

Agenda

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City Executive Board

Date: **Thursday 3 July 2014**

Time: **5.00 pm**

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

For any further information please contact:

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City Executive Board

Membership

Chair

Councillor Bob Price	Corporate Strategy, Economic Development and Planning
Councillor Ed Turner	Finance, Asset Management and Public Health
Councillor Dee Sinclair	Crime and Community Response
Councillor Christine Simm	Culture and Communities
Councillor Susan Brown	Customer Services and Social Inclusion
Councillor Pat Kennedy	Educational Attainment and Youth Ambition
Councillor Mark Lygo	Sports, Events and Parks
Councillor Mike Rowley	Leisure Contract and Community Partnership Grants
Councillor Scott Seamons	Housing and Estate Regeneration
Councillor John Tanner	Cleaner, Greener Oxford, Climate Change and Transport

The quorum for this meeting is 3, substitutes are not allowed.

HOW TO OBTAIN AGENDA

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AGENDA

PART ONE PUBLIC BUSINESS

Pages

1 **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

2 **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

3 **PUBLIC QUESTIONS**

When the Chair agrees, the public can ask questions about any item for decision at the meeting for up to 15 minutes. Questions must have been given to the Head of Law and Governance by 9.30am one clear working day before the meeting (email executiveboard@oxford.gov.uk or telephone the person named as staff contact). No supplementary questions or questioning will be permitted. Questions by the public will be taken as read and, when the Chair agrees, be responded to at the meeting.

4 **SCRUTINY COMMITTEE REPORTS**

15 - 30

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

- Recycling Incentive Schemes (report attached)
- Community Engagement Plan
- Integrated Performance Report for Quarter 4 2013/14

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

When the chair agrees, Councillors can address the Board about any item for decision at the meeting for up to 3 minutes. Addresses must have been given to the Head of Law and Governance by 9.30am, one clear working day before the meeting (email executiveboard@oxford.gov.uk or telephone the person named as staff contact). The Board Member who has political responsibility for the item for decision may respond or the Board will have regard to the points raised in reaching its decision.

6 **OXFORD GROWTH: GRENOBLE ROAD DEVELOPMENT**

31 - 36

Lead Member: Cllr Bob Price, Executive Board Member for Corporate Strategy, Economic Development and Planning

The Executive Director for City Regeneration and Housing has submitted a report which details a potential partnership with adjoining landowners to pursue the development of the Council's landholding south of Grenoble Road.

Officer Recommendations: That the City Executive Board

1. Approve the principle of pursuing discussions with adjoining landowners for a partnership to deliver development south of Grenoble Road, subject to a detailed report on whether such a partnership would represent best value.
2. Note that if a partnership arrangement was subsequently approved this is expected to require significant funding for specialist consultancy support in the preparation of Local Plan submissions and a planning application, which would be set out in the detailed report.

7 CAPITAL CONTRIBUTION TOWARDS FRIDESWIDE SQUARE

37 - 42

Lead Member: Cllr Bob Price, Executive Board Member for Corporate Strategy, Economic Development and Planning

The Head for City Development has submitted a report which details a request to make a financial contribution to Oxfordshire County Council towards the work to transform Frideswide Square.

Officer Recommendations: That the City Executive Board

1. Recommend to full Council to give a capital grant to the County Council of £670,000 in two phases of £335,000 each (50% in Q3 2014/15 and 50% in Q2 2015/16).
2. Delegate to the Executive Director of Regeneration and Housing responsibility to complete the legal agreement requested by the County Council.

8 OXPENS DELIVERY STRATEGY - STAGE 1

43 - 52

Lead Members: Cllr Bob Price, Executive Board Member for Corporate Strategy, Economic Development and Planning & Cllr Ed Turner, Executive Board Member for Finance, Asset Management and Public Health

The Executive Director for City Regeneration and Housing has submitted a report which details an update and agree the next steps to deliver redevelopment of the Oxpens site area, including establishing the budget.

Officer Recommendations: That the City Executive Board

1. Note the contents of this report.
2. Recommends to Council the establishment of a budget of £320,000 in the Council's revenue budget funded from New Growths Point Grant to complete due diligence and progress the project through the next stages.

9	GRANT MONITORING INFORMATION FOR 2013/14	53 - 98
	<p>Lead Member: Cllr Bob Price, Executive Board Member for Corporate Strategy, Economic Development and Planning</p> <p>The Head of Leisure, Parks and Communities has submitted a report to inform members of monitoring information returned by community & voluntary organisations awarded a grant by the City Council in 2013/14.</p> <p><u>Officer Recommendations:</u> That the City Executive Board</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Note the report 2. Approve the recommendation made by Price Waterhouse Coopers that there should be a penalty for organisations not returning their monitoring information of not being able to reapply for future funding and the grant awarded should be reclaimed. 	
10	DRAFT COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT POLICY STATEMENT 2014 - 17	99 - 182
	<p>Lead Members: Cllr Bob Price, Executive Board Member for Corporate Strategy, Economic Development and Planning & Cllr Christine Simm, Executive Member for Culture and Communities</p> <p>The Head of Policy, Culture and Communications has submitted a report which seeks approval from the City Executive Board to adopt the draft Community Engagement Policy Statement 2014 – 17.</p> <p><u>Officer Recommendation:</u> That the City Executive Board approve the draft Community Engagement Policy Statement 2014 – 17, subject to any specified amendments, for adoption.</p>	
11	DISPOSAL OF SUB STATION SITES	183 - 192
	<p>Lead Member: Cllr Ed Turner, Executive Board Member for Finance, Asset Management and Public Health</p> <p>The Regeneration and Major Projects Service Manager has submitted a report which seeks approval to the disposal of the freehold interest in 83 sub station sites to Scottish and Southern Energy PLC</p> <p><u>Officer Recommendations:</u> That the City Executive Board</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Approve the disposal of the freehold interest in 83 sub station sites on the terms set out in the Not for Publication Confidential Appendix 3 of this report. The detailed provisions of the sale are to be approved by the Executive Director, City Regeneration. 2. Grant authority to the Executive Director of City Regeneration and 	

Housing, in consultation with the Board Member, to vary or extend the sub station sites to be included in the transaction provided the transaction continues to represent best consideration.

12 TENANCY FRAUD AMNESTY

193 - 200

Lead Members: Cllr Ed Turner, Executive Board Members for Finance, Asset Management and Public Health & Cllr Scott Seamons, Executive Board Member for Housing and Estate Regeneration

The Heads of Finance and Housing and Property have submitted a report which seeks members' views on the implementation of a tenancy fraud amnesty campaign.

Officer Recommendation: That the City Executive Board considers the report and approve an amnesty.

13 FINANCIAL INCLUSION STRATEGY

201 - 232

Lead Member: Cllr Susan Brown, Executive Board Member for Customer Services and Social Inclusion

The Head of Customer Services has submitted a report which details a Financial Inclusion Strategy and an Action Plan for delivery.

Officer Recommendations: That the City Executive Board

1. Approve the Financial Inclusion Strategy for a period of three years from April 2014 to April 2017 as set out in Appendix 3 and;
2. Agree the associated Action Plan, the delivery of which will be coordinated by the Head of Customer Services.

14 ANTI-SOCIAL BEHAVIOUR POLICY IN THE LIGHT OF THE ANTI-SOCIAL BEHAVIOUR, CRIME AND POLICING ACT 2014

233 - 258

Lead Members: Cllr Pat Kennedy, Executive Board Member for Educational Attainment and Youth Ambition and Cllr Dee Sinclair, Executive Board Member for Crime and Community Response

The Head of Environmental Development has submitted a report which presents a revised Anti-Social Behaviour Policy for approval.

Officer Recommendation: That the City Executive Board approve the revised Anti-Social Behaviour Policy.

15 TOWER BLOCK REFURBISHMENT PROJECT

259 - 270

Lead Member: Cllr Scott Seamons, Executive Board Member for Housing and Estate Regeneration

The Head of Housing and Property has submitted a report which requests approval to commence a tender process and for the Executive Director of Regeneration and Housing to be able to appoint and award the contract for the refurbishment of the City tower blocks and to recommend to Council a revised budget to cover the agreed scope of works.

Officer Recommendations: That the City Executive Board:

1. Approve the commencement of the tender process and delegate to the Executive Director of Regeneration and Housing in consultation with the Section 151 Officer and Monitoring Officer, the authority to award the contract to the preferred contractor within the budget envelope for the refurbishment of the City tower blocks, following a competitive tender process.
2. Approve the scope of works as detailed in Appendix 1 to be included in the project. This will leave a revised total project cost of £18.358m. This revised total represents an increase of £1.743m over the current approved budget of £16.615m,
3. Recommend to Council the inclusion of an additional budget within the HRA Capital Programme of £1.743m funded by a combination of leaseholder contributions (for their element of the scheme), or as a last resort prudential borrowing together with appropriate revenue funding of a maximum of approximately £104k per annum in capital financing costs

16 LOCAL OFFER FOR OXFORD CITY COUNCIL TENANTS

271 - 282

Lead Member: Cllr Scott Seamons, Executive Board Member for Housing and Estate Regeneration

The Head of Housing and Property has submitted a report which details the Local Offer for approval.

Officer Recommendation: That the City Executive Board approve the Local Offer between the City Council and City Council tenants.

17 RESIDENT PARKING ON COUNCIL OWNED HOUSING LAND

283 - 296

Lead Member: Cllr Scott Seamons, Executive Board Member for Housing and Estate Regeneration

The Head of Housing and Property has submitted a report which sets out the options for management of the Council's small parking areas that are sited on housing land held in the Council's housing revenue account (HRA), including un-adopted highway.

Officer Recommendations: That the City Executive Board agrees:

1. That the preferred model for the enforcement of the Resident Parking Permit Scheme (RPPS) on HRA land is through an external contractor
2. That consultation arrangements for new Resident Parking Permit Areas on HRA land are as set out in this report
3. That delegated authority is given to the Head of Housing and Property to introduce new Resident Parking Permit Areas on HRA land.
4. The eligibility criteria for the Resident Parking Permit scheme as set out in this report
5. That permits under the Resident Parking Permit Scheme continue to be provided without charge to residents, their visitors and carers

18 HOUSING STOCK ENERGY EFFICIENCY IMPROVEMENTS

297 - 310

Lead Member: Cllr Scott Seamons, Executive Board Member for Housing and Estate Regeneration

The Head of Housing and Property has submitted a report which seeks amendment to a previous approval for the funding and procurement of a project to improve the energy efficiency of the Council's hard to treat housing stock and optimising the available Energy Company Obligation (ECO) funding.

Officer Recommendations: That the City Executive Board:

- 1 Grant amended project approval for the Council to gain optimum value for money, utilising ECO or Green Deal funding if possible, but using only previously agreed Council budget if the external funding cannot be accessed.
- 2 Grant delegated authority to the Executive Director of Regeneration and Housing, to authorise the Council's entry into all appropriate contracts required to implement this project.

19 HOUSING STRATEGY 2012-2015 FINAL REVIEW OF ACTION PLAN

311 - 342

Lead Member: Cllr Scott Seamons, Executive Board Member for Housing and Estate Regeneration

The Head of Housing and Property has submitted a report which provide the City Executive Board with the final position of the current Housing Strategy Action plan prior to the drafting of a new Housing Strategy for 2015-2018

Officer Recommendations: That the City Executive Board:

1. Note the progress made during the lifetime of the 2012 – 2015 Housing Strategy
2. Note possible actions to be carried through to the 2015 – 2018 Housing Strategy

20 REVISED TENANCY AGREEMENT FOR COUNCIL TENANTS

343 - 386

Lead Member: Cllr Scott Seamons, Executive Board Member for Housing and Estate Regeneration

The Head of Housing and Property has submitted a report which details the proposals for the revision of the Council's secure tenancy agreement and to advise the City Executive Board of the outcomes of the consultations with tenants and other stakeholders on the proposed revisions to the Tenancy Agreement.

Officer Recommendations: That the City Executive Board

1. Approve the Tenancy Agreement
2. Authorise the Executive Director for Regeneration and Housing to introduce the new Tenancy Agreement with effect from September 2014 on behalf of the Council.

21 SOCIAL INCLUSION FUND PROCESS

387 - 402

Lead Member: Cllr Christine Simm, Executive Board Member for Culture and Communities

The Head of Leisure, Parks and Communities has submitted a report which requests approval for the Social Inclusion Fund decision making process.

Officer Recommendations: That the City Executive Board

1. Approve the criteria and process for the application and award of the Social Inclusion grants as outlined in the report.
2. Delegate authority to the Head of Leisure, Parks & Communities to approve grants within the approved criteria in liaison with the City Executive Board Members for Youth & Communities and Education, Crime & Community Safety.

22 INTEGRATED PERFORMANCE REPORT FOR -QUARTER 4 2013/2014

403 - 460

Lead Member: Cllr Ed Turner, Executive Board Member for Finance, Asset Management and Public Health

The Heads of Finance and Business Improvement and Technology have submitted a report which updates Members on Finance, Risk and Performance as at the end of Quarter 4, 31st March 2014

Officer Recommendations: That the City Executive Board:

1. Note the financial outturn and performance of the Council for the year 2013/14 and also the position of risks outstanding as at 31st March 2014;
2. Note the transfers to General Fund earmarked reserves detailed in the report (including for expenditure on the Partnership Payment, Flooding, Capital Programme, Gladiators and a contingency against future property investment losses) and Appendix E5;
3. Note the transfers to the Housing Revenue Account (HRA) earmarked reserves as detailed in paragraphs 15 and 16 and Appendix E5;
4. Agree the recommended carry forward requests outlined at paragraph 9 and detailed in Appendix E4;
5. Note the capital slippage as detailed in Appendix E2; and.
6. Recommend to Council to include a budget of £162,000 in the capital programme in respect of highways vehicles outlined in paragraph 22.

23 APPOINTMENT TO OUTSIDE BODIES 2014/2015

461 - 484

Lead Member: Cllr Bob Price Executive Board Member for Corporate Strategy, Economic Development and Planning

The Head of Law and Governance has submitted a report which seeks nominations to outside and other bodies for the 2014/2015 Council Year.

Officer Recommendations: That the City Executive Board:

1. Reduce Council representation on the Oxford Leon Trust to two (when representation comes up for renewal).
2. Delete the following appointments because the groups are no longer in existence:-
 - Wood Farm Community Association
 - LGA Urban Commission
3. Remove Council representation from the Oxfordshire Building Trust as it is no longer needed.
4. Do not re-appoint to the Forest of Oxford until further work can be done to determine whether they are still operating.
5. Make appointments to outside bodies as shown in Appendix 3.

24 ACQUISITION OF INTERMEDIATE LEASEHOLD, HORSPATH ROAD INDUSTRIAL ESTATE

485 - 490

Lead Member: Cllr Bob Price, Executive Board Member for Finance, Asset Management and Public Health

The Head of Regeneration and Major Projects Services Manager has submitted a report which seeks approval to acquire the intermediate leasehold interest of Horspath Road Industrial Estate, Oxford.

Officer Recommendation: That the City Executive Board

1. Approve the acquisition of an intermediate leasehold interest in land and buildings forming the Horspath Road depot site on the terms set out in the Not for Publication Confidential Appendix 2 of this report.

25 FUTURE ITEMS

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

26 MINUTES

491 - 494

Minutes from 11 June 2014

Recommendation: That the minutes of the meeting held on 11 June 2014 be APPROVED as a true and accurate record.

27 MATTERS EXEMPT FROM PUBLICATION

If the Board wishes to exclude the press and the public from the meeting during consideration of any of the items on the exempt from publication part of the agenda, it will be necessary for the Board to pass a resolution in accordance with the provisions of Paragraph 21(1)(b) of the Local Authorities (Executive Arrangements) (Access to Information) (England) Regulations 2000 on the grounds that their presence could involve the likely disclosure of exempt information as described in specific paragraphs of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972.

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

PART TWO
MATTERS EXEMPT FROM PUBLICATION

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|-----------|--|-----------|
| 28 | APPENDIX 3_ DISPOSAL OF SUB STATION
SITES_CONFIDENTIAL | 495 - 496 |
| | <p>This paper contains one not for publication appendix to the report at agenda item 11</p> <p>It contains information concerning the amount of the proposed sale.</p> <p>The public interest in maintaining the exemption from publication is in order not to compromise commercially sensitive information under paragraph 3 of Part 1, Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972.</p> | |
| 29 | APPENDIX 2_ ACQUISITION OF SITE ON HORSPATH ROAD | 497 - 500 |
| | <p>This paper contains one not for publication appendix to the report at agenda item 24</p> <p>It contains information concerning the amount of the proposed purchase.</p> <p>The public interest in maintaining the exemption from publication is in order not to compromise commercially sensitive information under paragraph 3 of Part 1, Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972.</p> | |
| 30 | CONFIDENTIAL MINUTES JUNE 2014 | 501 - 504 |
| | <p>Confidential Minutes from 11 June 2014</p> <p><u>Recommendation:</u> That the confidential minutes of the meeting held on 11 June 2014 be APPROVED as a true and accurate record.</p> | |

DECLARING INTERESTS

General duty

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

What is a disclosable pecuniary interest?

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

Declaring an interest

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

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

Members' Code of Conduct and public perception

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

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

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To: City Executive Board

Date: 3 July 2014

Report of: The Scrutiny Committee

Title of Report: Recycling Incentive Schemes

Summary and Recommendations

Purpose of report: To determine whether incentive schemes or fines encourage residents to recycle, and if so, whether Council should introduce such a scheme.

Report Approved by:

Board Member: Cllr John Tanner, Cleaner Greener Oxford

Policy Framework: Cleaner Greener Oxford

For the City Executive Board to say if it agrees or disagrees with the following recommendations:

Recommendation 1

The Council should invest the £27,000 from the Waste Partnership Board into targeted education campaigns (to include flats) in partnership with the universities and student bodies to encourage recycling.

Recommendation 2

The Council should trial a positive community incentive campaign consisting of stickers being placed on waste bins that encourage residents to recycle for charity. The campaign would make a donation to a charity chosen on an area basis for each tonne of extra recycling collected (above a threshold) and would be funded from the revenue generated through extra recycling.

Appendix 1 Summary of review reports

Appendix 2 Oxford's recycling rate

Appendix 3 Average recycling rate (Quarter 3) per ward

Appendix 4 Recycling rate per round

Introduction

1. The recycling panel is made up of Councillors Fry, Jones and Simmons. It has met several times over the last 12 months to discuss and determine the questions:

*“Do fines and incentives to encourage recycling actually work?
What fines and incentives does the council use to encourage residents to recycle.”*

2. This report is in response to the Value and Performance Scrutiny Committee’s resolutions to the panel following the panel’s first report in March 2013 on whether the council’s recycling target was ambitious enough. From the debate at the meeting, it was felt incentives and fines merited more investigation.
3. The panel commends the recycling team for its performance, especially being continually on the look-out for ways to increase and improve waste management and recycling.
4. This report outlines the panel’s findings.

Background

5. What are reward schemes?
Rewards schemes generally require a certain recycling target to be reached before a reward is given. This can come in two forms, the individual or the community scheme.
6. Individual reward schemes reward individual households for the recycling they collect which can be redeemed for rewards such as free trips to the leisure centre or free DVD hire from the library.
7. Community reward schemes reward communities for their recycling, by offering rewards that will benefit the whole community (i.e., new playground equipment, or donation to a local charity).
8. The Government’s stance
The Government believes residents should be rewarded for recycling rather than penalised for not recycling as they think “that rewards and recognition can motivate people to take action”. In 2011, DEFRA launched the Rewards and Recognition scheme for councils to trial reward-based recycling programmes. The purpose of the scheme was to test a range of different schemes “that reward or recognise people or communities for adopting positive behaviour towards managing their waste”.

9. At the same time, the Government is opposed to householders being penalised for not recycling. The Climate Change Act 2008¹ offered local authorities the opportunity to design and pilot waste reduction schemes and the freedom to introduce charge based incentives. However these clauses were revoked by the Localism Act 2011.

10. Comparison reports

Three reports have recently been published that have reviewed the effectiveness of reward based incentives to encourage householders to recycle.

11. The reports are:

- DEFRA, *Evaluation of the Waste Reward and Recognition Scheme - Emerging Findings*, (December 2013)
- Serco, *Investigating the Impact of Recycling Investigation Schemes –* (January 2014)
- Environment Committee, London Assembly - *Carrots and Sticks – A review of waste financial reward and compulsory recycling schemes* (May 2011)

12. The panel has considered the findings of the three reports and compared them with the campaigns Oxford uses to determine whether incentives or fines are an effective mechanism for encouraging residents to recycle and whether they could be implemented in Oxford.

13. A summary of each report is attached as **Appendix 1** and links to the full reports can be found in the background papers of this report.

Rewarding residents for recycling

14. Statistics from councils who have implemented a reward based incentive scheme suggest they have a significant effect at increasing the recycling rate. The Serco report found that “Authorities with recycling incentive schemes recorded an average 8% increase in recycling performance and a 3% reduction in landfill. With 40% of schemes showing both increased recycling and reduced landfill.” (Serco, 2014, full p29)

15. Despite these statistics, all three reviews were inconclusive on the effectiveness of reward schemes in increasing recycling rates because, in most cases, reward schemes were not trialled in isolation but accompanied other improvements in the service such as an expanded

¹ Section 71-75 and Schedule 5 of the Climate Change Act gave councils the power to pilot a waste reduction scheme, which allowed council to either provide a council tax rebate or charge residents for not recycling.

waste collection service, the introduction of wheeled bins or a promotional campaign. This made it impossible for the reviews to determine how much of an impact the reward scheme had had on the increase in recycling compared to the other recycling services being offered.

16. The Government believes “that rewards and recognition [schemes] can motivate people to take action”. To a degree this view is correct, participation surveys conducted by the Serco review found that reward based schemes were effective at motivating some recyclers to recycle more. However the majority of participants stated they already recycled and would recycle irrespective of whether they were rewarded or not and overall participation rates by non-recyclers were very low compared to recyclers. (Serco 2014, full p29-30,)
17. Even if reward schemes only persuade a proportion of householders to recycle, survey results from five different local authorities showed that 25% of residents said that recycling incentives would encourage them to recycle more (Serco 2014, p30).

What Oxford does

18. Oxford City Council does not provide reward based incentives to encourage householders to recycle. However, over the last 5 years it has embarked on several projects and campaigns to raise the profile of recycling within the city.
19. It is impossible to isolate how much of an effect one scheme has had on the recycling rate over another, as they are all happening simultaneously. Results must therefore be viewed holistically as a combination of all the campaigns that have run. **Appendix 2** shows Oxford’s recycling rate over the last 8 years and highlights when a major change to the service has taken place.
20. **Appendices 3 and 4** show a breakdown of Oxford’s recycling rate to a ward and a collection round level. Produced quarterly they allow the recycling team to monitor recycling levels across the city, and assist them in deciding which areas need targeted educational campaigns to boost recycling.
21. Expansion of the service
Providing residents with the opportunity to recycle more of their waste has been the key to Oxford’s improved recycling rate. Moving to a comingled system, increasing the range of materials able to be recycled (i.e., electronics, food and batteries), expanding the opportunities of residents of flats to recycle and offering households’ 2 free bulky items collections

per year have all contributed to increasing the opportunity to recycle in the city.

22. The re-balancing campaign complements the waste collection service by making sure all residents have enough recycling bins. The programme involves the recycling team targeting a community and removing excess waste bins and providing additional recycling and food caddies. The recent campaign in East Oxford in 2013-2014 surveyed and door-knocked approximately 1,400 properties with unbalanced bins, it:

- Removed 114,900 litres of refuse space.
- Delivered 197,820 litres of extra recycling space.
- Reduced refuse by 61% and increased recycling by 120%.

23. Education and Promotion of Recycling

The need to promote recycling within Oxford is never ending as a quarter of Oxford's population moves every year and there is a constant need to re-educate newcomers on the importance of, and what can be, recycled.

24. With over 30,000 students living in Oxford, the recycling team have several continuing promotional and educational campaigns that target students. These include attending fresher fairs and colleges, door knocking and surveying student living in houses of multiple occupancy (HMOs) and encouraging student wardens to promote the need to recycle within designated areas. The "Moving Out Campaign" is a successful collaboration with the British Heart Foundation (BHF), in which unwanted furniture is collected from students when they move house and donated to the BHF to re-sell.

25. Continuing education of residents appears to be the best way to encourage non-recyclers and new residents to recycle. Despite Oxford's churn of new residents each year, the Council has continued to collect an additional 1,000 tonnes of dry recycling each year (Oxford City Council recycling tonnage).

26. Residents are also encouraged to recycle through campaigns, such as the Cleaner Greener campaign, which aim to promote the cleanliness of neighbourhoods. Weekend clean ups encourage residents and local groups to participate in a full litter sweep, and promoted dog fouling clean up and target problem areas in a neighbourhood. Local officers and the police attend to promote and educate the importance of recycling to all.

Conclusions on Incentives

27. Results from most of the councils that have introduced a reward based recycling scheme are positive, with most seeing an increase in recycling and a decrease in waste to landfill. Yet the reviews were inconclusive about the exact impact of incentive campaigns on the recycling rate because it is impossible to separate the effect of the reward scheme from the other recycling services and programmes being run.
28. Reward schemes should be considered by councils as one tool of many in a recycling service. When offered alongside a comprehensive recycling services and promotional campaigns, they have proven to have a positive effect on encouraging people to recycle.
29. Oxford already offers an expansive recycling service accessible to most residents and runs several awareness campaigns promoting the merits of recycling. These service enhancements have increased the share of Oxford's waste that is recycled by a quarter in the last 5 years. It is possible that running a reward scheme could only increase Oxford's recycling rate.
30. The panel sees merit in trialling a small community incentive campaign across the city to motivate residents and promote the recycling service. Reward campaigns do not have to be expensive to be effective, but could be as simple as putting stickers on waste bins that encourage residents to recycle for charity. Every tonne of additional recycling collected (above an agreed threshold), could lead to a donation to the charity. The money for the charitable donation could come from the fee paid for recycling by the county council or, if there is a willingness to provide even stronger incentives, from the savings of £27,000 resulting from the disbanding of the Waste Strategy Partnership.
31. Local authorities need to offer a range of approaches to encourage residents to recycle, as not residents are motivated by the same thing. Education campaigns are more effective at encouraging non-recyclers, while the participation surveys supported the use of rewards to encourage some recyclers to recycle more.
32. The City's education campaigns appear to be working well to increase awareness and promote the service among new residents and hard to reach groups. With the Waste Strategy Partnership disbanding, the panel would like to see the money saved go towards targeted education campaigns, if it is not committed to the charitable donation scheme as outlined above.

Recommendation 1

The Council should invest the £27,000 from the Waste Partnership Board into targeted education campaigns (to include flats) in partnership with the universities and student bodies to encourage recycling.

Recommendation 2

The Council should trial a positive community incentive campaign consisting of stickers being placed on waste bins that encourage residents to recycle for charity. The campaign would make a donation to a charity chosen on an area basis for each tonne of extra recycling collected (above a threshold) and would be funded from the revenue generated through extra recycling.

Using Fines or charges to encourage recycling

33. Legislation

Section 46 of the Environmental Protection Act 1990 allows councils to fine people for not providing waste in the receptacles provided. s46(4d) goes on state that:

“the authority may make provision with respect to ... the substances or articles which may or may not be put into the receptacles or compartments of receptacles of any description”.

34. Compulsory Recycling Schemes

Several London councils operate a compulsory recycling scheme that relies on the threat of a monetary fine to encourage residents to recycle. They are often run alongside a comprehensive promotional campaign and extensive recycling facilities. Personal visits and education are used to target households that are caught not recycling, with a penalty notice only being issued as a last resort. Councils that use compulsory recycling schemes have noticed an increase in the recycling rate but, because these schemes run alongside a promotion campaign, no evidence has been produced that can differentiate whether it's the promotion campaign or the threat of a fine that has contributed more to the recycling rate increasing.

35. Councils with compulsory recycling schemes have interpreted section 46 (4d) of the Environment Protection Act 1990 to mean that councils can fine residents who do not put recyclables into the recycling receptacle they are provided. However this interpretation of the statute has not been tested in court, nor have any residents been fined under the schemes (Environment Committee, 2011 p24).

What Oxford does

36. Oxford does not actively fine people or promote the threat of a fine to encourage recycling. When a property is brought to the attention of the recycling team, they try to encourage them to recycle by visited them before venturing down the enforcement route.
37. In December 2012 Council changed its waste and recycling policy so that at “*all relevant sites, the Council shall seek to collect no greater quantity of waste from domestic refuse bins than from domestic recycling bins*” (Waste and Recycling Policy 2012) to encourage flats in the city to recycle. Although this is not a direct fine on privately owned flat owners, it did required them to purchase recycling bins for their flats or opt out of the council’s waste collection and get their waste collected by private waste contractor. Eighteen months on, most private flat managers now offer recycling facilities for their residents.

Conclusions on Fines

38. Councils with compulsory recycling schemes use the threat of a fine to persuade residents to recycle, but they still rely on promotion campaigns and education to encourage residents to recycle. This appears very similar to Oxford’s current practice. As none of the councils with compulsory recycling schemes has fined anyone for failure to provide their recyclables in the correct bin or tested their interpretation of the statute in court, the panel feels there is no merit in investigating the threat of fines as a mechanism to encourage recycling further.

Name and contact details of author:

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Background papers:

DEFRA, *Evaluation of the Waste Reward and Recognition Scheme -Emerging Findings*, Dec 2013

http://www.google.co.uk/url?sa=t&rct=j&q=&esrc=s&frm=1&source=web&cd=3&ved=0CD8QFjAC&url=http%3A%2F%2Fwww.brooklyndhurst.co.uk%2Fdownload%2F184%2F554972a1%2FBrook%2520Lyndhurst%2520-%2520RRF%2520Interim%2520report.pdf&ei=0uhLU-m6Euup7AbSmiHoBQ&usg=AFQjCNGfT6jDLxJWSzEm_O38w-BO4o6SOg&sig2=qOHhvZksUhfXzXZ-zCgdIWA

Environment Committee, London Assembly, *Carrots and Sticks – A review of waste financial reward and compulsory recycling schemes*, May 2011

<http://www.london.gov.uk/moderngov/documents/s4182/Appendix%201%20-%20Carrots%20and%20Sticks.pdf>

Serco *Investigating the Impact of Recycling Investigation Schemes* – Jan 2014

Summary Report_

http://www.eunomia.co.uk/shopimages/SER449_Incentives%20Report%2013.pdf

Full report -

http://www.serco.com/Images/Serco%20Eunomia%20Incentives%20Full%20Report_tcm3-44276.pdf

Appendix 1

Summary of reports

DEFRA's report reviewed the results (so far) from 8 of the 28 local authorities that received Defra funding to implement incentive programmes in 2011. It focused on the impact the reward schemes had had on public participation rates and waste and recycling tonnage.

Serco's review drew on evidence obtained from over 30 different recycling incentives schemes operated by UK Local Authorities which were not funded under Defra's Recognition and Reward programme. The report focused on:

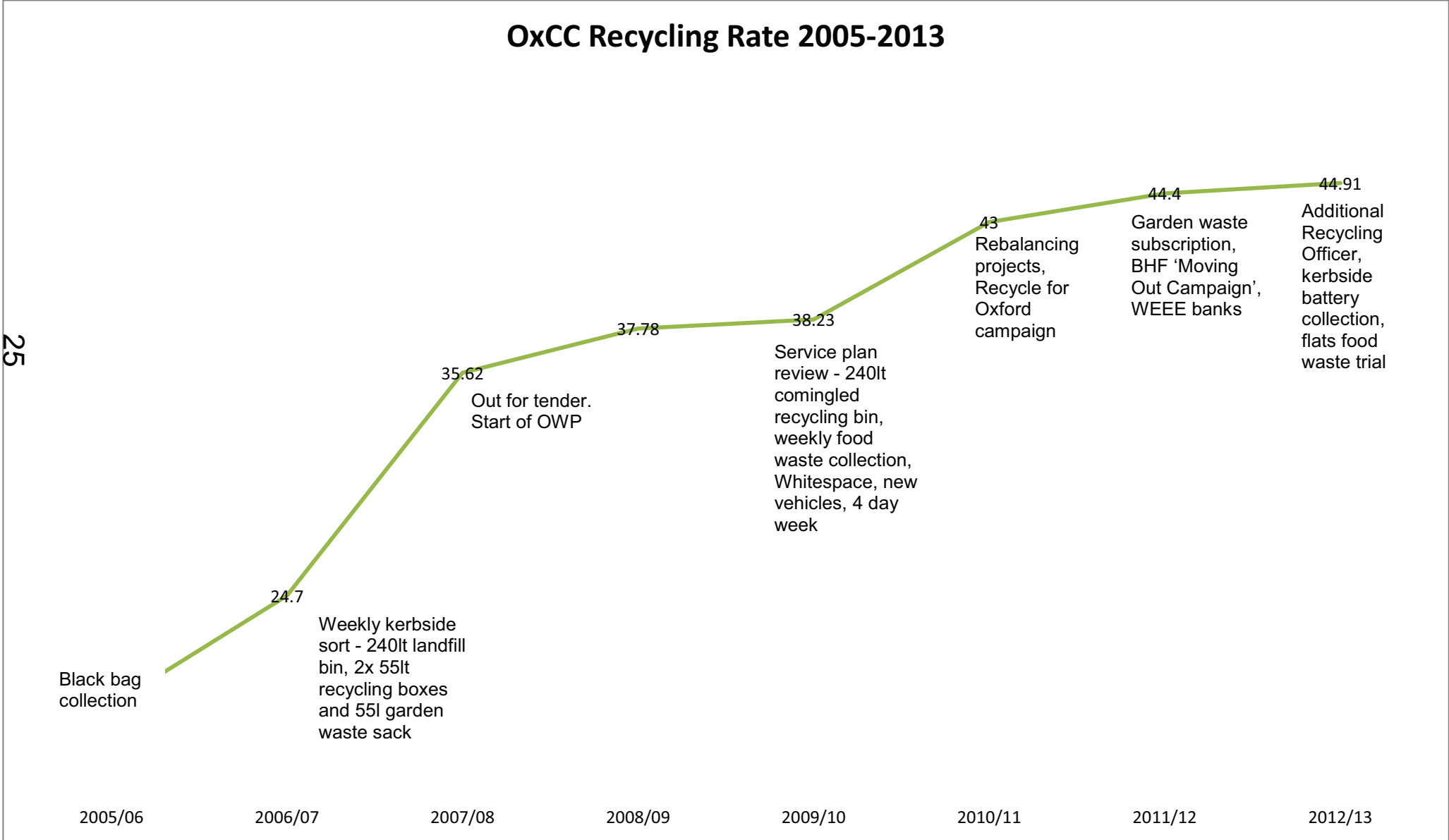
- The cost and benefits of the schemes that have been compared and evaluated;
- The impacts of recycling incentives benchmarked against 'Nearest Neighbours' to understand better whether the observed changes are attributable to the incentive scheme itself; and
- Conducted participant surveys to gauge resident preference and attitudes towards incentives.
- It found little difference in the impact on recycling rate between the two types of scheme, and concluded that success depended on Councils implementing a scheme that motivated their target audience.

The London Assembly's report reviewed the impact of reward based incentive schemes in several London Boroughs and whether the schemes were effective in improving the recycling rate. It

- Considered the impact of waste financial schemes on recycling performance
- Identified examples of best practice and lessons learnt
- Made recommendations on how such schemes might be applied to London.

Oxford City Council Recycling Rate

The graph below displays the recycling rate against key changes to the service over an 8 year period.



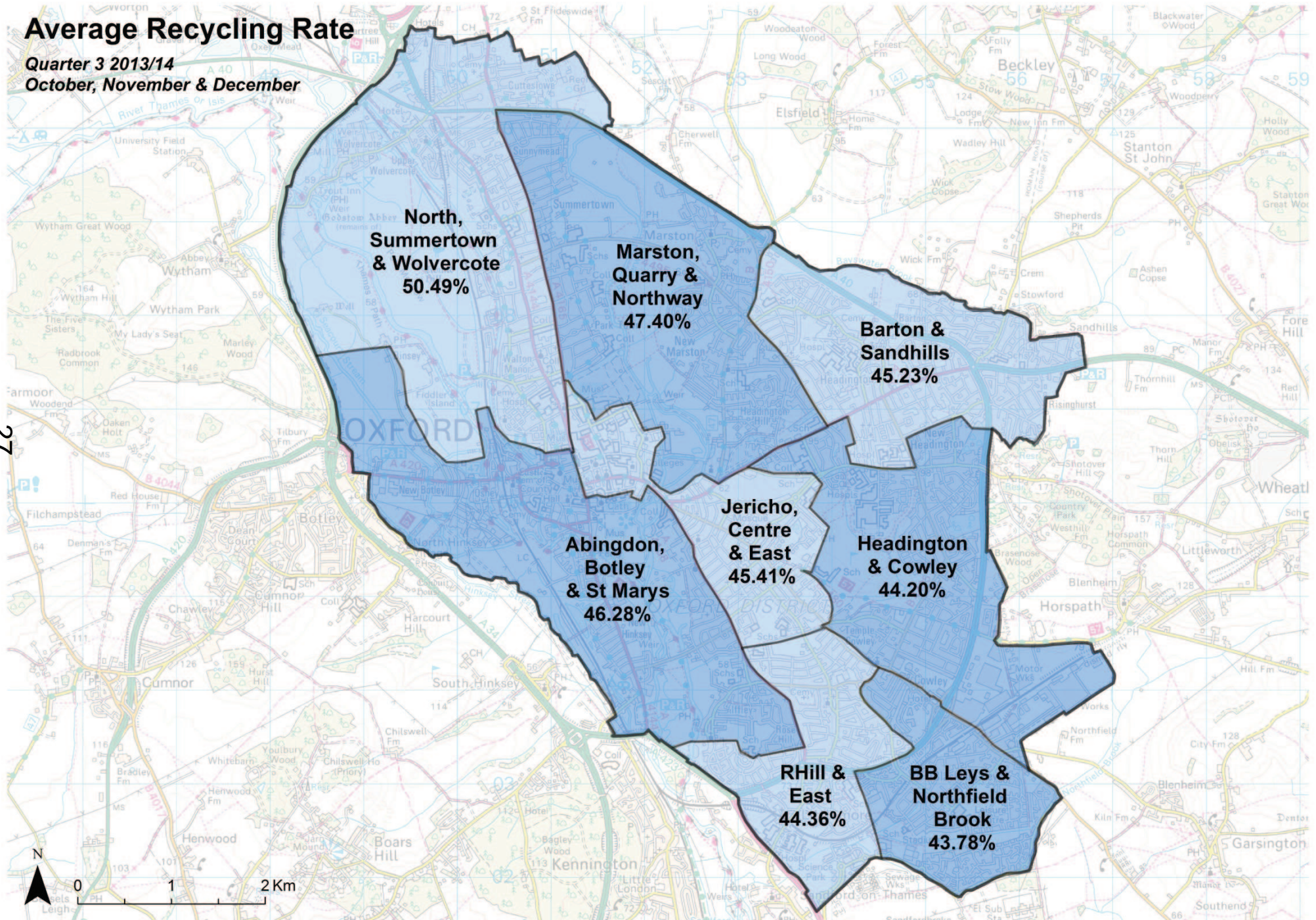
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Average Recycling Rate

Quarter 3 2013/14

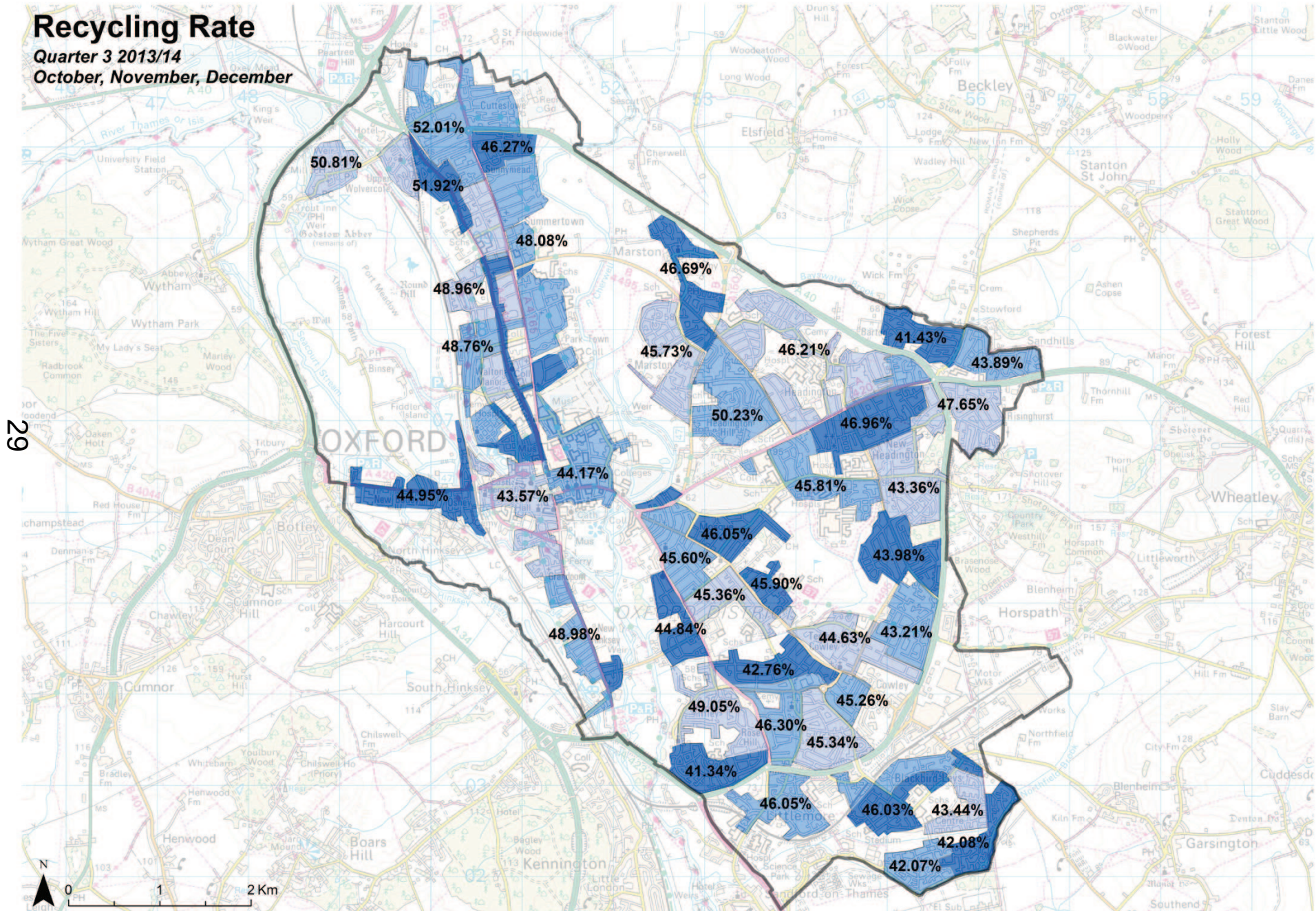
October, November & December

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The following map displays the latest quarterly round recycling rate based on the material collected **KERBSIDE ONLY**.



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To: City Executive Board

Date: 3 July 2014

Report of: Executive Director of Regeneration and Housing

Title of Report: Oxford Growth: Grenoble Road Urban Extension

Summary and Recommendations

Purpose of report: To advise of a potential partnership with adjoining landowners to pursue the development of the Council's landholding south of Grenoble Road.

Key decision: Yes

Executive lead member: Councillor Bob Price, Board Member for Corporate Strategy, Economic Development and Planning

Policy Framework:

Oxford Strategic Partnership City Economic Growth Strategy (2012)

Recommendations: That the City Executive

1. Approve the principle of pursuing discussions with adjoining landowners for a partnership to deliver development south of Grenoble Road, subject to a detailed report on whether such a partnership would represent best value.
2. Note that if a partnership arrangement was subsequently approved this is expected to require significant funding for specialist consultancy support in the preparation of Local Plan submissions and a planning application, which would be set out in the detailed report.

Appendix 1 - Risk Register

Appendix 2 - Site Plan

Introduction

1. The area south of Grenoble Road has been identified for many years as a potential urban extension to meet Oxford's pressing requirement for housing and employment land to enable economic growth and sustainable residential development.
2. Previously the Panel of Inspectors that independently examined the draft South East Plan recommended that there should be a selective, highly focused review of the boundaries of the greenbelt south of Oxford to consider the need for development.
3. More recently the Oxford Strategic Partnership City Economic Growth Strategy (2012) and the Science Oxford Oxfordshire Innovation Engine report (2013) both identified Grenoble Road as a location to meet the city's need for housing and employment growth. The recent publication of the Strategic Housing Market Assessment now identifies a need for some 30,000 new homes for the city in the period to 2031, where the existing capacity within the city boundary is assessed at around 7-8,000 homes. The strategic case for one or more sustainable urban extensions is clear.
4. The site is located within the South Oxfordshire District Council (SODC) administrative boundary. SODC has opposed the principle of development of the site, which is designated green belt. However, the SODC Local Plan will need to be reviewed within a year to reflect the latest assessment of housing need. The City Council has taken preliminary legal advice which supports promotion of this site for development. It is therefore appropriate to explore the options for pursuing development through the planning process.

Land Ownership

5. The focus for potential development is the land shown hatched on the attached plan, which could accommodate in excess of 4,000 homes. The land totals approximately 166 hectares, of which the Council's total ownership is approximately 35 hectares. The balance of the site is in institutional or operational ownerships. This land sits within the wider boundary of the former suggested urban extension which encompasses some 502 hectares, where the Council owns 105 hectares. The final boundaries of future urban extension are not confirmed at this stage.

Partnership Agreement

6. There have been previous agreements between the City Council and the other landowners. Recent discussions have confirmed in principle that the partners wish to progress an urban extension in this area. The partners now propose to develop a formal agreement which would share the costs, risks, financial benefits and set out a programme.

7. The intention is that Heads of Terms will be drafted and that these will be reported to CEB with a recommendation. It is identified that, if approved, the costs in promoting the land for development through the Local Plan process or pursuing a planning application is expected to exceed £0.5m. These costs would need to be shared between the landowners. A budget would need to be submitted for approval with the Heads of Terms.

Next Steps

8. The proposal is now to obtain external consultancy advice on draft Heads of Terms for a partnership agreement. This would include:
 - preliminary development appraisal and valuation advice
 - planning, environmental and transport advice
 - general masterplanning advice.
9. Draft Heads of Terms for a partnership agreement with the other landowners would be reported to CEB for approval.

Financial Implications

10. The initial consultancy advice for the draft Heads of Terms is funded from existing City Development and Major Projects consultancy budgets and is estimated not to exceed £50,000.

Equalities impact

11. The project will provide an important means to deliver new market and affordable housing, research and commercial floorspace in support of new homes and employment. An Equalities Impact Assessment will be included in a future CEB report for approval of the delivery strategy.

Environmental impact

12. The site is designated green belt. However, our assessment is that quality of area is poor and it is appropriate to review green belt boundaries in accordance with Government policy guidance and the strategic planning context.

