

Agenda

www.oxford.gov.uk



Scrutiny Committee

Date: **Monday 2 March 2015**

Time: **6.15 pm**

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

For any further information please contact:

Sarah Claridge, Committee Services Officer

Telephone: 01865 252402

Email: sclaridge@oxford.gov.uk

As a matter of courtesy, if you intend to record the meeting please let the Contact Officer know how you wish to do this before the start of the meeting.

Scrutiny Committee

Membership

Chair	Councillor Craig Simmons
Vice Chair	Councillor Tom Hayes
Members	Councillor Mohammed Altaf-Khan
	Councillor Farida Anwar
	Councillor Van Coulter
	Councillor Roy Darke
	Councillor James Fry
	Councillor Sam Hollick
	Councillor David Henwood
	Councillor Ben Lloyd-Shogbesan
	Councillor Linda Smith
	Councillor Louise Upton

The quorum for this Committee is 4, substitutes are permitted.

HOW TO OBTAIN A COPY OF THE AGENDA

In order to reduce the use of resources, our carbon footprint and our costs we will no longer produce paper copies of agenda over and above our minimum internal and Council member requirement. Paper copies may be looked at the Town Hall Reception and at Customer Services, St Aldate's and at the Westgate Library

A copy of the agenda may be:-

- Viewed on our website – mycouncil.oxford.gov.uk
- Downloaded from our website
- Subscribed to electronically by registering online at mycouncil.oxford.gov.uk
- Sent to you in hard copy form upon payment of an annual subscription.

AGENDA

Pages

1 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

2 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

3 UPDATES SINCE THE LAST MEETING

For scrutiny members to update the Committee on any developments since the last meeting.

The next Housing Standing Panel is scheduled for 24 March.
The next Finance Standing Panel is scheduled for 25 March.

4 LIVING WAGE 6.20PM

Contact Officer: Jarlath Brine, OD & Learning Advisor, Equalities & Apprenticeships jbrine@oxford.gov.uk

11 - 74

Why is it on the agenda?
The Scrutiny Committee requested a report to update members on how the Council's commitment to paying the Oxford Living Wage has been implemented internally and within our supply chain.
Who has been invited to comment?
Simon Howick, Head of Human Resources & Facilities, and Jane Lubbock, Head of Business Improvement & Technology, have been invited to present this item.

5 CONSULTATION AND ENGAGEMENT 6.50PM

Contact Officer: Sadie Paige, Policy, Culture and Communication spaige@oxford.gov.uk

75 - 92

Background Information
The Scrutiny Committee considered the Community Engagement Plan 2014/17 in June 2014 and made 4 recommendations.
Why is it on the agenda?
For the Scrutiny Committee to review information it requested in 2 of its recommendations.

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To provide information on the engagement ambitions set for all consultations during the last year, what was achieved and how this fits with the principles set within the Policy Statement. • To suggest to the Scrutiny Committee an up and coming engagement/empowerment exercise that can act as a pilot study to demonstrate the effectiveness of the principles within this report.
Who has been invited to comment?
Sadie Paige will present her report and answer the Committee's questions.

6 RESEARCH INTO THE LOCAL IMPACT OF WELFARE REFORM 7.10PM

93 - 176

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

Why is it on the agenda?
The Scrutiny Committee requested a report setting out research on the impacts of welfare reforms in Oxford.
Who has been invited to comment?
Paul Wilding will present this item and answer the Committee's questions.

7 DISCRETIONARY HOUSING PAYMENT POLICY 7.35PM

177 - 200

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

Background Information
The City Executive Board on 12 March will be asked to approve the revised Discretionary Housing Payment Policy. From 2015/16 Oxford City Council's grant will reduce from £514,496 to £288,092, a reduction of 44%.
Why is it on the agenda?
The Scrutiny Committee requested to pre-scrutinise this report.
Who has been invited to comment?
Paul Wilding will present this item and answer the Committee's questions.

8 THE CULTURE STRATEGY 2015-18**8.00PM**

201 - 244

Contact Officer: Peter McQuitty, Head of Policy, Culture and Communications Tel: 01865 252780 pmcquitty@oxford.gov.uk

Background Information
<p>The City Executive Board on 12 March will be asked to recommend the Culture Strategy to Council. The Scrutiny Committee reviewed the Draft Culture Strategy in October 2014 prior to consultation and made the following recommendations:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. That the Culture Strategy presents the fullest picture of Oxford's cultural offering, including cultural experiences that the City Council is not directly involved in. 2. That the Culture Strategy sets out how City Council functions such as licencing and planning can play an important role in supporting culture. 3. That the list of organisations invited to contribute to the Culture Strategy is shared with elected members, so that they can make any further suggestions. 4. That consideration is given to how the City Council can encourage visitors to spend more time in Oxford, and to whether increasing visitor length of stay should be made a priority in the Culture Strategy.
Why is it on the agenda?
The Scrutiny Committee requested to pre-scrutinise this report.
Who has been invited to comment?
Peter McQuitty has been invited to present this report.

9 PERFORMANCE MONITORING - QUARTER 3**8.15PM**

245 - 248

Contact Officer: Neil Lawrence, Performance Improvement Manager nlawrence@oxford.gov.uk

Background Information
<p>The Scrutiny Committee set a small Panel of members to consider the available performance measures and select two sets, linked to the scrutiny programme, for monitoring on a quarterly basis.</p> <p>The sets are to be considered by the Scrutiny Committee and the Housing Panel. The attached table includes the selection for the Scrutiny Committee.</p>
Why is it on the agenda?

For the Scrutiny Committee to monitor performance against selected indicators at the end of Quarter 3.

Who has been invited to comment?

This report is provided for the Scrutiny Committee's information and consideration. Any additional information required by the Committee can be requested to be made available for a future meeting.

10 WORK PROGRAMME AND FORWARD PLAN 8.25PM

249 - 276

Contact Officer: Andrew Brown, Scrutiny Officer Tel: 01865 252230
abrown2@oxford.gov.uk

Background Information

Indicative agenda schedules are set out in section 5 of the work programme.

The Forward Plan starting April 2015 is included which outlines decisions to be taken by the City Executive Board or Council.

Why is it on the agenda?

Members are asked to select which Forward Plan items they wish to pre-scrutinise at the 29 April Scrutiny Committee meeting, based on the following criteria:

- *Is the issue controversial / of significant public interest?*
- *Is it an area of high expenditure?*
- *Is it an essential service / corporate priority?*
- *Can Scrutiny influence and add value?*

A maximum of three items for pre-scrutiny will normally apply.

Who has been invited to comment?

Andrew Brown, Scrutiny Officer will present the work programme, answer questions and support the Committee in its decision making.

11 REPORT BACK ON RECOMMENDATIONS 8.30PM

277 - 298

Contact Officer: Andrew Brown, Scrutiny Officer Tel: 01865 252230
abrown2@oxford.gov.uk

Background Information

The Committee makes a number of recommendations to officers and decision makers. This item allows Committee to see the results of recommendations since the last meeting and the cumulative results

of all scrutiny recommendations.
Why is it on the agenda?
<p>Since the last Scrutiny Committee meeting, recommendations on the following items have been added:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Budget 2015/16 - Treasury Management Strategy 2015/16 - Grant Allocations to Community and Voluntary organisations - Activities for Older People - Communities and Neighbourhood Services
Who has been invited to comment?
Andrew Brown, Scrutiny Officer.

12 MINUTES

8.35PM

299 - 306

Minutes from the meetings held on 19 January and 3 February 2015

Recommendations:

That the minutes of the meeting held on 19 January 2015 be APPROVED as a true and accurate record.

That the minutes of the meeting held on 3 February 2015 be APPROVED as a true and accurate record.

13 DATES OF FUTURE MEETINGS

Meetings are scheduled as followed:

23 March 2015
29 April 2015

DECLARING INTERESTS

General duty

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

What is a disclosable pecuniary interest?

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

Declaring an interest

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

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

Members' Code of Conduct and public perception

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

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

To: The Scrutiny Committee

Date: 2nd March 2015

**Joint Report of: Head of HR & Facilities
Head of Business Improvement & Technology**

Title of Report: Living Wage

Summary and Recommendations

Purpose of report: To provide an update on how the Council's commitment to paying the Oxford Living Wage has been implemented internally and across our supply chain.

Executive Lead Member: Councillor Bob Price

Recommendation(s) or major points for consideration:

To note the actions that have been taken in implementing this policy and proposed future initiatives.

List of background papers:

- ***Living Wage Employers business case report 2014 outlining the qualitative and quantitative benefits to businesses of paying the Living Wage***
- ***Living Wage Welcome Brochure 2015***

1. Introduction:

The Scrutiny Committee have indicated a general interest in how the City Council's commitment to paying the Oxford Living Wage (OLW) has been implemented. This update covers four specific areas:

- Whether all staff employed directly or through contractors are now being paid the Oxford Living Wage
- Whether this policy has presented any practical challenges or difficulties
- How the Council is promoting the Oxford Living Wage more widely
- Further initiatives to promote the OLW

2. Payment of the Oxford Living Wage:

The Council agreed to implement the Oxford Living Wage in Sept 2009. It is set at 95% of the London Living Wage in recognition of the high cost of housing within the City. In November 2014 the National Living Wage rate increased to £7.85 and the London Living Wage rate to £9.15 an hour. From April 2015, no Council employee or agency worker will earn less than the revised Oxford Living Wage of £8.69; the lowest Council salary scale point will be £8.98 per hour. From October 2015 this will increase to £9.12 as the bottom scale point will be removed at that time as part of the pay agreement. The only exception to this are our 26 apprentices who are paid at scales above the statutory national minimum for apprentices and who, on successful completion of their training, are likely to migrate into full-time roles paid above the OLW.

As a large employer and major commissioner of services with an annual third party spend of £56m, we use this position to influence others by demonstrating the business and longer term benefits of paying the OLW. All Council tenders with values over £100k require contractors to pay their staff and sub-contractors the OLW. It is a standard clause in the terms and conditions for all contracts including those below £100k.

The procurement team hold two Meet the Buyer events each year and at each event the team promote the requirement for our supply chain to pay the OLW and the benefits it provides to both employers and the wider Oxford economy.

3. Has this policy presented any practical challenges or difficulties?

The Council was already committed to addressing low pay, e.g. through its Single Status agreement, the introduction of an innovative Partnership Payment during the pay freeze, and most recently in its negotiation of a five year pay deal. The cost in relation to existing substantive post holders was factored in to medium term financial planning and has been relatively modest at around £9k per annum (with on-costs). New national and London Living Wage rates are conventionally notified in November which allows time for budgeting and implementation of the OLW.

Contracts with a value of more than £100k a year (e.g. FUSION) are subject to a robust monitoring process. These contractors are required to regularly provide performance information including evidence that they are fulfilling their obligations to the living wage policy. This is not the case for lower values contracts, so it is planned that the Business Improvement Team should conduct an annual survey of all current suppliers in October/ November each year. The results of this survey will be reported back to the Council and the public as part of Small Business Saturday (*usually in December each year). This will also include notification to the suppliers of the latest Oxford Living Wage rate. Additionally, instructions will be issued to contract managers on an annual basis requiring them to: a) notify contractors of the OLW uplift and b) request confirmation from contractors that they pay the OLW.

It is likely that requiring small businesses to increase their rates of pay in line with the OLW will result in an increase in procurement costs.

4. How the City Council is promoting the Oxford Living Wage more widely:

The Living Wage Foundation spoke at the January Meet the Buyer event which was attended by over 120 local small and medium sized enterprises (SME's).

The Council was shortlisted for a Living Wage Champion award by the Living Wage Foundation in November 2014 and is currently the only LW Council in Oxfordshire. We know that there are six other LW accredited employers in Oxford but determining how many other employers actually pay the LW is more difficult.

Both Procurement & HR promote the initiative further at any conferences we present at, writing to local employers and using Business in the Community cluster meetings to encourage them to join the campaign. The Leader of the City Council, working through the Local Enterprise Partnership, has promoted the OLW at:

- Business Leaders Roundtable
- 1:1 meetings with businesses and meetings with business groups
- Events - Business Breakfast and Business in Oxford 2014

Possible further initiatives:

The City Council has been championing the concept of a Living Wage since 2009 when Councillors passed a motion to introduce an Oxford Living Wage (OLW). We have continued to campaign actively for its wider adoption since we became an accredited Living Wage employer in 2012, and recognise that presenting a coherent business case to employers to encourage them to pay the Living Wage and take the next step to become accredited Living Wage employers is a smart strategy (an approach corroborated by the recent Living

Wage Employers business case report 2014). It is pleasing to see that two of the city's biggest employers, Oxford University and Oxford University Hospitals Trust, have made their first moves in January 2015 to seek LW accreditation.

A further possible initiative would be to encourage local businesses to have a two or three year phased approach to paying the OLW, starting by paying the national Living Wage; the Council could promote this through its various channels into business.

Members are asked to consider whether there are other viable options or incentives that could be explored to stimulate businesses to pay the OLW. For instance, Brent's Living Wage offer to businesses for discounts of up to £5k off their rates if they pay all staff a living wage?

Name and contact details of authors:-

Name: Simon Howick and Jane Lubbock



Living Wage Employers: evidence of UK Business Cases

*By Andrea B. Coulson and James Bonner on behalf of the University of Strathclyde,
in partnership with the Living Wage Foundation*

Foreword



Barclays has supported the Living Wage since 2003, and we were proud to announce our formal accreditation as a national Living Wage Employer in 2013. This development, as well as making good business sense, demonstrates how our Purpose and Values permeate our day-to-day decisions and make a positive contribution to society. Not only is paying people who work on our behalf a wage that supports a decent standard of living a responsible thing to do, there are also clear business, societal and economic benefits to doing so. The perceived costs of paying this higher wage are, in our experience, outweighed by increased productivity and morale and reduced recruitment costs. Paying a higher wage encourages workers to stay and explore different career opportunities. We have also heard first hand from our contracted staff how receiving the Living Wage improves their quality of life both at work and home.

We are pleased to support this knowledge exchange project conducted by the University of Strathclyde and the Living Wage Foundation which investigates further the qualitative and quantitative benefits to businesses of paying the Living Wage, and hope that the Living Wage continues to gain increased support from the business community.

Dominic Johnson,
Employee Relations Director,
Barclays PLC

Contents

<i>i</i>	<i>Foreword</i>
<i>ii</i>	<i>Contents</i>
<i>1</i>	<i>Executive summary</i>
<i>4</i>	<i>The Living Wage Foundation and accreditation</i>
<i>7</i>	<i>Evolution of the business case</i>
<i>13</i>	<i>Evidence gathering and case selection</i>
<i>14</i>	<i>Aviva PLC</i>
<i>18</i>	<i>Barclays PLC</i>
<i>23</i>	<i>KPMG LLP UK</i>
<i>27</i>	<i>Penrose Care Ltd</i>
<i>30</i>	<i>SSE PLC</i>
<i>35</i>	<i>Enhance Office Cleaning Ltd</i>
<i>39</i>	<i>Discussion and conclusions</i>
<i>43</i>	<i>Endnote</i>
<i>44</i>	<i>Literature reference list</i>
<i>48</i>	<i>Thanks</i>

Executive summary

This report has been prepared by the University of Strathclyde in partnership with the Living Wage Foundation (LWF) and a number of Living Wage Employers to contribute to the growing 'business case' for the Living Wage in the UK. This project reported details the business cases of 5 Living Wage Employers - Aviva, Barclays, KPMG, Penrose Care and SSE - and a member of the LWF's Service Provider Recognition programme - Enhance Office Cleaning.

An historic approach was undertaken, providing where available evidence of employers' long term commitment (pre- and post LWF accreditation) to the Living Wage. The report begins by documenting the formation of the Living Wage Foundation and its accreditation process within the context of the living wage movement in the UK, and is followed by a review of core literature on the evolution of the business case. The subject of our attention within each case organisation then turns to the nature and recognition of value and how it is created in connection with Living Wage adoption. Evidence is provided of the business costs and benefits of Living Wage adoption, and in each case the employer's perceived impact on employees.

Introducing the Living Wage is foremost a reflection of the core values of a business. It can be adopted from the first day of business, or introduced as part of a change management programme. Becoming a Living Wage Employer accredited by the Living Wage Foundation requires a commitment to pay all direct employees, and all third-party on-site contract employees, the Living Wage. Continued debate exists on the degree to which the costs of adopting the Living Wage can/should be absorbed by the business and its stakeholders.

Evidence detailed in the case studies highlights the following points:

Living Wage adoption reflects social objectives in core business values

- The impact of implementing the Living Wage is far more than the wage rate to be measured in monetary values alone.
- Evidence is drawn from financial and non-financial information and representation of 'value' which can be created for a business and its stakeholders.

Covering costs of the Living Wage is fundamental to the business case

- Direct financial cost to the business is undeniable. A cost mitigation strategy is needed.
- Case evidence provides examples of how the financial costs of Living Wage adoption can be offset by cost mitigation strategies, and considered alongside investment commitments designed to achieve value creation.
- There are a number of potential benefits that specific businesses can realise from implementing the Living Wage which include financial savings such as: reducing staff turnover; increasing worker morale and loyalty; reducing absenteeism; productivity improvements; strengthening recruitment opportunities and providing reputational benefits.

A business case is developed based on value creation

- In the first instance, adopting the Living Wage encourages organisations to re-evaluate their business model, and to adjust conditions and working practices of employees – such as moving to day shifts work that has previously been done on night shifts, utilising workers to undertake other tasks that are more socially convenient for them, and offer more job variability/skill development. Such changes potentially deliver both financial value creation and social welfare improvements.
- Of particular note from a profit perspective, our cases provide emergent evidence of investment in the Living Wage leading to brand value creation.

Change can be phased in

- The Living Wage can be adopted from the first day of business, or introduced as part of a change management programme.
- Case evidence highlights the importance of including the Living Wage within interactions and interdependencies within the value chain – the need for clients, customers, service providers and others to ensure that the maximum value is derived for this strategic implementation or change programme.
- For example, when introducing the Living Wage businesses can utilise the change as an opportunity to achieve efficiency gains and to introduce new policies, such as recycling in the workplace, into working practices.

Create value with service providers and contractors

- Evidence suggests there is a varying degree of awareness and implementation of the Living Wage reflected by service providers and contractors.
- Momentum on Living Wage adoption and expectations are changing. With now over 1,000 Living Wage Employers in the UK paying the Living Wage, this is a requirement of doing business with them where on-site contracts are served.
- Case evidence is provided of the changing expectations of our case study businesses and how value can be created by working with service providers and contractors.

Pursue objectives of social welfare through employee impact

- Employee engagement is central to adopting the Living Wage. Asking employees how their lives can be improved by action taken by their employers is critical to improving social welfare.
- Evidence is provided of ‘packages’ of employment benefits that reflect fair compensation for workers and extends beyond the Living Wage to improved terms of employment and working conditions, and hopefully social welfare gains.
- Case evidence includes secondary data from service providers that demonstrates Living Wage initiatives have the potential to empower low-paid workers by providing them with new skills and training and improve standards of living.

Stakeholder engagement is critical in managing knowledge gaps

- Engagement is particularly important to manage any potential knowledge gaps which exist between a business and its stakeholders around perceptions of the business case for the Living Wage.
- Investor engagement and support for Living Wage adoption is critical to the business case.

Our findings highlight the importance of building a business case based on both financial objectives and social commitments. Inherent within the change management programme or business start-up case supporting the adoption of the Living Wage is the need to manage both the financial and non-financial impact of the Living Wage on value creation. The challenge of integrating varied performance considerations and valuing the business narrative, however formalised, alongside financial criteria become central to the formation of a business case going forward.

The Living Wage Foundation and accreditation

The living wage campaign in the UK: 2001- 2011

The living wage¹ movement in the UK evolved as a campaign launched in 2001 by the broad-based community group The East London Communities Organisation (TELCO – a forerunner to London Citizens, and eventually part of Citizens UK) to tackle the growing issue of ‘in-work poverty’. Working with UNISON and TELCO the York University Family Budget Unit produced a report in 2001 that established the income required for workers to support a family in East London with a “low cost but acceptable living standard”². The study Mapping Low Pay in East London by Wills & TELCO (2001) gathered evidence of poor working conditions and pay rates that fell below this threshold, and began to directly target public and private sector organisations in the capital to address this.³

With the campaign successful in signing up a number of organisations in London to commit to paying a living wage to employees, the Greater London Authority (GLA) were engaged in 2005 to set up the Living Wage Unit to work on setting an agreed hourly rate – the London Living Wage (LLW). By 2011

a number of other Living Wage campaign groups, such as the Scottish Living Wage Campaign, had evolved around the UK. Along with Citizens UK the campaigns came together to develop a standard model for a national living wage for employees outside London – the UK Living Wage (UK LW). The UK LW rate was modelled and set by the Centre for Research in Social Policy (CRSP) at Loughborough University.



TELCO Assembly that voted to launch the Living Wage Campaign in 2000

¹ It is important to note that the distinction between a *living wage* (a philosophical concept about the essence of a living wage) and *the Living Wage* (capitalised, and used to refer to the pay rate and associated campaign) is sometimes unclear, and arguably mistakenly used at times. In this report we have focused on *the Living Wage* advocated by the Living Wage Foundation (prepared by the Greater London Authority, and the Centre for Research in Social Policy).

² Parker (2001).

³ See Littman, Donne & Wakefield (2010).

The Living Wage Foundation: 2011 onwards

In 2011 the Living Wage Foundation (LWF)⁴ was established as a distinct initiative of Citizens UK, providing support and guidance to employers to voluntarily⁵ implement the Living Wage, with the ambition to afford employees the opportunity to provide for themselves and their families, improving lives and hopefully taking them out of in-work poverty⁶. With the support of its Principal Partners⁷ one of the Foundation's primary objectives is to develop a standard accreditation process and 'kite mark'⁸ for Living Wage Employers. From its launch in 2011, the accreditation scheme progressed quickly to having around 100 accredited Living Wage Employers in November 2012 and over 350 by October 2013⁹.

A valuable resource detailing the chronology of the Living Wage campaign is provided by Professor Jane Wills, Queen Mary University of London¹⁰. In terms of development of the Living Wage campaign, and the nature and composition of Living Wage Employers, Jensen and Wills (2013:p11) in their survey of accredited Living Wage Employers identified an uneven split in the geographical location of accredited organisations – in October 2013 51% of the 359 Living Wage Employers were based in London.

It is worth noting that the Jensen and Wills (2013) survey found that introducing the Living Wage did not have any direct (financial) impact for a number of the organisations involved in the study, as wage levels had already been at, or exceeded, the Living Wage rate. Accreditation was undertaken as a method to reflect employers' efforts to pay fair wages, and/or to protect wage levels in the future.

The LWF has also developed a Service Provider Recognition Scheme¹¹ for contractors that provide a service (such as cleaning, security, etc.) to other organisations – but feel they are unable to implement the Living Wage in all of their contracts. To attain the award, these organisations commit to paying all of their own head office staff the Living Wage, and to always supply a Living Wage bid alongside a market rate bid to all of their current and prospective clients.

During the period the project was undertaken to October 2014, the number of Living Wage Employers with the LWF had increased to over 900¹², paying the UK LW rate of £7.65 per hour or, where relevant, the LLW of £8.80 per hour. On the 3rd of November 2014 the LWF announced an increase to the UK LW to £7.85 per hour and the LLW to £9.15 per hour – and that over 1,000 organisations had signed up to be accredited Living Wage Employers¹³.

4 Website: www.livingwage.org.uk

5 Citizens UK and the LWF, as well as their Principal Partners, advocate a voluntary Living Wage. While the National Minimum Wage (NMW) has been established since 1999 as a legal floor rate that workers in the UK must be paid, the Living Wage is a voluntary undertaking by organisations to pay their workers a rate based on the cost of living in the UK. For perspectives on the difference between the NMW and the Living Wage see, for example, Jensen & Wills (2013); Wills & Linneker (2012) and Wills (2009).

6 Living Wage Foundation, *What are the benefits?* [online]. Available from: www.livingwage.org.uk/what-are-benefits [Accessed 2 August 2014].

7 Ten Principal Partners provide financial and strategic support to the LWF. They are: Aviva, Joseph Rowntree Foundation & Joseph Rowntree Housing Trust, KPMG, Linklaters, Nationwide, Nestle, Queen Mary University of London, Resolution Foundation, Save the Children, and Trust for London.

8 See Jensen & Wills (2013) and Living Wage Foundation, *What we do* [online]. Available from: www.livingwage.org.uk/what-we-do [Accessed 10 August 2014].

9 See graph in Jensen & Wills (2013:p10).

10 Wills, J. *A chronology of the London living wage campaign 2001-2009* [online]. Available from: www.geog.qmul.ac.uk/livingwage/chronology.html [Accessed 16 August 2014].

11 Living Wage Foundation, *About the Service Provider Recognition* [online]. Available from: www.livingwage.org.uk/about-service-provider-recognition [Accessed 10 August 2014].

12 As a further indication of increasing interest in the Living Wage, analysis using the 'Google Trends' tool revealed significant peaks in living wage searches during November of each year since 2012 – the month in which the LWF concentrates their marketing and campaigning through their annual 'Living Wage Week'.

13 For a list of Living Wage Employers please see www.livingwage.org.uk/employers.

The impacts

It was reported that by December 2011 at least 10,000 workers in London had been moved out of poverty as a result of the Living Wage campaign, having redistributed almost £100million since 2001¹⁴. By October 2013, it was calculated that this had increased to a figure of over £182 million having been added to the wages of almost 19,000 workers in the capital in the period from 2005- 2013¹⁵. By June 2014 the Living Wage Commission estimated that 45,568 employees had been brought up to the Living Wage by 712 accredited employers and the LWF recognised that over £210 million had been apportioned to low paid workers through the Living Wage campaign¹⁶. With over 1,000 accredited employers it is a reasonable assessment that around '60,000' employees have now been brought up to the Living Wage.

Despite these successes, it was reported in November 2014 that 22% of employees across the UK earned less than the Living Wage, an estimated 5.28 million workers (a rise of 150,000 since 2013) – and that 43% of part-time workers (compared to 13% full-time) in the UK earned below the rate¹⁷.

The UK has one of the highest proportions of employees in low paid work from advanced economies¹⁸. According to the OECD's (Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development) definition¹⁹ the share of employees in the UK earning below the low pay threshold in the period 2010-2012 was 21%, higher than most other European countries – including more than twice the rate in Italy (10%) and Switzerland (9%), and four times that in Belgium (5%)²⁰. Furthermore, the proportion of workers in low pay in the UK, having risen from around 15% in 1975 to a peak of 23% in 1996, had not fallen at any significant rate to April 2013²¹.

¹⁴ Wills & Linneker (2012).

¹⁵ See Professor Jane Wills' calculations for clarification on the methodology used: Wills, J. *The London living wage: Numbers and money (2013)* [online]. Available from: www.geog.qmul.ac.uk/livingwage/numbersandmoney.html [Accessed 21 August 2014]. (Note- this figure does not include workers involved in the 2012 Olympics, in which up to 100,000 individuals were paid the Living Wage in the period 2007-2012, a benefit of an additional £50 million to these workers relative to receiving the National Minimum Wage.)

¹⁶ See Living Wage Foundation, History [online]. Available from: www.livingwage.org.uk/history [Accessed 10 October 2014] and Living Wage Foundation, 2014. *We are recruiting!* [online]. 28 August 2014. Available from: www.livingwage.org.uk/blog/we-are-recruiting [Accessed 10 October 2014].

¹⁷ Markit (2014:p5). (Additionally, this research indicates that bar staff, waiters/waitresses and kitchen and catering assistants are the workers most likely to be paid less than the Living Wage, and sales and retail assistants as the occupation with the highest total number of workers earning less than the Living Wage rate.)

¹⁸ Lansley & Reed (2013), Pennycook (2012), Wills & Linneker (2013), Corlett & Whittaker (2014).

¹⁹ Low pay is defined by the OECD as earning less than two-thirds of the national gross median hourly wage. As a relative measure (rather than absolute) this may be more about differentials than the Living Wage. See commentary in Pennycook (2012) and Wills & Linneker (2013).

²⁰ Corlett & Whittaker (2014:p20).

²¹ Corlett & Whittaker (2014:p6).

Evolution of the business case

The focus of this report is to review evidence of the business case for the Living Wage in the UK. The following review of literature highlights business cases which have to date primarily been framed in terms of business ‘costs’ and ‘benefits’. We add to this the importance of recognising the business case within the context of its historical and geographical development, and with important reference to the stakeholders and socio-economic impacts of living wage campaigns.



Community campaign to persuade employers to pay a living wage 2005

Wage Framework²⁶ and adopt living wages ‘relevant’ for municipalities; Australian²⁷ union campaigns have focused on ensuring the country’s long standing minimum wage legislation provides an appropriate living wage²⁸.

While these international movements are significant, the development of the living wage campaign in the UK since 2001 has been notable for a number of reasons. These include its efforts to develop consistent rates for use across the country as set by external bodies (i.e. the Greater London Authority, and furthermore the Centre for Research in Social Policy); political support from the London Mayors; a focus beyond solely government contracts

An increasingly global issue

The modern living wage movement can generally be traced to Baltimore in the USA in 1994, and the resulting development of city wide and municipality living wage ordinances across the United States²² – growing to at least 140 such ordinances in the country by 2007²³. While these campaigns generally only extended to local government employees, and in some cases other employees receiving public funding, they brought attention to the principles of a living wage²⁴.

Since then a number of other initiatives have evolved: the Living Wage Movement Aotearoa, New Zealand²⁵ was developed by civil society campaigners and includes an accreditation scheme for employers; Canadian communities and employers have worked together to form the Canadian Living

²² See Macpherson (2004), Gallet (2004), Levi et al (2003), Luce (2005), Pollin et al (2008).

²³ Pollin et al (2008).

²⁴ Figart (2004), Wills & Linneker (2013).

²⁵ See Living Wage Aotearoa, www.livingwage.org.nz

²⁶ See Living Wage Canada, www.livingwagecanada.ca.

²⁷ Maloney & Gilbertson (2013), Wills & Linneker (2013).

²⁸ Australian Unions, *Increase the Minimum Wage* [online]. Available from www.australianunions.org.au/minimumwage [Accessed 15 October 2014].

to include other employers from the public and private sectors; and the involvement of employers and other stakeholders (i.e. the LWF's Principal Partners) to widen the impact of the campaign²⁹. Further increasing the UK living wage movement's visibility and impact has been the evolution of various other city-based living wage campaigns around the country outside London – including the Glasgow Living Wage³⁰ and others in Brighton, Norwich and Oxford³¹ – as well as the formation of the Living Wage Commission, a high profile 12 month independent inquiry set up in 2013 to explore issues around implementing the Living Wage in the UK³².

Evidence of business benefits

Studies examining the business case for the Living Wage in terms of impact on employers are limited and varied, with at best a common focus on the 'costs' and 'benefits' to employers.

Research conducted to identify the 'business benefits' of a living wage from the perspective of the employer³³ have included evidence of reduced staff turnover, reduced absenteeism, reputational benefits, recruitment and retention of staff, worker morale, and productivity benefits – all being linked to organisations paying a living wage³⁴.

Business benefits frequently cited from UK studies

In research by the Equality and Human Rights Commission (2014), cleaning firms that have undertaken the Living Wage in the UK have reported benefits of reduced absenteeism and staff turnover (some reporting staff turnover falling to less than 1%), as well as clients indicating improved service and higher productivity rates since moving to the Living Wage.

In a comparative study of employees receiving the London Living Wage (LLW) and non-LLW employees, Flint, Cummins and Wills (2013:p190) found that 50.3% of LLW workers registered above average scores for psychological well-being, a sign of good morale, compared to 33.9% of non-LLW employees³⁵.

Research by Wills and Linneker (2012) found that the impact of organisations moving to the LLW resulted in a 25% reduction in staff turnover on average – while organisations also reported positive reputational impacts, aiding their ability to recruit staff and (in one response) helping to win business. Additionally, following the introduction of the LLW by their employers, over half of the workers surveyed (54%) felt more positive about their employment, 52% felt more loyal towards their employer, and 17% indicated that their work was more productive.



Sugru being awarded London Living Wage Champions LW Week 2014

²⁹ Wills & Linneker (2013).

³⁰ The Glasgow Living Wage has more than 130 employers signed up across the city – see Glasgow Living Wage, *Glasgow Living Wage* [online]. Available from: www.glasgowlivingwage.co.uk [Accessed 15 October 2014].

³¹ See Hirsch & Moore (2011).

³² Website: www.livingwagecommission.org.uk

³³ See for example Dutton et al (2014), Fairris et al (2005), London Economics (2009), Reich et al (2003), Thompson & Chapman (2006), Wills & Linneker (2012), Wills et al (2009).

³⁴ Arguably the small sample size in a number of these studies, particularly those from the UK, may undermine their significance – but are noteworthy.

³⁵ However, this study is caveated to state that causality cannot necessarily be implied from the results – and it is noted that at an employer level support for the Living Wage may be correlated with other workplace benefits that boost employees well-being: e.g. employment rights, flexible working practices, improved benefits, etc.

In LLW employer focused research by London Economics (2009) for GLA Economics, more than 80% of employers believed that introducing the LLW had enhanced the quality of the work of their staff; a majority recognised an impact in reducing absenteeism and sick leave amongst workers (with one organisation reporting a 25% reduction in absenteeism); 70% reported the LLW had reputational benefits through increased consumer awareness of their commitment to being an ethical employer; and a majority of employers reported a benefit for recruitment and retention of staff, with two-thirds indicating a significant impact to their organisation.

Given the London Living Wage was established before the UK Living Wage it is unsurprising to find London has been the focus of most research³⁶. Accessing data on core issues such as the number of contracted workers employed by Living Wage organisations on the Living Wage rate can be difficult, a point stated in the conclusions of the study of accredited organisations by Jensen and Wills in 2013. However, and in line with one of their recommendations for the LWF to introduce greater oversight and monitoring when accrediting organisations, the Foundation has begun to collect such data and is an important partner in our study.

As the LWF seeks to increase the numbers of accredited organisations across the UK, it is important that literature and studies that account for the conditions and issues in different regions of the country are developed to encourage organisations in these locations to sign up. By providing several in-depth case studies established through engagement with Living Wage Employers from different sectors and locations in the UK, this study aims to provide some input here.



Boris Johnson, Mayor of London announcing the new London Living Wage rate at Great Ormond Street Hospital, 4 November 2013

This complements more recent studies which have emerged providing evidence of the Living Wage in practice, or exploring its potential impact, in regions such as Glasgow³⁷, Northern Ireland³⁸, Bradford³⁹, Manchester⁴⁰ and Wales⁴¹. (For example, an exploration study for the implementation of the Living Wage in Wales was commissioned by the Welsh Assembly Government in 2010.)

Furthermore, in 2012, the Chartered Institute of Personnel Development (CIPD) included some questions on the Living Wage as part of a wider survey of their UK membership⁴². This study indicated that from those organisations contacted around 13% (129 organisations) had adopted the Living Wage as a conscious policy decision. Of those representatives from organisations that had not introduced the Living Wage (or were unaware if their organisation had), 55% could not identify any benefits of (hypothetically) introducing the Living Wage, whereas only 16% of those companies that had incorporated the Living Wage identified “no benefits”. Of the employers that had introduced the Living Wage, business benefits identified included improved corporate reputation, employee loyalty/motivation, and higher productivity. This study offers some evidence that there may be a ‘knowledge gap’ of the benefits of the Living Wage between those organisations that have introduced it, and those that have not.

³⁶ Jensen & Wills (2013) assert that the uneven proportion of accredited London based Living Wage Employers relative to other UK regions could also be attributed to the distribution of economic activity focused on the capital, public awareness of the Living Wage movement through the LWF in London, and political endorsement of the campaign by London’s Mayors.

³⁷ Dutton et al (2014).

³⁸ Oxford Economics (2014).

³⁹ City of Bradford Metropolitan District Council (2013).

⁴⁰ Holden & Raikes (2012).

⁴¹ Marsh et al (2010).

⁴² Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development (2013:p28). Note that survey was of just over 1000 employers, around two-thirds of which were from the private sector.

In addition to these wider studies literature has included reference to a number of quotes/ testimonials from individuals on the business benefits of the Living Wage. These secondary sources, both from organisations/ businesses and other relevant stakeholders, offer a useful understanding and insight of the impacts, and potential benefits, of the Living Wage at a specific organisational level⁴³.

Evidence of business costs

Some of the identified costs and potential barriers to implementing a living wage include increased wage costs and expenditure, reduced profits/margins, impact on prices, issues around employee pay scales, decision making about wages being transferred to other agencies, negative impact on the morale of those not receiving a pay rise, and issues around the re-negotiation of employee or contractor contracts⁴⁴. However, it is claimed that increased wage costs of moving to a living wage does not necessarily impact significantly on overall salary costs⁴⁵, and that some costs could be mitigated by efficiency savings such as reviewing work practices⁴⁶. Furthermore, it has been argued that if costs were to be passed onto consumers these would be relatively low compared to the cost of the services⁴⁷.

Nevertheless, fears remain that the costs of implementing the Living Wage are unaffordable and/ or could lead to a loss of employment, hindering development and growth⁴⁸. These are often linked to sectors such as retail, hospitality and social care that arguably have a higher proportion of employees subject to in-work poverty, or small businesses. However, it is notable that the Federation of Small Businesses (FSB), in a survey of its members in September 2013, found that half (49%) of small firms already pay all their staff at, or above, the Living Wage⁴⁹. Consumer related research below shows consumers are willing to help meet the costs of the Living Wage for responsible retailers.

It is this business case, from the point of view of the employers, that this report seeks to primarily build. However, as noted previously, the business ‘costs’ and ‘benefits’ are often articulated through reference to the impact of employer actions on employees and to a lesser extent the socio-economic situation. The need to recognise the business case in context becomes apparent and helps to justify the case study approach taken when gathering evidence from Living Wage Employers in the UK.



October 2008 local citizens campaign in Whitehall for cleaners to be paid a Living Wage

⁴³ See, for example, NUS/UNISON (undated).

⁴⁴ For example see City of Bradford Metropolitan District Council (2013), London Economics (2009), Wills & Linneker (2012).

⁴⁵ Maloney & Gilbertson (2013), Pennycook (2012).

⁴⁶ QMUL & Trust for London (2012).

⁴⁷ Wills & Linneker (2012) from Thompson & Chapman (2006).

⁴⁸ Living Wage Commission (2014). Also consider Ray et al (2014) and Philpott (2014).

⁴⁹ Federation of Small Businesses, 2013. *FSB says firms are increasing wages for staff* [online]. (22 September 2013). Available from: www.fsb.org.uk/News.aspx?loc=pressroom&rec=8260 [Accessed 17 October 2014].

Taking a multi-stakeholder perspective

The argument for a living wage can be considered from a variety of different positions based on: social welfare; responsible business; economic ‘development’; public policy and more. At the centre of each position is a potentially different ‘stakeholder’, but the positions are not mutually exclusive. The business case may be argued from one or more of these perspectives.

At national and international levels it is significant that a number of campaign groups and bodies advocate the payment of an appropriate living wage to workers in developing nations, with the focus of attention on global business and/or sector specific supply chains. For example, the *Clean Clothes Campaign*⁵⁰ (an alliance campaigning for the garment industry to pay a living wage to workers); *Ethical Trade Initiative* (an alliance that promotes workers’ rights around the world, and supports moving towards a living wage for all); *Labour Behind the Label*⁵¹ (a charity and campaign group that have several campaigns focused on promoting a living wage in the garment industry, as well as producing the Tailored Wages UK report in 2014 that asked high street retailers and brands if they paid workers in their supply chain a living wage); *War on Want*⁵² (who support the UK Living Wage campaign, as well as pushing for the extension of a living wage obligation by companies to workers in their international supply chain).

Despite clear ethical and moral cases for organisations to pay a living wage, there is a need to present a convincing business case for its implementation⁵³, with proponents required to present a clear and coherent business case for a living wage to complement their moral and social arguments⁵⁴.

From a business/economic perspective, a number of research studies⁵⁵ have included reference to the employee impact of implementing a living wage, and in many cases the growth of living wage movements have been based on enhancing social benefits/returns. Employee benefits noted in these studies include, for example, increased income, improved standard of living, job ‘quality’ and motivation to work, increased bargaining power, better career opportunities, improvements in health and well-being, benefits to family life. However, these studies have also highlighted some of the potential costs to workers such as increased workloads, reduced hours and job losses.

These, and other, studies have also questioned the wider socio-economic impact of adopting a living wage including, for example, potential mitigation of in-work poverty and related child poverty, potential for both positive and negative changes in consumer pricing, impact on economic growth, effect on returns to local and/or foreign investors, impact on revenue generated from taxes and redistribution. An example of this research is a recent study by Oxford Economics for NICVA/Northern Ireland Council for Voluntary Action (2014) that estimated the economic impact of introducing the Living Wage across all employers in Northern Ireland using labour market data, and highlighting the importance of research with a regional focus.

50 Clean Clothes Campaign, *A Living Wage - A Human Right* [online]. Available from: www.cleanclothes.org/livingwage [Accessed 20 August 2014].

51 Labour Behind the Label, *Dignity needed*. [online]. Available from: www.labourbehindthelabel.org/campaigns [Accessed 20 August 2014].

52 War on Want, *Living Wage, a global battle* [online]. Available from: www.waronwant.org/campaigns/living-wage [Accessed 20 August 2014].

53 Pegram, T. & Sullivan, R., 2014. Why the moral case for the living wage is not enough. *The Guardian* [online], 29 April 2014. Available from: www.theguardian.com/sustainable-business/moral-case-living-wage-not-enough [Accessed 25 August 2014].

54 See Maher (2013): “Many campaigners interviewed for this report said that the business case for a living wage needs to be more strongly emphasised by its proponents around the world. These arguments are important, but need to be promoted alongside the moral and social justifications for a living wage... the available evidence leaves no doubt that a company can be successful, productive and profitable and still pay a living wage to all its workers.”

55 For example: City of Bradford Metropolitan District Council (2013), Lawton & Pennycook (2013), London Economics (2009) Wills et al (2009), Wills & Linneker (2012).

In a survey of consumers undertaken in May 2014, Censuswide asked over 1,000 people about their potential consumption choices in relation to employers that pay the Living Wage in the UK. The results indicated that 52% of shoppers were willing to pay higher prices if staff were paid the Living Wage; 61% would recognise the benefits in service from staff in pubs, restaurants and hotels if they were paid the Living Wage; and 4 in 10 would consider shopping elsewhere if their preferred store does not pay the Living Wage⁵⁶. This evidence points towards a positive consumer case for the Living Wage in the high street despite the relative absence of retailers as Living Wage Employers. Communicating the specific benefits for businesses of paying the Living Wage, particularly to non-Living Wage employers, is required to encourage uptake of the Living Wage, and to tackle a potential knowledge gap between employers who have not implemented the Living Wage, and those that have.

Given our interest in the business case, an obvious point of review was rating agencies and financial indexes for specific evidence of inclusion of the Living Wage as a metric in their rating criteria. No specific evidence was found of the Living Wage being included as criteria at this stage – other than the Business in the Community’s CR Index that does identify the Living Wage as a key issue in its CR Index 2014 Insight Report⁵⁷. Further transparency of evidence of the business case for the Living Wage is also needed to meet investor demands for information and manage any potential knowledge gap which exists between employers and their shareholders.

⁵⁶ See Living Wage Commission (2014:p36), and KPMG, 2014. *Customers threaten to shop elsewhere unless businesses pay fair wage* [online]. 18 June 2014. Available from: www.kpmg.com/uk/en/issuesandinsights/articlespublications/newsreleases/pages/customers-threaten-to-shop-elsewhere-if-businesses-fail-to-pay-a-fair-wage.aspx [Accessed 25 August 2014].

⁵⁷ Business in the Community (2014).

Evidence gathering and case selection

This report has been prepared by the University of Strathclyde in partnership with the Living Wage Foundation and a number of Living Wage Employers to contribute to the growing ‘business case’ for the Living Wage in the UK.

The project reported details the business cases of 5 Living Wage Employers – Aviva, Barclays, KPMG, Penrose Care and SSE – and a member of the LWF’s Service Provider Recognition programme – Enhance Office Cleaning. Evidence is provided of the business ‘costs’ and ‘benefits’ of Living Wage adoption and the employers’ perceived impact on employees.

It has been undertaken for the purpose of knowledge exchange and creation and includes case evidence gathered from June to September 2014 through a series of face-to-face, telephone and email interviews with key personnel in each organisation and review of relevant documentation, both public and private⁵⁸.

Given a focus on the business case, and inherent profit motive, only private sector employers were approached to take part in the project⁵⁹. The cases were selected from the Living Wage Foundation’s database of Living Wage Employers as of June 2014. The rationale for case selection and composition is driven by a desire to contribute to evidence from the point of view of new and established Living Wage Employers (pre and post the LWF’s accreditation process) and Service Providers, those with UK wide operations and/or those with a significant regional presence, and allowed for variation in business size, sector and nature and significance of the supply chain. Each case is individual, and while comparison and contrast may be drawn between some cases, the project is not intended to provide a general position of Living Wage Employers but emphasise individual “stories”. Given the significance of on-site service providers/contractors to the impact of the Living Wage Employers studies, we have included where available and feasible third party evidence drawn from engagement with their contractors/ services providers, and included the case of a Service Provider.

The 6 case studies which follow present a mixture of quantitative indicators and qualitative information from the organisations. Emphasis has been placed on contributing to the ‘costs’ and ‘benefits’ of implementing the Living Wage identified in our review of the literature. Furthermore, narratives are provided by individuals in the organisations who are involved in implementing the Living Wage to draw attention to Living Wage practicalities and complexities, and offer advice and inspiration to other established Living Wage Employers and Service Providers, those thinking of adopting the Living Wage, and significant stakeholders.

⁵⁸ The scope of the project does not extend to verification of internal data provided for review by individual case study organisations but, in the spirit of knowledge exchange, is reliant on evidence which case study organisations are willing to share and place in the public domain.

⁵⁹ It is notable that Corlett & Whittaker (2014) assert that low pay is more prevalent in the private sector than in the public or third sectors, however, this may well be because the public sector outsources many low paid services to the public sector. Furthermore, the Social Mobility & Child Poverty Commission (2014:p156) report that 86% of those earning below the Living Wage in the UK are employed in the private sector.

