability to speak it well was a barrier to obtaining work. In November a renewal of the DHP was declined as she had not attended any English lessons. In February, we were advised that the claimant was now attending English classes, and the DHP award was reinstated.

Case Study 3:

Claimant is a council tenant living with her partner and 5 children. She was affected by the Benefit cap which has left her with a shortfall of £49.50 per week.

A DHP was awarded for three months from August to November on the condition that they maintain engagement with the Work Programme, and continue to look for work. Claimant's partner is qualified to teach but had not worked since November 2012. In November a further four week DHP was applied on the condition that he attended the Job Club.

In January we were advised that they had not attended the Job Club, so no further DHP was awarded. Subsequently the claimant's partner found work which paid sufficiently to mean they were no longer entitled to Housing Benefit.

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DHP Summary

	Pre-April	April	May	June	July	August	September	October	November	December	January	February	March	Total
Applications & Awards														
Applications Processed		68	81	57	86	51	75	69	66	113	56	75		797
Awards Made		58	60	43	57	30	46	41	43	101	47	64		590
Value of Awards	£33,523.78	£29,327.15	£26,332.75	£23,318.49	£12,934.31	£43,346.06	£27,430.54	£29,602.40	£79,727.68	£32,088.23	£30,620.94			£368,252.33
Highest Weekly Award	£115.26	£108.80	£102.69	£144.11	£276.42	£299.50	£299.50	£292.12	£299.50	£299.50	£276.42			£299.50
Lowest Weekly Award	£4.01	£4.61	£5.77	£3.25	£4.61	£6.00	£12.79	£7.47	£4.93	£6.60	£5.77			£3.25
Mean Weekly Award	£21.11	£21.09	£29.90	£26.07	£27.29	£80.26	£66.84	£65.00	£191.27	£85.37	£85.98			£49.93
Mean Award Period (weeks)	27	22	20	17	13	14	12	16	13	14	13			16
Conditionality														
Engage with work related support	0	0	2	10	8	29	23	17	47	17	25			178
Reduce spending	0	1	0	7	4	6	5	7	9	2	3			44
Seek debt advice	0	0	0	2	1	9	5	4	17	7	12			57
Look for smaller accommodation	0	0	8	16	12	14	10	15	28	9	11			123
Look for a lodger	0	0	0	2	0	0	1	2	0	0	0			5
Apply for another benefit	0	0	0	0	0	9	3	1	23	8	9			53
Reason for App														
Benefit Cap	0	0	1	0	1	37	19	18	48	19	30			173
Bedroom Tax	27	30	27	65	36	30	25	25	50	26	36			377
LHA	38	48	24	14	10	4	14	15	14	6	5			192
Combination of above	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	1	0			2
Other	3	3	5	7	4	4	10	8	1	4	4			53

BUDGET POSITION

DWP Grant	£525,369.00
Additional from Housing	£100,000.00

Total Budget £625,369.00

Total Awarded	£368,252.33
Estimated spend on Benefit Cap	£70,495.00
Potential Repeat Awards*	

Remaining Budget £186,621.67

* Repeat awards are calculated as follows:

The caseworker makes a judgement about the likelihood of a repeat award (Very Unlikely, 50/50, Very Likely)

This converts to a multiplier (0,0.5,1)

The number of weeks remaining after the customer's current award ends are multiplied by the weekly award, and the multiplier above.

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To: City Executive Board

Date: 12th March 2014

Report of: David Edwards, Executive Director Regeneration and housing

Title of Report: Oxfordshire Strategic Economic Plan

Summary and Recommendations

Purpose of report: To provide an update on the progress for the development of the Oxfordshire Strategic Economic Plan and outline the timetable for its submission to Government and any commitments being asked of the City Council.