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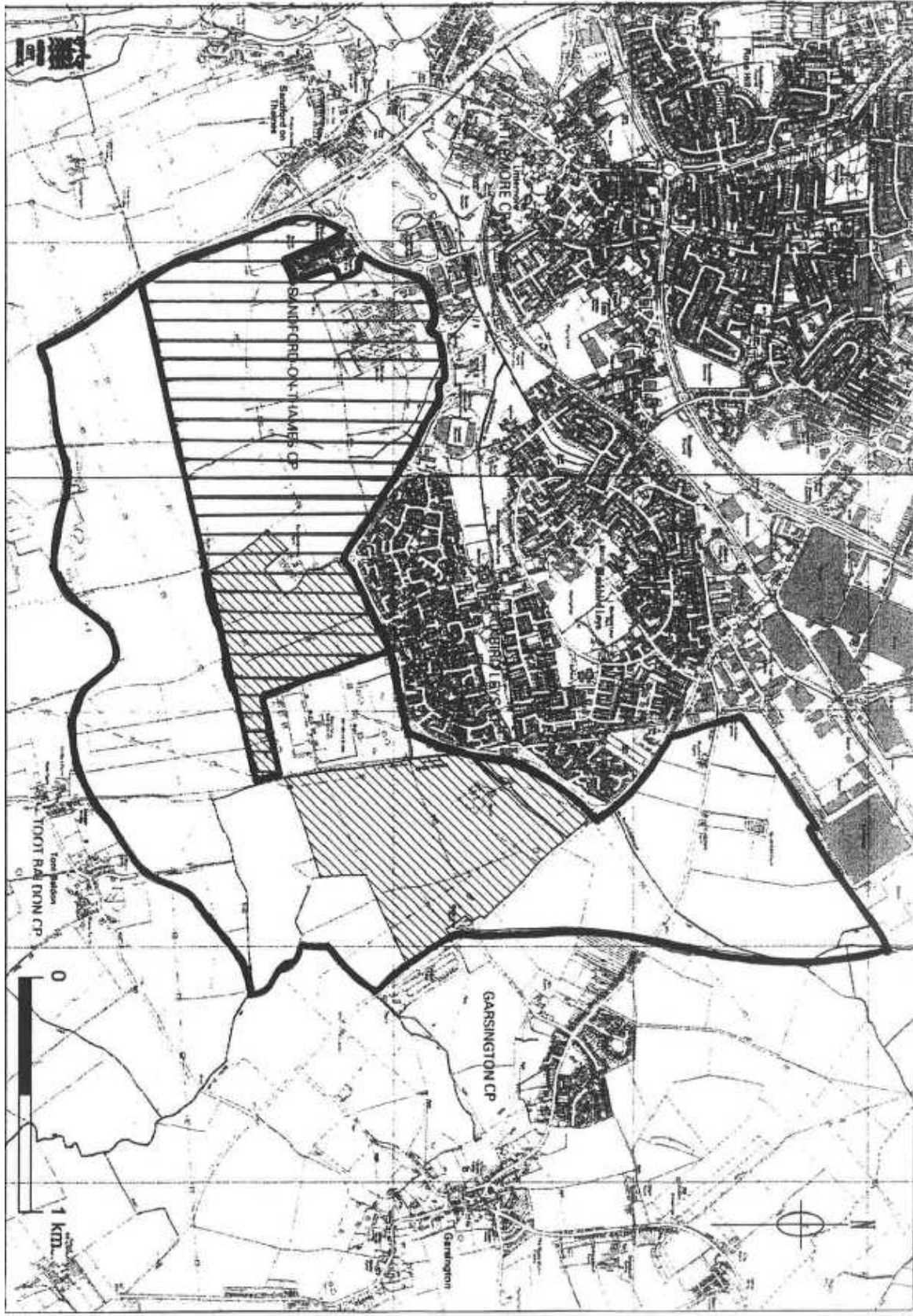
List of background papers: None

Appendix 1 – Risk Register

Risk ID	Risk						Corporate Objective	Gross Risk			Current Risk		Residual Risk		Owner	Date Risk Reviewed	Proximity of Risk (Projects/Contracts Only)
Category -000- Service Area Code	Risk Title	Opportunity/Threat	Risk Description	Risk Cause	Consequence	Date raised	1 to 6	I	P	I	P	I	P				
CEB-001-R&H	Partnership agreement	T	Failure to agree terms	Differing objectives	Delays in delivery	May 14		4	3	3	3	3	3	DE			

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Risk ID	Risk Title	Action Owner	Accept, Contingency, Transfer, Reduce or Avoid	Details of Action	Key Milestone	Milestone Delivery Date	%Action Complete	Date Reviewed
001	Landholder agreement	DE	Accept & aim to reduce	Negotiate and agree, early testing, alternative approach	Agree draft heads of terms	Aug 14		



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To: City Executive Board
Council

Date: 3 July 2014
14 July 2014

Report of: Head of City Development

Title of Report: Capital Contribution towards Frideswide Square

Summary and Recommendations

Purpose of report: To agree to make a financial contribution to the County Council towards the work to transform Frideswide Square.

Key decision Yes

Executive lead member: Councillor Bob Price, Board Member for Corporate Strategy, Economic Development and Planning

Policy Framework: Corporate Plan - Vibrant and Sustainable Economy, West End Area Action Plan – more attractive spaces.

Recommendations: That City Executive Board

1. Recommend to full Council to give a capital grant to the County Council of £670,000 in two phases of £335,000 each (50% in Q3 2014/15 and 50% in Q2 2015/16).
2. Delegate to the Executive Director of Regeneration and Housing responsibility to complete the legal agreement requested by the County Council.

Context

1. In the West Area Action Area Plan 2008 there is Policy WE 6 that promotes the improvement of Frideswide Square and the railway station forecourt to become more attractive, welcoming and better functioning spaces.

2. The West End AAP also brought in a special S106 policy requirement that major developments in the West End should contribute to a single streamline S106 contribution fund.
3. For a number of years the City and County Councils, together as part of the West End partnership, have been progressing a number of key West End projects including Frideswide Square, planning to transform Frideswide Square from a busy highway junction into a well-managed entry point to the city in keeping with the character of Oxford.
4. Frideswide Square is of strategic importance in Oxford and Oxfordshire's road network, handling tens of thousands of car, bus, cycle and pedestrian journeys every day. In particular, it is one of the key bottlenecks preventing reliable journey times for people commuting into Oxford.
5. It is also the gateway to the area for rail passengers. Oxford rail station is one of the fastest growing stations in the country, with 50% growth in passenger numbers since 2003. An estimated 5.5 million people pass through the station each year. Frideswide Square is the main point of arrival and departure for people using the station.
6. Transforming Frideswide Square is a vital part of the regeneration of Oxford's West End, helping to ensure excellent access to major development sites such as the Westgate shopping centre and Oxpens.
7. In early 2012, the County Council Cabinet approved the "Boulevard" option for detailed design and implementation. It considers that its bold and innovative approach proposed for Frideswide Square will help to set the tone for other projects and developments in the West End. The intention at the time was that construction would start early in 2013.
8. At that meeting it was explained that the "Boulevard" option was preferred to the alternative "Oval" option, for the following reasons:
 - a. **"Regeneration:** the Boulevard provides larger open spaces connected to all three principal frontages, which will better help businesses occupying them prosper and contribute to a thriving square and wider West End regeneration.
 - b. **Deliverability:** unlike the Oval option, no land outside the highway boundary is required to deliver the Boulevard, avoiding a significant risk to deliverability.
 - c. **Flexibility:** this part of the city is expected to change significantly over the next ten years. It is impossible to predict exactly what form these changes will take. The Boulevard has greater inherent flexibility to accommodate changes around the square such as new buildings or new uses.

- d. **Stakeholder support:** the Boulevard is supported by the majority of stakeholders. “
9. At the time the City Council informally supported the Boulevard option and agreed that it would be willing to consider making a financial contribution towards the cost of the square from the West End S106 streamline contribution fund.

Proposal

10. The County Council had originally hoped to have progressed with the project in early 2013. However, work then began on the new Station master plan through the three way partnership of City and County Councils with Network Rail. It soon became clear that an important part of the station project should be the replacement of the Botley Road bridge with a new wider and slightly deeper structure. This then had knock on implications for the Frideswide Square project both in terms of timing and design.
11. More recently the County Council has decided to proceed with Frideswide Square on a programme with the following steps:

Detailed design: May - Oct 2014
Enabling works: Sept to Dec 2014
Main work: Feb to Dec 2015
12. The County Council will consult the City Council on the detailed design of the square, seeking agreement through the Leaders Bi-lateral meeting. County officers have confirmed that they are working to a specification, materials and finishes that will be of high quality and not compromised. In addition the scheme will be presented to the Oxford Design Panel on about 17th June. *A verbal update will be made to CEB on the views expressed by the Panel in its Report.* There will also be an opportunity for the public to comment on the design later this year in August.
13. The full cost of the project is £5.5 m The County Council has asked the City Council to make a contribution of £670,000. This money is available from a number of different sources in the City Council's budgets. With this grant the County Council has confirmed that the project is now fully funded.

Source	Amount £
Capital Programme 2014/15 WE Partnership (M5014)	217,225
Capital Programme 2015/16 WE Partnership (M5014)	282,775
S106 extra WE Partnership not listed in Capital programme	50,000
New Growth Points unallocated	51,000
S106 Works of Art (West End) Said BS	50,000
S106 Works of Art (other)	19,000
Total	670,000

14. The County Council has indicated that it would wish to complete a formal legal agreement with the City Council so that the City Council can be reassured that its grant will be used for the purposes intended and in the timescales indicated and the County Council can be reassured that the City Council will make the payments on the dates agreed. This agreement will be able to stipulate that some of the grant is to be used towards an Arts strategy and public art. This agreement will also ensure that the City Council in return for offering this grant is invited to comment on the detailed design, through the regular Leaders Bi-Lateral meetings.

Level of Risk

15. The proposal is to give a grant to the County Council, who will bear all of the risks for its project.

Climate Change / Environmental Impact

16. There are no implications directly flowing from this report. However, the County Council's design concept for the square seeks to ease the flow of traffic and also encourage cycling and pedestrian flows through the square. This design should reduce the climate change impacts of the motorised traffic currently using this busy junction.

Equalities impact

17. As above, there are no implications directly flowing from this report. However, the County Council's design concept for the square seeks to ease the flow of traffic and also encourage cycling and pedestrian flows through the square. Improving the ability of pedestrians, in particular, by making the square a more pleasant environment should meet equalities aspirations.

Financial implications

18. As explained in the body of the report above, the finance involved is available in the Council's capital programme and in unallocated S106 and New Growth Point funds. The proposal is to phase the payments to 50% in Q3 2014/15 and 50% in Q2 2015/16. The first payment on the letting of a contract for the works (likely to be in Q3 14/15) and the second one 6 months after the start of the construction (likely to be in Q2 15/16)
19. £500, 000 of the £670,000 sought is already phased in the capital programme between these two financial years. Since this money is available from a number of different sources in the City Council's budgets, it is necessary to ask CEB to recommend to full Council that £670,000 is identified as a grant to be paid to the County Council for this project.
20. The level of grant is capped at £670,000. There has been no request that the City Council contribute to a proportion of the costs of the County Council's project. Therefore the City Council will have no liability should the cost escalate. This point will be confirmed in the legal agreement.

Legal Implications

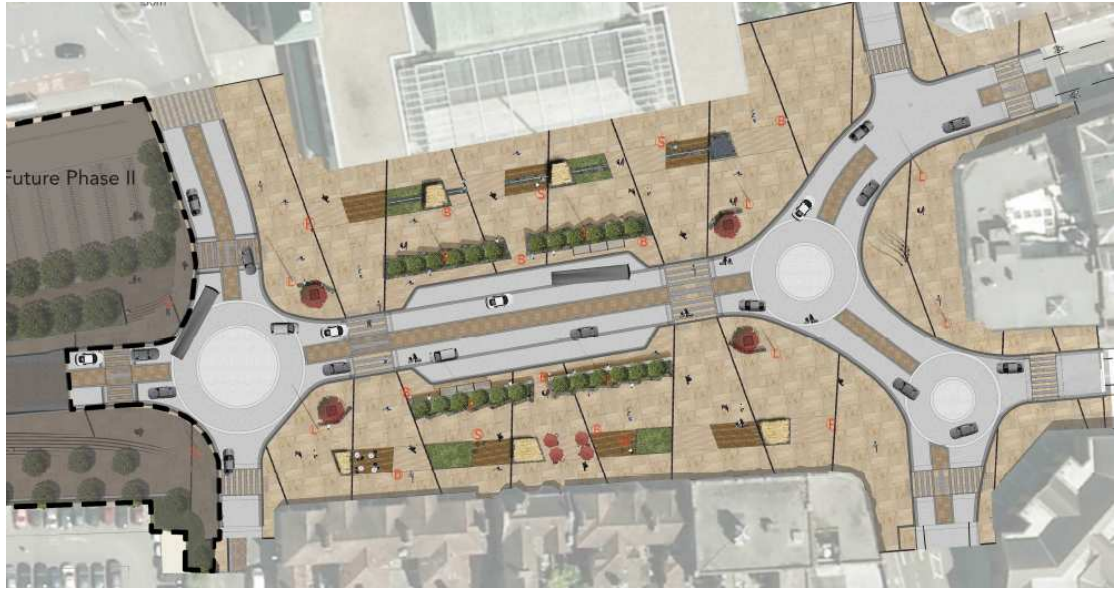
21. A copy of the draft legal agreement (has been provided) by the County Council. The purpose of the agreement is to safeguard the interest of the City Council and ensure that the money is only paid across to the County Council at the appropriate stages and if not used or if the project is abandoned or altered to a much down-graded scheme will be returned to the City Council. *Advice from legal officers is that*

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List of background papers:

County Council Cabinet Report 13th March 2012



Source: Oxfordshire County Council 2012 Landscape design proposals for the Boulevard – currently being updated

To: City Executive Board
To: Council

Date: 3 July 2014 CEB
14 July 2014 Council

Report of: Executive Director of Regeneration and Housing

Title of Report: Oxpens Delivery Strategy - Stage 1

Summary and Recommendations

Purpose of report: To provide an update and agree the next steps to deliver redevelopment of the Oxpens site area, including establishing the budget.

Key decision No

Executive lead member: Councillor Bob Price, Board Member for Corporate Strategy, Economic Development and Planning

Policy Framework:

Corporate Plan - Vibrant and Sustainable Economy, Core Strategy 2010, West End Area Action Plan 2008, Regeneration Framework 2010, Oxpens SPD 2013

Recommendations: That City Executive Board:

1. Note the contents of this report.
2. Recommends to Council the establishment of a budget of £320,000 in the Councils revenue budget funded from New Growths Point Grant to complete due diligence and progress the project through the next stages.

Appendix 1 - Risk Register

Appendix 2 - Land ownership

Introduction

1. The City Council has an adopted Core Strategy (March 2011) and West End Area Action Plan (June 2008) that set the policy framework for development on the Oxpens site in Oxford's West End. In addition, these plans are supplemented by the Oxpens Masterplan SPD (November 2013)

which provides clarity and advice on how the City Council's adopted planning policies should be implemented.

2. The Oxpens site, strategically located between the railway station and the Westgate development, represents one of the most significant development opportunities in Oxford City centre and has the potential to make a valuable contribution to the life and economy of the city. The site is identified for a new mixed use quarter, including housing, R&D space, offices, hotel, local facilities and public open space.
3. The Council's objectives, in summary, are to secure a comprehensive high quality, sustainable development of the site and to secure a private sector development and investment partner to deliver this.
4. The overall Oxpens site area comprises approximately 8.34 Hectares (20.6 acres) of land in multiple ownerships. The major landowners are Oxford City Council (8.7 acres) and London & Continental Railways (LCR 7.93 acres), LCR being a subsidiary of DfT and recipient of the British Rail Board – Residuary landholding. There are also assets in the ownership of Milton Property Investments (1.63 acres), Royal Mail (1.1 acres) and Greensquare Housing (0.3 acres) plus others. A land ownership plan is attached at Appendix 2.
5. The adopted SPD set out the City Council's preferred approach for bringing forward development proposals by showing how policies can be interpreted, and most notably identify that the Council seeks:
 - Development proposals that consider the whole site
 - To secure an urban approach to development that reflects the site's city centre location
 - To secure proposals that respond to the urban grain and local heritage
 - To show how a mix of uses can maximise site and amenity value in a sustainable manner

City Deal

6. Oxpens is a key project in the Oxford City Deal, accelerating economic growth and housing delivery with potential to deliver up to 300 new homes and support over 1000 jobs.
7. Under City Deal, it was agreed that: *'Oxford City Council will bring forward the Oxpens site for comprehensive redevelopment by 2015 to include a minimum of 300 residential units, together with office, leisure and other employment uses.'*
8. The Central Government commitments include that: *'The Department for Transport, Network Rail and London and Continental Railways, as part of Great Western Electrification, East-West Rail and the Electric Spine work,*

will work together to improve and develop Oxford Station. Local and national stakeholders have agreed to work together to develop a wider master plan that focuses on the gains a redeveloped station could enable and the regeneration benefits on adjacent sites. Further details on land assembly and on the allocation of uplift will be agreed as part of Local Growth Deal by Summer 2014.'

Recent Activity

9. Since the adoption of the SPD the Council commissioned technical studies to help inform development options. Assembling the site is complex, for example:
 - There are eight landowners, together with occupational leases
 - the ground conditions include made ground and contamination
 - the site drainage requires a comprehensive approach
 - the development will need to accommodate an existing deep sewer and fund new infrastructure.
10. The property market studies show that there is significant demand for the proposed development uses (residential, offices, retail and hotel) and scope to increase floorspace subject to site capacity.
11. The technical studies also show that a comprehensive scheme of redevelopment is potentially viable, but marginal based on our current knowledge. At this early stage there remain significant inherent uncertainties. There is scope to flex the development uses, infrastructure and planning requirements to secure a viable development and this will evolve as the scheme proposals are developed.

Development Partnership and Procurement

12. The Council will need to deliver this development through a partnership with the private sector, and can demonstrate a strong track record of partnership working. This requires shared objectives, a viable development and confidence in the timing for delivery. The Council will need to remain a key partner to ensure delivery of the scheme through its roles as landowner and planning authority, and if required, exercising Compulsory Purchase powers. The private sector will bring development expertise and funding to enable the site to be released to the market in development parcels. The Barton LLP is one example of such an approach.
13. A pre-requisite is the ability to deliver ownership or control of the land. Before going to the market to seek a private sector partner there needs to be a clear site assembly strategy. The preferred principles are set out below.
14. City Council and DfT land ownership: our combined ownership accounts for over 80% of the site. Through the City Deal the Council has agreed with DfT that the Council will bring the Oxpens site to the market in 2015 to

seek a development partner. This requires an arrangement which places our land under a single control and provides for a fair, transparent allocation of value and uplift between the parties. The Council is providing draft proposals to DfT shortly and this is due to be agreed by Summer this year. This is essential before we can prepare to go to the market.

15. **Remainder of the site:** the Council has had discussions with the remaining landowners. The remaining land interests will be brought into the development either by negotiation and mutual agreement, or failing this through Compulsory Purchase order (CPO).

Next Steps

16. Stage 1 involves seeking an agreement with DfT and is required before going to the market. Stage 2 will involve marketing activities. Stage 3 will involve appointing the Developer. Future stages may involve CPO processes (if appropriate/required) as set out below:

July 14	Report to CEB, Council: Oxpens Delivery Strategy Stage 1
Stage 1	Initial Landholder negotiations and agreement,
Sept 14	Report to CEB: Oxpens Delivery Strategy Stage 2 -
Stage 2	Complete Landholder agreement, finalise due diligence, establish data room, marketing strategy, developer procurement.
May 15	Report to CEB – Oxpens Delivery Strategy Stage 3
Stage 3	Appointment of Developer partner and establish delivery vehicle/Development Agreement
Future	Reports on CPO, if required

Environmental impact

17. The site area is on the Council's Prioritised list under part 2A of the Environmental Protection Act 1990 and an intrusive investigation will be required as a condition of planning for any proposed change of use. Remediation will be required to make the land suitable for residential uses.
18. The project provides an opportunity to remediate or remove the historic landfill on the site.
19. The West End Area Action Plan seeks a CHP plant for the area. Legal and technical feasibility studies have been carried out for a CHP plant in the

Oxpens site area, which may offer revenue opportunities for the Council. This will be the subject of a separate CEB report.

Equalities impact

20. The project will provide an important means to deliver new private and affordable housing and commercial spaces in support of economic development and the creation of new jobs.
21. An Equalities Impact Assessment will be included in future CEB report for approval of the delivery strategy.

Financial Implications

22. The following table shows the financial implications of the project, with the corresponding timing of CEB reports that will enable Members to adopt a staged approach to approvals. Members are not being asked to approve the whole process at this time, each step is subject to further reports.

Stage	Work Items	Services	Notes	Stage Cost	Cumulative
				£	£
July 14	Report to CEB, Council: Oxpens Delivery Strategy Stage 1				
Stage 1	Initial Landholder negotiations and agreement,	Legal, property, engineering		50,000	50,000
Sept 14	Report to CEB: Oxpens Delivery Strategy Stage 2 - Landholder agreement & Marketing Strategy				
Stage 2	Finalise due diligence; developer procurement,	Property, marketing, legal, technical, IT	1	270,000	320,000
May 15	Report to CEB – Oxpens Delivery Strategy Stage 3 -Approval for Appointment of Developer partner and establish delivery vehicle				
Stage 3	Establish vehicle	Legal, property, technical		50,000	370,000
Notes:					
1. Potential for sharing procurement costs with other landowner(s)					

23. The anticipated cost for Stages 1 and 2 is £320,000 which would be wholly funded from the New Growth Points Reserve which the Council holds. Members are asked to approve the creation of a budget of this amount so that the project can be progressed. Monies will only be drawn down in accordance with the staged approval process set out above with each of the stages being reported back to Members.

24. The total estimated costs for fees associated with negotiating and entering into a landholders agreement, procurement of a delivery partner and setting up a JV is £370k. This leaves an unfunded sum of £50K in Stage 3 of the project. However, if an agreement can be reached with DfT then some of the Stage 2 costs may be shared, reducing the overall burden significantly. These costs may also be minimised if an existing partnership model (such as Barton LLP) is used, or if a contractual approach is adopted instead of creating a separate legal entity. These issues are currently unknown and will be fully explored in the Stage 2 report back to Members.
25. Note that Members are not being asked to agree to any particular delivery route at this stage, or to make any financial commitments other than to establish the budget so that the project can be progressed.

Possible future financial implications

26. If a CPO process was adopted then it is likely that the Council would have to pay the upfront costs of making the Order; indemnities would be sought from a developer partner to recover the cost but this could be subject to the satisfactory confirmation of the order, for which the Council would bear the risk. The sum could be in the region of £250-500K.
27. The statutory requirement to obtain Best Consideration in accordance with Section 123 of the Local Government Act 1972 will be fully considered in any report back to CEB.

Legal implications

28. There are no legal implications.

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List of background papers: None.

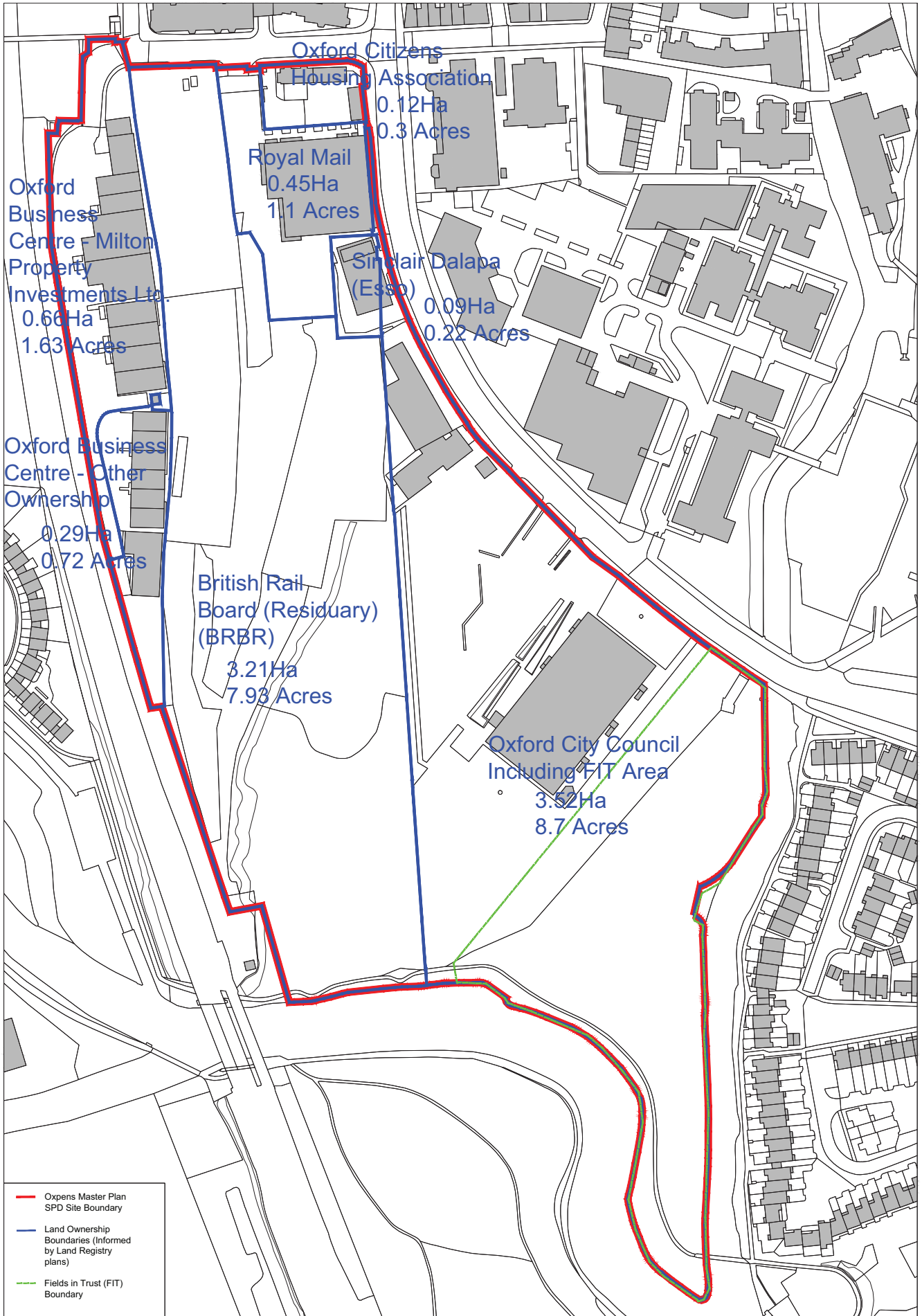
Appendix 1 – Risk Register

Risk ID	Risk						Corporate Objective	Gross Risk			Current Risk		Residual Risk		Owner	Date Risk Reviewed	Proximity of Risk (Projects/Contracts Only)
Category -000-Service Area Code	Risk Title	Opportunity/Threat	Risk Description	Risk Cause	Consequence	Date raised	1 to 6	I	P	I	P	I	P				
CEB-001-R&H	Landholder agreement	T	Failure to agree terms	Differing objectives	Delays in delivery	May 14	4		3	3	3	3	3	DE			

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Risk ID	Risk Title	Action Owner	Accept, Contingency, Transfer, Reduce or Avoid	Details of Action	Key Milestone	Milestone Delivery Date	%Action Complete	Date Reviewed
001	Landholder agreement	FP	Accept & aim to reduce	Negotiate and agree, early testing, alternative approach	Agree draft heads of terms	Aug 14		

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To: City Executive Board

Date: 3 July 2014

Report of: Head of Leisure, Parks & Communities

Report: Grant Monitoring Information for 2013/14

Summary and Recommendations

Purpose of report: To inform members of monitoring information returned by community & voluntary organisations awarded a grant by the City Council in 2013/14.

Key decision? No

Executive lead members: Councillor Price, Board Member for Corporate Strategy, Economic Development and Planning & Councillor Rowley, Board Member for Leisure Contract and Community Partnership Grants

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

Recommendations:

The City Executive Board is:-

1. Asked to note the report
2. To approve the recommendation made by Price Waterhouse Coopers that there should be a penalty for organisations not returning their monitoring information of not being able to reapply for future funding and the grant awarded should be reclaimed.

Appendices to report

- Appendix 1 List of Community & Voluntary Organisations awarded a grant through the open bidding, commissioning, social inclusion fund and youth ambition grants programmes.
- Appendix 2 Case studies
- Appendix 3 Risk Register

Introduction

1. The Communities and Neighbourhoods team ran three grant programmes during 2013/14. These programmes are in accordance with policy and prospectus set by Members.

The three grant programmes were:-

- Community & Voluntary Organisations (CVO's) Grants Programme
- Youth Ambition Grants Programme
- Social Inclusion Fund

Table 1 below shows the allocations and expenditure.

Table 1	Budget Approved (£)	Amount spent (£)
CVO's grant programme		
Advice & money management	536,379	536,379
Homelessness	442,279	442,271
Inclusive arts & culture	255,262	255,262
Community safety	58,082	58,082
Community & voluntary sector infrastructure	48,736	48,736
Inclusive play & leisure for children & young people with disabilities.	15,000	15,000
2013/14 annual open bidding programme	95,000	95,000
Small grants programme	12,727	5,961
Youth Ambition grants programme	107,320	107,319
Social Inclusion Fund	74,684	74,684
underspend	0	6,775
Totals	1,645,469	1,645,469

2. During the year (2013/14), we awarded 135 community and voluntary organisations and artists a grant. The funding supported the delivery of a variety of projects from small community events to welfare benefits advice, community safety projects, training for volunteers, focused work with young people and the arts.
3. The majority of the groups funded through the annual open bidding grants programme are the same groups the Council has funded in previous years. However through the social inclusion fund and youth ambition grants programmes nine organisations that the Council has not funded before were awarded a grant last year. Through our community engagement work minority groups are being made aware of the grant programmes and to promote the grants programmes wider social media mechanisms such as Facebook and Twitter are now being used.
4. £25,000 from the budget was made available for the commissioning of inclusive arts directly from the Arts & Culture team's core budget. (Details of how this funding was spent can be found in Appendix 1).

Process for gathering monitoring information

5. One of the conditions for funding is that organisations agree to provide feedback. This is generally by completing a monitoring form, site visit by officer(s) or a combination of both.
6. The monitoring ensures that the funding awarded to groups is used for the purpose it was given. The process for dealing with none returns is as follows:
 - Three weeks past the deadline a reminder is sent out with a copy of the monitoring form
 - Six weeks past the deadline a second reminder is sent with copy of the monitoring form followed up by email or telephone call
 - If there is still no response this is noted on file for future reference.
7. The majority of organisations will respond to the first reminder. However the following group have failed to return any monitoring information:-
 - **Wolvercote Young Peoples Club**
Awarded £3,000, through the social inclusion fund, to provide school holiday activities at Cutteslowe Community Centre
8. Price Waterhouse Coopers provide the Councils internal audit service and the process for the payment of grants was an area that the Council selected for audit this year. One of the recommendations for groups not returning their monitoring information was that there should be a penalty of not be able to reapply for future funding and the grant awarded should be reclaimed.
9. All funded groups will be written to, to inform them of this new procedure that is to take immediate effect. They will also be reminded that funding spent on things it was not awarded for will be reclaimed. The grants programme prospectus will be updated so that future applicants are aware.

Addressing Council Priorities

10. The community grants programme provides funding to a range of community and voluntary organisations who help deliver Corporate Plan objectives.
11. Groups funded through the open bidding programme will generally deliver activities and events that bring communities together building community cohesion supporting the Corporate Priority of Strong, Active Communities.
12. Voluntary organisations funded through the grants commissioning programme will be delivering services that have been identified by the Council as making a substantial contribution to the achievement of our

corporate goals such as reducing Homelessness and improving community cohesion.

Monitoring Information

13 Appendices 1 & 2 provide the following information:-

- Name of organisation / group
- Amount of grant awarded
- Description of project/activity
- Number of beneficiaries
- Brief description of what was achieved
- Total amount of match funding and / or funding levered in as a result of Oxford City Council funding.
- Case studies from a variety of organisations.

14. Table 2 below summarises the information listed in Appendix 1 for grants awarded through the 2013/14 Open Bidding Programme.

Table 2 – Annual Open Bidding Summary – grants up to £10,000

2013/14 Council Priority	Number of projects awarded a grant	Total amount of Grant Awarded (£)	Total of other funding matched or levered in (£)	Number of Beneficiaries from these projects	Some of the things the funding paid for
Strong, Active Communities	22	£95,000	£225,201	6,011 plus 20.050 households that received community newsletters	Community activities & events plus local newsletters

15. Table 3 below summarises the information in Appendix 1 for grants awarded through the small grants programme during 2013/14.

Table 3 - Open Bidding – small grants of up to £500

2013/14 Council Priority	Number of projects awarded a grant	Total amount of Grant Awarded (£)	Total of other funding matched or levered in (£)	Number of Beneficiaries from these projects	Some of the things the funding paid for
Strong, Active	13	£5,162.50	£22,681	7,364	Community

Communities					events, young people activities
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16. Table 4 below summaries the information listed in Appendix 1 for grants awarded through the 2013/14 Youth Ambition grants programme

Table 4 – Open bidding - summary from Youth Ambition Grants Programme – grants of up to £10,000

2013-14 Council Priority	Number of groups funded	Total amount of Grant Awarded (£)	Total of other funding matched or levered in (£)	Number of beneficiaries of these project	Some of the things this funding paid for
Strong, Active Communities	24	£107,318.95	£95,095	398	Youth sessions, training volunteers, art focused activities and sport

17. Table 5 below summaries the information in Appendix 1 for grants awarded through the 2013/14 Social Inclusion Fund.

Table 5 – Open bidding - Summary from the Social Inclusion Fund – grants of up to £10,000

2013/14 Council Priority	Number of projects awarded a grant	Total amount of Grant Awarded (£)	Total of other funding matched or levered in (£)	Number of Beneficiaries from these projects	Some of the things the funding paid for
Strong, Active Communities	16	£74,684	£37,136	658	Training, advice, transport for older people and an intergenerational project,

18 Tables 6 & 7 below summarises the information listed in Appendix 1 for grants awarded through the 2013/14 commissioning programme.

Table 6 – Commissioned Grants Summary

2013/14 Commissioning Theme	Number of groups funded	Total amount of Grant Awarded (£)	Total of other funding levered in (£)	Number of Beneficiaries from these projects	Some of the things the funding paid for
Arts	10	£255,262	£5,196,492	247,064	Training in film & digital media, music, Twinning events
Homelessness	11	£442,279	£4,495,937	944	Day centres, life skills, specialist workers,
Community Safety	3	£58,082	£112,608	520	Domestic violence outreach, helpline service for victims of sexual violence,
CVO Infrastructure	1	£48,736	£382,717	596 organisations who are members of OCVA of which 53% are in Oxford City	Providing information, support and advice to the voluntary sector.
Specialist Play	1	£15,000	£170,000	147	Supporting disabled children to participate in mainstream play
Oxford Credit Union	1	£20,000	n/a	1,156	Provides financial inclusion
Totals	27	£839,359	£11,197,113	249,831 & 596 community & voluntary groups	

Table 7 - Summary from Commissioned Advice Centres

2013-14 Council Priority	Number of Organisations	Total amount of Grant Awarded (£)	Number of Beneficiaries from these projects	Total Benefit take up (£)	Total amount of Debt Written Off (£)
Strong, Active communities	4	£498,379	12,177	£3,578,040	£1,454,670

Advice – General Trends

19. Oxford Citizens Advice Bureau (CAB) reported that the income profile of their client's remains weighted towards those with least financial resource. A sample of 2,033 clients gave information about their income levels. Of this sample 60% had incomes under £1,000 per month.
20. Clients looking for help with debt problems continue to increase for all of the Advice Centres. The total of client debt dealt with over the year amounts to £10,611,435. They are all reporting that priority debt (rent, mortgage, council tax etc) is now the biggest problem
21. Oxford's CAB financial inclusion project for older people (funded by Lloyds TSB Charity) has seen 353 clients, all over 60 years old (44% were over 80 years old) 60 older people helped were via the Councils Winter Warmth network. The average gain per client is just over £3,000.

Beneficiaries of the Grants Programme

22. Oxford's usual residential population was estimated to be 151,900 (2011 census) this includes over 30,000 full time students. The total number of people counted as benefitting from projects and activities funded through these grant programmes was 276,476.
23. It should be noted that one person might well have benefited from more than one project.

Joint Monitoring

24. Joint monitoring visits are taking place with Oxfordshire County Council to monitor the advice centres as these organisations are currently funded by both authorities.

Climate Change / Environmental Impact

25. The report has no climate change or environmental implications.

Equalities Impact

26. Grant funding awarded to community and voluntary organisations has a significant and positive impact on equalities and promotes community cohesion. In particular, some grants actively support the achievement of equality by otherwise marginalised groups, such as funding supplied to Oxford Friend, to Oxford Sexual Abuse & Rape Crisis Centre and for a domestic violence case worker.
27. When applying for grant funding each organisation has to supply a copy of their equal opportunities statement to confirm they comply with this legislation

Financial Impact

28. The recommendations have no financial implications.

Legal Implications

29. There are no legal implications

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List of background papers: none

APPENDIX 1

Grants to Community & Voluntary Organisations

Annual Open Bidding - 2013 / 2014

Grants Awarded under Council Priority - Strong & Active Communities

Organisation/Project	Grant Awarded (£)	Description of project	Number of people benefiting	Achievements / Outcome	Other funding received for this project (£)
Archway Foundation	£5,000	A project that supports individuals suffering from isolation and loneliness.	400	400 individuals held on database, of which 334 are from across Oxford. At any one time they can be in contact with up to 300 people. They have recorded 143 people accessing social sessions and events, 42 people are linked with volunteer befriender's who listen and explore ways to offer further support such as going shopping or visits to public places of interest. 30 users of this service are on a 'passenger list' and benefit from subsidised transport. Users also have opportunities to meet other people in similar situations and engage in organised events.	£34,995
Ark T Centre	£4,570	The Ark T Centre is an arts based organisation that includes a recording studio for young people. Funding was awarded to engage with young women from challenging circumstances to develop a female only music project.	13	Of the 13 young women actively engaged with the project 1 participant completed and achieved a Bronze Arts award, 7 recorded tracks and produced a video that filmed 6 young women performing live at the centre, 4 went on to perform live elsewhere and 5 have gone on to access music courses at college..	£9,728
Blackbird Leys Adventure Playground	£7,500	BLAP provides a safe and creative environment for children and young people to play. The scheme is open Monday to Friday after school from 3pm to 5.30pm and 10am to 4pm during school holidays. Funding was awarded towards their core costs to deliver this service.	175	Evaluation forms completed by the children and their parents shows a high level of satisfaction with the scheme. The children can do a variety of activities at BLAP that include creative art, cookery and play.	£25,000
Blackbird Leys Credit Union	£10,000	A financial cooperative offering its members flexible savings and affordable loans to residents living in Blackbird Leys	1005	During the year a lot of time has been spent working with Oxford Credit Union to amalgamate the two organisations but due to Oxford Credit Union making a change in how they deliver their service negotiations have fallen through.	£20,267
Cotteslowe Community Association	£2,000	Summer Playscheme 2013 - a 3 week summer playscheme for 50 children aged between 5-11 years old on the Cotteslowe Estate.	48	Although not all of the places were taken this year, there were a few children with very high support needs. 62% of the children were from families on benefits. Outcome - from feedback parents reported a growth in confidence and skills in their offspring. Also noted was a reduction in anti social behaviour on the estate during the school holidays.	£8,408
Cotteslowe Seniors Group	£1,000	A lively supportive group for the over 50's living in the Cotteslowe area.	33	Strong links made with members of Wolvercote older peoples group and advice given to a group of older people setting up a group in Jericho. Subsidised transport helps many of their members be able to attend sessions and outings.	£269
Donnington Doorstep Family Centre	£7,500	A free drop in facility for young people aged 8-18 years old that aims to improve the knowledge of those attending with a better understanding of what it means to be healthy, stay safe, enjoy and achieve.	285	In 2013/14 this project had 285 C&YP registered, 66 of these C&YP have been identified as having additional support needs and received targeted 1 to 1 support.	£12,342

APPENDIX 1

Grants to Community & Voluntary Organisations

Annual Open Bidding - 2013 / 2014

Grants Awarded under Council Priority - Strong & Active Communities

Falcon Rowing Club	£1,800	The Falcon Rowing and Canoe Club provides the opportunity for people to participate in rowing and kayaking. Funding awarded to fund training for volunteers and coaches.	5	3 volunteers have achieved level 2 coaching qualification and 2 achieve level 1 coaching qualification. This has meant that they can all take more responsibility and independence with rowers, allowing for more planned paddling sessions	£3,000
Film Oxford	£2,752	Funding awarded to contribute towards running a mini movie film project on Rose Hill for the Summerscreen 2013	12	12 young people were involved with the group, 10 from Rose Hill & 2 from Cowley. All 12 gained an Oxford Youth award in film making, 3 received an Oxford Youth award for lyric writing and composition and one member wants to take film further	£11,480
Kids Enjoy Exercise Now (KEEN)	£4,000	A project that provides sporting and other recreational activities for children & young people with special needs in the Oxford area.	143	During the academic term, 4 weekly recreational sessions are held for children & young people with special needs. The benefits to users are that they often gain confidence, pride, and a sense of belonging, as well as making great steps physically. The students (volunteers) become their friends as well as their coaches. For the often over-worked parents, KEEN provides a much-needed break, and all activities are free.	£25,313
The Leys CDI	£2,808	The Clockhouse Project - running activities for local residents over 50, promoting healthy life styles,	81	Tai Chi & yoga ran weekly throughout the year, 43 people attended on a regular basis and 28 people attended the monthly dance sessions. Feedback from attendees have stated that they have noticed improvements in their health, improved flexibility, feeling more cheerful, joints less painful, sleeping better, easier breathing and more energetic.	£18,661
Leys News	£10,000	An initiative that supports community groups with editorial guidance and publishing their newsletters	51 people trained and 20,500 households benefiting from free community newsletters	Last year 51 local residents were trained in community journalism and local newsletter groups were supported in Barton, Rose Hill, Cowley, Wood Farm, Littlemore and Northway to publish and produce their own local newsletters. <u>Leys News</u> - 6000 copies printed and delivered each month <u>Cowley News</u> - 3500 copies printed & delivered each quarter <u>Barton</u> - 2500 copies printed & delivered each quarter <u>Wood Farm News</u> - 2000 copies printed and delivered bi monthly <u>Rose Hill News</u> - 3000 copies printed and delivered bi monthly <u>Littlemore News</u> - 2500 copies printed and delivered each quarter <u>Northway News</u> - 1500 copies printed and delivered each quarter	£30,050
My Life, My Choice	£4,000	Funding was awarded to contribute towards mentoring 8 young people with learning disabilities to run and organise 4 events during the year	8	8 young people with learning disabilities engaged in workshops that gave them the skills and knowledge to organise and run social events for their peers. 3 events ran but with disappointing attendance.	£6,500

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APPENDIX 1

Grants to Community & Voluntary Organisations

Annual Open Bidding - 2013 / 2014

Grants Awarded under Council Priority - Strong & Active Communities

Open Door	£2,495	Open Door provides a sign posting service to asylum seekers and refugees living in Oxford. For those using the service they can also have a hot meal.	200	Over the year they have supported 200 different individuals, the weekly attendance is 47 people of whom over 80% are refugees. Main groups of people attending in descending order of size: Iran Kurdish people Algeria Afghanistan Uganda and then other African countries	£3,622
Oxford Friend	£3,000	A confidential telephone help line, advice, support and counselling to Oxfords gay men, lesbians, the bisexual community, their family and friends	222	Telephone service open 3 evenings a week from 7pm-9pm during these times, throughout the year, volunteers handled 152 active calls and 184 emails	£1,000
Oxford Wheels	£5,000	Funding awarded to contribute towards the running costs of the new skate park at Donnington	400	The new skate park has enabled Oxford Wheels to provide a wider range of wheeled sports and 400 different individuals have been recorded using the skate park during the year..	£2,750
Oxford Urban Wildlife Group	£2,405	Funding was awarded to contribute towards the general running costs of Boundary Brook Nature Park	336	336 children and adults have been recorded visiting the park during the year. There have been 8 organised visits made by schools and youth groups plus 18 wildlife / environment events held during the year.	£1,923
Oxfordshire Chinese Community & Advice Centre	£2,520	A series of exercise sessions for the elderly and bilingual talks on healthy lifestyles	249	Over the year they recorded 123 people taking part in seated exercise & fitness sessions for the elderly, 88 people got involved with healthy walks around the city and 38 attended cultural dance workshops.	£1,903
Oxfordshire Play Association	£750	Funding was awarded to contribute towards the City Playday which was held at Rose Hill recreation park	500	500 people attended on the day; it was the hottest day of the year at 30 degrees plus. It was felt that this adversely affected the attendance numbers.	£3,257
Restore -Elder Stubbs Festival	£900	Elder Stubbs Festival - An annual event promoting mental health awareness and bringing the community together.	2,045	Service users were closely involved in every level of planning and running the event, demonstrating their capabilities and dispelling myths about mental health. Interactive community activities during the day contributed to bringing people together and creating a community.	£0
South Oxford Adventure Playground	£8,000	Funding was awarded to contribute towards providing free supervised play during the Easter & Summer holidays.	1,996	1,996 children and young people were recorded using the facility during these two periods.	£3,818
Wood Farm Youth Club	£7,000	Funding awarded to contribute towards the running costs of Wood Farm youth club	55	Over the year 55 local children & young people have engaged with the youth club, on average 18 are attending weekly sessions.	£915

Total amount awarded	£95,000	Total number of beneficiaries	6,011 plus 20,050 households	Total other funding levered in	£225,201
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APPENDIX 1