Aviva PLC

2005

London Living Wage employer since 2005

2013

Living Wage Employer accredited for London operations
August 2013

2014

Living Wage Employer accredited for UK operations April 2014

Background, motivation and implementation

Aviva plc⁶⁰ is a British multinational insurance company headquartered in London. It is the largest general insurer, and a leading life and pensions provider, in the UK and has a significant regional presence with c.17,000 employees in the UK and Ireland.

Aviva's approach to the Living Wage has been one of gradual implementation. Aviva adopted the London Living Wage (LLW) in the first instance and then the UK national Living Wage to recognise its social responsibility to stakeholders and to manage the significant reputation, political and brand risks which emerged around living wage issues.

Aviva first adopted the Living Wage in London in response to campaigns aimed at the FTSE 100 by TELCO and the Greater London Authority in 2005⁶¹. Joanne Goddard, Head of CR Governance and Engagement at Aviva noted "we signed up without much hesitation. The upside was hugely beneficial to the employees affected and the impact on costs was minimal. It was also the right thing to do."

In 2010, Aviva recognised that a living wage was of increasing importance to stakeholders with campaigns starting to target specific companies. In particular, FairPensions (who later became ShareAction) started talking about the importance of a living wage in the media, and asking questions on behalf of shareholders at AGMs. Aviva took a proactive stance ahead of its 2011 AGM and engaged directly with FairPensions. This meant when questions on adopting a living wage were asked the CEO and Board were able to answer with knowledge. They perceived there was a case to look at for adopting a living wage across Aviva's UK business.

⁶⁰ Website: www.aviva.com

⁶¹ Aviva, 2012. *Aviva supports the Living Wage* [online], 5 November 2012. Available from: www.aviva.com/media/news/item/aviva-supports-the-living-wage-17034 [Accessed 2 September 2014].

Aviva and FairPensions continued to meet to discuss reward structures including pay scales, differentials and regional differences. This engagement led to an increased understanding of living wage benefits and impacts, and Aviva were able to move the agenda further forward as a result. Engagement with the City and campaigners has since taken place on a regular basis addressing living wage issues both directly and indirectly, and ensuring a socially responsible business case for a living wage was developing.

Of particular significance to Aviva, rolling out the Living Wage across the UK was recognition of its high number of staff and associated community involvement in Norwich⁶² and York⁶³ and the desire to expand their living wage commitment outside London.

In adopting the Living Wage outside London Aviva was also responding to direct political pressure in the regions and therefore managing their political risk. For example, a couple of years ago Rachel Reeves (Labour – Norwich MP) asked numerous questions on the Living Wage. For Aviva, the Living Wage campaign is an important public policy issue and an important subject of political engagements with MPs. Engagement around a living wage as a public policy issue has helped Aviva to develop its position, and contribute to public debate on the issue. Indeed there have been comments in The House of Commons specifically referring to Aviva on the Living Wage.

In 2012 Aviva became a Principal Partner of the Living Wage Foundation, and in 2013 gained London accreditation as a Living Wage Employer. By 2014 its accreditation as a Living Wage Employer has been extended to all full time direct employees in the UK, and included a commitment to roll out the Living Wage with all its on-site contractors⁶⁴. During the new round of tendering for facilities contracts Aviva asked for all tenders to be priced to include the Living Wage as a minimum standard and are engaging with contractors to consider the impact of this.

Impact

London Living Wage

Aviva implemented the payment of the LLW some years before national accreditation was developed by the Living Wage Foundation. The experience proved what a positive step this was and Aviva, and their supplier at the time, quickly noticed the impact on:

- lower attrition rates;
- the ability to recruit better calibre cleaning operatives;
- the opportunity to provide longer term training as opposed to core basic task training for what was at the time an ever changing workforce;
- ability to work with our cleaning force on pay and conditions with unionisation.

After implementation of the LLW, cleaners from other firms tenanted in Aviva's head office were requesting to work for Aviva. This provided a management issue for the cleaning contractor as there was dissatisfaction that one set of employees were paid what was considered a preferential rate. Over time this situation dissipated as more and more tenants realised the benefit of the LLW, and converted their contracts too.

⁶² Previously Norwich Union until 1 June 2009.

⁶³ Anon., 2014. Aviva set to pay its entire workforce living wage. The York Press [online]. 1 May 2014. Available from: www.yorkpress.co.uk/business/news/11186531.Aviva_set_to_pay_its_entire_workforce_living_wage [Accessed 2 September 2014].

⁶⁴ Living Wage Foundation, 2014. Aviva extends Living Wage commitment [online]. 30 April 2014. Available from: www.livingwage.org.uk/blog/aviva-extends-living-wage-commitment [Accessed 2 September 2014].

UK Living Wage

In July 2014 when Aviva became nationally accredited, and implemented the Living Wage to other Aviva offices in the UK, this proved highly popular with suppliers operatives who were at the time being paid industry regional pay rates. However, this move did not come without its challenges. For example, increasing the hourly pay rates for cleaning operatives now meant that almost all cleaning supervisors were being paid the same as their team members. Without an increase in the pay differential the supervisors would either leave or request demotion to a cleaning operative role with less responsibility but at the same hourly pay rate.

The biggest issue Aviva faced after implementation was the impact on the relative pay scales up the organisation in our supply chain. There is a need to maintain difference between pay grades, without a pay differential for supervisory roles overall cleaning costs would have increased by 3.81% per annum. With the agreed increase reflecting the differentials in pay scale the actual overall increase was 4.42% per annum. Aviva found an unanticipated impact on employees who were being paid above the Living Wage and had their pay uplifted – and gained positive feedback in general from all staff.

Another area of note is that of the three locations where Aviva premises are cleaned overnight, but there is still a day time housekeeping presence, the night time cleaning role previously attracted an enhanced pay rate. Now, almost everywhere, all cleaning operatives and day time housekeepers earn the Living Wage. This has been challenged by the night time cleaning operatives and a workable solution for all is currently being considered.

During a recent cleaning and security tender Aviva announced the contract would be awarded to a National Living Wage accredited company. Of the tender submissions Aviva were pleased to note the following statements and comments:

Bidder A

“Overall, we believe the Living Wage has many positive impacts including individual well-being, commitment, enhanced family and community life which in turn improve loyalty, performance and standards.”

Bidder B

“We are committed to setting pay rates on the Aviva contract in accordance with the Living Wage and, in doing so, we will provide Aviva with the following benefits:

- Creating an opportunity for people to provide for themselves and their families;
- Improved levels of service;
- Improved employee’s opinion of and commitment to their role;
- Improved productivity;
- Increased motivation and morale;
- Reduced absenteeism (c.25%);
- Minimised disruption to your business;
- Substantial positive impacts on recruitment and retention;
- Support your CR strategy and targets.”

Bidder C

“Where our clients have elected to implement the Living and London Wage we have seen a reduction in employee turnover, improved engagement and enhanced performance as we are able to attract the best calibre people in the market to these contracts. In one small study of a group of contracts that pay the Living Wage versus a group of similar contracts that did not, we saw a 4% decrease in employee turnover.”

The business case for Aviva

Aviva considers that adoption of the Living Wage will be beneficial to service levels and cost effective in the long term. Engagement with investors and stakeholder representatives on the Living Wage and managing investor expectations is critical to a private sector ‘business approach’.

Being Living Wage compliant allows Aviva to be a more effective advocate of issues such as poverty and human rights. For example, dialogue around the Living Wage has extended to issues linked to human rights internationally and has led to a number of wider discussions where a ‘seat at the table’ is a direct result of our progress with the Living Wage.

Barclays PLC

2003

Initial engagement with TELCO on living wage campaign in 2003

2004

Launch in 2004 of leading edge employment package for cleaning contract workers at new Canary Wharf headquarters – extended to UK network of premises in 2006

2007

London Living Wage commitment recognised by TELCO in 2007

2013

Living Wage Employer accredited UK operations October 2013

Background and motivation

With over 300 years of history and expertise in banking, Barclays⁶⁵ operates in over 50 countries and employs approximately 135,000 people. Barclays moves, lends, invests and protects money for customers and clients worldwide.

Barclays' initial engagement with the living wage movement began in 2003, and consequently through a meeting with London Citizens/TELCO in 2004⁶⁶, who were, as part of their living wage campaign, targeting financial services organisations moving from the City of London to the new Canary Wharf.

Taking account of concerns raised by the campaign, Barclays made a commitment to increase the rate of pay and improve the working conditions of its contracted service provision in its new Canary Wharf HQ – including catering, cleaning, engineering, security, logistics, front of house and health and fitness services. It began by promoting an employment package as part of its cleaning contract for the new Canary Wharf property designed to “give priority to the welfare, development and retention of employees, plus rewarding good performance”⁶⁷. This was considered to be a significant differentiating factor in maintaining a high quality workplace.

⁶⁵ Website: www.barclays.com

⁶⁶ Barclays, 2013. *Barclays supports National Living Wage Week* [online]. 4 November 2013. Available from: www.newsroom.barclays.com/Press-releases/Barclays-supports-National-Living-Wage-Week-ac7.aspx [Accessed 29 September 2014].

⁶⁷ See for example Barclays, Johnson Controls & Rentokil Initial UK Cleaning, 2004. Barclays Canary Wharf HQ Cleaning Contract Awarded to Rentokil Initial. 26 November 2004.

In 2006 Barclays and its cleaning contractors extended a “fair wage” package to front line cleaners working across the bank’s branch network.

After a period of on-going engagement with stakeholders, in July 2007 Barclays fully committed, in an important partnership with its union Unite, to extend its employment package for contracted workers to pay above the London Living Wage (LLW) rate. This involved paying over the LLW (£7.50 an hour) to all 1,000 cleaning, catering, mailroom and gym workers in London. In so doing, Barclays became the first high street bank to adopt the LLW.

Barclays formally rolled out its Living Wage commitment across the UK, achieving accreditation as a Living Wage Employer from the Living Wage Foundation in October 2013, and announcing that all permanent and subcontracted staff in the UK, regardless of their role or location, will be paid at least the relevant Living Wage rate. As part of this commitment Barclays is working closely with its facilities management contractor, ISS, to ensure all of their 3600 staff assigned to Barclays are paid the Living Wage.

Dominic Johnson, Employee Relations Director, states “Our UK Living Wage accreditation represents a commitment to ensure that people working on Barclays’ behalf are paid enough to enjoy a decent standard of living. Having supported the Living Wage for over ten years, we know that it can improve productivity, morale and retention rates. This is not just an expression of our corporate Values or an issue of social impact, but good business sense”. As in 2007, UK-wide accreditation was a commitment made in partnership with Barclays’ recognised trade union, Unite.

The business case for Barclays

Barclays has been measuring and assessing the business benefits associated with paying the Living Wage since its initial commitment to the LLW in 2007. Barclays recognises that paying the Living Wage alone will not necessarily lead to immediate benefits; it needs to be combined with effective, fair and responsible management of employees and contractors. Those organisations that do not take this approach may just raise their costs. The differentiator is in looking at the value of paying the Living Wage as well as managing the cost increases. As Dominic Johnson, Employee Relations Director explains, “When you look at employee engagement and what drives organisational performance, there’s a rational dimension and an emotional dimension. Pay is part of the rational dimension, but it is the emotional dimension of ‘do I feel valued’ that drives people’s behaviour ... Paying at or above the Living Wage is a key part of that.”

Barclays considers paying the Living Wage to staff and contractors to be a core part of their Purpose and Values and an important reputational management issue. The Living Wage commitment has helped improve relationships with key stakeholders, as follows:

- **Unions:** Becoming a Living Wage Employer has enhanced Barclays’ relationship with Unite, which recognises Barclays’ leadership in this area – this is important as the Living Wage and addressing low pay is a campaigning priority for the union, and they are a key partner for Barclays.
- **Media/politicians** There has been longstanding recognition of Barclays’ approach in the media, by leading politicians from different parties, and from other stakeholders with an interest in low pay – such as the Church of England.

- **Employees:** Barclays highlights Living Wage news and developments to its broader workforce via a variety of internal channels, including its corporate intranet and posters and notices displayed in bank premises. Moves such as increased daytime cleaning allow colleagues to get to know the person that cleans their office and this helps build working relationships and maintain awareness of the issue.
- **Shareholder/SRI community:** Barclays is often asked to complete socially responsible investment (SRI) questionnaires, and includes payment of the Living Wage in employee relations and union membership related questions.
- **Clients:** Barclays' clients are increasingly asking about information about the bank's approach to the Living Wage, especially those in the public sector, such as local authorities and universities. In tender documents Living Wage accreditation can be highlighted as a differentiating factor.

Impact

Barclays' commitment to pay the relevant Living Wage to its entire facilities management contractors (cleaners, catering, security, and mailroom) means there is an increased need to track and monitor the business benefits associated with doing so. Working in partnership with ISS, Barclays is developing a set of robust indicators to track issues such as absenteeism, health and safety/sickness, employee engagement and productivity of different roles. Some of these indicators already have established data baselines, others are under development. The following section details currently available statistics and commentary:

Pay rates

		Cleaning	Catering	Security	Mailroom	Landscaping/ other services	Gym	TOTAL
London	LLW	0 (all paid above)	0 (all paid above)	0 (all paid above)	53	0		53
	Above LLW	336	190	63	50	0	14	653
Rest of UK	UK Living Wage	1455	131	35	0	0		1621
	Above UK LW	138	39	60	0	39		276
							TOTAL	2603

A total of 3,717 people are employed by ISS on the Barclays contract. The table above refers to non-managerial staff (2,603 people). A further 1,114 staff members in managerial positions are paid on a monthly basis and are paid above the LLW and the UK Living Wage (UK LW). Barclays' contract with ISS is relatively new and has meant a restructuring of the bank's service provision to bring together a large number of smaller contracts under one umbrella. This restructure, plus the closure of some UK premises over the past 18 months has resulted in a reduction in the number of sub-contracted workers from 4,300 to 3,717. This reduction is unrelated to the Living Wage issue but means that it is not possible to provide topical year on year data on contracted employee retention rates and turnover.

Turnover

Turnover for ISS frontline contractors working for Barclays was unusually high in the preceding 12 months (30.54% during Quarter 1, 2014), due to the headcount reduction outlined above. However, ISS estimates that turnover among staff that were not affected by the restructure is nearer 25%. This figure was estimated using all ISS' living wage contracts and the industry average. As turnover among Barclays' contracted workers prior to this period was lower than the industry average, the bank expects this figure to reduce over the next 12 months as the new structure stabilises. ISS' Living Wage contracted staff (all, not solely those allocated to Barclays) have a turnover rate that is over one third lower than staff on non-Living Wage contracts.

Employee relations

ISS contractors working for Barclays took part in the annual employee Net Promoter Score engagement survey (issued by ISS) for the first time in 2013. Of the 3,717 staff members, 1,368 (37%) completed the survey.

The top five scoring statements were	
I know who is in charge of my team	90%
I know what is expected of me in my job	85%
H&S is taken seriously	79%
I feel able to make the decisions needed to do my job well	78%
My job makes good use of my skills and abilities	73%

When comparing the ISS Living Wage contracts with other non-Living Wage contracts, 83% of the former score higher on the engagement survey (on average 8% higher) than comparable non-Living Wage contracts. Whilst pay is not a direct driver of engagement, the benefits of higher pay (reduced turnover, a more stable team, more time to invest in that team and greater sense of wellbeing) are demonstrated by these results.

Career opportunities

The ISS-Barclays contractor relationship offers a fully integrated model (ISS delivers 22 different service streams) and, as a result, staff have more opportunities to work in different areas and improve their skills and development opportunities. ISS intends to start collecting data on career development and promotions from December 2015.

ISS has engaged with employees to explore their response to working with Barclays as a Living Wage Employer. One ISS employee noted "ISS promised us that we would have the opportunity to progress particularly because of the integrated model and this year I started a new role working with the welcome team. It was a big decision as I loved working in catering, but this opportunity has really changed my life as I never thought that I could get this type of job. I love being with customers and helping them each day and every day. I have been taught so much in the small time I have been with the welcome team. My aspirations now are to become a supervisor and then maybe higher."

Overview – costs and benefits

Philippa Birtwell, Head of Reputation Risk Management, summarises “Over the decade Barclays has been associated with the living wage issue the human story has been positive and constant and has always been subject to senior management interest and support. Engagement with our contractors over the years has highlighted small changes – apart from the Living Wage – that can make a big difference to individuals’ lives at little or no cost (e.g. moving more to daytime cleaning). These would not have come to our attention before the Living Wage issue catalysed a more proactive approach. The reputational benefit to the bank has also been a remarkable and sustained by-product that was not anticipated at the outset and is a helpful offset to the additional cost of paying the Living Wage. Being an accredited Living Wage Employer is a practical demonstration of our values in action”.

KPMG LLP UK

2005

Initial engagement with TELCO on living wage campaign in Q3 of 2005

2006

Rolled out the London Living Wage (LLW) in London, and a living wage rate to all other UK employees by October 2006 (based on the established LLW rate)

2012

Living Wage Employer accredited UK operations April 2012

Background and motivation

KPMG in the UK⁶⁸ is a leading provider of professional services including audit, tax, and advisory. They are part of KPMG's global network of professional firms providing these services- employing over 155,000 individuals in 155 countries, of which includes 11,335⁶⁹ partners and staff in the UK.

KPMG in the UK first became involved in the Living Wage in 2005 after engaging with a campaign by The East London Communities Organisation (TELCO) at their Salisbury Square office, putting forward the merits of a London Living Wage (LLW). In 2006, following consultation with TELCO's and cross functional management, the KPMG Board adopted the LLW in London, and a rate based on the LLW, and advice from Joseph Rowntree Foundation work in York and London Citizens personnel, for employees in the rest of the UK⁷⁰. As a leading provider of professional services KPMG operates in a high margin industry. Implementing the Living Wage involved ensuring all of the business's own staff and more significantly contracts for all third-party on site contractors - including, for example, that cleaning, security, catering and front of house, were based on the LLW rate⁷¹.

68 Website: www.kpmg.com/UK

69 KPMG (2013).

70 The LLW rate was paid to employees based in London. In the rest of the UK, the LLW was 'discounted' by about £1 per hour, and applied across the country- so that all workers got the same percentage increase.

71 Fundamental to KPMG's broader commitment to the Living Wage and wider engagement is the role of Michael Kelly, Head of Living Wage KPMG and chair of LWF Advisory Committee, and secondee to the LWF (May 2013-present). Guy Stallard, Head of Facilities KPMG, has also been a member of the Living Wage advisory group through Trust for London since 2009 and is a member of the technical policy group advising on the rate methodology. For the last 12 months Guy has also sat on the Living Wage Commission, an independent time bound group, reviewing the progress in the Living Wage.

Implementation

Guy Stallard, Head of Facilities and key to successful implementation of the Living Wage in KPMG, stressed adopting the Living Wage was about going through a “change management programme considering how we redefined service levels... in terms of values, not just what we paid”. Engagement with stakeholders was seen as critical – employees were asked what changes they would like, unions were engaged on professionalism and training and some tough conversations took place with suppliers. Guy Stallard recounts that “some FM contractors were mystified in early days, but they have moved to realising the benefits of the Living Wage, and become positive about it”.

Adopting the LLW also included the consideration of more flexible shift patterns to suit employees – including the organisation of a pool of workers who can work more established hours (i.e. during the day), at convenient locations – with sick pay, training and role development as a career, and pension considerations (although there was found to be little demand for this).

By 2006 KPMG had rolled out a living wage rate to all direct and full time UK employees and on-site contractors that was based on the LLW, and applied for LWF accreditation, when available, in 2012.

Impact

The following examples highlight some of the experiences KPMG and various employee groups in the business affected by the Living Wage that go beyond simply increasing wage rates⁷².

Employee group	Employee impact	Organisation impact
Cleaners: Engagement undertaken with cleaning staff prior to the introduction of the Living Wage in 2006, including consultation around what aspects of their job they liked/disliked, shift patterns, etc.	New Living Wage contract terms included changing shifts to more social hours, removing under desk bins and introducing centralised recycling systems ⁷³ .	Changes improved efficiency, staff retention and employee motivation and flexibility. During the first year of implementation turnover in cleaning staff fell from 44% to 27% (data collected by contractors and validated by company). Helped to manage resource use.
Mailroom staff: Responsibilities of mailroom staff were increased so that individuals had a wider organisational role in the hours out with their core mail sorting and delivery times (9am, lunchtime, and at the end of the day).	Individuals were given more varied roles – additional tasks to undertake at low demand periods in their shifts such as re-stocking stationery cupboards and setting up materials for conference rooms. In addition, they were paid more.	This resulted in better, and more efficient, use of labour as well as skills development. The additional necessary tasks undertaken assist in the efficiency and smooth running of the business.
Catering: Apprenticeships and more flexible working introduced for catering teams.	Catering has become more of an established function of the business – with wider training, flexibility, skills and job variability for individuals.	The recruitment and retention of catering staff has improved, and training and development have become easier because employees are there longer.

⁷² These have been identified through conversations with Mike Kelly and Guy Stallard.

⁷³ “KPMG have more day time cleaners than we had at the start of the process, but less total hours due to efficiencies - but this might cause some issues with unions on basis that there are potentially drops in hours for workers (though this is not through redundancies it is natural wastage)”, Guy Stallard.

Recent performance data collected by KPMG from its three main facilities service providers on key organisational metrics over the last few years are detailed below. This includes evidence from employee surveys conducted by each service provider⁷⁴.

	Employee numbers ⁷⁵	Staff turnover	Absenteeism	Other
Contractor 1	4% reduction in employee numbers since 2012/13.	2012/13: 21%. Rates are 10% lower than company average.		Job quality: 44% of security officers acknowledge their earnings are comparable to the industry. Security staff in the 'North' reported tangible benefit to their lifestyle. In the 'South' staff did not feel rates kept up with inflation. ⁷⁶
Contractor 2	No change in employee numbers.	2011/12: 27%. 2013/14: 13.9%.	10% reduction from 2012/13 to 2013/14.	Performance and productivity remain consistently high amongst Living Wage employees. Non-Living Wage employees regularly ask for transfers to KPMG's Living Wage contract. Reputation gain as a Living Wage service provider has resulted in a greater number of job applications, and the retention of current contracts.
Contractor 3	No change in employee numbers.	3% - compared to company average of 10%.		Changes in expenditure have been funded by specific clients. No Living Wage contracts have been lost, and the KPMG contract has been extended. 7% (of circa. 1,900) employees were increased to the Living Wage on KPMG contract. This was a higher percentage change than for other clients, where employees already earning Living Wage rates were lower.

As of mid-2014 KPMG's Living Wage performance data collection has been formalised (a process catalysed as a result of reviewing the business case data as part of this project).

Michael Kelly, Head of Living Wage at KPMG, stated that "My advice to organisations becoming accredited would be keep data. We have learned that what was economically right for years 1 to 3 is fine - but 8 years on the institutional memory is lost."

⁷⁴ Contract details have been anonymised due to commercially sensitivity (an audit trail has not been tracked for this information).

⁷⁵ A reduction in staff numbers at KPMG has resulted in revised levels of service which service provider employees have had to adjust to.

⁷⁶ Survey carried out by contractor. 'North' includes Manchester and other Northern offices, as well as Scotland.

KPMG have now developed and implemented a comprehensive list of questions to be posed to all contractors/ service providers. This list was designed from experience gained with service providers in Canary Wharf when negotiating the London Living Wage and rolling out the Living Wage rate across the UK:

KPMG Living Wage performance data collection framework (abbreviated version)

Quantified impacts (expressed in percentages, with comparatives)

- Staff turnover, absenteeism, change in employee numbers, employee and wage transfers to Living Wage contracts, change in cost of service.

Other impacts (to be answered Yes/No - with further details requested)

- Has presence, or lack of Living Wage, affected any reputational gains or losses for the company?
- Have there been changes in working conditions for Living Wage employees?
- Have there been changes in workload for Living Wage employees?
- Has there been career progression for employees?
- Has paying the Living Wage had an impact on employee relations?
- Has paying the Living Wage had an impact on performance and productivity?
- Has paying the Living Wage had an impact on employee morale?
- Number of contracts gained/lost/secured since previous year - and which of these were Living Wage?

Covering the costs

Although the cost of going Living Wage was originally borne by the organisation (against profit), KPMG has recorded evidence of improvements in productivity and positive changes of value to employees and the organisation.

Overall the total cost of providing all KPMG's Workplace Services on an annual basis is now more than £1million below the comparative costs in 2006. In the first years of introduction the increased cost of wages and other benefits was offset by the reductions in recruitment costs, increased skills and productivity of staff and changed business practices, such as using waste paper to generate an additional income stream. Whilst initial individual contract impacts varied all showed improvements in bottom line performance in both financial and non-financial indicators, such as employee engagement and customer satisfaction levels. As in most sustainability strategies the biggest opportunity to effect positive change comes at the design stage. For KPMG the move to new premises enabled them, working collaboratively with their key suppliers, to use the opportunity to create empowered and flexible staffing models.

Overall

Michael Kelly stresses "If you start from the premise that the whole change management programme is just a pay differential program you are at a loss even before you have got going." He advises other organisations should "treat going Living Wage as a change management programme; phase it over a reasonable term 1 or 2 years." Also, "Never underestimate the amount of positive engagement you generate from employees already above the Living Wage who will never see any change because of it."

Penrose Care Ltd

2012

Commitment to pay all employees the London Living Wage (shortly after the company was founded)

2012

Living Wage Employer accredited in October 2012

Background and motivation

Penrose Care⁷⁷ are a small privately owned London based business established in 2012 in the home care sector – providing a range of services from short visits, to live-in care. They deliver elderly care, disabilities care, domestic services and childcare agency services.

With the view that there was/is a need to “fundamentally reform the home care sector in the UK to help improve elderly care and disabilities care”⁷⁸ the co-founders Robert Stephenson-Padron, Managing Director, and Dr Matthew J. Knight, Non-Executive Director, of Penrose Care wanted to integrate core moral values into their business model. These included treating vulnerable people with human dignity, and to act ethically in their business.

Mr Stephenson-Padron and Dr Knight identified that if the business was to adequately deliver its primary service as a care provider, and fulfil its purpose to look after people, then this obligation should be extended to employees. Mr Stephenson-Padron affirms that “if a care provider wants to sustainably be a centre of workers that support vulnerable persons with the human dignity they deserve, the workers themselves must be treated with dignity.”

Penrose Care became an accredited Living Wage Employer in October 2012 (three months after the company was founded in July 2012)⁷⁹. In doing so they were 1 of only 3 accredited Living Wage Employers in London’s home care sector (of around 745 agencies), and just 1 of 4 in the whole of England (of almost 6,000 agencies) at the time of their accreditation in 2012. They remain 1 of 4 accredited home care providers in London, now of over 1,000 agencies (September 2014)⁸⁰.

⁷⁷ Website: www.penrosecare.co.uk

⁷⁸ Penrose Care, *Who we are* [online]. Available from: www.penrosecare.co.uk/who_we_are.html [Accessed 2 October 2014].

⁷⁹ Homecare.co.uk, 2013. *Outstanding CQC inspection report of Penrose Care shows ethical standards can drive excellence in care* [online]. 15 July 2014. Available from: www.homecare.co.uk/news/article.cfm/id/1560477/outstanding-cqc-inspection-report-of-penrose-care-shows-ethical-standards-can-drive-excellence-in-care [Accessed 7 September 2014].

⁸⁰ Penrose Care, 2014. *Penrose Care one of only four home care organisations in England named as an accredited Living Wage Employer* [online]. 5 November 2012. Available from: www.penrosecare.co.uk/penrose-care-one-of-only-four-home-care-organisations-in-england-named-as-an-accredited-living-wage-employer-4 [Accessed 7 September 2014].

Implementation

Recognising that workers in the home care sector are particularly subject to low pay rates, including in some cases below the minimum wage, the founders established Penrose Care as a Living Wage employer from the outset. In doing so they included the payment of the London Living Wage (LLW) in their business model when establishing their organisation.

Furthermore, to meet their objectives to provide a personal level of service, they aimed to employ the best professionals in the sector⁸¹, and linked this objective to the payment of the Living Wage. “Our Living Wage commitment stems from our belief that core to successfully delivering excellent home care with compassion is having the best staff, selected for their human touch as well as their professional qualities.”⁸²

While the organisation did not directly/actively seek ethical investment to fund the start-up of their business, Robert Stephenson-Padron has offered his view that all of the business’s “owners are personal owners and I do believe that some, if not all of them, decided to become co-owners of Penrose Care as a result of its pioneering commitment to ethics and the extremely high regard it has for integrity”.

Impacts

In addition to being a notoriously low paid sector, home care is recognised for a high turnover of staff. Robert Stephenson-Padron has identified that many care workers in the UK lack basic skills, and that the high turnover of staff is damaging to quality of care⁸³. Indeed, Mr Stephenson-Padron identifies that the Equality and Human Rights Commission have linked low pay with high staff-turnover and the non-continuity of care staff, and an issue that is regarded as significant threat to the human rights of the elderly⁸⁴. “By reducing staff turnover and thereby improving continuity, we have become able to deliver a better service to those for whom we care, at the same time as reducing the costs and disruption associated with constant appointment of new staff.”⁸⁵

Furthermore, Mr Stephenson-Padron asserts that paying the Living Wage makes employees feel more secure, and are consequently better able to make people in their care feel safe⁸⁶. In addition to paying the Living Wage, Penrose Care compensates workers for their travel time – something that over 80% of other independent care sector employers reportedly do not do⁸⁷.

81 Penrose Care, *Who we are* [online]. Available from: www.penrosecare.co.uk/who_we_are.html [Accessed 2 October 2014].

82 Penrose Care, *Our values* [online]. Available from: www.penrosecare.co.uk/our_values.html [Accessed 2 October 2014].

83 Homecare.co.uk, 2013. *London Living Wage Increase Effective Immediately at Penrose Care* [online]. 4 November 2013. Available from: www.homecare.co.uk/news/article.cfm/id/1561473/london-living-wage-increases-effective-immediately-penrose-care [Accessed 9 September 2014].

84 Knight, M. & Stephenson-Padron, R., 2013. *Care in Times of Crisis: Does 'the Living Wage' help?* [online]. 22 November 2013. Available from: www.thomasmoreinstitute.org.uk/care-in-times-of-crisis-does-the-living-wage-help [Accessed 2 September 2014].

85 Ibid.

86 Learner, S., 2013. Pressure mounts for better pay for homecare workers. *The Guardian* [online]. 4 December 2013. Available from: www.theguardian.com/social-care-network/2013/dec/04/pressure-mounts-better-pay-homecare-workers [Accessed 15 September 2014].

87 Hathway, N., 2013. *London home care provider raises carer pay* [online]. 6 November 2013. Available from: www.homecare.co.uk/news/article.cfm/id/1561502/london_home_care_provider_raises [Accessed 15 September 2014].

Other impacts

- Feedback from users of the organisation’s services has expressed high satisfaction with the service provided (evident from an average feedback score of 4.9 out of 5 from a customer satisfaction survey, and also numerous positive testimonials).
- The business has had no care worker voluntary leavers since it was founded in 2012, although Mr Stephenson-Padron notes that, at some point, Penrose Care expects this to change to a more sustainable “extremely low staff turnover”.
- The level of sick days taken by employees is “negligible”.
- The business has been able to recruit staff without the need to actively advertise positions⁸⁸.

Covering the costs

It was recognised that paying the Living Wage would impose an extra cost on the business relative to competitors. This required, in some cases, a slightly more expensive cost of service – but it was believed that users would be willing to pay a premium to receive “outstanding levels of care”.

Robert Stephenson-Padron stated that “We incorporated the London Living Wage into our business model from the very beginning. It meant we were going to have a higher cost base than our competitors but we had the firm belief, and this has been confirmed by our success to date, that there would be users of home care services willing to pay a little bit more than average to secure better care workers, with excellent training and high morale, from a provider that genuinely cares for them.”

The decision to incorporate the Living Wage on the basis that users would be attracted to the business as a result is backed up by some external evidence – a poll by Censuswide identified that “73.5% of the general public agreed that ‘when choosing a care provider for a loved one, I would like to know that the people looking after them were being paid a Living Wage.’”⁸⁹

Other measures to cover costs

- The managers of the business decided to pay themselves less than the average rate for their roles in order to cover the cost of the Living Wage for their staff⁹⁰.
- Employees are required to be more efficient in their working practices. This includes utilising the abilities of a number of staff that have multi-disciplinary skills and are competent in a number of roles, as well as adopting a state of the art IT system to maximise the time workers can undertake care activities over administrative tasks⁹¹.
- Realising the benefits of increased efficiency through multiple roles for staff, limiting idleness and reducing administrative costs, and furthermore developing the skills and competencies of workers⁹².

88 Knight, M. & Stephenson-Padron, R., 2014. Does the ‘Living Wage’ make sense in this age of financial crisis? [online]. 10 February 2014. Available from: www.homecarelondon.org/2014/02/10/does-the-living-wage-make-sense-in-this-age-of-financial-crisis [Accessed 5 September 2014].

89 Censuswide poll cited in Living Wage Commission (2014:p36).

90 Drury, F., 2013. Care bosses take salary cut to ensure staff receive fair income. *Wood and Vale* [online], 21 November 2013. Available from: <http://edition.pagesuite-professional.co.uk/launch.aspx?eid=2ac0a850-ffb9-49ad-9416-1cf3b1aab64d> [Accessed 20 October 2014].

91 Hathway, N., 2013. Profile: ‘To promote a caring workforce, the organisation itself must be caring’ says Penrose Care managing director [online]. 4 December 2013. Available from: www.homecare.co.uk/news/article.cfm/1d/1561802/to_promote_a_caring_workforce [Accessed 5 September 2014].

92 Ibid.

2013

Living Wage Employer accredited UK operations September 2013

Background and motivation

SSE⁹³ is a FTSE100 utility company based in Perth, Scotland – and operating in the UK and Ireland. It has, over time, been formed by the merger of Scottish Hydro Electric and Southern Electric and the acquisition of SWALEC (Wales) and Airtricity (Northern Ireland) from different regions in the UK and Ireland, and become one of the UK's largest FTSE listed companies. It is involved in the generation, transmission, distribution and supply of electricity, and in the production, storage, distribution and supply of gas and in other energy services. In support of this role, it is the largest generator of renewable electricity in the UK. It is furthermore involved in a wide range of energy related businesses. It has a large mechanical engineering business that provides energy services throughout the UK, and is the only energy company to retail a high street presence through its electrical supply stores in the north of Scotland.

Embarking on the Living Wage is an issue of values – moral and financial – for SSE. It was an issue the company decided was the right thing to do, and also aligned with the organisation's values. This was highlighted by Rachel McEwen, Director of Sustainability, in a statement at the time of the Living Wage launch “For SSE, being a Living Wage employer is about doing the right thing for people who work for us. That's good for our employees and it is good for business too. But just as importantly, it is a symbol of the type of company we want to be: being responsible in all that we do in order to make a difference to people's lives.”⁹⁴

⁹³ Website: www.sse.com

⁹⁴ SSE, 2014. *SSE plays its part to help more workers benefit from the Living Wage* [online]. 24 June 2014. Available from: www.sse.com/newsandviews/allarticles/2014/06/sse-plays-its-part-to-help-more-workers-benefit-from-the-living-wage [Accessed 20 September 2014].

SSE's commitment to the Living Wage comes from the top down. It has established Management Board Commitment to become an accredited Living Wage employer with support from a short life multi-functional working group from core corporate departments comprised of Rachel McEwen (then) Head of Sustainable Development, Kirsty Curry Head of Performance and Compliance and Robert Macdonald Head of HR Projects. Together they have outlined a definitive business case for the Living Wage detailed below:

Business case for the Living Wage

1. It is consistent with SSE's values

Paying a living wage is a sustainable policy: it rewards employees fairly for the contribution they make to SSE's success. It demonstrates our responsible approach to employment.

2. Improves employee retention, loyalty and employee engagement

We are convinced there is considerable evidence that in return for fair pay, employees reward their employer with increased loyalty and increased engagement.

3. Enhance SSE's public reputation

The Living Wage Foundation (LWF) accreditation is the 'official' way to have a quality mark around our position as a responsible Living Wage Employer.

4. Competitive differentiation – SSE stands out from the rest

Being the only Living Wage accredited energy/ utility company in the UK is an important differentiator which marks us out from our competitors.

5. The Living Wage matters to many of SSE's customers

The general public and SSE's business customers, many of whom are from public sector, are increasingly expecting enhanced social standards from their contactors.

SSE's position on the Living Wage is highly visible outside the organisation. The Living Wage has dedicated web space on its responsible business pages⁹⁵, was a case theme in SSE's 2013/14 AGM, including being the focus of a short film⁹⁶ and featured within SSE's Annual Report 2014 under the Sustainability Overview and strategic report on People, Values and the Environment⁹⁷. Details of SSE's position on the anniversary of its accreditation are detailed on a blog by Rachel McEwen⁹⁸.

Implementation and impact

All of SSE's 20,000 employees were being paid at least the Living Wage in September 2013, with those earning less than the Living Wage rate receiving a backdated pay rise to April 1st 2013. While the organisation has over 20,000 employees, due to their business very few (only 148 of the total) direct employees fell below the Living Wage rate when the organisation stated paying the Living Wage.

⁹⁵ SSE. *Being Responsible*. Available from: www.sse.com/beingresponsible [Accessed 20 September 2014].

⁹⁶ SSE, 2013. *Being responsible, making a difference* [video, online]. Available from: www.vimeo.com/100974142 Accessed 20 September.

⁹⁷ SSE, (2014). See Living Wage references on p:30, 53, 54, 56.

⁹⁸ McEwen, R., 2014. *The Living Wage: One year on* [online]. 26 September 2014. Available from: <http://sse.com/newsandviews/allarticles/2014/09/the-living-wage-one-year-on> [Accessed 2 October 2014].

Implementation of the Living Wage rates within SSE had an impact on the following:

- 148 full and part time staff receiving a pay rise of which 49 are men, 99 are women;
- They included: 65 Cleaning staff from the south of England, 40 Hydro Shop staff in the north of Scotland, 36 Airtricity staff including meter readers and admin staff in Northern Ireland and 7 others including tour guides at power stations in the north of England.
- The average annual increase in salary for those affected is £1,000;
- The total cost to SSE to increase these wage rates to the Living Wage rate was around £200,000. SSE has increased its costs by giving its staff a pay rise because, as stated by Rachel McEwen, they “believe paying our lowest paid staff a living wage is simply the right thing to do”.

Formal engagement on going Living Wage was undertaken with all trade unions leaders within SSE: Unite, Prospect, Unison and the GMB. There is evidence that all trade unions welcomed this move and engagement on Living Wage remains ongoing.

SSE trainee and apprentices have been excluded from the Living Wage rate but receive wages which are at or above the rates of pay accredited by the relevant trade bodies. While these are not at the level of the Living Wage, that reflects the age and experience of the trainees and apprentices. Evidence from SSE official correspondence with the LWF confirms the LWF recognise the training package and qualifications received by all SSE trainees and apprentices are sufficient to demonstrate real training value and therefore this group is excluded from the reach of the Living Wage.

To communicate the details of the Living Wage implementation, and keep it visible, SSE has adopted an ongoing communications plan for all SSE staff detailing why the Living Wage is important, and linking it directly to SSE core values. Further it cascades this message through its business units and account managers to key customer groups highlighting SSE’s commitment to the Living Wage and its accreditation as a Living Wage Employer.

With regards to Living Wage accreditation SSE agreed a formal detailed plan with the Living Wage Foundation to phase the Living Wage into its UK supply chain. The essence of this was that from 1st April 2014, all new eligible contracts tendered would include a Living Wage clause, and require the contractor to pay any person who works on an SSE site for two hours or more, for at least eight consecutive weeks, to be paid at least the Living Wage. Rachel McEwen states that “We are unable to implement these clauses retrospectively, but in due course, the whole supply chain (where appropriate) will be covered by the Living Wage clause.”

SSE signed its first Living Wage compliant contract with 3 suppliers in August 2014 to pay at least the Living Wage to over 100 employees directly involved in delivering an energy efficiency project in Perth, Scotland. Sandy Ferguson, Managing Director of one of these suppliers, Cameron and Ferguson, indicated that signing up to the Living Wage has improved the attitude and output of labour force⁹⁹.

⁹⁹ SSE, 2014. *SSE rolls out the Living Wage across its £2bn supply chain* [online]. 5 August 2014. Available from: www.sse.com/newsandviews/allarticles/2014/08/sse-rolls-out-the-living-wage-across-its-%C2%A32bn-supply-chain [Accessed 20 September 2014].

SSE most significant Living Wage impacts are likely to come from the organisation's commitment to work with its supply chain to roll out the Living Wage.

- SSE's annual supply chain bill is over £2billion; of which around £1.5bn is spent on service contracts and SSE awards around 1,500 contracts each year.
- By August 2014 high level analysis of SSE data demonstrated Living Wage contracts had been signed with an associated contract value in excess of £473,272,408 for 16 contracts awarded with suppliers based the length of the UK from Shetland to Portsmouth.

Further availability of information on the impact of SSE's supply chain going Living Wage is limited to that which contractors place in the public domain themselves. SSE does not intend to request Living Wage impact information from suppliers. The reason for this is that they expected it to be built into the contract thus, as Rachel McEwen explains, "it would be too onerous a task to our suppliers to go through hypothetical cost calculation for each contract as if it had not included a Living Wage rate, particularly as we were only interested in Living Wage compliant bids".

Given the scale and importance of SSE's supply chain, it was vital for both SSE and the LWF that SSE developed an action plan for implementation of the Living Wage in procurement. This involved integrating the Living Wage principles into their core procurement policy and developing and launching a new Responsible Procurement Charter¹⁰⁰. SSE suppliers were given an early indication to SSE suppliers that SSE were considering the 'principles of the Living Wage' through strategic engagement and included information uploaded to the corporate website for potential suppliers.

SSE are working closely with their supply chain to help them implement the Living Wage. They won't impose this on suppliers retrospectively, but paying staff the Living Wage who work on SSE sites in the future will be a feature of the contract SSE awards. Rachel McEwen notes "We believe the majority of workers in our sector are paid above the Living Wage, but there are areas where contractors may need to increase the wages of their staff – just as SSE did".

There are however likely to be challenges of going Living Wage. The nature of some of the contracts and supply chain inherent to SSE's business includes some complexity in establishing the Living Wage in contracts.

¹⁰⁰ SSE. *Responsible Procurement Charter* [online]. Available from: www.sse.com/media/210941/Responsible-Procurement-Charterv2.pdf [Accessed 5 October 2014]. (In terms of procurement, SSE is governed by the Utilities Regulation Code for its activities relating to its networks businesses. SSE has inserted a Living Wage clause as a social criterion into their procurement contracts.)

Overview

Rachel McEwen summarises that “The business argument for going Living Wage is overwhelming. When SSE was accredited in September 2013 there were only three FTSE 100 companies accredited as Living Wage Employers. While this number is increasing, it is fair to say that the private sector has not been as quick to adopt the policy as the public sector. SSE is happy to be leading the way among publically-listed companies in introducing the Living Wage.

The Living Wage is important to SSE because it is a symbol of what it stands for. But there is room for more development in ensuring SSE is sustainable in the long term. Understanding more clearly the way in which we can develop and enhance our social and environmental impacts is key to our business growth. Shortly we will publish new research that will quantify the development of human capital and the importance of that to business growth, individual development – and the wider contribution to society too. The publication of these non-financial impacts is important to SSE as we seek to become increasingly transparent about all our impacts on the economy, the environment and on society”.

Enhance Office Cleaning Ltd

2010

Proposal to introduce the Living Wage taken to clients in August 2010

2013

Service Provider Recognition since November 2013

Background and motivation

Enhance Office Cleaning¹⁰¹ are a medium sized private facilities management and commercial cleaning business, providing services to a range of organisations, predominately in central London.

Sandy Aird, Managing Director, initially sought for Enhance Office Cleaning to introduce the Living Wage in 2010 on the basis of a moral obligation to employees. “We decided to become a Living Wage Employer because we believed it was morally right; taking the decision was not easy as many of our competitors only offer rates around the National Minimum Wage... We were fortunate that all of our clients agreed it was the right thing to do and most of them paid the extra cost associated with achieving this.”¹⁰²

Implementation

Having decided to seek to implement the Living Wage, Mr Aird undertook discussions with the business’s trade association, the Cleaning Support Services Association, in 2010. This led to engagement with Neil Jamison, Director at London Citizens, and consequently Mr Aird making a proposition to the business’s 28 clients in August 2010 to pay the London Living Wage (LLW). Following these initial efforts to pursue the Living Wage, Mr Aird continued to have contact with the Living Wage Foundation (LWF) from when it was established 2011. Additionally his support for the Living Wage included being quoted in the published press, involvement in a study of the business costs and benefits of the Living Wage and, in 2013, involvement in organising and speaking at an evening presentation to 150 facilities managers in London on the Living Wage at an event sponsored by the British Institute of Facilities Management and KPMG.

¹⁰¹ Website: www.enhanceofficecleaning.com

¹⁰² Trust for London, 2012. *100,000 increase in London jobs paying poverty wages* [online]. 15 October 2012. Available from: www.trustforlondon.org.uk/media/press-release/100000-increase-in-london-jobs-paying-poverty-wages-2 [Accessed 28 August 2014].

Furthermore, the business was one of the first three building service providers¹⁰³ recognised by the LWF's Service Provider Recognition programme initiated in 2013 – awarded to organisations that commit to paying all of their own head office staff the Living Wage, and to always supply a Living Wage bid alongside a market rate bid to all of their current and prospective clients at the point of tender.¹⁰⁴

Impacts

Mr Aird's decision to embark on introducing the Living Wage was based on specific, and clear, objectives. These are/were as follows:

- To make sure that his staff would be earning pay rates that they could reasonably live off.
- To encourage and attract more people to apply for work with the business.
- To have better staff retention, and that staff would have a more flexible attitude towards working.
- That the business would attract enquiries from likeminded organisations.
- To break the mould in the UK cleaning industry which has a very large number of companies who offer a very similar service and, as a result, often compete predominantly on cost.