Key decision yes

Executive lead member: Cllr Bob Price

Policy Framework: No

Recommendation(s):

- 1. To formally support the overarching focus of the Oxfordshire Strategic Economic Plan**
- 2. To delegate authority to the Executive Director, Housing and Regeneration, in consultation with the Council Leader, to make an necessary editorial changes and to endorse the final Strategic Economic Plan prior to its submission to Government**
- 3. To delegate authority to the Executive Director, Housing and Regeneration, in consultation with the Council Leader, to lead on negotiations with partners and Government on any invitation to enter into a Local Growth Deal.**

Introduction

1. As part of the 2013 Spending Review, the Government announced proposals for strengthening of the role of Local Enterprise Partnerships by introducing the concept of Growth Deals which will be supported by a Single Local Growth Fund. Through Growth Deals Local Enterprise Partnerships can seek freedoms and flexibilities from Government as well as a share of the new Single Local Growth Fund. Growth Deals (and

access to the Single Local Growth Fund) will be based on the production of a Strategic Economic Plan. The Strategic Economic Plan is to be a new multi-year local growth strategy that demonstrates how Local Enterprise Partnerships will deliver growth based on a strong rationale, value for money and partnerships for delivery.

2. The Government anticipated that a Local Enterprise Partnership's Strategic Economic Plan, City Deals and its European Structural and Investment Funds Strategy will be designed and function as an integrated package. With all three using the same evidence, rationale and contributing to achieving the same vision.
3. Following completion of the Strategic Economic Plan *some* Local Enterprise Partnerships will be invited to negotiate a Growth Deal funded from the Single Local Growth fund. These negotiations will be completed in time for the beginning of 2015/16 financial year.
4. The Single Local Growth Fund is a competitive pot and access to it will depend on the strength of the Strategic Economic Plan. The Growth fund is not new money: it is the bringing together of a number of existing funds – mainly transport related capital funds.
5. A poor Strategic Economic Plan – or one which does not fully support the City's growth potential – could result in a fall in the level of resources available to support growth in the City and a weakening of our credibility with Government.

Overview of the Oxfordshire Strategic Economic Plan

6. The ambition set out in the Strategic Economic Plan builds on the narrative developed as part of the City Deal - that the 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.
7. The overall vision for the Oxfordshire Strategic Economic Plan is:

“By 2030 Oxfordshire will be a vibrant, sustainable, inclusive world leading economy, driven by innovation, enterprise and research excellence”
8. Initial drafting of the Strategic Economic Plan was based around four Thematic Objectives built around innovation and quality of life:
 - Innovative Enterprise – innovation-led growth is at the heart of our strategy, underpinned by the strength of our University research and development capacity, business collaboration and supply chain potential
 - Innovative Place – providing both the quality and choice of homes needed to support growth whilst capitalising upon the exceptional quality of life, vibrant economy and dynamic urban and rural communities
 - Innovative People – delivering specialist and flexible skills at all levels as required by our businesses with full employment and fulfilling jobs

- Innovative Connectivity – allowing people to move freely, connect easily and providing the services and facilities needed by a dynamic, growing and dispersed economy.
9. Late in the process it was decided to add a geographic dimension to the Plan focusing on the three growth points identified in the City Deal (Bicester, Oxford and Science Vale). Whilst this allows the strategic issues facing the City to be expressed it did present a challenge in drafting a coherent strategy for the LEP area within the timescale. The rationale for this geographic focus is to reinforce the Knowledge Spine concept centred on the major economic growth centres: Bicester, Oxford and Science Vale including the Enterprise Zone (Harwell and Milton Park) promoted as part of the City Deal. Indeed many of the interventions put forward in the Strategic Economic Plan are already in the City Deal or are extensions of City Deal activity.
 10. The narrative included in the Strategic Economic Plan that is specific to Oxford reflects the opportunities and challenges identified in the Oxford Economic Growth Strategy developed by the Oxford Strategic Partnership. Oxford City is uniquely placed to contribute to the growth of the Oxfordshire and national economy but faces significant barriers to growth which must be overcome (particularly with regard to local transport connectivity and housing supply and affordability); and has to ensure that in future all of Oxford's residents can share better in the benefits of economic growth.

Timetable and Next Steps

11. Discussions are continuing with the Local Enterprise Partnership and other partners to produce a final Strategic Economic Plan that will be delivered to the Government no later than the 31st March 2014.
12. The Government will undertake a formal assessment of the Strategic Economic Plan following its submission in March. The criteria against which the assessment will be undertaken was published in July 2013 (Growth Deals: Initial Guidance for Local Enterprise Partnerships, BIS July 2013). Formal feedback and a final assessment from the Government is expected in June 2014.
13. Whilst there is no formal ranking or 'minimum standard' for the Strategic Economic Plan, the Government's assessment will influence the size and scope of any Local Growth Deal the Local Enterprise Partnership is invited to negotiate. A poor plan will receive a small allocation from the Single Local Growth Fund.
14. Negotiations for Local Growth Deals will begin in June 2014 and be concluded in time for implementation to begin in April 2015.