Grants to Community & Voluntary Organisations / Groups

Small Grants awarded in 2013 / 2014

Organisation/Project	Grant Awarded (£)	Description of Project	Number of people who benefited	Achievements	Other funding received for this project (£)
Old Marstons Over 50's Club	£300.00	A thriving club that has been on going for 11 years, with over 80 members. Funding awarded to subsidise speakers fees and social activities	85	During the year they had 9 speakers on subjects that vary from health to walking in France, 4 outings to places of interest & 5 events.	£1,386
Innovista (Thrive project)	£387.50	Funding awarded to engage with 8 teenage girls/young women on Barton who have a low self esteem	5	5 local girls from Barton engaged and completed the 10 week course. They were given opportunities to increase their confidence and self esteem. 4 of the girls completed an evaluation and 75% said their confidence had increased and felt good about themselves.	£213
Churches Together in Headington	£300.00	Funding awarded to contribute towards the insurance costs to cover the Headington fun day	3000	The fun day took place on the 20.07.13, over 3,000 -people attended the event with 100 volunteers helping make the day happen.	£2,200
West Oxford Community Association	£300.00	Funding awarded to contribute towards the West Oxford fun day on 13.07.14	2,500	The fund day was part of the 2013 festival of nature and attracted more people to the event than in previous years. 70 volunteers helped run and organise the event with 30 local performers	£3,663
OXFORD ARCH Oxfordshire	£500.00	Funding awarded to contribute towards a book box scheme to support children struggling with reading	66	66 children are being supported by 22 volunteers in 8 primary schools in Oxford	£2,500
Friends of Iffley Village	£200.00	A project called Movement to Music targeting residents in sheltered housing at Rose Hill	35	35 older people living in sheltered housing in Rose Hill participated in regular sessions of dance for older people	£300
Cuttleslowe Community Association	£500.00	Funding awarded to contribute towards providing an after school club for girls aged 8 - 11 years old	9	The girls have learnt cooking skills and had the opportunity to go ice skating, which for some was the first time. They also took part in sports and team games weekly	£0
Oxford Polish Association	£500.00	Funding awarded to contribute towards venue charges for the Polish Film Festival that took place in November 2013	165	This event took place over 3 days and was attended by 165 people from Oxford. From feedback taken from everyone 37% of those attending the festival were from non Polish backgrounds	£825
Oxford Civic Society	£225.00	Funding was awarded to contribute towards the promotion of a website for walks in Oxford	n/k	Working with the Oxford ramblers, Oxford Pedestrians and the Go Active team a website was developed to promote walks in and around Oxford city (www.oxfordwalks.org.uk)	£243
Oxfordshire Chinese Community & Advice Centre	£500.00	Funding was awarded to contribute towards the venue hire charges for the celebration of the Chinese New Year	1000	Up to 1000 people attended this event of which 30% were non Chinese	836

APPENDIX 1

Grants to Community & Voluntary Organisations / Groups

Small Grants awarded in 2013 / 2014

Organisation/Project	Grant Awarded (£)	Description of Project	Number of people who benefited	Achievements	Other funding received for this project (£)
OXTALK	£500.00	This charity produces weekly local news recordings for the blind and visually impaired people of Oxford. The bulletins are produced by a group of volunteers who edit, read, copy and deliver 100 usb flash drives each week in the Oxford area. Funding was awarded to contribute towards their running costs	80	80 visually impaired people living in the city are benefiting from weekly news recordings	£192
Oxford 50+ Network	£450.00	Funding was awarded to contribute towards their general running costs to consult and represent city residents who are over 50 on issues that concern this age group	200	The funding has enabled the group to have refreshments at their AGM and quarterly meetings throughout the year. At their AGM 40 members attended with a variety of speakers and a committee was elected for the year ahead.	£0
JACARI	£500.00	This organisation is a student charity providing home tutoring for children aged 4-16 who don't speak English as their first language. Students spend an hour a week helping a child in the areas in which they are struggling. Funding was awarded to contribute towards the coordinators costs	219	This project is currently supporting 219 children and young people who have English as their second language and struggling with English.	£10,323
Totals	£5,162.50	Total number of beneficiaries	7364	Total other funding levered in	£22,681

65

APPENDIX 1
Commissioned Arts Organisations in 2013 / 2014

Council Priority - Strong, Active communities					
Commissioned Arts Partner	Grant Awarded (£)	Description of work area	Total number of Beneficiaries (attendees/participation at events & activities)	Key Outcomes Achieved	Other funding levered in for this project (£)
Fusion	£28,128	A community arts organisation delivering a programme of arts for adults and children from deprived communities. Deliverer of consultation workshops for public art installations and activity throughout the city.	45,825	Developing centre-based and off site activities exploring new art forms to benefit the local community included a wide range of artistic events, short courses and one off bookings as well as 13 on going regular creative classes offering a varied programme. They have had over 80 one off bookings from artistic groups.	£110,617
Modern Art Oxford	£70,000	An international art gallery working with local, national and international artists to deliver community & education programme aiming to increase the enjoyment and understanding of contemporary art and providing an internationally renowned exhibition programme.	97,827	To increase the amount of cultural activity to audiences digitally. MAO have produced 14 short films over the year which have received 6,950 views on Vimeo (Vimeo is a video sharing website). Unfortunately due to staff changes work targeting young people did not happen last year but they will be looking into delivering 4 sessions in 2014/15 to make up for this shortfall. The new director has begun a monthly column in the Oxford Times to encourage people to engage with and improve local understanding of contemporary art. The organisation raised £180,000 in philanthropic and grant support from private and public sources and submitted a £3.5m capital bid to the Arts Council for redevelopment of the building.	£350,000
Oxford Contemporary Music (OCM)	£5,000	Working with musicians and artists to deliver music focused projects in the community and providing a professional innovative and experimental music series.	7,947	OCM Partnerships Worked in partnership with Pitt Rivers Museum on a project called Overdubbing culture. They part funded this project by paying for two artists to work alongside five participants on the project. As a result, two participants gained Arts Awards – one Bronze Award and one Silver Award. The participants were teenage boys from Oxford who are currently living in care and do not normally access cultural organisations like the Pitt Rivers Museum. On the project, young people sampled sound from the museums archive and used their own youth culture to create new beats and tracks using the archive as inspiration. Education Education and Outreach Officer has been working with Parasol in developing music project ideas so that OCM can deliver workshops to disabled young people. Through these conversations OCM have also brokered a relationship with East Oxford Hub, who have invited them to partnership meetings to discuss what they can offer in terms of a project programme using Arts Award with their young people. Advice & training opportunities During the year OCM have also given work experience to two University of Oxford students (both spent five days with them) and one OCVC student (spent six days with them).	£85,639
Film Oxford (OFVM)	£25,000	Making film and digital media more accessible to all, particularly those from deprived and disadvantaged communities. Film Oxford also run Location Oxfordshire to encourage and manage filming in Oxford.	1,606	19 Training courses ran last year with a total of 132 people involved from Oxford. Engaged with 10 young people in Blackbird Leys over 10 evening sessions. In partnership with CDI Blackbird Leys. Rose Hill Mini Movie: 3 days of workshops with 8 young people from the Rose Hill estate during Summerscreen July 2013. In partnership with Rose Hill Youth Centre and Littlemore Youth Intervention Services.	£71,000
Oxford Inspires	£20,000	Oxford's cultural development agency creating new opportunities for arts and heritage organisations to promote and develop their work.	not known	Oxford Inspires and Visit Oxfordshire merged to form Experience Oxfordshire, the county's development agency for culture and tourism. Its focus is to create an environment where cultural organisations and tourism businesses thrive; to attract and retain visitors to the city and county and help to create more cultural experiences for more people more often. Oxford Inspires has strong relationships with the private sector and acts to draw in new potential business sponsors. The priority for fundraising is to raise money for partnership projects which benefit a large section of our diverse community as well as raising the profile of the City of Oxford both nationally and internationally. Additional investment leveraged: • £3k pledged from both Oxford University & Oxford Brookes towards Read Me 2015 programme • £12k for Christmas Light Night 2013 (MINI Plant Oxford);	not known
Oxford Playhouse (OP)	£24,000	A theatre for everyone - delivering performances out in the community and providing a mixed programme of high quality performances across art forms, for the whole community.	57,127	In 2013/14, a total of 216 family friendly performance/events attracted audiences of 51,441. Also 1,832 free tickets and 489 discounted tickets were issued. Playhouse Plays Out Pop Up Tent programme is a successful tool for generating a wider engagement with the arts as it has attracted a broader range of people from traditionally under represented areas, ethnicities and socio economic backgrounds. The tent visited 30 separate events and locations over six weeks and saw 5,686 people across Oxford and Oxfordshire enjoying theatre. Key areas included Peat Moors, Cowley Road, Cutteslowe, Blackbird Leys, Florence Park, Rose Hill, Marston and Wood Farm.	£3,500,000
Arts at the Old Fire Station	£27,134	This is a new charity and social enterprise created to promote excellence and participation in art and culture and to work with CRISIS a training centre offering creative and formal learning opportunities to homeless and vulnerably housed people and a dedicated employment service which helps them find and keep jobs.	20,000	For the period from 1 April 2013 to the end of March 2014 there have been over 20,000 visitors to the shop and gallery. During this time there have been 96 different professional shows consisting of 30 main shows, 3 regular/monthly shows (26 events), 18 different shows as part of Oxford Finge, 19 professional performers played a one off show at Folk Weekend Oxford, and 3 separate performers at the Human Rights Festival. 150 complimentary tickets have been taken up by Crisis members... 5 artists met with Crisis members to discuss their exhibitions.	£158,064

APPENDIX 1
Commissioned Arts Organisations in 2013 / 2014

Council Priority -Strong, Active communities					
Commissioned Arts Partner	Grant Awarded (£)	Description of work area	Total number of Beneficiaries (attendances/participation at events & activities)	Key Outcomes Achieved	Other funding levered in for this project (£)
Pegasus Theatre	£25,000	Home to Oxford's Youth Theatre and a flagship arts centre it can truly be proud of with young people at its heart, an energy and vibrancy to match the diversity of the area.	11,102	Young Leaders Pegasus continues to train and develop young people to become youth arts and cultural leaders, during the year they have run 20 outreach arts project in Blackbird Leys, Rose Hill, East Oxford, Littenore and Cotteslowe offering young people the opportunity to engage in participatory arts projects. 14 young people have taken and attained Bronze Arts Awards since April 2013, 4 of these young people are excluded or in danger of being excluded from school.	£300,000
Oxford International Links (OIL)	£6,000	OIL is an umbrella organisation that co-ordinates many winning events throughout the year	1,955	Funding was used to fund 4 winning activities that included the Boom week celebration in Oxford	£965
Culture Fund	£10,000	15 individual artists and organisations from across the city have received a grant of £300 - £1000 through the culture fund	n/a	Projects funded ranged from dance to sonic art, theatre and youth poetry. See Additional arts and culture info tab for details.	£120,287
funding wired into arts & culture team for culture forums and a leadership action programme	£15,000	Culture forums develop artists entrepreneurial skills and the leadership action partnership with Oxford University Museums	n/a	The initial focus of the culture forums has been on fundraising and invited speakers including Arts Council England. In partnership with the Oxford University Museums the cultural leadership action programme supported 8 cultural leaders from different art / cultural organisations to develop their leadership skills, the group meets independently and the Councils art team is working with the University Museums to develop a full leadership training programme.	n/a

Total amount awarded 255,262

Total number of beneficiaries

243,389

Total amount of funding levered in

£5,196,492

ARTS & CULTURE

The £25,000 vired into the Culture teams budget enabled the following to take place

- Awarded 31 grants of £200-£2,000, to individual artists and organisations across the city for projects ranging from community dance to sonic art, theatre and youth poetry. See Appendix 1 for a list of those funded.
- This funding enabled individual artists and organisations to leverage in funding from other sources.
- It also supported the introduction of the following Cultural Development initiatives
 - o CREATE: This microfunding event has successfully brought artists and organisations together from across the city to support each other and raise funding for small scale projects in their communities. Notable successes include Ellen Havard's theatre production, Hurricane Boy, which was funded through CREATE, developed with young people from Rose Hill and booked for a run at Oxford Playhouse in Spring 2014. CREATE continues to run every other month at sponsor venues across the city.
www.createoxford.org
 - o Culture Forums to develop artist's entrepreneurial skills, with an initial focus on fundraising and invited speakers such as the Arts Council England.
www.oxford.gov.uk/cultureforums
 - o Cultural Leadership Action Learning Sets: This partnership with the Oxford University Museums supported 8 cultural leaders from different organisations to develop their

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Artform	Applicant	Project	Funding type	Amount committed	Activity details	Levered funding
theatre	OXFORD PLAYHOUSE TRUST	EVOLVE ARTISTS IN RESIDENCE 2013	Strategic	£500	Professional development artist in residence programme hosted by Oxford Playhouse. The Evolve Artists in Residence scheme supports three artists or companies each year with seed funding for projects or research and development, the provision of free rehearsal space, and mentoring, advice and support from the Playhouse team. In 2013, 2 of the 3 companies were based in Oxford. Strategic funding supported a successful Arts Council grant application.	£2,500
Youth / cross artform	Oxfordshire Youth Arts Partnership (OYAP)	Stepping Up project	Strategic	£200	Project to recruit and train up to 10 young artists to deliver participatory youth arts projects taking place in partnership with cultural organisations. This project will introduce early career artists to more experienced artists through OVADA and Artweeks networks, and the wider cultural industry professional mentor pool. The programme will provide training for Oxford based artists to become mentors and provide an opportunity for collaboration and an exhibition at OVADA. This project will enable emerging artists to be Arts Award Adviser trained at Bronze and Silver level. They will be encouraged to work in partnership with Oxford and Oxfordshire based organisations to devise projects for and with young people to put into practice the training and mentoring that they will receive.	£29,289
Carnival	TOCTOK	Carnival project	CREATE	£263	Project developed a piece of street art with a group of vulnerable young learners from Cheney School. The work was presented at Cowley Road Carnival in July 2013.	£263

Music	NICHOLAS O'BRIEN	Bambino Dell'Oro Residency at OVADA	Culture Fund - R1	£820	Sonic art residency and the dissemination of musical experience at the OVADA (Oxfordshire Visual Arts Development Agency). The residency is a collaborative project between the band Bambino dell'Oro and a visual artist. Together, they explored the acoustic potential of the warehouse through piano/drum compositions and sonic sculptures. Work raised profile of the station area of Oxford, in partnership with OVADA and the Jam factory with strong digital engagement.	£4,500
Carnival	TOCTOK	Carnival project	Culture Fund - R1	£300	Project developed a piece of street art with a group of vulnerable young learners from Cheney School. The work was presented at Cowley Road Carnival in July 2013.	£828
Dance	ANJA MEINHARDT	Bound	Culture Fund - R1	£1,000	Physical theatre production, which explores the issue of Human Trafficking, as well as building and developing a new dance company – "Justice In Motion". The company explores social issues through the arts and wants to create thought-provoking, compelling theatre through a fusion of dance, live music, projection and spoken word. The piece was presented at the Pegasus Theatre in October 2013 for a two-night run.	£13,678
Dance	JOSEPHINE LOTT	Masculinity	CREATE	£487	Creation of a new dance work on the theme of manhood. Joe researched and presented a range of experiences of, and ideas about, being an adult male human. It was the third work in a triple bill presented at Pegasus, as part of Dancin' Oxford Festival 2014, and at other venues.	£487
Heritage / visual	MODUS OPERDANI ARTS CONSULTANTS	Revealing the ROQ	Culture Fund - R1	£1,000	Artist commission to create a light based artwork responding to the history of the Radcliffe Observatory Quarter and its heritage via a community engagement project. The commissioned artist researched and explored the Oxfordshire Museum Services' and Oxfordshire Health Archives collections and the Oxford Guild of Nurses archives to identify significant themes about the Radcliffe Observatory Quarter (ROQ). The artist developed a series of light installations that formed part of Christmas Light Night in November 2013.	£15,000
Dance	DRISHTI DANCE (UK) LTD	Anuradha Chaurvedi - The Five Elements	Culture Fund - R1	£1,000	New piece of dance that experimented with the movement language of Kathak with live video/Image projection. The project brought together professional and youth dancers, alongside international musician and digital media artist, in a research and development of a high quality choreographic piece.	£7,750

Digital	Shadowlight Artists (Film Oxford)	Film project	Culture Fund - R1	£700	This project will support the Shadowlight Artists to make themselves be heard using digital arts as their medium. This will not only help them as marginalised individuals, but also help raise the status of all people with learning disabilities in the eyes of the local community. The project will involve • 12 x monthly meetings - taking and distributing accessible minutes, supporting people to get to meetings. • Individual mentoring – 8 hours individual support over year to help them write letters, fill out applications, answer enquiries about their work (e.g. from Galleries, Festivals and Media etc) and also to plan and arrange the creation of new work and support them technically. • 2 x “Inclusive Practice” skill days - Recruit volunteer artists/arts students to run inclusive skill sharing days.	£6,306
Visual Arts	OVADA (Lucy Phillips)	Spotlight 2013	Culture Fund - R1	£500	OVADA to support a contemporary art exhibition across several rooms of the Town Hall in November 2014. Each year we have commissioned between 5-8 artists practicing in the South East region to make work for specific rooms within the Town Hall. The gives artists a unique opportunity to produce new work or show relevant existing work that responds to the physical space or the history of Oxford Town Hall.	£500
Visual Arts	Link Gallery at John Radcliffe Hospital	An insight into the work of Oxford's different communities	Culture Fund - R1	£500	Grant to present a series of exhibitions of work by artists who are members of different ethnic communities in Oxford. This will offer a new way of programming The Link Gallery at the John Radcliffe Hospital, reflecting the identities of different groups to a diverse audience. The exhibitions will not only profile the artists' work but also offer a glimpse behind the scenes into their studio spaces, providing an insight into their working methods and the stories behind their work.	£500

theatre	Lizzy McBain	Theatre Scratch Residency	Culture Fund - R1	£1,000	The Theatre Scratch night at the Old Fire Station features three pieces of work each month. Funding supports a 2 week residency for one company with a final performance of a more developed work. All previous artists at The Scratch were invited to apply and challenged to consider how they would like to develop their piece further. Alongside this residency was further research and development of "good" feedback facilitation. In addition a blog will be especially designed and developed.	£4,780
theatre	Ellen Havard	Hurricane Boy in Rose Hill	CREATE	£653	A piece of theatre for children and young people telling a story of loneliness and friendship, youth and maturity, busyness and stillness, based on a short story. Collaborating with both Oxford & Bristol based artists, Hurricane Boy was a powerful production with live music. The funding supported workshops and the cost of materials, working closely with Rose Hill Youth Club, giving them an opportunity to engage in theatre and work with them as theatre makers. Hurricane Boy premiered at Oxford Playhouse in spring 2014.	£653
Digital	Shadowlight Artists (Film Oxford)	Film project	CREATE	£317	The Shadowlight Artists are a collective of Oxford based digital artists with learning disabilities, supported by Film Oxford. The group have had tremendous success recently with the showcasing of their work in mainstream galleries and at national & international festivals. The key aims of the Shadowlight Artists are, firstly to breakdown barriers with the audience and gain equal respect for artists with learning disabilities, (in the same way Paralympians have broken down barriers in sport), and secondly it is to encourage more participation in the arts by people with learning disabilities, by acting as role models and cultural ambassadors. Funding supported self-led creative activities by talented professional artists with a learning disability.	£317
Dance	Lunas Dance Project	Oxford Dances to Christmas at Ark T Centre	CLF Programming Grant	£800	Lunas Dance created an opportunity for the public to see, participate and take part in a free dance class, open rehearsal and watch a series of short dances from our repertoire as part of the 2013 Light Festival. An interactive couple of days to be part of our world and to be more involved in the world of dance and performing. Took place at the Ark T Centre in Cowley.	£70

Theatre	Parton & Plath	Our Daily Bread in East Oxford	CLF Programming Grant	£1,500	Our Daily Bread invites you to pop out for a loaf of bread, with a twist. Inspired by Gibbons' Bakery, the last independent bakery in Oxford, it is a FREE audio play to experience as you stroll through East Oxford, culminating in a community breakfast at SS Mary and John School (tea, coffee and jams provided!). Download this 15-minute play to your phone, mp3 player or tablet, or borrow an MP3 player, available to collect from the school. Launch was attended by 107 people at the 2013 Light Festival and the play had been downloaded 967 times by January 2014.	£150
Film	Film Oxford	Ice Station Digital	CLF Programming Grant	£1,500	A Christmas digital lounge for the digital generation - launching the new 'Free Oxford' website promoting 'free activities' in the City. Live DJ beats + VJ visuals plus film shorts from the city's young digital creators at a tent in St Giles as part of the 2013 Light Festival. 950 people attended and 4 artists were employed by the project.	£1,350
Community	Arts at the Old Fire Station	Fireflow in Gloucester Green	CLF Programming Grant	£1,000	fireflow was Oxford's first Christmas fire festival in Gloucester Green organised by the Old Fire Station. This free event was part of the 2013 Light Festival and featured a 4metre pillar of fire for posting your hopes and dreams, open fires for toasting, diy wood burning pizzas, candlemaking, dance and music. 2000 people attended and 24 artists were employed by the project.	£3,000
Music	OCM and Pitt Rivers	Handling Sound at East Oxford Community Centre	CLF Programming Grant	£800	Handling Sound is a partnership project between Oxford Contemporary Music and Pitt Rivers and takes place at East Oxford Community Centre. Dr Noel Lobley will lead an interactive workshop to explore the sounds from the Pitt Rivers sound archive. Using iPads participants will explore creative uses for archival sound, including DJ-ing. The sound workshop will also be accompanied by related craft activities (e.g. making simple musical instruments) and handling sessions where participants will be able to touch and learn about some of the musical instruments and performance-related artefacts from around the world.	£0
Literature	New Writing South	Seed funding grant for Writer Squad	Strategic	£500	Writer Squads are New Writing South's flagship project to support the development of young writers across the south-east. Squads are open to enthusiastic young writers aged 13- 17, and are a brilliant opportunity to develop new skills and meet other young writers. By exploring a range of creative writing, from poetry to playwriting and lyrics to flash fiction, the Squads introduce young writers to a wide variety of writing styles whilst supporting the development of young writers in the region. Oxford Writer Squad is run in partnership with The Story Museum and delivered by performance poet, Paul Lyalls.	£8,300

Community	Stavroula Kounadea	Playground	Culture Fund - R2	£900	Grant to sustain and expand Playground, an artist-led platform which encourages the development and presentation of new work and ideas while introducing a space for meeting up, networking and collaboration between artists and art-related professionals in Oxford and its surroundings. Playground has been hosting regular free events in the Old Fire Station every month since June 2012.	£672
Dance	Ana Barbour	Meeting Points	Culture Fund - R2	£513	Regular opportunities over a 12 month period for dancers and artists from other disciplines to develop their artistic practice and to share their processes with each other and the public. These will include nine 2 hour cross arts sessions, twelve 2 hr choreographic development sessions and 2 half day choreographic workshops. These will largely be held at The Old Firestation in Oxford.	£6,700
Literature	Melissa Westbrook	Alice 3.0: an Alternative Wonderland	Culture Fund - R2	£1,000	Three workshops to accompany Alice 3.0: an Alternative Wonderland exhibition at the Museum of Oxford from July - September 2014. This will be a contemporary take on Carroll's tale, exploring who Alice would meet and where she would go if she fell down the rabbit hole today. Seeking to break down barriers, it will showcase the art of Oxfordshire children from diverse economic and geographical backgrounds alongside pieces by 25 UK and international artists. Pupils from three schools will provide the children's pieces for the show, made during a half day workshop.	£1,000
Theatre	Flintlock Theatre	Don Q research and development	Culture Fund - R2	£1,000	Support for the research and development (R&D) of this second theatre piece from Oxford company Flintlock. The R&D and sharing will take place in the Old Museum in March 2014. Culture Fund formed part of successful Grants for the Arts award from Arts Council England, leveraging significant additional funds.	£3,574
Visual Arts	Diane Jones- Parry & Annabel Ralphs (Metroncollaborative)	Breaking of Tulips: unwrapping books	Culture Fund - R2	£750	An exhibition at Oxford Botanic Gardens, March 20 - May 26 2014. 30 Professional artists will be invited, from across the arts disciplines, to make new work in response to a historic archive of gardening chronicles held in the Botanic Garden's library. Artists are invited from across the arts disciplines, from music, dance, animation, typography, to practitioners from the audio as well as visual arts.	£5,500

Literature	Lucy Mangua (Brand New Start)	Write Start	Culture Fund - R2	£1,000	Brand New Start plans to deliver Write Start, a creative writing project. The project is part of the 'Resolutions' series developed by Arts Council National Portfolio Organisation, Small Green Shoots. The theme will feature in arts based projects for young people not in education, employment or training focusing on new ideas, fresh starts and positive changes for the future. Write Start will involve 12 young people aged 16-24 from One Foot Forward homeless accommodation in Oxford. The participants will take part in a taster session to inspire them in creative writing, followed by three workshops at Pegasus Theatre where they will get the opportunity to express their hopes, fears and aspirations for 2014. Culture Fund supported successful Arts Council England grant application.	£1,000
Music	Ark T Centre	Youth Music project	CREATE (Jan 2014)	£415	The Ark T Music Project is based in the Kate Garrett studio at The Ark T Centre in Cowley. The project supports young musicians in Oxfordshire through providing free recording sessions to 11-19 year olds in a supportive environment with trained and experienced staff with knowledge and experience of growing up in the local area and of the local music scene. We work with several referring agencies to support young people who are vulnerable or at risk to make their own music as well as holding 'open access' sessions which enable any young person to use our facilities for free. Music is a valuable tool in helping young people to express themselves and deal with complex emotions. Many of the young people that use our studio would not be able to record elsewhere due to financial or other barriers. Funding enabled the studio keep providing free recording while they find a long term source of funding.	£415
Poetry	Azfa Ali	Youth Ambassador for Poetry	Strategic (Oct 2013)	£1,000	As a partnership between the City Council and Oxford Brookes, the Youth Ambassador role will run from November 2013 – July 2014. The Youth Ambassador will be expected to support, develop and celebrate young poets and youth poetry in Oxford. At the end of their tenure, they will provide a report outlining what they have learnt and achieved through the role. The young poet we have selected has been nationally recognised for their work. Azfa Ali, originally a refugee from Somalia, won the prestigious national Tower Poetry Prize for her poem, Origins, and was also awarded a fellowship by Apples and Snakes. This role will involve engagement with performing or writing at City Council events, contributing to the Oxford Writer Squad set up by The Story Museum and New Writing South, and working on a weekly basis at Oxford Spires Academy and The Oxford Academy.	£1,000
Poetry	Kate Clanchy	City Poet	Strategic (July 2013)	£2,000	Partnership between Oxford City Council and Oxford Brookes, established in 2011. Kate Clanchy visited all schools across the city and established partnerships and projects with community groups and other events such as Oxford's Literature Festival, the Story Museum and links with libraries for specific poetry focused activities, a community group for adult writers.	£0

Dance	Ellie Aldegheri	Lunas Dance project	CREATE (Mar 2014)	£205	New dance piece about the interplay of human connections through time as part of a bigger project inspired by St Augustine and Borges. This work aims to take the audience to a journey of sensations and a shared sense of experience finding meaning when words cannot be found. Funding will support a performance of "Measuring Times" at Arts at OFS on 10th May 2014.	£205
TOTAL GRANTS				£24,123		£120,287

OTHER EXPENDITURE

Date	Project	Expenditure detail	Amount
Jul-13	Culture Forum	Catering, materials and AV equipment hire	£366.25
Jul-13	Culture Forum	Printing posters and flyers	£17.00
Mar-13	CREATE	Printing posters and flyers	£80.00
May-13	CREATE	Pitch prep meeting room and catering	£27.00
Dec-13	CREATE	End of year event catering	£159.75
Sept-Nov 2013	Cultural Leadership Action Learning Sets	Equipment for Sept introductory session	£14.00
Oct-13	Greening the Arts	Julie's Bicycle Sustainable Arts Seminar at Pegasus	£109.00
Jul-13	Culture Forums	Grants for the Arts booklets x80 A5 printing	£58.30
Jun-13	Cultural Audience intelligence gathering	Audience Agency Area Profile report	£50.00
TOTAL OTHER EXPENDITURE			£881.30
TOTAL GRANTS + OTHER EXPENDITURE			£25,004.30

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APPENDIX 1

Commissioning Homelessness 2013 / 2014

All services & projects funded by this budget worked within the following principles to prevent and respond to rough sleeping:-

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

Grant Funding Awarded under Council Priority & Strategic Objective - Meeting Housing Needs

organisation/project	Grant Awarded (£)	Description of project	Number of Beneficiaries	Achievements	Other funding received for this project (£)
Aspire	£84,517.50	Aspire is a Social Enterprise with charitable status. It primarily works to facilitate the transition for individuals from homelessness into independent living. This is achieved by working with people in supported accommodation to access paid employment or unpaid work programmes/volunteering. Aspire liaises directly with referring organisations such as the City's hostels and day centres to ensure that housing and employment opportunities proceed in tandem and at an appropriate pace for disadvantaged individuals	251	Aspire offer training opportunities within their own enterprises – gardening and landscaping, property maintenance and recycling. They also offer employment and training opportunities with external companies and organisation with whom Aspire hold work contracts. Aspire is working towards becoming a self-sufficient social enterprise and Oxford City Council therefore introduced an in-year taper of 25% to the original grant allocation of £112,690.00. The organisation is progressing well towards self-sufficiency and will see a further reduction to their grant in 2014/15. Oxford City Council Grant Assistance constituted 31% of Aspire's total income in 2012/13. In 2013/14, this had decreased to 14%, which is evidence of the organisation making good progress towards self-sufficiency Aspire worked with 251 individuals last year, 97% of these people abstained from drink & drugs whilst engaging with Aspire, 32 people secured full time work and were off all out of work benefits, 10 secured part time employment, 24 improved their housing situation.	£280,135
Elmore Community Services	£52,067.00	The Elmore Team provides practical help, emotional support, advocacy and outreach for people who have complex needs and who are not picked up through other services available. The service also provides training for colleagues in the health and social services network. Oxford City Council Grant Assistance funds a tenancy sustainment service on an outreach or appointment basis for single clients over the age of 16 who live in Oxford city. Priority is given to Oxford City Council tenants and where there is capacity, can also extend to Home Choice properties and the wider private rented sector. In addition to this work Elmore also provide an Anti-Social Behaviour service.	100	This team work with people who have complex needs to support them to maintain their tenancies thus avoiding homelessness. 99% of the people they worked with throughout the year remained in a fixed abode, whether that was in private rented accommodation, council temporary accommodation or permanent council tenancies.	£590,924

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Grant Funding Awarded under Council Priority & Strategic Objective - Meeting Housing Needs

organisation/project	Grant Awarded (£)	Description of project	Number of Beneficiaries	Achievements	Other funding received for this project (£)
77 Emmaus Oxford Furniture Store	£25,000.00	Emmaus Oxford is an independent charity that is part of the international Emmaus movement. Emmaus Oxford is an independent community that provides accommodation and work for formerly homeless individuals and also runs a social enterprise which recycles donated furniture and other household goods. 'Companions' live at Emmaus and work 35 hours per week, usually at the store and receive a small allowance from Emmaus. All essential bills are covered by Emmaus and 'Companions' are not in receipt of Job Seeker's Allowance/Income Support. £5,000 of grant assistance pays for the rent that Oxford City Council charges for the store premises. The Emmaus super store is due to move to new premises on Barns Road in September 2015. Emmaus strives to be a self-sufficient organisation in the future and Oxford City Council Grant Assistance will be tapered accordingly	25	The average length of stay of people was 40 weeks and of the 25 people they supported last year 8 moved on in a planned way. Revenue sales from the furniture store totalled £253,573.	£235,779
Oxford Homeless Pathways (O'Hanlon House)	£133,432.00	O'Hanlon House is a 56 bed hostel for single homeless adults. In addition to the accommodation the hostel provides a Day Service, which provides meals, a wet room and a range of meaningful activities. O'Hanlon House also houses the No Second Night Out (NSNO) assessment center. Referrals are prioritised by Oxford City Outreach and managed by the NSNO team, based at O'Hanlon House. Since the introduction of No Second Night Out, O'Hanlon House is no longer a direct access hostels.	248	56 beds regularly occupied each night, not always by the same people. During the year 188 clients moved on from O'Hanlon House in a planned way.	£3,248,981
One Foot Forward	£42,992.00	One Foot Forward is a 20 bed young person's hostel offering first-stage accommodation to individuals aged between 16 - 25 years old. This service is jointly funded with Oxfordshire County Council. As well as accommodation, the hostel also offers a day service where young homeless individuals can develop their life skills. Structured activities focus on sustainable living, food, information and support. The project also provides a base from which resettlement work may be undertaken	112	On average this project worked with 37 young people each quarter and over the 12 month period they supported 56 young people to move on of which 35 moved on in a planned way.	n/k
The Gatehouse	£9,502.00	This organisation provides an open access drop-in centre for homeless and socially excluded persons, over 25 years of age.	49	The Organisation provides sandwiches, cakes and soups, as well as hot and cold drinks, as appropriate, and fruit where possible. They also offer art and literature nights	£140,118

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Grant Funding Awarded under Council Priority & Strategic Objective - Meeting Housing Needs

organisation/project	Grant Awarded (£)	Description of project	Number of Beneficiaries	Achievements	Other funding received for this project (£)
The Porch Steppin' Stones Centre	£55,000.00	<p>Steppin' Stone is a Day centre for single homeless and socially excluded individuals over the age of 18 and being a resident of Oxford. The centre is open six days per week and offers a number of different activities including: allotment scheme, access to computers, outings, complementary medicine, sports, arts and crafts, books and quizzes. The centre also offers laundry and shower facilities, a clothing store and counselling. Lunch and dinner is offered at a small cost.</p> <p>Workshops and training in life-skills are also offered and Steppin' Stone sign-post clients to other agencies, such as Aspire and Crisis, in order for clients to access employment and training opportunities.</p>	159	<p>During the year 28 individuals obtained paid/voluntary work. 53 individuals sustained or improved their housing situation. The breakdown of members housing situations is as follows (where the centre has been able to establish this):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Housed - 36% • Rough Sleeping/tents - 23% • Sofa surfing - 7% • Hostel - 16% • Supported housing – 18% 	n/k
<p style="text-align: center; font-size: 2em; font-weight: bold;">78</p> Arts at the Old Fire Station	£24,260.00	<p><i>Arts Summer School</i> and Arts at the Old Fire Station (AOFS). AOFS and Crisis Skylight will deliver intensive workshops over a 5 week period in August with the intention of attracting new members. They will work closely with hostels and other partners to engage more homeless people to take part in this course with the aim for these individuals to commit to the Crisis Skylight training programme in the future. Some of the funding is to be used a match funding in a bid for funding from the Lankelly Chase Foundation.</p>	0	not yet available - project started late and activities will be taking place later in the year, achievements will be reported on in next report.	£0
Oxford Community Churches	£14,000.00	<p>Oxford Community Churches is in the process of setting up an 'ethical landlord model' in Oxford city in order to address the lack of affordable housing in the private rented sector in Oxford city. A Co-ordinator will assist churches and congregations to purchase and manage housing in the city to be used to accommodate single and vulnerably housed persons in Oxford city. The rent charged for accommodation under this scheme will be at Local Housing Allowance, which means that an individuals' Housing Benefit will cover the full rent. Oxford City Council Grant Assistance funds 50% of the total cost of this project. The project starts 1st April 2014 and funding is provided until 31st December 2015</p>	0	not yet available - project started late and activities will be taking place later in the year and achievements will be reported on in next report.	£0

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Grant Funding Awarded under Council Priority & Strategic Objective - Meeting Housing Needs

organisation/project	Grant Awarded (£)	Description of project	Number of Beneficiaries	Achievements	Other funding received for this project (£)
Crisis Skylight	£1,500.00	Crisis Skylight has joined up with Reading based organisation Redipop in order to deliver a music based project aimed at homeless people under the age of 25. Redipop will deliver music sessions structured around Arts Award Explore, which is an accredited award. Together, Readipop and Crisis Skylight will aim to engage with young people across the city. Each individual will be able to develop their own learning programme specific to need and interest. Readipop is the main funder of this project. The project will start in April 2014 and ends in December 2015. The project has been designed in order for Crisis Skylight to develop as a hub for a music education network for young people beyond the initial 18 month project	0	not yet available - project started late and activities will be taking place later in the year, achievement will be reported on in next report.	£0
Total	£442,270.50	Total number of beneficiaries	944	Total	£4,495,937

PLEASE NOTE: Due to the nature of these services and client group some of this data may be counting individuals twice because they may be using more than one service.

APPENDIX 1
Commissioning Community Safety 2013/2014

Grant Funding Awarded under Council Priority - Reduce Crime & Anti Social Behaviour

organisation/project	Grant Awarded (£)	Description of project	Number of Beneficiaries	Achievements	Other funding received for this project (£)
A2 Dominion Group	£35,082	Funding awarded to pay for a full time Domestic Abuse Outreach Worker.	141	This post holder worked in partnership with both statutory & voluntary agencies to support & empower 52 adults & 89 children affected by domestic abuse.	n/a
Asylum Welcome	£8,000	Funding awarded to work with young people aged between 16-25 years old who are unaccompanied asylum seekers.	31	During 2013-14 the youth team worked with 80 young people who were unaccompanied asylum seekers. Through the Venda youth club the averaged number attending was 20 each week. The youth coordinator worked in partnership with Childrens Society & Terrance Higgins Trust. A pool of 10 volunteers have helped the young people with homework, construct CV's, searched for jobs and managed their benefits.	£17,000
Oxford Sexual Abuse and Rape Crisis Centre	£15,000	Funding awarded to support this helpline which provides support for women who have experienced sexual violence either in childhood or as adults	348	348 people were supported by OSACC in 2013-14, the service has seen a 98% increase since 2010. The average helpline call length has also increased by 34% since 2010 from 18 to 25 minutes. The type of abuse service users call about were historic child abuse issues, sexual assault, domestic sexual assault, young people rape/sexual violence	£95,608
Total awarded to Community Safety	<u>£58,082</u>	Total number benefiting	<u>520</u>	Total other funding levered in	<u>£112,608</u>

APPENDIX 1

Commissioning CVO Infrastructure 2013 / 2014

Grant Funding Awarded under Council Priority - Strong, Active Communities

Organisation/project	Grant Awarded (£)	Aims of project	Total amount of other funding (£)
Oxfordshire Community & Voluntary Action (OCVA)	£48,736	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To deliver a range of high quality and accessible support mechanisms that will be available for community and voluntary organisations in Oxford <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • These mechanisms will support and build the capacity of the community and voluntary sector in Oxford and enable them to bid successfully for funding and improve their sustainability • The voluntary, public and private sectors are supported to work effectively together in partnerships and forums • Promote volunteer involving organisations in Oxford and promote volunteering opportunities to increase the skills, knowledge and confidence of local people 	£382,717

Support the development of Community & Voluntary Organisation's

2012-13 Targets	Achievements
1-1 support for 60 groups City-wide. Support includes funding advice, business planning, constitutions and legal structure, policies including health & safety, risk assessment, insurance, HR & employment good practice and the law.	A total of 85 Oxford community groups were supported during the year for a variety of reasons that included governance and funding
Resource centre kept up to date and information to include volunteering.	Completed and this work is on going
A total of 50 up to date and high quality fact sheets and FAQs available on OCVA website, including 20 on volunteering.	Framework for comprehensive suite of fact sheets now developed and first set of new fact sheets on website - this work is on going.
On line guide to Funding Opportunities in Oxfordshire & annual satisfaction survey	Visitors to OCVA website can download details of funding opportunities across the county
Maintain on line directories and resources including directory of premises and directory of support services.	Completed and this work is on going
500 members (50% city based)	596 members at end of March 2014 (309 city based)

APPENDIX 1

Commissioning Specialist Leisure & Play for Disabled Children & Young People 2013 / 2014

organisation/project	Grant Awarded (£)	Description of project	other funding (£)
Parasol Project	£15,000	Parasol provided inclusive play, social & recreational opportunities for disabled children and young people, supporting them to access mainstream play & leisure activities with their non disabled peers.	£170,297

2012-2013 - Targets	Achievements
Work with at least 60 disabled children (5-12 years) over the year	In the year (2013/14) Parasol supported 57 disabled children (aged 5-12 years old) at playschemes across the city. Of which 49 were at the Tower Playbase, Northway.
Work with at least 30 disabled teenagers (13 - 19years) over the year	During the year (2012/13) Parasol supported 90 disabled young people (aged between 13-19).
To provide specialist support to play providers in Oxford City to enable disabled children & young people to take part in activities with their non disabled peers over the course of the year	Parasol supported children at Tower Playbase in Northway, Dovercote in Blackbird Leys, SOAP in South Oxford & Cutteslowe Play Scheme. Disabled teenagers were supported at a summer scheme on the Peers Campus & Choice Days which are activity days for teenagers.

Parasol had a pool of 43 individual workers 'enablers' available for work during the year. Some were employed for the full Summer holiday period (25 days) but all were employed for at least 1 day.

2 day training course delivered for staff covered lifting and handling disabled children and young people and safe guarding

The community nurse gave medical training for some of the staff on specific needs for 4 of the children attending Parasol.