Reflecting on these defined objectives, Mr Aird has identified corresponding outcomes from each of these aims. These are summarised as follows:

- In March 2010, 21% of staff were receiving the Living Wage. In March 2014, 85% received the rate. (By September 2014, this figure remains at this level – the 15% not paid the LLW are all part-time staff, working less than 22.5 hours per week, and earn between £7.65 and £8.75 per hour.)
- The business attracts more people seeking to apply to work for them, with a high number of speculative enquiries for employment. However, this is not specifically recorded.
- There is evidence of improved staff retention. In the year to March 2010 the business experienced an average of 8 leavers per month, dropping to 6 leavers per month in the year to March 2014 (and which was based on a 50% increase in the workforce). The reduced staff turnover makes the business easier to run, saves on management time, and furthermore reduces administrative costs in areas such as the recent legal requirement to provide an auto-enrolment pension scheme for employees.
- While the business has had significant media coverage in relation to its support of the Living Wage, this has not apparently directly translated into winning work, with business enquires continuing to come from existing client referral rather than media coverage of the company's support for the Living Wage.

¹⁰³ Enhance Office Cleaning. *Living Wage Recognised Service Provider* [online]. Available from: www.enhanceofficecleaning.com/about_us/living_wage.html [Accessed 28 August 2014].

¹⁰⁴ Living Wage Foundation. *About the Service Provider Recognition* [online]. Available from: <http://www.livingwage.org.uk/about-service-provider-recognition> [Accessed 29 August 2014].

Other impacts

- The implementation of the Living Wage has resulted in a more motivated and productive workforce¹⁰⁵.
- There is a benefit to existing client relationships. Sandy Aird states he believes “our existing clients respect us more for taking a firm stance on this and looking after the people who are most important to them – our staff who work in their premises. I’m certain that we have a much stronger business relationship with our clients as a result of paying the Living Wage.”
- With pay rates pegged to an externally set rate (the annual Living Wage calculation), it is easier for the business to keep pace with, and for clients to accept, inflationary cost increases.

Sandy Aird has also communicated the positive impacts for his business, employees and clients publically – challenging other contractor and employers who pay low pay rates to their workers “Enhance has proved that paying fair wages has attracted good staff with a service-oriented attitude. They view cleaning as a longer-term opportunity with promotion prospects - that’s good for client, employee and contractor.”¹⁰⁶

Financial impacts

- From March 2010 to March 2014 financial turnover increased by 67% – however, undertaking the Living Wage in likelihood restricted expansion over the period.
- Percentage gross profit on total turnover decreased between March 2010 and March 2011 from 26% to 20% (a 23% decrease) from considerably higher than market average, to slightly below market average. Higher pay rates for employees increased pressure on lowering the margins achievable to cover overheads, off site administration, management and profit. Since March 2011, and after most staff had achieved the Living Wage, gross profit percentages have increased from 20% to 23% (a 15% increase).
- Due to staff being mostly recruited through word of mouth, there are no significant direct savings on actual recruitment costs. There are some savings on management time, including organising, inducting and training new staff – though this is relatively insignificant.

¹⁰⁵ Enhance Office Cleaning. *Living Wage Recognised Service Provider* [online]. Available from: http://www.enhanceofficecleaning.com/about_us/living_wage.html [Accessed 28 August 2014].

¹⁰⁶ Nixon, N., 2011. *Living wages for London cleaners* [online]. 18 July 2011. Available from: www.cleaninghub.net/news/view/living-wages-for-london-cleaners [Accessed 2 September 2014].

Covering the costs

As well as the benefits, Mr Aird makes it clear there are challenges and costs associated with his business committing to the Living Wage – and highlights some of these from his experience:

- The difference between the labour costs of a competitor paying the minimum wage, and Enhance paying the LLW, means that they are starting from a point where their costs are 40% higher. While some of this can be mitigated through organisational creativity, productivity, and reducing other costs – a total cost of around 20% higher than the client would normally pay is expected.
- While clients are generally in support of the Living Wage, and interested in undertaking it considering the CSR benefits, they are often constrained by the extra cost.
- Significant time can be spent preparing Living Wage compliant tenders, which are then unsuccessful. Mr Aird states that “as a true Living Wage supporter the business needs to work harder to achieve tender success”.

Overall

Mr Aird summarises that implementing the Living Wage in his sector requires a balancing of the costs incurred, with the benefits it brings. “There is undoubtedly a financial cost in supporting the Living Wage for both clients and contractors, and it is simply a matter of weighing up the extra cost against the benefits. Entrepreneurs who want to maximise turnover and profit might pay lip service to supporting the Living Wage but it is not practical for them to actually support it. It makes it more difficult to be cost competitive and it adversely affects the gross profit that can be achieved.”

Discussion and conclusions

Living Wage adoption reflects social objectives in core business values

Evidence in each case highlights that the Living Wage is adopted based on core values of a business – both social concerns and economics. Central to the business case is recognising the financial cost of adopting the Living Wage and the potential impact on the financial capital of a business alongside value creation in terms of social welfare and arguably human ‘capital’. Fundamental to the business cases detailed in this report is both long

term value creation and as highlighted by Rachel McEwen’s realisation as Director of Sustainability at SSE that *“paying our lowest paid staff a living wage is simply the right thing to do”*.

Building a dialogue on the Living Wage around core business values positions the social responsibility of business in engagement on public policy issues around both poverty alleviation and recognition of human rights. In particular, there is evidence from the case of Penrose Care that this dialogue is critical in high impact sectors such as social care. Robert Stephenson-Padron, Managing Director, Penrose Care identifies that the Equality and Human Rights Commission have linked low pay with high staff turnover and the non-continuity of care staff – an issue that is regarded as a significant threat to the human rights of the elderly.



A photo call celebrating the House of Lords and the House of Commons both becoming Accredited Living Wage Employers 2014

Covering costs of the Living Wage is fundamental to the business case

It is undeniable that implementing the Living Wage is undertaken at a financial cost to the organisation concerned – inasmuch as the organisation is required to meet the direct costs of uplifting wage rates below the Living Wage to meet the set rate, and the indirect costs of administering this. Our evidence has shown how this cost will vary between organisations both in terms of the number of employees affected and the ability of the organisation to absorb or pass on these costs. The business case for the Living Wage is broadly understood as building on fundamental principles of costs recognition and absorption and considering the extent to which Living Wage adoption is considered an expense to the business, or an investment in value creation. In this respect a financial business case is relevant to all organisations: private, public, third sector and charities.

As Sandy Aird, Managing Director of Enhance Office Cleaning summarises – implementing the Living Wage requires a balancing of the costs incurred, with the benefits it brings. *“There is undoubtedly a financial cost in supporting the Living Wage for both clients and contractors, and it is a simply a matter of weighing up the extra cost against the benefits”.*

A business case is developed based on value creation

The focus of this study is on the private sector (recognising the inherent profit motive) and creation of ‘value’ through Living Wage adoption in addition to recognition of the costs of adopting a living wage rate. The nature and recognition of financial value and social welfare improvements and how ‘value’ is created in connection with the Living Wage has been the subject of our attention within each case organisation. A central issue in a ‘business case’ is cost mitigation and business differentiation in connection with the Living Wage to create value. The question for the private sector is how to incorporate the Living Wage into its value chain and ultimately its brand and recognition – and that this position is changing as more organisations adopt the Living Wage, and it is becoming an expectation of doing business rather than a differentiating factor.

Our findings highlight the importance of building a business case on both financial and non-financial performance criteria, quantitative and qualitative evidence. The challenges of ‘integrated’ performance considerations as a basis for value recognition become central to the formation of a business case going forward.

Change can be phased in

With the exception of Penrose Care who adopted the Living Wage on business formation, other Living Wage Employers have practices which reflected a phased implementation of the Living Wage as part of a broader change management programme. Employers considering Living Wage adoption should consider how to phase in changes.

Michael Kelly (KPMG) stresses *“If you start from the premise that the whole change management programme is just a pay differential program you are at a loss even before you have got going.”* He advises other organisations should *“treat going Living Wage as a change management programme; phase it over a reasonable term of 1 or 2 years.”*

As highlighted by Enhance Office Cleaning, for smaller established organisations the business case for a Living Wage may require a more disruptive business model to do things differently.

Sandy Aird, Managing Director of Enhance Office Cleaning noted *...“taking the decision was not easy as many of our competitors only offer rates around the National Minimum Wage ... We were fortunate that all of our clients agreed it was the right thing to do and most of them paid the extra cost associated with achieving this.”*

Case evidence illustrates how implementing the Living Wage can help to differentiate a business from its competitors and also build brand value through organisational transformation over time. The importance of including the Living Wage within interactions and interdependencies within the value chain is key to ensuring that the maximum value is derived for this strategic implementation or change programme.

Create value with service providers and contractors

Evidence suggests there is varying degrees of awareness and implementation of the Living Wage by service providers and contractors. This has led in some instances to unhappiness among employees who perceived they were being paid different rates for essentially the same job by different contractors (some were Living Wage employers, some were not). One of the objectives of the Living Wage Foundation’s Service Provider scheme is to help to resolve this issue by ensuring employees are paid a Living Wage on all contracts irrespective of the contractor’s Living Wage status.

Momentum on Living Wage adoption and expectations are changing. With now over 1,000 Living Wage Employers in the UK, this is a requirement of doing business with them where on-site contracts are served.

Evidence from SSE highlights the degree of change with respect to contractors related to just one Living Wage Employer: By August 2014 high level analysis of SSE data demonstrated Living Wage contracts had been signed with an associated contract value in excess of £473,272,408 for 16 contracts awarded with suppliers based the length of the UK from Shetland to Portsmouth.

Pursue objectives of social welfare through employee impact

Paying the Living Wage is about seeking to improve the lives of employees in some small way. There is case evidence to suggest that, if value is to be created from Living Wage adoption to offset the direct costs to the business, emphasis needs to be placed on working with relevant employees and empowering them with the right to influence business changes to that which suits their individual family circumstances (i.e. different employees may prefer night to day shift or vice versa). KPMG emphasised this by asking employees what they would like as part of their Living Wage adoption. They also identified what Living Wage employees in general were not interested in – they had little appetite for pension provision.

There is some evidence of employee dissatisfaction around Living Wage implementation. Tensions were recognised around local pay differentials, for example between ‘staff’ and supervisors, day and night shift workers – and these required careful consideration. Engagement with unions has been significant for a number of case study organisations to avoid and/or manage such experiences.

Stakeholder engagement is critical to managing knowledge gaps

Building on evidence of the importance of stakeholder support identified in the literature review, the significance of engagement with stakeholders is highlighted through the case studies with different emphasis depending upon the nature of the business. Engagement is particularly important to manage any potential knowledge gaps which exist between a business and its stakeholders around perceptions of the business case for the Living Wage.

Investor engagement and support for Living Wage adoption is critical to the business case. A number of cases noted here were motivated to adopt the Living Wage by market based campaigns. This is highlighted by Aviva’s proactive positioning on engagement on the Living Wage with shareholder representatives around their AGM. Engagement with the City and public policy makers has continued to take place on a regular basis addressing the Living Wage, both directly and indirectly, and ensuring a socially responsible business case for the Living Wage was developing.

Aviva’s position is: ...engagement with investors and stakeholder representatives on the Living Wage and managing investor expectations is critical to a private sector ‘business approach’.

The case study evidence presented highlights the scale of the implementation challenge which Living Wage Employers may face, but also the potential social impact which they can have, and the ‘value’ they can create for their business and its stakeholders.



*Selfie at Google HQ during the announcement of the 2014 London Living Wage Rate, November 2014
Robert Stephenson-Padron, Guy Stallard and Neil Jameson*

Endnote



We are very grateful to all the individuals and organisations who have contributed so much in producing this report.

The Living Wage campaign was started 14 years ago by a group of citizens whose communities were in membership of London Citizens. They had the courage and belief that by working together they could change the market for the poorest and in some cases most marginalised in our society.

We have come a long way since then and our ambition to consign poverty pay to history is now closer to happening than ever before. There is the growing realisation that a society which can be divided into ‘the makers’ and ‘the takers’ is fundamentally flawed and cuts immense segments of society off from meaningful participation in social, political and economic life.

That is why this report is so important. It provides a catalyst for change. I hope it will inspire other employers to start their own journey to becoming accredited Living Wage Employers. We know that changing the way work is valued will not happen overnight, but a journey of a thousand miles starts with the first step.

Our member communities will continue to press all responsible employers to embrace the Living Wage on a voluntary basis and we will celebrate when they do so. We will bring this campaign onto the High Streets of our nation and show the power that citizens and their communities acting together for the common good can wield when they have purpose, passion and a plan.

**Neil Jameson, Executive Director,
Citizens UK**

Literature reference list

Business in the Community, 2014. *CR Index 2014 Insight Report: Integrating, Measuring and Managing Responsible Business Practice*. 31 March. London: Business in the Community.

Available from: www.bitc.org.uk/system/files/cr_index_2014_insight_report_final_o.pdf

Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development, 2013. *Labour Market Outlook Winter 12-13*. London: Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development.

Available from: www.cipd.co.uk/binaries/labour-market-outlook_2012-13-winter.pdf

City of Bradford Metropolitan District Council, 2013. "Scrutiny review into the implications for the District of Bradford Council adopting a Living Wage Policy". Report of the Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Committee. September. Available from: www.bradford.gov.uk/NR/rdonlyres/E85CoDFA-3125-4CAD-AF33-45CDC1881240/0/LivingWageSept2013.pdf

Corlett, A. and Whittaker, M., 2014. *Low Pay Britain 2014*. October. London: Resolution Foundation.

Available from: www.resolutionfoundation.org/publications/low-pay-britain-2014

Dutton, M., Raeside, R., Mazza, T. and Chen, T., 2014. *Evaluating the Economic Impact of the Glasgow Living Wage*. October. Edinburgh: Employment Research Institute, Edinburgh Napier University.

Available from: www.glasgowcpp.org.uk/CHttpHandler.ashx?id=22489&p=0

Equality and Human Rights Commission, 2014. *The Invisible Workforce: Employment Practices in the Cleaning Sector: Findings Report*. August. Manchester: Equality and Human Rights Commission. Available from:

www.equalityhumanrights.com/publication/invisible-workforce-employment-practices-cleaning-sector

Fairris, D., Rusnsten, D., Briones, C. and Goodheart, J., 2005. *Examining the Evidence: The Impact of the Los Angeles Living Wage Ordinance on Workers and Businesses*.

Available from: www.irle.ucla.edu/publications/documents/LivingWage_fullreport.pdf

Flint, E., Cummins, S. and Wills, J., 2013. Investigating the effect of the London Living wage on the psychological wellbeing of low-wage service sector employees: a feasibility study. *Journal of Public Health* [online], 36 (2), 187-193.

Gallet, G., 2004. The determinants of living wage rates. *The Social Science Journal* [online], 41 (2004) 661-666.

GLA Economics, 2013. *A Fairer London: The 2013 Living Wage in London*. London: Greater London Authority.

Available from: www.london.gov.uk/priorities/business-economy/publications/gla-economics/a-fairer-london-the-2013-living-wage-in-london

Hirsch, D. and Moore, R., 2011. *The Living Wage in the United Kingdom: Building on Success* London: Living Wage Foundation. Available from: www.citizensuk.org/wp-content/uploads/2011/06/The-Living-Wage-in-the-United-Kingdom-May-2011.pdf

Holden, J. and Raikes, L., 2012. *Pay up? Living costs and the living wage in Manchester*. NEWP 009. July. Manchester: New Economy Working Papers. Available from: http://neweconomymanchester.com/stories/1656-revealed_the_true_cost_of_living_in_manchester

Jensen, N. and Wills, J., 2013. *The prevalence and impact of the Living Wage in the UK: A survey of organisations accredited by the Living Wage Foundation*. October. London: Queen Mary, University of London. Available from: www.geog.qmul.ac.uk/livingwage/pdf/FINALReportLWFsurvey2013.pdf

KPMG LLP, 2013. *UK Annual Report 2013*. London: KPMG LLP. Available from: www.kpmg.com/uk/en/about/pages/annual-review.aspx

Lansley, S. and Reed, H., 2013. *How to Boost the Wage Share*. Touchstone Pamphlet #13. London: Trades Union Congress. Available from: www.tuc.org.uk/sites/default/files/tucfiles/How%20to%20Boost%20the%20Wage%20Share.pdf

Lawton, K. and Pennycook, M., 2013. *Beyond the bottom line: The Challenges and Opportunities of a Living Wage*. January. London: Institute for Public Policy Research, Resolution Foundation. Available from: www.ippr.org/publications/beyond-the-bottom-line-the-challenges-and-opportunities-of-a-living-wage

Littman, D., Donne, M. and Wakefield, B., 2010. *Unfinished Business: The Quest for a Living Wage*. London: Fair Pay Network. Available from: <http://slw.povertyalliance.org/userfiles/files/living-wage-rep-sep-2010.pdf>

Living Wage Commission, 2014. *Work that pays: The Final report of the Living Wage Commission*. June. London: Living Wage Commission. Available from: http://livingwagecommission.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2014/06/Work-that-pays_The-Final-Report-of-The-Living-Wage-Commission_w-3.pdf

London Economics, 2009. *An independent study of the business benefits of implementing a Living Wage policy in London*. Final report for Greater London Authority Economics. February. London: Greater London Authority. Available from: www.london.gov.uk/mayor/economic_unit/docs/living-wage-benefits-report.pdf

Levi, M., Olsen, D. and Stienman, E., 2003. Living Wage Laws and Campaigns. *WorkingUSA* [online], 6 (3) Winter 2002-3 111-132.

Luce, S., 2005. Lessons from Living Wage Campaigns. *Work and Occupations* [online], 32 (4) November 2005 423-440.

Macpherson, D., 2004. Living wage laws and the case for a targeted wage subsidy. In: Figart, D. ed, 2004. *Living Wage Movements: Global Perspectives*. New York: Routledge.

Maher, S., 2013. *The Living Wage: Winning the fight for social justice*. September. London: War on Want. Available from: www.waronwant.org/overseas-work/sweatshops-and-plantations/free-trade-zones-in-sri-lanka/17978-report-the-living-wage

Maloney, T. & Gilbertson, A., 2013. *A Literature Review on the Effects of Living Wage Policies*. August. Auckland: Auckland University of Technology for Auckland Council. Available online from: www.aucklandcouncil.govt.nz/EN/planspoliciesprojects/reports/technicalpublications/Documents/tr2013034aliteraturereviewontheeffectsoflivingwagepolicies.pdf

Markit, 2014. *Living Wage Research for KPMG: Structural Analysis of Hourly Wages and Current Trends in Household Finances 2014 report*. Henley on Thames: Markit. Available from: www.kpmg.com/UK/en/IssuesAndInsights/ArticlesPublications/Pages/living-wage-research-2014.aspx

Marsh, R., Murphy, P., Blackaby, D., O’Leary, N. and Jones, M., 2010. *Living Wage in Wales: Exploratory Study*. Cardiff: Welsh Assembly Government. Available online from: <http://cymru.gov.uk/statistics-and-research/economic-analysis-implications-introducing-living-wage/?lang=en>

Oxford Economics, 2014. *An Economic Analysis of the Living Wage in Northern Ireland*. A Report for NICVA. Centre for Economic Empowerment Research Report: eight. Belfast: Northern Ireland Council for Voluntary Action. Available from: www.nicva.org/resource/economic-analysis-living-wage-northern-ireland

NUS/ UNISON, undated. *I want to live not just exist: The business case for the Living Wage*. Available from: www.unisoneastern.org.uk/assets/library/document/b/original/businesscaseforthelivingwage.pdf

Parker, H., ed, 2001. *Low cost but acceptable: a minimum income standard for households with children in London’s East End*. York: Family Budget Unit. Available from: www.york.ac.uk/res/fbu/documents/lcba_apr2001b.pdf

Pennycook, M., 2012. *What Price a Living Wage? Understanding the impact of a living wage on firm level wage bills*. London: Institute for Public Policy Research, Resolution Foundation. Available from: www.ippr.org/publications/what-price-a-living-wage-understanding-the-impact-of-a-living-wage-on-firm-level-wage-bills

Philpott, J., 2014. *Rewarding Work for Low-Paid Workers*. April. York: Joseph Rowntree Foundation. Available from: www.jrf.org.uk/publications/rewarding-work-low-paid-workers

Pollin, R., Brenner, M., Wicks-Lim, J. and Luce, S., 2008. *A Measure of Fairness: The Economics of Living Wages and Minimum Wages in the United States*. Ithaca: Cornell University Press.

Queen Mary, University of London and Trust for London, 2012. *Costs and Benefits of a Living Wage*. October. Available from: www.trustforlondon.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2012/10/Living-Wage-Costs-and-Benefits.pdf

Ray, K., Sissons, P., Jones, K. and Vegeris, S., 2014. *Employment, Pay and Poverty: Evidence and policy review*. July. Available from: www.theworkfoundation.com/DownloadPublication/Report/364_Employment%20pay%20and%20poverty%20.pdf

Reed, H., 2013. *The Economic Impact of Extending the Living Wage to all Employees in the UK*. October. Colchester: Landman Economics. Available from: www.unison.org.uk/upload/sharepoint/Briefings%20and%20Circulars/Landman%20Economics%20Living%20Wage%20Report%20-%20Final.pdf

Reich, M., Hall, P. & Jacobs, K., 2003. *Living wages and economic performance: The San Francisco Airport Model*. Berkeley, California: Institute of Industrial Relations. Available from: www.irl.berkeley.edu/research/livingwage/sfo_mar03.pdf

Social Mobility & Child Poverty Commission, 2014. *State of the Nation 2014: Social Mobility and Child Poverty in Great Britain*. October. London: Social Mobility and Child Poverty Commission. Available from: www.gov.uk/government/publications/state-of-the-nation-2014-report

SSE plc, 2014. *SSE plc Annual Report 2014: Providing the energy people need*. Perth: SSE plc. Available from: <http://sse.com/media/241200/2014AnnualReport.pdf>

Thompson, J. & Chapman, J., 2006. *The Economic impact of local living wages*. Washington: Economic Policy Institute. Available from: www.epi.org/publication/bp170

Wills, J. with Kakpo, N. and Begum, R., 2009. *The Business Case for the Living Wage: the story of the cleaning service at Queen Mary, University of London*. January. London: Queen Mary, University of London. Available from: www.geog.qmul.ac.uk/livingwage/pdf/livingwagereportQM.pdf

Wills, J. & Linneker, B., 2012. *The costs and benefits of the London living wage*. September. London: University of London and Trust for London. Available from: www.geog.qmul.ac.uk/livingwage/pdf/Livingwagecostsandbenefits.pdf

Wills, J. & Linneker, B., 2013. In-work poverty and the living wage in the United Kingdom: A Geographic Perspective. *Transactions* [online]. 39 (2) 182-194.

Wills, J. & TELCO, 2001. *Mapping low pay in East London*. London: TELCO. Available from: www.geog.qmul.ac.uk/livingwage/pdf/mappinglowpay.pdf

Thanks

Aviva Interviewees

Joanne Goddard	Group Head of CR Governance and Engagement
Stuart Wright	Group Property and Facilities Director
Simon Baldry	Head of Property and Facilities Service Delivery
Julien Kiddell	Property and Facilities Supplier Relationship Manager

Barclays Interviewees

Dominic Johnson	Employee Relations Director
Terry Waldron	European Head of Facilities Management
Philippa Birtwell	Head of Reputation Risk Management
Vicky McAllister	Reputation Risk Manager

KPMG Interviewees

Michael Kelly	Head of Living Wage
Guy Stallard	Head of Facilities

Penrose Care Interviewee

Robert Stephenson-Padron	Co-founder and Managing Director
--------------------------	----------------------------------

SSE Interviewee

Rachel McEwen	Director of Sustainability
---------------	----------------------------

Enhance Office Cleaning Interviewee

Sandy Aird	Managing Director
------------	-------------------

We are also grateful for advice received on the nature of the project and its development from: Julie McGahan and Peter Kelly, Poverty Alliance; Members of the Scottish Living Wage Accreditation Initiative's Leadership Group; Janette McKnight, Quaker Service; Anne Hinchley, Wales and West Housing; Tony Ruddy, Ark Housing; David Banks, Ben Willmott and Charles Cotton, Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development; Katie Schmuecker and Alice Rowland, Joseph Rowntree Foundation; Matthew Dutton, Edinburgh Napier University; Eoin Rooney, NICVA.

Please cite this report: Coulson, A. B. and Bonner, J., 2015. *Living Wages Employers: evidence of UK Business Cases*. January. London: Citizens UK on behalf of the Living Wage Foundation.

If you are interested in learning more about the Living Wage please contact The Living Wage Foundation or visit www.livingwage.org.uk

*The Living Wage Foundation
Citizens UK
112 Cavell Street
London E1 2JA*

*+44 (0) 20 7043 9882
info@livingwage.org.uk*



CITIZENS UK

 Living Wage is part of Citizens UK. Charity No. 1107264

THE LIVING WAGE SMALL CHANGE; BIG DIFFERENCE



WHAT IS THE LIVING WAGE?



The Living Wage is an hourly rate of pay, calculated according to the basic cost of living in the UK.

It provides an acceptable standard of living for employees and their families and a benchmark for employers who are able to pay more than the National Minimum Wage.

There are two Living Wage rates, the UK Living Wage and the London Living Wage. New Living Wage rates are announced in November each year.

Employers choose to pay the Living Wage rates on a voluntary basis.

Living Wage Foundation celebrates employers that pay the Living Wage by awarding an ethical mark for them to display.

“It is not just the right thing to do, it makes absolute business sense. It ensures that we attract and retain the best and most motivated people, whether directly employed by us or by others. We want good people and the Living Wage is an excellent way of getting and keeping them.”

Matthew Sparkes
Linklaters



With thanks to our Principal Partners



WHY SHOULD I PAY THE LIVING WAGE?

We think it's the right thing to do, for your employees and for your organisation.

Paying the Living Wage can have positive effects on staff wellbeing and team morale.

Employers have told us it can mean increased productivity, reduced absenteeism, better recruitment and retention, improved quality of work, and an increased consumer awareness of your organisation's ethical credentials.

Across the UK one in five workers earns less than the Living Wage.

85% of consumers think that companies that can afford to do so should voluntarily pay the Living Wage.

More than 80% of employers believe that the Living Wage had enhanced the quality of the work of their staff, while absenteeism had fallen by approximately 25%.

2/3 of employers reported a significant impact on recruitment and retention within their organisation.

“Before, I had to work two jobs to put food on the table and pay the rent. I had no time for my family or my community. When the Living Wage was introduced I was able to prioritise the one job and that means I've been able to be there for my family and set up a youth group in my community. What I've been given, I'm now able to give back.”

Amin Hussein
Cleaner and Youth worker



“The cost of living is a constant pressure and the Living Wage has allowed us to be more secure in our finances and planning out a happier future. I had never heard of the living wage before I was at Fresh Logistics and the impact on my families' lives is fantastic. Thank you, it is truly appreciated.”

Stefan Proudlove
Fresh Logistics



WHO ELSE PAYS THE LIVING WAGE?



Living Wage Employers range from community pubs, wholesalers, service providers and Local Authorities to consultancies, charities, banks, building societies and food manufacturers.

The majority of our employers are in the private sector.



WHERE DID IT COME FROM?



The Living Wage is an idea that began with parents and families.

It came from stories which were shared by the member communities of our parent charity Citizens UK. Parents were working hard, often in two jobs, but struggling to make ends meet and spend time at home.

These stories started the Living Wage movement and remain at its heart.

The Living Wage story is a partnership between civil society and responsible business.

WHAT DOES IT MEAN TO BE ACCREDITED?

Accredited Living Wage Employers sign a licence agreement with us to confirm they pay the Living Wage to all employees.

The Living Wage applies to employees over the age of 18. However it doesn't apply to temporary, developmental schemes, such as apprenticeships and internships.

Living Wage Employers also commit to paying the Living Wage to all subcontracted workers who regularly work on their premises. These may be cleaners working for a third party, or security guards or catering teams.

Rolling out the Living Wage across contracts can be phased in over time, as contracts come up for renewal.

We can work with you to develop a phased accreditation plan that works for your organisation.

Accreditation means committing to pay the new Living Wage rates year on year, which ensures your employees' pay keeps up with the cost of living.



WHAT ARE THE BENEFITS OF BECOMING ACCREDITED?

- Accredited employers display the Living Wage Employer Mark on their materials and in their buildings.
- We will provide you with guidance on paying the Living Wage, including best practice on how to implement the rate increases and work with third party organisations.
- We will celebrate your accreditation and work with you on publicity and media. We will also keep you up to date with news about the Living Wage campaign, and the rates.
- You will be included in the publicly available list of Living Wage Employers, meaning that consumers, prospective employees, or grant makers can easily find you.
- You will become part of a thriving network of UK employers that support and promote the Living Wage.

To start your journey to accreditation simply fill in the form on the Living Wage Foundation website www.livingwage.org.uk/contact and we will be in touch.

“With the economy showing signs of recovery, employers that can pay a Living Wage must do so. They should choose between continuing to make gains on the back of poverty wages, or doing the right thing and paying a fair wage for a hard day’s work.”

Dr. John Sentamu
Archbishop of York

“We must campaign for the cause of fairness, decent pay and putting money in people’s pockets and purses which will boost our local economy.”

Ian Stewart
Mayor of Salford

“Paying the London Living Wage is not only morally right, but makes good business sense too.”

Boris Johnson
Mayor of London



The Living Wage Foundation

Citizens UK Head Office
112 Cavell Street,
London, E1 2JA
020 7043 9882

www.livingwage.org.uk/contact

@LivingWageUK

72

Citizens UK Charity no. 1107264



SCRUTINY COMMITTEE REPORT - CONSULTATION AND ENGAGEMENT

www.oxford.gov.uk



To: Scrutiny Committee

Date: 2nd March 2015

Report of: Sadie Paige

Title of Report: Consultation and Engagement

Summary

Purpose of report: To provide a final report that addresses the outstanding recommendations made during Scrutiny Committee's review of the draft Community Engagement Policy Statement 2014-17.

Key decision: No

Executive lead member: Councillor Christine Simm

Report author: Sadie Paige

Policy Framework: No

Appendices to report

Appendix 1 – Recommendation 2 principles analysis

Appendix 2 – Recommendation 2 response rate analysis

Appendix 3 – Recommendation 3 pilot report

Background

During its review of the then draft Community Engagement Policy Statement 2014 – 17, on 23rd June 2014, Scrutiny Committee made four recommendations. These are presented below together with City Executive Board's response.

Recommendation	CEB response	Status
1. To provide a clear statement in the principles on the ambition for engagement focusing on depth as well as breadth.	Merge with recommendation 3.	CLOSED
2. To provide information on the engagement ambitions set for all consultations during the last year, what was achieved and how this fits with the principles set within the Policy Statement.	To provide this information for all consultations would be a huge piece of work so a sample will be used instead, together with a forward-looking approach.	Included in this report
3. To suggest to the Scrutiny Committee an up and coming engagement/empowerment exercise that can act as a pilot study to demonstrate the effectiveness of the principles within this report.	Two consultations identified as candidates for the pilot as per CEB suggestion. Project brief created for the pilot, which includes the objectives, and a reporting template.	Included in this report
4. To provide a table that shows how all comments received during the consultation on this Policy Statement have been handled.	Expected at 10 November Scrutiny Committee meeting.	DONE

Recommendation 2

To provide information on the engagement ambitions set for all consultations during the last year, what was achieved and how this fits with the principles set within the Policy Statement.

1. Scrutiny was advised that this would take considerable effort, so it was agreed (Cllr Simmons, Andrew Brown) that the following would be provided:
 - A small number (4 or 5) examples of different types of consultations with qualitative comments around the engagement ambitions, what was achieved and how this fits with the principles set in the Policy Statement.
 - Information around the response rates that different 'types' of consultations tend to attract i.e. what kind of consultations attract a higher or lower level of engagement.
2. The analysis was carried out on all public involvement events that had a close date between December 2013 and December 2014. There were 44 in total.
3. They have been summarised by service area and engagement ambition, see below.

	Evaluation	Operational	Housing	Supplementary Planning Documents	Strategy/ Policy	TOTAL
City Development		1		4	4	9
Customer Services	4				1	5
Direct Services		1				1
Environmental Development	1	1	2		1	5
Housing and Property		8	2			10
Leisure, Parks and Communities	4	2			1	7
Policy, Culture and Communications	3				4	7
TOTAL	12	13	4	4	11	44

Definition of engagement ambition:

Evaluation feedback on projects and services, customer satisfaction

Operational feedback on improvement proposals

Housing feedback on proposed changes to housing agreements

Strategy/ Policy includes planning policy

4. From this list four examples have been selected to represent a broad range of service areas and engagement ambitions. They are presented in Appendix 1, together with qualitative comments around the engagement ambitions, what was achieved and how this fits with the principles set in the Community Engagement Policy Statement.

5. The response rates for the 44 public involvement activities varied from 5 to 1170. They are presented in Appendix 2. There does not appear to be any correlation between number of replies and engagement ambition, service area, duration of consultation or scope. It should be noted that a low number can result from a low target audience (for example Tower Blocks). It seems very likely that there is a direct relationship between officer time and response rate,

Recommendation 3

To suggest to the Scrutiny Committee an up and coming engagement/ empowerment exercise that can act as a pilot study to demonstrate the effectiveness of the principles within this report. (To provide a clear statement in the principles on the ambition for engagement focusing on depth as well as breadth.)

6. The suggestion was made to Scrutiny Committee that the pilot comprises consultation on the Tower Block Refurbishments and the draft Culture Strategy 2015-18. Results are presented in Appendix 3.

Lessons learned

7. Increased focus on the principles of engagement have driven other process improvements:
 - Earlier planning of consultations in the report commissioning phase.
 - Increased focus on principles by the Public Involvement Board
 - The need for an evaluation of consultations once completed.
 - The disbanding of the Talkback Panel.

Name and contact details of author:-

Name: Sadie Paige

Job title: Consultation Officer

Service Area / Department: Policy, Culture and Communications

Tel: 01865 252250 e-mail: spaige@oxford.gov.uk

Version number: 1

Appendix 1 – Recommendation 2 – Analysis of Consultations

Consultation Project Title:	Citizens' Talkback Panel Feb/ Mar 2014		
Type:	Evaluation	Timeline:	17/2/14 – 17/3/14
Objective:	To carry out the annual residents' satisfaction survey – Living in Oxford.		
Target:	Oxford Talkback Panel members (991)		
Result:	340 people responded to the survey. Action plans were developed for areas that needed improving.		
Principle	Application		
Flexibility – appropriate range of engagement methods.	The need to compare performance year-on-year means that the methodology must be consistent. Therefore this consultation was restricted to the mail-out questionnaire to a defined panel.		
Proportionality – to the scale of impact.	The response size means that weighting is not possible and therefore general conclusions about the satisfaction of residents cannot be drawn.		
Transparency & clarity – of scope of consultation; provision of enough information.	Since this is an annual survey, the questions and scope are clear to the Panel members.		
Timeliness – when in decision-making process, duration and timing.	The field work took place over a non-holiday four week period.		
Feedback – results should be published.	A “You Said We Did” report was sent to the Talkback Panel members.		
Inclusiveness & Accessibility.	While the Panel reflects the demographic profile of Oxford residents, the profile of responders does not.		
Lessons learnt/ changes made	The methodology for gathering residents' satisfaction has been changed to a benchmark-able postal survey and the Citizen's Panel has been disbanded.		

Appendix 1 – Recommendation 2 – Analysis of Consultations

Consultation Project Title:	Diamond Place/ Ewert House Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) Options		
Type:	SPD	Timeline:	3/4/14 - 30/5/14
Objective:	To gather the community's views on the development of the site, which will then be incorporated into the SPD. This consultation is stage 2 of a 3-stage process.		
Target:	A representative cross section of the Summertown and St Margaret's community and local businesses. Ideally 50-100 people.		
Result:	191 people took part in the consultation. Draft supplementary planning document has been subsequently written.		
Principle	Application		
Flexibility – appropriate range of engagement methods	A range of engagement methods were used: workshop sessions at NOA on the 2nd April 2014, consultation was placed on the City Council's eConsult system.		
Proportionality – to the scale of impact	The impact of the decision is very high for the residents concerned, and since they are a relatively small well-defined group of residents concentrated in one area, a face-to-face meeting at a local venue seems to be appropriate		
Transparency & clarity – of scope of consultation; provision of enough information.	The objectives of the work sessions and boundaries of decisions were clear. Workshop props and facilitators also helped to clarify scope and objectives.		
Timeliness – when in decision-making process, duration and timing.	The production of a SPD must follow The Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012 regarding consultation process. The work session took place on one occasion with the on-line consultation available for minimum of 6 weeks.		
Feedback – results should be published	The results were posted 8 weeks after consultation closed. Residents have been kept apprised of progress through pre-existing meetings.		
Inclusiveness & Accessibility	Pre-consultation options were developed with the local Neighbourhood Forum steering group. Workshop held in local community centre, publicised through neighbourhood forum. Exhibition and feedback set up in the Ferry Sports Centre.		

Appendix 1 – Recommendation 2 – Analysis of Consultations

Consultation Project Title:	Hawksmoor Road Flats - improvements to green spaces.		
Type:	Operational	Timeline:	18/11/13 – 06/12/13, events in 2014
Objective:	To get local residents' feedback on proposed improvements to the outdoor space around Hawksmoor Road flats.		
Target:	residents of Hawksmoor Road flats		
Result:	A prioritised list of green space enhancements. The programme of works that were defined as a result of the public involvement are in the process of being implemented.		
Principle	Application		
Flexibility – appropriate range of engagement methods	A combination of door-knocking, on-line survey and a community centre event.		
Proportionality – to the scale of impact	A local approach to a local issue.		
Transparency & clarity – of scope of consultation; provision of enough information.	Officers were careful to set expectations with residents. The enhancements have been very clearly described in letters to residents.		
Timeliness – when in decision-making process, duration and timing.	On line consultation took place over a three week period in late Autumn avoiding the seasonal holidays. This was followed up with an on-site visit in late January.		
Feedback – results should be published	This has been sent by mail to each flat resident.		
Inclusiveness & Accessibility	Meetings, on-line and letters sent to residents.		

Appendix 1 – Recommendation 2 – Analysis of Consultations

Consultation Project Title:	Street Trading Policy	
Type:	Strategy	Timeline: 1/7/14 – 12/8/14
Objective:	To get feedback on the revised Street Trading Policy.	
Target:	Street traders, key stakeholders and the general public	
Result:	58 responses, and recommendation prepared for the General Purposes Licensing Committee, which was approved on 27/1/15.	
Principle	Application	
Flexibility – appropriate range of engagement methods	This was solely an on-line questionnaire	
Proportionality – to the scale of impact	An issue of broad interest. Consultation was widely publicised.	
Transparency & clarity – of scope of consultation; provision of enough information.	Scope of consultation and public input was defined through the questions, however clarity could have been improved by looking at the language used in the process to make sure it is clear for the general public to understand.	
Timeliness – when in decision-making process, duration and timing.	Five week period during the summer holidays	
Feedback – results should be published	Consultation results were posted on line, three months after consultation closed.	
Inclusiveness & Accessibility	Paper versions of the revised draft policy available in the Town Hall and St Aldates reception areas. Consultation was advertised in local media (website, twitter, facebook), and emails to current Street Trading Consent holders.	

Title	OPEN	CLOSE	duration	no. of replies	number of city responses	city scope	local scope	focussed scope
Financial Inclusion Strategy	07/04/14	02/05/14	25	5	low	y		
Customer Contact Survey - Business and Stakeholders	08/11/13	13/12/13	35	6	low			y
Evaluation of the Welfare Reform Team by Partners	11/12/13	12/01/14	32	6	low			y
Oxford Flood Impact January 2014	17/03/14	07/04/14	21	9	low		y	
Swimming Survey	18/11/13	13/12/13	25	10	low			y
Culture Strategy 2015-18	17/10/14	24/12/14	68	11	low			y
			18		low			
Hawksmoor Road Flats - improvements to green spaces.	18/11/13	06/12/13		11			y	
Broad Street Events	29/01/14	26/02/14	28	20	med		y	
Customer Contact Survey - General Public	08/11/13	15/12/13	37	23	med	y		
Oxford City Council's Draft Children and Young Peoples Plan 2014-2017	08/01/14	09/02/14	32	27	med	y		
Cuttleslowe and Sunnymead Park Paddling Pool Improvements	25/09/14	31/10/14	36	28	med		y	
Article 4 Direction	28/03/14	23/05/14	56	32	med	y		
	17/03/14	23/03/14	6	32				
Hockmore Tower Refurbishment - Consultation March 2014					med		y	
Pest Control Customer Satisfaction Survey	25/02/13	28/02/14	368	32	med	y		
Windrush Tower - New Colour Designs	07/08/14	14/08/14	7	32	med		y	
Oxford Stadium Conservation Area nomination	11/03/14	01/04/14	21	33	med		y	
	17/03/14	23/03/14	6	33				
Windrush Tower Refurbishment - Consultation March 2014					med		y	
Evenlode Tower - New Colour Designs	07/08/14	14/08/14	7	34	med		y	
City Development Website Review	01/09/14	31/10/14	60	35	med	y		
	17/03/14	23/03/14	6	37				
Evenlode Tower Refurbishment - Consultation March 2014					med		y	
	17/03/14	23/03/14	6	40				
Foresters Tower Refurbishment - Consultation March 2014					med		y	

An Assessment of the Oxford View Cones- consultation on the draft document	13/06/14	25/07/14	42	43	med	y		
HRA Flats Site Waste & Recycling Survey	25/11/13	10/02/14	77	45	med		y	
Draft Community Engagement Plan	20/12/13	31/03/14	101	48	med	y		
Street Trading Policy	01/07/14	12/08/14	42	58	med	y		
	17/03/14	23/03/14	6	59				
Plowman Tower Refurbishment - Consultation March 2014					med			y
Oxford City Council Draft Corporate Plan and Draft Budget 2014/18	20/12/13	31/01/14	42	62	med	y		
Standards in Houses in Multiple Occupation.	05/08/14	30/11/14	117	62	med			y
Oxford Heritage Plan Community Engagement strategy	27/01/14	24/02/14	28	65	med	y		
	13/12/13	12/01/14	30	86				
Evaluation of Oxford City Council's Welfare Reform Team during the Universal Credit Local Authority- Led Pilot in 2013.					med			y
Northern Gateway -Stage 2	21/07/14	15/09/14	56	156	high		y	
The Oxford Standard Consultation (for Oxford City Council tenants only)	05/07/14	10/07/14	5	165	high			y
Diamond Place/ Ewert House Supplementary Planning Document Options	03/04/14	30/05/14	57	191	high		y	
Living in Oxford through the eyes of a young person!	22/01/14	14/02/14	23	200	high	y		
Parks Satisfaction Survey 2014	06/03/14	31/12/14	300	201	high	y		
HMO Licensing and Accreditation 2014 Consultation	17/02/14	28/03/14	39	246	high	y		
Tower Block Refurbishment - stage 2	17/03/14	23/03/14	6	265	high		y	
Annual Rent Increase	01/01/14	03/02/14	33	300	high	y		
Citizens' Talkback Panel December 2013	11/11/13	06/12/13	25	323	high	y		
Parks Satisfaction Survey 2013	01/03/13	31/12/13	305	339	high	y		
Citizens' Talkback Panel Feb/ Mar 2014	17/02/14	17/03/14	28	340	high	y		
Oxford Covered Market Survey	05/11/13	13/12/13	37	428	high		y	
Northern Gateway AAP - Stage 1	14/02/14	28/03/14	42	546	high		y	
Quality of Life Survey	01/04/14	30/06/14	90	1170	high			y

low = less
than 20
med = 20 to
100
high =
greater than
100

This page is intentionally left blank

1. Description

This small project involved running a pilot of the principles of community engagement as defined in the Community Engagement Policy Statement 2014 – 17.

Two different public involvement consultations were selected: one a broad, city-wide consultation and the other a small in-depth sole community of interest.

Results of the pilot will be presented to Scrutiny Committee and Public Involvement Board, together with any recommendations.

2. Objective of the pilot

The objective is to test the effectiveness of the Council's Community Engagement Policy Statement's principles of community engagement by applying them to two different public involvement consultations. Effectiveness is defined here as the capability of producing a desired result. The desired result will be taken from the Public Involvement Brief for the respective consultation.

3. Pilot reporting template

Consultation Project Title:		Tower Block Refurbishment - Evenlode and Windrush	
Intended result:		To establish resident's preferred choice of colour.	
Scope:		Small in-depth community of interest	
Timeline:		one day event 7/8/14	
Principle	Definition	Application	Observation
Flexibility	This principle dictates that a broad range of mechanisms may be used to build and sustain a conversation with the community.	This is a narrowly focussed issue that affects the residents of two tower blocks. Resident involvement will be part of a public exhibition, which will also provide residents the opportunity to provide feedback on other concerns.	A range of mechanisms were used: public exhibition, doorstep survey and on-line survey. This followed two earlier consultations so the method was already tried and tested.
Proportionality	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.	The impact of the decision is very high for the residents concerned, and since they are a relatively small well-defined group of residents concentrated in one area, a face-to-face	Officers have a list of all residents and tracked who responded to the survey.

Appendix 3 – Recommendation 3 pilot report

		meeting at a local venue seems to be appropriate.	
Transparency & clarity	<p>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 that has been reached. It should be clear which aspects are being consulted upon, and where decisions have already been made.</p> <p>Sufficient information should be available to enable stakeholders and residents to make informed comments.</p>	<p>This consultation will be part of an exhibition, which will show which decisions have already been made (earlier in the process by the same group of residents).</p> <p>The exhibition will present the three paint colour options available to residents.</p>	<p>The exhibition happened as planned, the results were tallied real-time so a decision could be made “by the end of the day”. The result will be posted on the team’s website.</p>
Timeliness	<p>Engagement should begin early in the decision-making process when views can genuinely be taken into account. It may be appropriate to engage in different ways at different stages. Timeframes for consultation should be proportionate and realistic, and decided on a case-by-case basis.</p>	<p>This is a one-day event that is part of an on-going programme of engagement with Tower Block residents.</p>	<p>This happened as planned, although it was augmented by an on-line survey so that residents not at home could take part.</p>
Feedback	<p>The principle of feedback recognises that decision 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. The results of consultation must be published.</p>	<p>The goal is to have discussions with all the residents directly impacted by the decision. It is part of the on-going engagement with residents as part of the wider Tower Block Refurbishment programme. The programme has its own communication officer and website.</p>	<p>The team tracked all residents and followed up with several rounds of doorstep survey. Over 50% of residents provided their input.</p>
Inclusiveness & Accessibility	<p>Providing the opportunity for the participation of all</p>	<p>This event will take place close to the</p>	<p>This happened as planned.</p>

Appendix 3 – Recommendation 3 pilot report

	<p>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.</p>	<p>impacted residents. It will be followed up with doorstep surveys carried out by Council officers for people not able to attend the exhibition.</p>	
<p>Was the intended result achieved? Yes, a decision on the choice of colour was made.</p>			

Consultation Project Title:		Culture Strategy 2015 – 18	
Intended result:		Feedback that will inform the action plan that will support the new Culture Strategy	
Scope:		Broad city-wide	
Timeline:		17th October – 17th December 2014	
Principle	Definition	Application	Observation
Flexibility	This principle dictates that a broad range of mechanisms may be used to build and sustain a conversation with the community	Stakeholders have been engaged through the Cultural Partnership Group. The draft Strategy will be available for review by other stakeholders, and interested parties will be able to respond via questionnaire.	The Cultural Partnership Group was heavily involved in developing the draft Culture Strategy. It was agreed at 15 th October CEB that the consultation would be focussed on the identification of delivery partners and their plans for cultural projects and activities.
Proportionality	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.	The level of impact varies from very high (people whose jobs/ deliverables are affected by the strategy) to no impact (people who do not engage with culture at all). This is reflected in the approach to public involvement.	Given the revised approach to the consultation, the focus has been on the cultural organisations.