Financial and Resource Implications

15. The City Council will continue to support the Local Enterprise Partnership to develop and finalise the Strategic Economic Plan by providing staffing support to work alongside County Council and other partners.

16. 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 arise if we are invited to enter into a Local Growth Deal.
17. The City Council is not making any new financial commitments in the delivery of the Strategic Economic Plan.

Legal Implications

18. There are no legal implications arising from this report.

Risks

19. There are two notable risks associated with the Strategic Economic Plan
20. Firstly; that the Plan does not reflect the issues specific to the City's economy. Officers at the City Council have engaged extensively with the process of developing the Strategic Economic Plan in an effort to ensure the opportunities and challenges specific to Oxford are recognised and reflected in the Plan. The final drafting to the Strategic Economic Plan is the responsibility of the Local Enterprise Partnership.
21. Secondly, that the final Plan is not endorsed by the Government. This is highly unlikely. But it is possible that the Plan is judged by Government to be of insufficient quality to develop into a Local Growth Deal. Whilst the endorsement of the Strategic Economic Plan will be based on its merits in articulating barriers and opportunities for growth, invitations to develop a Local Growth Deal will be a competition based on the quality and deliverability of Plans from other Local Enterprise Partnerships.

Climate Change / Environmental Impact

22. Any projects involving the City Council that come out of the Strategic Economic Plan will have due regard to climate change and environmental impact.

Equalities Impact

23. Any projects involving the City Council that come out of the Strategic Economic Plan will have due regard to equalities impacts.

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List of background papers: none

Version number: two

SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Tuesday 4 February 2014

COUNCILLORS PRESENT: Councillors Mills (Chair), Sanders (Vice-Chair), Abbasi, Altaf-Khan, Campbell, Coulter, Darke, Fry, Lloyd-Shogbesan, Simmons and Upton.

OFFICERS PRESENT: Lois Stock (Democratic and Electoral Services Officer), Pat Jones (Principal Scrutiny Officer), Jarlath Brine (OD & Learning Advisor, Equalities & Apprenticeships), Simon Howick (Head of Human Resources and Facilities), Nigel Kennedy (Head of Finance), Tim Sadler (Executive Director Community Services) and Anna Wright (Education Adviser)

64. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Smith – Councillor Pressel substituted.

65. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest made.

66. WORK PROGRAMME AND FORWARD PLAN

The Principal Scrutiny Officer introduced the Work Programme and Forward Plan to the Committee and highlighted the following:

- A verbal update will be made by Tim Sadler on the post-flood operational review;
- Councillor Darke will update the Committee on the work of the Flooding Panel;
- Two members of the public have asked to address the Committee on issues of flooding and sewage in Marston and Northway;
- The Scrutiny Finance Panel has completed its review of the Budget and Medium Term Financial Strategy and the Review report, which will go to the City Executive Board on the 12th. February is attached for information;
- The Covered Market Review Report is on this agenda and to allow members to see the complete picture officers have also attached the Officer recommendations to the City Executive Board on the same subject.

Councillor Simmons (Chair of the Scrutiny Finance Panel) gave a short presentation of the Budget Review Report:-

- The majority of recommendations have been accepted by the Board Member which is good;
- Of those that have not been accepted there may have been some misinterpretation of what was been recommended. Councillor Simmons will try to clarify some of these issues in his presentation of the report at the City Executive Board.

The Scrutiny Finance Panel has also made recommendations on the proposed Treasury Management Strategy for 2014/15; these will also be considered by the City Executive Board on the 12th. February. Councillor Simmons emphasised the importance of this document because of our increasing investment levels and healthy balances. The Council is generally doing well and Councillor Simmons said that officers were generally moving in the direction the Scrutiny Panel wished to see.

The Committee moved on to discuss flooding issues and agreed to take the addresses from the members of the public on this first.

Betty Fletcher spoke and raised the following issues:-

- Concern is for flooding in Northway and Court Place Farm “we have lost the sponge and this is making flooding worse”;
- Seeing increasing levels of road flooding which is getting worse;
- There is a lack of involvement of tenants and residents in the area and so the issues are not always understood, supported or delivered to best effect;
- Would like some form of Area Committee back in this area.