Training was also given to staff on general play work and disability equality

ADVICE CENTRE MONITORING

		Rose Hill and Donnington Advice Centre	Agnes Smith/BBL Neighbourhood Support Scheme	Oxford Community Work Agency	Oxford CAB
Oxford City Council funding		£90,478	£85,290	£122,611	£200,000
Additional funding from Oxfordshire County Council		£14,360	£14,684	£119,000	£24,000
other additional funding eg fundraising, donations, grants		£0	£56,752	£155,485	£243,753
Number of clients :					
New	645	710	505	505	5,056
On-going	1,982	1,537	377	377	1,365
total	2,627	2,247	882	882	6,421
Total number of contacts	includes telephone, face to face, casework, appointments, signposting and consultancy (clients are counted more than once)	4,666	12,692	8,865	27,668
Gender:					
Male	1,190	759	438	3,233	
Female	1,437	1,488	444	3,188	
not recorded	0	0	0	0	
Age:					
under 25	124	205	52	495	
25-59	2,151	1,745	463	4,450	
60-74	225	239	334	847	
75+	25	46	33	413	
not recorded	0	12	0	216	
Ethnicity:					
White	2,085	1,813	637	4,461	
Black	181	282	78	546	
Asian	287	70	83	548	
Chinese or other ethnic group	9	5	3	330	
Mixed race	12	58	74	297	
Other	25	5	5	18	
Not stated	2	14	2	136	
Disability or long term sick					
		1,030	528	689	1,842
Type of visit/ contact:					
Out Reach / out of office	14	460	0	n/k	
Court Visits	9	5	256	n/k	
Home Visits	17	19	11	n/k	
In house / office	2,566	1,763	615	n/k	
Issues / categories: presented by client					
Benefits					
Social care /means tested	141	218	1,330	27	
Tax Credits	238	92	393	464	
DLA, Carers Allowance	185	81	1,582	1,218	
Incapacity Benefit / ESA	545	228	2,009	26	
Personal Independent Payment	23	48	n/k	1620	
Pensions	0	44	19	319	
Child Support / Child Benefit	64	7	1	0	
Income allowances (eg Job Seekers Allowance, income support)	69	0	184	0	
Debt					
Priority debt (rent, mortgage, council tax)	531	978	306	n/k	
Non priority debt (catalogues etc)	561	1,020	230	n/k	
Other (family, friends etc)	68	43	146	n/k	
Housing					
Conditions	25	23	0	n/k	
Homelessness/threatened homelessness	41	58	10	n/k	
Environmental/neighbour issues	19	9	0	n/k	
Housing costs (excluding housing debts)	4	20	0	n/k	
Other housing issues	105	61	36	n/k	
Other					
Charities	189	62	3	0	
Community care	1	3	0	50	
Consumer & general contract	3	36	7	362	
Crime	4	2	0	0	
Education	12	10	2	86	
Employment	52	54	3	1,427	
Family	36	22	2	0	
Health	61	13	15	228	
Immigration / Nationality	9	5	0	560	
Legal	86	44	0	610	
Mental Health	39	5	0	0	
Relationship		14	0	654	
Other	83	42	14	654	
		495	83	208	

		Rose Hill and Donnington Advice Centre	Agnes Smith/BBL Neighbourhood Support Scheme	Oxford Community Work Agency	Oxford CAB
Representations	Court Representations - number of clients	9	3	0	0
	Appeals Representation - number of clients	52	5	256	25
	Informal Repayment Plans - number of clients	7	n/k	0	n/k
	Other	5	n/k	0	n/k
Money Gained					
	Benefit take-up (projected for current period).	£108,149.00	£322,191.00	£2,377,700.00	£770,000.00
	Total client debt dealt with for period	£375,217.00	£1,955,146.00	£781,072.00	£7,500,000.00
	Debt written off	£278,991.00	£959,659.00	£216,020.00	n/k
	One off payments gained for clients (charities etc)	£24,621.00	£6,733.00	£0.00	n/k

APPENDIX 1

Commissioning Money Management / Advice 2013 / 2014

Grant Funding Awarded under Council Priority - Strong, Active Communities

organisation/project	Grant Awarded (£)	Description of project	Number of members	Achievements	Other funding received for this project (£)
Oxford Credit Union	£20,000	A financial co-operative run by its members providing a saving service and affordable loans	1156	The organisation continues to work towards becoming self sustaining, however this has had a set back due to bad debt from small loans given to new members last year. The introduction of debit cards was a success, more information now on line with the opportunity to open an account on line. The management committee has agreed to contract out their back office service, this decision will help them reduce staffing costs and rent but it will mean there will be very little or no face to face work with their customers. They are working to have this in place before their current lease runs out in August 2014. As a result of this decision discussions with Blackbird Leys Credit Union on amalgamating both services has stopped because BBL credit union has a legal obligation to go back to their members for another vote due to the change in the way Oxford Credit Union will be operating. Both parties would still like to go ahead with the amalgamation however both agree its on hold for the foreseeable future..	£56,357
Total amount awarded	<u>£20,000</u>	Total number of beneficiaries	<u>1156</u>	Total other funding	<u>£56,357</u>

APPENDIX 1

2013 / 2014 Social Inclusion Fund

Grant Funding Awarded under Council Priority - Strong, Active Communities

organisation/project	Grant Awarded (£)	Description of project	Number of beneficiaries	Achievements	Other funding received for this project (£)
Agnes Smith Advice Centre	£1,000	Funding was awarded for training needs of volunteers at the centre to build their capacity and skills	8	The reception supervisor and 7 volunteers have undertaken training that has built their skills and knowledge. These new skills means they can support case workers and help people coming into the centre	£2,000
Ark T Centre	£4,800	Funding was awarded to extend their volunteer programme to enable the project to take up to 30 volunteers referred to them from various partners	13	13 volunteers have worked with the programme so far, 6 volunteers between them have completed 14 AQA's in food preparation and a further 3 volunteers will be attending a Chartered Institute of Environmental Health (CIEH) level 2 training in food safety	£7,616
Barton Community Association	£3,000	Funding was awarded towards a half term Community Arts Festival at Barton	90	90 children and young people were engaged in positive activities during the Feb 2014 half term. 276 attendances were recorded through the week with 55 children attending daily.	£5,450
Cuttleslowe Community Association	£5,909	Funding was awarded to contribute towards an allotment club and an intergenerational project at Cuttleslowe	90	Over 40 young people are involved with the allotment project. They are learning how to prepare soil, sow seeds, harvest and produce meals, or preserve food. 30 senior people have had several intergenerational meetings with pupils from Cuttleslowe Primary School and have also visited the school. In addition they have set up a series of formal meetings, where Seniors come into the classroom and engage with the pupils' questions. So far around 20 pupils have been involved	£1,750
Rose Hill Junior Youth Club	£1,500	Funding was awarded to contribute towards providing bespoke specialist support for children with challenging behaviour that would otherwise be excluded from the club	4	4 children who attend specialist schools such as Northern House for more advance special educational needs (SEN), such as Autism or attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD), have been supported with this funding allowing them to participate in activities at the youth club,	£2,320
Innovista (Thrive project)	£9,575	Funding was awarded for the Thrive young achievers project to engage with 10 young people from Barton	11	Through teaching, on-the-job learning, and follow up one-to-one coaching, the project leaders have seen leadership skills grow in each of the 11 young volunteers involved in this project. All have learnt new skills and gained knowledge that will help them in the future and as they grow provide positive role models for younger children growing up around them	£0
Oxford Citizens Advice Bureau	£2,150	Funding was awarded to work with 5 people from Wood Farm to help them build the capacity and skills to give their peers advice	5	5 local people recruited, 4 completed the course. Training covered financial capability. The volunteers have been able to deliver financial capability at an event at the Slade Nursery and also to members of their community.	£0
Oxford Community Work Agency	£2,000	Funding was awarded for the additional work needed to identify returning users and support them to budget and manage their on going	306	306 people have been supported to budget and manage on going debts	£0

Oxford Credit Union	£7,500	Funding was awarded for core costs associated with the merger of Oxford Credit Union and Blackbird Leys Credit Union plus 'one off' system costs.	0	Work and discussions for the amalgamation have broken down due to changes in the way Oxford Credit Union intend to run their back office service. At present the amalgamation is on hold to allow for Blackbird Leys credit union to consult with their members on the operational changes of Oxford Credit Union	£0
Oxfordshire Community & Voluntary Action	£10,000	Funding was awarded to design and deliver ESOL courses for people in Oxford who cannot speak English or who do not speak it well.	45	To date the course that was developed through this project has benefited 45 people to improve their English	£10,000
Oxfordshire Mind	£10,000	Funding was awarded to fund a Wellbeing caseworker who will work from estate based advice centres across the city working with people who visit the advice centres and who have been identified as having mental health issues.	16	Due to some unforeseeable problems the project was delayed in starting and is still currently running however a caseworker has been recruited and he has engaged with all of the estate based advice centres and is currently working with 16 people across the three estates (BBL, RH & Barton)	£8,000
Oxfordshire Music Service	£6,350	Funding was awarded to provide Saturday morning music lessons for 30 children and young people on Blackbird Leys.	55	2 music sessions run each week which are regularly attended by 45 children and accessed by a further 10 children on a less regular basis. Participants have performed at Templars Square, the Blackbird Leys annual concert and the Music Service summer concert	£0
Risinghurst Seniors Group	£3,900	Funding was awarded for transport costs to enable more older people to get involved and participate with the group	10	10 members of the Risinghurst Seniors group have benefited from this support for subsidised transport to enable them to attend group sessions	£0
Rose Hill & Donnington Advice Centre	£2,000	Funding was awarded to fund additional staff training needs due to the changes in the benefits system	5	5 members of staff have increased knowledge on the new benefit changes. This knowledge will benefit all their clients in the longer term	£0
St Lukes Church	£2,000	Funding was awarded to tackle social isolation in older people in the area.	0	Due to the delayed refurbishment of the building this project will now run in 2014/15	£0
Wolvercote Young Peoples Club	£3,000	Funding was awarded for school holiday activities at Cutteslowe Community Centre	0	NO MONITORING RETURNED	£0

Total amount awarded

£74,684

Total number of beneficiaries

658

Total other funding levered in

£37,136

APPENDIX 1

Grants to Community & Voluntary Organisations

2013 / 2014 Youth Ambition Grants programme

Grants Awarded under Council Priority - Strong & Active Communities

organisation/project	Grant Awarded (£)	Description of project	Number of people benefiting	Achievements / Outcome	Other funding received for this project (£)
Yellow Submarine	£3,958.00	Funding was awarded to contribute towards the delivery of 12 work experience taster sessions for up to 60 young people with learning disabilities	8	8 young people with learning disabilities gained new skills and knowledge about working in a café environment. This included stock taking and restocking, cashing up and money counting.	£0
Wolvercote Young Peoples Club	£5,000.00	Funding was awarded to deliver Friday night youth club sessions at Cutteslowe Community Centre	34	34 young people have attended these sessions and engaged with positive activities to combat the issues of anti social behaviour in the area	£0
Wood Farm Community Forum	£6,375.00	Funding was awarded to deliver 22 weeks of detached youth work on Wood Farm	50	The aim of this project was to engage with young people who are 'detached' from the youth club and over the 22 week programme they engaged with 50 young people on the Wood Farm estate all of whom were signposted to other activities	£0
Barton Community Association	£9,000.00	Funding awarded for the Barton Youth Partnership 'in sync project' to engage with children and young people in positive activities.	103	A variety of activities and projects took place through this initiative and ran through the 2013 summer holiday period with some activities running up until October 2013. They engaged with 94 children and young people from Barton and employed 9 local people to help supervise sessions. Feedback from young people evidenced how much they enjoyed the activities and due to the success of the programme Barton Community Association are looking for alternative sources of funding to run it again in the future	£4,590
Parasol Project	£5,738.00	Funding was awarded to deliver youth work on Mondays with volunteer training until July 2013.	35	35 young people engaged with the Monday evening youth sessions and 2 volunteers trained in leadership skills	£0
Frontiers New Horizons Ltd	£8,500.00	Funding was awarded to engage with 15 young people from around the city but particularly the Leys, Barton, Headington and Cowley who are NEET to develop a sustainable social enterprise model	47	This project engaged with 47 young people from around the city and they looked at 5 different small scale enterprises. They learnt a range of skills including market research, basic business finance, product quality, communication skills & confidence building. 18 of the young people are on course to complete an accredited learning programme in business studies.	£6,500
Small Green Shoots	£666.00	Funding was awarded to engage with 16 young people on Blackbird Leys in workshops that focus on literary and the spoken word	14	12 young people engaged with 10 obtaining a Bronze arts award	£9,205
Donnington Doorstep Family Centre	£10,000.00	Funding awarded for their 'STEP OUT' project to support 10 girls and young women who are, or have been, victims of sexual exploitation.	18	18 girls and young women have been supported through this initiative with on going one to one support focusing on building relationships and developing trust. Once this has been established its then possible to explore issues of concern and their safety.	£61,000
St Lukes Church	£1,198.00	Funding was awarded to engage 22 young people in a 6 week cookery course and pottery project.	0	Due to the delayed refurbishment of the building this work has not yet been completed and will be reported on at a later date	£0

Film Oxford	£3,700.00	Funding was awarded to contribute towards the creation of a website for young people, particularly to deliver 5 days of news production workshops for up to 10 young people	13	13 young people aged 15-18 years old gained knowledge and new skills in web design, web management and how to produce video news.	£1,500
The Disability Karate Federation	£4,387.50	Funding was awarded to contribute towards karate sessions for disabled young people aged from 15 to 25 years old	12	Although sessions have recorded 119 children and young people participating in karate, only 12 fit the youth ambition criteria / age range. However this activity has provided disabled young people with a wide range of benefits that include confidence building and the health benefits of being active	£10,000
Littlemore Village Hall	£9,292.00	Funding was awarded to contribute towards the costs of the professional leadership for the Littlemore youth club and information about employment opportunities.	22	A series of learning opportunities were provided in carpentry, hair, make-up and beauty therapy. The young people that engaged with these found them enjoyable and 1 person has been inspired to explore carpentry more seriously.	£0
Oxfordshire My Life, My Choice	£3,170.00	Funding was awarded to contribution towards the costs of the monthly self help group that runs at Blackbird Leys for disabled young people.	14	A facilitator was recruited and a user led management team of 4 young people also recruited to run these sessions. They have been working on all aspects of the projects development. 3 sessions have taken place with a further 8 planned for the rest of the year. An average of 10 young people attend.	£0
Pegasus Theatre	£7,500.00	Funding awarded to contribute towards an after school project for young people who are at risk or excluded from school and for some group work that runs in schools with partners such as the Princes Trust	12	12 young people have engaged with positive regular arts activities which has kept them away from being involved with anti social behaviour	£0
SAFE! Support for young people affected by crime	£5,892.00	Funding was awarded to contribute towards the costs of supporting young people who have been affected by crime or bullying.	8	8 young people from Oxford have received one to one support through this funding, using protective behaviours and a restorative approach it has helped them with their recovery	£2,300
The Story Museum	£940.00	Funding awarded to engage with 15 young people to support them in creating a space of their own within the Story Museum and for them to work towards an Arts Award	0	Funding was awarded in January 2014 so monitoring information not currently due but will be reported on in next years report	£0
Oxfordshire Association for Young People	£3,350.00	Funding awarded to contribute towards the Oxfordshire Youth Awards, specifically for trophies, certificates, promotion and accreditation for the youth committee	8	The awards took place on the 17th March 2014, with over 650 nominations the youth committee had a hard job deciding on the winners. Over a 1000 people attended the event. A total of 8 individuals and organisations were presented with awards.	£0
Cheney Falcon Rowing Club	£1,510.00	Funding was awarded to pay for volunteer training and the race fees of those young people who want to participate but cannot afford it	0	Funding was awarded in January 2014 so monitoring information not currently due but will be reported on in next years report	£0
The Clear Trust	£2,880.00	Funding was awarded to contribute towards coaching costs to work with young people who may not get involved with sport due to confidence or ability issues	0	Funding was awarded in January 2014 so monitoring information not currently due but will be reported on in next years report	£0
TRAX - Oxfordshire Motor Project	£3,500.00	Funding awarded to engage with & enrol 10 young people aged 16-18 years old on their Foundation Learning course	0	Funding was awarded in January 2014 so monitoring information not currently due but will be reported on in next years report	£0

Innovista - Thrive Project	£1,977.95	Funding was awarded to engage with 6 vulnerable girls & young women on Barton who have a low self esteem	0	Funding was awarded in January 2014 so monitoring information not currently due but will be reported on in next years report	£0
Ark T Centre	£3,548.50	Funding was awarded to engage with 10 young people and give them the opportunity to learn how to use a professional music recording studio and for them to achieve an Arts Award accreditation	0	Funding was awarded in January 2014 so monitoring information not currently due but will be reported on in next years report	£0
Parasol Project	£4,736.00	Funding awarded to contribute towards the costs to offer disabled young people the opportunity to enrol in their volunteering programme.	0	Funding was awarded in January 2014 so monitoring information not currently due but will be reported on in next years report	£0
Florence Park Community Association	£500.00	Funding awarded to engage with local young people to get them involved with the celebration of Florence Parks 80th birthday	0	Funding was awarded in January 2014 so monitoring information not currently due but will be reported on in next years report	£0

total amount awarded £107,318.95

total number of beneficiaries 398

total amount of other funding levered in £95,095

APPENDIX 2

Case Study from the Domestic Abuse Outreach Worker

This is a live on-going case. Names have been changed.

Brief Synopsis of circumstances

- Lisa has been with her partner for 8 years and they have been living together for 7 years. They have a 6 year old son
- Lisa is experiencing financial, emotional, sexual and psychological abuse within this relationship
- There are high elements of control, excessive jealousy and her mobile is constantly checked and often confiscated
- Lisa is employed in full time work and is often accused of infidelity with colleagues at work
- Her partner is a window cleaner but does not contribute to the household finances
- He drinks excessively on a regular basis and whilst drunk is verbally abusive and demanding sexually
- This has resulted in a complete loss of dignity and self-esteem for Lisa

Lisa referred herself for support through the helpline. The contact number she provided was her work number as her mobile number is not safe.

The outreach worker met her in a public café, near her place of work during her lunch break. She was accompanied by her mother. The both seemed very nervous. Lisa spoke honestly and clearly but the lack of confidence and embarrassment was pertinently clear. The outreach worker had initially thought her mother accompanied

Lisa for support but the actual reason was that her mother presented an alibi in the event that Lisa was “seen”. I could then be presented as a “friend” of her mothers.

Lisa is very scared and undecided about what she wants to do. The outreach worker has made it clear that her role is to support her and to assist in her safety, not to judge or rush her into anything she was not ready to do.

APPENDIX 2 continued:

ADVICE CENTRE CASE STUDIES

Debt is an increasing issue that people are seeking help with. Clients looking for help with debt problems continue to increase for all of the Advice Centres. The total of client debt dealt with, by all of the Advice Centres, over the year amounts to £10,611,435. They are all reporting that priority debt (rent, mortgage, council tax etc) is now the biggest problem

There are a couple of ways the advice centres can help, first by helping them look realistically at their household budgets and how much they are spending. Liaising with their creditors and setting up informal repayment plans.

Another option is to apply for a Debt Relief Order (DRO).

Available from 2009, a DRO is a form of insolvency which is designed to help people who have relatively low debt (less than £15,000), little surplus income and few valuable assets - and who have no realistic chance of paying off their debts within a reasonable time.

There are strict rules for applying and anyone with assets worth over £300 or a motor vehicle worth more than £1,000 would not be eligible to apply.

There are disadvantages to a DRO it will appear on your credit rating for 6 years, it may affect some people's ability to get credit in the future and they may not be able to open a bank account.

A DRO will last for a period of 12 months and during which time, any creditor named on the order cannot take any action to recover their money unless they have the courts permission. After which, the individual will be freed of the debts included in the order (unless their circumstances have significantly improved).

Certain debts such as student loans and fines cannot be written off.

DROs don't involve the courts, and are run by The Insolvency Service in partnership with debt advisers known as `approved intermediaries` - the people who actually help individuals apply to the Service for a DRO

Debt Case Study from Rose Hill & Donnington Advice Centre

Mrs C is disabled and came in for the first time in January 2013 as her husband passed away in the previous month and she needed help with her benefits and debt problems. She wanted to know what she could do about the outstanding cost of her late husband's funeral. The client also finds it difficult to read and write.

The case worker decided to apply for charity grants to help with some of the funeral cost. With regard to her debts the caseworker wrote to all of her creditors and they did a budget to establish what she income is and what she could afford to pay.

They were successful in getting two charity grants towards the funeral costs but this still left her with £1,000 to pay. After going through a budget and looking at all of her debts (which totalled £5,049.01) they talked about her options that included doing a DRO.

The client agreed to go ahead with the DRO. The caseworker submitted the DRO which was accepted which wrote off all of her debts.

The advice centre continues to support this client with her housing benefit and council tax issues. She also comes in on a regular basis for the case worker to read her letters and explain them to her because of her reading difficulty.

Debt Case Study from Blackbird Leys Neighbourhood Support Service (Agnes Smith Advice Centre)

Mrs L came into the centre for help with debts that were spiralling out of control. She explained that her husband had been able to manage their finances until Mr L had to give up work due to ill health. They have used up all of their savings and tried to meet their commitments but it was becoming increasingly difficult the longer Mr L was unable to work. They struggled on until the situation took a dramatic turn for the worse when Mr L was rushed into hospital with acute kidney problems.

Mr L is now on dialysis, confined to a wheelchair and unable to work again. Mrs L continued her part time job as a shop assistant on top of caring for her husband. The stress of trying to deal with her debts on top of her caring role has got on top of her.

The caseworker worked with her to go through a budget and look at her income and the options open the Mrs L. There was no real prospect of paying back the creditors on her income alone. It was at this point that Mrs L accepted the advice that bankruptcy was the best solution to her debt problems.

The caseworker successfully applied to a local charity for help with the bankruptcy fee of £525 and prepared all the forms for Mrs L to present to court. The application was successful and Mrs L is now debt free.

Mrs L says that she could see no real alternative to bankruptcy when her circumstances changed so drastically. Now that she is debt free, she feels a sense of overwhelming relief.

APPENDIX 2 continued

CASE STUDIES FROM OXFORDSHIRE COMMUNITY & VOLUNTARY ACTION (OCVA)

The Leys CDI (Community Development Initiative)

The Leys CDI got in touch the OCVA because they needed to find funding for their youth work. This work included preventative work and specialist intervention work with older young people on the estate who have already been involved in the criminal justice system or are at risk of being involved with criminal activities.

Working with the development team they identified the Big Lottery Reaching Communities fund as the most appropriate funding source but they need assistance with the complex application form.

They had a number of meetings with OCVA who helped strengthen the bid and supplied them with the appropriate statistics including child wellbeing index figures.

OCVA redrafted the opening section of the application for them juxtaposing high levels of disadvantage in education, learning and training with the international reputation of Oxford.

OCVA also help them liaise with a Big Lottery advisor who helped them identify weaknesses in the bid that were addressed and strengthened.

Comment from the Leys CDI

"I have found the support from OCVA invaluable. It was a real hand on support based on outstanding expertise, knowledge and experience for the benefit of the community always recognising the immense value small local organisation and their workers bring to the community."

Cotteslowe Community Association

A locality officer from Communities and Neighbourhoods team contacted OCVA to assist the trustees of Cotteslowe Community Association. They were keen to become a corporate body but were concerned about the process and how complex, lengthy and expensive it would be.

The Development Team Manager at OCVA, met with a sub-committee of the Trustees to talk through the appropriate legal form for the Community Association. She outlined all the steps which would need to be taken, and the key decisions which had to be made. She subsequently sent more information by email and signposted the trustees to other useful information.

Cotteslowe Community Association became a Charitable Incorporated Organisation in January 2014. This limits the liabilities of individual trustees, creates permanent succession with no need to transfer contracts, leases or other legal agreements to new signatories and gives the association its own legal personality.

The Chair of Trustees wrote in an online survey, '(We received) Very clear and detailed account of the process involved in becoming a Charitable Incorporated Organisation from OCVA. And an invaluable checklist on-line of steps required

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APPENDIX 3 - RISK REGISTER

Risk Score: Impact Score: 1=insignificant; 2=minor ;3=moderate; 4=major; 5=catastrophic Probability Score: 1=Rare;2=Unlikely;3=Possible'4=Likely'5=Almost Certain

No	Risk description link to corporate obj.	Gross risk		Cause of risk	Mitigation	Net risk		Further Management of Risk Transfer/Accept/Reduce/Avoid		Monitoring Effectiveness				Control Risk	
		I	P			I	P			Q	Q	Q	Q	I	P
1 97	Monitoring Information not returned. (Strong, Active Communities)	I 1	P 3	Grant funding awarded to community & voluntary organisations is not used appropriately	Mitigating Control: Monitoring Forms & visits Level of Effectiveness: Medium because information may not be returned & visits may not take place	I 1	P 2	Action: Reduce Action Owner Julia Tomkins Mitigating control Keep check list & close monitoring	Outcome Required: All monitoring forms returned & monitoring visits made. Milestone date: On going	Q 1	Q 2	Q 3	Q 4	I	P

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To: City Executive Board

Date: 3 July 2014

Report of: Head of Policy, Culture and Communications.

Title of Report: Draft Community Engagement Policy Statement 2014 – 17

Summary and Recommendations

Purpose of report: To seek approval from the City Executive Board to adopt the draft Community Engagement Policy Statement 2014 – 17.

Key decision? No

Executive lead members: Cllr Bob Price, Corporate Strategy, Economic Development and Planning &
Cllr Christine Simm, Culture and Communities

Policy Framework: Corporate Plan, Strong Active Communities

Recommendation: To approve the draft Community Engagement Policy Statement 2014 – 17, subject to any specified amendments, for adoption

Appendix 1: Draft Community Engagement Policy Statement 2014 – 17

Appendix 2: Consultation Results – draft Community Engagement Plan

Appendix 3: Risk Register

Appendix 4: Equalities Impact Assessment Screening

Appendix 5: Consultation Toolkit 2014

Introduction

1. Oxford City Council has a long track record of working with local people to build strong and active communities, and its commitment to community engagement predates, outlives and goes much further than legislative requirements.
2. The purpose of the new Community Engagement Policy Statement is to provide a framework for how the Council engages with its residents and communities to develop a greater understanding of their needs, and to increase the level and quality of involvement in the decisions that affect their lives.

3. The policy statement includes:
 - an analysis of how demographic and technological factors impact community engagement;
 - the principles that underpin the Council's community engagement activities; and
 - the Council's methods of community engagement, including the role of Councillors.
4. As an overarching principle, the City Council believes that services must be delivered within a framework of standards where people have access to high quality services regardless of where they live.
5. Using a re-purposed set of principles of community engagement the policy statement describes how the different forms of community engagement activities relate to the principles. The principles are: flexibility, proportionality, transparency and clarity, timeliness, feedback and inclusiveness and accessibility.

Development of the policy statement

6. The new Community Engagement Policy Statement develops the "Engaging Our Communities" themes already set out in the Council's Corporate Plan 2014-18. It references principles and methodologies that were included in the Council's Consultation Strategy and Toolkit 2010-2013, and it takes account of the significant developments that have occurred in neighbourhood working.
7. Benchmarking was carried out across nine local authorities. Principles of consultation and community engagement were drawn from sources including the Cabinet Office, where they were used to help re-define the principles contained in the revised draft policy statement.
8. The Community Engagement Policy Statement has been developed with Consultation Officers and the Communities and Neighbourhoods Manager, with input from service areas' Consultation Officers, and the Lead Member for Youth and Communities.
9. Public consultation was carried out from 20th December 2013 to 31st March 2014. Over 1300 invitations were sent to residents who have registered an interest in community consultations, as well as leaders of Residents' Groups and minority ethnic groups. 48 individual and three group submissions were received. The full results of consultation can be found in Appendix 2.
10. High level responses from the consultation show that:
 - 89% of responders agree or strongly agree with the principles.

- 100% wanted to be involved in decision making through a variety of methods, but the main barriers to participation were lack of time, lack of information, and concern that feedback was not being taken seriously.
- People want to be more engaged in planning and housing decisions, in addition to a broader range of topics
- The majority of responders want to see the more commitment to the principles of engagement reflected in the Community Engagement Policy Statement, such as accountability and inclusiveness.

The Policy Statement

The policy statement includes the following elements:

- Understanding communities
- Principles of community engagement
- Flexibility and proportionality
- Transparency and clarity
- Timeliness
- Feedback
- Inclusivity and accessibility
- The way forward

Managing and Monitoring

11. In parallel with the development of the Community Engagement Policy Statement, actions planning has been completed and incorporated into Service Plans for Policy Culture and Communications and Leisure, Parks and Communities, and will be managed through routine performance management processes.
12. Key success indicators for the Community Engagement Policy Statement have been developed. A formal Service Area performance measure tracks feedback on consultation activities, with targets set for the length of time to publish consultation results. In addition inclusiveness is monitored wherever the demographic information is available.
13. The policy statement will be reviewed once per year to ensure that it is still current.

Level of Risk

14. See Appendix 3 for the Risk Register.

Climate Change/ environmental impact

15. The Community Engagement Policy Statement offers an opportunity for the City Council to reduce its carbon footprint and consumption of paper by encouraging the use of digital technologies.

16. It is recognised that this needs to be balanced with our principles of inclusiveness and accessibility, which will require that some people will continue to require non-digital methods of engagement.

Equalities impact

17. The Community Engagement Policy Statement is based upon our principles of engagement, which includes inclusiveness and accessibility. This is defined as: “the participation of all stakeholders who have an interest in or who would be affected by a specific decision, including groups that are sometimes difficult to engage such as young people, older people, minority groups, and people with disabilities”.

18. See Appendix 4 for the Initial Equalities Impact Assessment.

Financial Implications

19. There are no immediate direct financial implications of the Community Engagement Policy Statement as it reflects programmes that are funded within existing budgets.

Legal Implications

20. While there is not a statutory requirement to have a community engagement policy statement, there is new guidance from the Cabinet Office on Consultation Principles. Local Authorities should adopt those principles to engage stakeholders in policy and legislative developments. The Guidance is intended to improve the way public bodies consult by emphasising a more “proportionate and targeted” approach, so that the type and scale of engagement is proportionate to the potential impacts of the proposal under consideration.

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1. Executive Summary

This policy statement describes how Oxford City Council engages its communities in decision-making. It builds on and supersedes the Consultation Strategy 2010-13 and takes account of the significant developments that have occurred in neighbourhood and partnership working in recent times. It develops the “Engaging Our Communities” themes already set out in the Council’s Corporate Plan 2014-18, and while the Corporate Plan describes what we intend to do in support of this priority, the Community Engagement Policy Statement sets out the framework for how we will do it.

2. Purpose of this policy statement

The purpose of this new three-year Community Engagement Policy Statement is to provide a framework for how the Council engages with its residents and communities to develop a greater understanding of their needs, and to increase the level and quality of involvement in the decisions that affect their lives.

This policy statement aims to clarify:

- how demographic changes in Oxford impact on our approach to community engagement
- the principles underpinning the Council’s community engagement activities
- the different activities involved in community engagement and the purposes of these activities
- progress that has been made so far in different areas of community engagement and our plans for the future.

3. Introduction

Oxford City Council is committed to building a world-class city for all its citizens. Working with our communities to build channels for dialogue and engagement is a key part of the Council’s plan to enhance the relationship between citizens, their local communities and those who they elect to represent them.

The Council believes that building stronger communities and supporting community engagement in decision-making are mutually supportive, and that stronger communities and engaged citizens will participate more with the City’s decision-making processes.

In October 2013 the Cabinet Office issued guidance on Consultation Principles¹, which sets out the principles that public bodies should adopt when attempting to engage stakeholders.

¹ https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/255180/Consultation-Principles-Oct-2013.pdf downloaded 1 May 2014.

The guidance proposes a proportionate and targeted approach, so that the type and scale of engagement is proportionate to the potential impacts of the proposal under consideration, and the ability to shape them. These principles are reflected in the City Council's long-standing approach to community engagement and are reflected in this policy statement.

4. Background

Oxford City Council has a long and successful track record of working with local people to build strong and active communities - community engagement is at the heart of how the Council does business. Examples include: working in the 1990s to regenerate east Oxford; engaging with the Prince's Foundation and the people of Blackbird Leys to improve the quality of life there; working with local people to remodel play areas across the city and engaging local people in Rose Hill to develop a new community centre; and working with Cowley Road Works to revive the popular Cowley Road Carnival.

The City Council engages with its residents and communities in a wide range of different ways. These include:

- Engagement through ward councillors. Oxford City Council is led by its elected members - they set the Council's policy and strategic direction. Oxford's 48 city councillors also provide a direct link between local residents and the City Council's decision-making mechanisms. One of their most important roles is explaining the community to the council by being the voice for local people
- The Customer Contact Strategy sets out how our customers can be involved in shaping and improving our front-line services. We want to know what is important to them in their contact with us and to understand how they wish to access services
- The Statement of Community Involvement describes how residents are involved in planning decisions at the city-wide and very local level. The Planning department is improving its consultation process. We want all planning development in our city to be of the highest quality. We also want to expand the scope and effectiveness of our consultation arrangements and to put collaboration at the heart of our planning processes. Improvements include allowing more time between project inception and commencement dates as a way of improving consultation with all interested parties
- Engagement with tenants and leaseholders. Tenants and leaseholders co-exist in areas of mixed tenure and solving problems and driving new initiatives must involve all relevant groups. The City Council's model of engagement has been developed with the national Tenant Participation Advisory Service (TPAS) and involves:
 - creating a structure which enables tenants and leaseholders to be involved in ways that suit their needs
 - developing training and support opportunities
 - ensuring transparency so that tenants and leaseholders are able to see the difference that their engagement has made
- The opportunity to comment on all policy and strategy documents, including the Corporate Plan and Annual Budget that are produced by Oxford City Council.

This Community Engagement Policy Statement focuses on ways that local people can further contribute to decision-making in their local communities. Flexibility, a desire to find

the most appropriate approach to each issue or community group, underpins the approaches to engagement set out above. Flexibility also plays a key role in our approach to community engagement.

5. Understanding our communities

Oxford's annual population churn of 25%, around 5,000 houses of multiple occupation, and a culturally diverse population present challenges in terms of sustained and effective community engagement. A thorough understanding of the city's demographics – city-wide and at ward and neighbourhood level – lies at the heart of our approach.

Oxford appears to be a thriving city with many opportunities for work and leisure and, for many residents, this is the daily reality of their lives. However, there are major inequalities in life chances and life expectancy in our city.

The Index of Multiple Deprivation 2010 ranks Oxford 131st out of 354, placing it in the top half most deprived local authority areas in England. Of 85 areas in Oxford, 12 are among the 20% most deprived areas in England. These areas, in the south and east of the city, experience multiple levels of deprivation - low skills, low incomes and relatively high levels of crime; the majority of the Council's 7,800 tenants live in these areas. Men and women from the more deprived areas can expect to live six years less than those in the more affluent areas. While 43% of Oxford residents have degree-level qualifications or above 14% have no qualifications at all.

In terms of ethnicity, Oxford has a diverse population. In 2011, 22% of the population were from black or minority ethnic backgrounds, compared to an England average of 13%. An additional 14% of residents were of white but non-British backgrounds. The largest non-white ethnic groups represented are Pakistani, Indian, Black African, 'other Asian' and Chinese ethnic groups. The child population is considerably more ethnically diverse than the older population and as a result the population is expected to become more ethnically diverse in the future.

In 2011, 16% of Oxford residents said their main language was not English; this is twice the national average. After English, the most common main languages were Polish and Chinese languages, followed by French, Portuguese and Spanish. South Asian languages - Urdu, Bengali and Panjabi – also made up a large proportion.

A significant proportion of the population is youthful. This is in part because of the student population; 24% of the city's adult population are students compared to an England average of 6%. Overall, 32% of the city's population are aged between 18 and 29 compared to an England average of 16%.

Oxford's high house prices make it one of the least affordable places in the country. The percentage of households who own their home is relatively low in Oxford - 47% compared to 63% in England. The percentage of households renting their home in the private sector is high - 28% in Oxford compared with 17% in England. Over the last decade the number of

households renting their home in the private sector rose by almost 50%, from nearly 11,000 households in 2001 to nearly 16,000 households in 2011. One in five Oxford residents lives in a house of multiple occupation. More than 6,000 people are on our waiting list for social housing.

6. Our principles of community engagement

The principles underpinning our approach to community engagement derive directly from the city's demographics.

Oxford is an extremely diverse city where multiple and changing concepts of community overlap. There are communities of place - people living in geographically distinct areas of the city; communities of identity - people from black and ethnic minority groups, older people, younger people, people with disabilities, religious groups, and gay and lesbian groups; and communities of interest – such as students, business and academic visitors, council tenants, allotment holders, cyclists, and theatre-goers, or people who come together to use services such as parks, roads, community buildings or transport.

In the light of this high level of diversity, the need to maintain and strengthen community cohesion, and the desire to engage people in decisions that impact on them, the City Council has adopted a strategy that operates at two levels.

As an overarching principle, the City Council believes that services must be delivered within a framework of standards where people have access to high quality services regardless of where they live. This means that the majority of services should be designed, delivered and reviewed on a city-wide basis. Services will, of course, reflect the different needs of areas across the city and resource allocation will vary accordingly. However, these variations should be seen in the context of the Council's vision for the whole city, which is set out in the Corporate Plan and the budget approved by Council.

Community engagement is about ensuring that elected councillors are aware of and engaged with the views of individuals, community groups, and other stakeholders. It is not intended to enable minority interests to overrule the best interests of the wider community and the city as a whole. Community engagement supports, informs and improves decision-making by elected councillors, but it does not replace it; the responsibility for the final decision on any issue that involves the Council's resources rests with the city's elected councillors.

However, within this framework of standards, arrangements for community engagement must be sufficiently flexible to enable people to engage in ways that suit them. In this regard, one size will definitely not fit all.

Within this context our principles of community engagement are:

1. Flexibility
2. Proportionality
3. Transparency and clarity

4. Timeliness
5. Feedback
6. Inclusiveness and accessibility

Our approach to community engagement contributes directly to the City Council's ambition to build a world class city for all its citizens. Many Oxford residents are highly articulate and very skilled at getting their points of view heard and their voices are always welcome. However, in areas of deprivation where challenges are greatest, the capacity for community involvement is often lower. Oxford City Council wants to open up more opportunities for engagement with people living in the more deprived areas of the city whose voices otherwise might not so easily be heard.

7. Flexibility

Successful engagement requires a range of mechanisms to build and sustain a conversation with the community, with a broad or narrow audience as the issue requires. Broad principles and general ideas could be consulted on across a wide audience while the details of implementation might require input from a much smaller group

This flexible approach to community engagement means that lessons can be learned and acted on quickly. For some people, public meetings are a popular method of community engagement, but for others it is either not appealing or impractical. For example, a recent consultation about tower block refurbishment was scheduled to be carried out at a meeting at local community centre. Turnout at the meeting was poor so officers carried out intensive door-knocking to gather feedback. A subsequent successful engagement activity took place in the tower block lobby.

The diverse and overlapping communities in the city have been referred to earlier in this report. People often see themselves as belonging to one community of place and one or more communities of interest, and this means that the City Council must provide appropriate methods of engagement. For example:

- communities of place could be engaged through Area Forums, Neighbourhood Forums or Community Partnerships
- communities of identity could be engaged through the work of the community development team and other officers and members given special responsibility for managing these relations
- communities of interest could be engaged through the delivery of services that they best relate to, such as sports and leisure, culture, or housing.

Effective engagement means identifying the kinds of audience that need to be involved at each stage of the process on any given issue. This requires a good understanding of the networks of interest and expertise in the area. Some examples of the range of engagement forums are described below.

Area Forums

Area forums are informal meetings held across six geographical areas of the city, providing an opportunity for local people to discuss priority issues for the community and agree actions with other residents, councillors, city council teams and other partners.

Area Forums are sponsored and supported by the Council, and are free to adapt arrangements to best meet their own needs. The purpose of Area Forums is to:

- identify key issues and priorities to feed into city-wide service and budget planning processes
- enable local councillors to play a central role in drawing up community plans, which provides an opportunity to link up service-planning more closely with local needs and aspirations

- provide a space in which residents and community groups can work with mainstream service providers – health, education, police, businesses and the voluntary sectors – to ensure that local services are responsive to community needs
- comment on policy documents and proposals that affect the area
- enable local issues and interests to be discussed with local members.

Oxford City Council is:

- providing each Councillor with an annual budget of £1,500 for small projects that link to the priorities emerging from forum discussions and other local consultations
- exploring ways to ensure that all of our communities, including the more ‘hidden’ groups, have the opportunity to engage with them
- providing an Area Support Officer to arrange and publicise meetings, and Senior Management support for each Area Forum.

Community Partnerships

Community Partnerships have been established in those areas of the city which have been identified as being in greatest need: Barton, The Leys, Rose Hill, Wood Farm, Northway, Cutteslowe and Littlemore. They are not decision-making bodies but provide a focus for local action and engagement on local issues.

A neighbourhood management approach is being implemented in these areas to develop a stronger sense of community. It involves residents working in partnership with mainstream service providers, the local authority, councillors, businesses and the voluntary and community sectors to address local priorities and make local services more responsive to the needs of their area.

It is a process which recognises the uniqueness of each place; allowing the people that live, work or provide services in it to build on its strengths and address its specific challenges.

Community plans are being developed in these areas so that there is co-ordinated action to address local issues and services can respond more effectively to local needs.

Oxford City Council is:

- Providing a Neighbourhood Locality Officer who supports and develops the partnership approach and co-ordinates bi-monthly or quarterly meetings and sub-groups to work on specific topic areas e.g. young people, housing and environment.
- Providing Community Development Officer support to engage with residents and develop local projects and support capacity building.
- Grant funding to Oxfordshire Community and Voluntary Action (OCVA) to support greater involvement of the voluntary sector within the partnerships
- Senior Management support for each partnership

These resources will primarily be focused on tackling the issues identified in the community plan.

Neighbourhood Forums

The Localism Act has introduced new rights and powers for communities and individuals to enable them to get directly involved in spatial planning for their areas. Neighbourhood planning will allow communities to come together through a neighbourhood forum to produce a neighbourhood plan.

Neighbourhood plans are about allocating land for development and being able to say where new houses, businesses, shops and so on should go and what they should look like. Once plans are adopted they will become an important consideration when making decisions on planning applications.

Three local groups have asked Oxford City Council to formally designate their proposed neighbourhood areas. Designating a neighbourhood area is the first step towards producing a neighbourhood plan. The proposed neighbourhood areas are:

- Wolvercote
- Jericho
- Summertown and St Margaret's

The details of the neighbourhood area applications and comments received will be considered at a meeting of the City Executive Board, where the final decision on whether to designate each of the proposed neighbourhood areas will be made.

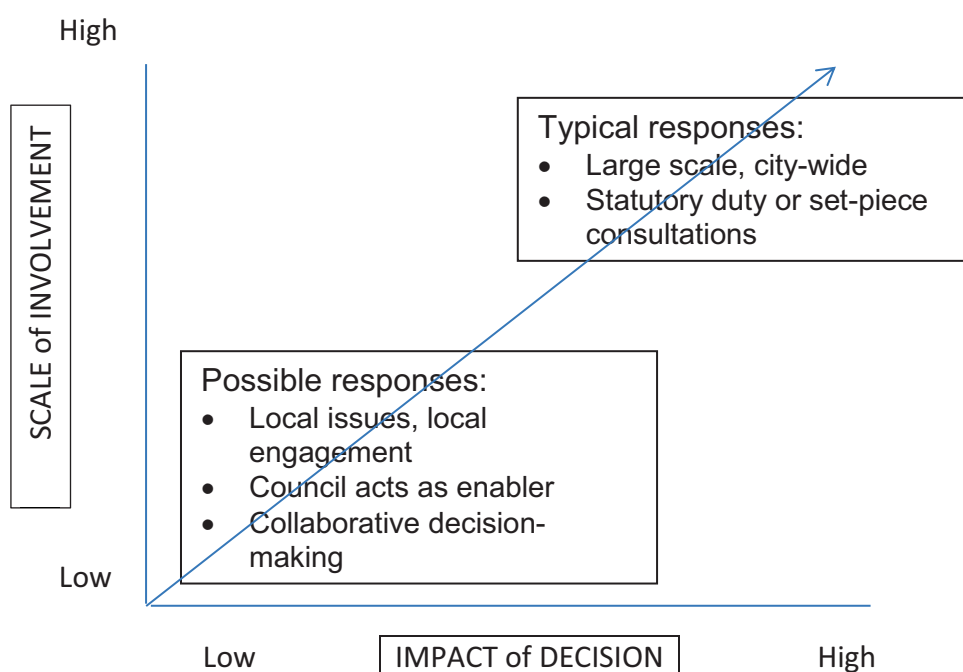
The Oxford Student Community Partnership Group

An example of a community of interest is the university student population of Oxford who run the Oxford Student Community Partnership Group. This meets twice a term and is attended by representatives from both universities, along with all Councillors and Oxford City Council officers. Topics of interest for this community include waste and recycling, voter registration and housing.

8. Proportionality

Oxford City Council applies the principle of proportionality when deciding which method of community engagement to use in any particular situation. This means that the type and scale of involvement will be proportional to both the potential impact of the proposal or decision being taken, and the ability to shape them.

The model below shows how the type of engagement varies according to the scale of impact, the role of the council and the nature and scale of the communities impacted by the issue. Adequate focus must be placed on the effective use of City Council resources as well as consideration for the resource commitment of community.



9. Transparency and clarity

Oxford City Council applies the principle of transparency and clarity to its engagement processes. This means that the objectives of the community engagement activity must be clear since they vary according to type of issue and the stage in the decision-making or policy development process that has been reached. This means that consultation on policy is less useful when councillors have clear priorities that they intend to pursue.

The boundaries of the decision must be defined - it should be clear which aspects are being consulted upon, and where decisions have already been made. To avoid creating unrealistic expectations, stakeholders and citizens must be told what they can or cannot influence by responding to engagement, and what the next steps will be.

Sufficient information should be available to enable stakeholders and residents to make informed comments. This will be provided both on a case-by-case basis through the provision of information related to specific consultations and engagement events and activities, and as part of Oxford City Council’s on-going commitment to provide the public with balanced and objective information to assist the understanding of issues.

The residents of Oxford receive information through a variety of media channels, as shown in the table below. These are all overseen by the City Council’s Communication team. There is evidence that suggests that community and tenant newsletters are particularly effective ways to make residents more aware of how decisions are made at the City Council². While some of the communication channels are broadcast in nature, others are more targeted.

Method	Frequency
Your Oxford	2 per year
City Briefing	3 per year
Facebook and Twitter	> daily
Oxford City Council website	> daily
Media releases	> daily
Service specific briefings	> Bi-monthly
Community and tenant newsletters (Leys News)	Quarterly?
Television and radio	Ad hoc

Social research

The social research function delivers high quality quantitative data to support policy development, service delivery, and project implementation. This research is carried out through both the Council’s social research functions (statistical analysis) and as part of its consultation function (opinion and perception research).

Social research is carried out by a central service within the Policy, Culture and Communications service area, and includes:

- Finding and sourcing data that can inform particular research questions.
- Researching and analysing data to inform strategies and plans.

² Living in Oxford Talkback survey spring 2014.

- Making research data available internally across service areas and externally to the public and communities, to enable them to understand the needs of their areas. The data can be used to help groups to develop funding bids, for example the social inclusion fund. This is done through the annual summary leaflet, website, monthly statistical publication and general statistics enquiry service.
- Providing research data that advocates the city's needs to other agencies that provide services.
- Providing links to national research.

Much of this data is available to the general public through the City Council's Statistics about Oxford website at

http://oxford.gov.uk/PageRender/decC/Statistics_about_Oxford_occw.htm

Consultation

Consultation seeks public feedback on analysis, options, services and plans in order to inform decision-making, and in some cases this is statutory: the Council's annual budget for example. These decisions are critical to the successful development of Council policy and strategy, service design and service delivery. Consultation can only be successful with the active participation of the public.

Oxford City Council carries out its consultation through a variety of methods including a Citizens' Panel, postal and on-line surveys and focus groups; the different methods are described in the Consultation Toolkit. Consultation support is provided as a central service by the Consultation Officer, while management of the Citizens' Talkback Panel is managed by a specialist market research company, currently Ipsos MORI.

The Citizens' Panel model has been at the heart of Oxford City Council's approach to consultation. The Talkback Panel – consisting of around 1,000 residents (aged 16+) - was first established in 1997, when it was set up as a partnership initiative involving Oxford City Council, Oxfordshire County Council, the health authority, and Thames Valley Police. Also at this time, the Talkback Panel provided data for the Place survey, which allowed Oxford City Council to benchmark its performance against other local authorities.

Over time partners withdrew funding, but information sharing continues largely through the Oxford Strategic Partnership's programme boards. For example, in its role as a member of the Safer Communities Partnership, the City Council has continued to gather annual information from Talkback about community safety issues. The results are fed back to Thames Valley Police, who continue to reference Talkback findings in their annual report and forward planning.

While every effort is made to ensure that the panel membership is representative of the city's population (by using the demographic profile of Oxford residents from the Census 2011 data), the profile of respondents is significantly skewed towards white, older, female residents. To address this the Panel is refreshed every two years and ways of reaching

under-represented groups are called upon. For example, young people's views can be accessed through Youth Voice as described in chapter 12.

Oxford City Council has decided in principle to use Local Government Inform as a survey methodology to measure residents' satisfaction. This will offer the council the opportunity to benchmark performance across other participating local authorities (the Place survey no longer exists). The methodology requires that at least 1,000 randomly selected responses must be received, and this will be administered by Ipsos MORI.

The principle of transparency and clarity is applicable to Oxford City Council's Local Development Planning engagement practices. The Council is required by law to consult on both Development Plan Documents and Supplementary Planning Documents, and the consultation process for each of these document types as well as consultation on planning applications is detailed in the Statement of Community Involvement.

The use of on-line technology enables transparency and clarity: information can be readily accessed by computer users, results and plans can be published. For information related to consultations Oxford City Council aims to post on its consultation website.

www.consultation.oxford.gov.uk

The representational and scrutiny role of councillors is vital to the consultation process, and all councillors must be informed of any consultations taking place within their wards.

In their role as community leaders, councillors play a key role in consultation as they have a unique relationship with residents and can provide valuable feedback from their involvement with local groups, partnerships and organisations. They are active members of local community initiatives and sometimes the instigators of consultation initiatives.

In their role on scrutiny committees, councillors provide a 'critical friend' challenge to Council decision-making and scrutinise external organisations and partnerships that influence and deliver services within the city.

10. Timeliness³

Oxford City Council recognises that engagement should begin early in the policy development or decision-making process when the policy is still under consideration and views can genuinely be taken into account.

There are several stages of policy development, and it may be appropriate to engage in different ways at different stages. As part of this, there can be different reasons for, and types of consultation, some radically different from simply inviting response to a document. Every effort should be made to make available the information an early stage to enable contestability and challenge.

³ https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/255180/Consultation-Principles-Oct-2013.pdf downloaded 15th May 2014.

Timeframes for consultation should be proportionate and realistic to allow stakeholders sufficient time to provide a considered response and where the consultation spans all or part of a holiday period policy makers should consider what if any impact there may be and take appropriate mitigating action. The amount of time required will depend on the nature and impact of the proposal (for example, the diversity of interested parties or the complexity of the issue, or even external events), and might typically vary between two and 12 weeks.

The timing and length of a consultation should be decided on a case-by-case basis; there is no set formula for establishing the right length. In some cases there will be no requirement for consultation, depending on the issue and whether interested groups have already been engaged in the policy-making process. For a new and contentious policy, 12 weeks or more may still be appropriate. When deciding on the timescale for a given consultation the capacity of the groups being consulted to respond should be taken into consideration.

11. Feedback

Oxford City Council applies the principle of feedback (rather than a bureaucratic box ticking exercise), which recognises that open policy making should use real discussion with affected parties and experts to make well-informed decisions, and that consultation forms part of a wider scheme of engagement.

This means that policy-makers and decision makers should:

- explain what responses have been received and how they have been used. Results, including the number of responses, should be published within 12 weeks of the consultation closing and be mindful of current data protection legislation
- ensure that participants receive feedback about how their contributions have informed the outcome, and ensure that there are communications channels that allow for follow-up including reporting on final decisions and/or implementation plans
- ensure that Information and viewpoints have been collated and objectively assessed – there must be a fair interpretation of the results
- policy-makers should be prepared to change their plans as a result of community engagement. Citizens who participate in any form of community engagement must believe that their voice will be taken seriously, and that things can be changed if there is support for change
- ensure that engagement will be given sufficient priority, space, time and resources. There must be a genuine attempt to understand and incorporate other opinions even when they conflict with the existing point of view.

12. Inclusiveness and accessibility

Oxford City Council recognises that providing the opportunity for the participation of all stakeholders and citizens who have an interest in, or who would be affected by, a specific decision will inform better outcomes. This includes groups that are sometimes more challenging to engage such as young people, older people, minority groups, and people with disabilities.

It means that information should be easy to comprehend, and consideration should be given to appropriate forms of consultation by providing different ways for people to be engaged and ensuring that people are not excluded through barriers of language, culture or opportunity.

The results of Census 2011 are now available so it is possible to compare the demographic profile of participants with that of the population of Oxford. This has highlighted the need for focussed engagement with younger people (15-25 year olds), older people (over 65 year olds) and non-native English speakers.

Younger People

To enable younger people to influence and shape the services that affect their lives, Oxford City Council has established Youth Voice. This is a programme to support children and young people in Oxford between the ages of 15 and 21 (25 where there are special educational needs).

Youth Voice aims to:

- pro-actively listen to and act on the feedback of young people and to influence partners to do the same
- provide more and better personal and professional development opportunities to young people enabling them to effectively engage with decision makers
- enable young people to have increased access to decision-makers in their local community, the city, regionally and nationally
- To create a legacy of participation across the city and for young people to become role models and ambassadors for change now and in their adult lives.