Appendix 3 – Recommendation 3 pilot report

<p>Transparency</p>	<p>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 that has been reached. It should be clear which aspects are being consulted upon, and where decisions have already been made.</p> <p>Sufficient information should be available to enable stakeholders and residents to make informed comments.</p>	<p>The priorities in the Culture Strategy have been decided and are derived from the previous Culture Strategy, the City Council's Corporate Plan, independent national research and current Arts Council England priorities. We are consulting in order to solicit comments on how we can best achieve these priorities and objectives over the next three years.</p>	<p>The consultation questions were created with this objective in mind.</p>
<p>Timeliness</p>	<p>Engagement should begin early in the decision-making process when views can genuinely be taken into account. It may be appropriate to engage in different ways at different stages. Timeframes for consultation should be proportionate and realistic, and decided on a case-by-case basis.</p>	<p>The Cultural Partnership has been involved in shaping the draft. Consultation is scheduled well in advance of expiry of the existing strategy. Consultation is scheduled for 8 weeks starting mid-November.</p>	<p>Consultation period was 17 October to 24 December – earlier than planned to avoid the Christmas holidays.</p>
<p>Feedback</p>	<p>The principle of feedback recognises that decision 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. The results of consultation must be published.</p>	<p>The project manager has committed to share the final draft of the strategy, the consultation feedback received and how that has shaped the final draft.</p>	<p>The consultation results have been posted on the eConsult website and the action plan will be presented to CEB on March 12th.</p>
<p>Inclusiveness & Accessibility</p>	<p>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.</p>	<p>We will develop mechanisms to enable input to the consultation from communities diverse in age, location and ethnicity.</p>	<p>Invitations were sent via the eConsult portal to the 499 people and organisations that were invited to take part in consultation</p>

Appendix 3 – Recommendation 3 pilot report

	<p>This includes groups that are sometimes more challenging to engage such as young people, older people, minority groups, and people with disabilities.</p>		<p>for the current Culture Strategy 2012 – 15. The invitation was extended to 30 members of the Youth Engagement Officer’s network. In addition the Culture Manager has requested that her staff provide the url to their respective networks.</p>
<p>Was the intended result achieved? Yes. A small number of responses were received it has been possible to create a robust and achievable action plan that supports the priorities of the draft Culture Strategy 2015 - 18. The respondents are from the following organisations Arts Council England, 13th Theatre Co, Cowley Road Works, Folk Arts Oxford, University of Oxford Dept. of Education, Oxford Castle Ltd, Wesley Memorial Methodist Church, Innovista International, The Story Museum, Justice in Motion and Oxford Preservation Trust.</p>			

This page is intentionally left blank

To: Scrutiny Committee

Date: 2 March 2015

Report of: Head of Customer Services

Title of Report: A report on research into the impact of Welfare Reforms in Oxford

Summary and Recommendations

Purpose of report: To provide a summary of the findings of research into the impact of Welfare Reform in Oxford, and the Council's Strategy for mitigating this.

Report Approved by:

Finance:

Legal:

Policy Framework: Efficient, Effective Council

Recommendation(s): To note the agreed action plan

APPENDICES:

Appendix 1 – Welfare Reform Research Action Plan

INTRODUCTION

1. In 2014, Customer Services commissioned a report into the impact of welfare reform in Oxford. Since 2010, many changes have been made to the benefits system, and the cumulative impact was not understood. The research was undertaken in order to inform our policy response, and to help us understand the likely demand for support from the Council in the future. The work was tendered and the contract subsequently awarded to the Centre for Economic and Social Inclusion (CESI).
2. CESI have estimated that households claiming benefit in Oxford will be £1,594 worse off this year, than prior to the benefit reforms. The majority of this impact (nearly 75%) is as a result of changes to Tax Credits, restricting increases in benefits to 1%, and the changes to Local Housing Allowance (which is the Housing support paid to private sector tenants). The research identified two key groups of people adversely impacted by reforms: lone parents and disabled people.

3. A qualitative approach was taken to the research, which included forty representative, in-depth face-to-face interviews and three focus groups with Oxford residents. These were supported by interviews with support organisations in the City. This approach has provided more depth and detail than pure quantitative analysis, as it records attitudes, feelings and behaviours, not just numbers.
4. A workshop was used to consider the initial findings and the Council's response. The workshop was attended by a wide range of Council staff as well as partner organisations and used to inform the recommendations in the final report. These recommendations have been incorporated into the Financial Inclusion Strategy action plan.
5. A common response from people interviewed was to say they were skipping meals and not heating the house to reduce their outgoings. Many of those who had children reported that they were eating less in order to ensure that their children were able to eat regularly.
6. Overall, the welfare reforms have led to a reduction in the quality of life of residents interviewed. The changes have increased stress and anxiety levels and for many, this has had a knock-on effect on their health – particularly for those who had pre-existing conditions.
7. Interviews with support agencies identified an increase in disabled people and those with health conditions seeking support – particularly in relation to applications for Employment & Support Allowance (ESA) – and support for social housing. The agencies also reported that more people seeking support had anxiety, depression and other common mental health problems.
8. A number of factors were identified which affected people's abilities to cope with the reforms. The rising costs of living, the availability of social networks, language barriers, and dependencies on alcohol or drugs were all cited as having a bearing on people's ability to cope. The main way respondents were coping with reforms was by economising, borrowing money from family and friends, and by claiming Discretionary Housing Payments.
9. The research suggested people affected by the welfare reforms had three main support needs: financial support, housing support and employment support. They also required help in navigating the system. These findings have informed the Council's Financial Inclusion Strategy and Action Plan.

Name and contact details of author:

Paul Wilding, Revenues & Benefits Manager
01865 252461; pwilding@oxford.gov.uk

Background papers:

The impacts of Welfare Reform in Oxford – CESI
Financial Inclusion Strategy
Version number: 0.1

Appendix One

Welfare Reform Research Action Plan

THEME	TASK	TIMESCALE	TARGET/OUTCOME	RESP.	DELIVERY PARTNERS
DATA	Develop a Dashboard to help monitor the impact of Welfare Reform	Jun 15	By monitoring different sets of data, we can prioritise resources and target interventions	Revs & Bens Programme Manager	JCP, Housing, Advice Sector
	Building on the triage tool used by the Welfare Reform Team	Ongoing	Continual improvement of the triage process to ensure we can deliver the most effective support to people affected by welfare reforms	Welfare Reform Manager	Internal
DEBT – Long Term	Explore the scope for integrated casework for debt and arrears	Dec 15	A co-ordinated approach to collecting multiple Council debts	Revs & Bens Service Manager	Internal action
HOUSING – Long Term	Explore a common approach across agencies to identify priority groups, underpinned by data sharing & Develop the “Oxford offer”	Feb 15 to Mar 16	Ensure a more consistent approach is taken in dealing with people affected by welfare reform across different organisations.	Welfare Reform Manager	Various
SKILLS – Short Term	Explore the scope to work with adult education providers City College to provide short, focused training as part of the offer to residents	June 14 to June 15	Ensure people affected by welfare reforms have the necessary skills to allow them to find work locally	Welfare Reform manager	City of Oxford College, EMBS, WEA
SKILLS – Long Term	Work through communities and local services to engage those further from support	Ongoing	Explore whether community champions and peer support can be used effectively to support people affected by Welfare Reforms	Welfare Reform manager	CAN Team Support services in regen areas
	Take the opportunity of the Local Support Services Framework	Jan 15 to Mar 16	Use the Delivery Partnership Arrangement to test how different support needs can be delivered by working together with local	Revs & Bens Programme Manager	Various

			providers		
	Build on 'Benefits in Practice' to reach those with health conditions and disabled people	Jan 15 to Jun 15	Improve access to the Welfare Reform team for harder to reach customers	Welfare Reform Manager	Health Improvement Board

Recommendations which are already being delivered

A number of recommendations that CESI made are already being delivered as part of our Business as Usual processes or are already actions within the Financial Inclusion Strategy. These are as follows:

Try to build in follow-up activity as well as signposting and referral – Anyone affected by a welfare reform who is being supported by the Welfare Reform team with a DHP will have any referrals for support followed up

Build on existing employment and support and focus this on residents impacted by welfare reforms – This is already being undertaken by the Welfare Reform Team

Ensure that links are made with wider strategy and policy work within the Council – This is happening through co-ordination with Corporate Policy which has resulted in papers going to the Health Improvement Board and Oxford Strategic Partnership. Work has also been undertaken with the LEP to inform its Strategy and to develop the Commissioning work.

94

Recommendations which won't be taken forward

Information sheet with key contacts for support services – To be useful, this sheet would need to be a booklet to contain all the useful contacts that support services would require, and it would constantly need to be updated. The OOAST Partnership that was formed last year has developed a website aimed to support signposting to support services, and this is a more useful tool than an information sheet

For priority groups, explore the scope for integrated case management through a 'key worker' model – The recommendation proposes using the caseworker model to co-ordinate delivery of housing, health, employment and advice services. Whilst desirable this is not something which can be lead by the Council's FIS

Jobcentre Plus should look to provide case-managed adviser support to residents who claim JSA and have significant welfare reform impacts – The best way for this to be taken forward is for the City Council to work in partnership with JCP to support and case manage customers utilising each organisation's respective strengths

Develop the cost-benefit case for additional investment in managing reforms – This proposal suggests lobbying central government for greater local control of funding to for case managed support of residents. This is not the function of the FIS

In the longer term, ensure that the need for affordable housing for low-income workers is a clear part of the planning cycle – This is not something the FIS can take forward, but the recommendation is a priority for the Council

The impacts of welfare reform in Oxford

A report to Oxford City Council from the Centre for Economic and Social Inclusion

Malen Davies

Tony Wilson

April 2014

This report has been quality assured by:

Name: Tony Wilson

Position: Director of Policy

Date: 7th April 2014

Malen Davies

Researcher

Inclusion

Third Floor

89 Albert Embankment

London

SE1 7TP

Tel: 0207 8408336

Email: malen.davies@cesi.org.uk

Contents

Executive summary	4
1 Introduction	17
Aims and objectives.....	17
Methodology	17
Report outline	20
2 Welfare reform overview	22
The financial impacts of welfare reforms in Oxford	22
The impacts for different groups	27
The Oxford context – recovering labour market and hot housing market	29
A very hot housing market.....	31
The local impacts of welfare reform.....	33
The impacts of reform over time	35
3 The impacts of reform on residents	36
Summary	36
Mapping the impacts of welfare reforms	37
Understanding the wider impacts of welfare reforms	44
4 Responding to welfare reform	49
Summary	49
External factors affecting the impact of reforms	50
How residents are responding to welfare reforms.....	51
Where have residents gone for support?.....	59
Experiences and perceptions of Council support	61
What support do residents say that they need?.....	64
Reaching the limits	67
5 Facing the future	69
Monitoring	70
Identification.....	72
Engagement	74
Delivery	76

Executive summary

The Centre for Economic and Social Inclusion (*Inclusion*) was commissioned by Oxford City Council to assess if there are impacts in Oxford of reforms to the welfare system that have been introduced since 2010 that the City Council has no visibility of, or that will face the City Council in the future.

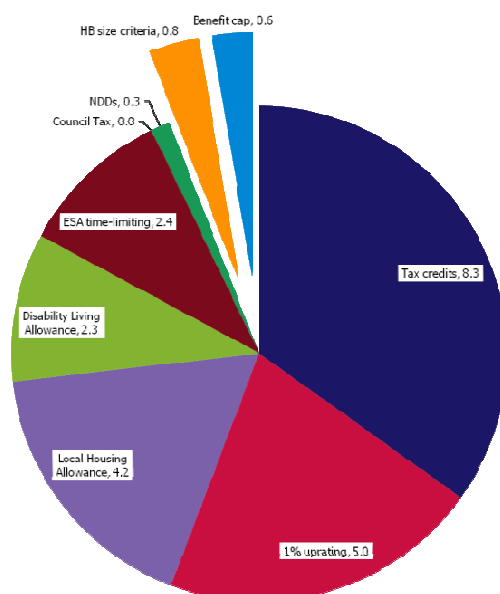
The financial impacts of welfare reforms in Oxford

By 2015, we estimate that the cumulative financial impact of welfare reforms in Oxford will mean that households claiming benefit will be on average **£1,594 per year (£31 per week) worse off** than would have been the case without reform.

We estimate that this will be felt by **14,950 households in Oxford**, around one third of all households of working age. 60% of these (8,800 households) will be households where someone is in work.

The impacts of specific reforms are set out in the Figure below. We find that in Oxford – in common with almost all other areas – the reforms with the largest impacts are those that affect the most claimants.

Figure 1 – Breakdown of money removed from benefits in 2015/16, Oxford (£ million)

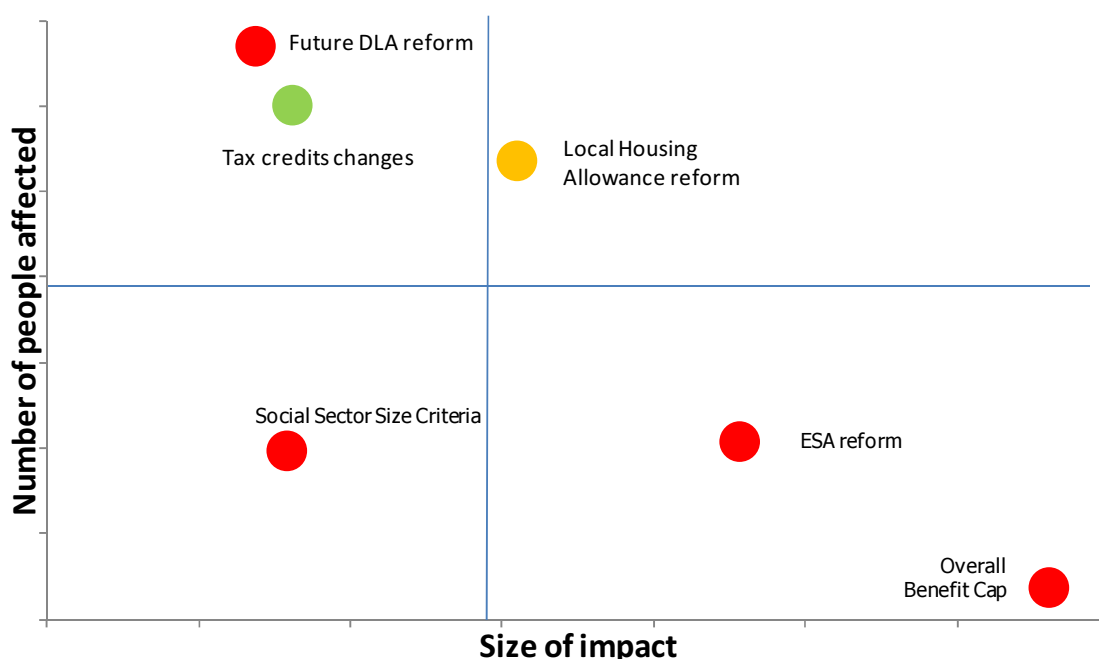


Source: HM Treasury and Inclusion calculations

The Social Sector Size Criteria (commonly known as the Bedroom Tax) and the cap on the total amount of benefits that a household can receive (referred to as the 'Overall Benefit Cap' in this report) account for about one pound in every twenty that is being removed from local households as a result of welfare reforms.

Figure 2 below sets out the estimated numbers impacted by individual reforms and the size of those impacts on those households. In addition to this, we have 'colour coded' reforms based on claimants' potential resilience to deal with the impacts.

Figure 2.2 Overview of financial impact of welfare reform



Source: HMT and Inclusion calculations

The impacts for different groups

Limitations in data mean that it is not possible to systematically assess the impacts of reforms cumulatively for different protected groups. However our analysis identifies two particular groups of concern: disabled people and lone parents.

One fifth of the total financial impact of welfare reforms will be accounted for by the replacement of the Disability Living Allowance (DLA) with a new Personal Independence Payment (PIP) and by time-limiting of the Contributory element of Employment and Support Allowance (ESA), while disabled people are more likely to be affected by the Social Sector Size Criteria (commonly known as the Bedroom Tax) and more likely to be in the Local Housing Allowance (LHA) system (where there are

rising gaps between rents and the amount paid in Housing Benefit). Those affected by multiple reforms – and specifically **DLA** or **ESA** claimants affected by Housing Benefit changes – are likely to be particularly disadvantaged.

Lone parents are particularly impacted through tax credits reforms. There are 2,400 fewer working households receiving tax credits than four years ago and many of these will be low income lone parents. Around one third of those affected by LHA reforms and one in five affected by the Social Sector Size Criteria are lone parents. Families, and particularly larger lone parent families, are also more likely to be affected by the Overall Benefit Cap.

Oxford: recovering labour market, hot housing market

Oxford's labour market strength means that a relatively smaller proportion of residents claim out-of-work benefits than in many other cities, and a very small proportion of these are unemployed. However, more than half of Oxford claimants are claiming benefits due to ill health or disability and nearly three quarters claim either these benefits or lone parent benefits. Therefore Oxford claimants are more likely to be disabled, have health conditions or caring responsibilities – and so more likely to be further from work.

Alongside this, Oxford continues to be among the most expensive places to rent (or buy) property in the country – with an average rent of at least £1,150 per month, putting it in the top 5% of most expensive areas outside London. This means that those impacted by benefits reforms face significant cuts as no account is taken of the particular problems of the housing market locally. This also means that many more working households are drawn into the Housing Benefit system and then into welfare reform. There are 3,600 households in the Private Rented Sector claiming Housing Benefit, with around 40% of these being working households.

The shortage of affordable housing is a contributing factor to entrenching disadvantage in the social sector. Housing Benefit claimants are overwhelmingly in the social rented sector, and within this they are overwhelmingly out of work.

Local impacts of reform

The south of the City (Northfield Brook, Blackbird Leys, Littlemore, Rose Hill and Iffley) and Barton and Sandhills in the North East are facing the most significant impacts of reform, with the largest proportions of the population on benefit. In the south we find predominantly social rented households, with 60% of residents

reporting health conditions or disability¹, and high numbers of lone parents. In Barton and Sandhills we find greater risks of impacts from private rented reforms, but again large concentrations of disabled people and lone parents.

In addition St Mary's, St Clement's and Cowley Marsh are likely to be areas with large impacts from LHA reforms – with between a third and half of households renting privately and above average proportions claiming benefits.

Importantly, the impacts of welfare reforms are set to continue to grow – particularly as the impacts of existing measures ratchet up over time, as living costs (including costs of renting) continue to rise faster than benefits. In addition new reforms like the reassessment of DLA claimants will begin to take effect – so far the affects of these particular changes are only just beginning to be felt by households in Oxford.

The impacts of reform on residents

Forty in-depth, face-to-face interviews and three focus groups were conducted with Oxford residents. This research identified three key groups where impacts have been felt distinctly differently and where there appeared to be different support needs.

Households where one or more members were disabled

Over half of those interviewed were either claiming or had tried to claim Employment and Support Allowance. This group had some significant barriers to work and it was common for them to have been on long-term Incapacity Benefit (a benefit for those with a work-limiting health condition or disability) and its replacement benefit, ESA. They were generally older and more likely to be single with no children living at home.

Within this group, being found 'Fit for Work' as a result of a Work Capability Assessment was a key cause of distress and financial hardship.

Impacts were further exacerbated for disabled households affected by the Social Sector Size Criteria. Often these respondents had spent long periods out of work, and this was the first change to their income in a number of years.

Many people were very concerned about leaving their family home or the local area within which they had built up a social network and had family.

¹ Source: Census 2011

Lone parent families

As a whole, households with children were more likely to report that they were struggling with rising costs of living – and in particular having higher costs for food, heating and housing. These impacts were felt most strongly among lone parent households. These were generally younger households, some reported that they had a disability, and in some cases one or more of their children had a disability or ill health.

Lone parents were a more diverse group in terms of reform impacts. Common reforms included: the Social Sector Size Criteria changes, the Overall Benefit Cap, the changes to Local Housing Allowance and having benefits stopped or reduced for failing to meet conditions (known as 'benefit sanctions'). Lone parent households were also very likely to be impacted by multiple benefits reforms.

Single earner households

This was a smaller and more diverse group, with a range of different ages and housing tenures. None reported having a health condition or disability. These households were on low incomes, either due to working part-time hours or work that paid National Minimum Wage. The fact that benefits and wages had not increased in line with costs of living was a key contributor to financial hardship.

These households were generally more resilient, but reforms increased the pressure to juggle and prioritise within family finances. Many of them had been coping with growing gaps between rents and Housing Benefit since 2011 and so had become accustomed to managing this. There was a strong sense of frustration and anger from these households. Families felt undeserving of reductions to their benefits at a time of rising living costs.

The impact of housing tenure and tenancy type

Across all of these, living in the Private Rented Sector (PRS) itself was a key indicator of larger impacts of welfare reform. Respondents were often using a significant proportion of other income, including benefits income, to cover their rent. Those interviewed in the Private Rented Sector were a very diverse group – including lone parent families, working families and couples with older children.

Sanctioning

Only six of those interviewed were claiming Jobseeker's Allowance, however almost all of them had been sanctioned at some point. The financial impact of sanctioning

for all respondents was significant. The length of time they had been sanctioned for obviously also had influence on the financial impact and their income.

Impacts on health, wellbeing and living standards

Residents were asked how the reforms had made them feel. The most common feeling was hopelessness – that the situation was out of their control. This was often combined with stress, worry and fear.

It was common for respondents across all key groups to say they were skipping meals and not heating the house to reduce their outgoings. Many of those who had children reported that they were eating less in order to ensure that their children were able to eat regularly.

Overall, welfare reform has led to a reduction in the quality of life of residents interviewed. The changes have led to a great amount of stress and anxiety about their current financial situation. For many, this has had a knock-on effect on their health – particularly for those who are already experiencing health conditions. In general, our research has found that residents feel a sense of hopelessness and lack of control over the financial impact of welfare reform.

Increases in demand for support

In-depth interviews were conducted with nine local stakeholders to explore the impacts of welfare reform on local services, while a further 18 completed an online survey. Respondents stated that demand for services has increased markedly in the last three years. As a result, they reported a number of changes in the way services are delivered. The most common approach has been for advice agencies to prioritise those in most need of support and signpost others who they feel will be able to deal with less intense support.

Agencies reported that in particular they had seen more people seeking support who are disabled or who have health conditions – particularly those needing support with applications for ESA – and more people seeking support from the social rented sector. It was also reported that more people seeking support had anxiety, depression and other common mental health problems.

Responding to welfare reform

We found a clear set of drivers that had a bearing on the ability to cope with reform:

- **Rising costs of living.** Almost all reported that this was driving them to reduce expenditure. Rising costs of food and utility bills were most commonly cited.

- **Social networks.** Participants who had weak networks of family or friends felt very isolated, were less likely to understand impacts, more likely to be struggling, and more likely to report negative impacts on health and wellbeing. Conversely, participants who had strong networks –in particular family and peers – often called upon them to provide financial, emotional and advisory support.
- **Language and literacy.** Where participants had poor levels of literacy, communication about changes to benefits were often less well understood. As a consequence these participants had often not sought support because they did not understand what reforms they had been affected by or what support was available. For those with English as a second language, this was often compounded by nervousness around explaining their situation and needs verbally.
- **Drugs and alcohol** and other dependencies. A number of participants reported that these had an impact on how they dealt with the changes to their benefits. For some, this meant they did not feel they could also cope with reforms that they were being affected by.

How residents are responding

Respondents have coped with welfare reforms in three main ways: economising; borrowing money from family and friends and claiming Discretionary Housing Payments. The most common approach was to economise. Where this was not possible, residents often borrowed money from trusted family and friends. This was often small amounts of money that they knew they'd be able to pay back.

Discretionary Housing Payments were common among affected by the Social Sector Size Criteria and the Overall Benefit Cap. At the time of the fieldwork (January to March 2014) none of those who had received the payment had done much to change their circumstances..

Where residents have gone for support

Residents had gone to a range of organisations to access support. The most common places visited were local advice centres and the Citizens Advice Bureau.

Many residents had accessed financial support from the Council. However those who had not accessed this support, and in some cases those that had, were not averse to accessing financial support from the Council in future. The general consensus from respondents was that if they were made more aware of what financial assistance was available they'd be more likely to seek support.

Support needs

The research with residents suggested four practical support needs, around:

- Financial support – to cope with the loss of income from benefit changes, and to budget and manage finances;
- Housing support – both for those accessing DHPs (who at the time of the research were often doing little to move home) and others in the Private Rented Sector (who were often very keen to find cheaper, more secure accommodation but were not accessing support to do so);
- Employment support – even those who were on benefits due to ill health or caring responsibilities feel they may be able to work if they had specific support, although many residents were concerned about moving into insecure work and leaving the perceived security of the benefits system;
- Navigation – some participants were very confused about benefit changes and often felt it would be useful if they could access support from someone who could explain these clearly and where they could go for support.

In addition for those residents who appeared to have increased levels of anxiety and whose mental wellbeing had deteriorated, there is likely a case for increased support from mental health services.

Reaching the limits

Many households were concerned about their ability to deal with impacts in the longer term, and about future cuts tipping them over the edge. This was particularly the case for households where no one was in work, as they have no means of additional income to support them.

Our research identifies extensive impacts from welfare reforms and strong indications that those impacts will grow over the coming years.

Facing the future

We consider that it is highly likely that without preventative measures to support residents, reform impacts will ratchet up in the future – with growing numbers needing support to manage debt and financial crises, combined with claimants impacted by new reforms. We consider that there are two key pressures:

- **Growing gaps** – between household finances and living costs, particularly in the private rented sector but also as arrears and debts increase for those in the social sector. The needs here are likely to be around financial management and building resilience.
- **New reforms** – particularly with Universal Credit and rollout of the Personal Independence Payment. These are complex administrative changes and likely to be stressful and disorientating. Support needs here will be around navigation and understanding.

At the same time, we identify that many residents are a long way from being able to take steps to actively mitigate the impacts of reform – through finding work, moving home or improving financial management.

We consider that there are four key areas where the Council and partners should focus efforts in developing their strategy for welfare reform.

It should not be the responsibility of the Council alone to develop and implement these proposals, if they are accepted. Most or all of them would require buy-in from a range of organisations, as well as their active involvement. We would therefore recommend that for those proposals that are taken forward the Council establishes small 'task and finish' group involving relevant lead officials and partners (housing associations, Jobcentre Plus, advice agencies, etc) to lead their development.

Monitoring

1. Explore the scope to develop a monitoring 'dashboard'

This dashboard should capture both:

- The direct impacts of reform – e.g. shortfalls between rents and HB from the Single Housing Benefit Extract (SHBE), sanctions and disallowances from DWP data, numbers affected by the Overall Benefit Cap and Social Sector Size Criteria from DWP data; and
- The consequences – including rent arrears data from social and private landlords, evictions data, demand for services from advice agency and partner data, and so on.

This should be aggregated data – not personal data – which ideally could be collated into a small number of headline indicators and then broken down into geographical and demographic groups in order to monitor reform impacts.

Identification

2. Build on existing triage tools to assess residents' needs across all welfare reforms – the INTRO model

The Council has done extensive work to develop a triage tool for prioritising support as part of its welfare reform pilots. This research, and discussions at the workshop on 10 April, point to five key parameters for a new assessment tool, which we summarise as the INTRO model:

- **Impact** – understanding what reforms residents are impacted by and the financial impacts on them and their household
- **Needs** – what support residents may need to manage or mitigate impacts, including support with housing, debt, managing health, improving skills, securing employment
- **Type of family** – lone parents and disabled people are likely to be priorities for support, other potential priorities could include families with children in local schools, those with adapted homes, low income workers
- **Resilience** – specifically including their access to support networks
- **Options** – for some families, even with intensive support, their options may be quite limited – so assessment needs to be able to identify those options and then tailor support around them

An assessment or triage approach would need to be sophisticated enough to prioritise households against these different parameters and then use this as the basis for appropriate signposting or referral to more specialist support.

3. Explore whether a common approach can be developed across agencies to identify priority groups, underpinned by data sharing

This could work as a 'front end' and lighter-touch assessment of need as part of the INTRO model above when residents come into contact with services and have clear impacts as a result of welfare reforms. Alternatively (or alongside this), there may be scope to develop a 'No Wrong Door' model, as has been applied in some other local areas.

Engagement

4. Develop an information sheet with key contacts for support services

This could then be used by a wider range of services and agencies, as well as by local authority staff and on the doorstep by Councillors, as a relatively light-touch way of signposting residents to additional support.

5. Work through communities and local services to engage those further from support

There may be scope to learn from examples where community champions and peer mentors have been used to disseminate information and engage vulnerable groups, and to link up with the Council lead who is looking at how to engage communities that do not access Council services and with regeneration activity.

6. Build on 'Benefits in Practice' to reach those with health conditions and disabled people

'Benefits in Practice' is a model being deployed across the County to co-locate benefits advice within GP surgeries. Disabled people and those with health conditions are likely to be a key group for engagement, particularly with the prospect of the rollout of PIP, and Benefits in Practice may provide a straightforward model to build on.

Delivery

7. For priority groups, explore the scope for integrated case management through a 'key worker' model

This could include greater joint working and planning with DWP and local colleges, co-location of advisers, joining up between health services and employment services, and working in partnership with housing associations. This could be done most easily for residents that are already engaged with services through a 'key worker' approach that then looks to join up and pull in wider support as needed. This could build on the good practices within the City's welfare reform pilot.

8. Try to build in follow-up activity as well as signposting and referral

Residents are often signposted to other services, but not generally followed up after referral. We would advise that for those identified as priority groups, the Council builds in light touch follow-up with agencies to identify whether they have received support and/ or resolved their issues. If not, they should be prioritised for case management.

9. Jobcentre Plus should look to provide case-managed adviser support to residents who claim JSA and have significant welfare reform impacts

It makes sense for Jobcentre Plus to lead on case managing those impacted by reforms who are also within the JSA regime. This would require some re-prioritisation of resource and close co-operation and working with the City Council.

10. Build on existing employment and support and focus this on residents impacted by welfare reforms

There is a range of activity going on within the City. Many of those targeted for this support will also be priorities for support with welfare reform impacts. Therefore there is potentially scope to more closely target this support.

11. Explore the scope to work with City College to provide short, focused training as part of the offer to residents

This could include short, focused training to priority residents on employability, confidence and motivation, jobsearch techniques, budgeting and financial management and other areas that may support employment and generally greater resilience.

12. Ensure that links are made with wider strategy and policy work within the Council

The workshop identified a plethora of strategies and policy areas where there were likely to be links across to supporting residents affected by welfare reforms. It will be important to consider within each of these both the impacts of welfare reform, and the scope to support affected residents through those strategies.

13. Explore the scope for integrated casework for debt and arrears

One potential quick win, which would likely save the Council in the longer term, would be to have a more integrated approach to case managing those who are flagged as having multiple debts across Council services.

14. Develop the cost-benefit case for additional investment in managing reforms

There is likely to be a clear fiscal case for engaging more systematically, through a 'key worker' approach, with those facing larger reform impacts. There are opportunities to engage with central government on this, and given funding constraints and the potential impacts down the line as gaps grow between benefits and living costs, there would be a strong argument to develop a cost-benefit case for greater local control over funding to support case managed support for residents. This has also been flagged as a priority within the City's Financial Inclusion Strategy.

15. Take the opportunity of the Local Support Services Framework

Oxford is ahead of many other authorities in considering and preparing for the impacts of Universal Credit. The Council should continue to explore how it can make the most of the Local Support Services Framework, as an opportunity to join up support services and support residents most likely to be impacted by reforms.

16. In the longer term, ensure that the need for affordable housing for low-income workers is a clear part of the planning cycle

Many of the most pressing issues identified in this research are a housing problem – housing is unaffordable for those on low incomes including low earners, and this affordability problem will spread. Many of the steps above will help residents to manage these impacts in the short to medium term. However in the longer term, there needs to be a clear focus on how housing strategy and the planning cycle can increase the supply of affordable units for low-income working families.

17. Develop the 'Oxford offer'

Finally, it is important to note that we found very strong buy-in to support residents affected by reforms across Council services, the voluntary sector and other agencies. We also found many examples of good practices and a strong commitment to testing and improving services. In the longer term, there is scope to pull all of these elements together – across monitoring, identification, engagement and delivery – into a compelling 'Oxford offer' for residents that claim social security benefits and that need support to move on and move up.

1 Introduction

The Centre for Economic and Social Inclusion (*Inclusion*) was commissioned by Oxford City Council to assess the impacts in Oxford of reforms to the welfare system that have been introduced since 2010.

Aims and objectives

The broad aim of this research was to explore how residents have responded to changes in the welfare system, in order to provide the Council with recommendations on the design and delivery of future support and services.

Research questions

Oxford City Council set out six research questions:

- 1 What is the cumulative financial impact on households of welfare reforms?
- 2 How have residents responded to these impacts, in order to afford their rent, household bills and food?
- 3 Where people have sought financial assistance, who have they gone to?
- 4 If they haven't approached the Council for support, are they likely to in the future, and if so when is this likely to happen?
- 5 What are the key actions that Oxford City Council should take to support people affected by welfare reforms?
- 6 Without any intervention by the City Council, how will these impacts change over the coming years?

Methodology

Inclusion used a mix of qualitative and quantitative methods to address the research questions above.

Data analysis

In order to understand the quantitative impacts of welfare reforms on Oxford residents, we have analysed a range of data, including the Census, Annual

Population Survey, administrative benefits data, and Housing Benefit data provided by the City Council. Our analysis focused on:

- Environmental changes – in particular how the housing and labour markets have affected both the impacts of reform and residents' abilities to deal with them;
- Benefit receipt –including changes to, and the composition of, claims for Housing Benefit, Jobseeker's Allowance, Employment and Support Allowance and Tax Credits; and
- Impact indicators –measures of direct impact (in particular estimates of those affected by the Overall Benefit Cap and Social Sector Size Criteria) and indirect impacts such as arrears and Discretionary Housing Payments.

Advice agency in-depth interviews and online survey

We interviewed nine local stakeholders within agencies delivering advice and support to residents affected by welfare reform. A further eighteen local advice agency organisations took part in an online survey.

Both the in-depth qualitative telephone interviews and online survey covered:

- Organisations' responses to welfare reform
- Their views on the impacts of reforms on service users
- The effectiveness of local responses
- Views on the cumulative impacts of welfare reform
- Views on the Council response and the support available to deal with reforms

Qualitative in-depth interviews

We also conducted 40 face-to-face qualitative interviews and three focus groups with Oxford residents who had been affected by welfare reform, making this one of the largest single-area studies of welfare reform impacts yet undertaken. Both the face-to-face interviews and focus groups explored the following:

- The characteristics of the household, including: geographical area, ages, housing tenure, types of benefits received and labour market status
- Direct impacts of welfare reform – including what reforms they are affected by and their feelings towards reform

- How they have responded to welfare reform
- Experiences of support and the impact of receiving support
- Attitudes toward Council support and whether they would need Council support (and specifically financial support) in the future

In order to capture experiences from a range of respondents, we took a number of different approaches to recruitment. The first, and main method, was by using a sample of Housing Benefit data records and recruiting directly from this. This enabled us to reach residents with a range of characteristics, many of whom were not in contact with advice agencies. We also used an opt-in approach, which involved advertising the research in local advice centres and recruiting via these agencies (all focus groups were recruited using this method).

Outline of who was interviewed

All of the qualitative fieldwork was conducted between January and March 2014. The intention was to capture a broad range of residents who had been affected by different welfare reforms. The tables below provide demographic breakdowns of those who took part in the qualitative interviews and focus groups (forty-nine residents in total).

Research respondent demographics		Number of research respondents
Geographical area	Littlemore	16
	Blackbird Leys	15
	Barton	6
	Rose Hill	12
Age	16-25	3
	26-35	14
	36-45	8
	46-55	9
	56-65	11
	65+	4
Household make-up	Single household with no children	19
	Couple household with no children	8
	Single household with children	15
	Couple household with children	7
Tenancy type	Private rented sector	17
	Social sector	32
Benefit type	Jobseeker's Allowance	6
	Employment and Support Allowance	22

	Income Support/Incapacity Benefit	8
	Not on out-of-work benefits	13
Working households	Working households	12
	Non-working households	37

The table below outlines how many people were interviewed against the specific reforms that the research has focused on. Many of the respondents were impacted by multiple reforms.

Reform impact	Interview and focus group respondents
Social Sector Size Criteria	10
Local Housing Allowance reforms	17
Overall Benefit Cap	4
Temporary accommodation	3
Employment and Support Allowance time-limiting	3
Found 'Fit for Work' at Work Capability Assessment	4
Disability Living Allowance	13
Tax credits reduced	6
Total	60

Options appraisal workshop

Following the fieldwork, we held an options appraisal workshop on 10 April with 20-25 staff representing Oxford City Council (policy and operational staff across housing, welfare reform, regeneration and customer services), the County Council, local advice agencies, Jobcentre Plus and Catalyst Housing. This was used to test findings and to develop the analysis and options presented in Chapter Five.

Report outline

The rest of this report sets out our key findings and recommendations.

In **Chapter Two** we provide an overview of welfare reform in Oxford. This includes an assessment of the overall impacts, environmental factors, and trends in benefit receipt within the City.

Chapter Three then explores the impacts of reform on residents. This focuses on the key drivers that are associated with larger impacts on residents, and an assessment of the key groups affected by reforms.

In **Chapter Four** we examine how residents have responded to the impacts of welfare reform. This draws on both the research with claimants and the information from advice agencies.

Finally, **Chapter Five** summarises the key findings and sets out recommendations for the design and delivery of future support.

2 Welfare reform overview

The financial impacts of welfare reforms in Oxford

The current Government's welfare reforms represent the most fundamental changes to the benefits system in a generation. While the reforms are intended to reduce dependency on social security and to encourage employment, they also play a key part in the Government's deficit reduction strategy – generating savings of more than £15 billion per year across Britain by the end of this Parliament.²

By that point (2015), we estimate that the cumulative financial impact of welfare reforms in Oxford will mean that households claiming benefit will be on average **£1,594 per year (£31 per week) worse off** than would have been the case without reform.

We estimate that this will be felt by **14,950 households in Oxford**, around one third of all households of working age (where the head of the household is aged 16-64). We also estimate that around 60% of these (8,800 households) will be households where someone is in work.

The impacts of specific reforms

Looking at the individual impact of welfare reforms, we find that in Oxford – in common with almost all other areas – the reforms with the largest impacts are those that affect the most claimants. These are set out in Figure 2.1 below. Almost all of these have already started to take effect. Taking these in turn:

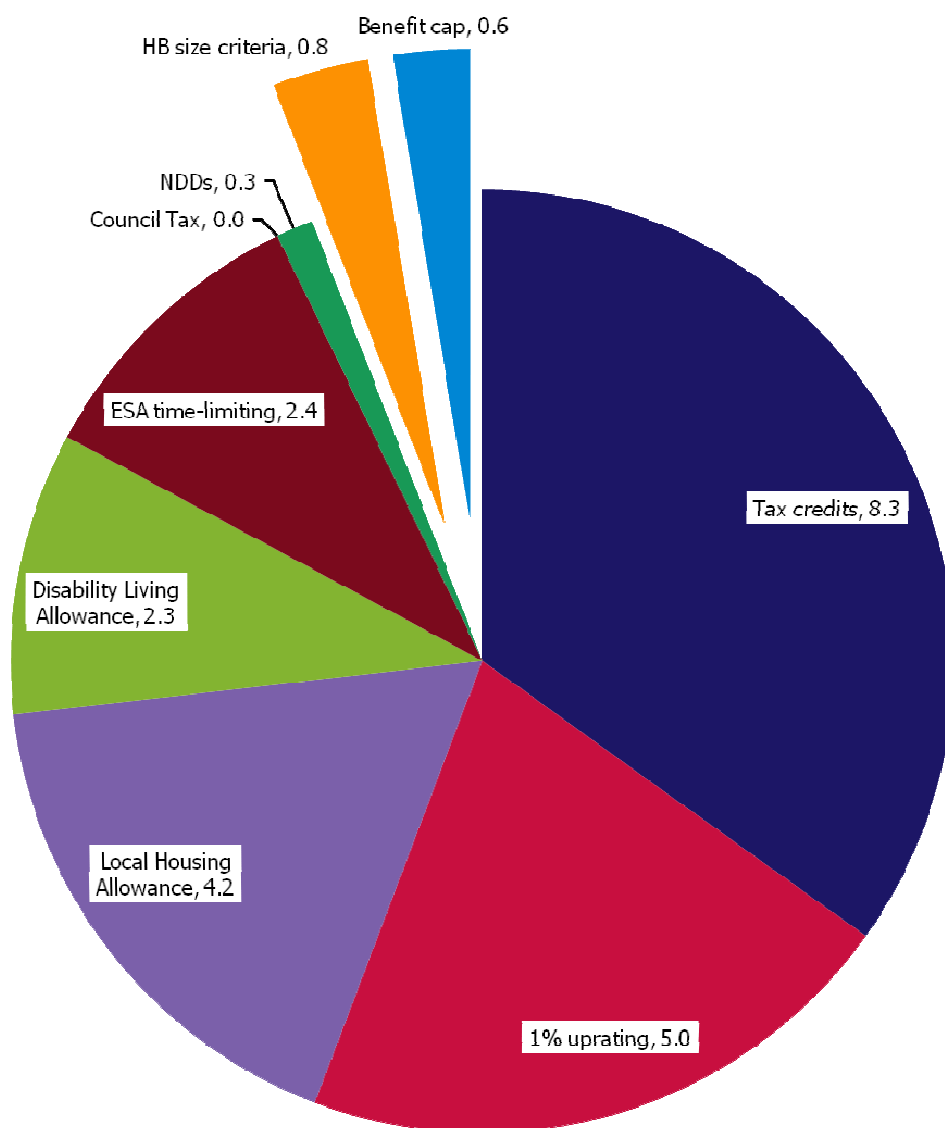
- **Changes to tax credits** have the single largest cash impact in Oxford, with £8.3 million being taken away by 2015/16. These reforms began in 2011 and predominantly affect low income working households – including reductions in the basic, 30-hour and childcare elements; increases in the child element; changes to working hours requirements, thresholds, disregards and withdrawal rates.
- **The uprating of benefits and tax credits** by 1% instead of the Consumer Prices Index, taking out £5.0 million from Oxford households by 2015/16. This lower uprating affects all the main benefits and began to take effect in April 2013. By increasing benefits by less than inflation it will further increase the gap between household income and living costs.

² Source: HM Treasury and *Inclusion* calculations

- **Changes to Housing Benefit (HB) for renters in the private sector** which began in 2011: restricting the maximum Local Housing Allowance (LHA) payment to the thirtieth percentile of average local rents, introducing Housing Benefit caps, restricting HB to the “Shared Room Rate” for most claimants aged under 35, and changing the formula for annual increases in benefit. This will lead to reductions of £4.2 million locally by 2015/16, with far greater impacts in Oxford than in almost any other non-London authority due to very high rent levels.
- **The restriction of contributory Employment and Support Allowance (ESA) to one year** for claimants in the “Work Related Activity Group”, introduced in April 2013 and removing £2.4 million from claimants in Oxford. This mostly affects households where someone is in work or where they have other sources of income.
- **The replacement of Disability Living Allowance (DLA) with a new benefit** called the Personal Independence Payment (PIP), saving £2.3 million. PIP is now in place for all new claimants, with existing claimants of DLA due to be reassessed from late 2015.
- **The introduction of “size criteria”** for most Housing Benefit recipients in social housing, reducing awards by 14% where tenants are deemed to have one spare bedroom and 25% where they have two spare bedrooms – introduced in April 2013 and taking £800,000 from tenants in Oxford. This is commonly known as the ‘Bedroom Tax’ or the ‘Spare Room Subsidy’ – it is referred to as the Social Sector Size Criteria in this report.
- **The introduction of a cap on total benefit receipt** for most households where no adult is in work, of £500 a week for families or £350 a week for single people – also introduced in April 2013, removing £600,000 from these households.

In addition, there have been smaller changes to how Housing Benefit is reduced to take account of ‘non-dependants’ living in that property. The government’s localisation of Council Tax Support (and abolition of Council Tax Benefit) was also designed to provide government with a cost saving by reducing the benefits available. However, in Oxford the City Council has made the decision to continue to fund council tax benefit in order to support households in need. Therefore the cost of providing this benefit has effectively transferred from central to local government taxpayers.