Elaine Bennett spoke on issues and concerns around flooding.

Councillor Darke (Leader Member of the Flooding Panel) updated the Committee on progress so far.

- Surface and sewage flooding is an issue in the City and the Panel has been set up to provide some impetus for this. The focus of the work will be on sewage flooding and improvements to the sewage infrastructure managed by Thames Water;
- £1.6m has been provided in the Capital programme as a large contribution towards a scheme to deal with flooding in the area the 2 speakers were talking about. We now need to get the County Council and Thames Water in on this. The speakers asked if matched funding was needed from the other agencies and Councillor Darke clarified that a contribution was sort rather than matched funding. The other issues are because of a culvert that is not fit for purpose. Saxon way culvert has been cleared recently but the proposed scheme will help problems here. Whilst accepting that building in the flood plain causes problem the City Council has not approved development of this type in recent years. Ms Bennett pressed the Committee to ensure that the issue of flood-plain development was taken seriously;

- The Panel is focusing on Thames Water to get them to take their responsibilities and duties seriously. The Panel is developing with officers a priority investment list and the intention is to match this with Thames Water proposals for the infrastructure to see where there is match and mismatch. The Panel will be pressing hard the City's case and inviting the Local M.P.s to be part of the debate;
- A letter has been sent from the Oxford Flood alliance to the prime Minister to ask for his support in providing a flood defence for Oxford.

Tim Sadler updated the Committee on the operational review that is underway. Before doing this, Mr Sadler said that the Pitt Review had recommended that water run-off from developments had to be contained within those developments. This had been confirmed in regulations and County Councils are responsible for delivering on this.

On the operation review so far we have bought 2 additional 6inch pumps to support our work. We are now working with partners to look at other issues and the City's priorities for these discussions are:

- Road Closures, how they are decided upon and enforced etc;
- How the Bronze, Silver and Gold commands operate in the County and at what point do things get serious enough for Oxford to have its own command centre;
- Evacuation/relocation co-ordination;
- Thames Water issues – how we get a response and some longer term issues.

Councillor Simmons asked if we could take up the issues raised by the public speakers in our Panel. After discussion it was agreed that the Panel should maintain its focus.

Councillor Coulter expressed his thanks to public sector workers for their response during the flooding; it is at times like this we see the value of public sector workers. Flooding affect the vulnerable more because they have less resilience to cope with it.

The effects of the impact on businesses in the City are about £30m with BMW having to close the line because of difficulties in obtaining parts. We need to address these issues urgently and prove a more secure situation for people and businesses.

The current scoring system for investment in flood prevention does not give sufficient weight to Economic Impact.

Councillor Upton asked if the Committee could consider in their work programme what the City Council can do for children in care. Councillor sanders expressed concern about this because of the complexity of the issues and the responsibility of the County Council. It was agreed to add this to the considerations for the next programme.

From the Forward Plan Councillor Simmons asked to see for pre-scrutiny the consultation results from the Community Engagement Strategy and the final recommendation to the City Executive Board. This was agreed by the Committee.

67. REPORT BACK ON RECOMMENDATIONS

The Principal Scrutiny Officer highlighted that all recent recommendations had been accepted. Committee members made no further comment on this.

68. EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT PROGRAMME - PROGRESS

Councillor Kennedy, Board Member for Education, Crime and Community Safety presented the main points of the report to the Committee. In addition she added that she is a governor at a school that is part of the Leadership programme and she has seen first-hand the benefits of this.

In addition early discussions are showing that KRM is particularly affective with girls and has proved to be a catalyst for discussions in the staff room on improvement strategies.

Councillor Campbell (Scrutiny Lead Member for Educational Attainment) said that these were very important schemes. His Panel had been set to try to ascertain the value for money of the investments we are making but this is proving to be very difficult. He asked how we are going to evaluate overall the impact of the KRM programme and within this how we were going to look at comparator schools to check progress.

Councillor Pressel said that all 3 programmes outlined in the report were good and going well. She was interested to know how these schemes compared to other schemes particularly the County Scheme and were any schools participating in both the county and City offer. Specifically is Matthew Arnold involved in the digital exclusion programme?