The City Council's Youth Ambition Strategy details the Council's approach to engaging young people in positive activities and its aim to more fully involve young people in how we develop and deliver services.

Older People

Oxford City Council co-ordinates the Ageing Successfully Partnership to provide a partnership approach to addressing the needs of older people in the city; to improving wellbeing; and to addressing isolation and increasing engagement with older people.

An Older People's Needs Assessment has been carried out to review the needs of the older population of Oxford. This work will help inform the City Council of the longer term support for older people in the city.

The City Council works closely with the 50+ Network which is a volunteer-run community group whose aim is to engage with older people on relevant issues and increase involvement. This group have a representative on the Ageing Successfully Partnership.

English as a second language

As discussed earlier, many languages are spoken by the residents of Oxford. In the 2011 census 16% of residents said that English was not their first language, so there are challenges for developing services and policy that should be taken into consideration when determining the method of engagement.

Oxford City Council, through its Communities and Neighbourhoods team, is increasingly using community and voluntary networks to raise awareness of engagement activities that are less dependent upon a high level of competence in reading and writing English.

This is demonstrated in recent work with the Somali and Polish communities, where officers have:

- made use of community translators in meetings with the community
- tailored presentations to enable better clarity for people who have English as a second language
- attended pre-existing community led meetings rather than setting up separate City Council meetings. This maximises the number of people we can get feedback from
- advertised City Council opportunities through community newspapers and other sources to ensure we reach a wider cross section of the community.

The Communities and Neighbourhoods team facilitated a meeting between the Somali community and Scrutiny panel to receive feedback from the community on their experiences of living in Oxford and their perceptions of Oxford City Council. A number of the people in meeting had limited or no English and as such we made use of community leaders that were willing to act as an informal translator to ensure they were included at all times.

Communities and Neighbourhoods have worked closely with Human Resources to receive feedback on our recruitment process and how we are perceived as an employer from the Polish Community. A presentation was tailored to be more informal and visual for the community and it enabled plenty of opportunities for feedback and clarification. Both departments worked closely with the Oxford Polish Association to advertise the event and ensure that those who may not receive information from the City Council on a regular basis were aware of the meeting.

13. Summary

This policy statement describes how Oxford City Council engages its communities in decision-making. Not only does it build on the Consultation Strategy 2010-13 and the community engagement themes set out in the Council's Corporate Plan 2014-18, it takes account both of the demographic changes occurring in Oxford and the ideas and feedback provided during the process of creating this plan.

The intended purpose of this new three-year Community Engagement Policy Statement was to provide a framework for how the Council engages with its residents and communities to develop a greater understanding of their needs, and to increase the level and quality of involvement in the decisions that affect their lives. To achieve these objectives it has become clear, through the development of this policy statement, that the framework must be based upon the Principles of Community Engagement.

Analysis of consultation results showed that there was a keen interest in how we carried out public engagement, strong support for the community engagement principles and, naturally, areas where we could do better. These improvement suggestions have been factored into the redefinition and re-purposing of the Principles of Community Engagement. For example, concern was raised about the publication of consultation results and the outcomes of consultation, leading to scepticism that residents' voices were being listened to. To address this we have set a target to publish the results of 70 per cent of consultations within eight weeks by the end of the year.

It would be misleading to suggest our principles existed on paper only – indeed our focus on the demographics of the participants of public involvement activities and the development of corrective actions in partnership with Ipsos MORI is testament to this. This Community Engagement Policy Statement elevates the importance of the principles and the need to embed them further into our organisational culture.

14. The way forward

Oxford City Council is committed to continuous improvement. For community engagement this will continue to be done through benchmarking, engaging with professional organisations and the adoption of new technology.

Benchmarking

Benchmarking of consultation services is carried out across Oxfordshire and nationally when, for example, budget consultation practices are explored. Membership of the Consultation Institute and the relationship with Ipsos MORI ensures that we stay current with best practice. Research carried out through the Talkback Panel has shown an appetite for using mobile devices for responding to surveys – an example of technology supporting improvements to accessibility, which will be piloted during the year.

New Technology

The methods of engaging with residents of Oxford have changed considerably as a result of the increase in internet access, changes in the way of accessing the internet as well as how digital technology is used. For example, by 2012, 80% of all UK households had internet access, with 67 per cent of adults in Great Britain using a computer every day; this rises to over 80% amongst people under 45 years of age. Access to the Internet using a mobile phone more than doubled between 2010 and 2012, from 24% to 51, and in 2012 32% of adults accessed the Internet using a mobile phone every day.

Statistics about the level and type of internet use in Oxford are not available. However, as the city a very young population due to the large number of university students, we can expect that internet usage in Oxford is higher than the national average.

Social Media

For younger people - a rapidly increasing proportion of Oxford residents - social media has become the form of communication. Social media is a good way to engage people with specific issues where a quick turn-around is required; it allows for two-way, real-time dialogue and is an easy and cost effective way of getting people involved. Social media is transparent and open, and is a good way to build communities (especially communities of interest).

To make consultation more inclusive and accessible, the Council will assess what technology can best achieve our objectives. Twitter and Facebook can be used to raise awareness of community engagement events and as a pointer to the consultation website. YouTube can be used to upload videos of proposals as another format for gathering resident feedback. In addition the use of external discussion forums run by the community for the community can be encouraged, for example, the Headington and Marston Neighbourhood Discussion Forum. However, a strong social media presence and robust social media guidelines must be in place before relying on it as a consultation mechanism.

Currently potential consultees are required to sign up for an account to respond on the consultation system. This is stopping people contributing and limiting the usefulness of promoting consultations on social media channels. People have often responded to social media posts saying that they aren't going to contribute because the process they have to go through is too inaccessible. The Council will consider relaxing its approach to mandatory sign-in for some consultations. This won't be possible for all consultations, including those that are statutory, but there is little doubt that breaking down this barrier to participation will help to increase interaction.

However it is acknowledged that on-line methods are not for everyone and the Council will continue to offer multiple engagement channels, such as the provision and processing of paper surveys and face to face engagement opportunities.

The Council's consultations will be made more accessible by simplifying questions, removing large policy documents and adding more visuals where possible. This will encourage interaction on mobile devices and engage an audience who in the past have not had time to interact before.

15. Appendix 1 - Case Studies.

In order to understand the various types of engagement, below are 2 case studies. The first (Rose Hill Community Centre) is an example of how we have collaborated with the community on the development of a new community centre and the second (Open Space Event) is an example of how through talking to members of our community we have gathered information on Research.

Rose Hill Community Centre Case Study (Engagement Type: Collaborate)

The need for a new community centre in the Rose Hill area in Oxford was identified in 2012.

This engagement was undertaken in two stages: preliminary research and discussion with service providers and users. This was followed by a consultation fun day event where the local community could cast their vote as to whether they wanted a new community centre or to refurbish the existing one. To manage this, a sub group of local residents and partners was launched to work with officers from the City Council. This collaborative approach has been vital to the success of this project.

The main objective and purpose for undertaking this project was to collaborate with the different communities to develop strong and active links so that the community could make decisions for themselves

A questionnaire was developed and then designed into a flyer which was delivered to every home in the Rose Hill area, each leaflet could either be posted at one of the three key locations in the area or could be returned by using the prepaid envelope attached. In addition to this OCC Communities and Neighbourhoods (CAN) officers provided frequent opportunities for local residents to have face to face discussions to complete the questions in 'walk and talk' sessions. These sessions took place at different times in the day in order to speak to as many residents as possible. The strapline on these questionnaires was translated into seven different languages to promote inclusiveness.

From this process the architect used the gathered information to work up a concept for a new community centre. This was then taken back out to the Rose Hill Sub Group and other community groups before a final concept drawing could be generated for public display during the week leading up to the voting day on the 17th November 2012.

The method of engagement proved a huge success, and everyone in the community had the opportunity to share their views and vote upon the different options available. The support for the new centre was clearly demonstrated by 78% of all those voting being in support.

The City Council is confident that through undertaking this engagement exercise the new community centre will become a hub for the residents of the surrounding area. A one stop shop that the community can be proud of as having helped to drive and develop themselves. The relationship between the community and the Council has strengthened as part of this exercise as well as increasing community cohesion in the area. Collaborating on this project has helped to build a community they are all proud to be a part of.

Open Space Event (Engagement Type: Research)

This was an engagement event aimed at gathering information about the key issues that affect young people and through this research we have a better understanding of those issues.

The Open Space Event, where 35 young people came together, took place on 8th October 2013 at the Town Hall. The event was held to enable young people to discuss any issues that are important to them. By carrying out this research it improves our understanding of the issues important to young people. This in turn helps us when we are making decisions about particular areas and services and where we should target resources.

All the issues were put forward by young people, and they were given the space and time to discuss them in a way that suited them, without any preconceptions.

The young people who attended were from various ethnic backgrounds, in the lower third educational attainment bracket and from some of the most disadvantaged areas in the city.

In order to ensure that the young people felt comfortable we created a relaxed and friendly atmosphere by inviting the young people to host the event which was a great opportunity for them and something they enjoyed doing. We also ensured the lighting and branding made the space more inviting and less “stuffy”. This atmosphere allowed young people to feel at ease enough to discuss issues important to them without a set agenda and some difficult topics were addressed.

The topics young people discussed included:

- Oxford Bus Fares – young people have to stay in education longer but still have to pay adult fares at the age of 16.
- Communication – most young people who had heard about what is offered had done so through word of mouth highlighting the importance of outreach. Other forms of innovative communication need to be explored.
- Positive Choices – young people wanted more support with financial management, sex education and alcohol and drugs education and didn't always want to be taught about the extremes.

Having a central scribe so young hosts did not have worry about writing everything down worked well and took the pressure off hosts.

95% of participants thought their experience was satisfactory or above, with 81% rating the event at 4 or 5 (5 being the best).

We left the event with some very useful information about the issues that are important to young people, how young people feel about their lives and growing up in Oxford. This piece of research will help us when we are planning future consultations aimed at young people and also when we are making decisions on allocating resources to projects aimed at young people.

The output from this engagement exercise has been a greater understanding of the issues that are important to young people. With this information we can then develop further stages of engagement such as consultation where we take the information from the Research stage and use it to develop options to consult on.

Draft Policy Statement of Community Engagement 2014- 17

Final Consultation Report 23rd May 2014

Introduction

Consultation on the Draft Policy Statement of Community Engagement 2014- 17 opened on 20th December 2013 and closed on 31st March 2014.

47 individuals submitted their feedback using the City Council's on-line consultation system (eConsult) and four group submissions were received by email. One of the email submissions was short enough to be entered into eConsult and is included in the data in Part 1 below.

Of the other three email submissions, two were very similar in content: one from David Newman and the other from Craig Simmons on behalf of the Oxfordshire Green Party. The more expansive version from David Newman has been included in this document, together with the email submission from Oxford Civic Society. They are presented in Part 2 below.

Comments have been reproduced verbatim i.e. spelling mistakes have not been corrected.

Invitations to participate

Over 1300 invitations to participate in the consultation were sent out on 9th January (avoiding the holiday season) to residents who have registered an interest in community consultations, as well as leaders of Residents' Groups and minority ethnic groups

Demographics of 47 individual respondents

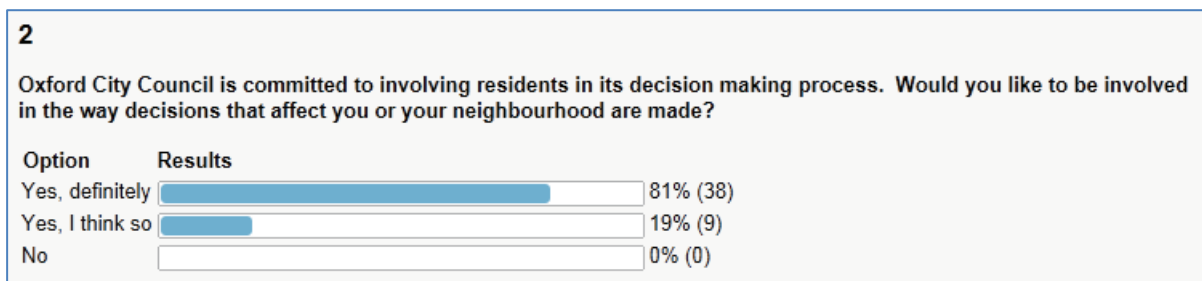
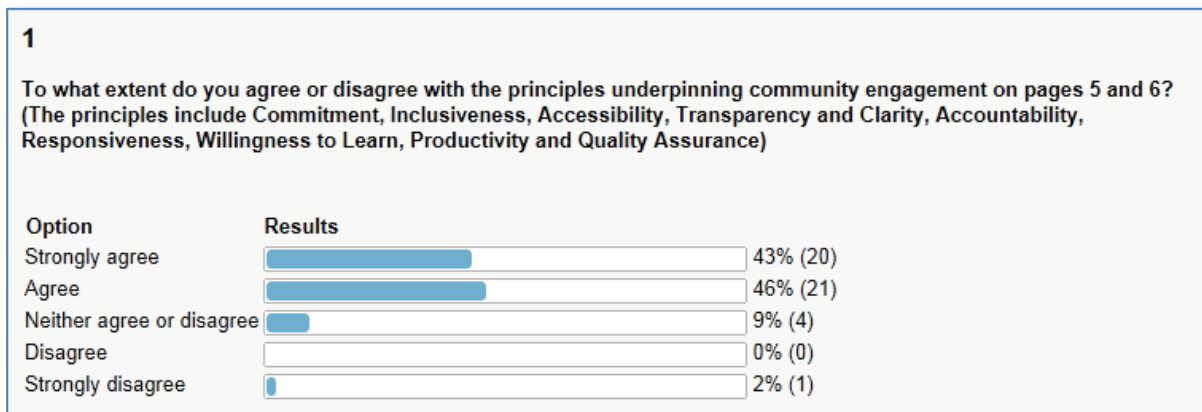
58% of the respondents who provided gender information were female (26) compared the Oxford Census 2011 data of 15+ age group (51%). 100% of the respondents who provided ethnicity information were White (39) compared the Oxford Census 2011 data of 15+ age group (80%).

The breakdown of the respondents who provided their age information is presented below. The table shows that the age groups (19- 44) are under-represented and the age groups (45- 74) are over-represented, when compared to the demographic profile of Oxford residents as a whole. There were no responses from people under 19 or over 74, although 24% and 5% respectively of Oxford residents fall into those age ranges.

age range	count	%	Oxford %
19-24	1	2.5%	14.9%
25-44	7	17.5%	31.9%
45-59	18	45.0%	14.2%
60-74	14	35.0%	9.4%

Part 1 results from the on-line consultation system.

Questions and responses



Q3 Comments. Three additional ways of getting involved were suggested:

Comment
By being allowed access to planning applications
Direct contact from Council staff wherever specialist advice is required
Participatory budgeting; alternate reality games

4

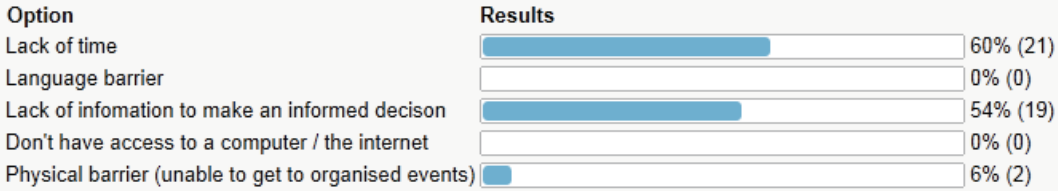
Do you feel there are barriers to getting involved in the decision making process?

Option Results



5

If yes, what are those barriers?



Q5 Comments. 15 additional barriers were noted:

Barrier
Unable to get actual replies to questions
timing of meetings: at dinnertime. Why not have a few late morning or afternoon meetings?
The East Area Parliament was so successful that the Labour Group got rid of it.
Resistance to expertise external to the Council and poor accountability.
residents comments are often a 'box ticking' exercise without being taken seriously.
Reluctance or inability to fully understand issues.
MENTAL HEALTH
Meetings not always well publicised and local opinion is often ignored even when given
Long reports, or too many not of particular interest, would tend to put me off.
Lack of information about what decisions are being made and how to best input into the process
Cynicism about being taken seriously; nothing changes so whats the point culture; not informed
Council will not allow access to planning documents
As part of the boating community I see consultation going on with little representation sort.
A perception that our comments are not taken seriously.
Lack of serious response to citizen inputs.

6

In your view, are there particular areas and/or services where we should engage with you more often?

Yes, wherever the Council is attempting decisions where expertise in the community is better qualified e.g. specialist ecologists and naturalists.

working with like-minded residents and councillors to improve the community and environment for people living in Oxford City Central.
We want to ensure that Rose Hill and Iffley new-build houses and public buildings are well insulated and use their roof space for pv panels to the maximum extent. We can work with the Low Carbon Hub to put out share offers for pv panels on public buildings such as schools. We have already secured the agreement of the City Council to cover the new Community Centre for Rose Hill with pv panels.
Voluntary community group issues, anti-social behaviour. Changes or issues which impact on children, young people and young people with impairments
Views of older people who have difficulty with mobility.
Use of pavements, vide the debacle over locating cycle racks near St Andrews school in Headington. The use and abuse of pavements by cyclists. Designation of uses for shops.
Traffic and road use. Business rents and rates. Planning decisions.
There is no point in 'engaging' with communities unless the communities are listened to - something which the City council seem PROUD NOT to do. IE the huge opposition to the closure of Temple Cowley Pools, and the refusal of councillors and officers to listen.
The proposal mentions Oxford and its residents what it doesn't mention is that Oxford services Oxfordshire as the main destination and shopping destination. Oxfordshire residents should be consulted on things such as the redevelopment of the Westgate centre and the Botley road because the protestors who tend to be residents of the city do not represent the people from the surrounding area to travel into the city to access the facilities that are not available in the rural towns and villages of Oxfordshire.
The communication between the city council front line staff (for example the repairs team) and the contact admin staff (the call centre) seems to get very confused and often leads to the wrong worker being sent to the wrong job (electrician instead of plumber). this costs time and money. Direct contact between tenant and the repairs team is needed.
provision of pedestrian and bicycle paths.
pre school care, libraries
Practical, local stuff like work being done in our immediate area that misses a problem that locals could have identified to be sorted efficiently at the same time as other work. Good work being done with consultation / engagement at a more strategic level - now try using more local knowlege at the practical level
Planning..
Planning, Transport, HMO development
Planning decisions. Retention of green space.
PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES NEED TO BE GIVEN MORE INFO SO THEY CAN ENGAGE
Oxford City could do more to counter Oxfordshire County's policies which continually prioritise commuters and tourists over local residents (e.g. Headington traffic 'improvements'). Local open meetings should be held as people are more likely to drop in to their local community centre / hall than take the time to fill in online consultations. Also, people ask more questions face to face and a more acceptable solution is often reached. It is very easy to ignore online / social media comments (offensive Tweeting being a good example) and people don't see Council business as 'social' until a policy has been implemented and individuals are adversely affected.
No
N/a
Matters regarding funding/finance, and its impact on reducing services.
Many.
local transport: bus and coach schedules, bus and coach stops. HMOs: poor external upkeep. While it is comforting to know that licensed HMOs are basically safe for their occupants and nearby residents, many of them look decidedly decrepit from the street, and the letting agents leave signs up long after new tenancy agreements have been signed.
local history
Litter collection/recycling.

It is a great pity that so little was done to engage with local residents over the plans for the Castle Mill development. The general policy in favour of growth appears to have been decided upon without proper consultation.
in short the boating community is often overlooked as I've heard recently perceived in relation to the JLHT /OCCP canal project.
How to solve the housing crisis in Oxford!
Housing - location and number of multi occupations (high level of private rented in city and getting higher) Street furniture and layout - makes a direct impact on experience of being in a neighbourhood Leisure services - Temple Cowley Pool is still a thorn in the side of any kind of consultation and leaves a bad taste after all the petitions etc. that had so many respondents on them City Centre events to balance the positive and the negative
grants given to community groups, e.g. music services, pegasus theatre
General experience of the parts of Oxford which I frequently use, pass through, see, or value - i.e. not just the buildings immediately adjacent to or in sight from my own home. In my case, this would mean all the alternative N-S routes from Grandpont to the areas around St Giles Church and Jericho, Port Meadow and Univ Parks, and the railway and bus stations: not only via St Aldates, Cornmarket and St Giles, but also via the footbridge and New Inn Hall St, or by car via Oxpens; or via Turl St or Radcliffe Square and Parks Road and Keble Road,
Decisions that affect the living environment. At the moment, decisions are taken for the Community without resident consultation surveys.
Controversial planning decisions
Bus transport from north to south oxford, avoiding the walk along Cornmarket
At the moment it is unclear what are the areas where you are engaging people and how this happens. It would be great to have a more comprehensive approach or a way in which people could easily access information about the decisions that are being made and how to best input into them.
All topics
More engagement in Donington, and other small pockets of deprivation. More engagement with private tenants. More engagement with older people through elderly-led (and controlled) organisations, rather than younger people claiming to represent us. More continuous local engagement, rather than separate consultations. More engagement through online community networks. More engagement with participation professionals, rather than assuming Oxford knows best.
Planning, housing development, traffic, parking
No

7

In your view, are there particular areas and/or services where you think we should engage with you less often?

Q7 Comments. 23 people answered "no" to this question and others had the following comments:

Politics
Loads, like the success of the East Area Parliament which threatened the Labour Group, so it was done away with. So it seems to me that the only consultation that this council wants is badly attended meetings with people going to them who have no views. And if the council have something to hide - like the Roger Dudman Way planning application - then the public are misled.
Less printed material posted
Crime - let TVP and the experts deal with this I don't feel as if I engage with services often at all as an owner occupier in East Oxford
Fewer council newsletters: instead fund hyperlocal independent newsheets and blogs.
Consultation should be relevant and meaningful at all times, i.e. don't ask everyone's opinion on everything or they will stop contributing. Also, local residents are just that. We are not 'stakeholders',

'customers' or any other such fatuous term of appeasement. The NHS is a Council stakeholder, I am not.

8

Is there anything else you like to see included in the Community Engagement Plan 2014-2017?

Q8 Comments. Seven people answered “no” and the following replies were submitted by others:

Yes. Mention is made of engaging those who may not be engaged due to barriers of language. Whilst this is right - this must be by ensuring that the people affected are given opportunities to learn the English language - otherwise we risk ghettos.
Whoever is running this consultation should watch this TED talk, particularly point 1, from the beginning to minute 2 approx) http://www.ted.com/talks/dave_meslin_the_antidote_to_apathy.html
We hope that community renewable energy plans will be on the list.
Undertaking to publish results of surveys/opinion polls
THERE NEEDS TO BE MORE INFORMATION IN LOCAL NEWS LETTER'S AS A LOT OF OLDER PEOPLE DO NOT HAVE A COMPUTER'S LET ALONE INTERNET
There needs to be mention of how the City Council plans to engage with students. It is repeatedly mentioned that students make up a larger than average proportion of the city's population and yet the document makes no reference to how the Council plans to engage with this section of its population! From Oxford University Student Union Vice-President (Charities and Community)
Some ACTION to enable people to be listened to by councillors. Access to all planning applications in hard copy.
Report corrective action to resolve issues brought up by local residents... and how long it takes them to be resolved..
priority list. creating an agenda to create a top 5 or 10 list of things that people really would like.
Outline Response from Oxford Green Party Consulting over the Xmas/New Year period was unfortunate and is likely to lead to a poor response rate to this important consultation. Our views on consultation are well known. Using the terminology in the draft plan, our views are that the Council is extremely poor at consulting residents. On planning, it does the statutory minimum consultation in most cases. And even where there is a clear opposition to its plans (for example, St Clement's Car Park redevelopment and the demolition of Temple Cowley Pool), it ignores the views of the majority. The abolition of area committees is a case in point. Despite a majority vote by residents in favour of retaining local powers and budgets, the Council pressed ahead and abolished them anyway. They represented a means by which local residents could be 'Empowered'. The reliance of the creation of Neighbourhood Fora in the Plan is unfortunate. These would seem to have few advantages and many disadvantages. they are in no way a substitute for the powers that were previously delegated to the now abolished Area Committees. As acknowledged in the report, the Area Fora are now 'talking shops' with no clear reporting in to the Council's decision making processes. They have no support (for example, minutes are only taken if Councillors agree to write them). So, we believe that the Council needs to be enhancing its engagement with local residents not relying on existing structures. The Council should return to full Area Committees with delegated powers; and improve its consultation processes more generally. Oxford Green Party c/o 41 Magdalen Road OX4 1RB
No. This draft plan seems well thought out and it will come down to implementation details, on which I hope we will have an opportunity to comment in due course.
No. It looks sound.
no, I think its' well written and comprehensive
More inclusion of Oxfordshire residents as opposed to residents of the city of Oxford.

Just continue to consult,inform and communicate with the local community.
I might have missed it but didnt' see much by way of leisure service provision ? Not just facilities but activities generally - more emphasis on well being for everyone meaning a commitment to the arts and to sports (in the widest sense) provision. Lots of research from Joseph Rowntree Trust and others about benefits of active leisure in older age and during periods of economic stress, So possibly engagement via the arts generally like in the Rose Hill example for instance - connecting with people while they are engaged in other activity which is pleasing and purposeful. Also open spaces and engagement on the multi use of parks etc - dog owners versus sports etc.
I believe local opinion is not given the importance it deserves
How to provide good, affordable local housing.
Effective Area committees where residents can express views and have a valid vote.
a way to address the lack of consultation offered to the boating community when decisions are made that effect them.
A statutory consultation meeting of residents in a local hall upon sensitive issues.
A provision for all resident-based groups within Oxford to meet together, say twice a year, so that we can share our thoughts, observations, and concerns. I note the availability of social media, but this something not everyone has access to.
A key to effective consultation is outcomes. Local residents, myself included, often feel our participation was in vain as comments appear to be ignored, glossed over or paid lip service to, at best. I appreciate not all comments and suggestions can be accommodated, but evidence of some modification to plans / policies based on local opinion would be a big boost.
A dedicated group for people with disabilities
I will descibe this in more detail in a separate e-mail, as there is so much Oxford could do to catch up with Bristol, Bonn, Bremen, Porto Alegre, Milan, New England town meetings and other leading exponents of e-democracy, citizen participation and citizen control.

Part 2 Consultation responses received by email.

From Oxford Civic Society.

“January 2014

Response to the Draft Community Engagement Plan 2014-2017

Overall comments

Thank you for inviting the Oxford Civic Society to comment on the Draft Community Engagement Plan 2014-2017.

The overall message that we glean from this report is ‘more of the same’. We presume, therefore, that there is no ambition to change or develop engagement processes, and it is considered there is limited need to improve them. Is this the unstated intent? We recognise that local authorities are under severe financial constraints, but nevertheless we would expect to see statements about the ‘direction of travel’.

The draft plan is structured around the widely accepted ‘ladder of participation’ model; inform, research, consult, collaborate, empower. Picking up key points on some of these ‘rungs’:

- We are pleased to note that some weaknesses in **consultation** processes are recognised – specifically inclusiveness and accessibility to the consultation process and

a need to improve consultation feedback. It is not stated how this will be done (although the document states in Section 1 that this is a how rather than a what plan).

- **Collaboration**, in our opinion, is the 'rung' where greatest returns can be made. Indeed we suspect this is also the view of the authors of this plan, as most 'column inches' are devoted to the topic. We are very surprised not to see more information on the future of Neighbourhood Partnerships and Neighbourhood Planning. We develop this point below.
- We do suspect there are more opportunities for **empowerment** if there is the will. We recognise this is not easy, and often not appropriate for democratic and accountability reasons. But, there is clearly no (political) intent to devolve decision making below the City level. We agree that decisions must be made by properly representative bodies, but surely there is scope for some devolution to areas / wards. The old 'area committees' had certain strengths in this respect although we are not advocating a return to them as previously constituted because there were clearly weaknesses, especially in the way they handled planning applications.

There is no evidence in the document about how good or poor community engagement currently is. Have any measures been made? With respect to **consultation**, for example, we suspect many residents would say this is poor – there is cynicism that consultations are window dressings.

We note and applaud the City's ambitions for strong active communities (*Corporate Plan 2013-2017: communities that are socially cohesive and safe, and citizens who are actively engaged in pursuing their own well-being and that of their communities*). We recognise that the Draft Engagement Plan is about engagement with decision making. It does not cover the important topics of community building and mutual support between citizens. But we think a linkage between decision making and community building should be recognised. Stronger communities will engage more with the City's decision making processes. Building stronger communities and supporting community engagement in decision making are mutually supportive.

We also note that planning consultations are not included in this paper, as the subject is covered elsewhere. We suggest the process for planning consultations should at the very least be recognised in the engagement plan as we suspect the public's poor regard to planning consultations reflects badly on all attempts by the City Council to consult, however well they are carried out.

Specific comments

Section 1 (Executive summary)

We note it is the intent of the Community Engagement Plan to set out how engagement will be done. We consider that the document will be strengthened if it incorporates more 'how' actions.

Section 4 (Understanding our communities)

We note that in areas of deprivation the capacity for community involvement is lower than in more affluent areas. This is clearly true. The document states that it contains a plan for how Oxford City Council will address this imbalance. We are not convinced this is adequately covered.

Section 5 (Principles of community engagement)

We note the nine 'principles underpinning community engagement'. Points 5 and 6 (accountability and responsiveness) are particularly important. We suspect residents have a poor view about the Council's performance here.

Section 7 (Inform)

We are puzzled about the statement 'informing residents is also achieved through Neighbourhood Forums'. We have seen no evidence of the City engaging with Neighbourhood

Forums to do this (assuming this is referring to Neighbourhood Forums as set up under the Localism Act).

Section 9 (*Consult*)

We are pleased to note that the City recognises the need to improve inclusiveness and accessibility (paragraph 6), and accountability and responsiveness (paragraph 7). There are no statements about how this will be achieved.

Section 10.1 (*Collaborate – Area Forums*)

Area Forums are not successful. There seems to be recognition that this is the case, but no stated intent to improve them. We understand a review of Area Forums was carried out about two years ago. Was a report published?

Section 10.2 and 10.6 (*Collaborate – Community Partnerships and Neighbourhood Plans*)

We applaud the City's work in developing Community Partnerships. They seem to be showing some successes.

In comparison, the section on Neighbourhood Planning is very bland. It gives no indication of how they might be embraced, or indeed any willingness to embrace them. And we are puzzled by the statement the 'Council's preference is to start with Community Planning'. What is meant by that? The phrase 'Community Planning' is not defined.

There is no mention of Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL). We suggest the document should contain statements about how CIL will support community engagement and community empowerment. Indeed, the relationship of CIL policy to both Community Partnerships and Neighbourhood Forums could helpfully be developed.

The impact of the Localism Act on community engagement structures and processes is omitted from the plan, although surely it is of relevance (and is likely to continue to be of relevance after the next general election, whichever colour of government is in power). An LGiU policy briefing (January 2014) is timely in this respect. See extract below.

Section 10.7 (*Collaborate – Oxford Strategic Partnership*)

We note there is recognition that there are weaknesses in the OSP process. But the document contains highly generalised statements about what will be done to address the weaknesses.

Section 11 (*Empower*)

As previously stated, we agree that empowering people at community level is not easy and is often not appropriate, but we would like to see an intent to devolve some powers to Councillor-led bodies at a local area level and a consideration of how more powers might be devolved to community groups and other agencies.

We note there is no mention of Parishes. We assume the Council does not support the concept of creating more city parishes, although they do provide an element of local area empowerment. We think this is a subject worth exploring.

We also note (and this surely is not contentious) that there is no mention of helping communities help themselves. Perhaps this is not seen as being of relevance to decision making.

Section 12 (*Next Steps*)

This section of the plan could usefully be strengthened and clarified. For example, we are unclear what is meant by a 'system for evaluating community engagement activities'.

Recommendations

The following provides some ideas about how, in our view, the document might be developed. This is largely a distillation of the comments made above.

1. More detail would be helpful about how community engagement will be done.
2. There should be some recognition of the importance of planning consultations and the development of active communities.
3. Something should be said on how accountability and responsiveness (5.5 and 5.6) will be improved.
4. There should be recognition of the value of communities helping themselves, and how this will be encouraged.
5. Devolution of powers to area / ward level should be considered.
6. There should be a recognition of the relevance of CIL to community engagement.

7. There is scope for developing area structures across the city, building on the Community Partnerships and Neighbourhood Forums already in place. This might enable a greater degree of local collaboration and even empowerment. It would have implications on the workings of the area forums, perhaps replacing them, and the role of councillors as decision makers. (See LGiU paper)
8. The statement on 'next steps' should be clearer and measurable."

Richard Bradley (on behalf of the Oxford Civic Society)
01865 762418 | 07802 215517

Where next for neighbourhood planning and management – opportunities and challenges for local government

7 January 2014

Selected extracts:

What is our 'vision and values' for community and neighbourhood planning and management in our area? There are a number of 'models' that might be important in this process – for instance:-

- community and neighbourhood empowerment as democratic and governance- related processes – e.g. through encouraging town and parish councils; or area/local committees and assemblies with a democratic mandate/accountability;
- community and neighbourhood empowerment as a service model – either commissioning and/or providing some specific local services;
- community and neighbourhood empowerment as an influencing model – through advocacy, mobilisation, processes like neighbourhood planning, but with other bodies beyond the council;
- mixed models of the above plus other roles and functions

How do local solutions and initiatives fit in with wider council and partner structures and processes – and are there any knock-on consequences of adopting different solutions in different local areas (e.g. for neighbouring communities)?

Whilst it makes sense for the council to work through these issues/questions, systematically, they can anticipate that there will be bottom-up pressures locally, and some top-down pressures from government, that may determine how any council perspective plays out in practice.

Lessons from NCBs and neighbourhood planning to date have tended to confirm the questions above as relevant and reasonable. More generally, though, neighbourhood planning and management are long-run processes. These processes have been shown to deliver significant benefits in local involvement and ownership, and can often produce valuable ideas for local improvement. However, they require considerable upfront investment (e.g. in evidence gathering, consultation, capacity building, business case formulation, and negotiation).

However, were an integrated approach to be pursued (and if it could be resourced), at one extreme, this most local of devolution might provide a particularly 'close to home' mirror on fundamental issues raised by localism and centralism – postcode lotteries, exclusive and inclusive character of communities, 'NIMBY charters' etc. For instance, it is noteworthy for neighbourhood planning, that only six areas have been designated across the twenty most deprived LA areas, with 15 of the 20 having NO neighbourhood planning activity. For the twenty least deprived LAs, there have been 49 designations, and only six LAs with no activity.

In conclusion, all local authorities are likely to have to engage actively in major neighbourhood planning and management exercises over 2014/15 and beyond.

For full document see <http://www.lgiu.org.uk/briefing/where-next-for-neighbourhood-planning-and-management-opportunities-and-challenges-for-local-government-2/>

Oxford City Council
St. Aldates
Oxford OX1 1BX

31 Mar. 2014

Draft Community Engagement plan

I am responding to your consultation on the Draft Community Engagement plan on behalf of the Oxfordshire Green Party. The Green Councillors group have asked me, as an expert on e-participation, to write this response.

Since moving to Oxford 2 years ago, I have been disappointed in the gap between the way public consultations are carried out here, and best national and international practice.

5. Principles of community engagement

Since the first question in your online questionnaire asks about the principles on p. 5-6, I will first respond to those. The list of principles is good, but could be extended. Categories reflecting sets of values on which professionals judge public consultations are listed at <http://www.e-consultation.org/Theory> and explained in Value Conflicts in e-Participation (Newman, 2006). The categories found were:

- | | |
|---|-------------------------------------|
| A) Honesty and transparency | G) Feedback |
| B) Facilitation (of process) | H) Relevance (to problem or people) |
| C) Citizen participation in decision-making | I) Preparation |
| D) Structure (of activities) | J) Support for constitutional goals |
| E) Impact | K) Feasibility and sustainability |
| F) Stakeholders/participants involvement | L) Fidelity |
| | M) Security |

□

Some of these evaluation categories concern the processes of consultation, that will form part of the forthcoming action plan. However, there are principles not listed in the Draft Community Engagement Plan.

⑩ Honesty is joined with transparency, making sure that there is no manipulation of the process or outcome (e.g. when an apparently objective reason is given to justify a politically biased choice).

⑩ The constitutional goals include democratic ones, aimed at reversing declining democratic participation. With turnouts of 30% in local elections, and small responses to consultations, this is an important goal. But increasing democracy does not appear to be an aim of Oxford City Council, at least in this document.

⑩ Citizen participation in decision-making is a very important criterion for both consultees and researchers in public participation. Yet it is explicitly excluded in the context of these principles.

The argument that the Council operates within the context of a representative democracy is spurious. There is a long tradition of citizen involvement in local government through consultation and partnership processes, separate from the representative role of councillors. We do not have to choose just between representative and direct democracy. The literature on democratic theories and practice includes many other alternative ways of achieving democratic governance, such as deliberative democracy, and networked governance (where decisions emerge from interactions between stakeholders). (J. Morison & Newman, 2001; John Morison, 2004).

Citizen engagement requires the sharing of power. It is limited sharing, but it still means that neither councillors nor officials, let alone the Cabinet, can make all decisions on their own. If there is no way for citizens to at least influence or modify decisions, then there will be no participation. The best consultations as reported by our focus groups of consultees in the north and south of Ireland (Fagan, Newman, McCusker, & Murray, 2006)□,

'... giving people a voice, better decision making, more informed decision making. More I suppose... a sense of participation and control over their own lives and things that are important for them, you know? That's the theory of why we need to do it...'

□ It is the control over your own lives that drives deep engagement, with good feedback as a minimum to get any engagement. From the perspective of the consulters, it is this deep engagement that reveals the experiential knowledge needed to make better-informed decisions. It is a common complaint of officials that they do not have enough relevant information to make decisions that avoid unanticipated consequences. Yet to transfer knowledge from of a mother taking her children to school to a Permanent Secretary requires the consulter to humble himself before her practical knowledge. In knowledge management terms, perceived status is a barrier to knowledge transfer.

Yet in Oxford, citizen and community input has often been ignored. Take for example the large numbers of people who have signed petitions to save Temple Cowley Pools. Each time, the petitions have been rejected by a whipped vote of councillors. There has not even been the reasoned justification that official bodies give when rejecting the recommendations of citizens' juries. Raw power has over-ridden reasoned argument. In the past there are many occasions when council leaders have not shown a willingness to learn (principle 7) or a commitment to make a genuine attempt to understand and incorporate other opinions even when they conflict with the existing point of view (principle 1).

We welcome the principles listed in this document, but not the context which can hinder their honest application in community engagement.

6. Methods of community engagement

The ladder of participation model is a shortened form of Arnstein's ladder.

8	Citizen Control	Degree of citizen power
7	Delegated Power	
6	Partnership	
5	Placation	Degree of tokenism
4	Consultation	
3	Informing	
2	Therapy	Non-participation
1	Manipulation	
0	Coercion	

Note that consultation is a degree of tokenism, not of citizen power. It is important that Oxford City does not limit itself to the lower levels of this ladder, but devolve power on local issues to local citizens, just as it would like central Government to devolve more power to the council.

We agree, as stated on p. 7, that effective engagement means identifying the kinds of participant (not audience) that need to be involved at each stage of the process on any given issue. However, the consult stage starts too late in the process. It is possible to consult people before any analyses, alternatives or decisions are made. In particular, it is possible to find out what people's needs are, and what problems they want the council to help them solve. In other words, public participation in agenda setting. See http://www.e-consultation.org/guide/index.php/Technology_matching_for_E-consultation. (J. Morison & Newman, 2001)□ and http://www.e-consultation.org/guide/index.php/Technology_classification (D. Newman et al., 2007). These show how far thinking on participation has advanced since David Wilcox's 1994 guide.

7. Inform

There are ways community groups can make use of council data to answer their own questions, so it is

important to make as much council data openly available for manipulation by computer programs (using RDF on the semantic web, not PDFs).

8. Research

It is important to make good use of research in decision-making. So we agree wholeheartedly with the importance of the two kinds of research mentioned here. Add to that the usefulness of community involvement in this research, by supporting research collaborations with community groups, and school and university students.

9. Consult

As mentioned above, consultation can start much earlier, in agenda setting, not just as a final rubber stamp to approve or reject fully formed plans. Indeed, some of the most interesting forms of consultation involve community design, as happens in participatory mapping sessions in developing countries, or some neighbourhood planning forums, where people gather to make maps showing current usage of land, and possible new uses.

Although Oxford City Council has a well-established consultation process, it is rather traditional, and falls short of the state of the art of Bristol City Council, Bonn and Bremen in Germany, participative budgeting in Porto Alegre, the use of online discussion forums to bring people from neighbouring municipalities together around Milan, or many of the practices discussed in the annual e-democracy conferences in Austria or even Prescott's Local E-Democracy project.

When Bristol City consults on parks, it gives people the chance to be a park warden for a day. Councillor Sam Hollick ran a participatory budgeting exercise, asking Holywell residents to decide on how to distribute his allocated small project budget. New York

10. Collaborate

Since the analysis of problems, the development of alternative options, and the ranking of solutions are part of any decision-making process, or indeed, of all learning processes (David R Newman, Johnson, Webb, & Cochrane, 1997)□), it is disingenuous to say these are not decision-making forums. The point is to make the most effective use of collaborations and partnerships in different stages of decision-making processes: and then to not ignore all this work when the final formal decision is made. We need decisions based on data, information and knowledge, not raw power.

The Area Forums could be a great opportunity for citizen design of locally appropriate solutions, rather than sticking to one size fits all models across the city. But they will not deeply engage citizen participation (both in number and time), until they have devolved powers to make and implement decisions on local issues. And it is notable that many Area Forums hardly ever meet, despite the claim that the council provides an area support officer to organise and publicise meetings.

There was a local model that worked, that of Area Committees, with devolved power to make decisions on local issues. A serious commitment to community engagement requires and equally serious commitment to community decision-making power over the issues that affect them locally.

A community partnership could do more than an area forum, but here there are two problems to overcome:

1. To involve a diverse range of groups within the area, rather just those friendliest to the council. The lists of groups represented look rather like “the usual suspects”.
2. Areas of greatest need may be large, like the ones identified, or pockets of deprivation inside areas that on average are in less need. Community partnerships need to be set up to deal with these pockets of deprivation.

There is not much resident involvement so far. When tenants representatives criticised the council, they were replaced by people who never criticise the council. Community Associations are in dispute with the Council, as they have been offered tenancy agreements with so many conditions they could easily lose their premises. There is a pattern of the Council acting as the master of Oxford, dictating terms, not humbly serving their masters, the people of Oxford. Collaboration needs to be as equals with the powerless, not just with the powerful in the Oxford Strategic Partnership.

11. Empower

This part of the document has too many limitations, as if the Council wants to avoid any empowerment of citizens. Contrast that to New York City, who invited in America Speaks to organise a meeting of 6000 New Yorkers to decide on what to do with the Twin Towers site. There were 600 tables of 10 people, all having facilitated conversations, with their points fed by computer to a team of who picked out common ideas and positions, which all the tables then voted on. By the end, they knew that the people of New York wanted new tall skyscrapers, so they changed the city plans for the site.

There are lots of benefits for localising power. This plan should not try to prevent that, but instead take risks, do trials, and evaluate the results.

12. Next steps

One important next step is for Oxford City Council to become a corporate member of the Consultation Institute, and then send the top officers, and the Executive on courses to learn about the benefits of effective participation.

Yours Sincerely,



Dr. David Newman

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Sadie Paige
23rd May 2014

Community Engagement Policy Statement 2014 – 2017 (draft)

Appendix 3 – Risk Register

Risk ID	Risk						Corporate Objective	Gross Risk		Residual Risk		Current Risk		Owner	Date Risk Reviewed	Proximity of Risk (Projects/ Contracts Only)
Category -000- Service Area Code	Risk Title	Opportunity/ Risk Threat	Description	Risk Cause	Consequence	Date raised	1 to 6	I	P	I	P	I	P			
141 PCC 001	Budget	Threat	That City Council Budget 2015 – 2018 cuts affect service delivery	Need to reduce budget.	Resources are not available to carry out public engagement activities described in the draft Plan	4/11/13	3	3	2	3	1	3	2	Angela Cristofoli/ Sadie Paige	12/5/14	
PCC 002	Legal	Threat	That charges are made against the council related to Community Engagement activities	Legal challenge to community engagement activity	Damage to reputation, legal costs	4/11/13	3	4	2	4	2	4	2	Angela Cristofoli/ Sadie Paige	12/5/14	
PCC 003	Resources	Threat	That there are insufficient resources to execute this plan	Resources are under-estimated and stretch service delivery	Stress	4/11/13	3	2	3	2	1	2	1	Angela Cristofoli/ Sadie Paige	12/5/14	
PCC 004	Publication of results	Threat	That the decision making process is compromised by lack of trust by consultees	Lack of clarity and transparency	Poor quality decision making	12/5/14	3	3	3	3	1	3	3	Sadie Paige	12/5/14	
PCC 005	Inclusion of all groups	Threat	That the decision making process is compromised	Lack of inclusiveness and accessibility	Poor quality decision making	12/5/14	3	3	2	3	1	3	2	Sadie Paige	12/5/14	

Community Engagement Policy Statement 2014 – 2017 (draft)

			by lack input from some groups														
LPC 001	Failure to engage appropriately with communities of identity.	Threat	Following implementation of Plan, services do not engage effectively with Communities of Interest	Lack of understanding or commitment by services of how to engage	Communities feel issues not being addressed and feel solated	4/11/13	3	4	3	4	1	4	3	Angela Cristofoli	4/11/13		
LPC 002	Increase in numbers engaged through collaborating.	Opportunity	Currently few residents actively engaged in deprived areas and amongst young people	Lack of active targeted engagement and dedicated resources	Does not address council's priority to encourage community engagement especially amongst hard to reach groups	4/11/13	3							Angela Cristofoli	4/11/13		

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Risk ID	Risk Title	Action Owner	Accept, Contingency, Transfer, Reduce or Avoid	Details of Action	Key Milestone	Milestone Delivery Date	%Action Complete	Date Reviewed
PCC 001	Budget	AC/SP	Reduce	2014/15 budget has been approved. CEP action plan based upon current resource level.	2015/16 budget approval	Feb 2015		12/5/14
PCC 002	Legal	AC/SP	Avoid	On-going participation of Legal Service Head at Public Involvement Board	None, action is on-going	Not applicable		12/5/14

Community Engagement Policy Statement 2014 – 2017 (draft)

PCC 003	Resources	AC/SP	Avoid	Review 2014/15 Service Plans for consultation activities. Develop Annual Plan and estimate resource. Develop service level agreement with service areas. Organise eConsult training.	Service Plans posted on intranet	May/ June 2014		12/5/14
PCC 004	Publication of results	SP	Avoid	Implement service level metric to improve the publication of results. Explore mail merge capability within eConsult.	New metrics added to CorVu	May 2014		12/5/14
PCC 005	Inclusion of all groups	SP	Avoid	Panel refresh. Raise awareness of consultations across Students, Polish community, voluntary sector.	Panel refresh	July/Aug 2014		12/5/14
LPC 001	Failure to engage	AC/SP	Avoid	Ensure training programme for services and regular updates. Consultation Officers group to share best practice and audit engagement. Public Involvement Board to review PIDs to ensure address Communities of Identity	Training and updates timetabled after Plan implemented			4/11/13
				Set annual targets for young people's engagement and also for residents in areas of deprivation	6 month review			

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Appendix 4 Initial screening Equalities Impact Assessment for the draft Policy Statement of Community Engagement 2014 – 17.