Figure 2.1 – Breakdown of money taken out of benefits in 2015/16, Oxford (£ million)



Source: HM Treasury and Inclusion calculations

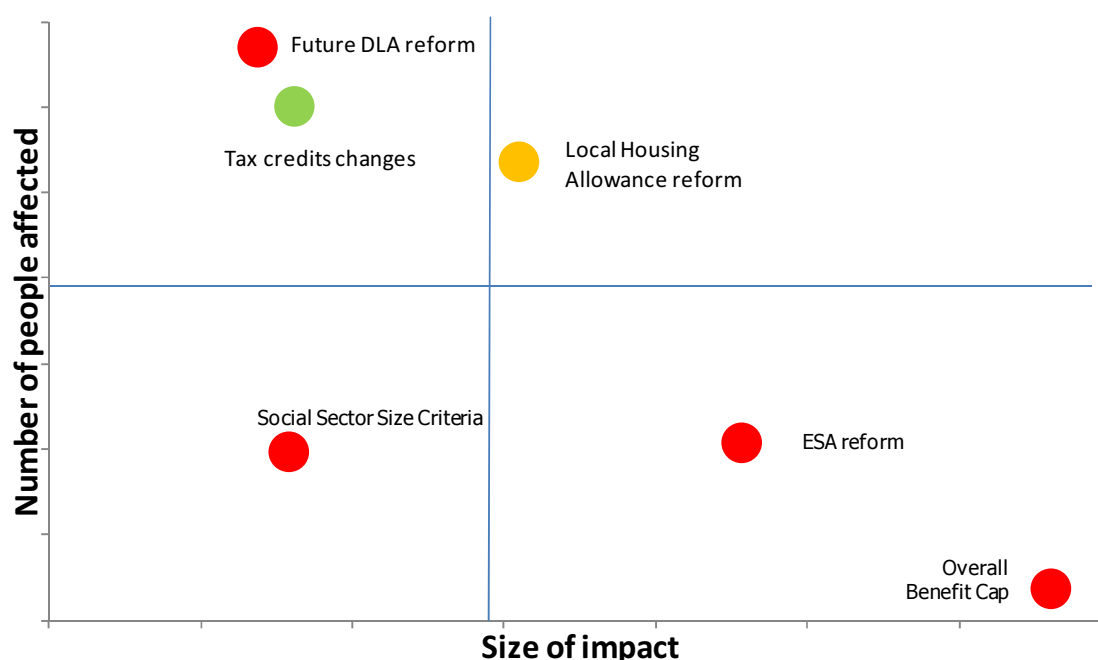
The impact of the Social Sector Size Criteria and of the Overall Benefit Cap are highlighted specifically, as these have often received the most significant local attention. However, combined they account for about one pound in every twenty that is being made as a result of welfare reforms.

Size of impacts and numbers impacted

Figure 2.2 below sets out, based on our modeling, the estimated numbers impacted by individual reforms and the size of those impacts on those households. This gets below the headline financial losses described above to consider the likelihood and the impact of households being affected by welfare reforms.

In addition to this, we have 'colour coded' reforms based on claimants' potential resilience to deal with the impacts (which in part draws on the qualitative research later in the report).

Figure 2.2 Overview of financial impact of welfare reform



Source: HMT and Inclusion calculations

This analysis groups reforms into four:

- **High probability and high impact:** the LHA reforms, which we estimate will affect around 2,700 households and on their own will lead to cuts of around £1,500 per household in 2015/16. These impacts will likely continue to grow.
- **Low probability and (very) high impact:** the time-limiting of ESA, which we estimate will affect around 1,000 households and lead to losses of nearly £3,000 in

2015/16; and the introduction of the Overall Benefit Cap, where 144 households have been capped³ and likely face losses in excess of £3,000

- **High probability, lower impact:** tax credit changes, where the number of working households receiving tax credits has fallen by 2,400 since 2010 (one third of the total⁴) with a likely average impact of around £800 per year; and the introduction of PIP which in time will affect most or all of the 5,200 residents claiming DLA – with potentially large impacts for those who are unsuccessful in claiming PIP.
- **Low probability, lower impact:** the Social Sector Size Criteria reform, affecting around 730 residents⁵ with average losses of around £750 per year. However, as our fieldwork has found, many of these are vulnerable residents with limited scope to manage these losses.

Wider welfare reforms

In addition to these main reforms to benefit rules and eligibility, we have also considered the impacts of wider reforms on residents, specifically:

- The reassessment of claimants of incapacity benefits under the new ESA regime. Of the 2,100 completed reassessments in Oxford, the large majority have been found to be eligible for ESA. However 350 claimants (one in six) were found 'Fit for Work' and so not entitled to ESA.⁶
- The impact of sanctions, where recent reforms have led to significant increases in the numbers of claimants losing benefit income, and increases in the duration of penalties.
- The future introduction of Universal Credit, which will replace the main means-tested benefits for those on low incomes in and out of work (Housing Benefit, Jobseeker's Allowance, Income Support, Employment and Support Allowance, Tax Credits) with a single benefit paid to the head of the household. Universal Credit will lead to significant changes in benefit entitlement for some households (particularly those with low earnings or with disabled people in them) but will also affect how benefits are claimed and paid. Oxford has been at the leading edge of testing this, through its Direct Payment Demonstration Project – which has been

³ Source: DWP Benefit Cap Statistics, January 2014

⁴ Source: HMRC statistics

⁵ Source: Oxford City Council, November 2013

⁶ Source: DWP Work Capability Assessment statistics, March 2014

testing the payment of Housing Benefit in the social rented sector directly to tenants, rather than paying landlords as is currently the case.

The impacts for different groups

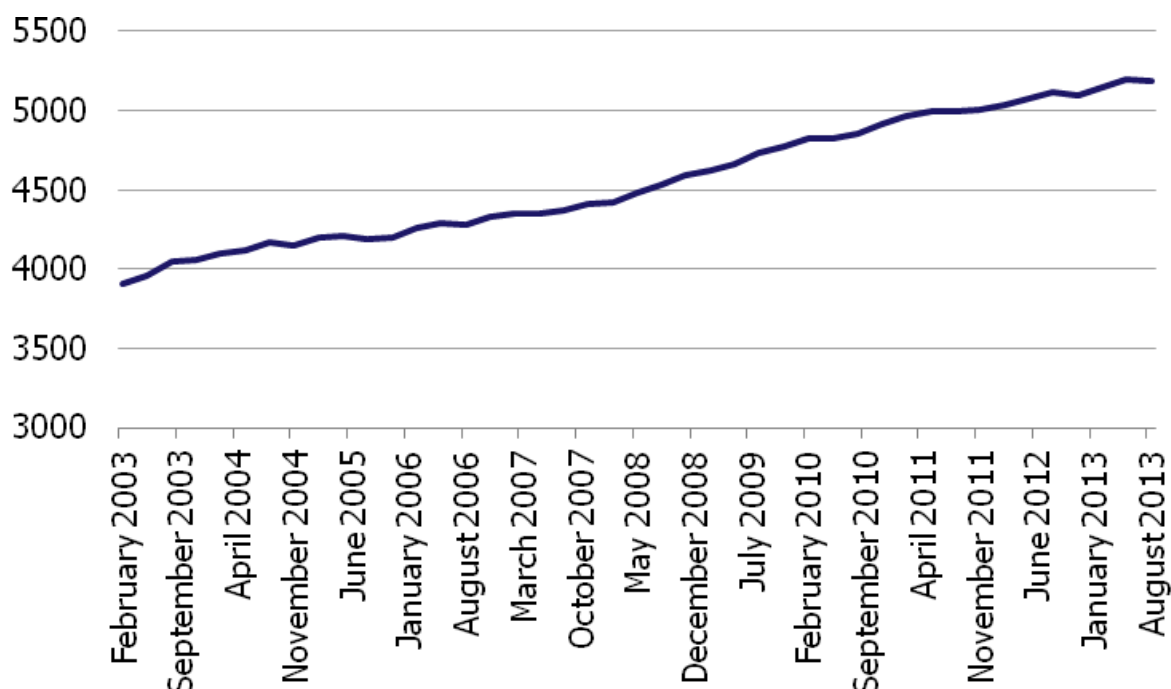
A common problem across all assessments of the impacts of welfare reform is understanding the impacts on individuals and households according to their characteristics – and particularly those with ‘protected’ characteristics such as age, disability, race and gender. Currently, it is not possible to say what the cumulative impact of reforms is for lone parents for example, nor to say how many households in an area face very large or very small impacts.

The reason for this limitation is that the source data to make these sorts of assessments does not exist – we do not know enough about the combinations of benefits that people in different places with different characteristics claim, and therefore the combined impacts of changes to those benefits. However, there have been detailed assessments of the impacts on protected groups of individual reforms, which are important and instructive for this research. These identify two particular groups of concern: disabled people and lone parents.

Disabled people are disproportionately affected by many reforms

First, and most importantly, a number of benefit reforms are specifically aimed at disabled people and those with health conditions. In Oxford, we estimate that around **one fifth of the total financial impact of welfare reforms** will be accounted for by changes to DLA and to ESA.

Within Oxford, the number of people claiming DLA has increased steadily over the last decade – rising from 3,900 in 2003 to 5,200 residents in 2013. Three quarters of these are adults of working age, with around one in ten being children. This is set out in Figure 2.3 below.

Figure 2.3 –Oxford residents claiming Disability Living Allowance

Source: DWP statistics

Most or all of these claimants will in time be required to apply for the Personal Independence Payment. Currently, around 35% of new claims are successful which compares with around 45% under DLA. This difference (about 20%) is consistent with the savings figure that the Department has 'scored' against the introduction of PIP. The extent and scale of reassessment activity will far exceed what has been experienced under the reassessment of IB claimants for Employment and Support Allowance.

In addition to this, disabled people are identified as a key group more likely to be affected by the Social Sector Size Criteria⁷ and a sizeable proportion of Housing Benefit claimants in the Local Housing Allowance system are disabled people (with the DWP Impact Assessment for the LHA reforms suggesting around one in five of those affected would be disabled⁸).

This suggests in particular that **disabled people affected by multiple reforms** – and specifically DLA or ESA claimants affected by Housing Benefit changes – are likely to be particularly disadvantaged.

⁷ Source: DWP Social Sector Size Criteria Equality Impact Assessment, updated June 2012

⁸ Source: DWP Local Housing Allowance reform Equality Impact Assessment, November 2010

Lone parents face larger impacts than most

The nature of the large scale reforms to tax credits have particularly impacted on lone parents – by increasing the hours required in work before payments are made, and increasing the rate at which tax credits are withdrawn as earnings increase. No impact assessment has been published for these reforms, but it is highly likely that lone parents have seen the largest impacts. As noted, there are 2,400 fewer working households in Oxford receiving support through tax credits than four years ago.

DWP impact assessments of LHA reforms and of the Social Sector Size Criteria also suggest lone parents will be substantially impacted by these reforms – around one third of those affected by LHA, and around one in five of those affected by the Size Criteria. Families, and particularly larger lone parent families, are also more likely to be affected by the Overall Benefit Cap.

The Oxford context – recovering labour market and hot housing market

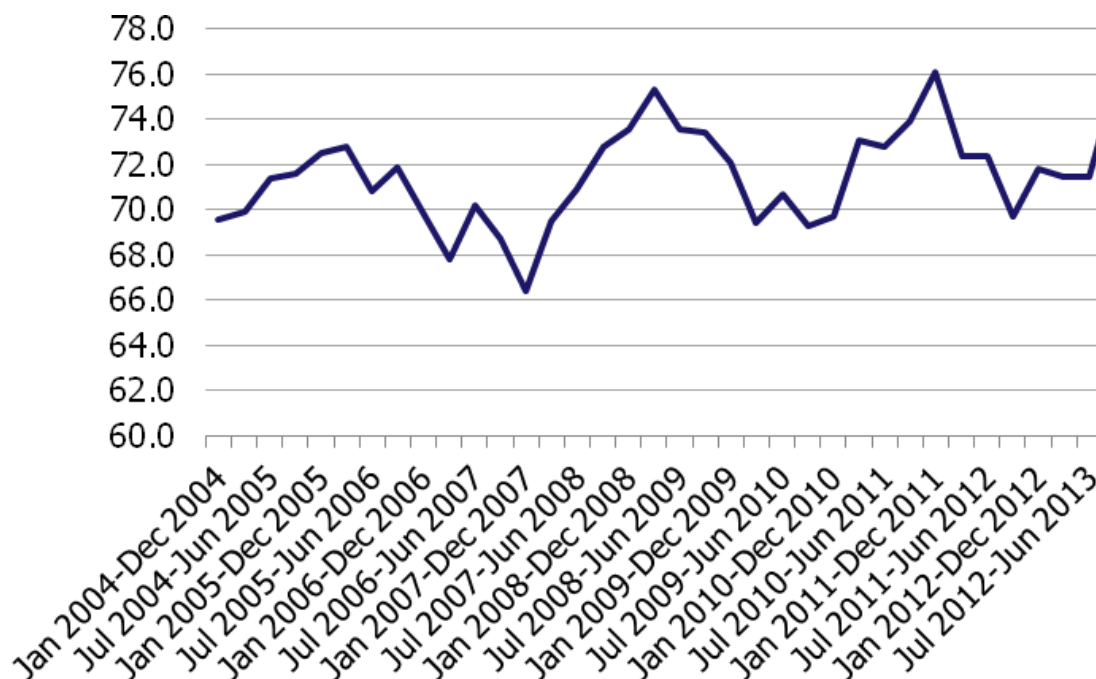
The impacts of welfare reform in Oxford are particularly affected by its labour market and housing market contexts. So there are likely to be particular challenges both in supporting tenants to find suitable accommodation, and in supporting them to find work.

A recovering jobs market

Oxford has a strong labour market. Households are more likely to be in work and less likely to be out of work than compared with other parts of the South East.

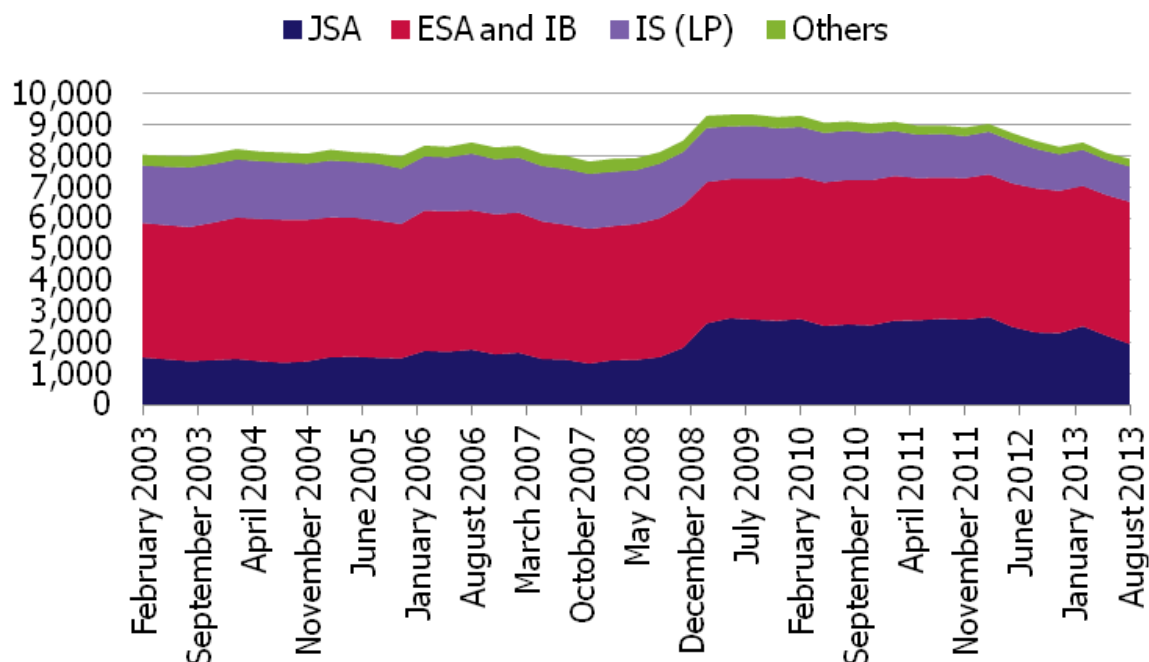
Figure 2.4 below shows that Oxford's labour market has been noticeably affected by successive periods of weaker and then stronger growth – with a sharp decline in employment with the recession (2008-10), strong recovery, decline again with the 'double dip' and more recent signs of employment increasing again.

Figure 2.4 – Oxford employment rate, Annual Population Survey estimate



Source: NOMIS

This labour market strength means that a relatively smaller proportion of residents claim out-of-work benefits than in many other cities, and a very small proportion of these are unemployed (claiming Jobseeker’s Allowance). However, one important consequence of this is that a very large proportion of those that are on benefit are claiming either Employment and Support Allowance or lone parent benefits. This is illustrated in Figure 2.5 below.

Figure 2.5 – out-of-work benefit claimants in Oxford, August 2013

Source: NOMIS

Overall, more than half of Oxford claimants are claiming ESA or incapacity benefits (IB), and nearly three quarters claim either these benefits or lone parent benefits. As a result, Oxford claimants that are out of work are likely to face greater challenges in returning to work – for example due to ill health or impairments, lack of recent work experience or other barriers to work. Those claimants are also likely to be disproportionately impacted by reforms that are particularly impacting disabled people and lone parents.

A very hot housing market

Alongside this, Oxford continues to be among the most expensive places to rent property in the country – with an average rent of around £1,150 per month for the Local Authority as a whole (with city centre rents likely to be even higher)⁹, putting it in the top 5% of most expensive areas outside London. Average rents are fully one third more expensive than the wider South East. Average Housing Benefit for LHA claimants is £585 per month, rising to £795 with three or more bedrooms. This has a number of consequences.

⁹ Source: Valuation Office Agency, Oct 2012 – Sep 2013

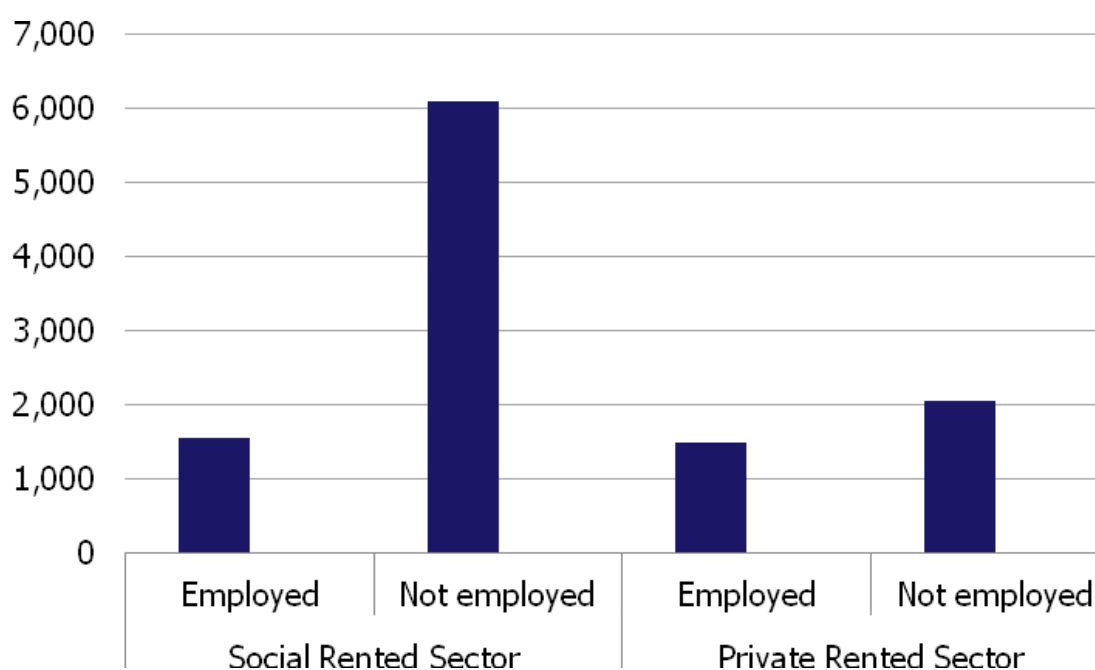
First, those living in the Private Rented Sector who are impacted by benefits reforms face significant cuts. For example on the Overall Benefit Cap, our analysis of census and rents data suggests that there are around 250 workless families with three or more children living in the Private Rented Sector, with average benefit incomes of around £530 a week. Clearly not all will be affected by the cap (as some will have incomes just below £500) but they likely make up a sizeable chunk of the 140 households in Oxford affected. Based on Local Housing Allowances, we estimate that the impacts of the Overall Benefit Cap for these families with three to five children would be between £50 and £200 a week.

Secondly, high rents means that many more working households are drawn into the Housing Benefit system and then into welfare reform. In total there are 3,600 households in the Private Rented Sector in Oxford that are claiming Housing Benefit, with around 40% of these being working households.

Thirdly, the shortage of affordable housing in the Private Rented Sector is a contributing factor to entrenching disadvantage in the social sector – as those households in social housing cannot afford to move out, even where they work or are affected by benefit reforms.

Overall, as **Figure 2.6** below shows, Housing Benefit claimants are overwhelmingly in the social rented sector, and within this they are overwhelmingly out of work.

Figure 2.6 – Housing Benefit claimants by tenure and employment, Nov 13



Source: DWP statistics

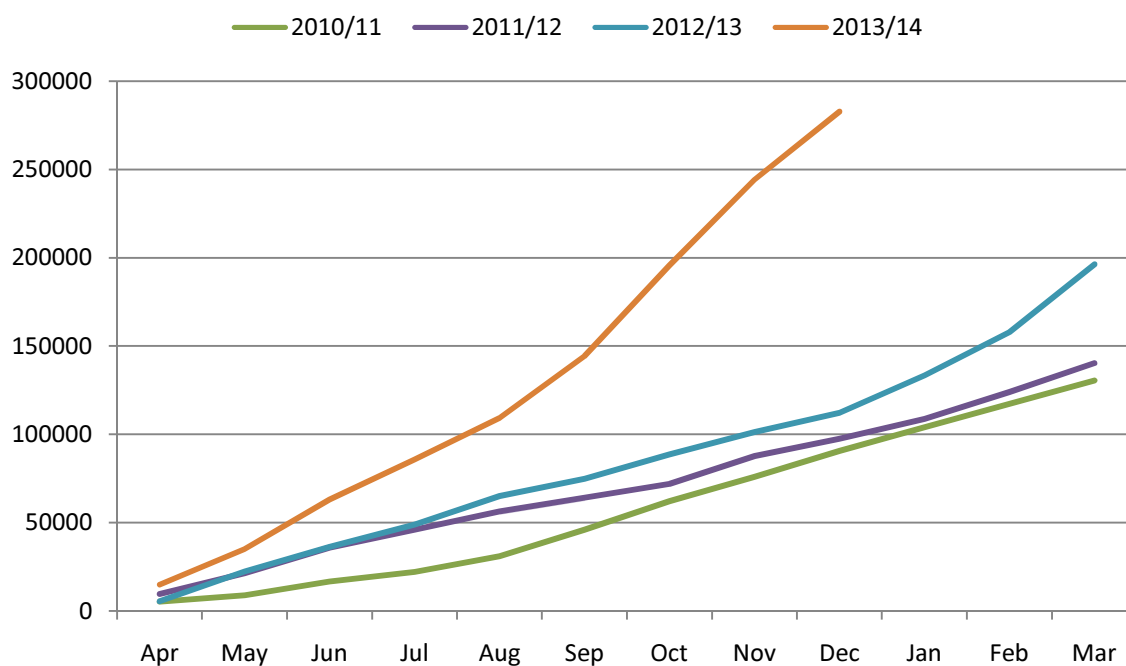
Just under one in ten of these social sector households are impacted by the Social Sector Size Criteria, generally facing impacts of between £10 and £20 per week.

The role of Discretionary Housing Payments

The use of Discretionary Housing Payments (DHPs) has increased significantly over the last year in particular, in response to the impacts of the Overall Benefit Cap and Social Sector Size Criteria. This is set out below.

Overall however, we estimate that DHPs are able to cover just £1 in every £7 of cash impacts from Housing Benefit reforms. This means that DHPs can at best provide bridging support for a small proportion of claimants impacted by benefit reforms.

Figure 2.7 – cumulative spending on Discretionary Housing Payments



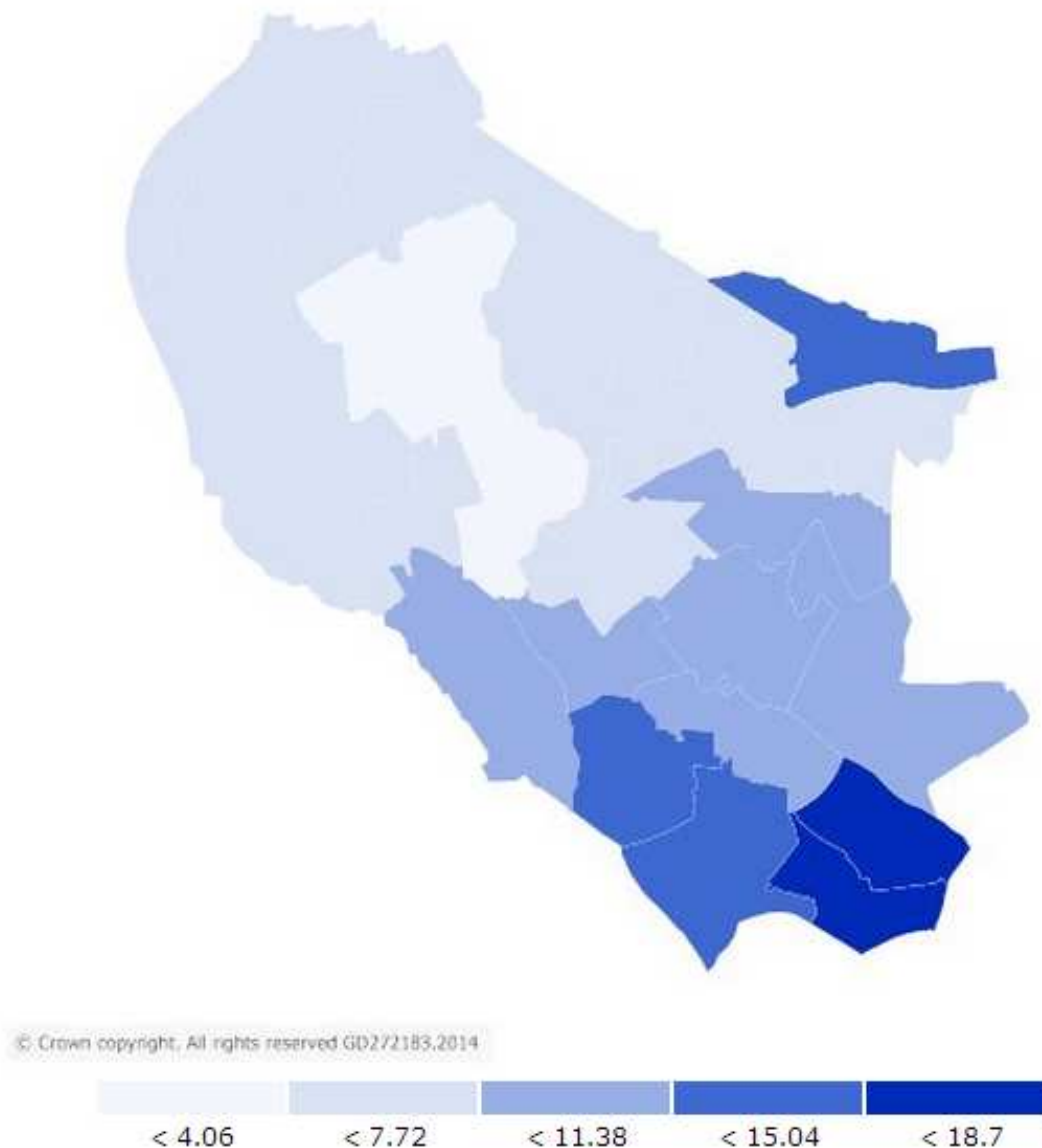
Source: Oxford City Council

The local impacts of welfare reform

At a local level, the impacts of welfare reform will depend both on the demographics of local areas and the extent to which residents claim benefits.

Figure 2.8 below shows the proportion of the population, to Ward level, that claim a DWP benefit (so an out of work benefit or DLA). The figures here range from less than 1% of the population (Holywell) to 19% in Blackbird Leys.

Figure 2.8 – proportion of population claiming a DWP benefit



Source: NOMIS

The largest proportions on benefit are in the south of the City (Northfield Brook, Blackbird Leys, Littlemore, Rose Hill and Iffley), with Barton and Sandhills in the North East of the City also high up.

Analysis of census data confirms that the same areas are also more likely to have disabled residents, lone parents and residents that live in social housing.

In **Blackbird Leys**, more than half of households (1,200) are in the social rented sector (with just one in ten privately rented), 60% of residents have a health condition or disability, and 9% are lone parents (400 lone parent households in total).

In **Northfield Brook**, there are similar proportions of households in social housing, with disabilities or health conditions and lone parents. As a slightly larger Ward, the total numbers in each category are slightly higher – with 500 lone parent households (just over half of which are in work) and 1,300 households in the social sector.

St Mary's, St Clement's and **Cowley Marsh** in the middle of the city, and Jericho and Osney in the West, stand out as areas with a very high dependence on the private rented sector – with between a third and half of all households privately rented. The larger impacts of welfare reform in the private rented sector are likely to be found in the three central Wards – where in each case between 7 and 9% of households are claiming a DWP benefit.

In **Barton and Sandhills** too, more mixed tenures means that there are likely to be many more households that are disadvantaged and affected by high rents in the private rented sector. Around one in five households are privately rented, but large numbers of disabled people and lone parents.

The impacts of reform over time

Importantly, the impacts of welfare reforms are set to continue to grow – particularly as the impacts of existing measures ratchet up over time, as living costs (including costs of renting) continue to rise faster than benefits. In addition new reforms like the reassessment of DLA claimants will begin to take effect.

Our analysis for the LGA concludes that without additional support, only a very small proportion of households are likely to successfully mitigate their losses by finding work or moving home. This also reflects the emerging evidence on impacts of individual reforms so far, which suggest that very few claimants are successfully moving or working.¹⁰ Our research below has similar findings.

Addressing these challenges over time, and particularly in the private rented sector, will continue to be critical.

¹⁰ See for example Beatty, C., Cole, I., Powell, R., Crisp, R., Brewer, M., Browne, J., Emmerson, C., Joyce, R., Kemp, P. and Pereira, I. (2013) *Monitoring the impact of changes to the Local Housing Allowance system of Housing Benefit*, DWP Research Report 838

3 The impacts of reform on residents

Summary

We identify three key groups in our qualitative research:

- Households where one or more members were disabled. This group had some significant barriers to work and it was common for many to have been on long-term Incapacity Benefit. These households were generally older and more likely to be single with no children living at home.
- Lone parent families. Households with children were more likely to be struggling with generally rising costs of living. These impacts were felt most strongly among lone parent households. These were generally younger than couple and single households. Some participants also reported that they had a disability, and in some cases one or more of their children had a disability or ill health.
- Single earner households. This was a smaller and more diverse group of respondents. It included respondents of a range of different ages and housing tenures. These households were generally more resilient, but reforms increased the pressure to juggle and prioritise within family finances.

Across all of these, living in the Private Rented Sector itself was a key indicator of larger impacts of welfare reform. Respondents were often using a significant proportion of other income, including benefits income, to cover their rent.

Only six of those interviewed were claiming Jobseeker's Allowance, however almost all of them had been sanctioned at some point. The financial impact of sanctioning for all respondents was significant.

Overall, welfare reform has led to a reduction to the overall quality of life of residents interviewed. The changes have led to a great amount of stress and anxiety about their current financial situation. For many, this has had a knock-on effect on their health – particularly for those who are already experiencing health conditions.

Demand for services has increased markedly in the last three years. As a result there have been a number of changes in the way services are delivered to people affected by welfare reform. The most common approach has been for advice agencies to prioritise those in most need of support and signpost others.

Mapping the impacts of welfare reforms

As Chapter Two sets out, we can make assessments of the impact of individual welfare changes on different areas and (to some extent) on people with different characteristics. However, simply describing the impacts on residents of specific welfare reforms misses two key points: first, that households can be affected by multiple different reforms; and second, that how reforms are experienced will depend on a range of factors – including family type (single or couple), whether anyone in their household works, whether there are children, housing tenure, whether anyone is disabled, and so on.

We have identified three key groups where impacts have been felt distinctly differently and where there appear to be different support needs, two of which are also identified in Chapter Two. They are:

- Families with one or more disabled person
- Lone parent families
- Single earner households

These three groups are taken in turn below. In addition, housing tenure – and specifically, living in the private rented sector – was identified as a key determinant of larger impacts of welfare reform. This is also set out below. The first part of this chapter explores the financial impacts of reforms, before assessing wider, non-financial consequences.

Households where one or more members were disabled

Over half of those interviewed were either claiming or had tried to claim Employment and Support Allowance. This group had some significant barriers to work which were related to their health condition and it was common for many to have been on long-term Incapacity Benefit prior to their ESA claim. These households were generally older than others interviewed (usually over 45) and were more likely to be single with no children living at home.

Within this group, **being found fit for work** as a result of a Work Capability Assessment was a key cause of distress and financial hardship. Five of those interviewed had been found fit for work. As a consequence, their incomes had reduced typically by £29 per week, and they were now required to actively seek work and to attend regular meetings at Jobcentre Plus. Being found fit for work was associated with a sense of hopelessness and despair, highlighted by one respondent:

"There's not much you can do, once they've made their mind up they just go ahead and do it." (330)

Impacts were further exacerbated for disabled households also affected by the **Social Sector Size Criteria**. Often these respondents had spent long periods out of work, and this was the first time they have been confronted with a change to their income in a number of years. This alongside changes to disability benefits has caused stress, confusion and anger. For example one respondent stated:

"I was in a terrible state, I was right depressed, I had no money, I was having to borrow money off my dad constantly. To be hit by getting near enough half your money [cut] and then the council put this [Social Sector Size Criteria] on me at the same time, it was depressing." (393)

Many people were very concerned about leaving their family home or the local area within which they had built up a social network and had family. For instance, one respondent who has lived in her local area for over 30 years and has a strong network of family and friends reported:

"It's really affected me, I didn't realise how much it would impact. But I've been here 30 years and I love it here, I can't move, it's the family home. It'd so upset me to leave this house." (387)

The fact that many of the households impacted by the Work Capability Assessment and the Social Sector Size Criteria were older households is also consistent with the findings of the Department for Work and Pensions' Equality Impact Assessments for these reforms¹¹¹².

¹¹ Equality Impact Assessment – Response to the Work Capability Assessment Independent Review (2010) [online]
https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/70078/wca-review-response-eia.pdf

¹² Department for Work and Pensions (2012) Housing Benefit: Size Criteria for People Renting in the Social Sector – equality impact assessment [online]
https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/220154/eia-social-sector-housing-under-occupation-wr2011.pdf

Case study - Michael – Social Sector Size Criteria and Employment and Support Allowance regime



Household

Michael is in his early fifties and lives in a two bedroom Council property. He has eight children, and two of them come and stay on a regular basis. Michael has multiple health problems. He has had three heart attacks and back pain and he also suffers from depression. He has been out of work for over twenty years and is unable to read and write.

Welfare Reform

In March 2013 Michael attended his Work Capability Assessment and was found 'fit for work'. A month later he was told that because he has two spare bedrooms he would have to contribute up to £14 per week toward his housing benefit.

Impact

Within the space of two months, Michael's income from benefits had reduced from around £250 per week to £99 per week in total.

"I had to go to the council when my money was chopped in half from nearly £200 to £99 and there was no way they were going to chop it down by £14 a week".

Michael was deeply distressed with the changes and as a result had to borrow money from family and friends.

"I was in a terrible state, I was right depressed, I had no money, I was having to borrow money off my dad constantly. To be hit by getting near enough half your money and then the council put this on me at the same time, it's depressing."

He did approach the Council to see what they could do about the reduction to his housing benefit. He found the Council really helpful and they gave him a Discretionary Housing Payment. However he was told that this was a 'year's grace' to work out how he would pay the extra £14 per week.

Lone parent families

As a whole, households with children were more likely to be struggling with generally rising costs of living – due to having higher costs for food, heating and housing. Unsurprisingly, cuts to benefits on top of this were leading to larger impacts on these households.

These impacts were felt most strongly among the fifteen lone parent households that took part in the research. These were generally younger than couple and single households. Some participants also reported that they had a disability, and in some cases one or more of their children had a disability or ill health.

Lone parents were a more diverse group in terms of how they had been affected by welfare reform. Common reforms which had affected them included: the **Social Sector Size Criteria changes**, the **Overall Benefit Cap**, the **changes to Local Housing Allowance** and **sanctioning**. This combination of reforms and living costs was explained by one lone parent affected by the Overall Benefit Cap:

"It's very, very hard, cost of food, children's clothes, even in second hand shops it's still gone up, it's so, so difficult.....the bus, it's so much, and this winter I can't go out, I always stay home. I haven't been in city centre for two years now, apart from when I had to see the council." (281)

Lone parent households were also very likely to be impacted by multiple benefits reforms. Large lone parent households in particular were being affected by the Overall Benefit Cap alongside other varying changes to their benefits (including changes to non-dependant deductions and sanctioning).

Case study – Adi – Overall Benefit Cap

Household

- Lone parent
- Three children and one nephew
- Living in emergency accommodation

Welfare reform

- Overall Benefit Cap
- Non-dependent deduction rate

Impact

- Reduction to housing benefit
- Landlord threatening eviction
- Stress and confusion over changes

Household

Adi is in her mid 30s and lives with her three children who are all under 12 years old. She also had a nephew living with her who is in his mid twenties. She has been a lone parent since October 2012 when she left a violent relationship with her partner and was placed in temporary accommodation. Adi is from South East Asia and English is her second language. As a result she finds it difficult to communicate with people and doesn't have the confidence to seek support. Adi has been in and out of work over the past two years but finds it very difficult to maintain a job because her three children go to different schools.

Welfare reform

In the autumn of 2013 Adi was subjected to the Overall Benefit Cap – this means she was expected to pay just under £50 a week toward her rent.

Alongside this she is also expected to pay toward the rent because of changes to the non-dependant deduction rate for her nephew.

In addition, at the time of the interview her Jobseeker's Allowance had been stopped for reasons unknown to Adi. Her only sources of income were Child Benefit and tax credits.

Impact

Adi's landlord has threatened her with eviction because she has failed to pay her rent. The reduction to her benefits has caused her great stress and worry and when she was interviewed for the research she was very concerned about how she was going to pay for the bills:

"Today I got my child benefit but they cut it for the water bill, and so I don't have nothing now and I'm thinking, if my gas is going to finish, what am I going to do in a few days, because I can't leave my children to sit in the darkness, that is why I'm stressed."

She had recently been awarded a Discretionary Housing Payment, but her landlord was still asking for the arrears she had accrued up until this point.

Adi's health and well-being had been severely impacted by welfare reform and the worry had caused her to be unable to sleep:

I can't sleep since my benefits stopped, I'm so worried."

Single earner households

The final key group were respondents who lived in households with one earner. This was a smaller and more diverse group of respondents compared to those where no-one worked. For instance, it included respondents of a range of different ages and housing tenures. None reported having a health condition or disability. The one common characteristic however was that most had at least one dependant child. Generally, single earner households were on low incomes, either due to working part-time hours or work that paid National Minimum Wage. The fact that their benefits and wages had not increased in line with their costs of living was also a key contributor to financial hardship.

The main impact for single earners who were interviewed had been a reduction to their Housing Benefit, due to **changes to Local Housing Allowance regulations**, which were intended to reduce expenditure on Housing Benefit for those in the private rented sector. The impact of welfare reform was somewhat different for these households. These households were generally more resilient, but reforms increased the pressure to juggle and prioritise within family finances. However, many of them had been coping with growing gaps between rents and Housing Benefit since 2011 and so had become accustomed to managing this.

There was a strong sense of frustration and anger from these households. It was clear that families in this situation felt undeserving of reductions to their benefits at a time of rising living costs. This was summarised by one respondent whose husband was working full-time as a caretaker, yet they were still struggling:

"To be honest it's like a kick in the teeth... We're a decent family, we've got work, we're not on all the benefits, and we're in private rented accommodation... If we were in a council house we'd be laughing, but I refuse to work for nothing, so I'll

stay at home for now. We really did struggle when my husband started working, and it feels like there's no help for us." (141)

The impact of housing tenure and tenancy type

Unsurprisingly, given the evidence from Chapter Two, living in the Private Rented Sector (PRS) itself was a key indicator of larger impacts of welfare reform. Very high rents combined with cuts to the Local Housing Allowance (from 2011) and the introduction of the Overall Benefit Cap (in 2013) meant that Housing Benefit was no longer covering a considerable proportion of rents. Therefore, respondents were often using a significant proportion of other income, including benefits income, to cover their rent.

In total seventeen residents who took part in the research were private renters affected by LHA reforms. They were a very diverse group, as noted above – including lone parent families, working families and couples with older children. Twelve of the participants were in households where no-one was in work. Advice agencies identified this housing effect as “the cumulative impact of local factors [i.e. rents] plus [welfare] reforms”.

Sanctioning

Alongside impacts of changes to benefit rules, we also found incidences of sanctioning. Only six of those interviewed were claiming Jobseeker's Allowance. However, almost all of them had been sanctioned at some point.

The reason for sanctioning was not always clear to respondents, but it was mainly related to either not attending their Jobcentre Plus signing on appointment or not attending a mandatory Work Programme appointment.

The financial impact of sanctioning for all respondents was significant. The length of time they had been sanctioned for obviously also had influence on the financial impact and their income. For interviewees who had strong social networks of family and friends, the main way of coping with the loss of benefit was to borrow money throughout the duration of their sanction period. Those who did not have social networks reported that they applied for hardship payments and also made use of local food banks.

One case of sanctioning was revealed by a respondent living in shared privately rented accommodation. She had her Jobseeker's Allowance stopped for six weeks. During this time she had to utilise a combination of financial support from her social networks, Jobcentre Plus and the local food bank:

"I needed money for gas and electric and I had to borrow yet again off my mum's partner. But he could only do it for a week or so. Then I had to get a food bank voucher to go to the church up by Hollow Way...then I had to apply for a hardship payment but you had to wait for two weeks before you got paid". (RH006)

Respondents were extremely concerned and stressed about the process of being sanctioned and often felt that their only option throughout the duration of their sanction was to survive on the support of social networks and available support within the local community, such as food banks. Again for this group there was a strong sense of hopelessness about their current situation. Often respondents felt that there was very little they could do about the sanctioning; rather they just had to utilise other means of financial support from family or friends to get by whilst their money had been reduced.

One particular respondent who had very few social contacts within their local area revealed a concern that while they had been able to rely on food banks for food during their latest sanctioning, they were aware that they could only use this support up to three times a year., After this they revealed that crime would likely be the next option:

"You're only allowed that three times a year. So foreexample if you have one in January and two in February you have to wait for the next year....so when you go back into that situation or the Jobcentre has not paid your money. When you've used up all of your food bank allocation and you've got no money or you've got no friends that's when certain people turn to crime". (focus group one)

Understanding the wider impacts of welfare reforms

Impacts on health, wellbeing and living standards

Alongside the negative financial impacts of welfare reform, our research found that there was a set of wider impacts taking place. This included an impact on health and wellbeing and changes to respondents' living standards and lifestyle.

Residents were asked how the reforms had made them feel. The most common feeling was **hopelessness** – that the reduction to their benefits was a situation out of their control. This was often combined with **stress, worry and fear** regarding the impacts and effect welfare reform had on their lives. For example, one respondent who had been through the Work Capability Assessment and been placed in the Support Group had had no financial impact from that reform but had found the process stressful. A few months later they were affected by the Social Sector

Size Criteria, and despite being granted Discretionary Housing Payments she was still very concerned for future changes:

"You just worry about it. When the brown envelope comes through the door your stomach turns over." (307)

One lone parent who was experiencing personal and health difficulties was due to have her eligibility for Employment and Support Allowance assessed at the same time as trying to pay rent arrears. As a consequence her health was being affected:

"Stressed out of my mind, it's been just another thing to have to deal with. I had a lot of personal difficulties last year as well as my eyesight packing up, and that stuff as well is just horrible. It's worrying, because I don't live lavishly". (301)

Concerned feelings were not exclusive to those out of work. Another respondent who was working full-time, on a low income and received partial Housing Benefit, was also worried and finding it hard to cope. When asked how she felt about her situation she responded:

"It's all very worrying, and makes me feel absolutely crazy". (158)

Alongside the pressure that welfare reform appears to have had on health for some respondents, it was also having a direct impact on wellbeing. It was common for respondents across all key groups to say they were skipping meals and not heating the house to reduce their outgoings (discussed in more detail in Chapter Four). Those who had children reported that they skipped meals in order to ensure that their children were able to eat normally. For instance one lone parent who had been affected by the Social Sector Size Criteria explained how she had started going without food to ensure her children were able to eat a healthy diet:

"I've lost weight which ain't a bad thing because obviously I go without for my kids. Even though I do shop cheaply and do cheap meals, you know we're not a chip lover [family] anyway and it isn't very healthy to have those meals. So I do try and give them fresh and healthy food every day. Three days we'll have any food and then four days we'll have good and healthy food – you know good meat and veg". (AS004)

Another respondent who was found fit for work and was waiting for the decision on her appeal, reported that the reduction to her benefits meant that she was not able to heat the house efficiently or eat as often as she used to. This was then having a detrimental effect on her health and well-being:

"You can't afford to heat the house, you can't afford to feed yourself, which is hard especially with my illness...sometimes I don't eat for days." (AS003)

Overall, welfare reform has led to a reduction to the overall quality of life of residents interviewed. The changes have led to a great amount of stress and anxiety about their current financial situation. For many, this has had a knock-on effect on their health – particularly for those who are already experiencing health conditions. In general, our research has found that residents feel a general sense of hopelessness and lack of control over the financial impact of welfare reform. This is summed-up by one respondent:

"My standard of living has gone right downhill. It gets really depressing, but at the end of the day, you've got to live with it." (330)

Increases in demand for support

Oxford has a wealth of advice and support agencies. The three main advicecentres – Agnes Smith, Barton and Rose Hill and Donnington– and the Citizens Advice Bureauall contributed to this research. In addition an online survey was opened to all agencies, while more specialist organisations were interviewed separately.