Councillor Simmons asked when we will see the evaluation of the Leadership Programme and when could this come to the Committee. He was also interested to know how we will evaluate the digital exclusion programme.

Councillor Sanders asked how we were going to evaluate the effects of KRM when there are so many different improvements and changes going on in schools.

In response to these questions Anna Wright said:

- Schools cannot take part in the City and County schemes they were required to make a choice;
- Accepts the difficulty in evaluation. The only tangible outcome we have is improvements in the key stage results so these will be used. We will have un-moderated results in July 2014 and moderated results in December 2014;

- In terms of the targets and their link to national performance Ms Wright confirmed that our targets will not move upwards with national outcomes but will remain as 10% above the national target achieved in 12/13;
- The digital inclusion project is being evaluated by Oxford University. They have a lot of research data and this research will be followed through with each family involved;
- Matthew Arnold is not involved in the Digital Inclusion project because it said it could not afford to buy the lap tops

Ms Wright added that the other challenges were:

- To ensure KRM is being implemented consistently day to day in participating schools;
- The high level of turnover of Heads and also the high level (50%) turnover of teachers. This produced pressures for training.

Councillor Coulter said that we also have an issue with high pupil turnover which he understood to be about 25%. His view was that some of this is related to our difficult housing situation and caused a disconnect between school and parent. He highlighted the work done by Blackpool Council who had a universal free school meal programme which was having a significant effect on pupil attainment (10% increase in results).

Councillor Khan said he had made the point about teachers leaving at the launch of the City programme. We must understand that school places are not being offered at local schools because of pressure on places. We also need to consider more the performance of those children whose first language is not English. He said that new arrivals are said to be about 30%. All these issues might take generations to tackle. In response Councillor Kennedy recognised that there were problems with some groups whose first language is not English but there is little research on this. Teachers comment that where the child has good literacy skills in their first language, they quickly perform well in English. We see particular problems with white working class boys whose literacy skills are poor. This subject needs more research.

Anna Wright outlined a scheme for Key Workers accommodation in an effort to attract and keep teachers. Councillor Sanders commented that she had used this scheme in a recent recruitment exercise in her local school and it had made little difference.

The committee agreed the following recommendation to the City Executive Board.

To welcome the continued investment and work in this area and to see both the evaluation of the Leadership programme and the Key Stage results as soon as they are available.

69. COVERED MARKET - FINAL PANEL REPORT

The Covered Market Scrutiny Panel submitted a report (previously circulated, now appended). This presented the Panel's conclusions and recommendations on its inquiry into the economic health of the Covered Market to the Committee. It laid out a series of recommendations that it wished to see presented to the City Executive Board. Councillor Jim Campbell, as Lead Member of the Scrutiny Panel, introduced the report and its findings.

In his introduction, Councillor Campbell highlighted the following:-

- The workshop organised in January 2012 to consider the future of the Covered Market had been a major influence on the Panel's work;
- The Panel's key message is "the need for a clearer understanding of the role of the Covered Market and for greater flexibility and cooperation in fulfilling that role. *Doing nothing is not an option.*";
- The Panel's work and report is an important starting point on that work;
- There is a need to focus on the role of the Covered Market within the Council's Asset Management Strategy which highlights the need for the Market (amongst other assets) to "make the greatest possible financial contribution to the Council";
- The Panel was aware that a report into the Covered Market had been produced by The Retail Group who were experts in retailing. The Panel's report, whilst not produced by "experts", had been produced by people who have long experience of the Market and on-going contact with the traders. This two-tier approach was valuable.

Councillor Campbell ran through the recommendations that the Panel made in its report, and emphasised that the Panel wished to see them implemented by Council as soon as possible.

General Issues

In discussion with the Committee, the following issues were raised:-

- A leasing strategy presents a challenge. Many traders see their lease as permanent and lifelong. A dedicated Market manager could play a key role in encouraging traders to see that a more flexible scheme can be in their interest – for example, 3 month leases for traders to try out a new idea;
- Parking in Market Street was also identified as an issue. There is a need to review the loading/unloading requirements of traders, because some vehicles are parked there for a long time (in some cases most of the day). A better regulated scheme needs to be developed, in conjunction with the traders, and efforts should be made to ensure that the entrances to the Market are visible, accessible and uncluttered;

- There was concern that changes to rents and rental schemes did not penalise smaller traders. The Panel did not wish to be prescriptive, and it certainly had no desire to penalise smaller units, but it did wish to suggest things to look at;
- The Market does open on a Sunday but not all traders wish to join in. It would be desirable to have at least one late night opening (to 8pm?) each week;
- The Committee agreed that inaction was not an option!
- Some care should be exercised around outdoor trading – it should not adversely affect trading inside the Market;

Response from the Board Member

Councillor Colin Cook, Board Member for City Development, indicated that he was generally supportive of the recommendations made in the report.