1. Within the aims and objectives of the policy or Plan which group (s) of people has been identified as being potentially disadvantaged by your proposals? What are the equality impacts?

The Policy Statement of Community Engagement is underpinned by our principles of engagement, which requires the participation of all stakeholders who have an interest in, or are impacted by, a decision, regardless of age, gender, disability, race, or language
We strive to engage with a representative sample of stakeholders and have used information from the Census 2011 to define that goal. We have developed plans to increase engagement with younger people, people from minority ethnic groups and people who are not native English-speakers. We are sensitive to the need not to alienate existing audiences – for example through the exclusive use of digital technology.

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

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

In order to minimise the adverse equality impact we are now tracking and reporting the demographic profile of survey respondents. These are reported as caveats to reports where appropriate.
We have added the Communities and Neighbourhood Manager to the Public Involvement Board. This allows us to identify ways of tapping into hard to reach groups.
We will continue to enforce the use the Public Involvement Project Brief which requires that external consultation projects define their target groups, as well as the means of reaching the target groups. We will continue to segment our communication channels to ensure that the most appropriate means are used to reach the community.

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

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

The draft version of the Policy Statement of Community Engagement was available for consultation feedback from 20th December 2013 until 31st March

2014. Over 1300 invitations to participate in the consultation were sent out on 9th January (avoiding the holiday season) to residents who have registered an interest in community consultations, as well as leaders of Residents' Groups and minority ethnic groups. Within that time period consultation was extended to allow for additional representation from minority and hard to reach groups. The full results of consultation will be available in Appendix x £%^*£^%

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

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

One of the principles that underpins the Policy Statement is "inclusiveness and accessibility" and we have now started to measure how successful we are at being inclusiveness by comparing response rates to a profile of Oxford residents that is based upon Census 2011 data. As a further example of our commitment to be more inclusive we will be refreshing the Talkback Panel in Autumn 2014, with the goal of making it more representative of the people of Oxford.

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

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

We are tracking the demographics of people in the community who are involved or engaged with City Council. The profile of the members of the Talkback Panel is tracked whenever it changes (approximately every two years), and the profile of the responders to Talkback Panel surveys is monitored whenever surveys have been completed (approximately twice per year).

Lead officer responsible for signing off the EqIA:

Role:

Date:

Note, please consider & include the following areas:

- Summary of the impacts of any individual policies

Equalities Impact Assessment – Initial Screening – Policy Statement of Community Engagement 2014 – 17.

- Specific impact tests (e.g. statutory equality duties, social, regeneration and sustainability)
- Post implementation review plan (consider the basis for the review, objectives and how these will be measured, impacts and outcomes including the “unknown”)
- Potential data sources (attach hyperlinks including Government impact assessments where relevant)

Sadie Paige 12 May 2014

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Consultation Toolkit

A Guide to Effective Consultation

Oxford City Council

Updated: June 2014

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1 Introduction

1.1 Introduction to consultation

Oxford City Council is committed to building a world-class city for all its citizens. Working with local communities and stakeholders to build channels for dialogue and engagement is a key part of the Council's plan to enhance the relationship between citizens, their local communities and those who they elect to represent them. Public services that are based on an understanding of citizens' needs are crucial and consultation is one way of achieving this.

Consultation is a vital part of a modern, representative democracy. It is about ensuring that elected councillors are aware of and engaged with the views of individuals, community groups, and other stakeholders. It is not intended to enable minority interests to overrule the best interests of the wider community and the city as a whole. Consultation supports, informs and improves decision-making by elected councillors, but it does not replace it; the responsibility for the final decision on any issue that involves the Council's resources rests with the city's elected councillors.

Consultation is the process of actively seeking information or advice prior to making a decision. It is the way in which residents can influence the delivery of services and the development of policies; it applies to both routine functions, as well as significant one-off decisions.

Consultation should be a dialogue - an on-going exchange of views - and councils, the police and health authorities have statutory duties to consult the public on a range of issues. However, we do not engage just because we have to...effective consultation can inform decision-making in the Council and ensures that we are meeting the needs of our citizens.

1.2 Purpose

This toolkit is intended to help officers across Oxford City Council to deliver effective consultation. Please contact the consultation team if you have any suggested improvements or questions.

1.3 Here to help

For advice and guidance on consultation projects, please contact the consultation officers:

Sadie Paige	spaige@oxford.gov.uk	01865 252250
Hamera Plume	hplume@oxford.gov.uk	01865 252057

(Hamera is on maternity leave until January 2015)

2 The Principles of Consultation

2.1 Context

With the adoption of the Community Engagement Policy Statement 2014 – 17, Oxford City Council agreed to a revised set of principles that apply to all forms of community engagement including consultation.

These principles of consultation have been adapted from ideas from the Consultation Institute, the Cabinet Office, and are informed by the feedback from residents provided by the December 2013 – March 2014 consultation activities.

2.2 Principles

1. **Flexibility:** Successful engagement requires a range of mechanisms to build and sustain a conversation with the community, with a broad or narrow audience as the issue requires. Broad principles and general ideas could be consulted on across a wide audience while the details of implementation might require input from a much smaller group. Flexibility requires that a range of engagement methods should be considered, including consultation, area forums, neighbourhood forums, community partnerships or through the work of the Communities and Neighbourhoods team.
2. **Proportionality:** Oxford City Council applies the principle of proportionality when deciding which method of community engagement to use in any particular situation. This means that the type and scale of involvement will be proportional to the potential impact of the proposal or decision being taken.
3. **Transparency and clarity:** is applied to the consultation processes. This means that the objectives must be clear since they vary according to type of issue and the stage in the decision-making or policy development process that has been reached.

It must be clear what is being consulted upon, and where decisions have already been made. To avoid creating unrealistic expectations, stakeholders and citizens must be told what they can or cannot influence by responding to consultation, and what the next steps will be.

Sufficient information should be available to enable stakeholders and residents to provide informed feedback. This will be provided both on a case-by-case basis through the provision of information related to specific consultations and engagement events and activities, and as part of Oxford City Council's on-going commitment to provide the public with balanced and objective information to assist the understanding of issues.

4. **Timeliness:** consultation should begin early in the policy development or decision-making process when views can genuinely be taken into account. Every effort will be made to make available the information an early stage to enable contestability and challenge.

Timeframes for consultation should allow stakeholders sufficient time to provide a considered response. When the consultation spans all or part of a holiday

period policy makers should consider what if any impact there may be and take appropriate mitigating action.

The amount of time required will depend on the nature and impact of the proposal (for example, the diversity of interested parties or the complexity of the issue, or even external events), and might typically vary between two and 12 weeks.

5. **Feedback:** policy and decision-makers must publish a summary of the responses to consultation that have been received and how they have been used; ensure that participants receive feedback about how their contributions have informed the outcome; ensure that information and viewpoints have been collated and objectively assessed; and ensure that there is a fair interpretation of the results.

Policy-makers must be prepared to change their plans as a result of consultation. Citizens who participate in any form of community engagement must believe that their voice will be taken seriously, and that things can be changed if there is support for change

6. **Inclusiveness and accessibility:** all stakeholders and citizens who have an interest in, or who would be affected by, a specific decision must have the opportunity to participate in consultation activities. This includes groups that are sometimes more challenging to engage such as younger people, older people, minority groups, and people with disabilities.

It means that information should be easy to comprehend, and consideration should be given to appropriate forms of consultation by providing different ways for people to be engaged, and ensuring that people are not excluded through barriers of language, culture or opportunity.

3 Overview of the Consultation Process

There is a defined process to follow for carrying out public involvement projects across the Council. The table below summarises the process these projects should follow.

			✓
PLAN	1	Discuss your need for public involvement with the consultation officers. Determine whether there is a need for project brief.	
	2	Complete the Project Brief and send it to the consultation officers. The brief will then be reviewed at the Public Involvement Board.	
	3	Once you have been notified that your public involvement activity has been approved you should inform the councillors whose wards will be involved and wider groups of councillors if appropriate.	
IMPLEMENT	4	Record the project on the City Council's consultation portal (eConsult) at www.oxford.gov.uk/consultation . If you require training on how to use the portal please contact the consultation officers. NB this is a requirement <u>whether or not</u> it involves an online survey.	
	5	Develop your survey with the support of the consultation officers	
	6	Pilot the questions you are proposing to ask.	
	7	Revise your questions if necessary following the pilot.	
	8	Run your public involvement exercise	
REPORT	9	Collate and analyse the results	

	10	<p>Produce a report including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The response rates • The groups that responded • The main findings • How you intend to use the results 	
	11	<p>Produce a newsletter summarising the main results. This should be sent to everybody who took part in your engagement project and also made available to the wider public on the portal at www.oxford.gov.uk/consultation.</p> <p>You must state how you intend to report all the findings back to those that participated in your consultation.</p> <p>The newsletter should also state how you intend to use the results.</p>	
REVIEW	12	<p>Carry out an evaluation. The completed evaluation form should then be sent to the Consultation Officers no later than 6 weeks after the closing date.</p>	

4 Planning your consultation

4.1 Public Involvement Project Brief Template

The project brief document, as highlighted in step 2 of the process, must be completed before any work on your public involvement project begins. All public involvement activities must follow the processes outlined below:

1. A project brief must be completed for all public involvement exercises. See below for the template that must be filled in, as well as guidance about public involvement. The template can also be found on the Intranet, under 'Processes and Procedures' and 'Consultation Process.'

Public Involvement Project Brief Template

2. The completed project brief must then be approved by the Public Involvement Board. The board meets monthly and is chaired by Tim Sadler and includes Angela Cristofoli, Jeremy Thomas, Peter McQuitty, Hamera Plume and Sadie Paige. See <http://occweb/intranet/consultation-toolkit.cfm> for dates
3. Internal staff surveys do not normally need to be approved by the Public Involvement Board and a lighter version of the project brief template is available.

[Project Brief Light Template](#)

The full process must be completed before any consultation or public involvement project can begin. The only exemptions from this requirement are individual development control and licensing consultations.

4.2 Questions to consider ahead of consultation

- What is the purpose of the consultation?
- Why would you like to carry out the consultation?
- Who is going to carry out the consultation?
- What has happened in the past around this situation?
- What is important to different people?
- What has been stated publicly about the situation?
- What are people's assumptions on the issues?
- What are different stakeholders' concerns?

4.3 What do we mean by stakeholders?

For all consultation projects, it is important to consider who your stakeholders are and how you intend to involve them. Stakeholders are by definition people who have a 'stake' in a situation. Identifying your stakeholders is key to a successful engagement exercise. The main groups usually consist of:

- The whole community. If you are talking about engaging 'the public' then you are probably thinking in terms of seeking public opinion about something, so you will want to run a process that involves a representative cross-section of your target population.
- A representative cross-section of the community. It may not be the public in general you want to involve, but people from a certain community, or even from a particular street.
- Specific groups in the community. These may be people of a particular ethnic community, people with special needs, or people with a common interest in a shared concern.
- Professionals, experts, and the organisations that have a statutory right to be involved. These are people and organisations who have to be involved in engagement and consultation either by law (hence 'statutory') or by virtue of the positions they hold, for example organisations such as the Environment Agency and local councils, and individuals such as Members of Parliament.

4.4 Identifying Stakeholders – who to involve, how to reach them?

- The purpose of your consultation will help to determine who you involve.
- If you are engaging stakeholders rather than just the public at large, it is better to involve too many than to miss out some who are crucial.
- Beware of 'consultation fatigue' caused by engaging the same people too often. There is a limit to the number of times that most people will respond to consultations. If you want to engage the same people repeatedly you would be well advised to ask them to join some sort of panel or group that meets regularly.
- Equally, beware of engaging the 'wrong' people. For example, some 'community leaders' are self-appointed or designated as leaders by the media. In reality they may have no mandate to speak on behalf of the local community; ensure you do not solely rely on such people for your engagement process.
- Who is or will be affected, positively or negatively, by what you are doing or proposing to do? For example, communities, employees, customers, contractors, suppliers, partners, trade unions and shareholders.

- Who holds official positions relevant to what you are doing?
- Who runs organisations with relevant interests?
- Who has been involved in any similar issues in the past? For example, regulators, Government agencies and politicians at regional or national levels, non-Government organisations and other national interest groups.

4.5 Key considerations when selecting your target audience

Representativeness

Representative audiences are important in consultation. A representative sample is of crucial importance when you need to gather the views of the public at large, for example when a new development has been proposed. However, it is less important if you are carrying out engagement relevant to a particular group, e.g. wheelchair users.

Sampling

Sampling involves engaging a small number of people and, provided that the sample is representative, extrapolating the results to work out what a much larger number thinks about a certain issue. The larger your sample, the more accurate your results will be. There are three basic sampling methods:

Random sampling: To do this you need a list of the people you need to sample, then you simply pick say, 10% of them by choosing every tenth name.

Stratified sampling: This involves a bit more work, but the results will be more representative. You begin by dividing the target population into sub-categories – say, single women, or people living in a certain area. Then you pick a random selection of that group, and combine all the random selections so that eventually your random selection reflects the composition of the total population.

Quota sampling: This involves finding a quota of people representing certain sub-categories of the target population – so you might ask an interviewer to stop and talk to 150 men under the age of 25, or 100 people over 60 and so forth.

Inclusiveness

It is vital that your consultation avoids the ‘usual suspects’ and reaches the ‘hard to reach’.

The ‘usual suspects’

People should not be excluded because they regularly attend meetings and get involved. However, we should also ensure we do not rely on them as our sole audience for consultation. Often useful ideas and observations come from those who are less familiar with the issues as they can bring different perspectives.

Therefore it is worth making efforts to go beyond the 'usual suspects' and thinking of people whose contribution could be valuable because of their viewpoint or expertise, or who could be excluded unless special efforts are made to include them (e.g. minority black and ethnic groups, special needs groups).

The 'hard to reach'

The flip side of the 'usual suspects' point is that you have to make special efforts to ensure that certain sections of the population are included in any engagement exercise. These are often designated as the 'hard to reach'. These groups include minority ethnic groups, the disabled and young people. But also consider other groups such as commuters, young professionals and parents with young children.

To ensure consultations are inclusive we must ensure the following conditions are met:

- There is accessible and targeted information about the community engagement.
- There is assistance with transport to the meeting where needed.
- There is an accessible building with accessible lavatory facilities.
- There is communication support; e.g. induction loop, interpreters.
- There is accommodation for personal assistants/helpers.
- There is supporting documentation in accessible formats.

We must also:

- Check access needs at the start.
- Ask the right questions, i.e. about barriers faced rather than about impairments.
- Ensure people speak one at a time at a pace to suit other participants and interpreters.
- Allow additional time for communicating with people who have sensory or learning impairments.
- Use appropriate and respectful language.
- Allow enough time for breaks.

Matching methods to people

Think, early on, about the engagement methods that you can use in relation to certain types of stakeholder. For example, if you are speaking to people with low levels of literacy a questionnaire may not be a good idea, and there is no point in having a public meeting designed to attract parents with children of school age during the school holidays.

5 Consultation Methods

Finding new and interesting ways to engage people is essential but can also be challenging. To find the best method for you bear the following questions in mind before embarking on a consultation exercise.

- What is the purpose of the engagement process?
- What would you like to have at the end of the process?
- Which particular stakeholder groups would you like to involve and what special needs do they have, if any?
- How interactive would you like your process to be?

Comparison of Consultation Methods

Method	Advantages	Disadvantages	Cost
Survey (face-to-face)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Useful for benchmarking against previous findings. • Statistically sound, you can ensure it is representative of the population. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Respondents cannot talk freely if the structure of the survey is too rigid. • There is little time for respondents to think about their answers. • Time consuming. 	£££
Survey (on-line)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cheap. • Allows consultation with a large number of people. • Can be used to access views from people that don't take part in traditional consultation methods such as attending public meetings. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Will miss those that do not use our website. • Can be unrepresentative unless you include a monitoring form. • No control over who completes the survey. 	£
Survey (postal)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Can access a large number of people. • Good when dealing with a sensitive subject. • Can target groups which are often excluded. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tightly structured surveys can constrain responses. • Can have a poor response rate. • No control over who completes the survey. 	££
Focus Groups	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enables participants to discuss topics in detail. • In groups participants can use each other to springboard ideas off one another. • Not prescriptive. • Can be useful for complex issues. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It is not statistically reliable as the numbers involved in a group are quite small. • Some members of the group may be more vocal than others and try to take over the group. 	££

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Can help to include people that are sometimes 'hard to reach' 		
Leaflets	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A good method when you want to inform people about a particular issue. • Relatively inexpensive to produce 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • May not be read by all that receive it. • Not suitable for those who cannot read or have visual impairments 	£
Citizens' Jury	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enables participants to make an informed judgement. • Encourages active citizenship. • Empowers participants by encouraging them to make decisions based on the information that has been presented to them. • A small number of citizens are involved, usually 12. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Participants' views may become unrepresentative of the community as a result of being more informed than others that have not been part of the Jury. 	£££
Citizens' Panel	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A cost-effective resource for all types of consultation. • A good way of building relationships with members of the community. • Encourages active citizenship. • Regular refreshment • Of the panel can keep it representative of the community. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Large amount of maintenance and administration involved. • If the panel is not refreshed regularly it could become unrepresentative of the community 	££
Public Meeting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Can engage with a large group of people in one setting 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Low turnout can lead to poor results 	££
Exhibition	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Displays can be clearly set out. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • People that are unable to attend will be excluded. 	££
Media / Press release/ Radio/ Television/ Website	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Useful when you need to give information to a large number of people. • Quick way to get out information. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Only goes to people that read certain newspapers, or listen/watch particular radio and TV stations. • Media can put their own 	Varies

		slant on a story.	
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5.1 Surveys

Surveys (and questionnaires) are one of the most popular consultation methods. They can be used to gather public views to proposals or find out what people think of certain services.

It is always a good idea to test how the questions work in practice and to ensure the questions you are asking will produce the information you want.

They can be used when consulting with a large number of people and are an excellent way of collecting quantitative data. They are also useful for benchmarking, if you would like to compare results over time. Also, the fact that there are several potential delivery methods make surveys a flexible way to get responses. However, it is harder than it looks to write a good questionnaire and a poor format can lead to misleading results.

Method

1. Decide which type of questionnaire or survey you want to use:
 - Deliberative: gives people information before asking their opinion
 - Qualitative: asks people to respond in their own words
 - Quantitative: asks people to react to various propositions by ticking boxes or marking answers against a scale.
2. Decide the delivery method:
 - Telephone: people are telephoned at home and the interviewer completes the form
 - Interview on the street: interviewer with a clipboard approaches people and asks questions
 - Interview at home: interviewer arranges to visit
 - Postal: form completed by householder and returned
 - Online: form completed online
3. Decide how you will manage, collate, analyse and use the responses.
4. Draft the survey or questionnaire taking your answers to the above into account.
5. Ask at least five people to complete it. Consider whether your questions have provoked the type of responses that you want.
6. Issue the questionnaire.
7. Receive responses and thank respondents (if you asked for contact details).
8. Collate, analyse and publish the results, and tell people how you will use them.

Hints for drafting questions for surveys and questionnaires

1. Try to keep questions as short as possible. A few carefully focused questions usually produce more useful responses than a larger number of general ones
2. Use simple words: people will not answer questions they don't immediately understand
3. Start by asking relatively straightforward questions and then those requiring more complex answers
4. Group together questions investigating similar themes
5. If you are using tick boxes, vary the question format so that people have to think about each response rather than just ticking the same box throughout. You should also alert people to the fact that the format changes
6. If you give people a number of alternatives, ensure you give them enough choice to ensure they think about the answer
7. If you give people a scale on which to score something, tell them which end is high and which low
8. Guard against phrasing questions in such a way that they reflect your own presuppositions or biases
9. Be careful not to lead people in particular directions either through the wording of the question or through any examples you use
10. Avoid composite questions such as "What are the advantages and disadvantages of public transport?" Separate them
11. Where possible avoid questions including words that need defining, such as 'regularly'
12. Avoid questions that are likely to have predictable answers. For example, "Is a safer neighbourhood important to you?"
13. Always put a closing date on questionnaires.

5.2 Focus Groups

Focus groups are groups of 6–12 people carefully selected to be representative of a designated part of the population. They are used primarily for intensive research designed to tease out the depths, subtleties and nuances of opinion. They need to be carefully facilitated.

Focus groups can explain what lies behind an opinion, or how people approach an issue. But they should not be used as a substitute for engaging directly with actual stakeholders in situations where merely knowing who thinks what is not enough. A warning: the term 'focus group' is coming to be used to describe any small meeting of people, regardless of whether they are representative and of the purpose for which the group has been convened.

Interaction between participants, enabled by the small size of the group and the skill of the facilitator, can be very productive. Members can be carefully recruited to fit specific profiles. Focus groups enable a facilitator to design a very precise process that will examine the issues in the way required.

The smallness of the group allows the facilitator to get to the heart of difficult issues. Focus groups can obtain opinions from people who would not respond to other methods because they are not comfortable with writing or because of other constraints.

Some people have more confidence to participate in groups than others. This may result in an imbalance in discussion. Variations of ability and articulacy within the group may inhibit some members.

Method

1. Decide exactly how a focus group process will contribute to your overall engagement process and what specifically you want the use of them to achieve.
2. Identify groups of 8–12 people to form focus groups, ensuring they are representative of either the whole community or of the particular groups with whom you want to engage (or hire a market research company to do the work for you).
3. You will probably have to offer an incentive to attend. It needs to be enough to be attractive but be careful it does not tend to distort the representativeness of participation.
4. Engage a skilled facilitator to run the groups and work with him/her to devise questions and prompts, ground rules and briefing materials if required, and a co-facilitator to be responsible for recording the process.
5. Book venue(s), catering and childcare arrangements if necessary.
6. Produce a report of the process and the results, ensuring participants receive copies.

5.3 Newsletters

Newsletters provide the opportunity to set out plans or options and give feedback to stakeholders on the progress of a project. They are often used when an on-going process requires regular updating and they are one of the cheapest and most effective methods of keeping people informed. Newsletters are most useful when they are used in addition to other forms of consultation activities and are a good way to give people regular updates on a project's progression.

They should consist of key findings, be of a high quality and kept brief and to the point. It is also useful to include other local information in the newsletter that the recipient may find interesting.

It is a relatively cheap way of reaching a large number of people and is an excellent way to benchmark changes over time. It also allows you to control the flow of information that stakeholders will receive

The drawbacks are that newsletters can be seen as impersonal and so will be discarded by some as soon as they receive them

Method

Variable, depending on the numbers of newsletters to be produced and the quality used. If professionally written and produced they can become expensive.

Using this method:

1. Call a meeting to decide the purpose of the newsletter and who it is aimed at.
2. Research methods and costs of production and distribution.
3. Produce a 'dummy' to give you a clearer idea of the work involved and the practicalities.
4. Draw up a realistic schedule for producing and distributing it, and a list of the topics the first few issues should cover.
5. Call another meeting with the results of the above to decide whether to go ahead.
6. Produce and distribute your first newsletter.
7. Evaluate reactions and tweak the next one accordingly.

5.4 Citizens' Panel

A Citizens' Panel uses a representative sample of the public to obtain their views in order to ascertain what the community, as a whole, thinks about a particular issue. To ensure Panels do not become the same people giving us their views over time, it is important to refresh the Panel on a regular basis.

'Talkback' is our Citizens Panel in Oxford. It is made up of 1,000 residents over the age of 16 that are representative of the city's population. The panel are sent 2 surveys per year on a range of topics in either postal or online format. If you would like to submit a topic to a Talkback survey you should contact the Consultation Officers.

Talkback provides an immediately available means to assess opinion on specific issues. It overcomes the problem of having to recruit for each separate exercise. The response rate from Talkback is usually much higher than from the population as a whole as Panel members have expressed an interest in getting involved in consultation exercises, so tend to respond when they are asked.

Talkback can be used in a variety of ways, from questionnaires sent to all members when a sense of local opinion is required, to small numbers being recruited to attend a focus group meeting. Questionnaires are sent electronically as well as via the post, a variety of delivery methods increases the chances of receiving a high response rate. Panels are an excellent way to ensure there is a regular means of communication with a cross-section of opinion.

Results can deliver valuable trend information based on the survey being repeated over time which makes them an excellent benchmarking tool.

To maintain citizens' interest in the process it is important to give them feedback. Newsletters are used for this. In addition it is possible to use samples from the Panel for Citizens' Juries or other forms of discussion groups. Also at the end of each year, an annual newsletter is produced which highlights all the changes that have been made as a result of the Talkback surveys during that particular year.

Method

1. Contact the Consultation Officers if you would like to submit a topic to a Talkback Survey or if you would like to use members of the panel for a focus group.
2. The Consultation Officers will work with you to develop your questions for the Talkback survey.
3. Once the questions have been developed, a Pilot will take place to test your questions.
4. Any necessary changes will be made to the Talkback survey questions as a result of the pilot.
5. The Consultation Officers will run the Talkback survey.
6. The survey results will be analysed.
7. A Talkback report will be produced and circulated to the relevant Service Areas

5.5 Public Meetings and Workshops

Public meetings are normally large meetings where information about plans, decisions taken and options available are presented to the public. They are a conventional way of involving the public in discussions about schemes of work and projects.

To make the meeting more interactive a meeting can, after the initial presentation, be split into smaller discussion groups. The groups can then report back their discussion to the meeting, This encourages those that are not confident speaking in public to still get involved.

Good design and preparation, an experienced facilitator and a suitable venue at a suitable time can all help to make a successful public meeting.

A good public meeting enables all participants to say what they want to without feeling intimidated or inhibited. It also leaves people knowing what will happen as a result of it and how the results will be used.

Workshops are similar to public meetings in that they involved members of the public with the main difference being they are usually invited to attend the meeting and are usually asked to carry out some actions during the meeting. The method that applies to public meetings can also be used when holding workshops.

Method

1. Decide what you want your public meeting to achieve and therefore who should come to it
2. Identify a series of steps from beginning to end that will achieve these purposes.
3. Ask yourself what the participants will want from the meeting, and whether your steps will meet their needs as well as yours
4. Book a suitable venue, estimating the likely number of participants. Check heating, lighting, ventilation, electrical equipment, coffee/lunch break arrangements and house rules, e.g. emergency exits.
5. Identify a chair or facilitator and speakers.
6. Send out invitations and/or advertise the meeting.
7. Prepare background materials.
8. Hold the meeting, record key points visibly during it and provide participants with comment sheets so that those who are unable or too inhibited to speak can still make their points
9. After the meeting report the results to participants and thank them for attending.
10. De-brief and evaluate.

5.6 Exhibitions and Roadshows

Exhibitions are used to take the message about plans and schemes of work to dispersed audiences. Apart from the desire to reflect the interests of different geographical areas, another reason for travelling around with the exhibition material is that it increases the number of different people that get to see it. They can be taken out to where people are, such as schools, shopping centres and housing estates, rather than having to attract people to them, and they can appeal to groups, such as young people, who may not respond to document or meetings-based methods.

Care must be taken to ensure that the exhibition material is readable, interesting and easy to understand. Visual displays are particularly useful when you are consulting on proposed design or planning issues. These displays help give people a clear sense of what is involved and show how schemes would look and function.

Exhibitions can also be used to gather immediate reactions from those who see them. They are also good when access to local knowledge or concerns is required.

Exhibitions involve a significant amount of research around venues and the best times to hold the exhibition. To ensure maximum attendance they must be held in the right places at the right times. They are particularly useful when the audience would be more responsive to a visual image rather than written material, for example young children, older persons and those whose first language is not English.

Roadshows and exhibitions are time-consuming for staff that are attending and there must be a sufficient number of staff that are fully briefed for the exhibition/roadshow to be effective.

Exhibitions also allow you to get feedback from those attending, although you must treat this with caution as the people attending may not be fully representative of their community.

Method

1. Decide if an exhibition or roadshow is a good way to explain your project e.g. is it something that can be best explained visually?
2. If it is, establish the availability and suitability of venues, how long it will take to produce materials, and when staff will be available.
3. As soon as the materials are available, gather as many people as possible and ask them to study all the materials. Then go over each item in depth asking if the meaning is clear, if it explains issues at the right level of detail, and if the materials are visually attractive.
4. Edit and test the materials again.
5. Pick the staff who will attend and brief them on the questions they may be asked and how to answer them.
6. Arrive at the venues in good time to set up the exhibition and test equipment.

7. Welcome visitors and try to be as open as possible about all aspects of the project. If a question is asked that cannot be answered immediately, take the person's contact details and respond to them as soon as you can.
8. If you are running a sequence of exhibitions, hold a debrief session at the close of each to record questions asked and answers given to establish some consistency of responses.

5.5 Using the Media

The media – press, radio, television and internet – is an important channel for disseminating information to the community at large or to target audiences. Television and radio in particular offer a means to communicate with groups of people who might not otherwise seek information or who have difficulties with written material. The media can target information at transport users; for example, the radio can be used to reach commuters travelling by car.

The use of the media is useful when public awareness about a proposal or issue needs to be raised and local debate promoted. The media is also an excellent way to promote dates of roadshows/exhibitions/public meetings or telephone numbers.

The media can be used alongside other public involvement methods to raise awareness of events or services. Staff should receive training before dealing with the media. Any communication with the press must go via the Press Office. You should not make any direct contact with the press without agreement from the Press Office.

Method

1. Contact the Press Office to decide on the most appropriate form of media – if it requires an interview and explanation then a radio interview may be best. If it's to let people know of dates and venues of an event then a press article may be better.
2. If you plan to feature in a local newspaper, draft a press release about your consultation event and submit it to the press office. For advice on how to write a press release contact the press officer.
3. If you plan to feature on the radio ensure you have received media training and are prepared for the interview. Contact the Press Office if you require media training.

5.6 Mystery Shopping

There are many organisations that offer mystery shoppers to organisations to 'test' their services. The general format of the exercise is someone who is unknown to the Council would try out a service and they report back on their experience as a way of testing service quality. If the 'shopper' is properly briefed they can test, for instance, whether correct advice and information is being given out or whether standards or service provision have been adequately met.

Before embarking on this method it is important to ensure that the right questions are being asked and that shoppers are familiar with services and understand the responses they might receive. The use of trained mystery shoppers can provide precise and detailed feedback.

This is a useful method to use when you are testing the clarity of signing and directional advice, when different aspects of service quality are to be measured and compared or when services involve a strong person to person (or subjective) aspect such as issues of courtesy, knowledge, assistance etc.

Method

1. Decide on the service that you would like to be mystery shopped.
2. Design a brief that you would like the mystery shopper to test, e.g. housing advice service or making an enquiry at a leisure centre.
3. Appoint the mystery shopper.
4. Design the questions/scenario you would like the mystery shopper to test.
5. Organise a date/time to carry out the mystery shopper test.
6. Once the test has been carried out evaluate the results.
7. Feedback the results to the service that has been evaluated.

5.7 Conferences and Seminars

Conferences and Seminars differ from both public meetings and workshops. While public meetings are primarily information-oriented, and workshops action-oriented, the primary purposes of most conferences and seminars are analysis and discussion.

The format of such events tends to be presentations followed by discussion, sometimes with specialist breakout sessions (which may be referred to as 'workshops') for informal discussion.

This method tends to appeal more to professionals and experts as opposed to 'ordinary' people. Therefore it might be useful if you are trying to consult with a group of professionals but not if you would like a representative sample of people from the local community. It's a good forum for bringing a range of experts together to discuss issues in detail

Method

1. If you are intent upon using this method as part of an engagement strategy, decide what it is going to achieve, who will participate and how it contributes to your other engagement objectives.
2. If you are sure that it is the right thing to do, draft invitations and an outline programme that will achieve your objectives.
3. Issue a call for papers and abstracts (usually in parallel with invitations to attend).
4. Book an appropriate venue.
5. Assess abstracts, identify speakers and invite them.
6. Draft publicity material and mail-shot possible participants.
7. Invite someone to chair the event, or facilitate if it is relatively informal.
8. Produce a report of the event, including all the papers delivered, and distribute among participants.

5.8 Open Days and Drop-In Sessions

Open days and drop-in sessions offer opportunities for people to talk to staff, seek information, discuss local issues or proposals, or simply chat about the things that concern them. The essence of this approach is that it is informal

From the organisation's point of view it provides an opportunity to give information, show an interest in people's concerns, answer questions, and generally show people what goes on behind the public face of the organisation. It's a good way of reaching out to the community and seeking informal contact and it can fit into people's personal timetables.

Staff need to be briefed and some sort of introductory exhibition is usually a good idea. It is also a good idea to collect as many names and contact details as possible: the people who come may well be prepared to respond positively to other opportunities for engagement

Open days can be quite time intensive so you need to ensure staff have sufficient time to allocate to them. It is also difficult to predict attendance so you should market and promote the days to ensure as many people as possible are aware of them.

Method

1. Decide how holding an open day or drop-in session will contribute to your overall engagement activities
2. Identify whether there are particular sections of the community who might welcome this opportunity, or who would respond to this method of engagement. Think about what this might mean in terms of which of your staff should be involved
3. Identify general staffing requirements, where visitors will be welcomed, and assess impact on other duties
4. Decide what information should be available to visitors, and in what languages to produce it
5. Decide what you will seek in return and draft questionnaires or feedback sheets accordingly
6. Publicise dates, times, purposes and attractions
7. Organise refreshments and/or childcare
8. Brief staff
9. Meet and greet visitors
10. De-brief, evaluate and decide how to follow up

5.9 Using the Internet and Our Website

Community engagement is possible via our website. We have an online consultation system, eConsult, that allows all consultations to be stored in one area of our website at www.oxford.gov.uk/consultation.

Web based consultations offer a number of advantages: people can participate without having to travel to meetings, they save paper, they enable people to focus on the issues that particularly interest them and they work well for people who feel worried by speaking in public or for those that find writing English is easier than speaking it.

In order to run successful online consultations It is important that our website is easily navigable, the information is understandable and of relevance to users.

It is also vital that the needs of particular groups (e.g. visually impaired, black and minority ethnic groups) are considered and addressed. When there are particular needs to be addressed, e.g. visual impairments, facilities such as Text to Speech on our website, which reads web pages aloud, can address this.

Our eConsult system lets us present issues to stakeholders and the public easily and clearly, encouraging high levels of participation and response. It also lets us manage all our consultation needs through a single, flexible system.

On our website we can create and carry out large or small, private or public public engagement exercises easily and quickly. The eConsult system is designed to offer a wide range of feedback mechanisms, including interactive questionnaires, online discussions and commenting on specific sections in consultation documents.

It also lets us convert documents, questionnaires, communications and processes into hard copy form, to ensure that offline consultation can be managed in tandem.

Through our online consultation system we can:

- improve coordination of all our consultation activities, avoid unnecessary duplication and maintain an electronic record of all consultation activity
- provide a framework for best practice and consistency across our organisation
- enhance communications with participants, before, during and after each consultation activity
- build up a self-maintaining stakeholder database that can be used to profile and target interested parties
- save time in assembling evidence on which to base a decision
- automatically analyse feedback and increase efficiency in data processing
- quickly and efficiently publish summaries, formal responses and individual responses as required
- decrease errors and costs normally associated with data take-on and validation
- dramatically reduce costs on print production and posting, and improve your sustainability rating

5.10 Social Media

Essentially, social media incorporates the online technology and methods through which people can share content, personal opinions and swap different perspectives. Social media website content can come in many shapes and forms:

- Text - text is used to put across opinions or write blog posts.
- Images - images and photos can be used to convey information in illustrative form.
- Audio - social media lets you create podcasts (Podcasts are audio files that are automatically delivered directly to your desktop computer, and can be transferred to your iPod or other MP3 player) for users to download. Podcasting has now become popular as an alternative way of providing 'radio' type content that can be listened to whenever, wherever and as many times as the listener wants.
- Video - video sites mean that you'll be able to record a video and then then allow people all over the world to see it.

- The most popular types of social media websites are huge at the moment. A few examples of these social media websites are:
 - Social networking - websites that allows you to create a personal profile about yourself then chat, discuss and share information with others such as friends and family. Prime examples of social networking sites are Facebook and Twitter.
 - Wikis - wikis are websites that allow you to create, edit and share information about a subject or topic. Wikipedia, for instance, is one of the world's most popular wikis.
 - Video sharing - video-sharing sites allow you to upload and share your personal videos with the rest of the web community. A perfect example of a video sharing website is YouTube.
 - Photo sharing - photo-sharing websites allow users to upload pictures and images to a personal account which can then be viewed by web users the world over. Flickr acts as a great example of a successful photo-sharing site.
 - News aggregation - news aggregators provide a list of the latest news stories published by users from a range of different websites. Digg, for instance, is one of the web's largest news aggregators with one of the most dedicated communities.
 - Social bookmarking - social bookmarking sites allow users to publicly bookmark web pages they find valuable in order to share them with other internet users.
 - Microblogging - these websites allow you to post micro blog-like posts to announce what you are currently doing. Twitter is a good example of a presence app.

This list is by no means exhaustive and there are many more types of social media sites available on the internet. The social media front is moving very fast and new and more innovative social media sites are springing up all the time.

What to do if you want to use Social Media

If you would like to use a form of social media such as set up a Facebook page or Twitter account, you should contact the Website Manager (Chris Lee, clee@oxford.gov.uk) in the Policy, Culture and Communications department to discuss your request.

Before you request access to use any social media you must ensure you have adequate resources to manage the process. This includes regularly monitoring the content of all messages that you receive in response to your consultation, managing the expectations of those participating, responding to messages where required and recording all consultation information on the City Council website.

Any messages from participants that contain offensive language, incorrect information or are vexatious must be removed. Social media sites must be regularly monitored in order to prevent this from happening wherever possible.

Online methods are a cost-effective way of hearing people's views on issues and they are also useful as they allow people to say what they want on a subject at any time of the day or night. They are good when it is important that participants have access to information on a regular basis to ensure effective participation. They are also a good way of potentially involving large numbers of people.

However, online methods should be used in addition to other methods rather than instead of otherwise you risk excluding people who don't have access to the internet from your consultation. Participation can also be confined to the very dedicated and may therefore be unrepresentative. This should also not be a substitute for meeting and talking to people face to face.

6 Incentive Guidelines

Introduction

These guidelines have been put together to ensure consistency across the organisation in the incentives we offer residents when participating in consultation. The document also outlines some conditions under which free prize draws must be operated at Oxford City Council.

Free prize draws

There is no specific legislation governing free prize draws but there are common law principles such as:

- Transparency
- Equity
- Fairness

All these must clearly be incorporated into the administration of free prize draws by those researchers who organise them as an incentive for survey participation.

Respondents should not be required to do anything other than agree to participate in a consultation exercise or return a questionnaire to be eligible for entry in to a free prize draw.

No incentive should be offered that requires respondents to spend any money.

Respondents should not be offered price discounts as incentives because claiming the incentive would involve the respondents paying the balance after the discount.

The offer of monetary vouchers is permissible because this does not necessitate expenditure on the part of the respondents.

The use of incentives to stimulate response must not be used as a means of collecting respondents' personal details. These should be kept separate from the completed questionnaires or response forms.

Permission to use a respondent's details must be specifically sought and must not be linked or be a condition of entry to a free prize draw. Failure to fully complete a free interview or questionnaire should not disqualify a respondent from entry to a free prize draw. Respondents should be clearly informed before participating of the following facts:

- The closing date for receipt of entry.
- The nature of the prizes.
- If a cash alternative can be substituted for any prize.
- How and when winners will be notified of results.
- How and when winners will be announced.

Unless otherwise stated in advance, prize winners should receive their prizes within six weeks after the draw has been held.

Winners in a free prize draw should be selected in a manner that ensures fair application of the laws of chance. The process by which winners will be selected must involve a clear audit trail and an independent draw. This process will not be made public but can be explained to individual respondents when specifically

requested.

A poor response or an inferior quality of entries is not an acceptable basis for extending the duration of a free prize draw or withholding prizes unless the draw organisers have announced their intention to do so at the outset.

Incentives

As above for free prize draws:

- No incentive should be offered that requires the respondent to spend any money.
- Respondents should not be offered price discounts as incentives because claiming the incentive would involve the respondents paying the balance after the discount.
- The offer of monetary vouchers is permissible because this does not necessitate expenditure on the part of the respondents.

Suggested guidelines

Some research has been done which looks at the impact of incentives and whether it improves response rate. The following points are worth considering when deciding on whether to use an incentive or not:

- Think carefully before offering an incentive. We are a public sector organisation and there are discussions going on about the appropriateness of offering incentives to take part in consultation
- It is recommended that those who attend a focus group are offered an incentive. You can offer the incentive after the event as this allows those who do not wish to have one to opt out. It is also an opportunity to send it with feedback from the session.
- Offering an incentive, e.g. entering a prize draw for completing a survey is becoming more and more popular. However, there is debate as to how much of an impact this has on the response rate. It is recommended to always enclose a prepaid addressed envelope and if the survey is long (15–20+ questions) to offer something. For smaller surveys it is less important and perhaps offer something which is related to the survey, e.g. for a fitness survey – a free exercise class.
- Where possible try and offer an incentive from a service we provide, e.g. a Slice card.

Table 1: Some examples of the type of incentive you might offer

Engagement Method	Example of an incentive (if needed/required)
1–2 hour focus group/workshop	£10–20 high street vouchers
2 hour+ workshop	£25+ high street vouchers
Questionnaire prize draws	Related to survey, e.g. free Slice card, game of tennis, free exercise class etc. Or £25+ high street vouchers
Consulting with young children	Stickers/Balloons

What not to do

Support individual retail outlets.

Offer food. There are always concerns over allergies, healthy eating policies, supporting fair trade etc.

Transport costs

It is advised that as an organiser of a consultation event, e.g. a focus group, you need to offer to cover travel expenses.

Useful tips

Enclose a free stamped addressed envelope.

7 What is a pilot?

A pilot is a way to test your consultation method to make sure it works before you carry it out for real. It is also a good way to measure what works and doesn't work with your engagement method so that you can make any changes necessary to it to ensure it works well.

A pilot usually involves getting a small group of people to test your engagement under the same conditions in which the real consultation will take place. The group are then asked for their feedback and the engagement method is revised accordingly.

Why is it important to pilot?

By carrying out a pilot you will limit your chances of missing something key in your consultation. A pilot will throw up any issues with the consultation such as poor wording of questions, spelling errors or unclear instructions.

When is the best time to carry out a pilot?

As soon as your consultation method is ready to test. By carrying out your pilot as early as possible you will be leaving enough time to make any necessary changes should the Pilot identify problems with your engagement method.

8 Evaluation

All public engagement projects should be evaluated after they have closed.

At the end of each public involvement exercise we should evaluate how things have gone. The evaluation criteria below, provides a set of questions that you should use. It is useful to think about these evaluation questions before you develop your project plan.

Purposes	<ul style="list-style-type: none">■ What were the purposes?■ Were they achieved?■ If not, why not?
Methods	<ul style="list-style-type: none">■ What methods were used?■ Did they achieve the desired results in terms of levels of participation and type of response?■ Which methods worked best for which types of people?■ Did the process go according to the intended timetable?
Participation	<ul style="list-style-type: none">■ How many people participated?■ Did all key stakeholders participate?■ If participation was intended to be representative, was this achieved?■ If it was intended to reach several different groups, was this achieved?■ What efforts were made to reach commonly underrepresented groups?■ What methods were used to encourage participation?■ Did they work?
Results	<ul style="list-style-type: none">■ Were the results – in terms of enough people responding usefully – satisfactory?■ How easy were they to analyse and interpret?■ What form did any final report of the results take?■ How were results communicated to participants?
Outcomes	<ul style="list-style-type: none">■ What were the results of the exercise?■ What has changed or will be changed as a result of the exercise?
Participant comments	<ul style="list-style-type: none">■ What comments were made by participants about the engagement process?
Cost	<ul style="list-style-type: none">■ What did the process cost?■ Were the results worth the money?

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To: City Executive Board

Date: 3 July 2014

Report of: Regeneration and Major Projects Service Manager

Title of Report: Disposal of Sub Station Sites

Summary and Recommendations

Purpose of report: To seek approval to the disposal of the freehold interest in 83 sub station sites to Scottish and Southern Energy PLC

Key Decision? Yes

Executive lead member: Councillor Ed Turner, Executive Member for Finance, Asset Management and Public Health

Policy Framework: Corporate Plan

Recommendations:

1. To approve the disposal of the freehold interest in 83 sub station sites on the terms set out in the Not for Publication Confidential Appendix 3 of this report. The detailed provisions of the sale are to be approved by the Executive Director, City Regeneration.
2. Grant authority to the Executive Director, City Regeneration, in consultation with the Board Member, to vary or extend the sub station sites to be included in the transaction provided the transaction continues to represent best consideration.