Findings from the in-depth interviews and the online survey indicated that demand for services has increased markedly in the last three years. For example, one advice agency reported that they were often operating significantly beyond their capacity:

"We're absolutely overloaded. We have a limit of the number of cases we take on and in the summer we were just under 50% above this... It's fair to say the need for our service has increased". (Local advice service four)

Another advice agency also suggested that along with an increase in demand there has also been increased complexity of cases residents are presenting them with:

"The numbers have gone up 500 a year each year over three years and what we've seen alongside that is the complexities of the issues that people are presenting and the fragility of their issues". (local advice service three)

As a result there have been a number of changes in the way services are delivered to people affected by welfare reform. The most common approach has been for advice agencies to prioritise those in most need of support and signpost others who they feel will they think will be able to deal with less intense support. This is highlighted clearly by two of the local advice agencies who were interviewed and responded to the survey:

"What we do, we'll deal with those in most difficulty. We'll prioritise those who need the support the most and those who can do it themselves we will signpost...we will refer a bit more ruthlessly so we can meet the greater need". (Local advice service two)

"Our work is more targeted and less universal. We have increased our work with partner organisations to help meet the increased demand. Also better communication between organisations will help our clients more". (Online survey respondent one)

One advice agency has equipped advisors with debt advice training so they are able to deal with the increased demand for advice and support residents need with debt.

Changes in those seeking support

Alongside this, there has also been a change in the type of resident who have presented themselves for advice and support. In particular, reinforcing the findings from the interviews with residents, more disabled people are seeking support and more people from the social rented sector.

One advice agency highlighted that they have seen an increase in the number of people coming for support because of debt problems as a result of the Social Sector Size Criteria change, often with no history of debt:

"Welfare reform, particularly this year, the bedroom tax has caused a lot of debt particularly for people who have never had debt before". (Local advice agency one)

Advice agency interviewees revealed that there has been a strong sense of anger from residents affected by the reform. One respondent went so far as saying that the reform was breaking up communities:

"They are very angry about the bedroom tax - it is breaking up communities. Part of our advice is not just to get them Discretionary Housing Payments for now, but to actually trying to do something about it which is like moving or trying to find work. Rose Hill and Donnington are what we'd called family estates and people have always lived there. So there is a lot of support in the area and now they have to move out of it to move into smaller properties". (Local advice agency one)

The reassessment of Incapacity Benefit claimants had also led to changes in the characteristics of those seeking support, with many more disabled people seeking support to navigate their way through the Work Capability Assessment, the appeal process and mandatory reconsideration of decisions. One interviewee described it as: *"helping people deal with bureaucracy".*

In some instances advice agencies were also supporting residents who had had their benefits stopped while a decision was being made about their claim. Residents in this situation were presenting themselves in desperate need of money in order for them to buy food and pay utility bills. As a result, advice agencies were working with local charities and local parish churches that were providing residents with one off

payments when they were in crisis with no income. This one off payment system appeared also to be being used to support some residents affected by the Social Sector Size Criteria.

4 Responding to welfare reform

Summary

Respondents have coped with welfare reforms in three main ways: economising; borrowing money from family and friends and claiming Discretionary Housing Payments. The most common approach was to economise. Where this was not possible residents often borrowed money from trusted family and friends. This was often small amounts of money that they knew they'd be able to pay back.

Discretionary Housing Payments were common among affected by the Social Sector Size Criteria and the Overall Benefit Cap. At the time of the research, none of those who had received the payment had done much to change their circumstances, and some residents had had their award terminated for not complying with the conditions attached to it – increasing risks of rent arrears and homelessness.

Residents had gone to a range of organisations to access support as a result of welfare reform. The most common places visited were local advice centres and the Citizens Advice Bureau.

Those who had not accessed financial support from the Council (i.e. Discretionary Housing Payments) were not averse to seeking support in the future. The general consensus from respondents was that if they were made more aware of what financial assistance was available they'd be more likely to seek support.

Finally, there are a number of support needs identified by respondents and others which have emerged from the research. Some residents need more employment support – even those who are on inactive benefits feel they may be able to work if they had specific support. However, the biggest fear is that they would move into insecure work which may result in less income that they receive currently on benefits.

Others also need support with housing. Those who were accessing DHP were doing very little to move accommodation or move home, and those in the Private Rented Sector were very keen to find cheaper, more secure accommodation.

The last support need was for help navigating the complicated benefit system. Some participants were very confused about the changes and often felt it would be useful if they could access support from someone who could explain the changes clearly.

External factors affecting the impact of reforms

Our research found a clear set of drivers that had a bearing on respondents' abilities to cope with welfare reforms. These are summarised below.

Rising costs of living

Almost all respondents reported that the rising cost of living was driving them to reduce expenditure quite apart from the additional impacts of welfare reform. Rising costs of food and utility bills were most commonly cited; with households reporting that they were already struggling with making ends meet prior to reductions to their benefits. In some instances, participants had made the decision not to pay certain bills (particularly water bills) to ensure that they were able to eat and have a warm home.

These costs of living impacts were reported widely, but seemed most acute among families with children (as set out in Chapter Three).

Social networks

Participants who had little to no networks of family or friends in the local area felt very isolated, were less likely to understand impacts, more likely to be struggling to cope with impacts, and more likely to report negative impacts on their health and wellbeing. In particular, participants who were new to the area, or had separated from partners were less likely to have strong social networks.

Conversely, participants who had strong networks – and in particular family connections or strong peer networks – often called upon them to provide financial, emotional and advisory support. Networks seemed particularly important for providing 'bridging' support during financial crises.

Language and literacy

For some participants, poor levels of literacy (including, in one case, not being able to read or write) meant that communications about changes to benefits were either not understood or not fully understood. As a consequence, these participants were often not clear on what reforms they had been affected by, were unsure where to go for help, and did not have confidence in seeking help or communicating about their needs.

For those participants where English was their second language, there were often similar barriers around comprehension and the confidence to seek support.

However, these participants were often additionally nervous about their ability to explain their situation verbally, if they did seek support.

Drugs and alcohol and other dependencies

A number of participants reported that they had dependencies which they were dealing with. This often had an impact on how they dealt with the changes to their benefits. For some, this meant they did not feel they could also cope with reforms that they were being affected by. In some cases, this meant ignoring letters or communication from the Council or other statutory organisations who were trying to notify them of the changes to their benefits.

Many of those who reported drug and alcohol dependencies were on Employment and Support Allowance and had been migrated from long-term Incapacity Benefit.

How residents are responding to welfare reforms

Respondents were asked what they were doing to manage the impact of welfare reform and cope with the reduction to their benefits and tax credits. We found a clear set of ways respondents were coping with the reductions. These were:

- Economising and trying to make their reduced income stretch further
- Borrowing money from family and friends
- Claiming Discretionary Housing Payments

The research also explored whether people were making more significant changes to their lives as a result of the reforms – such as moving to cheaper accommodation or finding work. While some residents had done this, on the whole these two options were not felt to be viable options. This is also set out in more detail below.

Economising

In response to the rise in the cost of living and the reduction to benefit claimants' income, almost all respondents reported that they were economising and making what they were now receiving in benefits, tax credits and wages go further. The main way in which people did this was to **spend less money on food and utility bills; less on themselves and their family;** and in some cases **not paying some bills.**

The most common way households were economising was through spending less money on food and utility bills. Often interviewees revealed that this was their only option in response to the reduction to their income. Respondents revealed a variety

of approaches to reducing these outgoings. These involved maintaining a tight budget for food and utility bills; some were skipping meals and not heating their home or using electricity as often as they used to; and some respondents reported deciding not to pay certain bills. For instance, one respondent highlighted how he economises due to the rise in cost of living alongside cuts to his Housing Benefit (from LHA changes):

"I've learnt to be really quite ruthless with how much everything costs. I reckon my food bill alone is 10 per cent more than it was 12 months ago.... you shop cheap, you go in at 4 o'clock when the remainders are there, and life is frugal, there's no perks." (296)

Another lone parent, affected by the Social Sector Size Criteria, who has three children and is also currently in custody of a grandchild explained how she copes:

"I am now adding up as I'm going round the shop; sometimes I only have £20 to spend for two weeks". (AS003)

As outlined above another common form of economising that respondents revealed was to spend less money on themselves and their family. This was particularly relevant for those who had children, and most significantly respondents who were lone parents. For example, one respondent who was living in temporary accommodation mentioned that she was having to wear the same clothes every day because she was unable to afford anything new. It was more important for her to provide food for her children:

"I can't buy myself new clothes or anything like that, I just wear the same clothes all the time, but it is more important to have food on the table for the children". (RH005)

Food banks

One of the main ways residents were working toward reducing their food bills was by using the local food bank. This was not the case for all respondents and it is important to note here that the wide majority of those who said they had used it were those who were engaged with local Children Centres and advice agencies. Therefore, it is difficult to ascertain whether this source of food and support was being used by those most in need or those who were most aware that the support was available.

Nevertheless, respondents who had used the food bank, and particularly those who had experience of being sanctioned, suggested that it was a vital source of food during a period with which they had no income. For instance one lone parent stated:

"I don't like it; it's not nice is it? But they are there to help so it is ok and I have used it a few times when I'm desperate". (RH005)

Using one benefit to supplement another reducing benefit

In some cases, some residents subsidised the reductions and changes to their benefits by using other elements of their income from benefits. For example, lone parents who had been sanctioned or had a large reduction to their housing benefit reported using child benefit and child tax credits to pay for food and utility bills. Similarly those with a disability or health condition reported using Disability Living Allowance (DLA) to supplement the day to day household income, rather than use it for its intended purpose.

"Because I've got bad eyes I sometimes have to get taxis and that's what DLA is supposed to cover. But my DLA pays bills and buys food. It pays for everyday living stuff. Even now it doesn't get used for stuff to do with my disability."(301)

Case study – Peter – Local Housing Allowance regulation



Household

Peter lives alone in a small one bedroom flat in the Private Rented Sector. He has two children who are at school and University and occasionally stay with him. Peter has a severe mental health condition. In 2013 he also had a serious car accident which caused him to stay in hospital for 11 weeks.

Welfare Reform

Due to Peter living in privately rented accommodation, his Housing Benefit does not cover all of his rent. As a result Peter has to contribute £60 per month towards his rent.

In 2013 Peter had to undergo a Work Capability Assessment. He found the experience very stressful, but with the support of Mind he was successful in his claim.

Impact

Peter has learnt how to economise with the money he has left once he contributes to his rent. He had been contributing toward his rent for over two years but has noticed that the rising cost of living has made it even more difficult to manage his outgoings.

"I write everything down. I have to know how much my water, my gas, my tv, my internet to keep me in the real world".

He has taken a number of steps and techniques to ensure he is able to live on his new income.

"You shop cheap, you go in at 4 o'clock when the remainders are there, and life's frugal, there's no perks."

Borrowing money from family and friends

For respondents who had networks of family and friends in the local area, borrowing money was a key way to cope with the reduction to their benefits. This was often cited by respondents as a regular way of accessing small amounts of money when they had run out of money. There were only a small number of cases respondents had borrowed large amounts of money from family and friends. In these instances it was often for a deposit for accommodation in the Private Rented Sector, and in one case a resident's ex-partner had paid her rent arrears to stop her being evicted.

Borrowing money from family and friends **was often felt to be the last resort**, and not particularly what people wanted to do. However, those that did so suggested that they would not have been able to cope without the financial support from their friends and family. This common practice of borrowing money from family and friends is highlighted by one Oxford resident who explained that she felt comfortable borrowing money from her children, as they know she'll pay it back. Moreover the whole family, who rely mainly on benefits and tax credits as income, have a network of loaning each other money when different members fall into financial difficulty:

"I've got that buffer with the fact that I would never be without because I could take a loan off my children and they know I'd always pay it back. We do an internal family 'I'm short this week' and we help each other. And I think if we couldn't we'd all be in a bit of a fix...we all help each other". (304)

Another lone parent who had been sanctioned three times during her pregnancy and was currently homeless and living temporarily with her father and step mother revealed how she felt about borrowing money from family and friends:

"I borrowed money from my dad, friends, my nan and gramps. It made me feel like crap to be honest. I don't like borrowing money. It makes me feel like a scrounger so I would only ask close family and friends because I don't want people to think bad of me". (RH002)

It was clear however that people were not borrowing money on a regular basis; rather they were borrowing it at point when they were either without their regular benefit payment – due to sanctioning or reassessment of their benefit; or when they needed to finance something specific. For example, one focus group respondent explained that she had gone to her parents to ask for up front funding to get a taxi to her Work Capability Assessment as this was something she could not afford without their help. Here she emphasises the important of having the financial backing of her parents:

"Next week I have my interview, I've had to request to get their permission to get a taxi. It's about 20 minutes and that works out £20 one way. I've got to find the money for that, who do I go for that? I've gone to my parents again. But the point is what if I didn't have my parents? what am I meant to do". (focus group 2)

For those interviewed who had experienced a prolonged reduction to their benefit – particularly due to the Social Sector Size Criteria changes, Overall Benefit Cap and Local Housing Allowance changes – **borrowing small amounts of money to get by was not a sustainable option**. Our research found that this group had either learnt to deal with the reduced income through economising or were claiming Discretionary Housing Payments (DHP).

Most residents suggested that they only borrowed an amount that they could repay once they had received their own benefit payments. One resident who had to contribute toward his housing benefit due to the Local Housing Allowance regulations explained that he was borrowing money from family and friends, but was always paying it back:

"Nobody gives you anything; there have been times when I had to ask for money. I had to borrow, but I had to pay it back. Every little helps".(296)

Borrowing and lending money between close networks of family and friends appeared to be a cyclical process that respondents were using to bridge temporary and usually small gaps, rather than providing regular financial support – described by one as "swapsies without the interest".

Other financial assistance

In only a very small number of instances, interviewees reported taking out bank loans and payday loans to support themselves. This was reported by those who had little to no social networks within Oxford. For instance, one interviewee in her late 40s, who had no children and had recently split from her partner and had been homeless for six months, had taken out a loan to pay for a deposit. In order for her to access her own Privately Rented flat she felt like the only option was to take out a loan in order to pay for her deposit:

"I had to take a loan for five years to get a deposit from Barclays Bank. I was looking for a place without a deposit and it was too hard, I asked the council and they say they couldn't help me. So I helped myself and now I have to by £80 a month over 5 years". (158)

Discretionary Housing Payments

Just under half of the respondents who had been affected by either the Social Sector Size Criteria or the Overall Benefit Cap had received a Discretionary Housing Payment (DHP). Those that were given a DHP were provided with between £14 and £75 per week.

For respondents who were in receipt of DHP it was welcome support as many of them were not sure how they were going to be able to afford the shortfall in their Housing Benefit.

A small number of DHP recipients had their payments stopped after the first six months of payment. For example, one lone parent who had been affected by the Overall Benefit Cap and was now expected to pay £72.93 per week had been receiving DHPs from August 2013 and was told that this would be stopped from February 2014. She said that she had been told she would not be eligible to receive it anymore:

"I was getting a top-up for the Council and then it stopped and now they've told me there is nothing I can do. They told me it was means tested and I had to go in and give them information on all my outgoings, and now they've told me 'no more'".
(374)

In this case, it did not appear that the participant's income had improved in the time since their initial claim – so it appeared that their DHP had not been renewed for other reasons (and potentially, because they had not met the conditions attached to the original award).

Another interviewee who had been affected by the Social Sector Size Criteria and had a severe disability, had her DHP stopped in October 2013 because she was told that the Council had been notified her circumstances had changed (although she said that she had reported no changes to her personal situation).

Overall, respondents who had received DHP were largely happy with the support they were getting to cover the shortfall in their housing benefit. However, most of them **had done very little to change their circumstances** during the year or six months for which they had received the payment. For most, this payment had merely sidelined the problem of a reduced income rather than given them additional time to find alternative means of paying their outstanding rent which was no longer covered by Housing Benefit. Respondents who were yet to have their DHP renewed were hopeful that this would happen, and **had not thought about the consequences of not having a DHP**. For example, a couple who were close to State Pension Age and had been affected by the Social Sector Size Criteria were

hoping they could continue to get their DHP renewed until then (as once they reached pension age, they would be exempted from the Size Criteria):

"What I'm asking for is could they cover it [with discretionary support] until I get my full pension. If not then we've got to carry on finding this money. We've got nowhere to move to and no one to help." (307)

In August 2013 Oxford City Council started attaching conditions to DHP payments – which means that residents are expected to start finding ways to cover the shortfall in housing benefit through seeking smaller accommodation or finding appropriate work. The two examples above where DHP had been terminated and not renewed could have been where residents had not met these conditions, or could be cases where they were made awards prior to conditions being attached. However, neither really knew why they could no longer receive a DHP, and generally residents did not report of knowing that their DHP came with terms and conditions.

Moving home or finding work

Our research found **very little evidence of residents moving**. Only one person (a lone parent) had moved house and downsized to mitigate the reduction to their Housing Benefit as a result of the Social Sector Size Criteria:

"I was affected by the bedroom tax. What happened, when it all came though last year, I had a three bedroom house and my daughter had moved out with her boyfriend and I had the letter come through the door saying you're going to have to pay for this room. And I just thought I can't do it, so I exchanged and I'm now living in a two bedroom. I was very upset about it at the time, I just thought what if my daughter came home."

It **was common for participants to be aware of the ways in which they could move home** – for example home swapping websites or the bidding system within the Council. However, there was very little evidence of residents proactively engaging with these systems and it was apparent that there was a perception that trying to move was going to be difficult. Many of the residents affected by the Social Sector Size Criteria had been in their home for long periods of time – in some cases up to 30 years. These were family homes which were still being occasionally, and in some cases regularly, used by their children and grandchildren. As a result many of the people we spoke to were reluctant to move to smaller accommodation. For example, one interviewee was living in a three bedroom property that she had raised her children in. Over the last four years she had developed a disability which meant she had to leave her job and start claiming ESA. From April she had to start contributing £26.12 for her two spare rooms. While she understood that other

families might need the house she explained that she had a lot of social networks in the local area and wanted to stay:

"I understand people need it, but on the other hand, 30 years, I love it here. All my friends live round here." (387)

Another respondent had a similar attitude toward moving home. She had already downsized a number of years ago when her children had moved out of the family home. In April 2013 she had been affected by the Social Sector Size Criteria and had to pay £14 per week toward her housing benefit. Although this was a change to her benefit she explained that her house was very energy efficient so she had not felt the additional impact on her outgoings that significantly. She explained that she had already moved once and was not prepared to move again because she was settled:

"I moved from a five bedroom house to come here so I've done my bit... "If not I'll just pay it. I never wanted to live here but now I am and I'm settled here, and the cats are too." (385)

Finding work was also not considered an option for most of those interviewed who were not in employment. Many people were facing significant barriers to work – mainly centred on disability and childcare –and were either lone parents or older disabled people. For example, one lone parent had had a number of jobs but struggled to maintain them at the same time as caring for three children who were all attending different schools:

"I'm a lone parent without help from anybody, and a problem for me is that every single time I find a job, one of my children is ill, or by the time I get to work I'm late, 15, 20 minutes, half an hour because of taking my three children to different schools. That is a problem for me, and I'm very stressed." (355)

Where have residents gone for support?

Outlined above are the main ways residents were coping with the impacts of welfare reform. Alongside this, some interviewees revealed that they had sought advice, guidance and support from local agencies to help them deal with changes. It is important to note that **those who had accessed support from outside agencies were often those who had strong social networks** and close links within the community. Others who **appeared to be more isolated– particularly those with English as a second language or those with mobility-limiting disabilities**–reported less incidences of seeking support. These respondents were the most likely to present a strong sense of hopelessness about their current

financial situation, and are groups that should be a priority for engaging and supporting.

Local advice centres

Some participants had visited one of the three local advice centres in the City or the Citizen Advice Bureau (CAB). Advice centres were used for a number of different reasons. Some had used them to help understand the changes to their income, while others had used advice centres for support to appeal decisions, such as being found fit for work. There were also instances where local advice centres were used to support participants with debt problems. For most that had used the advice centres they were very positive about the support they were given. For example, one was very grateful of the support she had been given by her CAB advisor:

"She's been like my lifesaver". (opt in 1)

Another respondent who was being provided with support by a friend who worked in the local advice centre explained how she would not have been able to navigate her own way through her Employment and Support Allowance application form:

"I'd never be able to do it without her, because they're like books, aren't they, those forms". (387)

As outlined in Chapter Three, a small number of respondents had accessed financial support through local advice agencies. Some participants had received one-off payments to support them during a crisis – for example, a few people reported receiving between £20 and £50 from their local church. One lone parent who had had her benefits stopped reported:

"The local church did help me. It was the local advice centre that spoke to them and they gave me £50, it was a one off payment which I really appreciated". (AS004)

Local charities and other support agencies

Alongside local advice centres, there were also some cases where participants had been in touch with local charities for support. This was particularly the case for participants who had specific and specialist needs. For instance, interviewees who had mental health problems reported that they had been supported through the mental health charity Mind. Often this support was to help respondents complete Employment and Support Allowance and Disability Living Allowance application forms.

Jobcentre Plus

For the small number of participants who were claiming Jobseeker's Allowance, they reported that they were engaging regularly with their advisor to help them look for work. There were also a few incidences where respondents had gone to Jobcentre Plus to ask how they might appeal being found fit for work.

Family and friends

Family and friends were cited as one of the main places respondents sought support, advice, as well as financial assistance. This was often due to them trusting family members and only feeling comfortable asking people they felt close to for support. As discussed above, often financial support from family or friends was very small. Participants felt very guilty as they were borrowing money from other benefit claimants or their elderly parents as they reported they had very little money themselves.

Experiences and perceptions of Council support

Experiences of financial support

Almost all respondents had had contact with the Council in one way or other. This was usually as part of claiming Housing Benefit claim, but also included where the Council was the landlord for social tenants.

Financial support was largely sought by those who had been affected by the Social Sector Size Criteria (and the small number who had been affected by the Overall Benefit Cap) and this was primarily to secure a Discretionary Housing Payment (DHP). Respondents found out about DHPs in a variety of ways. Some had gone to local advice agencies who explained they were eligible; others were either directly contacted by the Council or approached them themselves. Often, residents only applied for support at the point where they were already in financial difficulty and in rent arrears. However this was not always the case – one interviewee decided to call the Council when she first heard about the changes to her Housing Benefit, and had a very positive experience of the support:

"I phoned up the council when the bedroom tax was coming in and spoke to a really nice lady who said she'd send me the form to get the grant." (387)

Another respondent who had also been affected by the Social Sector Size Criteria reported a positive experience of support from the Council. The Council

representative had spent time listening to her explain her current situation and responded to her needs:

"It was just that he had the time to go through things, and he gave us a bit of reassurance and looked at how one thing might have a knock on affect on another, and even offering us the food bank voucher as he could see that we were struggling at the time." (414)

There was a small group of respondents who found dealing with the Council more difficult. The main complaint by participants was that the Council provided confused information and in some instances residents felt Council representatives had quite negative approaches to supporting them. Not being able to understand the Council correspondence was mostly a problem for residents who spoke English as a second language, however not exclusively so. For instance, a focus group respondent explained that he had to visit the CAB and ask them to explain what the Council letter was asking of him:

"The letters that the council send you regarding the council tax and Housing Benefit is very confusing to lots of people, they don't understand. I don't understand them. So that's why I went there [CAB] and even he [the adviser] couldn't understand it". (focus group 2)

Only a small number of residents reported negative responses or unhelpful attitudes from Council staff. In one of the instances where this was reported, the respondent stated that she asked the local advice centre to discuss her problems with the Council on her behalf. Another respondent who has been affected by the Overall Benefit Cap explained that she did not feel adequately supported:

"I don't feel like they try and help me. Last time I was there I had a fall out with the Council".

Attitudes to financial support in the future

Respondents were all asked whether they would be likely to seek financial support in the future from the Council, if they knew it was available. Aside from those who had applied and successfully secured DHP support, most interviewees had not considered seeking financial support from the Council. For some, they were not averse to seeking this type of support but explained **they were not aware of any support available** and in some cases felt communication about support available could be undertaken with more clarity. A number of respondents highlight this:

"It's quite hard to get any information, to be fair, unless you talk a lot and have friends and family around you, then you don't know. Because they [the Council] don't tell you." (374)

"They could support you more by letting you know what support you could get or should get." (171)

"Just make things a bit easier, be more accessible as a council. You feel like you're being really awkward when you go in there." (432)

Most respondents had **never considered approaching the Council for financial support**, and as a result found it very difficult to say at which point they would seek this type of support in the future. One particular resident who had been affected by the Social Sector Size Criteria, and had not received DHP, revealed she would approach the Council when her situation got really bad, but only if she knew that they were able to provide financial support:

"I didn't know they could give support. It would never cross my mind; if I knew that they'd done that then I would go and ask. If things were bad, I wouldn't just ask. I'm quite independent and I've got pride. But it did get really bad and I thought I was a terrible mum because we had no food in the freezer". (AS004)

This was common for most respondents who took part in the research –**it was very difficult for people to quantify the length of time or at which point in a difficult situation they would seek financial help from the Council**. However, they all cited that the likelihood of them seeking this support was based on the information and knowledge on what support was available from the Council.

Feedback from advice agencies

Overall, local advice agencies were very positive about the Council's approach to supporting people affected by welfare reform. One respondent stated that they were impressed that the City Council had been trying to support residents and that the Council had thought about it from the client's perspective:

"I'm quite impressed with the City Council...they're taking it very seriously from the client side and understand what is happening to people"

All support agencies, particularly the local advice centres, were generally pleased with the information they were given regarding the Council's approach to welfare reform and felt that they were doing the best they could with 'limited funds' to support Oxford City residents.

Experiences of the welfare reform pilot

Our research included **four households** who were being supported by the Local Authority-led welfare reform pilot. All four had either been affected by the Social Sector Size Criteria or the Overall Benefit Cap.

While these households reported that they had been supported by the Council either face-to-face or by telephone, none reported that they were being helped specifically to manage the impacts of welfare reform. Three of the respondents had been supported to make an application for a Discretionary Housing Payment. However, one respondent's claim had already come to an end, and none were actively putting plans in place to deal with future shortfalls.

One respondent was very happy with the support that they had received as a result of the welfare reform pilot. They were particularly pleased with the fact that they had explained their financial difficulties and that these were resolved quickly by the Council after their first meeting. Three of the four still reported that Council support, and what is available, could be made clearer still.

What support do residents say that they need?

Research participants were asked what support they felt they needed as a result of welfare reform. We found that support needs depended on household circumstances, but there were clear common themes.

Help with finding work

There were a group of residents who were looking for work – some of these were already accessing support through the Work Programme and from Jobcentre Plus. Barriers to work were often specific to residents' needs – for example lone parents found work difficult due to childcare commitments; and disabled residents often said they did not think employers would be accepting of their access needs. However, the most common barrier was a concern that there was little or no work available that was both secure and more financially rewarding than being on benefits. This echoes findings from other research, that has found that experience of employment in deprived neighbourhoods is often poorly paid, insecure and can make it harder to manage family life.¹³

¹³ Crisp, R. Batty, E., Cole, I. and Robinson, D. (2009) *Work and Worklessness in Deprived Neighbourhoods: Policy Assumptions and Personal Experiences*; Joseph Rowntree Foundation

Part of this concern about employment prospects came from a deep scepticism about work after many years out of employment. For instance, one focus group respondent, who had a number of health conditions which affected his mobility, explained that while he would like a job it would need to provide him with financial security and the offer of regular hours:

"Employers have got the run of it haven't they, zero hours contract, what's that about? I want to have a job where I know I will have a income...either you're being employed or you're not being employed". (focus group three)

Many residents stated that they wanted to work, however, and many were claiming 'inactive' benefits that meant that they were outside mainstream support (particularly lone parents with younger children, and older disabled people).

Help with reducing housing costs

As discussed above, one of the key coping mechanisms for residents affected by the Social Sector Size Criteria and the Overall Benefit Cap has been Discretionary Housing Payments. Our research found these were welcomed by residents, but little had been done by the resident to consider how they were going to pay this additional housing benefit payment once their grant had finished.

Those in the Private Rented Sector were often most keen to move to cheaper accommodation because of the high rent they were paying in their properties. However, there was less systematic support to them to do so than existed for those affected by the Social Sector Size Criteria. One of their main concerns raised was the insecurity of living within the Private Rented Sector – often residents did not feel like it was a long-term solution to live in this type of accommodation.

Navigation through the benefit system

There were a number of residents who reported that they had been **very confused by welfare reform**. This was particularly the case for those who had been affected by multiple changes. Common issues were overcomplicated forms and confused correspondence—often from the City Council.

These participants in particular were residents who were not accessing any formal support from advice agencies or the local Council. However, there were some respondents who had sought advice and support from local advice agencies and felt that they still had been unable to understand the respondent's situation. For instance, a focus group participant who had been found fit for work under the Employment and Support Allowance regime reported that generally people were

confused. Furthermore, in his particular experience even a local advice agency had not been able to understand and support him with his current situation:

"The letters that the council send you regarding the council tax and housing benefit is very confusing to lots of people. They don't understand. I don't understand them. So that's why I went there [to a local advice agency] and even he [the adviser] couldn't understand it." (focus group two)

This was magnified by those who spoke English as a second language. For example, one particular respondent – a lone parent affected by the Overall Benefit Cap – had English as a second language and was really struggling with understanding the letters and other communication from the Council. She explained that she did not feel confident going to the Council to seek support because her English was not good enough to give explanation of her problems:

"I don't know, my English is poor to be able to communicate and too difficult to put my point across, but I really want to get more information but the problem is my English is very poor". (355)

She also revealed that often she would use Google translate when she did receive letters from the Council to try and better understand the correspondence. Other respondents also cited that English was a barrier to understanding and then corresponding to Council communication about welfare reform.

Budgeting support needs?

All research respondents were asked if they would like support with budgeting their money as a result of the reductions to their income. Most people **felt that they were actually already very good at budgeting** their money as they had lived on a low income for most of their lives.

"I'm 45, I know how to deal with my bills, I know how to juggle it well, get things down to the minimum payments. It might not be the best way but it's the only way I can do it."

"I'm quite good at budgeting anyway..I know what's important you know gas, electric food for the kid"(AS004)

While residents suggested that they were very good at budgeting money on their current income, all residents – apart from those involved in the Direct Payment pilot – has been receiving their income on a fortnightly basis throughout the time they had been on benefits.

The changes with Universal Credit (direct payment, monthly payment) were discussed within the focus groups. Participants were asked what they thought would be their main support needs under a monthly payment system. Most respondents felt (unsurprisingly) that budgeting support would be very important under Universal Credit. For example, one participant who had been out of work for a number of years explained that the temptation to spend money for people who were not used to a lump sum would be very difficult to avoid:

"Imagine you've been claiming benefits for years and then someone lumps a big sum of money in your hand and some people get scared and just spend it."

Wider support needs

Finally, a number of participants had wider support needs that were affecting their ability to budget effectively, to prepare for or seek work, and/ or to reduce their housing costs. In particular, these related to:

- Childcare accessibility and affordability – particularly for lone parent households. Concerns around childcare made it harder to consider returning to work; while in one case, having children in different schools was making it far harder to deal with the impacts of reform.
- Transport costs – these were particularly felt among disabled participants, who often had to rely on public transport and where costs appeared to act as a barrier to travelling to and from the city centre.
- Health, including mental health – many participants appeared to have low level health problems and often poor mental health (particularly anxiety and stress). Most were not seeking support from health services, while there were no clear referral routes from advice services to health support.
- Addictions and dependency – a small number of participants reported having drug and alcohol dependencies. Those who reported these issues appeared to be in contact with appropriate recovery services.

Reaching the limits

Many households were concerned about their ability to deal with impacts in the longer term, and about future cuts tipping them over the edge. This was particularly the case for households where no one was in work, as they have no means of additional income to support them. One particular participant highlighted this well:

"The council want to dock my money by about £80 a month when I don't have any income to offset it." (301)

As a result many households felt vulnerable and concerned about how they were going to cope. As one respondent who had been out of work for six years suggested:

"It's much harder to cope with things that go wrong. And also having been out of work for some time, as you can see, most of life before, life was quite comfortable, and the trouble is, that after time stuff starts to wear out and you can't afford to replace it." (210)

In principle, local welfare assistance schemes are expected to support residents to meet these additional costs. This funding has been devolved to upper-tier authorities, so in this case Oxfordshire. The 'Oxfordshire Support Fund' is available to provide emergency support, usually in the form of goods and services rather than cash, however there are a number of restrictions on this support (including a maximum award of £100).

5 Facing the future

Our research identifies extensive impacts from welfare reforms and strong indications that those impacts will grow over the coming years.

We find particularly strong impacts for disabled households and lone parents, and larger impacts for those in the private rented sector. Many of these are below the radars of advice agencies – for example low income working households, who are managing to cope through their personal networks and resilience.

Many others are requiring new and more intensive support. Often these are households that are experiencing cuts to their income for the first time (particularly those in the social sector), with impacts that are relatively not as great as for others but where they have limited resilience to cope.

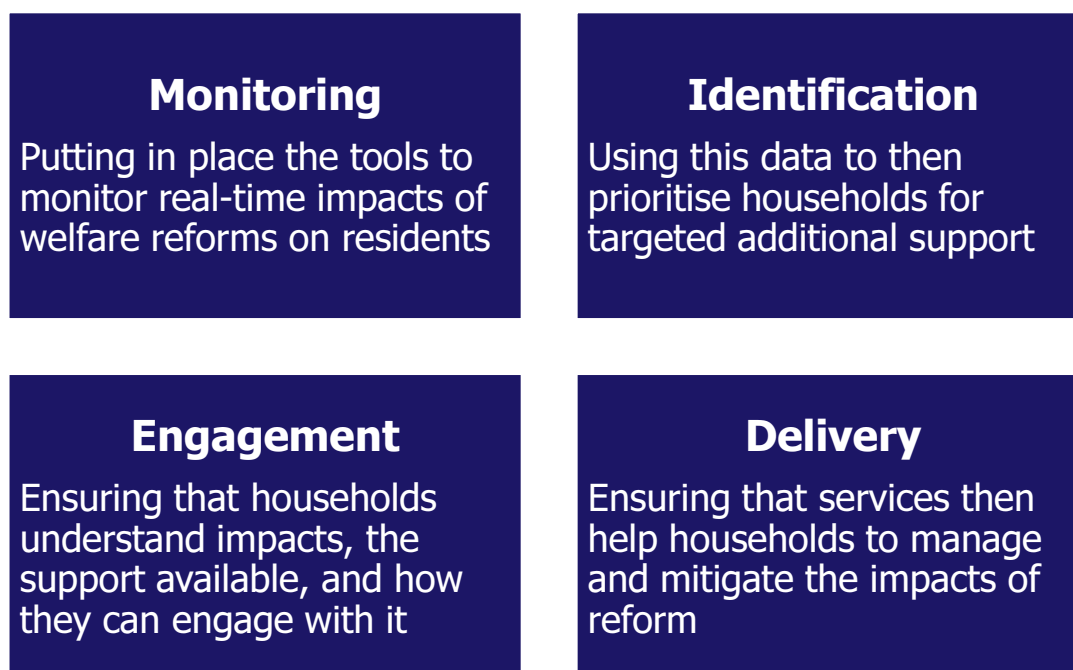
We consider that it is highly likely that without preventative measures to support residents, reform impacts will ratchet up in the future – with growing numbers needing support to manage debt and financial crises, combined with claimants impacted by new reforms. We consider that there are two key pressures:

- **Growing gaps** – between household finances and living costs, particularly in the private rented sector but also as arrears and debts increase for those in the social sector. The needs here are likely to be around financial management and building resilience.
- **New reforms** – particularly with Universal Credit and rollout of the Personal Independence Payment. These are complex administrative changes and likely to be stressful and disorientating. Support needs here will be around navigation and understanding.

At the same time, we identify that many residents are a long way from being able to take steps to actively mitigate the impacts of reform – through finding work, moving home or improving financial management. In large part these are structural problems (in the economy, labour market and housing markets, as well as the support available) but in part they reflect issues around resilience and abilities to cope.

We consider that there are four key areas where the Council and partners should focus efforts in developing their strategy for welfare reform, set out in **Figure 5.1**.

Figure 5.1 – developing Oxford City Council’s welfare reform strategy



These four areas are taken in turn below. The findings and proposals presented here build on our research findings and draw on input from participants in the options appraisal workshop of 10 April.

In our view, it should not be the responsibility of the Council alone to develop and implement these proposals, if they are accepted. Most or all of them would require buy-in from a range of organisations, as well as their active involvement – and some are clearly the responsibility of wider partners. We would therefore recommend that for those proposals that are taken forward the Council establishes small ‘task and finish’ group involving relevant lead officials and partners (housing associations, Jobcentre Plus, advice agencies, etc) to lead their development.

Monitoring

1. Explore the scope to develop a monitoring ‘dashboard’

The Council and its partners have been mainly focused on monitoring and managing the impacts of the social sector size criteria and of the Overall Benefit Cap. This is understandable, as these two reforms came in together in 2013 and led to immediate and new impacts on those households affected. However, our research has identified wider impacts from a range of reforms that are likely to continue to grow. There is a strong case therefore to monitor these impacts in ‘real time’.

We would therefore recommend exploring the scope to develop a dashboard and monitoring system to ensure that the right data is being collected and assessed in order to understand and respond to welfare reform impacts.

Ideally, a local monitoring tool would be able to aggregate into a small number of headline indicators data from a range of sources – Jobcentre Plus, the benefits system, the Single Housing Benefit Extract (SHBE), the City Council (for example on DHP applications and awards) and local advice agencies. The tool should be focused on monitoring the impacts of a range of welfare reforms, by identifying the best proxies for specific reforms. For example these could include:

- Gaps between the levels of Housing Benefit paid and a household's rent for different household types in the Private Rented Sector – this should be possible from the SHBE
- Evictions from the Private Rented Sector – which may be available from the Housing Department
- Trends in homelessness and Temporary Accommodation – with some data available from public statistics and likely more detailed data collected locally
- Housing arrears in the social rented sector – which should be available from the Housing Department and from Housing Associations
- Trends in ESA applications, those found 'Fit for Work' and appeals – where limited data is available through National Statistics and more detailed data may be available through Jobcentre Plus/ DWP
- Applications, decisions and waiting times for the Personal Independence Payment – which is not currently available but may become available in the near future from DWP
- Trends in sanctions referrals, decisions and levels of sanctioning – available through Stat X-Plore
- Trends in residents accessing advice services, food banks and other local supports (including the reasons for accessing these services) – a number of local organisations stated that they collect this data

Ideally a tool would also allow for more detailed analysis beneath the headline indicators, of the characteristics of groups being impacted and the areas in which they live.

Identification

2. Build on existing triage tools to assess residents' needs across all welfare reforms – the INTRO model

Clearly, organisations will need to prioritise how they support residents affected by reforms. So monitoring data on its own is not enough – we also need tools that can then identify amongst those impacted which residents are priorities for additional support.

The Council has gone to great lengths to identify those most likely to be impacted by reforms, and to contact those affected by specific reforms. They have also done extensive work to develop a triage tool for prioritising support as part of its welfare reform pilots. This tool was used to identify residents affected by the Overall Benefit Cap and the Social Sector Size Criteria who may be in need of more intensive support (identifying 224 such residents). Prioritising amongst those affected by wider welfare reforms will likely require assessment against a different and wider set of considerations. This research, and discussions at the workshop on 10 April, point to five key parameters for a new assessment tool, which we summarise as the INTRO model:

Impact – understanding what reforms residents are impacted by and the financial impacts on them and their household

Needs – what support residents may need to manage or mitigate impacts, including support with housing, debt, managing health, improving skills, securing employment, increasing earnings

Type of family – our research suggests that lone parents and disabled people are likely to be priorities for support, other potential priorities could include families with children in local schools, those with adapted homes, low income workers

Resilience – families' ability to cope varies significantly even where other factors were similar, so assessing resilience is critical – specifically including their access to support networks

Options – a key message from the workshop was that for some families, even with intensive support, their options may be quite limited (particularly those who cannot afford to live in their current accommodation) – so assessment may need to prioritise or differentiate support depending on what options are realistically available (for example identifying where employment, housing or financial/budgeting support is most appropriate)

An assessment or triage approach would need to be sophisticated enough to prioritise households against these different parameters and then use this as the basis for appropriate signposting or referral to more specialist support.

So for example, **a low income working household in the private rented sector** may face high impacts, have clear needs to increase earnings and/ or find alternative housing, be a priority family if they have children in local schools, but be relatively resilient and realistically have quite limited options – around increasing employment and/ or moving home. So in those circumstances, it might be most appropriate to signpost to third-party skills, employment and/ or housing support in the first instance, and then follow up in 1-2 months.

On the other hand, **a workless household in the social sector** may face relatively smaller financial impacts, have specific needs around raising income and/ or financial management, be a relatively lower priority family for support, but have limited resilience and clear options for how issues could be managed and resolved with support. So they may be a priority for more intensive, short-term engagement.

We recommend that the Council builds on this research and its previous work on triage tools to develop a new triage model – based on the INTRO principles above – to identify those areas and groups who are impacted by reforms, have the greatest needs and are least resilient – with a focus on identifying options.

Part of this should be area-based, as now – with a focus on those areas with high concentrations of worklessness, social housing and ill health and disability. However, this should also bring in identifying large families in hotspots with high housing costs, particularly lone parents, and those single earner households who may be less able to cope.

Many of these will also be households without strong family or social networks, with drug or alcohol dependencies, and/ or with English as a second language.

3. Explore whether a common approach can be developed across agencies to identify priority groups, underpinned by data sharing

Residents impacted by reforms can come into contact with different parts of the City Council – the welfare reform team (where impacted by the Overall Benefit Cap or Social Sector Size Criteria), Customer Services (where they have arrears), housing services, Children’s Centres and schools; as well as a range of advice agencies, employment services, food banks and so on. This creates a range of potential opportunities to identify and refer individuals for support – i.e. to apply the ‘INTRO’

model described above – but also risks of duplication and even confusion and disorientation.

The workshop raised two linked issues: first, the need to ensure that staff in different organisations in frontline roles knew how to assess needs and then take appropriate action; and second, the need for this to be underpinned by effective processes for data gathering and sharing. This means moving on from using aggregate data to monitor impacts, to using individual contact and data to target support.

In order to address these issues, the Council and partners should look at the scope for developing a common approach across agencies – local government, Jobcentre Plus, health, housing, advice agencies and so on – to identifying households in need of additional support. This could work as a 'front end' and lighter-touch assessment of need as part of the INTRO model above when residents come into contact with services and have clear impacts as a result of welfare reforms, in order to identify those that should be referred on for a fuller needs assessment or additional support.

Alternatively (or alongside this), there may be scope to develop a 'No Wrong Door' model, as has been applied in some other local areas. These typically involve some co-location or close working between different agencies and/ or Council services, so that where residents come into contact with services and have wider support needs they are assigned a single 'key worker' who can then co-ordinate and join up that support.

Engagement

There were common concerns from those involved in our research that residents only engage with services when they have reached a crisis point – and many do not engage for cultural or other reasons (including poor health, poor mobility, language and literacy issues). This has been found in similar research in other areas.

Finding ways to engage earlier and more effectively is clearly critical. However, the most effective ways to engage – face to face and through networks or peers – are also the most time and resource intensive, and may have quite limited returns.

4. Develop an information sheet with key contacts for support services

One clear and quick win however, which a number of organisations raised, would be to develop a factsheet with key organisations that can support with different issues

or problems – housing, debt and financial support, employment support, training, family support, health and so on.

This could then be used by a wider range of services and agencies, as well as by local authority staff and on the doorstep by Councillors, as a relatively light-touch way of signposting residents to additional support. There may be scope to build on existing databases that have been compiled for the Thriving Families programme or by Jobcentre Plus.

5. Work through communities and local services to engage those further from support

Those involved in the workshop also suggested that communities themselves – as well as VCS organisations and local services like schools, libraries, Housing Associations and Children’s Centres – should take more responsibility in engaging residents affected by wider welfare reforms. Many have regular contact with residents and would be well placed to provide information and basic signposting to services or early warning to other agencies.

There may be scope to learn from examples where community champions and peer mentors have been used to disseminate information and engage vulnerable groups (for example in Manchester City).

In addition to this, there may be scope to link up efforts with the Council lead who is looking at how to engage communities that do not access Council services – and ensuring that communications around welfare reform impacts is central in this work.

Linked to this, a further way of engaging residents could be through closer linking between regeneration activity (which is targeting seven disadvantaged areas in Oxford) and welfare reform. This could include for example looking at the scope to target employment and skills support on those who may be able to increase their incomes in order to mitigate reform impacts.

6. Build on ‘Benefits in Practice’ to reach those with health conditions and disabled people

One key group that does not get regular support from Jobcentre Plus and is generally not in contact with Council services is those with health conditions and disabilities – including those that claim Employment and Support Allowance.

The ‘Benefits in Practice’ model was raised as a potential way of reaching these groups. Through it, the CAB has been funded by Oxfordshire Clinical Commissioning

Group to provide benefits advice in GP surgeries. There was a general view that doctors and health professionals themselves were generally not well placed to identify those impacted by reforms and/ or to engage residents. However, co-located services could.

We would recommend exploring the scope to build on this model in current and future health commissioning. This is likely to be a key group for engagement, particularly with the prospect of the rollout of PIP, and Benefits in Practice may provide a straightforward model to build on.

Delivery

7. For priority groups, explore the scope for integrated case management through a 'key worker' model

Finally, on delivery of services, we consider that there is a strong case for looking at how support can be more effectively co-ordinated across services – including housing, family support (including Thriving Families), Jobcentre Plus and local advice agencies. Many respondents were in contact with at least one agency, but had multiple issues or barriers. They were generally not positive about the quality of support that they received, including from the Council – often a result of receiving multiple letters with difficult to understand or different information, speaking to different people and not getting co-ordinated support. Those that reported better quality support were often in Council housing, and had a support worker who was able to provide more personalised and holistic support.

So better integrated provision could include for example greater joint working and planning with DWP and local colleges, co-location of advisers, joining up between health services and employment services, and working in partnership with housing associations.

This could be done most easily for residents that are already engaged with services (for example Jobcentre Plus, Thriving Families or housing services) through a 'key worker' approach that then looks to join up and pull in wider support as needed. This could build on the good practices within the City's welfare reform pilot – around holistic support and bringing together different services.

For those not engaged with services, there would be greater resource implications and therefore may be limited scope to implement or fund in the short term. This is explored in more depth under proposal 14 below.

8. Try to build in follow-up activity as well as signposting and referral

Residents are often signposted to other services where issues like debt, housing or employment are identified. However, these signpostings are not generally followed up to identify whether issues have been resolved or actions taken.

We would advise that particularly for those identified as priority groups for support, the Council builds in light touch follow-up with agencies to identify whether claimants have received support and/ or resolved their issues. If not, then they should be prioritised for case management support.