He sought greater clarity on the Panel's suggestions concerning rental structures. The Council charged on a basis of square footage, but footfall and trades in the location were also taken into account. The Council took less rent from those traders with a lower turnover.

Councillor Campbell stressed that what the Panel sought was as flexible a system as possible. It wanted to avoid long drawn out arguments about the rent between the Council and traders.

Response from the Executive Director, City Development

David Edwards, Executive Director for City Development, noted that the recommendations were broadly similar to those made by the Retail Group, and that this was to be welcomed.

There are multiple issues here. It should be noted that tenants do have full legal protection under the Landlord and Tenant Act. Changes should be by mutual agreement, and it may not be present to change the lease structure easily. It was acknowledged that traders had differing views about Sunday trading. Issues around parking in Market Street, and signage, would be worked through. There had to be a genuine partnership with traders to make things work.

Councillor Campbell responded that the Panel worked closely with traders and officers while producing its report. Traders had been involved and they were aware of the Panel's report. The workshop held on December 10th, (referred to previously) showed that the Covered Market Traders wanted to move forwards with the Council, not against it.

Councillor Campbell thanked the Panel Members and supporting officers (Sarah Claridge and Pat Jones) for all their hard work. In return the Panel thanked Councillor Campbell for all his efforts on this matter.

Resolved to:-

- (1) Accept the report with the recommendations as shown below;
- (2) Ask that the report and its recommendations be presented to City Executive Board on 12th February for consideration.

Recommendation 1.

The Council should articulate its role in the Covered Market. The Panel believes that this should provide for greater emphasis on the civic importance of the Market and its contribution to the City.

Recommendation 2

The Council should appoint a Market Manager who will be based in the Market and accessible to the traders.

The role should include the following:

- Working with the Council and traders to develop the Market for the future, including discussions on the leasing structure and strategy, and the balance of trades
- Spending the Councils allocated budget for the Market and commissioning services delivered within that
- Promoting the market
- Offering training and support for traders
- Reviewing the website and keeping it up to date.

Recommendation 3

In the longer term to evaluate all the options for the management of the market around criteria to be developed by the Market Manager, traders and the City Council.

Recommendation 4

That early negotiations take place between the Council and traders to determine the best rental and licensing structure with the aim of moving as quickly as possible to a clearer and more flexible leasing and licensing arrangement needed to improve relationships and provide the flexibility needed for success.

Recommendation 5

That the Council moves as quickly as possible to improvements to the Market Street entrance to the Market, and begins negotiations with traders on their loading and unloading requirements with the aim of freeing space for the extension of outdoor trading. This should also include discussions on the provision of extra cycle parking.

Recommendation 6

To come forward with temporary arrangements for more visible signage for the Market on High Street including options using the buildings above and free standing signs.

Recommendation 7

To provide money as soon as possible for the improvement of the Market Avenues from High Street.

Recommendation 8

The Council move to commission design options for changes to the Covered Market and for these to include better use of the service yard.

Recommendation 9

That Council actively promotes and includes the Covered Market in their communications and event planning to take the opportunity to highlight the Market as a key destination and also attract a more diverse range of people into it.

70. EMPLOYMENT ANALYSIS - BME GROUPS

The Head of HR and Facilities submitted a report (previously circulated, now appended). This presented some headline analysis of BME applicants to the Council at shortlisting and appointment stages. Simon Howick (Head of HR and Facilities) and Jarlath Brine (Organisational Learning and Development Advisor, Equalities and Apprenticeships) attended the meeting and presented the report to the Committee.