Appendices to report:

Appendix 1 – Schedule of Properties

Appendix 2 - Risk Register

Appendix 3 - Not for publication confidential appendix

Background

1. The Council currently owns the freehold interest in some 92 sub station sites across Oxford with the properties currently leased to Scottish and Southern Energy PLC (SSE) on a variety of lease terms with approximately 50% expiring between 2042 and 2045.
2. The income stream is low (currently approximately £14,000 per annum) and administration and management of the portfolio is time consuming and burdensome given the property management, rent negotiations and collection and accounting etc involved.
3. As the properties are largely of non-strategic importance and are poorly performing it is appropriate and in accordance with the principles outlined in the Asset Management Plan to consider disposal.
4. SSE approached the Council with a proposal to acquire the freehold interests in the sub-station sites and following negotiations, terms have been agreed for a private treaty sale of 83 of the 92 sites. (see 1.6 below) A property schedule is contained in **Appendix 1**.
5. The terms of the transaction are as per the Not for Publication Confidential Appendix 3 to this report and the Council enters into these arrangements on the basis that the price agreed represents best value and good consideration for the portfolio given its low current income stream to the Council. In this way officers consider that the Council has met its obligations under s123 Local Government Act 1972.
6. The sites comprise small areas of land mainly within the Council's housing estates and have limited alternative development or other potential and disposal will not interfere or restrict the Council's ability to redevelop or re-configure the housing estates at some future date.
7. A small number of sites (9) will be retained by the Council with leases to SSE in view of their strategic/ future development impacts.
8. The disposal will be on the basis of a restriction on SSE to use the sites as sub-stations only.
9. Carter Jonas, a firm of external Property Consultants provided valuation advice to support the negotiation process and confirmation that the price represents best consideration in accordance with S123 of the Local Government Act 1972

Planning Implications

10. There are no planning implications. The sites are to continue in their existing use

Risk Implications

11. A risk assessment has been undertaken and the risk register is attached as Appendix 2.

Sustainability and Climate Change Implications

12. None

Equalities Implications

13. No implications arising

Financial Implications

14. Capital proceeds and reduction of rental income as per the Not for Publication Confidential Appendix 3

Legal Implications

15. The power to dispose of land is contained within Section 123 of the Local Government Act 1972 for best consideration

Name and contact details of author:-

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List of background papers: none

APPENDIX – 1 Property Schedule

OXFORD CITY COUNCIL

Purchase of Electricity Sub-Stations by SSE

Freehold Title	SWRPS	Leasehold Title	Substation Name
ON292785	16500	ON23734	Barton Road
ON292424	11851	ON19590	Barton Village Road
ON8255	16515	Unknown	Bonar Road
ON7938	16516	Unknown	Boundary Brook Road
ON288392	16517	ON285377	Brambling Way, Blackbird Leys
ON6635	16521	ON286607	Bridge Street Osney
ON41398	13366	ON65342	Calves Close
ON294113	14043	ON206800	Chapel Lane
Not registered	16548	Unknown	City Motors
ON291697	16554	ON15724	Comfrey Road
ON98105	00222/00223	ON95555	Cowley Local
ON4652	16567	ON13247	Cowley Police HQ
ON292324	11855	ON291837	Cranley Road
ON26149	16572	ON10844	Croft Road
ON273760	16576	Unknown	Danvers Road
ON288470	16579	Unknown	Devereaux Place
ON25237	16580	ON83894	Diamond Cottages
ON291439	16583	ON22644	Druce Way
ON21950	16589	ON49090	Edmund Road
ON289378	16592	ON286605	Evenlode Tower
ON15882	16595	ON9668	Express Distribution

ON292424	11856	ON12422	Fettiplace
ON291082	16599	ON15358	Field Avenue
ON288470	16600	Unknown	Fiennes Road
ON7938	16607	Unknown	George Moore Close
ON288474	16608	ON285595	Giles Road, Littlemore
ON26151	16610	Unknown	Girdlestone Road
ON13814	16612	ON285320	Gladstone Road, Headington
ON15882	16620	ON9669	H&M Transport
ON24996	16902	ON294864	Harbord Road 38
ON291124	16624	ON286604	Harebell Road
ON26045	16633	ON23941	Hawthorn Avenue
ON285314	16645	ON285314	Holley Crescent
ON292075	16898	ON288706	Hollow Way 114
ON292328	30706	ON28690	Horspath Road Sports Pavillion
ON15401	16664	Unknown	Kersington Crescent
ON21862	16674	Unknown	Leiden Road
ON79306	16679	ON300018	Littlegate Street
ON15401	16682	ON286659	Lockheart Crescent
ON8255	16686	Unknown	Long Close
ON23546	16688	ON105817	Long Ford Close
ON288495	16696	ON16645	Mallard Close
ON4725	16701	ON10719	Marlborough Road
ON299771	16703	ON286514	Marsh Road
ON26149	16704	ON206896	Marston Road
ON292700	16705	ON42520	Mather Road
ON292135	16707	ON11339	Meadow Lane
ON1046	16728	ON258053	Normandy Crescent
ON89763	16736	Unknown	Nye Bevan Close
ON289937	16751	ON24602	Overmead Green
ON294008	14973	Unknown	Parkway
ON26151	16757	ON32350	Peat Moors
ON291031	16759	ON15725	Pegasus Road

ON24996	16760	ON23910	Pennywell Drive
ON291697	16763	ON15721	Pine Close
ON79307	16767	ON10920	Preachers Lane
ON9714	16769	Unknown	Priory Road
ON273760	16786		Rivermead Road
ON12743	16787	ON14562	Ro Corps
ON298747	319	ON285319	Rose Hill
ON9714	16801	ON23627	Saint Nicholas Road
ON4725	16804	ON45058	Salter Close
ON295322	16724	ON5196	Sandy Lane No 20
ON291401	16806	ON5195	Sawpit Road
ON291124	16818	ON15722	Sorrell Road
ON288830	16825	ON15740	Spindlebury Close
ON7936	533	ON19731	St Ebbes
ON291789	16835	Unknown	Stainfield Road
ON291789	16838	ON217614	Stockleys Road
ON289378	16841	ON15367	Strawberry Path
ON292424	11865	ON31405	Taggs Gate/Barton Community Centre
ON292390	16844	ON286654	Tawney Street
ON24996	16846	ON236984	Templar Road
ON273760	16851	Unknown	Thames View Road
ON26151	16857	ON26151	The Slade
Not Registered (?ON26151)	16860	ON285586	Town Furze (Warren Crescent)
ON292390	289	ON285854	Union Street, Cowley

ON16015	16870	ON24041	Venables Close
ON291401	16874	ON22643	Warburgh Crescent
ON292700	11868	ON286504	Wilcote Road
ON288626	16888	ON286602	Windrush Tower
ON8255	16891	ON8255	Wood Farm Road
ON292839	3637	ON290903	Yarnells Hill Top

Appendix 2 - Report Risk Register – Disposal of Sub-Station sites

No.	Risk Description	Gross Risk		Cause of Risk	Mitigation	Current Risk		Further Management of Risk: Transfer/Accept/Reduce/Avoid	Monitoring Effectiveness	Residual Risk		
Risk Score	Impact Score: 1 = Insignificant; 2 = Minor; 3 = Moderate; 4 = Major; 5 = Catastrophic						Probability Score: 1 = Rare; 2 = Unlikely; 3 = Possible; 4 = Likely; 5 = Almost Certain					
		I	P			I	P			I	P	
1	Best consideration Not achieved	4	3	Lack of market knowledge and values	External specialist consultants utilised to provide valuation and market advice	3	2	Restriction on use to Sub station only		2	1	
2	Future development restricted due to sale	3	3	Loss of ownership of property may interfere or restrict future development or works to adjoining land and properties	Full review of each site undertaken considering implications for future development and sites excluded from sale where there is considered to be potential impact	2	2	Lift and shift provisions included in documentation		2	2	
3	The sale does not proceed to completion	4	3	Purchaser decides not to proceed	Complete transaction as quickly as possible and work as closely as possible with the purchaser to identify issues early to enable resolution	4	2			4	2	

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To: City Executive Board

Date: 3 July 2014

Report of: Head of Finance and Head of Housing and Property

Title of Report: Tenancy Fraud Amnesty

Summary and Recommendations

Purpose of report: To seek members views on the implementation of a tenancy fraudamnesty campaign.

Key decision Yes

Executive lead members: Councillor Scott Seamons, Board Member for Housing and Estate Regeneration & Councillor Ed Turner, Board Member for Finance, Asset Management and Public Health

Policy Framework: Housing

Recommendation: That the Board consider the report and approve an amnesty.

Appendices to report –

Appendix 1 – Risk Assessment

Introduction

1. In 2009 the Audit Commission identified significant areas at risk of fraud within Local Government that needed to be addressed at a local level. One of those areas was housing tenancy fraud.
2. In the Commission's publication "Protecting the Public Purse 2009" they estimated that 50,000 social housing properties across England were potentially being abused by fraudsters. They further estimated the cost to

local authorities, for each property sub-let, to be approximately £18,000:the equivalent of keeping a family in temporary accommodation for one year.

3. At the time; housing tenancy fraud was considered to be just a problem within London. However, the Council's Benefit Investigation Team had at that time already identified some housing tenancy fraud during their investigations into housing benefit claims. The information was shared with the Housing Services who took the appropriate action to recover the properties.
4. In 2009 the Department for Communities and Local Government (DCLG) announced that funding would be available to Councils across England in order to tackle tenancy fraud. Oxford City Council successfully bid for and received £10,000. This funding was matched with an equivalent amount from the Housing Revenue Account and a Tenancy Investigation Officer was employed on a 6 month contract.
5. During the 6 month period 6 properties were recovered, effectively showing that housing tenancy fraud was not just a London problem.
6. Further funding was made available by the DCLG in subsequent years and to date the Council has received £360,000 towards combatting housing tenancy fraud. The Council in recognition of the importance of this work also made more funding available from the Housing Revenue Account (HRA) from 2013/14 onwards
7. There are now 3 officers (2 permanent and 1 temporary) employed solely for the purpose of investigating social housing tenancy fraud. To date they have been involved in the recovery of 50 social housing properties.
8. These officers also currently provide advice and assistance to other Registered Providers of social housing in Oxford and have worked closely with them in the recovery of 13 of their properties.
9. Given the high cost of private sector rents in Oxford, sub-letting social housing whilst fraudulent is seen by some as a potentially lucrative opportunity. Hence the Council's housing stock is at risk.
10. One of the suggestions made by the Audit Commission in 2009 to combat housing tenancy fraud was the use of public campaigns. They not only raise awareness of the issue but also encourage residents to report suspected illegal activity.
11. Awareness of housing tenancy fraud has previously been raised to tenants by way of articles in the 'Tenants in Touch' publication.
12. In October 2013 the Prevention of Social Housing Fraud Act 2013 (PoSHF Act) was enacted and made the sub-letting of any social housing property a criminal offence. The Act also introduced the profit order. This

means that a council can apply to the court and request that any profits the tenant has made from the illegal sub-letting of the property are paid to the council. This is in addition to any damages that the council may request

13. The aim of the tenancy fraud amnesty is to raise awareness with the public, not just our tenants and to encourage the reporting of illegal activity. It is also to:
 - encourage those misusing their Council properties to surrender their tenancies without the Council having to take expensive legal proceedings to gain possession of the property. It currently costs in the region of £2,000 to take an uncontested possession case through civil court.
 - make the public aware that sub-letting of Social Housing is now a criminal offence and therefore act as a deterrent to those considering sub-letting.
 - show that the Council is taking all possible steps to tackle the problem of the lack of affordable housing in Oxford.
 - reduce anti-social behaviour and illegal activity which often increases when a property is sub-let.
14. The Audit Commission has recently produced figures which suggest that 2% of housing stock outside of London is likely to be sub-let. This would equate to approximately 140 council homes in the Oxford area.
15. The Tenancy Investigation Team believes they are only scratching the surface of a problem and have identified patterns and trends in different areas of the city
16. Some of the cases of sub-letting have included:
 - Tenants moving abroad
 - Tenants moving into another area
 - Tenants passing on properties to their children effectively allowing them to jump the waiting list.
 - Tenants not using their property as their main place of residence
 - Tenants renting out their properties on a short term let basis to tourists who come to visit Oxford.
17. Prior to October 2013 no criminal action was taken against social housing tenants unless proceedings were being taken under the Fraud Act 2006. However, the exchange of money between the tenant and the sub-lettee was extremely difficult to prove and the tenant could simply hand back their keys if the sub-letting was discovered and keep any profit they had made from their unlawful activity.
18. The PoSHF Act 2013 provides investigation officers with the power to acquire information from certain financial institutions, utility and telecommunication companies. The statutory instrument for this was introduced in April 2014.

An Amnesty

19. It is considered that a 2 month amnesty period would enable a campaign to have the greatest impact and reach the maximum number of people across different sections and areas of the city.
20. The PoSHF Act is a relatively new piece of legislation and some tenants may be unaware that what they are doing is now illegal and could result in them having criminal action being taken against them.
21. The amnesty will allow any tenants who are now illegally sub-letting to voluntarily surrender their tenancy during this 2 month period without the Council taking expensive criminal action against them at a cost to the local taxpayer.
22. Once the amnesty has ended any allegations of sub-letting reported by the public will be fully investigated with a view to prosecuting the tenant and taking criminal proceedings against the tenant and civil action to recover the property.
23. The amnesty will be fully publicised. This will include a poster campaign and adverts in local press and community news letters. Posters will be placed in public areas and at bus stops in and around Oxford, Kidlington and Abingdon.
24. A dedicated "hot line" will be made available to those wishing to surrender their tenancies and for others to provide information about any further properties they believe are being sub-let.
25. Many local authorities in England have implemented one or two month long amnesties and have recovered properties as a result. These include;
 - Barnet Council (stock 11,000) 14 properties recovered, including 2 for a local Housing Association. The saving to their temporary accommodation costs was said to be £250,000
 - Croydon Council (14,000) had an amnesty in November to January 2014 and it resulted in keys to 3 properties being returned and further reports of fraud being made. Investigations are on-going into these allegations.
 - Newham Council (17,000) recovered 26 properties as a result of their amnesty which ran from October to January 2014.
 - Stoke City Council (19,000) created the successful "Know a cheat in your street" campaign in 2012. The campaign was initially targeted at tenancy fraud but has since been used to highlight other areas of fraud within the Council. The reuse of the "know a cheat in your street" has kept tenancy fraud in the media spotlight. Over a 2 year period they

have recovered 116 properties and made significant savings in different areas around the Council.

Environmental Impact

26. It is considered that there will not be any environmental impact as a result of the campaign.

Equalities Impact

27. Consideration has been given to the public sector equality duty imposed by s149 of the Equality Act 2010. Having due regard to the need to meet the objectives of that duty, this being to eliminate discrimination, victimisation and promote equal opportunities the view is taken that the duty is met.

Financial Implications

28. The cost of the media and poster campaign will be approximately £10,000 and be funded from the Housing Revenue Account.

29. Local Housing Associations are being approached to see if they want to join in with the campaign and contribute towards the cost of it. Should they agree this will add greater weight to the campaign and offset costs, in exchange for the Council passing on information received regarding their properties

Legal Implications

30. The Council will allow tenants to surrender their tenancy immediately rather than have to give the normal 4 week notice period.

31. Section 9.6 of the current tenancy agreement allows that in special circumstances the Council is able to end the tenancy quicker.

32. There is no requirement for consultation on this temporary departure from policy.

33. Legal action may be required to evict any illegal occupants once the tenant has surrendered their tenancy.

Risk Assessment

34. A risk assessment has been undertaken. No significant risks were identified.

Name and contact details of author:-

Name: Catherine Jones

Job title: Senior Investigation Officer (Corporate & Tenancy Fraud)

Service Area / Department: Finance, Investigations

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List of background papers:

Protecting the Public Purse 2009 – Audit Commission publication

<http://archive.auditcommission.gov.uk/auditcommission/SiteCollectionDocuments/AuditCommissionReports/NationalStudies/20090915protectingpublicpurserep.pdf>

Tenancy Fraud Amnesty Risk Assessment

<i>What are the risks?</i>	Consequence	Risk Owner	Action Owner	Mitigation Action	Likelihood	Impact	Overall Risk
<i>Increase in the number of council owned homes being sub-let</i>	Increase in the number of homes sub-let. Potential increase to temporary accommodation costs. Reputational risk to the council in that the public feel the council are not dealing with all local housing issues.	Oxford City Council	Catherine Jones/ Carol Quainton	Tenancy fraud amnesty media campaign to highlight the problem and show the council is dealing with the issue. Tenancy Investigation Team currently looking into allegations at the present time.	5	3	15

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DRAFT

To: City Executive Board

Date: 3 July 2014

Report of: Head of Customer Services

Title of Report: Financial Inclusion Strategy

Summary and Recommendations

Purpose of report: To present a Financial Inclusion Strategy together with an Action Plan for delivery.

Key decision? Yes

Executive lead member Councillor Susan Brown, Board Member for Customer Services and Social Inclusion

Policy Framework: None

Recommendations:-

That the City Executive Board:

1. Approves the Financial Inclusion Strategy for a period of three years from April 2014 to April 2017 as set out in Appendix 3 and;
2. Agrees the associated Action Plan, the delivery of which will be coordinated by the Head of Customer Services.

Appendices to report

- Appendix 1: Summary of Responses to the Consultation on the Draft Financial Inclusion Strategy
- Appendix 2: Financial Inclusion Strategy 2014 - 2017 and action plan
- Appendix 3: Risk Assessment
- Appendix 4: Equalities Impact Assessment

Background

1. The current public funding climate and cuts in welfare are putting increasing pressure on those with the lowest incomes. Rising costs of living in relation to basic needs such as home energy and food together with increased housing costs are exacerbating the problems of vulnerable residents and also pushing others currently at the 'tipping point' into potential difficulties. This means there is an increased danger of people falling into debt, getting into rent arrears, failing to adequately heat their homes or feed themselves and their family properly.
2. The issues which the Financial Inclusion Strategy aims to tackle are outlined in the Strategy document at Appendix 1. They include an annual reduction of £34.5 million in welfare benefits paid to Oxford residents, 42 excess winter deaths (linked to home fuel poverty) in 2012, 11% of the city's residents classed as indebted and a lack of skills preventing a significant number of residents entering the job market.
3. In March, the City Executive Board (CEB) approved a draft Financial Inclusion Strategy for consultation. There were only a small number of respondents, however, some were of very high quality. The Strategy, attached at Appendix 2, has been amended in light of these responses.
4. In late 2013, the City Council commissioned some research into the impact of the Government's Welfare Reform programme on its residents. The Centre of Economic and Social Inclusion (CESI) carried out this research and have recently presented their early findings prior to production of their final report. These identified that people with disabilities, lone parents, and people living in the private rented sector were impacted more heavily by welfare reform than other groups. Their final report will contain a number of recommendations to meet the identified challenges. The majority of these will be addressed through the Action Plan at Appendix 2. However a new action has been added to ensure that any further recommendations are addressed in the implementation of the Financial Inclusion Strategy.

Public Consultation

5. Public consultation on the Financial Inclusion Strategy was carried out for four weeks during April 2014. A range of partners in the Housing and Voluntary sectors were invited to respond to the consultation. The consultation was also available on the Council's website for members of the public to respond to. A summary of the responses is provided at Appendix 1.
6. Following the public consultation two further actions have been added to the Action Plan. These are: 1) to promote Discretionary Housing Payments to private sector tenants, and 2) to look at the viability of setting up a city wide Financial Inclusion Partnership to lead on future development of this Strategy.
7. Respondents to the public consultation were keen for the Strategy to be more ambitious and set more specific targets in many areas. This Strategy does not go as far as these respondents would like as it represents a first step, with the

majority of actions focussed on the Council getting its own house in order first. However, the Strategy will be refreshed annually, with actions and outcomes being updated so that in the future the ambitions articulated by respondents are met.

Climate change / environmental impact

8. There are no negative climate change or environmental impact issues related to this report. A number of the activities proposed in the Financial Inclusion Action Plan will lead to reduced carbon footprints for affected properties. Alleviating fuel poverty locally by improving the energy efficiency of poor homes reduces energy bills for occupants, improves health and contributes to the Council's carbon reduction target for the whole city of 40% by 2020. The Council has a duty under the Home Energy Conservation Act to report on plans to help householders lower their fuel bills. It was the intention to produce a separate Fuel Poverty Strategy, however the issues of household income, energy prices and the thermal efficiency of dwellings, are so inextricably linked with financial inclusion, that bringing these issues together in a single strategy represents a more cohesive approach.

Risk

9. A risk assessment can be found at Appendix 3.

Equalities impact

10. The equalities impact assessment can be found at Appendix 4.

Financial implications

11. This report does not propose any new expenditure. Instead it seeks to align a number of different initiatives to produce greater outcomes.

Legal implications

12. None

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List of background papers: none

Appendix 1

Summary of Consultation Responses

The following organisations were invited to respond to this consultation:
Advice UK, Age UK, Agnes Smith, Asylum Welcome, Blackbird Leys Neighbourhood Support Scheme, CAB, Connection Floating Support, Connexions, DWP, Oxford Association for the Blind, Oxford Brookes (Student Advice), Oxford Community Work Agency, Oxford Homeless Pathways, Oxfordshire Chinese Community Advice Centre, OCC Childrens Centres, OCC – Youth Support, Oxfordshire Mental Health Matters, Oxfordshire Mind, Pension Service, Rose Hill & Donnington Advice Centre, Stepping Stone, Terrence Higgins Trust, Turpin & Miller, A2 Dominion, Abbeyfield, Advance Housing, Bournemouth Churches HA, Bromford Housing, Catalyst, GreenSquare, Response, Riverside, South Oxfordshire HA, Thames Valley HA, Windmill House

1. Do you think that these themes adequately capture the range of issues that need to be addressed by the Financial Inclusion Strategy?

One respondent agreed with the emphasis on tenancy sustainment

One respondent said it was important to ensure the quality of debt advice, tackle high cost and illegal money lending, working more closely with partners especially Social Housing partners, joint commissioning of advice services, working with the financial services sector, setting up a Financial Inclusion Partnership

2. Have we identified the right outcomes for each of the themes in the Financial Inclusion Strategy, and are there any others which should be included?

One respondent referenced the need to provide advice about the dangers of getting loans from loan sharks.

One respondent identified the following additional outcomes:

Debt - Needs to include supporting free debt advice and monitoring quality. Tackling and providing alternatives to high cost and illegal lending. Joint commissioning of advice.

Income - Supporting access to financial products and services, ie link with MAS. Financial Capability should sit in skills not income.

Housing - The strategy talks about working with Council tenants and PRS but what about the social housing sector? For new tenancies especially ready to move courses with other housing partners, RSLVF verification for HB's, better information sharing with housing partners, work with those on the housing waiting list for tenancy preparation.

3. Will the proposed actions meet the outcomes outlined in Section 4 above?

One respondent advised of the need to raise awareness of DHP's, using nil income letters to obtain Hb and to try and avoid rent arrears so as to reduce the risk of homelessness.

One respondent thought not because there are no targets, and it looks like each action is being delivered in isolation. There needs to be more promotion of partnerships

4. Are there additional actions which need to be undertaken? If so, please explain which outcomes the proposed action would meet, and which partners the Council should work with to deliver it.

One respondent said that people needed to support to make use of digital services for applying for benefits and managing financial affairs.

One respondent suggested setting up a citywide Financial Inclusion group.

5. Are the identified delivery partners the right ones, or are there others that should also be included?

One respondent referred to Aspire, Emmaus and Food banks as potential partners. They also said a booklet would be helpful which explained the ways to get statutory support and also support available in the voluntary sector.

One respondent suggested working with national Teams like Money Advice Service, Illegal Money Lending Teams, the Financial services sector. Also locally Social Housing Providers, NHS, Public Health, Private Rented Sector.

Other comments:

One respondent felt that the survey was not presented clearly which made it difficult to respond.

One respondent just agreed with all the statements.

One respondent left the following comments:

Oxford CAB welcomes:

- the development of the financial inclusion strategy and the commitment it expresses to ensuring that policy, procedure and culture across the Council work together to maximise financial inclusion for residents.
- The review of debt recovery policies and of bailiff use
- the commitment to use tendering for the Council's own banking arrangements as an opportunity to find a local supplier of appropriate basic banking facilities.
- the recognition that key payments for fuel can disadvantage Council tenants looking for the best deals.
- The support for the Credit Union – with the caveat that unless access is made very easy it is still not an attractive option for low income savers
- the potential for the advice sector to contribute to the ESF project.

Para 3.1 - possible additions to the definitions/analysis

It might be helpful to include in the definition of the process of financial inclusion, aspects of income maximisation and confidence in managing finances as well as the points about accessing financial services and products. The bullet points at 3.1 are indicators of financial exclusion. The process of financial inclusion has been described as ‘the process which ensures a person’s incoming money is maximised, their out-goings are controlled and they can exercise informed choices through access to basic financial services.’ The definition then ties in more closely to the actions in the plan. This wider definition could also be referenced at paragraph 4.

Additions elsewhere

1. The document talks about tenant ready preparation for council tenants but this is equally important for private rented sector tenants, especially if direct payments are to be rolled out to tenants in the private rented sector whose landlords may not renew tenancies if payment arrangements change.

2. There are references in the analysis to both the need to change Council culture and to ‘join up providers’ and this could be reflected in more specific actions in the plan. It’s not clear what the Council would like to do in order to address this or what the current deficiencies are considered to be. Para 6.1 states ‘In most cases where there are multiple providers delivery is not joined up.’ If this is a reference to the links between advice providers in the advice sector it would be helpful to know more about the shortfalls the Council has identified. Our view would be that the advice sector actually works closely together: it is the links with some of the major sources of advice queries eg JCP that could be improved.

3. Any work on standard Income and Expenditure forms would benefit from input from a qualified debt adviser to ensure that whatever is developed is consistent with the Common Financial Statement accepted by creditors.

4. There are a lot of concrete actions against the housing objectives – perhaps because of the more tangible outputs available. Could this be balanced by including under the other themes some of the policy actions available? For example including an action to continue to make the case for revision of the BMRA would highlight the major impact on financial inclusion of the gap between LHA levels and average rents. Future decisions on the Council Tax Reduction Scheme would also potentially have a huge impact – either increasing or decreasing financial inclusion, and so might be worth a mention.

Useful clarifications – some relate to advice sector review

2.3 Housing – There are references to the number of families and to the number of households seeking social housing. The first mention is of an increase in families seeking social housing from 4,500 to 6,000 and then a second reference to 4,600 households on the Council’s waiting list. Should this second figure also be 6,000? Page 9 second row – Oxford CAB has provided financial capability sessions to a wide range of groups for at least the last five years. These sessions include information on how to open a bank account, the differences between various types of accounts, and how to access affordable credit and safe savings schemes. It would be helpful to acknowledge this rather than suggesting that there is currently nothing available to support this outcome.

Para 8.4 – it would be useful to know a bit more about the issues referred to here as under discussion with the advice sector. Dialogue is under way on information requirements but I'd be interested to know what the thinking is around referrals, data sharing, training and governance arrangements.

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Financial Inclusion Strategy

2014 - 2017

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1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 This document sets out Oxford City Council's (OCC) vision and strategy for financial inclusion and forms an integral component of the Council's commitment to reduce inequality. To this end the strategy has been developed in conjunction with the Council's wider work on Welfare Reform, Fuel Poverty and our Stronger Communities Programme.

1.2 The Financial Inclusion Strategy comprises this document and Financial Inclusion Action Plan, appended to this document. The Action Plan details the activities that will be undertaken to achieve the aims of this strategy together with the lead officer from the Council's perspective, plus any external partners involved in delivery.

1.3 The Strategy covers the period April 2014 to March 2017. However this document will be refreshed annually to ensure the outcomes from the Action Plan continue to meet the Council's priorities.

2. WHY DO WE NEED A STRATEGY

National Context

2.1 The country is facing one of the most difficult public funding climates seen for decades with reductions in public spending and significant areas of social policy reform. Rising costs of living in relation to basic needs such as fuel and food together with higher housing costs are exacerbating the problems of vulnerable residents and pushing others currently at the 'tipping point' into potential difficulties.

Traditional responses in terms of increased resources for service delivery are no longer viable. A step change is necessary which requires leadership and cultural transformation. In real terms, this means developing a strategy for financial inclusion that, as far as possible, protects the most economically vulnerable whilst recognising the economic reality the Council faces. This means reshaping the internal policy, practice and culture of the Council and working with external partners to leverage those resources which are available to ensure the best outcomes for our residents.

Local Context

2.2 Welfare Reform

The introduction of Universal Credit means direct payments to landlords of Housing Benefit will cease, potentially leading to an increase in rent arrears and debt as some tenants may have difficulty managing their money and not pay their landlords rent owed.

Those who under-occupy their current property (currently 720 households) could see their benefits reduce to such an extent that they may be forced into moving out of their current home into smaller accommodation. This may impact on the demand for smaller accommodation and lead to an increase in rent arrears from households who currently receive housing benefit or force families to leave Oxford in search of more affordable Housing.

The Benefit Cap which currently affects approximately 130 households in Oxford means that for some of those households, moving into employment is the only way they are going to be able to afford to maintain a tenancy in Oxford. Many of those affected have never worked and have multiple barriers preventing them from working. Intense support is required to deliver a sustainable solution to such people.

These are challenges that need to be planned for and managed and entail providing a supporting role for people affected by them. Part of the role will be to promote and advise customers of future benefit changes. This work is already being carried out and will continue for the near future.

The City Council recently commissioned research into the impacts of welfare reform in Oxford, which was carried out by the Centre for Economic and Social Inclusion. Early findings from the research are that people in receipt of disabilities, lone parents, and people living in the private rented sector are likely to be the most severely impacted by the government's welfare reforms.

2.3 Housing

The city is a densely packed urban space covering only 17.6 square miles with very high levels of housing density. There are severe pressures on housing stock, with large concentrations of homes in multiple occupation and significant numbers of homeless and other vulnerable groups. The recession has increased the number of families seeking to obtain social housing from 4,500 to over 6,000.

Oxford has a current population of 151,000 which is projected to increase to 160,000 by 2021. 16,000 households live in private rented accommodation, an increase of 45% since 2001. Twenty percent of the city now lives in the Private Rented Sector (PRS), which is the 10th highest proportion in the country. There are currently 4,600 households on the

Council's housing list. With increasing student numbers, and with home ownership becoming more unaffordable for young professionals, demand for PRS property is high and increasing. This is putting the PRS beyond the reach of increasing numbers of benefit claimants, as market rents are significantly higher than Local Housing Allowance (LHA) rates

Despite the perception of an affluent, historic city, Oxford has seven super output areas within the 15% most deprived in the country. Some properties in Oxford City are referred to as Hard to Treat in energy efficiency terms. These are those without mains gas as the primary heating fuel, and solid-walled or non-traditional system built properties that are expensive to insulate. This is compounded by the higher than average number of private rented properties in Oxford. This sector is known to be poor in terms of energy efficiency of housing and this is therefore a target for housing improvements and other fuel poverty work, as are the most deprived areas.

2.4 Skills

Employment is very high in Oxford, with 1.4% of the population claiming Jobseekers Allowance, compared to the national average of 2.9% (March 2014, DWP). Whilst Oxford has a highly skilled workforce, with a high proportion of residents holding degrees, there are also a significant proportion of residents with no educational or skills qualifications and attainment levels of pupils in state schools are significantly lower than the regional and national average. This poor attainment at both primary and secondary levels impacts directly on access to the labour market and on economic and social life-chances.

The 2011 Oxfordshire Skills Needs Analysis suggested that a lack of education, qualifications and 'employability' skills prevented a significant number of Oxfordshire's residents from entering the local job market, in particular certain groups of young people including teenage mothers, young people with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, young people who have offended and young people leaving care. Young people between the ages of 16 and 18 who are not participating in education, employment or training (NEET) are a major source of concern. Their circumstances are predictors of future unemployment, low income, poor mental health and potential involvement in crime.

2.5 Living Costs

In August 2013, the Money Advice Service conducted some research into the indebtedness of people in the UK. In Oxford they found that 11% of the population are indebted. This means that they meet either of the following criteria:

- They feel their debt is a heavy burden
- They missed out on; or fell behind on credit payments or a bill for three of the last six months

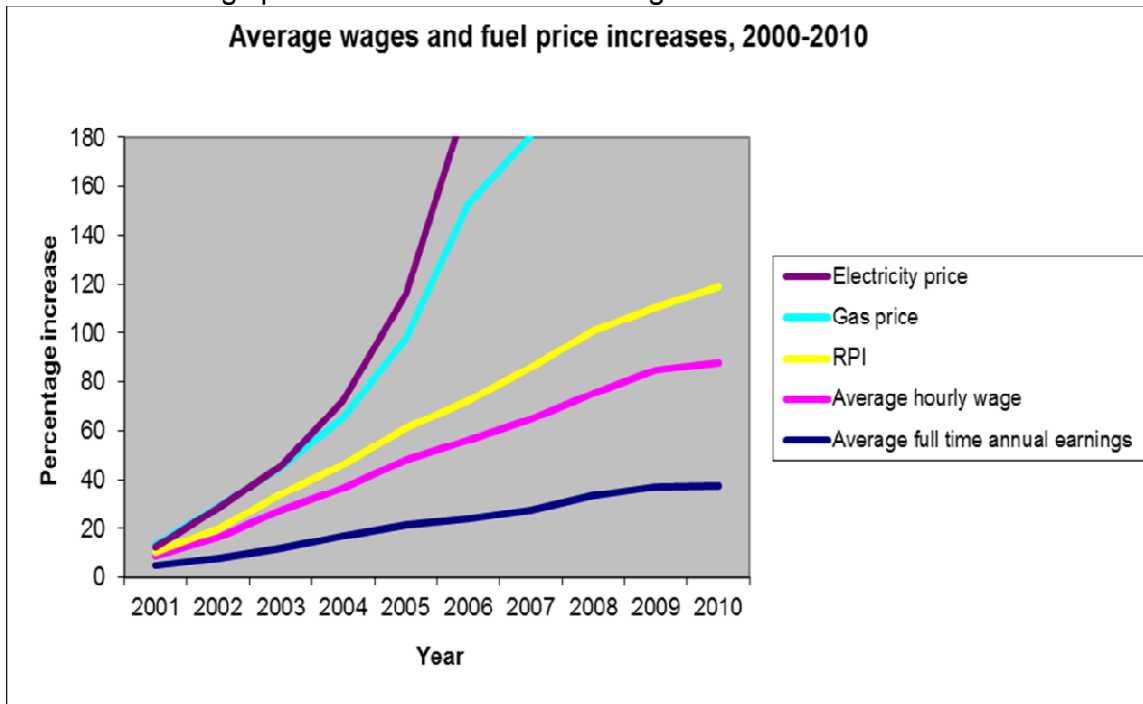
Nationally, the use of food banks is increasing and it is thought that half a million people in the UK now use them. In Oxford the Community Emergency Foodbank has reported a significant increase in customers from 120 per month in 2012 to 200 per month in 2013. The provision of food banks in Oxford is currently unclear as a number of charities and religious organisations operate informal food banks. It is one aim of this strategy to better understand provision in the city. Initial findings from the research carried out by CESI found that many respondents reported skipping meals and turning off heating in their homes in order to save money. The twin impacts of welfare reform and increased living costs were a source of stress and anxiety which in some cases is exacerbating existing health conditions.

2.6 Fuel Poverty

This is better than the England average and the same as the average for the South East. Broadly, fuel poverty is influenced by 3 factors: 1) household income; 2) energy prices and 3) the thermal efficiency of the dwelling. Households are more likely to be fuel poor if their homes were built before 1945, are large, off gas, being privately rented and/or have old; or inefficient boilers.

In 2012-13, UK winter deaths increased by 29% from 2011/12 which highlights a need to understand links between cold homes and health. The most vulnerable to health impacts include the over 65s, the disabled and long-term sick, unemployed, people on low incomes and those with very young children. This is because they are likely to spend more time in the home, and have health issues that are aggravated by cold homes.

The chart below shows how fuel bills have risen since 2001 compared to the average hourly wage. They continue to rise, with the major energy providers announcing near double digit price rises at the time of writing.



Following the removal of Warm Front, CERT, Cocoon insulation projects and the current issues around Energy Company Obligation (ECO) funded projects there is far less grant money available to improve energy efficiency of homes. Both the City Council’s Housing Board and County Council’s Health Improvement Board have raised the need for a strategy that tackles fuel poverty due to the health impacts of poorly heated homes.

The Council has signed the End Fuel Poverty Coalition’s Local Authority Commitment which commits it to understanding housing stock, fuel poverty data and linking the related health impacts. As both a building based and financial issue, it was agreed that fuel poverty should be incorporated into the Strategy.

3. WHAT IS FINANCIAL INCLUSION

3.1 Financial inclusion has been described as the process which ensures a person’s incoming money is maximised, their out-goings are controlled and they can exercise informed choices through access to basic financial services. Without this, people are often referred to as financially excluded. People that are financially excluded are often those in poverty or experiencing disadvantage and as a result might:

- Not be able to access affordable credit
- Not want, or have difficulty obtaining a bank account
- Be financially at risk through not having home insurance
- Struggle to budget and manage money or plan for the unexpected
- Struggle to pay fuel bills and/or live in poor quality housing
- Not know how to make the most of their money

3.2 As the impact of financial exclusion falls more heavily on low income households, this strategy seeks to ensure sufficient support is provided to such households to maximise their income. This will be achieved through a number of means, but will include supporting people to access employment, and in overcoming barriers to work.

3.3 Sound financial inclusion work can help deliver sustainable improvements for individuals and their communities, and enable the Council to become more cost efficient. The benefits of financial inclusion can be defined as follows:

For Customers:

Access to lower cost household bills
Lower transactions costs
More able to withstand financial shocks
Better physical and mental health outcomes
Able to play a full part in society

For Communities:

More settled and stable communities
Fewer family break-ups
More money spent in local economy

For the Council:

Improved cash flow
Reduction in rent arrears
Fewer evictions
Fewer homeless presentations
Less tenant turnover
Reduction in costs of Council Tax and Rent collection

4. THE CHALLENGE OF FINANCIAL INCLUSION

4.1 It is important to note that even in good times, poor financial health affects many of our residents leaving them at risk of exclusion. This can exacerbate poverty (including child poverty), increases disadvantage and have a profound impact on life chances. This in turn has a wider bearing on our communities affecting family breakdowns, crime levels, the environment in which we live and an individual's ability to contribute equally to the City.

4.2 Access to appropriate, high quality financial services is a central component of financial inclusion. Financial services, including savings, borrowing and insurance are a key part of modern life, enabling bills to be paid, unexpected costs to be met or emergencies to be managed. Access to these services helps people make the very best of the money they have and provides both stability and the opportunity for individuals, families and communities to progress and thrive.

4.3 The cost of financial exclusion is captured by the concept of the 'poverty premium'. This calculation by Save the Children in 2007 measures the cost to a family of normal life, such as paying utility bills, buying standard household goods, converting cheques into cash and purchasing essential services such as insurance. In 2007 the 'poverty premium' was calculated at over £1000 per annum for a family of four, thus wasting approximately 9 per cent of their disposable income after housing costs.

4.4 There are a number of barriers to financial inclusion and good financial health we wish to address through this Strategy and they include:

- access to advice

- access to transactional banking services
- access to affordable loans
- no savings
- access to insurance
- poor financial knowledge and skills
- fuel and food poverty

4.5 The causes of financial exclusion can be attributed to a variety of reasons but are most usually as a result of changes in circumstance, for example:

- loss of home
- loss of employment or retirement
- low pay
- breakdown of a relationship
- illness, disability or bereavement within the family
- becoming new parents
- changes to benefit entitlement
- starting a new business
- going into or coming out of prison
- reductions in income
- long term worklessness

5. THEMES

5.1 For the purposes of this strategy, current work and future actions have been divided into four categories:

- Debt, (Including Provision of Advice and Access to Financial Services)
- Income (Including Benefit Entitlement, and Budgeting Support)
- Housing (Including Affordable Warmth, Discretionary Housing Payments and Tenant Support)
- Skills (Work Readiness, Training, Digital Access)

Work undertaken in furtherance of these aims is designed to achieve the following short term and longer term outcomes.

5.2 **DEBT**

Short Term

- Residents will know where to access information and advice
- Residents will be able to seek free advice about their debts and be supported to make affordable repayment plans

Long Term

- Residents will have increased ability and confidence in managing everyday finances including contracting with and changing utility companies
- Residents will be able to receive and make payments easily through mainstream or alternative transactional banking services.
- Residents will have increased knowledge and confidence in using financial services
- Council policies and processes will support the aims of the Financial Inclusion Strategy

5.3 **INCOME**

Short Term

- Residents will be supported to claim the benefits to which they are entitled
- Residents will be supported to access emergency support when required

Long Term

- Residents will be supported to manage their finances
- Residents will be able to save and therefore be better able to cope with financial crisis and changes in circumstance.

5.4 HOUSING

Short Term

- Residents facing shortfalls in their Housing Benefit will be supported financially whilst seeking longer term solutions

Long Term

- Tenants will be supported to ensure they are able to manage their tenancy when they sign up for one
- Fewer residents will fall under the definition of fuel poverty
- Fewer residents will suffer poor health as a result of not being able to adequately heat their homes
- The number of excess winter deaths in Oxford will reduce
- Both Council tenants and private sector tenants to have better insulated properties with lower fuel bills

5.5 SKILLS

Short Term

- Residents will be supported to use the right channel for their needs including face to face, telephone and online
- Residents will be assisted in accessing digital services

Long Term

- Residents will be engaged by partners to support them to learn the skills they need to obtain work
- Residents will receive training for the type of work which is available locally, so they are best placed to obtain employment
- Residents will be supported to overcome barriers to work
- Residents will be supported to become self-sufficient in accessing online services

6. CURRENT DELIVERY MODEL

6.1 The table below details the current delivery mechanisms/Partners which contribute to the outcomes listed above. In most cases, where there are multiple providers listed, even though there is some good partnership working, delivery is not joined up. As such this provides opportunities for efficiencies, or for improved service provision.

Theme	Outcome	Current Delivery
DEBT – Short Term	Residents will know where to access information and advice	Signposting and referrals from frontline Council services Information in letters and leaflets Council Website
	Residents will be able to seek help with their debts and be supported to make affordable repayment plans	Advice sector
DEBT – Long Term	Residents will have increased ability and confidence in managing everyday finances including contracting utility companies	Council tenants included in Direct Payments project

	Residents will be able to receive and make payments easily through mainstream or alternative transactional banking services.	Assistance provided where need identified via Direct Payments project Credit Unions
	Residents gain increased knowledge and confidence in using financial services	Advice Sector, although there are challenges in encouraging take up of such support
	Council policies and processes support the aims of the Financial Inclusion Strategy	DHP Policy includes conditionality. Direct Payments Pilot being extended to all tenants
INCOME – Short Term	Residents will be supported to claim the benefits to which they are entitled	OCC Benefits Team Advice Sector
	Residents will be supported to access emergency support when required	Foodbanks Local Charities Oxfordshire Support Fund (to end from April 2014)
INCOME – Long Term	Residents will be supported to manage their finances	Advice Sector
	Residents will be able to save and therefore be better able to cope with financial crisis and changes in circumstance.	Credit Unions
HOUSING – Short Term	Residents facing shortfalls in their Housing Benefit will be supported financially whilst seeking longer term solutions	Discretionary Housing Payments managed by Customer Services
HOUSING – Long Term	Tenants will be supported so they can manage their tenancy when they sign up for one	Roll out of Direct Payments to all eligible tenants
	Fewer residents will fall under the definition of fuel poverty	Environmental Development
	Both Council tenants and private sector tenants to have better insulated properties with lower fuel bills	Environmental Development Community Housing Low Carbon Hub
	Residents will be supported in finding a sustainable Housing solution	Community Housing
SKILLS – Short Term	Residents will be supported to use the right channel for their needs including face to face, telephone and online	N/A
	Residents will be assisted in accessing digital services	Pilot involving school children Limited independent provision Local Colleges
SKILLS – Long Term	Residents will be engaged by partners to support them to learn the skills they need to obtain work	Welfare Reform Team Jobcentre Plus/Work Programme providers Job Clubs

		Independent providers
	Residents will receive training for the type of work which is available locally, so they are best placed to obtain employment	Work Programme Local colleges Independent providers
	Residents will be supported to overcome barriers to work	Welfare Reform team Independent providers
	Residents will be supported to become self-sufficient in accessing online services	N/A

7. COUNCIL INITIATIVES

7.1 Across the Council there is already a lot of work being undertaken which contributes towards the delivery of the Strategy. This work is summarised below:

7.2 DEBT

- Council's Debt Management Policy: Allows people to make one affordable payment where possible, to repay all debts owed to the Council.
- Advice Commissioning: £500,000 provided annually to fund advice services across the city with a focus on benefit take-up and debt advice. Two Credit Unions are also funded to promote savings and provide banking services and affordable credit to those who might otherwise struggle to access such services.
- Direct Payments Demonstration Project: Preparing our tenants for Universal Credit by paying them their Housing Benefit direct, supporting people to access bank accounts where required

7.3 INCOME

- A wide range of concessionary charges are available on sporting and cultural activities etc.
- Payday lending: The Council will not allow companies offering high cost credit to advertise on its property or website. Prime Site Media, who manage advertising panels in our car parks have also agreed not to accept such advertising.

7.4 HOUSING

- The majority of 7,800 Council houses have been fitted with cavity wall and loft insulation
- Environmental Development can assess homes in the private rented sector for "Excess cold", and can compel landlords to carry out certain energy efficient measures. They are running pilots to assess whether thermal imaging and Energy Performance Certificates can support appropriate guidance and enforcement for single occupancy homes and Houses of Multiple Occupation.
- The Home Improvement Agency provide some basic loans and grants such as the means tested Essential Repair Grants and Flexible Home Improvement Loans for homeowners aged 60 & over. They also run the Small Repairs Service for owner occupiers & tenants aged 60 & over, those suffering from long term health condition or those who are disabled.
- In partnership with the Low Carbon Hub the Council are running a pilot in Barton to install external wall insulation to 26 private rented properties.
- The Council aims to access energy company funding to roll out hard to treat external wall insulation in 2014/15
- Asset management strategy to contain energy targets for retrofitting Council houses including insulation and boiler replacement
- Solar Photovoltaic panels are installed on some Council stock to provide cheaper electricity, and the Council is working on a pilot of 5 typical homes
- Oxford City Council has committed to the End Fuel Poverty Coalition's Local Authority agreement
- Helping people find more affordable accommodation

- Housing Options: Securing accommodation to those facing eviction
- Provision of assistance to rough sleepers in partnership with the Crisis Skylight Centre who we grant fund
- Work of tenancy sustainment team: Working with people with various level of need to help them maintain their tenancy. Referrals are made to specialist support agencies where relevant.
- The Council supports the Affordable Warmth Network, offering a referral helpline for residents, training and information for staff and other key workers
- A 'Winter Warmth' outreach programme is being run with community groups and advice centre, targeting vulnerable older people
- The Council provides yearly fuel poverty grants, aimed at improving the energy efficiency of private sector properties, filling existing gaps

7.5 SKILLS

- Apprenticeship Program: 10 apprenticeships created
- Universal Credit LA Pilot: Tackling barriers to work for people affected by the Benefit Cap and Bedroom Tax, resulting in 39 people accessing work
- Local job clubs supported in estates by Stronger Communities Team
- Educational Attainment Programme: Investing £400,000 in education and leadership programmes over the next four years
- All large construction contracts require the lead contractor to provide a commitment on the number of jobs, training places and apprenticeships they will offer. This is then a contractual clause.
- The City has been awarded £3m to provide small to medium sized enterprises in Oxford a voucher for Superfast broadband.
- The contract with the supplier of the Gloucester Green market includes opportunities for start-up to have a stall at a discounted price to help them start up the business
- Pilot providing laptops and broadband access to school children without online access at home
- Business in the community mentoring scheme and partnership with Cherwell School

8. FUTURE DELIVERY PLANS

8.1 Consultation

The Council has conducted research to better understand the impacts of Welfare Reform in Oxford. Recommendations from this research will be carried out as part of this Strategy and are reflected in the Action Plan.

The Strategy was also subjected to public consultation for four weeks in April. This consultation has also informed the way in which this Strategy will be delivered.

Work is currently on-going with the advice sector in the City to understand current provision and research has also been commissioned into the local impact of Welfare Reform. These pieces of work will inform future strategy and service provision.

8.2 Embedding Financial Inclusion within the organisation (Related Themes – Debt, Income, Housing & Skills)

Strategic action is required in respect of organisational and cultural change to ensure Council policy and practice doesn't directly or inadvertently contribute to financial exclusion. It is also about making sure that the authority's range of services and activities make the strongest and best possible contribution to financial Inclusion.