9. Jobcentre Plus should look to provide case-managed adviser support to residents who claim JSA and have significant welfare reform impacts

Jobcentre Plus is in regular contact with those households impacted by reforms that also claim Jobseeker's Allowance (and either have claimed for less than a year or have been through the Work Programme). In many cases they are best placed to lead on providing case-managed/ key worker support through their specialist personal advisers – as many of these residents will likely be relatively closer to work and would be able to manage impacts more effectively by finding a job.

It therefore makes sense for Jobcentre Plus to lead on case managing those impacted by reforms who are also within the JSA regime. This would require some re-prioritisation of resource, within the delegated flexibilities that JCP have. It would also require close co-operation and working with the City Council. We would therefore recommend exploring the scope to provide this support through JCP, where claimants are identified as being high priorities for support.

10. Build on existing employment and support and focus this on residents impacted by welfare reforms

Very few of those interviewed were actively engaged in employment support and most were a long way from work. However, there is a range of activity going on within the City, including engaging older people in Barton through Jobs Clubs, engaging lone parents with 'better off in work' calculations, and work by advice agencies to support residents to stay in work. In addition the Council is considering the scope to engage recruitment agencies in the future.

Many of those targeted for this support will also be priorities for support with welfare reform impacts. Therefore there is potentially scope to more closely target this support on those residents identified as being priorities for support to deal with welfare reform.

11. Explore the scope to work with City College to provide short, focused training as part of the offer to residents

It was suggested in the workshop that City College were ready to provide support through Adult Skills Budget activity. This funding can be drawn down to provide accredited training to claimants of JSA and ESA.

Given that there is potential funding and the will to provide support, we would recommend exploring the scope to work with the College to provide short, focused training to priority residents on employability, confidence and motivation, jobsearch techniques, budgeting and financial management and other areas that may support employment and generally greater resilience. This could have a particular focus on those most likely to benefit from this support – such as older residents in social housing; those with health conditions and lone parents.

12. Ensure that links are made with wider strategy and policy work within the Council

The workshop identified a plethora of strategies and policy areas where there were likely to be links across to supporting residents affected by welfare reforms. These included health and housing, wellbeing, mental health, transport and regeneration. It will be important to consider within each of these both the impacts of welfare reform, and the scope to support affected residents through those strategies.

In particular, there are areas where residents reported barriers and issues that extended beyond jobseeking, skills and housing – for example in access to flexible childcare, affordability of transport, managing health conditions, and so on. Addressing these will require that other strategy work takes into account the needs and priorities for those affected by welfare reforms.

13. Explore the scope for integrated casework for debt and arrears

One specific issue raised in the workshop was around how the Council can take a fragmented approach where residents have issues (including arrears) across Housing Benefit, rent collection, Council Tax and other debts.

One potential quick win, which would likely save the Council in the longer term, would be to have a more integrated approach to case managing those who are flagged as having multiple debts across Council services. This should be a priority for the City's Financial Inclusion Strategy. Doing this would also send an important message about the value in taking a holistic approach to supporting residents.

14. Develop the cost-benefit case for additional investment in managing reforms

In our view there is likely to be a clear fiscal case for engaging more systematically, through a 'key worker' approach, with those facing larger reform impacts. By avoiding evictions and expensive rehousing in Temporary Accommodation, and by supporting residents to move into work and stay in work, interventions can deliver clear savings that could exceed the costs of intervention.

There are opportunities to engage with central government on this through its work on public services transformation and localism, and clear(er) processes for how costs and benefits should be captured and estimated. Given the funding constraints around 'doing more' for residents, and the potential impacts down the line as gaps grow between benefits and living costs, we consider that there would be a strong argument to develop a cost-benefit case for greater local control over funding to support case managed support for residents.

15. Take the opportunity of the Local Support Services Framework

Oxford is ahead of many other authorities in considering and preparing for the impacts of Universal Credit. Our research suggests that many of those impacts – around digital inclusion, financial inclusion and different support needs – are likely to be felt most keenly by those with the greatest impacts from wider welfare reforms. As part of its medium term work, the Council should continue to explore how it can make the most of the Local Support Services Framework, as an opportunity to join up support services across agencies and support residents most likely to be impacted by reforms.

16. In the longer term, ensure that the need for affordable housing for low-income workers is a clear part of the planning cycle

At root, many of the most pressing issues identified in this research are a housing problem – city centre housing is unaffordable for those on low incomes including low

earners, and as Housing Benefit continues to fall behind rents this affordability problem will spread. Many of the steps above will help residents to manage these impacts in the short to medium term. However, in the longer term, there needs to be a clear focus on how housing strategy and the planning cycle can increase the supply of affordable units for low-income working families.

17. Develop the 'Oxford offer'

Finally, it is important to note that we found very strong buy-in to support residents affected by reforms across Council services, the voluntary sector and other agencies. We also found many examples of good practices and a strong commitment to testing and improving services. In the longer term, there is scope to pull all of these elements together – across monitoring, identification, engagement and delivery – into a compelling 'Oxford offer' for residents that claim social security benefits and that need support to move on and move up.

To: City Executive Board
Date: 12 March 2015
Report of: Head of Customer Services
Title of Report: Discretionary Housing Payments Policy

Summary and Recommendations

Purpose of report: To approve the revised Discretionary Housing Payments Policy

Key decision? Yes

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

Policy Framework: None

Recommendations: That the City Executive Board:

1. Approve the revised Discretionary Housing Payment Policy at Appendix 1

Appendices to report –

Appendix 1 – Revised Discretionary Housing Payments Policy

Appendix 2 – Risk Register

Appendix 3 – Equalities Impact Assessment

INTRODUCTION

1. On 12 June 2013 the City Executive Board (CEB) approved a new Discretionary Housing Payment (DHP) Policy. The most significant change to the new policy was to award DHP only where agreement is reached for the applicant to work on an action plan to reduce their reliance on DHP. Against a backdrop of significant welfare reform and consequent reductions in benefit entitlement, this approach was introduced to ensure that people being supported with DHP's were also taking steps to find more sustainable solutions to their situation.
2. Reductions in Housing Benefit made as part of the government's Welfare Reform programme have resulted in a significant increase in the number of applications for DHP's. The government temporarily increased DHP grants to Local Authorities in the last two years to meet this need. However, without supporting applicants to reduce their reliance on DHP's, there was a risk of

creating a dependency on this support, and creating demand which could not be met once the additional government funding was reduced.

3. The government announced a significant reduction in the national grant for DHP's on the 2nd February. From 2015/16 Oxford City Council's grant will reduce from £514,496 to £288,092, a reduction of 44%. However this is still well above the grant of £229,846 received in 2012/13 after the Local Housing Allowance reforms had been introduced.
4. The government has distributed the DHP grant on the basis of need, in relation to the impacts of the Benefit Cap, Bedroom Tax and Local Housing Allowance(LHA) changes. London Authorities and Northern LA's are more severely affected by the first two measures and receive the majority of those elements of the DHP grant. Perversely, the unaffordability of the private rented sector in Oxford means that we have seen a reduction in our LHA caseload in that sector, and consequently receive a lower allocation of DHP funding.
5. The reduction in funding requires the current policy to be reviewed. The main changes are outlined below. Appendix 1 contains the revised DHP Policy. Appendix 4 provides some information on the background and purpose of DHP's.

EXPENDITURE

6. The policy change introduced in 2013 helped to manage the increased demand for support arising from the introduction of the Benefit Cap and the Social Sector Size Criteria (known as the Bedroom Tax). Demand for DHP's had already increased as a result of the reduction in Local Housing Allowance (LHA) rates from 2011 (LHA is the name for Housing Benefit paid to private sector tenants).
7. In 2013/14 we spent £431,244.10 on 802 awards (82% of our grant) even though the government did not introduce Universal Credit during the course of the year which was anticipated when the budget was set. In 2012/13 we spent £196,371.81 on 373 awards, which was 85% of our grant. Expenditure in the current year, up until the end of December was £327,579 on 761 awards which represents 64% of our grant for the year. The projected outturn for 2014/15 is currently £481,000
8. The following table compares the details of DHP awards and expenditure by benefit category for the year to date with 2013/14. Please note that the category of "Other" relates to circumstances where an applicant is not entitled to full Housing Benefit. This will usually be as a result of having greater income than the minimum level which attracts full Housing Benefit or, due to deductions made in respect of non-dependant adults living at the property.

Breakdown of DHP applications

Reason for Claim	2013/14			2014/15 (1st 6 months)		
	Apps	Awards	Amount of awards	Apps	Awards	Amount of awards
Benefit Cap	226	215	£213,064.96	169	155	£166,208.80
Bedroom Tax	474	379	£124,386.18	267	223	£47,767.06
Local Housing Allowance	232	180	£93,005.42	176	141	£38,812.72
Combination	7	3	£1,681.36	3	3	£4,295.22
Other	67	25	£12,549.96	39	22	£3,410.28
Totals	1006	802	£444,687.88	654	544	£260,494.08

NB: The figures quoted in paragraph 6 above, are taken from the Benefits system, and are different from those in the above table. This is because the benefits system takes account of awards for claims which end prematurely, or where there are minor adjustments to the amount of benefit claimed, but cannot easily record the reason for the claim. Hence the reason for claims is recorded manually in a spread sheet together with the original award amount (the figure shown in the table).

9. 212 applications were turned down in the six months to 31.12.14. The main reason being that it was determined that the customer was able to afford their rent. In a small number of circumstances applications were turned down because the customer was not willing to undertake activities to help them find a more sustainable solution. However, often in such cases, the customer changes their mind once they start to accrue rent arrears.

Reasons for refusal:

Excess income	55
Failed to supply requested information	36
No rent shortfall	36
Unwilling to accept conditions of award	15
Failed to meet conditions of previous award	13
Means tested shortfall only	11
Other	10
Ineligible rent costs	9
DHP would not sustain tenancy	7
No longer affected by welfare reform	6
No HB entitlement	5
No long term plan to reduce DHP reliance	4
Expensive rent	3
Home Choice paying top up	2
Total:	212

10. The 761 awards made to the end of the December include 570 individual customers. 236 customers have received multiple awards during the year. Customers receiving a larger number of repeat awards tend to have complex needs. Analysis of DHP awards made over the last two years identifies 115 customers who have received multiple awards over both 2013/14 and 2014/15. Expenditure on these cases this year is £195,929, with the forecast expenditure for the year on these cases being approximately £250,000. This represents the minimum amount of DHP expenditure that the Council will need to make on an ongoing basis. The figure is likely to increase year on year as a result of rent increases exceeding the increase in housing support paid.
11. The analysis of repeat awards clearly demonstrates the importance of minimising dependency on DHP's wherever possible. Awards require action plans to be agreed so that customers are supported to manage their shortfalls themselves. Action plans have been agreed with applicants in 720 awards made this year. The top five actions are shown in the table below. An action plan would not be agreed for awards made for a short fixed period, such as supporting someone as they move into employment.

Reason	Total
Find work	329
Apply for another benefit	133
Debt Advice	132
Downsize*	105
Find cheaper accommodation	46

*Downsizing is applied to people occupying property which is larger than they need whereas "Find cheaper accommodation" is applied to people who are in the right size accommodation, but which is unaffordable.

2015/16 GRANT

12. Oxford's DHP grant for 2015/16 is £288,092. Regulations put a ceiling on the amount of additional funding a local authority can spend on DHP; this is 2.5 times the central government grant. Therefore for 2015/16 the ceiling is £720,230. Any expenditure over and above the grant, up to the ceiling, is a direct cost to the Council.
13. The Housing Service is committed to providing an additional £150,000 from Homelessness Prevention funding to supplement the DHP grant. This means there is a total fund of £438,092 to spend on DHP's in 2015/16.

POLICY CHANGES

14. The policy has been amended to give priority to applications from households with children and from people who have limited scope to change their circumstances. This helps to reduce child poverty whilst ensuring the Council supports people who are victims of circumstances, such as disabled people affected by the Bedroom Tax who have had adaptations made to their home.

For the latter group, it would not be cost effective for them to move due to the adaptations required at any new property.

15. Analysis in December of live Housing Benefit claims which have received a DHP this year shows that 52% of recipients have children and 10% have an additional premium relating to long term illness or disability, and are affected by the Bedroom Tax. Restricting the majority of DHP payments to these groups should result in the following amounts of expenditure:

Reason for DHP	2015/16 Expenditure
Benefit Cap	£250,000
Bedroom Tax	£30,000
LHA Changes	£50,000
Total	£330,000

16. A new policy aim has been added which is to support people who are transitioning into work, particularly those at the risk of homelessness. This helps to support the aim of the DHP policy which is to support people finding long term, sustainable solutions which prevents dependency on DHP's.
17. In determining awards, the policy has been changed to make the main consideration in making an award the scope which people have to reduce their reliance on DHP. With the government grant reducing it is important that DHPs are used to effect change in people's lives and enable them to become financially sustainable. Aligned to this is a requirement for repeat applicants to show the progress they are making in respect of any action plan agreed, and to be clear about what their next steps are. The policy also now says that where work is a reasonable outcome for someone, this will always form part of any action plan agreed with them.
18. Minor administrative changes have also been made to reflect the fact that the Welfare Reform Team now assesses all DHP's and to state how recipients of Universal Credit will be treated.

MONITORING

19. The consistency of decision making will be monitored by continuing to undertake a 10% check of all applications, whether successful or unsuccessful. In 2013/14 and 2014/15 regular reports have been made to Scrutiny Committee on DHP expenditure, and it is anticipated this will continue in 2015/16. Such monitoring will include detail of the amount of expenditure being made in respect of different Welfare Reform measures, and the number of cases receiving multiple awards throughout the year. Both actual and forecast DHP expenditure will be reported so that pressures can be identified as early as possible.

RISK

20. An evaluation of the risks associated with the implementation of this policy has been carried out. A detailed Risk Register is attached at Appendix 2.

ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT

21. No impact

EQUALITIES IMPACT

22. An initial impact assessment has been carried out and is attached at Appendix 3. No undue, adverse impacts have been identified. However as the DHP budget is finite, and needs to be allocated within set guidelines, monitoring will be carried out to ensure there are no unintended consequences of the policy to any specific group of customers.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

23. By making effective use of the Discretionary Housing Payment budget, and targeting awards effectively, the Council will save the costs of placing people in temporary accommodation or dealing with people who are homeless. Typically the cost of placing someone in temporary accommodation can be 18 times that of sustaining a tenancy using DHPs. There is a risk that the £388,092 of financial resources available to the Council will be insufficient to meet the level of eligible applications for DHP. Going forward officers will be carefully monitoring the situation, looking for additional funding and targeting awards to those least able to effect a change in their circumstances.

LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

24. The recommendations of this report are within the scope of the Child Support, Pensions and Social Security Act 2000 and The Discretionary Financial Assistance Regulations 2001 (SI2001/1167), and subsequent amendments. Whilst the regulations give a very broad discretion the Council has a duty to act fairly, reasonably and consistently. Each case must be decided on its own merits, and decision making should be consistent throughout the year.

Background Papers: None

Name and contact details of author:-

Paul Wilding
Revenues & Benefits Programme Manager
Benefits, Customer Services
Tel: 01865 252461 e-mail: pwilding@oxford.gov.uk

Oxford City Council's Discretionary Housing Payment Policy

1. Aims

- 1.1. The overarching objective of this policy is to distribute funding granted under the Discretionary Housing Payment scheme (DHP) in order to prevent homelessness. This will be achieved by providing short term relief to applicants in order to give them time to find more sustainable solutions to their financial arrangements. The policy is also intended to support people who have little scope to change their personal circumstances.
- 1.2. Demand for support through awards of DHP has increased since 2013/14 as a result of the introduction of under occupancy criteria in the social sector, and the Benefit Cap. These measures together with the reduction in the Local Housing Allowance rates are estimated to reduce the amount of Housing Benefit paid in Oxford by £5.6 million annually.
- 1.3. In addition to the overarching objective of the policy outlined in 1.1, the policy also aims to:
 - alleviate child poverty and keep families together
 - support vulnerable young people in the transition to adult life, including young people leaving care; and
 - support the vulnerable in the local community
 - support the transition into work, particularly for people at risk of homelessness

2. Determination of Applications

- 2.1. Applications for DHP awards must be made on the form shown at Appendix A. The Welfare Reform Team will consider all applications for DHP on their individual merit.
- 2.2. DHP's can not be awarded in the following circumstances:
 - To top up an award made under the Council Tax Reduction Scheme¹.
 - To contribute to the cost of ineligible service charges
 - To assist in paying for rent increases imposed as a result of incurring rent arrears
 - To assist in paying for rent costs which arise from the imposition of sanctions or reductions in Housing Benefit. These include any reduction made as a result of not complying with work related conditionality, or in arranging maintenance as directed by the Child Support Agency, or breaching a community service order.

¹ Section 13A of the Local Government Finance Act 1992 provides for Local Authorities to make reductions in the amount of Council Tax owed by an individual.

- 2.3. It is not intended to award DHP in the following circumstances, unless to do so would strongly support the policy objectives outlined above:
- To support households without children, where applicants have scope to improve their situation themselves
 - Assistance with moving costs, rent in advance, and deposits (unless moving to more affordable accommodation)
 - Shortfalls caused by a non-dependent deduction.
 - Where a DHP is requested for a backdated period
 - Where Capital in excess of £6,000 is held for people of working age, or £10,000 for those of pensionable age
 - Where the tenancy was not affordable when it was taken on.
 - Where an applicant has multiple outstanding debts, and professional debt advice has not been sought, nor a plan put in place to deal with the debt
 - Where there is affordable and suitable available alternative accommodation.
 - Where applicants have not taken steps to reduce or remove their need for DHP, and/or state the period of time they require the DHP.
 - Where multiple family units or households are living in one property, and another household could be expected to make additional contributions to the rent
 - Where fraud has been admitted or proven in relation to claims for Housing Benefit, Council Tax Benefit, Council Tax Reduction Scheme or Discretionary Housing Payments.

2.4 In deciding whether to award a DHP, the consideration will be given to:

- how the award will meet the policy objectives, with priority being given to:
 - households with children
 - applicants who have limited scope to change their circumstances (e.g. a disabled applicant affected by the underoccupancy rules who has had adaptations made to their property)
- the shortfall between Housing Benefit and the rental liability (unless Universal Credit is in payment, in which case the award can be any amount up to the amount of eligible rent);
- any steps taken by the claimant to reduce their rental liability;
- any steps taken by the claimant to find work, or increase their hours of work
- the financial and medical circumstances (including ill health and disabilities) of the claimant, their partner and any dependants and any other occupants of the claimant's home;
- the income and expenses of the claimant, their partner and any dependants or other occupants of the claimant's home. (All applicants will be required to complete an Income & Expenses Form.) Where it is felt that expenditure is inappropriate or incompatible with award of a DHP, the claimant will be referred for debt advice or financial capability support.
- any savings or capital that might be held by the claimant or their family;
- the level of indebtedness of the claimant and their family;
- the exceptional nature of the claimant and his / her family's circumstances;
- the amount available in the DHP budget at the time of the application;
- the possible impact on the Council of not making such an award, e.g. the pressure on priority homeless accommodation;

- any other special circumstances brought to the attention of the Welfare Reform Team.

3 Amount and condition of awards

3.1 The Welfare Reform Team will decide how much to award based on all the circumstances. However, the main determining factor will be a consideration of the applicant's scope for reducing their reliance on DHP's in the future. Where this is possible, awards will usually be made for a maximum of three months. If an applicant has limited options for making changes in their circumstances awards will be made for longer periods, of up to 12 months. An award of a DHP does not guarantee a further award at a later date even if the claimant's circumstances have not changed.

3.2 . The start date of the award will normally be:

- the Monday after the Welfare Reform Team receives the written claim for a DHP; or
- the date on which entitlement to Housing Benefit starts; or
- another date, where this fulfils the objectives of this policy better than the dates above.

3.3 An award of DHP will have conditionality attached to it in the majority of circumstances. Any conditionality will be linked to increasing the applicant's income, reducing their rental liability or reducing other outgoings. Examples of types of conditionality could include:

- Attending work related coaching with one of the Council's partners
- Actively looking for work, with or without the support of the Council, or one of our partners
- Registering for housing and bidding for suitable properties in each cycle
- Seeking assistance to manage debts
- Paying rent arrears
- Engaging with specialist support services

The intention of any conditionality is to assist the customer in improving their circumstances, it is not a punitive measure. However an award of DHP can be cancelled if a customer has not undertaken the agreed activity. Where employment is a reasonable outcome for someone, a condition related to moving into work will always be applied.

3.4 Where an application for DHP is made by a recipient of Universal Credit, the DHP award will be calculated in one of two ways. If an Alternative Payment Arrangement (APA) is in place to the applicant's landlord, the award will be the shortfall between the payment to the landlord and the applicant's rent (taking into account paragraph 2.2 above). This amount will be converted from a monthly to a weekly amount. Where an APA is not in place, the shortfall will be determined with reference to the applicant's income and expenditure details.

3.5 When making a repeat application for an award, the customer must have met the conditions applied to their previous award, be able to set out what actions they have undertaken as a result of that support, and explain their next steps in order to reduce their reliance on DHP awards. Such applications will require an interview with a Council officer before an award can be made.

4 Administration of Payments

4.1 Where the applicant appears to be entitled to another state benefit that they are not receiving, they will be advised to make a claim, and provided with details of other

agencies in the city who may be able to help with such a claim. Any DHP will be reviewed in light of the result of this claim.

- 4.2 The Welfare Reform Team may need to revise an award of a DHP where the claimant's circumstances have materially changed. Any revision to the award will take effect from the same day as any change to the Housing Benefit award. If a revision of an award leads to an overpayment then steps will be taken to recover this money if it is reasonable in the circumstances to do so.
- 4.3 A DHP will normally be made payable to the person receiving the Housing Benefit payment. Where Housing Benefit is paid to the landlord, and a DHP award is made for more than three months, the Welfare Reform team will review the claim to ensure that payment should continue to be made to the landlord.
- 4.4 DHP will be paid by the most appropriate means available. This will normally be by BACS transfer. The payment frequency will normally be made in line with payments of Housing Benefit.
- 4.5 Decisions regarding DHPs will be notified to the claimant within 10 working days of receiving the last piece of information required to determine the application, and will include:
 - Reasons for the decision
 - The start and end date of the award
 - The amount of the award
 - Conditions attached to the award
 - The claimants right of review
 - Advice that future awards may not be made
- 4.6 A more senior officer will review any DHP decision that is disputed by the claimant. If the decision is still upheld, any further dispute must be dealt with through the Councils complaints procedures and ultimately by judicial review.
- 4.7 Where a customer has a complaint in the way we have applied our policy, they may ask the Local Government Ombudsman to look at their case, after exhausting the Council's own complaints procedure.

5 Fraud

- 5.1 Oxford City Council is committed to the fight against fraud in all its forms. A claimant who tries to fraudulently claim a DHP by falsely declaring their circumstances, or providing a false statement or evidence in support of their application, may have committed an offence under section 2 of the Fraud Act 2006. Where the Welfare Reform Team suspects such a fraud may have occurred, the matter will be investigated and this may lead to the instigation of criminal proceedings.

6 Monitoring

- 6.1 Reports will be extracted from the DHP software on a monthly basis to ensure that expenditure is within budget and is correctly profiled to ensure no overspend at the end of the financial year. Overpayments will be reconciled on a monthly basis. A 10% check will be made of all DHP applications, whether successful or not, to ensure that decision making is consistent.
- 6.2 The reasons for making a DHP award will be monitored and reported based on the following list:

Benefit Cap
LHA Reductions
Housing Benefit reductions due to under-occupation
Combination of reforms
Other

This will be reported back to DWP in accordance with their requirements.

7 Communication of Policy

7.1 The Welfare Reform Team will publicise the scheme and will work with all interested parties to achieve this. A copy of this policy statement will be made available for inspection and will be posted on Oxford City Council's website.

8 Review

8.1 This policy is effective from 12 March 2015. It will be reviewed no later than 1 April 2017.

Application for Discretionary Housing Payment (DHP)

Section 1: About you

We may need to contact you to discuss your claim further. To help us to process your claim quicker, please give us your current contact details.

Full Name:

.....

Address:

.....

.....

..... Post Code:

Claim reference number: 80-

Home number: Mobile:

Email address:

Tick this box if you do not want us to contact you by text or email.

Section 2: About your circumstances

1. Why are you applying for DHP e.g. bedroom tax, local housing allowance (LHA) shortfall, benefit cap, personal circumstances?

2. What is your tenancy type?

Council Tenant Housing Association (please specify):

.....

Private Rented Other (please specify):

.....

3. Are you getting help from anyone at the moment e.g. Tenancy Sustainment, Connection, Crisis, Aspire, Mind, Advice Centre, Citizens Advice Bureau, Job Clubs, Social Services, etc?

4. Are you at risk of eviction? Please tell us what action your landlord is taking against you.

5. Have you applied for DHP before?

Yes- please answer question 6A

No- Please answer question 6B

6A. Please tell us what are you doing to meet the conditions of your last award?

6B. Please tell us what have you tried to do to improve your current situation?

7. Is there anything else you would like us to know about when we are considering your claim e.g. health, pregnancy, addiction issues.

Section 3: About your new DHP award

8. DHPs provide short term financial help for people who are working towards improving their situation so they can afford to pay their rent without this support in the future. Which of the following options are you taking or are you prepared to take to improve your situation?

- Employment/training towards work
 Downsizing (moving to a smaller home)
 Increasing working hours
 Debt/money advice
 Moving to cheaper accommodation
 Lodger
 Other (please specify below):

Section 4: About your financial situation

Please give us details of your Income and Expenditure as accurately and completely as you can. This information is needed to make a decision about your Discretionary Housing Payment. You may be asked to provide proof of the amounts declared.

Please state period as Y = yearly or Q = quarterly or M = monthly or W = weekly

Income					
Income Type	Period	Amount	Income Type	Period	Amount
Wages			Rent from lodger		
Wages (partner)			Industrial Injuries Benefit		
Jobseeker's Allowance			Pension Credit		
Income Support			State Retirement Pension		
ESA – Work Group			Occupational Pension		
ESA- Assessment Phase			Sick Pay		
ESA- Support Group			Maternity Pay		
Child Tax Credit			Carer's Allowance		
Child Benefit			Attendance Allowance		

Disability Living Allowance			Student Income/ Loans		
Personal Independence Payment (PIP)			Savings/ Investments		
Maintenance			Armed Forces Independence Payment		
Working Tax Credit			Universal Credit		
Money from Non-Dependant			Other (please specify)		

Bills					
Expenses	Period	Amount	Expense	Period	Amount
Rent (after HB*)			Pay TV/ Internet/ Phone Package		
Council Tax (after CTRS*)			Maintenance Payments		
Water Rates-metered			Service Charges		
Water Rates-not metered			Repairs		
Gas			Private Pension payments		
Electricity			Insurance e.g. contents, life, pets		
Coal/Wood/Other Heating			Other (please specify)		
TV Licence					
Mobile Phone 1					
Mobile Phone 2					

Travel					
Expenses	Period	Amount	Expense	Period	Amount
Public Transport			Disability Related Mobility Expenditure		
Petrol			Breakdown Cover		
Car/Van Insurance			MOT		
Road Tax			Other (please specify)		
Taxi					
Motorbike Insurance					

*HB- Housing Benefit

*CTRS- Council Tax Reductions Scheme

Please state period as Y = yearly or Q = quarterly or M = monthly or W = weekly

Housekeeping					
Expenses	Period	Amount	Expense	Period	Amount
Food			Childcare		
Takeaway			Healthcare Prescriptions		
Meals on Wheels			Health & Beauty (please		

Baby Food/ Milk			specify)		
Toiletries			Clothing		
Nappies			Disability Related Care		
Laundry/ Dry Cleaning			Expenditure		
Cleaning Materials			Haircuts		
School Uniform			Gym Membership		
School Meals			Other		
School Trips			(please specify)		

Other costs					
Expenses	Period	Amount	Expense	Period	Amount
Going Out/ Entertainment			Gambling		
			Holidays		
Savings			Investments		
Pets e.g. food, vets			Bank Costs		
Pocket money			Meals at work		
Afterschool Activities Clubs			Newspapers/ Magazines		
			Memberships/ Subscriptions		
Birthdays			Online Subscriptions		
Religious Holidays e.g. Christmas, Eid			Charities		
			Other (please specify)		
Cigarettes					
Alcohol					

Debt			
Expenses	Period	Amount	Total amount of debt
Personal Loans e.g. family, friends			
Pay Day Loans			
Credit Cards			
Rent Arrears			
Utility Arrears e.g. gas, water, electrics			
Council Tax Arrears			
Student Loans			
Hire Purchase			
Court Fines			
Maintenance Payments			
White Goods/ Furniture Loans			
Catalogue Payments			
Other (please specify)			

--

Section 5: About a backdate

If you want to request a backdated DHP, please answer the questions below. You may be asked to provide evidence.

1. What period do you want the payment to cover?

2. Why did you not make your claim earlier? Please give any other information you would like us to take into consideration when assessing your request for a backdate.

Section 6: Your declaration

I declare that the information I have given on this form is correct and complete.

I understand the following:

- If I give incorrect or incomplete information, the council may take action (including court action) against me;
- The council will use the information that I provide on this form in accordance with the Data Protection Act 1998;
- The council will use the information I have given to assess my claim for Discretionary Housing Payment, and I agree that the council can verify this if needed;
- I will tell the council about any changes in my circumstance that may affect my claim.

You can view the council's data protection policy and privacy notice at www.oxford.gov.uk/privacy

Your signature:

Date:

If you had help filling in this form or someone filled it in for you, please ask them to complete the next section.

I can confirm that I have completed this form on behalf of the claimant. The information contained within the form has been given to me by the claimant. The claimant confirms that this information is correct.

Name and relationship to you of the person who filled in the form:

Signature of the person who filled in the form:

Date:

**Appendix 2
Risk Register**

Nos.	Raised by	Date Raised	Probability	Impact	Gross Risk Score	Proximity	Description	Mitigation	Owner	Target Date	Revised Probability	Revised Impact	Residual Risk Score
193 DHP001	PW	22/1/15	3	4	12	Short term	Those most in need of support don't receive it due to budget being spent before EOY	Monitor expenditure monthly. Consider changing length and amount of awards during year to target those most in need	PW	31/3/16	3	3	9
DHP002	PW	22/1/15	4	3	12	Short term	Council challenged on application of policy by unsuccessful applicants.	10% check of applications carried out to ensure decision making is consistent	PW	31/3/16	2	3	6
DHP003	PW	22/1/15	2	4	8	Short term	Unintended negative impact on specific customer groups	Monitor successful and unsuccessful applications against the criteria established in the policy	PW	31/3/16	1	4	4

Appendix 3

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 changes proposed in the new DHP policy give priority to households with children and people with limited scope to change their circumstances. This latter group tends to comprise mainly people aged 45 to pension age, without children. A new policy aim has been added which is to support people who are transitioning into work, particularly those at risk of homelessness. This group tends to comprise mainly of single males. As such the groups who may be potentially disadvantaged by the changes in policy will be couples without children (both in work and out of work), and singles without children who are in work.

The Discretionary Housing Payment policy is intended to support those who are disadvantaged by changes to Housing Benefit rules, specifically the under occupation rules in the social sector, the Benefit Cap and the changes to Local Housing Allowance rates. The under occupation rules disproportionately impact older customers (from 45 to pension age) and people with a disability. The Benefit Cap affects mainly households where there are lots of children (and in most cases a single parent). The Local Housing Allowance changes impact mainly on households with children. As such, if the DHP policy is not applied correctly, these groups could be disadvantaged.

The CAB have expressed concern at the treatment of income related to disability benefits (Disability Living Allowance, Personal Independence Payment and Attendance Allowance). They believe that taking such income into account when determining DHP applications could be discriminatory as such income is intended to meet costs related to the illness or disability concerned. The Council's view is that it is reasonable to take such income into account provided that any expenditure related to such income is also taken into account. The presence of such income prompts officers to ask specific questions related to expenditure on care costs and related items.

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

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

The aim of amending the DHP policy is to maximise the number of families and individuals who are able to retain their tenancies in light of a reduction in the DHP grant provided by the government. In addition to the financial support that we can provide, our Welfare Reform team will assist customers in negotiating new rents with landlords, and in trying to find alternative accommodation if the rent is unaffordable. For people affected by the under occupancy rules in the social sector we will explore whether taking a lodger is an appropriate solution. Where this can not be found, we will continue to support them in their existing accommodation as far as the DHP budget allows.

The Welfare Reform team have developed strong partnerships with a wide range of support organisations. Where financial support cannot be provided, customers will be referred to appropriate organisations for support..

As the policy is discretionary people who are in groups at risk of being disadvantaged can still receive DHP awards if to do so meets the policy's broader objectives.

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

We are not consulting externally on the change to the DHP policy. There is no fundamental change being proposed to the DHP policy. As such the process of consultation may raise unrealistic expectations and would be an unproductive exercise at this point, as it would not generate any information that the Council hasn't already anticipated or did not know.

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

As this policy is discretionary, all applications will be considered on their merit. Where an application meets the aims of the policy, it is intended to provide support.

The policy is a fairly straightforward one to apply. CEB should note that, as it is a discretionary payment the Council are not intending to set out any circumstances in which we definitely wouldn't support someone. If an application meets various policy aims, it will be successful.

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 10% check of applications will be carried out to ensure consistency of decision making. This will be done for both successful and unsuccessful applications. Monitoring will be carried out on a monthly basis, and this will also include the reason for the application being made. Regular reports have also been provided to Scrutiny Committee in the last two years. It is expected that this will continue.

Appendix 4

Discretionary Housing Payment – Background Document

Discretionary Housing Payments (DHP's) are monies allocated by local authorities under legislation set out in the Child Support, Pensions and Social Security Act 2000 and The Discretionary Financial Assistance Regulations 2001 (SI2001/1167). In summary, the funds can be used to meet eligible rent for people already in receipt of housing benefit. The customer must make an application for the payment, and the council must consider the applicants financial need if an award is to be made. In effect, the fund allows some local discretion to meet the needs that are not covered by the national Housing Benefit scheme.

In the interests of administering the fund fairly and consistently, it is recommended that the Council has a clear policy and criteria on which to base these decisions. This should take into account the local housing situation and other significant factors. The amended policy is set out in Appendix 1 to this document.

Guidance from the Department of Communities & Local Government (DCLG) and the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) recommends using the DHP fund as one way of preventing and tackling homelessness. On occasions a small increase to Housing Benefit payments via the DHP fund can secure adequate housing at a much lower cost to the Council than dealing with the same customers as homeless. The guidance also advises that support from the DHP fund, should generally be temporary in nature.

Oxford City Council pays out around £67 million per annum in Housing Benefit to around 12,500 households. The majority of this is claimed back in subsidy from central government. Many of these households receive sufficient Housing Benefit to cover their rent in full. Those who do not, fall into the following categories:

1. Those that are working or have other income above the basic minimum levels. Their benefit is reduced in proportion to their income and capital.
2. Private sector tenants in properties considered too large by the national scheme for the household or more expensive than the average for Oxford.
3. Social sector tenants in properties considered too large by the national scheme.
4. People impacted by the Benefit Cap Families will be restricted to a total of £500 per week in benefits. This will be £350 for individuals. The following benefits are included in the Cap:
 - i. Bereavement Allowance
 - ii. Carer's Allowance
 - iii. Child Benefit
 - iv. Child Tax Credit
 - v. Employment and Support Allowance
 - vi. Guardian's Allowance
 - vii. Housing benefit

- viii. Incapacity benefit
- ix. Income Support
- x. Jobseeker's Allowance
- xi. Maternity Allowance
- xii. Severe Disablement Allowance
- xiii. Widowed Parent's Allowance (or Widowed Mother's Allowance or Widows Pension you started getting before 9 April 2001)

To: City Executive Board

Date: 12 March 2015

Report of: Head of Policy, Culture and Communications

Title of Report: Culture Strategy 2015-18: Consultation Responses

Summary and Recommendations

Purpose of report: This report provides background to the development of the draft Culture Strategy 2015 – 18, an overview of its vision and priorities and reports on the results of public consultation. It proposes approval of the strategy in the light of consultation.

Key decision: No

Executive lead member: Cllr Christine Simm, Board member for Culture and Communities

Policy Framework: Corporate Plan 2015-2019: Strong, Active Communities and Vibrant, Sustainable Economy.

Recommendations: That the City Executive Board considers the draft Culture Strategy 2015 – 2018 as set out at Appendix 1 and recommends it to Council for approval.

Appendices to report

Appendix 1: Draft Culture Strategy 2015-18
Appendix 2: Consultation process and events
Appendix 3: Initial Equalities Impact Assessment
Appendix 4: Risk Assessment

Background

1. The 2015-2018 Culture Strategy will play an important role in developing partnerships, enhancing cultural provision for Oxford's communities and highlighting the Council's commitment to cultural regeneration through new projects.
2. Since the publication of the Council's current Culture Strategy there have been substantial changes to Government policies, restructuring of the national development agencies including the addition of museums, libraries and archives to the Arts Council England portfolio and reduced national funding for arts and culture. Cultural organisations find themselves competing locally and externally for ever-decreasing pots of money.
3. It will become increasingly important to identify efficiencies and explore delivery models over the next three to five years. The Council's draft Culture Strategy is ambitious and also realistic in its ability to support and innovate.
4. The levels of disadvantage in the city underpin the City Council's belief that access to high quality cultural experiences can play a significant role in social as well as economic regeneration. The Council aims to work through partnerships to create a truly "joined-up" Oxford for our local communities.

Draft vision and priorities set out in in the draft Culture Strategy 2015 – 2018

5. The Council's vision for culture is:
To work in partnership with key stakeholders to deliver and support affordable and excellent cultural activities and events; enhance and leave a legacy in the lives of Oxford's individuals and communities; encourage youth attainment; engage our diverse communities; and develop skills and businesses in the city's creative sector.
6. The Council's three key priorities are to:
 - I. Support the sustainability of Oxford's cultural sector and improve the skills and diversity of the city's current and future creative workforce.
 - II. Improve opportunities for Oxford's diverse range of communities to actively engage with and be inspired by culture.
 - III. Improve opportunities for young people to access and actively participate in cultural activities.
7. The draft Culture Strategy (Appendix 1) sets out objectives for each of these priorities. Underpinning each of these priorities is a commitment to work in partnership, explore the barriers to participation faced by

different sectors of the community and find ways of removing these barriers to cultural engagement.

Consultation

8. The draft strategy was open to public consultation from the end of October to December 2014. The views of the Scrutiny Committee have also contributed to the development of the plan.
9. The priorities and objectives in the draft Culture Strategy 2015-18 derive from the Council's Corporate Plan. Those who responded to the consultation were very supportive of the priorities and objectives set out in the draft Culture Strategy, particularly those relating to young people. The consultation invited organisations and members of the public to contribute their views as to how these priorities and objectives could best be delivered.
10. In the light of consultation, the draft Culture Strategy has been amended to reflect the following issues:
 - Over 2015-18 Arts Council England (ACE) wants to see – and to be part of – highly collaborative approaches to tackling some of the ongoing opportunities/challenges for the culture sector in Oxford. ACE stressed the importance of influencing high level strategic partnerships – e.g. the Oxfordshire LEP – as a means of opening up funding opportunities for culture in Oxford. ACE argued that the Oxford Cultural Partnership should continue to act as the key strategic partnership for culture in Oxfordshire over 2015-18 and become even more focussed on how the sector can work together to seize joint opportunities e.g. shared audience development or cultural tourism initiatives.
 - Most respondents agreed with the need for new kinds of collaboration and digital approaches to achieving strategic aims.
 - Cultural organisations across Oxford each have their own areas of expertise and individuals with specific skill sets. Further integrated workshops such as the HLF workshop held at the Museum of Oxford and training in digital skills would be helpful.
 - University of Oxford is now providing funding for events such as the Cowley Road Carnival and Alice's Day
 - The first draft of the strategy did not adequately reflect the role that the Oxford Preservation Trust plays in the cultural life of the city, particularly through the annual Open Doors event, and the work of Oxford Castle.
11. Full results of the public consultation are set out in Appendix 2.

Level of risk

12. The draft Culture Strategy is low risk, although its non-adoption might result in the reduction or loss of funding to arts partners and City

Council cultural programmes such as the Museum of Oxford. A summary risk assessment is set out in Appendix 3.

Climate Change/Environmental impact

13. The strategy adheres to the City Council's policy on climate change. In 2013, the Culture team worked with Environmental Development to make Oxford City Council the first council in England to require funded cultural organisations to develop environmental sustainability action plans, measuring and reducing their energy use. This initiative has been nationally recognised and praised by Arts Council England.

Equalities impact

14. An initial Equalities Impact Assessment is provided at Appendix 2. The City Council's overriding concern in formulating its Culture Strategy has been to engage communities currently excluded from participation in the city's cultural life.

Financial implications

15. The Culture Strategy can be delivered through existing financial resources and through partnership agreements.

Legal Implications

16. Issues relating to governance and/or contractual matters may arise where cultural partners assist with delivery of objectives within the strategy. There are no other current legal implications.

Name and contact details of author:-

Name: Peter McQuitty

Job title: Head of Policy, Culture and Communications

Tel: 01865 252780 e-mail: pmcquitty@oxford.gov.uk

Background Papers: None

Culture Strategy 2015-18

1. Introduction

This strategy, developed with the support and engagement of the cultural sector and community groups in our city, explicitly links the City Council's vision for culture and the arts with the needs of the city's communities. There are significant levels of disadvantage in the city and the City Council believes that access to high quality cultural experiences - creating more quality cultural experiences for more people, more often - can play a vital role in regenerating communities and sustaining the city's economy.

The City Council develops and invests in cultural experiences that enrich people's lives. We deliver and support a range of arts and heritage activities in Oxford, including dance, music, theatre, literature, film, digital art, the Museum of Oxford and the city's archives.

In 2013/14, the City Council invested a budget of £389,000 to develop and sustain these cultural experiences for as many residents as possible. This investment helped leverage in an additional £6.6 million to the city's economy from grants, donations and earned income. In the same year, the cultural organisations and activities supported by the Council engaged audiences of more than 700,000 people, including 114,000 for cultural events organised by the City Council's Culture Team and 85,000 visitors to the Museum of Oxford.¹

This strategy:

- Provides demographic and other contextual information about Oxford
- Details the contribution of culture and the arts to the delivery of the City Council's Corporate Priorities, in particular Vibrant, Sustainable Economy and Strong, Active Communities
- Outlines the City Council's priorities for culture and the arts over the next three years
- Sets out objectives for each of the priorities and information about how progress will be monitored.

The City Council has three key priorities for culture:

¹In 2013/14, commissioned organisations reached an audience of 483,847, received total of £274,262 grants and leveraged in an additional £6,114,276. Culture Fund Round 1 projects reached an audience of 7130, were awarded total £5,820 grants and leveraged in an additional £125,887. Culture Fund Round 2 projects were awarded total £5,163 grants. Round 2 data on leveraged income and audiences will be received by October 2014. Programming Grants projects reached an audience of 4,086, were awarded total £5,600 and leveraged in an additional £4,570. The Museum of Oxford reached an audience of 85,421, cost the Council £35,014 and leveraged in an additional £131,078 towards delivery. Cultural City Events reached an audience of 114,000, cost the Council £56,223 and leveraged in an additional £150,943 towards delivery. Dancin' Oxford's 2013 programme reached an audience of 6955, cost the Council £7,095 and leveraged in an additional £67,421 towards delivery. 2013/14 Totals (excluding Culture Fund Round 2 leveraged income and audience data): Audiences 701,018, Council investment (grants and project delivery) £389,177, Leveraged income £6,594,175.

1. Support the sustainability of Oxford's cultural sector and improve the skills and diversity of the city's current and future creative workforce.
2. Improve opportunities for Oxford's diverse range of communities to actively engage with and be inspired by culture.
3. Improve opportunities for young people to access and actively participate in cultural activities.

The strategy's time-span reflects national funding arrangements. The funding for Arts Council England's National Portfolio Organisations (NPOs) ends in March 2018 and their delivery programmes and 3-year targets also run to this timetable. As this will mark a time of change for cultural funding at a national level, we will update Oxford's Culture Strategy in 2018.

2. Our vision for culture and the arts

Our shared vision for culture is:

To work in partnership with key stakeholders to deliver and support affordable and excellent cultural activities and events; enhance and leave a legacy in the lives of Oxford's individuals and communities; encourage youth attainment; engage our diverse communities; and develop skills and businesses in the city's creative sector.

This vision will be delivered through partnership working, high quality cultural experiences and a commitment to accessibility.

Partnership

The City Council is committed to retaining a partnership model for delivery of culture and the arts. Oxford City Council directly delivers some cultural services, for example the Museum of Oxford, city events and culture forums for skills development. We also help develop and sustain the city's cultural sector through the provision of core and project funding and by supporting cultural partnerships. Partnership working with the city's major stakeholders (the two Universities, County Council, the Oxford Strategic Partnership and the LEP) will enable us to create a collective vision of Oxford's cultural offer for its residents, artists, businesses and tourists. Working together already has and will continue to create more and better cultural opportunities, reduce duplication, and maximise funding potential.

This has been demonstrated through the activities of the Cultural Partnership Group, which fulfils a key strategic leadership role for culture in the city. This group comprises the various Oxford-based organisations core funded by Arts Council England (ACE) and the City Council, as well as the city's other cultural funders; Oxford University, Oxford ASPIRE Museums Consortium and Oxfordshire County Council. Current members are: Oxford Playhouse, Pegasus Theatre, Modern Art Oxford, Oxford Contemporary Music, Film Oxford, OVADA, Arts at the Old Fire Station, Ark T, Fusion, Cowley Road Works, the Story Museum, Oxford Philomusica, and Experience Oxfordshire. See Appendix 1 for full details of members. The City Council is working with the Cultural Partnership Group and Arts Council England to

share best practice and develop sustainable projects with arts and cultural organisations. Working in partnership enables organisations to make the most of public funding and ensures arts and culture in the city can be world-class and available to all.

In the period 2015-18 Arts Council England wants to see – and to be part of – highly collaborative approaches to tackling some of the ongoing opportunities/challenges for the culture sector in Oxford. Arts Council England is working to influence high level strategic partnerships – e.g. the Oxfordshire Local Enterprise Partnership – as a means of opening up funding opportunities for culture in Oxford. Arts Council England believes that Oxford’s Cultural Partnership Group should be the key strategic partnership for culture in Oxfordshire over 2015-18 and become even more focused on how the sector can work together to seize joint opportunities.