The provided the following additional information to the Committee:-

- Many people struggle to make a good application for employment – this is not limited to BME groups;
- Applicants have a significant level of qualification; but too many applications fail because they miss the target. The Council needs to consider how it writes and targets its advertisements;
- The Council receives many “scattergun” applications which are not directly related to the job on offer;
- Some applicants are capable of making a good application, but perform less well when it comes to practical tests;
- The Council needs to consider where, when and how it advertises its jobs. It needs to look beyond what it normally does and seek fresh avenues – for example, placing adverts in the Leys News. Greater creativity in advertising is needed;
- The Council also needs to think about how is words job descriptions for entry-level jobs;

- Currently, HR is reviewing how it profiles recruitment for the next apprentice cohort.

Committee Observations

- There is a huge failing on the part of schools which are not teaching young people how to present themselves well, either through their CV, application form or at interview;
- There is a need to couch our adverts for vacancies in different terms, even if that means going far from what has become our norm. Then we might attract different people;
- If we want to see change, we need to put specific measures in place;
- Could we offer more volunteering/work experience opportunities in order to give people a taste of work here, as well as helping to mentor them and prepare them to make a full application?
- There is still the perception amongst some BME groups that working at the Council (or the University) is not for them. This perception needs to be changed;
- There seems to be some apprehension amongst applicants about the type of place the Council is – and we need to explain properly what the Council does and how potential employees can get involved and so help their community;
- Some places make small payments to staff if they recommend a vacancy to another person, and that person is subsequently recruited to the firm.

Response from Officers:

- Agreed that schools are, generally, failing to prepare young people to make good applications for employment. However, the Council intends to help people and coach them before they apply;
- 60% of the last apprentice cohort was from the BME community;
- It would be very useful if the Scrutiny Committee could support the idea of advertising in different ways and in different, non-conventional places;
- The Council tries to do as much in-house recruitment as possible, but it will consider looking at outside recruitment;
- The Council was considering creating a group of young apprentices that would go into schools to talk about their role and act as advocates for recruitment;
- The Council does not have the resources to replicate the Careers Service, but it can form stronger contacts with key schools. It would also be useful to develop links with local employers to discuss issues of mutual concern;

- Luke Nipen (from Communities) will be working with HR on initiatives around recruitment, especially from BME communities;
- It is intended that HR will give feedback to every candidate;
- The negative perception of the Council has been recognised, and HR has looked at creating a myth busting video about working in local government.

Resolved to recommend the following to Councillor Price, Board Member for Corporate Governance, Strategic Partnerships and Economic Development:-

- (1.) To support the use in job adverts of a variety of brandings and styles, rather than the rigorous application of the “Corporate Brand”, in an effort to engagement widely with target groups. To provide money within the Human Resources budget to support this and test the effectiveness of these methods;
- (2.) For the Council to offer a greater number of meaningful work experiences places focused on BME groups to allow potential applicants to build a better understanding of the Council and be better prepared for selection processes;
- (3.) To build on the success of appointing a significant number of apprentices from BME groups and use these staff as mentors and ambassadors. For this work to be part of the training offer as a development opportunity;
- (4.) To consider and bring forward ideas to break down the perception of some BME groups that “the City Council is not for us”. To consider within this how current employees can be used within outreach;
- (5.) To show our commitment to addressing the anomalies within the selection process by providing some initial investment money to prepare candidates or potential candidates from BME groups for the selection process, and to consider outcomes from this to support future investment in this area.

71. PERFORMANCE MONITORING - QUARTER 3

The Committee had before it the Performance Monitoring figures for Quarter 3. Pat Jones, Principal Scrutiny Officer, presented the report to the Committee and provided some background and context.

The following indicators were highlighted:-

CS003 – customers getting through first time – although the target is not being met at present, it is important to remember that there were over 211,000 calls of which some 15,250 were abandoned for various reasons. This still compares favourably with other Councils’ results.

LP106 – increase participation at leisure centres by target groups – a more detailed report will be presented at a future Committee meeting (probably in April).

B1002a – training places – the Committee received further information on this at a previous meeting;

Councillor Simmons asked for further information about the Council's carbon footprint and the recycling rate. He would like further information about current trends.

Resolved to note the report.

72. MINUTES

Resolved to approve as a correct record the minutes of the meeting held on 3rd December 2013.

73. DATES OF FUTURE MEETINGS

Resolved to note the date of future meetings:-

4th March 2014

1st April 2014.

The meeting started at 6.00 pm and ended at 8.40 pm