The government has identified a number of key indicators for financial exclusion and systemic use of these would be hugely beneficial to prevention and reduction of vulnerability. These include:

- no bank account
- no savings
- use of high interest credit facilities

- owes priority debts (e.g. council tax, rent)
- annual individual income of less than £14,500 or household income of less than £15,600
- no insurance

8.3 Debt Recovery (Related Themes – Debt)

Recovery processes will be reviewed to ensure the principles of the Debt Recovery Policy are built into business as usual. The Policy commits the Council to:

- Allowing people to make one affordable payment where possible to repay all debts owed to the Council.
- Recovery officers promoting the services of qualified debt advisers where required.
- Introducing a standard Income & Expenditure form for use across the Council for the purposes of determining suitable repayments. This should be based on the Common Financial Statement which is accepted by creditors

Additionally, the processes for referring cases to bailiffs for collection, or for bankruptcy, committal or County Court recovery will be reviewed to ensure they do not contradict the principles of this Strategy.

8.4 Advice Commissioning (Related Themes – Debt, Income, Housing & Skills)

Oxford City Council funds a number of organisations in the city to provide advice, mainly relating to debt and welfare benefits, but a range of other issues as well.

It was agreed by CEB on 9th October that funding for advice and money management services is allocated on a one year basis for 2014/15, with a three year commissioning cycle being reintroduced from 2015/16 based on an agreed model for the future.

Officers are working with the advice sector to:

- a) Map current provision within the City; and
- b) Explore how Service Level Agreements can be developed to reflect the positive learning from the Council's welfare reform pilot, respond most effectively to government policy developments and leverage the experience and skills of the advice sector in order to reduce the impact on poverty.

8.5 Financial Capability (Related Themes – Debt, Income & Housing)

Community Housing will develop an accredited Tenant Ready scheme. The objectives of the scheme are:

- Improved tenancy sustainment for new or prospective social housing tenants (Council or Registered Provider) by improving the financial capacity and life skills of new tenants, and/or
- Improved access of clients to the PRS, by improving the financial capacity and life skills of prospective tenants; making credit checks; making reference checks from previous landlords and presenting better tenancy histories to deposit scheme landlords; etc

In an Open Space Event held in October 2013, Young People raised financial management as a skill they would like to learn. This will be built into the Youth Ambition Programme.

Under the governance arrangements for the Financial Inclusion Strategy (detailed in the following section), the above initiatives will be developed in a co-ordinated approach together with Advice sector, Registered Providers and other relevant organisations.

The Home Choice team plan to work with the Credit Unions to help their customers to save up and buy themselves out of the Home Choice scheme. At a time when it is getting harder to find private sector landlords to let to people in receipt of Housing Benefit, it is becoming more important to help people in the scheme move on from it.

8.6 Expansion of LA led pilot (Related Themes – Debt, Income, Housing & Skills)

Subject to funding being made available, it is intended to develop this pilot further in 2014/15, and try to align it with the work of the Job Clubs which have been established by the Stronger Communities Team. Customers in the pilot have indicated a preference for services to be provided locally so it is intended to deliver this work in the affected communities. The four Job Clubs are based in Wood Farm, Barton, Blackbird Leys and Littlemore and are well placed to support local communities with high levels of unemployment. The Welfare Reform Team will work with customers in these locations so that practical support is immediately to hand, and customers do not need to incur unnecessary travel expenses.

8.7 Fuel poverty (Related Themes – Debt, Income & Housing)

The Council's intended approach covers four different sectors, supported by appropriate communications and promotions.

Our own housing stock

- Accessing accurate construction and energy data from the recent Stock Condition Survey on our housing stock and rolling out an energy improvement programme according to the need to improve energy efficiency and prioritise vulnerable residents. This will also incorporate renewables such as solar PV, an approach to which is currently being piloted. Available funding will also be assessed to optimise the amount of work that can be done.

The private rented sector

- The Energy Act states that tenants can request 'green dealable' measures on properties with F and G rated Energy Performance Certificates (EPCs). By 2018, neither social or private sector landlords will be able to rent out these properties. Working with the private rented sector, work will be undertaken to promote these legislative changes and available financial assistance. In addition to existing licensing and enforcement work, pilots are being carried out using EPC and thermal imaging in both single occupancy homes and Houses of Multiple Occupation (HMOs) Licensing to address poor energy efficiency in the private rented sector.

Targeting deprived and vulnerable people

- The Council and its delivery partners will continue to pilot different approaches awaiting changes to existing funding mechanisms and building on lessons learned from the Warming Barton project. The Winter Warmth project will build on last year's Warm Homes Healthy People project to deliver affordable warmth outreach work to vulnerable older people via community groups and advice centres.
- Officers will research a meaningful way of monitoring and measuring fuel poverty that takes into account the impacts on health for the use of the Health Improvement Board. This will consider health issues that arise from cold homes and excess winter deaths to add context to the more general fuel poverty indicators.

We will continue to target those most at need of support and develop a communications plan to maximise take up of financial support available to people to pay for their energy costs, generate their own electricity through renewable energy and/or to improve the energy efficiency of their home.

8.8 Digital Take-Up (Related Themes –Skills)

'Digital by default' is a key plank of the government's reform programme. There is an expectation that applications for benefits and jobs will be processed through online profiles. The monthly payment and transactional bank accounts required by universal credit will mean that more people need to manage their money online. In addition, increasingly the best and most affordable services including insurance, fuel and products are available online. Anecdotally it appears that many people in Oxford have online access, however they often lack the confidence or skills to manage IT processes adequately.

It is therefore critical that the Strategy has a strong focus on digital inclusion. Such services will be promoted at a local level. Community Associations are well placed to deliver support in the city's most disadvantaged areas, to provide better online access and improve resident confidence, skills and knowledge.

9. GOVERNANCE

- 9.1 This Strategy will be overseen by the Customer First Programme Board.
- 9.2 A working group will be required to ensure the effective delivery of the Financial Inclusion Action Plan. It will require representations from the main areas responsible for delivering Financial Inclusion which would include Customer Services, Stronger Communities, Community Housing and Environmental Development, as well as effective partnership working with a range of external organisations.
- 9.3 The delivery of the Strategy itself will be coordinated on a day to day basis by the Council's Revenues & Benefits Programme Manager.

10. ACTION PLAN

- 10.1 See Appendix 1 attached.

**Appendix One
Financial Inclusion Action Plan**

THEME	TASK	TIMESCALE	TARGET/OUTCOME	RESP.	DELIVERY PARTNERS
DEBT – Short Term	Agree revised outcomes with Advice Sector and draft revised SLA's for 14/15	By Sep 14	Agree a set of outcomes which reflect the customers' needs and respond to challenges of Welfare Reform and increasing living costs.	Head of Customer Services	Advice Sector
	Map provision of emergency support available in the City to those in crisis (e.g. Foodbanks, grants, loans)	By Jul 14	Ensure Council staff can refer people in crisis to appropriate emergency support. Commission services to fill any identified gaps.	Stronger Communities	Oxfordshire County Council for information on charities
DEBT – Long Term	Monitor performance against SLA's, and use data to inform commissioning process for 15/16 to 17/18	Sep 14 to Jan 14	Complete data sets in relation to outcomes agreed in SLA's (above)	R&B Programme Manager	Advice Sector
	Map advice provision in City, with reference to services required under Localised Support Services Framework(LSSF)	By Mar 15	Understand gaps in service provision which need to be addressed to deliver LSSF	R&B Programme Manager	Stronger Communities Oxford Community & Voluntary Action
	Ensure Corporate Debt Recovery policy is embedded in debt collection processes	By Dec 15	To ensure all Council debts are considered when making payment arrangements, introduction of single Income & Expenditure form for Council debts, and to ensure customers are referred for debt advice and budgeting support where appropriate. Work towards providing a single point of contact in the council for customers with multiple debts	R&B Service Manager	N/A
	Work with Credit Unions to promote their services, and to inform the public about the dangers of unaffordable credit	Jun 14 to Mar 15	Increase the number of Oxford residents who are saving with the Credit Unions.	R&B Programme Manager	Oxford Credit Union

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	Ensure provision is made for providing basic bank accounts when retendering the Council's bank contract	By Mar 15	Ensure the Council's provider of banking services has a commitment to providing basic bank accounts for those that require them	Head of Finance	N/A
	Investigate the establishment of a citywide Financial Inclusion Partnership	By Mar 15	Work with partners in the most effective way to ensure Financial Inclusion issues are affectively tackled.	R&B Programme Manager	Various
INCOME – Short Term	Review recommendations contained in CESI research on the local impact of Welfare Reform.	By Sep 15	Determine new actions and amend actions within this plan to meet the challenges identified in the research.	R&B Programme Manager	Multiple, as identified in CESI research.
	Promote DHP's to Private Sector Tenants	By Mar 15	Ensure there is a higher take up of support from the private sector compared to 2013/14, by targeting recipients likely to require support.	R&B Programme Manager	Advice Sector
INCOME –Long Term	Train frontline staff to recognise indicators of financial exclusion	By Jan 15	Customers correctly referred for internal or external support. Data gathered on extent of financial exclusion	Customer Contact Manager	NA
	Roll out direct payment of Housing Benefit to all eligible working age tenants	By Dec15	Prepare tenants and the Council for introduction of Universal Credit, and identify tenants likely to be excluded from the direct payment element of Universal Credit	Rents Manager	Advice Sector Local banks Community Housing
	Deliver financial capability training to young people	By Jan 15	Young people better informed to make decisions which impact on their financial wellbeing	Youth Ambition Manager	Oxfordshire County Council Schools
	Gain accreditation with Living Wage Foundation	By Mar 15	Acting as a role model for businesses and other organisations in the City.Ensure that the Council's suppliers and contractors also gain accreditation.	Head of Human Resources and Facilities	N/A
	Identify local providers of affordable childcare	By Oct 14	Range of providers identified to be used in assisting people moving into work	R&B Programme Manager	Stronger Communities County Council

	When reviewing related policies, ensure the aims of the Financial Inclusion Strategy are supported	By Mar 15	Ensure the Council adopts a consistent approach to matters related to Financial Inclusion	All policy leads	N/A
HOUSING – Short Term	Support tenants to downsize where Welfare Reforms mean their rent is unaffordable	Apr 15 to Oct 15	Host further Mutual Exchange Speed Dating events. Facilitate more moves by providing financial support to people downsizing.	Landlord Services	Welfare Reform Team
	Monitor & Review Discretionary Housing Payment policy	Mar 15	Ensure conditionality effectively supports tenants.	R&B Programme Manager	N/A
	Programme of council housing energy efficiency and renewable energy works to be incorporated into Asset Management Strategy based on stock condition data	Sept 14 (AMS timeframe)	Target and prioritisation of stock according to energy efficiency and vulnerable residents. Rolling programme set, adapted according to available funding	Head of Housing & Property	Direct Services
	Introduce a Tenant Ready Scheme	Apr 14	Ensure tenants are equipped with the skills to manage their tenancy, especially payment of rent.	Housing Strategy & Needs Manager	External partners to be agreed
	Pilot project utilising thermal imaging to inform Housing Health & Safety Rating System	May 14	Poorly performing properties identified, and landlords informed how to make required changes.	Head of Environmental Development	N/A
	Roll out of Winter Warmth outreach project to help vulnerable old people access guidance and funding for affordable warmth	May 14	Future years dependent on resources available	Stronger Communities	Organisations in receipt of grants supporting this work
	Affordable Warmth grants - currently £25k/y to lever in additional funding.	Mar 15	Continue to use to lever in external funding to alleviate fuel poverty for Oxford households where possible.	Head of Environmental Development	None
HOUSING – Long Term	Programme of insulation, heating and ventilation improvements carried out within the Tower Blocks refurbishment programme	Mar 15 – end date	Better insulated, ventilated properties that result in lower energy bills for residents	Head of Housing & Property	Direct Services
	Pilot to change HMO licensing	Sep 14	Changes to HMO licensing researched,	Head of	N/A

	conditions to necessitate carrying out of recommended measures in EPCs rated F and G		consulted on as necessary and implemented. Achieved by working with landlords supporting identification of good practice, and providing support where required.	Environmental Development	
	Work with Affordable Warmth Network and Health Improvement Board to find a meaningful way to monitor the health impacts of fuel poverty across Oxford (and Oxfordshire)	Mar 15	A standard fuel poverty indicator with health indicators that enable monitoring of impacts of work around fuel poverty	Head of Environmental Development	Affordable Warmth Network Health Improvement Board
	Determine programme of insulation in housing stock, maximising available funding	Aug 15	Clarification of properties to be insulated in priority order, to be carried out as per available funding	Head of Housing & Property	Direct Services
	Investigate ways of minimising the negative impacts of key energy payment meters in council housing	Aug 15	Reduce fuel bills for Council tenants.	Head of Housing & Property	N/A
	Continue to investigate new ways to maximise available funding for insulation and other measures across Oxford as available funding changes	Ongoing	Maximise funding for energy efficiency measures	Head of Environmental Development	N/A
	Use the Building Research Establishment Stock modelling and other data to find private rental areas most at risk of fuel poverty	By Mar 15	Target residents in private rented sector in areas found to be most at risk of fuel poverty	Head of Environmental Development	Affordable Warmth Network
	Identify households covered by the new low income, high cost" definition of fuel poverty and give further consideration to low income, smaller homes that may not meet this classification but still be fuel poor	By Mar 15	Ensure customers in fuel poverty are provided with the support to which they are entitled	Head of Environmental Development	Affordable Warmth Network
	Energy strategy and training to be implemented for all housing staff with communications plan for	Aug 15	Ensure consideration of fuel poverty is embedded in all Housing services.	Head of Housing & Property	N/A

	external promotions				
SKILLS – Short Term	Support customers to access digital services	By Sep 15	As part of Channel shift strategy, ensure support is provided to assist customers in accessing and utilising digital services	Head of Customer Services	Consider whether external partner is required
SKILLS – Long Term	Development of LA led pilot, and planning for LSSF	Apr 14 to Mar 15	Extend scope of work to Private Rented Sector.	R&B Programme Manager	Job Clubs Jobcentre Plus Advice Sector
	Develop the partnership network that was established in the LA led pilot, to include providers that can deliver bespoke training to provide clients with the skills needed for known vacancies	Apr 14 to Mar 15	Maximise the opportunity for people with limited skills to move into employment.	Welfare Reform Manager	Job Clubs Further partners to be sought
	Align work of Welfare reform team to that of the Job Clubs	Apr 14 to Mar 15	Provide locally based, joined up support to people who need help accessing work.	Welfare Reform Manager	Job Clubs
	If bids to the European Social Fund are successful, ensure the funding is used to develop the work carried out by the LA led pilot	Apr 14 to Mar 15	Ensure any additional resources are used consistently, and in support of this strategy	R&B Programme Manager	Job Clubs Jobcentre Plus Aspire Crisis Advice Sector

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Title	Risk description	Opp/ threat	Cause	Consequence	Date Raised	Owner	Gross		Current		Residual		Comments	Controls				
							I	P	I	P	I	P		Control description	Due date	Status	Progress %	Action Owner
Strategy not carried out	The Financial Inclusion Strategy is not implemented due to lack of governance arrangements.		No ownership of the Strategy as a whole	Lack of impetus to encourage delivery of strategy	20/5/14	Paul Wilding	4	3	4	1	4	1		Strategy to be overseen by Customer First Program Board	Ongoing		0	Paul Wilding
Haphazard delivery of Strategy	The Financial Inclusion Action Plan is not fully delivered, due to lack of monitoring of individual actions		Lack of a delivery group to oversee the Strategy, or such a group does not comprise members of all relevant Services.	Only those actions for represented areas are monitored and delivered.	20/5/14	Paul Wilding	4	3	4	3	4	2		Financial Strategy Delivery Group to be established with representatives from Customer Services, Housing and Environmental Services.	Ongoing		0	Paul Wilding
Services not committed to delivering actions	The Financial Inclusion Action Plan is not fully delivered, due to lack of support from the services responsible for each action		Services not engaged in the development of the Strategy	Services do not have the resources to carry out the actions they are responsible for	20/5/14	Paul Wilding	4	3	4	1	4	1		During the development of the Strategy, all relevant departments were involved in determining the actions to be carried out.	3/7/14		100	Paul Wilding

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Appendix 4

Initial Equalities Impact Assessment

1. Within the aims and objectives of the policy or strategy which group (s) of people has been identified as being potentially disadvantaged by your proposals? What are the equality impacts?

The aim of the Financial Inclusion Strategy is to ensure that fewer people in the city are financially excluded. As such we would expect to see a positive impact on certain vulnerable groups, and also groups with protected characteristics.

Reductions in benefits impact disproportionately on single parents and people with disabilities. Older people and people in the private rented sector are disproportionately impacted by fuel poverty. Actions proposed in this strategy will therefore reduce the inequalities created for these groups.

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

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

Monitoring of the implementation of the Financial Inclusion Strategy will include reporting on the groups of people positively impacted by the measures which have been undertaken.

A Financial Inclusion Dashboard will be created to identify any groups not benefiting from the measures being taken so that mitigating action can be planned and delivered.

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

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

Public consultation was carried out during April 2014. Stakeholders in the Housing and Third Sector were invited to respond. The consultation was also available on the City Council website for members of the public to respond.

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

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

No adverse impacts have been identified. Monitoring will be undertaken to ensure delivery has equally positive impacts on the target groups it is aimed at, as outlined above.

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

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

A delivery group has been established to ensure the Financial Inclusion Strategy is effectively delivered. This group will be responsible for monitoring the impacts of specific actions, which will in turn be reported to the Customer First Board.

A dash board of Financial Inclusion indicators will also be established to monitor the overall impact of the Strategy.

To: City Executive Board

Date: 3 July 2014

Report of: Head of Environmental Development

Title of Report: Anti-social Behaviour Policy in the light of the Anti-social Behaviour, Crime and Policing Act 2014

Summary and Recommendations

Purpose: This report presents a revised Anti-Social Behaviour Policy for approval.

Report Approved by:

Finance: Paul Swaffield

Legal: Jeremy Franklin

Board Member: Councillors Dee Sinclair, Board Member for Crime and Community Response & Pat Kennedy, Board Member for Educational Attainment and Youth Ambition

Policy Framework: Strong, Active Communities; Cleaner, Greener Oxford;

Recommendation: That the City Executive Board approve the revised Anti-Social Behaviour Policy

Appendices

Appendix 1: Oxford City Council Anti-Social Behaviour Policy

Appendix 2: Oxford City Council Anti-Social Behaviour Procedures

Introduction

1. Oxford City Council is committed to tackling all forms of anti-social behaviour. Its responsibilities are integral to its role as a housing provider, environmental champion and lead partner for the Oxford Community Safety Partnership; the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 places a legal duty on the council to work in partnership to tackle the city's crime and disorder priorities.
2. Oxford City Council's existing Anti-social Behaviour Policy for Tenants and Leaseholders 2008 set out the policy guidelines for dealing with neighbourhood nuisance and other forms of anti-social behaviour. The delivery of anti-social behaviour interventions by council teams to non-Council tenants requires the policy to be revised to reflect the duty to investigate anti-social behaviour in all tenures.
3. In addition, changes to powers and tools under the Anti-social Behaviour, Crime and Policing Act 2014 require that local authorities amend the way in which they tackle and prevent anti-social behaviour.

4. This report sets out those legislative changes and proposes the local response.

Background

5. Oxford City Council has 15 years' experience of tackling anti-social behaviour, preventing crime, making our communities safer and the environment cleaner. The revised Anti-Social Behaviour Policy defines our approach to addressing anti-social behaviour and is supported by our Anti-social Behaviour Service Procedures.
6. The Crime and Disorder Act 1998 strengthened the council's powers to tackle anti-social behaviour through the introduction of the Anti-social Behaviour Order and Drug House Closure Order. The act also created separate offences for crimes aggravated by a victim's race or religion.
7. Housing providers already had a number of powers to deal with tenants who behave in an anti-social manner, including the Anti-Social Behaviour Injunction introduced by the Housing Act 1996.
8. The Clean Neighbourhoods and Environmental Act 2004 and Violent Crime Act 2006 introduced further interventions that local authorities and other partners could apply to tackle environmental crime and alcohol-related anti-social behaviour.

Consultation approach

9. During summer 2013 Oxford City Council's Housing and Property Services conducted a consultation exercise with our tenants and leaseholders to develop a "local offer" for housing services. This process has been used to determine the service standards and approach tenants and residents feel the council should adopt in relation to tackling anti-social behaviour.
10. An ASB Champions group made up of representatives from Oxford City Council's tenants and leaseholders will help monitor the service. They will play an important role in reviewing the performance of the local offer, become actively engaged in helping to prevent anti-social behaviour and assist in new areas of development for the service.
11. The results of this consultation have been incorporated into the revised Anti-Social Behaviour Policy.

Overview of the policy

12. The policy sets out the council's responsibilities as a landlord, environmental protection champion and lead member of the community safety partnership.
13. The policy defines what is, and what is not, considered to be anti-social behaviour and sets service standards for each category. Categorisation is decided using a case-by-case risk assessment.
14. The policy describes the five core principles that underpin the council's commitment to tackling anti-social behaviour, and activities that support these principles. The principles are:
 - a) No one should have to suffer from anti-social behaviour.
 - b) Reports of anti-social behaviour will be treated seriously and dealt with professionally.

- c) Anti-social behaviour will be addressed firmly, fairly and proportionately.
- d) We will work with partners in order to deliver an effective, value for money ASB service across our communities.
- e) We will deliver high quality customer service.

15. The policy includes reference to Oxford City Council's Compliments, Complaints and Comments process for customers who wish to provide feedback on the service they have received.

Review of the policy

16. The policy will be reviewed on a three-year cycle.

Financial Implications

17. All financial implications regarding this matter are covered within existing budgets.

Legal Implications

18. The policy assists in fulfilling our duties under Section 17, Crime and Disorder Act 1998 which "without prejudice to any other obligation imposed on it, it shall be the duty of each authority to which this section applies to exercise its various functions with due regard to the likely effect of the exercise of those functions on, and the need to do all that it reasonably can to prevent, crime and disorder in its area."

19. The policy fulfils the council's duty under Section 218A, Housing Act 1996, as amended by the Anti-social Behaviour Act 2003, requiring local authority housing providers to formulate and publish anti-social behaviour policies and procedures.

20. The proposed policy reflects the requirements of the Anti-social Behaviour, Crime and Policing Act 2014.

Environmental Implications

21. The policy makes a clear statement on the council's approach to tackling environmental crimes through the use of the powers available to it. The implementation of this policy does not have any negative impact upon the environment.

Name and contact details of report author:

Richard Adams Environmental Protection Service Manager radams@oxford.gov.uk

Background Papers:

None

www.oxford.gov.uk



Anti-Social Behaviour Policy

Contents

- 1) Scope and purpose of this document
- 2) The Council's Anti-Social Behaviour responsibilities
- 3) What is Anti-Social Behaviour
- 4) Our principles

Principle One: No one should have to suffer from anti-social behaviour

Principle Two: Reports of anti-social behaviour will be treated seriously and dealt with professionally

Principle Three: Anti-social behaviour will be addressed firmly, fairly and proportionately

Principle Four: We will work with partners in order to deliver an effective, value for money anti-social behaviour service across our communities

Principle Five: We will deliver high quality customer service

- 5) Concerns for children, young people or vulnerable adults
- 6) Future legislation
- 7) Section 218A, Housing Act 1996 requirements
- 8) Compliments, comments and complaints

1. Scope and purpose of this policy document

This document should be read in conjunction with Oxford City Council's Anti-social Behaviour Procedure.

This is the **policy** document. It tells you what we mean by 'anti-social behaviour' (ASB) and sets out the principles the council applies when responding to a report of anti-social behaviour. It explains how the council responds when people experiencing ASB contact us for help, and details the service quality we will provide.

This document does not say how we will deal with ASB on a day-to-day basis. This is explained in our **procedure** document, which should be read alongside this Policy.

2. The Council's responsibilities

Oxford City Council believes that no-one should tolerate anti-social behaviour and will use appropriate tools and powers available to local authorities to address all forms of nuisance. These powers arise from three complementary roles

The Council's role as a Responsible Authority of the [Oxford Safer Communities Partnership \(OSCP\)](#) as defined by the Crime and Disorder Act 1998. The Act states that the Council must work with the police and other agencies to reduce crime and disorder in Oxford. The council makes a significant contribution to dealing with anti-social behaviour of all kinds and undertakes both investigations and prevention activities

As a landlord the Council has a [duty to respond to ASB](#) affecting the properties we manage. Our landlord duties and powers complement the duties and powers we have to deal with ASB by non-council tenants. In this document, and our Anti-social Behaviour Procedure document, we will make it clear when a duty or a power only applies to Council tenancies.

As an environmental protection champion the Council has a range of legal powers to deal with environmental anti-social behaviour such as noise, graffiti, litter, rubbish and abandoned vehicles. These responsibilities arise from a number of legal instruments and local byelaws, but in particular from the Environmental Protection Act 1990, Clean Neighbourhoods and Environment Act 2005 and Anti-social behaviour, Police and Crime Act 2014.

3. What is anti-social behaviour?

Oxford City Council considers anti-social behaviour to be:

- Conduct capable of causing nuisance or annoyance to a person in relation to that person's occupation of residential premises; or
- Any act that causes, or is likely to cause, harassment, alarm or distress to one or more persons not of the same household; or
- Using or threatening to use Council property for unlawful and/or immoral purposes.

Anti-social behaviour cases are categorised according to the type of behaviour. This categorisation determines the response time Oxford City Council will apply and is described in the table below.

Category 1	Target time for first contact with victim or referrer: 1 working day
<p>Definition</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Behaviour that is a serious risk to individuals or the peace of the neighbourhood and which may include violence, serious threats of violence or other criminal activity. 2. Any complaint where the complainant or perpetrator is a vulnerable child, or adult as defined by s. 59 of the Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006. 3. Any complaint where there have been previous incidents and it appears to the case officer that, taking these together, a greater risk has developed or may be developing. <p>Category 1 includes extreme cases of anti-social behaviour such as:-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Hate related incidents (based on race, sexual orientation, homophobia, gender, disability, religion, age.) ■ Allegations of drugs/substance misuse and drug dealing ■ Criminal behaviour involving violence or threats of violence ■ Physical violence such as assault ■ Threats of harm / violence ■ Arson ■ Child abuse ■ Domestic abuse ■ Serious harassment/intimidation and threatening behaviour ■ Racist or offensive graffiti following a report ■ Other forms of anti-social behaviour requiring an immediate response ■ Threats to Oxford City Council staff 	
Category 2	Target time for first contact with victim or referrer: 2-4 working days
<p>Definition: Unreasonable, prolonged domestic disturbance such as verbal abuse or persistent noise nuisance.</p> <p>Category two includes serious cases of anti-social behaviour such as:-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Allegations of aggressive/abusive behaviour ■ Regular disturbances, such as noise ■ Drug/solvent and alcohol abuse ■ Verbal abuse and written intimidation and harassment ■ Allegations of sex working, sexual acts and kerb crawling ■ Other forms of serious anti-social behaviour, which in our opinion, needs priority but does not warrant an urgent or immediate response 	

Category 3

Target time for first contact with victim or referrer: 5 working days

Definition: Disputes between neighbours such as disagreements about parking, minor noise issues, children, pets and environmental matters.

Category three includes neighbour nuisance and tenancy breaches such as:-

- Pet and animal nuisance
- Minor noise nuisance
- Untidy gardens
- Litter, rubbish, refuse disposal and fly tipping
- Running a business without permission
- Car repairs
- Nuisance from vehicles such as untaxed vehicles
- Vandalism and damage to property
- Access disputes
- Misuse of the communal areas
- Parking disputes where no restrictions are in place
- Lifestyle disputes where breaches of tenancy cannot be proved
- Disputes between children
- Misuse of communal gardens
- Gardening disputes
- Disputes about cleaning communal areas where a service charge does not exist.

4. Policy principles

These principles underline our approach to tackling anti-social behaviour, how we manage cases and work with our customers.

4.1. No one should have to suffer from ASB

We will:

- make people aware of what anti-social behaviour is.
- publicise and promote our various services to tackle ASB.
- encourage people to report ASB and make it possible for them to do this using a range of reporting methods.
- respond to each reported case of ASB within our target times.
- support victims of ASB throughout the case.

4.2. Reports of ASB will be treated seriously and dealt with professionally.

We will:

- assess the seriousness of ASB reported to us, and take action in accordance with our service standards.

- treat all reports as confidential unless we consider that we should share information for safeguarding purposes or where it is in the public interest.
- share information only with other organisations that can help with the problem and observe data protection laws and information sharing agreements.
- ensure that criminal activities reported to the Council are quickly passed on to the police.
- register each case, give it a unique reference number and named lead officer.
- fully investigate the complaint, which will usually involve interviewing alleged perpetrators and may involve interviewing third party witnesses.
- quickly refer cases between the different sections of the Council and to other agencies, as necessary.
- formally deactivate cases, using the complainant's preferred method of correspondence.
- respond promptly to complaints about the service and advise anyone not satisfied with the way their case was handled about how to make a formal complaint.
- explain our reasons should we choose to take no action, and advise on self-help or other alternative courses of action whenever it is possible and appropriate to do this.
- review every open case of anti-social behaviour each month and set appropriate objectives for each case.

4.3. ASB will be addressed firmly, fairly and proportionately.

We will:

- deal with the most serious cases first, taking any necessary early action to protect people and property.
- investigate the circumstances and seek to understand all the facts of any matter reported to us.
- seek always to resolve cases at the lowest level of intervention, taking formal action when the ASB is serious or persistent or when it threatens people's safety or health.
- use any of the legal tools and powers available to us under the law and Council policy, according to our best professional judgment.
- consider and adjust our approach as necessary, when a victim or a perpetrator is a vulnerable person.
- with the consent of the people involved, refer suitable low-level cases to mediation.

4.4. We will work with partners in order to deliver an effective, value for money ASB service across our communities.

We will:

- play a full part as a lead member of the Oxford Safer Communities Partnership.
- participate in relevant strategic or preventative initiatives, being mindful of our core activities, current workload and costs of participation relative to the likely benefits.
- participate in multi-agency workgroups dealing with specific ASB issues.
- work with Registered Providers, private landlords, letting agents, universities and businesses, providing professional advice and support as required so that these organisations can act confidently to prevent or tackle ASB making use of their own resources.

4.5. We will deliver high quality customer service.

We will:

- ensure that staff dealing with ASB are trained in equality, diversity and safeguarding.
- ensure that staff dealing with ASB follow agreed policies and procedures.
- set ourselves demanding service standards, and publicly report on our performance against the standards.
- obtain customer feedback through surveys of users of the ASB service provided by Oxford City Council to rate their satisfaction with the service.
- formally review this policy document and the ASB procedure document at least once every three years.
- formally seek the views of service users and partner organisations as part of each review.

5. Concerns for children, young people or vulnerable adults

In the course of an investigation an officer may come across a person whose welfare may raise concerns. Whether or not the subject has a direct connection to the case under investigation, it remains the duty of officers to ensure that these concerns are properly logged and passed to the appropriate safeguarding agency via the council's safeguarding mechanism.

6. Future legislation

The Anti-social Behaviour, Crime and Policing Act 2014 will be enacted in the Autumn 2014, providing local authorities, social housing providers and partners with a new range of powers to tackle anti-social behaviour. The council will develop and publish revised procedures necessary to implement these, and any future legal powers.

7. Section 218A, Housing Act 1996 requirements

This document fulfils the requirements of section 218A of the Housing Act 1996 (as amended by the Anti-Social Behaviour Act 2003) with regard to the publication of the ASB procedures of a local authority landlord.

This policy contributes to the council statutory requirement under the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 that places a legal duty on the council to work in partnership to tackle the city's crime and disorder priorities, specifically section 17 that states that *"each authority needs to do all it reasonably can to prevent crime and disorder and to ensure services give due regard to crime and disorder."*

8. Comments, compliments and complaints

As a service provider, Oxford City Council strives to excel in customer satisfaction. We particularly welcome feedback where our staff, services, policies and procedures have exceeded customer expectations

Oxford City Council's objective is to build a world class city for everyone and excel in our service provision, but we recognise that things sometimes can go wrong. When they do, we want to put them right as soon as possible and learn from what happened to develop and improve services and procedures.

To ensure we receive customer feedback, either positive or negative, please use our on-line form that can be found here:

<http://www.oxford.gov.uk/PageRender/decVanilla/CommentsComplimentsorComplaints.htm>

or call us on our mainline number: 01865 249811

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Anti-Social Behaviour Procedure

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1. Scope and purpose of the procedure document

- 1.1. This document is one of two that tells you about Oxford City Council's anti-social behaviour (ASB) responsibilities and what we do to prevent and investigate ASB. This is the **Procedure** document. It tells you in detail how you can expect us to deal with your case should you report an ASB problem to the Council.
- 1.2. Our Anti-Social Behaviour **Policy** should be read alongside this document and tells you what we mean by 'anti-social behaviour' and sets out the principles of our ASB services.

2. The Council's responsibilities

- 2.1. Oxford City Council believes that no-one should tolerate anti-social behaviour and will use appropriate tools and powers available to local authorities to address all forms of nuisance.
- 2.2. These powers arise from three complementary roles
 - As a Responsible Authority for the Oxford Safer Communities Partnership
 - As a landlord
 - As an environmental protection champion
- 2.3. Anti-social behaviour refers to any form of nuisance, disorderly or offensive behaviour, intimidation or harassment that impact on a person's quality of life. Such a broad term can encompass everything from nuisance neighbours and drug dealing, to anti-social drinking and vandalism.

3. Behaviour that is not anti-social

- 3.1. The Council does not regard the following types of behaviours as anti-social and therefore we **will not** record or investigate the following:
 - Children playing in a public place e.g. streets, where they are **not** making excessive noise, obstructing access to public space or causing damage.
 - Neighbour disputes involving, for example, land boundaries, location of waste bins
 - Reasonable noise from vehicles on the highway carrying out their routine activities.
 - Reports of inconveniently or illegally parked vehicles will be recorded, but may not be immediately investigated. Where a significant and recurrent problem occurs further action may be taken.

4. Categories of anti-social behaviour

All complaints of anti-social behaviour made to the Council are categorised according to their level of seriousness, as detailed in the table below. How a case is rated is an important judgement which may affect how quickly we deal with a case; if the nature of the case changes, so will its rating.

Category 1	Target time for first contact with victim or referrer: 1 working day
<p>Definition</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Behaviour that is a serious risk to individuals or the peace of the neighbourhood and which may include violence, serious threats of violence or other criminal activity. 2. Any complaint where the complainant or perpetrator is a vulnerable child, or adult as defined by s. 59 of the Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006. 3. Any complaint where there have been previous incidents and it appears to the case officer that, taking these together, a greater risk has developed or may be developing. <p>Category 1 includes extreme cases of anti-social behaviour such as:-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Hate related incidents (based on race, sexual orientation, homophobia, gender, disability, religion, age) ■ Allegations of drugs/substance misuse and drug dealing ■ Criminal behaviour involving violence or threats of violence ■ Physical violence such as assault ■ Threats of harm / violence ■ Arson ■ Child abuse ■ Domestic abuse ■ Serious harassment/intimidation and threatening behaviour ■ Racist or offensive graffiti following a report ■ Other forms of anti-social behaviour requiring an immediate response ■ Threats to Oxford City Council staff 	
Category 2	Target time for first contact with victim or referrer: 2-4 working days
<p>Definition: Unreasonable, prolonged domestic disturbance such as verbal abuse or persistent noise nuisance.</p> <p>Category two includes serious cases of anti-social behaviour such as:-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Aggressive/abusive behaviour ■ Regular disturbances, such as noise ■ Drug/solvent and alcohol abuse ■ Verbal abuse and written intimidation and harassment ■ Allegations of sex working, sexual acts and kerb crawling ■ Other forms of serious anti-social behaviour, which in our opinion, need priority but do not warrant an urgent or immediate response 	

Category 3**Target time for first contact with victim or referrer: 5 working days**

Definition: Disputes between neighbours such as disagreements about parking, minor noise issues, children, pets and environmental matters.

Category three includes neighbour nuisance and tenancy breaches such as:-

- Pet and animal nuisance
- Minor noise nuisance
- Untidy gardens
- Litter, rubbish, refusal disposal and fly tipping
- Running a business without permission
- Car repairs
- Nuisance from vehicles such as untaxed vehicles
- Vandalism and damage to property
- Access disputes
- Misuse of the communal areas
- Parking disputes where no restrictions are in place
- Lifestyle disputes where breaches of tenancy cannot be proved
- Disputes between children
- Use of communal gardens
- Gardening disputes
- Disputes about cleaning communal areas where a service charge does not exist.

5. Stages of an investigation

5.1. Not all anti-social behaviour cases will follow the process set out below; however these stages are used as a guide to ensure that our investigations are robust and proportionate to the nature of the case. A case whose seriousness increases rapidly may result in moving straight to emergency court action, particularly where there is a threat of violence. The key stages to case investigation are:

- Reporting
- Initial investigations and evidence gathering
- Early intervention
- Involvement of support services
- Enforcement activities
- Court action
- Case closure and post-case after-care

6. Housing-related remedies

6.1. Many cases are resolved through a variety of early intervention techniques including accessing relevant support agencies, mediation, warning letters

and voluntary Acceptable Behaviour Contracts (ABCs). Unfortunately there are cases where these remedies either do not work or need to have enforcement activities running alongside them. Listed below are the most commonly used tools available.

- 6.2. **Introductory tenancies.** Introductory Tenancies are a “trial” tenancy where, if there are no problems with the tenancy after a year, the tenant will move onto a more secure form of tenancy agreement. The Council will adhere to the legal process set out for dealing with ASB related to Introductory Tenancies. Enforcement measures used for Introductory Tenancies are:
 - Extension of Introductory Tenancies
 - Termination of Introductory Tenancies
 - Final Warnings
 - Possession proceedings
- 6.3. **Secure/Assured/Licence Tenancies.** This is the most common form of tenancy and provides the tenant security unless they breach the grounds of the tenancy agreement. Breaches can be dealt with by:
 - Written warnings
 - Housing Cautions
 - Demoted tenancies. A demoted tenancy is a less secure form of tenancy. A secure tenancy can be demoted where there is anti-social behaviour, and is done by serving a Demotion Notice and making a court application for a Demotion Order. Demotion tenancies generally last for a period of 12-18 months.
 - Possession proceedings
- 6.4. **Possession Proceedings.** The council can consider applying to the court to repossess a tenant’s home where the perpetrator of anti-social behaviour is a council tenant or someone living with or visiting a tenant. The behaviour complained of is a breach of the terms of the tenancy agreement, or, in the case of secure tenants, one of the grounds for possession as defined by the Housing Act 1985 applies.
- 6.5. The grounds for possession include where the tenant or a person living with or visiting the tenant is guilty of anti-social behaviour.
- 6.6. The type of tenancy held determines the course of legal action. When an application is made to court for possession of an Introductory Tenancy, the court should grant possession, as long as the Council has correctly followed its Introductory Tenancy procedures.
- 6.7. When the tenant is a secure tenant the court must also be satisfied that it is reasonable to evict the tenant on the basis of the anti-social behaviour that has been evidenced.
- 6.8. The Anti-Social Behaviour, Crime and Policing Act 2014 introduces a new absolute grounds for possession whereby in certain circumstances a court must make an order for possession where a tenant or person visiting the house has been convicted of a serious offence.

- 6.9. Possession will always be a last resort and is reserved for serious cases. Examples of cases where eviction would be considered include:
- Dealing/supplying/cultivation of drugs from council property;
 - Using violence or severe intimidation against neighbours or staff;
 - Using council property for serious criminal activity;
 - Where properties have been closed under crack house or anti-social behaviour closure powers;
 - Where the anti-social behaviour is persistent and other attempts to prevent it have failed.

7. Anti-Social Behaviour enforcement remedies

- 7.1. Once enforcement options have been approved by the Community Response Team Manager or ASB Investigation Team Manager, the case officer will compile a full case file with all documentary evidence obtained during the investigation for submission to the Council's Legal and Democratic Services. This could include photographs, statements, letters, ABCs, Cautions and CCTV evidence.
- 7.2. Prior to any submission to legal service for formal enforcement action, the case officer will revisit case participants to ensure all reasonable steps have been taken to identify any vulnerabilities and safeguarding needs, and appropriate supportive actions considered.
- 7.3. The manager will provide appropriate advice and guidance with regards to appropriate legal measures taking full account of the perpetrator's age, tenure and reflecting the nature and the seriousness of the case.
- 7.4. **Anti-Social Behaviour Orders (ASBOs)**. These are civil orders setting out terms which prohibit the perpetrator from carrying out specific anti-social acts, for example, to prevent them from entering defined areas on a map or prohibiting them from associating with people also involved in anti-social acts.
- 7.5. Applications are presented to an Oxford ASB panel, a multi-agency forum with a statutory responsibility to consult on, and approve applications for court. The council can apply for these orders in the Magistrates Court or as part of other proceedings in the County Court, for example, possession proceedings.
- 7.6. The anti-social acts have to be proven to a criminal standard of proof and the Council also has to persuade the court that proposed terms are necessary. Once the ASBO is made, breaching the order is a criminal offence.
- 7.7. Anti-social behaviour orders can also be made following a conviction in the criminal courts. Although the prosecutor and not the council makes the application for this to happen, the Council works closely with the police and CPS to identify suitable cases for such orders on conviction.
- 7.8. The ASB, Crime and Policing Act 2014 will repeal the ASBO and replace it with an Injunction.

- 7.9. **Injunctions under s.153 Housing Act 1996.**An injunction is a court order prohibiting a person from committing certain acts. If an injunction is breached, this will be contempt of court, and the Council can apply for this contempt to be punished by a fine or committal to prison. It may also be possible to obtain a power of arrest and exclusion zone (including exclusion from someone's home), as part of the injunction if the individual has used or threatened violence or there is a significant risk of harm to victims.
- 7.10. In very serious cases it may be possible to apply for an injunction without telling the perpetrator that the Council is applying to court for an order.
- 7.11. **Injunctions for trespass.**The Council can send a prohibition letter banning individuals from entering council owned property. If the letter is ignored this will be trespass and the Council can apply for an injunction banning the individual from continuing the trespass. In the case of schools, the law requires the parent of a child to be consulted before such a ban is made against them.
- 7.12. **Injunctions under s.222 Local Government Act 1972.**The Council can use the authority of s. 222 Local Government Act 1972 to bring proceedings in the County Court to prohibit a person from continuing to cause a public nuisance, if it can be shown that it is expedient for the promotion or protection of the interests of the inhabitants of the area. These can be used to deal with problems such as drug dealing, begging or prostitution.
- 7.13. **ASB and Drug House Closure Orders.**The Council can make an application for an order which closes a property which is associated with significant and persistent disorder or persistent serious nuisance to members of the public, or drug misuse. The order excludes everyone from the property for a period of up to three months. The order can be extended for a further three months if necessary. The order can be sought against any property whether owned by the council or not and can include commercial buildings.
- 7.14. The ASB, Crime and Policing Act 2014 will replace the existing closure orders with a new Closure Order for premises associated with nuisance or disorder.
- 7.15. **Seizure of sound equipment.**Section 10(7) of the Noise Act 1996 confirms the power of a local authority to abate any statutory noise nuisance by seizing and removing equipment used in the emission of the noise in question.

8. Evidence gathering

- 8.1. It is essential that high quality evidence is gathered at an early stage to ensure risks are identified, the correct courses of actions are taken, support agencies are involved and, if necessary, court files prepared. Case Managers will ensure all investigations are thorough and all avenues of potential evidence are explored to determine the most effective means to resolve complaints of ASB.
- 8.2. This information is recorded on the ASB case management system. Any evidence provided in support of an anti-social behaviour case may be used as evidence in legal proceedings, where appropriate.

- 8.3. **Statements.** Witness Statements can be taken from any person over the age of 10 years, but for anyone under 19 an appropriate adult must be present. It will be explained that a person may be required to attend court.
- 8.4. **Community Harm Statements.** May be used, where appropriate, in order to highlight the harm an individual's behaviour is having on the wider community. Statements may be exhibited as part of legal proceedings or may be used as part of non-legal interventions.
- 8.5. **Professional witnesses** can be used in situations of harassment, threat or intimidation where a witness is not prepared to make a statement.
- 8.6. **Incident diaries** will be made available to all complainants of ASB and will be:
 - provided with guidance of 'how to complete'
 - made available in community languages where requested
 - provided with a freepost envelope, on request
 - made available digitally on request.
- 8.7. **Letter drops.** Neighbours may be written to asking whether they would like to report any cases of anti-social behaviour or have information relating to a case. All responses are kept confidential.
- 8.8. **Photographs.** Photographic evidence is particularly used when prosecuting environmental offences such as dog-fouling, fly-tipping, illegal parking and incorrect presentation of domestic or commercial waste.
- 8.9. **Surveillance.** Where surveillance operations are to be used to obtain covert CCTV evidence of incidents of ASB, an appropriate Regulation of Investigatory Powers Act 2000 (RIPA) authorisation will be sought.

9. CCTV

- 9.1. CCTV can be a significant tool in the fight against ASB. The impact of CCTV can also help detect crime, as well as identifying missing persons and other public safety concerns.
- 9.2. Oxford's public space CCTV cameras are currently managed under a partnership agreement between Oxford City Council and Thames Valley Police.
- 9.3. The cameras in Oxford can be found in the following places:
 - Oxford City Centre
 - Park and Ride sites
 - Cowley Road
 - Rose Hill
 - Wood Farm
 - Barton
 - Blackbird Leys
 - City Council tower blocks.

10. Supporting victims and witnesses

- 10.1. To tackle ASB effectively, victims and witnesses must feel able to provide evidence in confidence and without fear.
- 10.2. For cases that end up in court, the lead officer may consider compiling a “Community Harm Statement” detailing the effects of the perpetrator’s behaviour on the witness’s life. .
- 10.3. Officers will ensure that any instructions issued to legal representatives will include full consideration of the needs of the witness. Officers will always advise complainants of the final outcome of cases and of any measures aimed at preventing problems from recurring.

11. Logging concerns for children, young people or vulnerable adults

- 11.1. In the course of an investigation an officer may come across a person whose welfare may raise concerns. Whether or not the subject has a direct connection to the case under investigation, it remains the duty of officers to ensure that these concerns are properly logged and passed to social services through the appropriate safeguarding mechanism.

12. Monitoring the service

- 12.1. Oxford City Council is committed to delivering a high quality anti-social behaviour service. Our aim is to continuously improve the way we work and to acknowledge, and learn from, the occasions when the service fails to meet expectations.
- 12.2. One way in which we monitor the quality of the service is to ask people who have used it to tell us about their experience. Each Customer Feedback Survey outlines the customer’s experience of the case. We look for trends in the provision of the service. We ask an identical set of questions to those asked by other ASB service providers and compare our performance relative to that of other organisations. This information is then scrutinised by the ASB Champion Group.
- 12.3. How we deal with ASB in the community is also monitored against an agreed set of minimum standards of performance, established in the Oxford Local Offer for ASB. We report on our performance against these standards.

13. Professional discretion

- 13.1. This policy commits us to dealing with ASB in Oxford in a way that will be fair and proportionate. Our services are constantly evolving and each ASB case we deal with is unique. When appropriate, we will use our discretion to vary our approach from the overview set out in this document.

14. Comments, compliments and complaints

- 14.1. As a service provider, Oxford City Council strives to excel in customer satisfaction. We particularly welcome feedback where our staff, services, policies and procedures have exceeded customer expectations.
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