Cultural organisations across Oxford each have their own areas of expertise and individuals with specific skill sets. Collaborative approaches to sharing knowledge in areas such as grant applications, audience development and digital technology will contribute to achieving joint strategic aims.

In 2013, the Culture Team worked with the City Council’s Environmental Development team, Julie’s Bicycle and Arts Council England to become the first UK Council to require funded arts organisations to develop environmental sustainability plans to reduce energy use in the sector. We will continue to co-ordinate with other City Council departments – particularly Licensing, Direct Services, and Planning - to enhance sustainability, overcome practical barriers to delivering cultural activity and to embed the arts in future Council infrastructure development.

Quality

The City Council and its partners believe that cultural provision – whether it takes the form of museums that reflect our past and present, or the artsthrough which we share and celebrate our experiences – plays a profound role in shaping people’s attitudes and aspirations. As such, the quality of cultural provision can benefit our communities and economy as well as providing opportunities for creative work. Excellent cultural provision reflects the talent, ambition and skill of our cultural sector and the diversity of our communities.

National funders such as Arts Council England make evidence of quality a prerequisite for their grants; an approach which also underpins funding decisions made by the City Council. We will continue to work closely with key national agencies such as Arts Council England and we support their strategic aims.

“The importance of the relationship between excellence and engagement cannot be understated. For example, the value of museums is generated not only by the excellence of their collections, but by how these collections are interpreted, how they inspire, and how they change the people that visit or

encounter them. Arts organisations also achieve excellence when their work fully engages with, challenges or connects with an audience."

Great Art and Culture for Everyone, Arts Council England

Accessibility

We believe that access to high quality cultural experiences is the right of all our citizens. We are committed to providing and supporting opportunities for all of Oxford's residents to engage with arts and cultural events and activities, with a particular focus on work which reaches and represents our young people and diverse communities. We want to ensure that more people of all ages, ethnicities and locations within Oxford have the opportunity to engage in great cultural experiences, particularly those people who are currently least engaged with arts and heritage.

The City Council and its partners believe that access to excellent cultural experiences can be a significant driver of regeneration, economic sustainability and community cohesion by encouraging different groups to enjoy and share their different traditions. Our aim - working with our partners in the cultural sector - is to increase access from all our communities to good quality cultural opportunities and events, at affordable prices, in a range of venues and locations.

The City Council will continue to work closely with other regional funders and authorities to identify collaborative opportunities to enhance and ensure access to culture. In particular, we will work with Arts Council England and Oxfordshire County Council through the Cultural Partnership Group, Oxfordshire Arts Partnership, Oxford Strategic Partnership and the Oxfordshire Local Enterprise Partnership.

3. Building a world class cultural offer for everyone

Oxford is one of the most photographed, filmed, and written about cities in the world. The enduring media images are of historic Oxford, where much of the city's heritage environment and many of its cultural attractions directly reflect the University of Oxford's influence on the development of the city.

Oxford's rich cultural heritage does not derive only from the University. It also includes the motor industry and other developments that have shaped modern Oxford. However, these images of historic Oxford are central to our flourishing tourist industry because it is the historic heart of Oxford that millions of tourists visit every year.

Oxford has a long history of cultural innovation. The country's first Botanic Garden, the world's first public museum (the Ashmolean in 1682) and the world's first music room (Holywell) are part of the city's cultural heritage. Oxford's contemporary cultural sector is also innovative, rich and diverse. It is not the purpose of this strategy to (attempt to) set out a complete picture of Oxford's cultural offer and the following paragraphs merely hint at the richness of this offer Oxford.

The offer includes national museums and world-famous heritage sites. The annual Oxford Open Doors event, a partnership between the Oxford Preservation Trust and Oxford University, plays an important role in enabling local people to access these heritage sites and a cross-section of the city's treasures. It includes a commercial creative sector, and a myriad of voluntary arts organisations, folk and dance and literary festivals. The Sunday Times Oxford Literary Festival, for example, is an annual event where people can listen to and meet authors discussing a wide variety of topics. Oxford has thriving contemporary art and theatre produced and showcased by nationally-recognised organisations such as Oxford Playhouse, Modern Art Oxford, Oxford Contemporary Music, and Pegasus. The Oxford Castle Quarter, including Oxford Castle Unlocked and the O3 Gallery, has been part of a consistent city cultural offer since the site was redeveloped in 2006 and has hosted events such as the Ghost Fest, Folk Festival, Dancin Oxford, Theatre Performances, a Medieval Fair, and the Britain/Earth from the Air exhibition.

Oxford's world class music scene provides music for all tastes. Oxford Philomusica, The City of Oxford Orchestra and others play to enthusiastic audiences. Franz Schubert has been at the core of the Oxford Leier Festival since 2002 and in 2014 the festival presented the first complete performance of his body of songs over a three week period. Oxford has a strong reputation as a source of innovative new music and Oxford Contemporary Music, for example, is a leading commissioner of new music. While Radiohead and Foals are international rock names, new local talent is always being encouraged. The Oxford Punt festival, organised by *Nightshift* magazine, offers an annual showcase of Oxford's best new unsigned music, featuring twenty acts across five venues in the city centre on one night. The city also hosts vibrant community events such as the Christmas Light Festival, May Morning, Alice's Day and the Cowley Road Carnival.

The combination of prestigious, world-famous institutions alongside a more informal, but still high quality, network of smaller venues and organisations is central to Oxford's cultural identity and strength. Appendix 1 includes details of the organisations we fund which contribute to the city's vibrant cultural scene.

Historic Oxford is only one part of our city's story. Contemporary Oxford is a densely packed urban space, with a population of around 152,000 living in an area of only 17.6 square miles. Oxford's population grew by 12% over the decade 2001–2011, making it the sixth fastest growing English city. The population is projected to continue to grow, reaching 161,000 by 2019. There are 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.

There are major inequalities in life chances and life expectancy in our city. Relative to the rest of Oxfordshire, Oxford has high levels of deprivation. The Index of Multiple Deprivation 2010 ranks Oxford 131 out of 354, placing it in the top half of the most deprived local authority areas in England. Of 85 areas in Oxford, 12 are among the 20% most deprived areas in England, with one area in Northfield Brook ward among

the 10% most deprived. Around 22% of Oxford's children live in low-income households, and child poverty is a key concern in eight neighbourhoods which feature among the 10% worst affected in England. In some areas, half of all adults have no qualifications and this is linked to lower incomes, poor health and child poverty. Oxford has over 9,000 working-age residents claiming benefits –the highest percentage in the county. Life expectancy in the most deprived areas is up to ten years less than in the wealthiest areas.

Our diverse communities

We are committed to engaging Oxford's diverse communities with the city's cultural opportunities and consider diversity not only in terms of ethnicity, but also age, disability, and economic circumstances.

The 2011 Census showed that 16,000 Oxford residents were retired, 21,000 were self-employed or working part time, 43,000 worked full time, 33,000 were full time students over the age of 16, and 25,000 were children up to the age of 15. According to the 2011 Census, 12% of Oxford's population (18,850 people) said they suffered from a limiting long-term illness or disability; 3,100 people aged 16-74 years said they were permanently sick or disabled and therefore not working or looking for work (3% of this population); and 11,700 people said that they had caring responsibilities.

According to the Office of National Statistics 2012 mid-year estimate, 24% of Oxford residents (36,507) were over the age of 50. A Needs Assessment for Older People in Oxford undertaken in October 2013 included feedback from older people which confirmed that they have a huge variety of interests and social preferences. The report also highlighted a strong sense that mental health issues among the older population are often directly linked to isolation and loneliness. Research in the report demonstrates that tackling isolation is fundamental to fully addressing all other need relating to income, employment, health, safety, security and access to information.

In marked contrast to the surrounding county, Oxford is an ethnically and internationally diverse city. 22% of residents were from a black or minority ethnic group in 2011, compared to 13% in England. An additional 14% of residents are from a white but non-British ethnic background. Ethnic diversity increased markedly between 2001 and 2011; the number of people from all ethnic groups increased, with the exception of people in the White British and White Irish ethnic groups. The largest non-white ethnic groups represented in Oxford are Pakistani, Indian, Black African, 'other Asian' and Chinese ethnic groups. The child population is considerably more ethnically diverse than the older population, which is one reason why the population is expected to become more ethnically diverse in the future.

Oxford has long been a destination for international migrants, be it for work or study. There are over 30,000 students studying full-time at the two universities, and there is significant annual turnover in their number. The 2011 Census showed that

28% of Oxford's population was born outside the UK. The most common countries of birth were Poland, USA, Germany, India and Pakistan. In 2011, 6,800 people - 4% of the city's population - said they had moved to Oxford from outside the UK in the last 15 months.

Our young people

As part of its commitment to building a world class city for everyone, Oxford City Council aims to reduce the extent of inequality and to improve the lives of the most vulnerable members of our society. We particularly want to improve outcomes for young people.

This is particularly important for our young people in Oxford, where there are major inequalities in life opportunities. For a long time, attainment levels of pupils in Oxford's state schools have been significantly lower than the national average. Although they have been improving in recent years the performance of Oxford pupils – particularly those in economically deprived areas - is still below the national average. Pupils living in economically deprived areas have particularly poor results. Improving educational attainment and access to cultural education and experiences are integrally related and are key priorities for the City Council.

The City Council has invested in improving educational attainment in the city, particularly in the more deprived neighbourhoods. Access to quality cultural experiences and exposure to the practical skills that the arts require play a key role in high performing educational environments and this will also be the case in Oxford.

4. Public Attitudes to Cultural Facilities and Services

According to Arts Council England Stakeholder Focus Research from April 2014, the majority of the general public support public funding of the arts, with levels of support at their highest level since records began. When asked what public funding of the arts should achieve, the three objectives considered to be most important are;

- Giving every child the opportunity to access arts and culture
- Enabling access to arts and culture for people who would not normally have that opportunity
- Encouraging more ordinary people to engage with arts and culture

This increase in support for public funding is mirrored by an increase in levels of arts engagement. According to national Taking Part Survey results, in 2012/13, 9 in 10 children aged 5-15 had engaged with the arts in the last week, marking a significant increase since 2008/09. Levels of adult engagement with the arts are also increasing year on year. Cultural events such as the Christmas Light Festival received almost three times as many visitors in 2013 compared to 2012, while the majority of Oxford's adult residents have attended a theatre performance in the previous year. Adults from black and minority ethnic communities, however, continue to have lower levels of engagement with museums, galleries, or the arts than white adults.

According to the City Council's Living in Oxford Talkback Survey in Spring 2014, an increasing proportion of Oxford residents consider cultural facilities to be among the most important attributes in making the city a good place to live, and satisfaction with these facilities is improving. Satisfaction with Museums and Galleries is amongst the highest of all City Council services.

Nationally, Museum and Gallery attendance rates are also at their highest since surveys began, with the majority of adults having visited a museum or gallery in the last 12 months. The Museum of Oxford has experienced this increase in visitor numbers, with a 20% increase in attendance in 2013/14.

With increasing levels of demand and interest in arts and heritage activities, along with recognition of the educational, health and wellbeing benefits of cultural engagement, there has never been a stronger need to deliver and support high quality cultural activity in order to make it accessible for all.

5. Culture and community benefit

Corporate Priority: Strong, Active Communities
Our ambition: Communities that are socially cohesive and safe, and citizens who are actively engaged in pursuing their own well-being and that of their communities.

Culture has the potential to bring people together from all areas of life, break down barriers, and build strong communities by increasing the sense of local identity and belonging. Oxford City Council works with its cultural partners to co-ordinate and strengthen cultural provision, working particularly with the more deprived communities of the city.

The success of the Christmas Light Festival, which received 100,000 visitors in 2013, and the Cowley Road Carnival, which was attended by 45,000 people in 2014, strongly illustrate the value and popularity of opportunities for people to come together through community events and festivals. It is particularly positive to note that 68% of respondents to the Talkback Survey in Spring 2014 agree that Oxford is a place where different nationalities and ethnicities get on well together.

Many of the city's cultural organisations already offer successful and well-resourced outreach services. The Museum of Oxford received 85,000 visitors in 2013/14 and runs formal and informal learning programmes which reach almost 4,000 residents each year. Funded organisations including Film Oxford, Modern Art Oxford, Pegasus and Oxford Playhouse provide free cultural activities in leisure centres as part of the council's Youth Ambition programme. The City Council's Christmas Light Festival in 2013 worked with almost 800 young people from 27 city schools and community groups to create a spectacular lantern parade inspired by Oxford's industrial and cultural heritage, from William Morris' cars to CS Lewis' Narnia characters.

CASE STUDY: Health and Wellbeing / Dance for Parkinson's

The City Council's Dance for Parkinson's Project is run in partnership with English National Ballet, engaging with 21-25 participants on a weekly basis. ENB commissioned a Roehampton University research study into the effects of dancing with Parkinson's, and the results were compiled into a BUPA award-winning study. That study concluded that dancing positively affects people with Parkinson's, enabling them to achieve more physically and helping them to rise above some of the limitations of their neurological condition. Participants relish the social interaction and, in some, it encourages a more positive outlook on their lives. One of the most noticeable aspects of the project was how it engenders confidence, as well as body awareness and relative physical dexterity. The study argues that faced with an unpredictable disease, a project that encourages confidence, greater awareness of one's own movement potential, social interaction and communal bonding is vitally important to those who live with Parkinson's.

CASE STUDY: New models for social inclusion / Arts at the Old Fire Station

The Old Fire Station is a flagship project for the City Council. One of the most innovative projects in the country, it brings together the Crisis Skylight Centre – a training centre for homeless people - and Arts at The Old Fire Station – a professional arts centre for the public. The centre combines a theatre, dance and artists' studios, a cafe, a gallery and a shop selling hand-made contemporary craft and design. It also provides training and support to help homeless people into further training or work. This is a unique model of social inclusion bringing artists, homeless people and the public into the same space. Over the coming years, the Old Fire Station will extend its offer to the public, support more emerging artists and find more ways to include vulnerable adults in making, presenting and supporting high quality work. They will also be evaluating impact and the significance of including marginalised people in a high quality, highly valued public arts centre.

CASE STUDY: International connections / Pegasus

Pegasus, Oxford's theatre for young people in East Oxford – consolidated by a £4m rebuild – continues to go from strength to strength. Since 2011, Pegasus has led Mesh, Oxford's first International Youth Arts Festival. Mesh is co-planned, run and hosted by and for young people from Oxford, France, Germany, the Netherlands, Croatia, Lithuania and Russia. Mesh 2014 was made possible by the support of many individuals and organisations including British Council Youth in Action Programme, Oxford City Council, Oxfordshire County Council and Oxford Bus Company. This project complements the work done through the City Council's own international links programme and offers opportunities for exchange projects involving young people from our twin cities.

6. Culture and economic benefit

Corporate Priority: Vibrant, Sustainable Economy
Our ambition: A strong local economy, supported by effective education and training.

The cultural sector benefits Oxford's economy through direct job creation and skills development, attracting other businesses and their employees to locate in a world-class cultural environment, and using City Council support to leverage income from other funders and visitors.

Every £1 of City Council investment in cultural organisations in 2013/14 equated to more than £22 of extra funding and benefit.²

With high levels of economic as well as social return on investment, the City Council is committed to supporting Oxford's creative and cultural industries. The UK's Creative Industries are the most successful in Europe. They contribute more than £8m per hour to the UK economy, generate more than £70bn a year, and are outperforming all other sectors of the UK economy. Jobs in the creative and cultural sector are expected to increase up to a third by 2020, while volunteering in the sector continues to provide skills development opportunities and enhance community engagement.

In keeping with this national trend, Oxford's cultural sector contributes significantly to building a vibrant and sustainable local economy. Culture has a strongly positive economic impact on Oxford, with cultural events attracting secondary spend up of more than £1million over a single weekend, tourists to the city spending £721million in 2012, and arts organisations funded by the City Council leveraging more than £6million of additional funding from grants, donations, sponsorship and earned income with our support.³

CASE STUDY: Creative Economy jobs

Total Creative Economy employment across the UK increased by 8.8% from 2.4 million jobs in 2011 to 2.6 million jobs in 2013. This increase compares with a 2.4 per cent increase in the total number of jobs in the wider UK economy over the same period. By 2013, one in every 10 jobs in the South East was in the Creative Economy, with 50,000 of these jobs in Music, Performing and Visual Arts, 40,000 jobs in Publishing and 16,000 jobs in Museums, Galleries and Libraries. Oxford is recognised internationally for its cultural sector which provides employment for thousands of the city's talented workers. The challenge over the next three years will be in supporting the resilience of cultural sector organisations and ensuring our current and future workforce is appropriately skilled to sustain and grow the sector.

CASE STUDY: Cultural Events

The Christmas Light Festival in November 2013 attracted an audience of more than 100,000 people over three days, making it the largest annual cultural event in the city and generating a total gross expenditure of £1.8million. The festival weekend also resulted in an increase in footfall of 20,750 people in Cornmarket compared to

²Commissioned cultural organisations received total of £274,262 grants and leveraged in an additional £6,114,276 in 2013/14. Every £1 of grants awarded enabled organisations to leverage £22.29 from other sources.

³ The total gross expenditure generated by the 2013 Christmas Light Festival was estimated at £1.8million.

the previous, non-festival weekend. Audience data revealed an average spend of £17 per person, with an estimated transport spend of £102,000 by festival audiences. The event secured funding from Arts Council England, MINI Plant Oxford, British Gas, Westgate and the University of Oxford, as well as a range of local businesses. With events such as the Light Festival, Cowley Road Carnival and OxfordOxford attracting large audiences, the city's economy will continue to benefit from cultural events as long as we work with partners to enable them to happen.

CASE STUDY: Cultural Tourism

Oxford's dazzling architectural heritage, and the rich offerings of the Ashmolean and other museums, means that tourism plays a key part in the local economy. In 2013, Oxford was the seventh most visited city in the UK and is the tourism gateway to the rest of Oxfordshire. We attract approximately 9.5 million visitors per year, generating £770 million of income for local Oxford businesses. We would like visitors to stay longer in the city and to explore areas beyond the city as well. In order to facilitate this we worked with partners to set up Experience Oxfordshire, an organisation working to improve the management and marketing of tourism in Oxford and throughout Oxfordshire. Oxford led the way in formalising the link between culture and tourism, acknowledging that culture is an attraction for visitors and that tourism can be an audience development tool for the cultural community. Currently, cultural tourism tends to focus on historic Oxford. While Oxford's heritage will always be the primary attraction, Oxford also has a thriving contemporary cultural scene which is under-represented in the tourist offer.⁴ We are working with Experience Oxfordshire and cultural partners to maximise the role that culture can play in Oxford's tourism offer. This has the potential to bring further benefit to the local economy.

7. Funding

Since 2010, the Government - while acknowledging the ability of the cultural sector to deliver economic, social and wellbeing benefits - has cut funding to arts and heritage and is promoting philanthropy and increased earned income as the solution to this funding gap. In reality, many cultural organisations lack the capacity and connections to make philanthropy work for them, despite the fact that their work can have a transformative effect on the communities they engage. Even regional organisations with the skill and time to secure corporate and donor support struggle with 68% of all business investment and 90% of individual giving in the arts going to London. Continuing reductions to local government funding are also impacting on the ability to fund culture (and other services). Cultural organisations find themselves competing locally and externally for ever-decreasing pots of money.

Despite the current context of reduced national funding for culture, the City Council remains committed to funding arts and cultural organisations in Oxford, as well as supporting them to diversify their income streams and enhance their sustainability. Core funding from public sources helps to encourage innovation and new initiatives

⁴ See Appendix 1 for examples.

at the grass-roots level and to ensure that engagement with and participation in cultural activities is available to everyone, not just the wealthy.

Oxford City Council core-funded 10 cultural organisations in 2013/14 at a total cost of £274,000. With this support, these organisations leveraged in more than £6 million of additional funding from other sources, including sponsors, national funding bodies and earned income. In 2014/15, the City Council added 2 organisations to the core funded group and increased the total awarded to £278,000.

Art projects and activities funded through Oxford City Council's open bidding, small grants and ward member budgets in 2013/14 totalled £17,761.20, providing support for activities including dance sessions for older people, free film screenings in parks and a women's music project in Cowley. In 2012/13, the City Council piloted the Culture Fund, awarding £6,000 to 6 projects that contributed to the delivery of the Culture Strategy. This support enabled these projects to leverage an additional £85,188 from other sources, equating to more than £14 of extra funding and benefit for every £1 of Council investment. Results for 2013/14 Culture Fund grants are currently being collated. Since 2013, Oxford City Council has also allocated between £21,000 and £25,000 per year to Culture Fund grants and cultural development projects, supporting skills development and training for artists and funding projects which contribute to delivering Culture Strategy priorities. The City Council will build on these successful initiatives over the next three years.

CASE STUDY: Arts Council England investment in Oxford

Between 2015 and 2018, Arts Council England will invest £5.4m in its Oxford NPOs and a further £4.4m in the Oxford ASPIRE museum consortium. This investment will make a significant contribution to Oxford's economy and is dependent on the City Council's support for many of these organisations. Arts Council England explicitly state that they will not enter a position where they become the sole public funder in a local authority area. It is extremely positive to see City Council funding enabling Oxford's cultural organisations to leverage in such significant investment, providing jobs as well as high quality cultural activity for our residents and visitors.

CASE STUDY: Investing in High Speed Broadband

The City Council's Super Connected Oxford team have worked with cultural partners to raise awareness of the opportunities afforded by this DCMS funding to boost wireless infrastructure and broadband speeds, with museums and galleries in the city looking set to benefit from approximately £300,000 of support by the time the project is complete in 2015. Making wireless broadband freely available to the public in the city's cultural venues is expected to enable new types of audience engagement from internet of things installations to bespoke app tours.

CASE STUDY: Investing in Oxford's cultural infrastructure

Four members of the Cultural Partnership Group - The Museum of Oxford, the Story Museum, Oxford Playhouse and Modern Art Oxford - will be undertaking capital developments over the next three years, which will further enhance Oxford's cultural

infrastructure and provide more opportunities to engage with the city's arts and heritage offer. It has already been confirmed that three of these developments - Modern Art Oxford, Oxford Playhouse and the Story Museum - will benefit from a total of more than £4.6m in Arts Council England Capital Grants. This funding will enable these organisations to develop inspirational spaces and programmes. City Council support contributed to the ability of these organisations to leverage this additional funding, which will in turn contribute to their future sustainability. The planned Westgate development also looks set to further strengthen and connect cultural organisations and heritage sites including Oxford Castle with the city's retail centre.

8. Our priorities for culture

The City Council has three key priorities for culture:

1. Support the sustainability of Oxford's cultural organisations and improve the skills and diversity of the city's current and future creative workforce.
2. Improve opportunities for Oxford's diverse range of communities to actively engage with and be inspired by culture.
3. Improve opportunities for young people to access and actively participate in cultural activities.

Underpinning each of these priorities is a commitment to work in partnership to explore the barriers to participation in cultural activities confronted by different sectors of the community and find ways of removing them.

1. Support the sustainability of Oxford's cultural organisations and improve the skills and diversity of the city's current and future creative workforce.

Oxford's vibrant cultural sector makes a valuable contribution to the city's economy, providing local employment and attracting tourism income as well as creating world-class arts and heritage experiences for our residents. While national funding for arts and museums is under pressure, opportunities are growing for cultural organisations to diversify their audiences and incomes through digital engagement. The City Council is committed to supporting initiatives which embed resilience and enhance sustainability in our cultural organisations, develop a skilled workforce and provide diverse entry routes into cultural careers.

Objectives:

- I. Invest in cultural organisations and projects that contribute to the sustainability, resilience and growth of the city's creative economy
- II. Support the cultural sector to develop expertise and share best practice in areas of shared interest, for example, securing additional funding through philanthropy, developing a wider offer for cultural tourism, enhancing environmental sustainability.
- III. Support the growth of a diverse cultural workforce through initiatives such as creative and digital skills training, mentoring, professional development,

volunteer schemes, creative apprenticeships and paid bursary/internship schemes.

- IV. Identify and broker opportunities for cultural organisations to deliver projects that contribute to City Council and County Council objectives or collaborate with Oxford's two universities, particularly in regards to education and libraries, health and social care, and strong and active communities.

2. Improve opportunities for Oxford's diverse range of communities to actively engage with and be inspired by culture.

The City Council is committed to supporting cultural representation and engagement opportunities for all of Oxford's communities, whatever their age, physical ability, economic circumstances and ethnicity. Audience development and engagement is therefore central to the work of the City Council's Culture team and the city's cultural organisations. We support and create cultural activities which celebrate the diversity of our audiences and contribute to social inclusion and community cohesion.

Objectives:

- I. Support and deliver high quality cultural activities and events that engage and celebrate Oxford's diverse communities, with a focus on increasing the number of people experiencing culture.
- II. Increase the amount of cultural activity that is captured, created, produced, shared and archived through digital technologies and platforms, and support partnerships which will enable more people to access this activity.
- III. Invest in projects and organisations which encourage diverse communities to shape and create their own arts and cultural activities.

3. Improve opportunities for young people to access and actively participate in cultural activities.

Engagement with culture offers opportunities for young people to share their experiences with others, and can help to build social cohesion. Participation in arts and heritage activities can develop creative and technical skills, ambition, discipline, and the confidence necessary for future success. With the growth of cultural and creative industries providing exciting opportunities for youth employment, the City Council is committed to supporting Oxford's young people to be culturally engaged and creatively skilled. In order to maximise opportunities for Oxford's young people, the delivery of the Culture strategy will align with complementary Council programmes, for example the Youth Ambition strategy.

Objectives:

- I. Support and deliver cultural activities for young people to increase levels of youth engagement with culture and enhance youth ambition.
- II. Invest in projects and organisations which provide opportunities for young people to create cultural programmes and participate in cultural planning.

- III. Encourage the take-up of Arts Award (both primary and secondary) by young people in the city and support schools wishing to become Artsmark accredited.

9. Monitoring and Evaluation

The Culture Team's Service Plan, including milestones and performance indicators to measure success linked to the objectives of City Council staff and the Service Level Agreements of commissioned organisations, will underpin the Strategy. Delivery will be monitored monthly through CorVu targets, through 6-monthly reporting from funded organisations and quarterly updates from members of the Cultural Partnership Group. The Cultural Development Manager will undertake an Annual Review of activity to evaluate performance against the Culture Strategy objectives.

10. Conclusion

Oxford City Council and its partners believe that culture and the arts play a profound role in shaping people's experiences and attitudes. We believe that access to high quality cultural experiences across a wide range of forms is the right of all our citizens. We believe that the proposals in this strategy will contribute to ensuring that these opportunities are open to all our citizens and not just the few.

Appendix 1

Cultural Partnership Group members

Oxford City Council Culture Team

Cultural Development

We provide core and project funding to cultural organisations and numerous arts and heritage activities each year through our Commissioning and Culture Fund grants. We introduced our CREATE crowdfunding events in March 2013, which have awarded more than £4,000 to winning pitches for cultural projects in Oxford, leveraging in audience donations and sponsorship from host venues. The team run Culture Forums to provide free skills development and training for the cultural sector in areas of shared interest such as fundraising. Working with Arts at the Old Fire Station, we also introduced the Arts Marketing Group in early 2014, which is a networking event designed for the sharing of best practice and identification of joint promotional campaigns.

Cultural outdoor events

Large scale outdoor and site specific events play an important role in building cohesion and celebrating life in our city. The Christmas Light Festival grew in 2013 to be the largest free event in the city. The City Council worked with more than 25 cultural organisations to engage 100,000 people over three days with hundreds of free arts and heritage activities across the city. Up to 20,000 people attend the city's May Morning celebrations each year, which are co-ordinated by the City Council with key partners. We also deliver the Lord Mayor's Celebrations in Gloucester Green, which has become a popular summer event for families, attracting more than 5,000 people each year.

Dancin' Oxford

Dancin' Oxford festival continues to receive enthusiastic support from partners including Oxford Playhouse, Pegasus and Oxford Castle, and has secured a £129k Arts Council England grant for 2014-16. The festival's year-round programme of work includes a Spring Festival, Summer outdoor programme and Autumn Family Dance Week. Baby Boogie, a fun and informal disco dance event for under-5's and their families, is a key feature of the festival's year-round programme. It has grown in popularity to become a bi-monthly event at Pegasus, alongside a growing outreach programme in Family Centres in Blackbird Leys, Barton, Donnington and Northway. In the first half of 2014, 85% of audiences for these events were first-time engagers in dance activity. Other dance development projects include Get Moving! (a project for over-50's which improves health and reduces isolation), Oxford Dance Forum's professional development programme and Dance for Parkinson's classes (in partnership with English National Ballet). The dance programme engages more than 7,000 people annually.

Museum of Oxford

The only museum dedicated to telling the story of the city and its people, the Museum of Oxford is undertaking a major capital development in order to meet increased demand for its services, represent the heritage of our diverse communities and enable public engagement with the City's Archives. Thanks to support from the Heritage Lottery Fund and Arts Council England, the Museum will celebrate its 40th Anniversary in 2015 with a year-long season of high quality arts events. The Old Museum space, which launched in January 2014, will showcase events to drive capital fundraising for the new museum during this anniversary season. Our plans for the Museum have attracted more than £85k in grant support from external funders to date. Cultural Development Manager Ceri Gorton, who will be leading on the museum's development, has been awarded the Arts Council England Museums Fellowship for the 2014/15 Clore Leadership programme. The Museum is a development partner in the Oxford University Museums consortium.

The Oxford University Museums Partnership

The University of Oxford is home to the Ashmolean Museum, Museum of the History of Science, Museum of Natural History and Pitt Rivers Museum. Free to enter, these museums welcome 2 million visitors through their doors each year and are the public face of the university. Custodians of vast and varied collections representing the natural world and the majority of world cultures, Oxford University Museums bring internationally significant cultural experiences to the city of Oxford. The museums recently secured renewed funding from Arts Council England as a Major Partner Museum service, with a mandate to facilitate broad access and play a leadership role within the cultural sector.

As part of their Major Partner Museum programme, Oxford University Museums work in a delivery partnership with the Museum of Oxford. The museums work collaboratively to engage Oxford's diverse community and realise the city's ambitious cultural aspirations. Having worked directly with every primary and secondary state school in Oxford in the last year, the partnership will actively reach into schools and communities, raising aspirations and supporting educational attainment across the curriculum and across all ages.

Oxford's Universities

The University of Oxford has continued to make a strong contribution to the cultural life of the city and the region, working in collaboration with cultural organisations in the city including Pegasus Theatre and Modern Art Oxford. The Bodleian and University libraries receive over 100,000 visitors annually and take part in events such as World Book Day. Oxford University Press has partnered with the National Literacy Trust to develop innovative schools programmes aimed at raising boys' literacy levels and improving behaviour and engagement. Oxford Brookes University's Poetry Centre hosts an annual programme of events including exhibitions and community projects in the areas of poetry and science; poetry and the environment; poetry and business; and performance poetry in Oxfordshire. The City Council works with Oxford Brookes University to co-ordinate the city's Youth

Ambassador for Poetry, a position held by Azfa Awad in 2013/14. The city also benefits from a range of educational outreach activities in the city, organised through the widening participation teams at The University of Oxford and Oxford Brookes University.

Oxfordshire County Council

The County Council's cultural services – libraries, museums, archives and arts – remain committed to actively working in partnership with the city to improve children's and adults' literacy and skills; provide curatorial expertise to the Museum of Oxford and its redevelopment; help conserve and provide access to the city's archives; support the jointly funded organisations of Pegasus and OVADA; and work closely with members of the Cultural Partnership Group, in particular to strengthen the relationship with the LEP to emphasise the economic benefit of culture in the county and city. A significant improvement to the library provision in the city will be the presence of the county's Central Library (3rd busiest in the country) as part of the redevelopment of the Westgate Centre.

Arts at the Old Fire Station

Arts at the Old Fire Station focuses on great art for the public, professional development for artists and building the confidence and skills of homeless people. Since opening in November 2011, the centre has developed an eclectic programme of events ranging from new writing to comedy to jazz nights to contemporary dance. They have produced ground-breaking visual and performing arts work for the public created by professional artists with homeless people. Exhibitions in the gallery prioritise work by early to mid-career artists and the shop sells unique hand-made work by designer-makers. Now a significant local venue for festivals and conferences, the Old Fire Station also offers a programme of regular events for artists of all disciplines to share ideas and works in progress. Over the coming years, they will launch a new 'Making Space' Programme which will explore the process of making; present more of the best theatre, music, dance and work which crosses art forms; and put down roots as a sustainable social enterprise.

Oxford Contemporary Music

OCM is an Arts Council England National Portfolio Organisation, producing some of the highest quality and most innovative new music and sound events in the UK. It engages diverse local and national audiences with its work and aspires to deepen understanding and appreciation of musical cultures from within the UK and worldwide. Its raison d'être is to bring music, artists and audiences together in ways that encourage and create memorable and meaningful experiences for all. It aims to do this by presenting concerts, producing new work and programming education and outreach activity in Oxford, the UK and abroad. Working in partnership with the City Council's Culture team, OCM bring world-class contemporary music to Oxford audiences through free events such as the Christmas Light Festival and Lord Mayor's Celebration. Recent achievements include Mira Calix's *Nothing Is Set In Stone* (2012),

Audible Forces (2013), and Nathaniel Mann's SAM Embedded residency (2013/14). Future plans include increased investment in new projects and the launch of OCM's associate artist and producer scheme. www.ocmevents.org

Film Oxford

Film Oxford is a centre for film and digital media committed to building a strong community of local filmmakers and digital creators through its 'Learn, Network, Create. Exhibit' programme. The centre provides a range of accessible training for all and particularly invests in developing projects with marginalised communities. Over the last 5 years Film Oxford has built a reputation for its ground breaking work with artists with disabilities as well as its work with young filmmakers and digital creatives. A strong partnership with the BFI through 'Youth Academies' and 'Into Film' has offered unprecedented opportunities for a new emerging generation of young talent in the area. Film Oxford supports a number of local network groups, offers a production service for charities and 'not for profit' organisations and runs Location Oxfordshire - the locations website and information service for film and television companies looking to film in the area.

Ark T

The Ark T Centre is a creative arts project with a recording studio for young musicians, rehearsal space for dance, artist studios, a café and an outdoor creative play garden. Opened in 1997, it is based at John Bunyan Baptist Church in Cowley. Nurturing the courage to create, and providing the right support to let freedom of expression flourish are central to the projects which attract around 700 people each week. The Centre employs six staff, has four resident artists and a team of sessional workers. It runs a volunteer programme for skills-training and rehabilitation and works in close partnership with agencies which make referrals to its various programmes. The volunteer programme aims to help people experiencing difficult situations benefit from mixing with a wide range of other life experiences and be useful and productive to others. Volunteers provide food every day in the cafe; learn administrative and customer service skills; garden, and support creative workshops. These volunteers are referred to Ark T from agencies working with marginalised groups experiencing the difficulties of drug and alcohol abuse, homelessness, mental health difficulty or are NEET. Through their work at Ark T, they acquire skills and training as well as re-finding social and personal confidence to move on from challenging circumstances.

OVADA

Established in 2004, OVADA is a dynamic, artist-led organisation, passionately committed to the development of creative practitioners and promoting access to high quality arts for all. From a designated warehouse space in central Oxford, OVADA creates a supportive environment for the transfer of skills, knowledge and experience. OVADA's artistic programme enables students to work alongside professional artists and practitioners through workshops, professional development

talks and exhibiting opportunities. OVADA offers volunteering opportunities for people who are not in education or employment to gain experience in Arts Management, alongside formal work experience placements for City of Oxford College students. With support from Oxford City Council, OVADA is in the process of registering as an Arts Award provider. OVADA runs continuing practice courses through the alternative Warehouse Art School and weekly Drawing Classes for the community. Hosting four artist's studios and a multi-use project space, OVADA provides a base for Oxford Hackspace and collaborate with them on digital projects and public lessons in new technologies. OVADA also contributes to major Festivals such as Audiograft (Sonic Arts), Artweeks and the Christmas Light Festival.

Oxford Playhouse

Oxford Playhouse is an Arts Council England National Portfolio Organisation. Positioned at the cultural heart of Oxfordshire, with the drive to inspire, engage and entertain a wide-reaching and diverse audience, Oxford Playhouse brings together artists and audiences to experience great live performance. Over 150,000 people each year experience the Playhouse's world class programme. The Playhouse plays an active role in the arts ecology within Oxford, the wider region and national cultural sector; presenting, producing and touring the highest quality middle-scale, small-scale and off-site theatre, developing relationships and partnerships which enable artists to make work and develop their practice, creating imaginative and ambitious opportunities for children and young people and embracing involvement by all in exceptional cultural experiences.

Cowley Road Works

Cowley Road Works is a small, community based charity, which produces the annual Cowley Road Carnival in July and associated activity during the year. Its mission is to present Carnival in East Oxford as a means of celebrating community through culturally diverse arts, events and education. The Carnival held on 6 July 2014, from 12 noon to 6pm, attracted 45,000 people to the Cowley Road for wide range of music, dance, family activity, food and other stalls and the Carnival procession. The charity works in partnership with a number of arts and community organisations, individual artists, and businesses to prepare for and produce the event, and welcomes new collaborations in order to enrich the quality of the Carnival experience and deepen its impact in the local and wider community.

Experience Oxfordshire

Experience Oxfordshire is a not-for-profit partnership of businesses and organisations committed to realising Oxfordshire's potential as a cultural tourism destination. The mission is for Oxfordshire's name to be known throughout the world; to be synonymous with our rich, distinctive cultural heritage, our world class arts, tourism offer and welcome. Because of this people will want to enjoy more of the Oxfordshire experience, spend more and invest more. The aim is to achieve twice the forecast UK tourism growth rate, creating 5,800 new jobs by 2025.

Experience Oxfordshire operates the Oxford Visitor Information Centre and undertakes a range of leisure and business tourism marketing activities reaching around 2.5 million customers a year. Improving cultural marketing and promotion, ticket sales, and helping organisations tap into the wider visitor market are priorities from 2014.

Modern Art Oxford

Modern Art Oxford is an Arts Council England National Portfolio Organisation. Located in a rare industrial building in the centre of the City, Modern Art Oxford is one of the UK's leading contemporary art spaces with an international reputation for innovative and ambitious artistic programmes and community outreach. Celebrating the relevance of contemporary visual culture to society and Oxford today, the programme is shaped by a belief in dialogue between contemporary art, ideas and society. Celebrating its 50th anniversary in 2016, the gallery seeks to create new relationships between artists, audiences and communities at the beginning of the 21st century.

Pegasus Theatre

Pegasus Theatre is an Arts Council England National Portfolio Organisation. Situated on Magdalen Road in East Oxford, Pegasus is a theatre with young people at its heart. In everything it does, Pegasus considers how to attract, engage and spark the imaginations of young people. This includes families with young children, schools, teenagers and students. Yet the work has a wider, crossover appeal, so that people of different ages can experience together art that is vibrant, inspiring, urgent and exciting. Pegasus is a meeting place between generations, cultures, artists and participants, a place of creative exchange and community. Within its 50 year history Pegasus has produced and programmed diverse and inspiring performances; pioneered the field of participatory arts; played a special role in supporting new and emerging artists; and provided training, education and career paths for young people.

The Story Museum

The Story Museum celebrates stories in all forms, harnessing their power to teach and delight. Since 2005 we have been running storytelling projects in schools and the local community with proven impacts on language, empathy, confidence and imagination. In April 2014 we opened the first phase of our most unusual museum in Oxford in which people of all ages and abilities enjoy stories through exhibitions, talks and performances, and create stories of their own. Part of Oxford's West End regeneration, the museum is already a hub for our wider work with partners across Oxford city, county and beyond. Given successful completion of our £8m capital development by 2017/18, The Story Museum will be an international centre of literature inspiring present and future generations and reaching well over 100K visitors annually.

Appendix 2

Reference Documents

Arts & Business Private Investment in Culture Survey Report 2011/12, May 2013
Arts Council England Report 'The Role of Diversity in Building Adaptive Resilience', May 2011
Arts Council England Stakeholder Focus Research, April 2014
Arts Council England Strategic Framework 2010-2020 'Great Art and Culture for Everyone', October 2013
Audience Agency Area Profile Report for Oxford, May 2013
Christmas Light Festival 2013 Evaluation Report, February 2014
DCMS Report 'Creative Industries: Focus on Employment', June 2014
DCMS Statistical Release 'Creative Industries Economic Estimates', January 2014
Insight Oxford 'Needs Assessment for Older People in Oxford: A research project for Oxford City Council', October 2013
Living in Oxford Talkback Survey Report, Spring 2014
Oxford City Council Children and Young People's Plan 2014-17
Oxford City Council Corporate Plan 2014-18
Oxford City Council Youth Ambition Strategy 2013-17
Oxford Strategic Partnership - Oxford Economic Growth Strategy, January 2013
Taking Part Survey 2012/13 Annual Child Report, August 2013
Taking Part Survey 2012/13 Quarter 4 Report, June 2013

Appendix 2 - Consultation Process and Events

1. Consultation process

The consultation went live on 17th October 2014, when it was made available on the Council's website home page. The consultation close date was extended by one week to 24th December 2014.

Invitations were sent via the eConsult portal to the 499 people and organisations that were invited to take part in consultation for the current Culture Strategy 2012–15.

The url to the eConsult portal was also sent to 30 people and organisations that are part of the Youth Engagement Officer's network. In addition the Culture Manager requested that her staff provide the url to their respective networks.

2. About the respondents.

In addition to extensive discussion with interested parties – all broadly supportive of the strategy - 13 formal responses were submitted – 12 online and one via email. The email response is added at the bottom of this report.

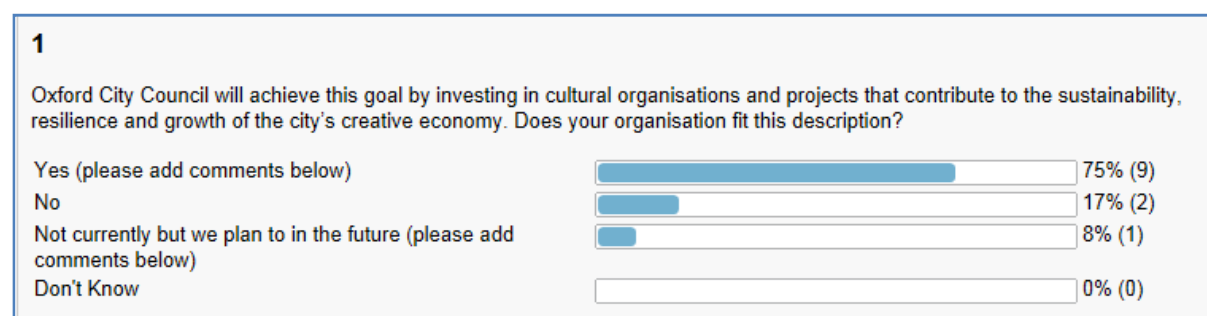
The respondents are from the following organisations: Arts Council England; 13th Theatre Co; Cowley Road Works; Folk Arts Oxford; University of Oxford, Dept of Education; Oxford Castle Ltd; Wesley Memorial Methodist Church; Innovista International; The Story Museum; Justice in Motion; and Oxford Preservation Trust.

3. Responses in the eConsult system.

The survey questions and responses are presented below. The survey questions were aligned to the three priorities set out in the draft Culture Strategy. Given the nature to the responses, it seemed helpful to present the comments verbatim.

Priority One: To support the sustainability of Oxford's cultural organisations and improve the skills and diversity of the city's current and future creative workforce.

Question 1 and comments.



13th Theatre Company. We are a social enterprise theatre company. We deal with

<p>social issues of disability, bullying and self-esteem. Our motto is why fit the mould when you can create it. We are an equal opportunities company and socially inclusive. We also run drama workshops for people 50+ called Never Past the Sell by</p>
<p>Wilson (Freelance). As a freelance theatre/dance artist I am a small part of Oxford's creative economy, but represent a significant proportion of frontline individuals who initiate and deliver cultural projects.</p>
<p>Oxford Methodists. We currently offer space to cultural events, and would like to increase this. We also plan to develop a heritage interpretation centre, drawing out Oxford's part in the story of the worldwide Methodist movement.</p>
<p>Oxford Castle Quarter is a cultural hub within Oxford. With an art gallery, visitor attraction, museum and education centre it offers a variety of cultural and educational experiences to a diverse audience.</p>
<p>The Story Museum. After completion of our capital development The Story Museum will employ 27 people to run a six-day a week venue programming original creative content and be largely self-supporting through ticket income and associated sales. Since opening in April we are attracting visitors from outside Oxfordshire</p>
<p>Arts Council England. Co-investment between ACE and Oxford City Council is essential to the sustainability of the city's creative economy. The Council's ongoing investment in culture is hugely significant to leveraging funding from ACE and other sources, at all levels.</p>
<p>Cowley Road Works. Cowley Road Carnival provides opportunities for established, new, emerging, young and diverse artists and organisations to perform/exhibit/engage/showcase their work to a large and diverse audience, and to work in partnership with Cowley Road Works on pre Carnival events and activities.</p>
<p>Justice in Motion is a multidisciplinary company, which is dedicated to creating issue-based work, inspired by true accounts of social injustice. Through a dynamic fusion of physical theatre, dance, music, multi-media and spoken word, the company presents a variety of engaging and thought-provoking performances. Our ambition is to operate as a creative ambassador that will impact our culture and society - calling forth change and transformation towards a life of freedom and justice.</p> <p>As a young and developing company, one of our goals is to secure our reputation within the Oxfordshire theatre and dance community. As such we create high quality performances and host dance classes for professionals (weekly), workshops and events – all of which contribute to the city's creative economy. When employing performers, artists, and teachers we strive to pay them a competitive fee, which will encourage and facilitate their continued work in our area. We regularly hire and pay venues for rehearsals or performance. The larger we grow, the more productive we are, and the more we can and do contribute to Oxfordshire's creative economy.</p>

Question 2 and comments.

2

Oxford City Council will support the cultural sector to develop expertise and share best practice in areas of shared interest, for example, securing additional funding through philanthropy, developing a wider offer for cultural tourism, enhancing environmental sustainability. Do you have any suggestions as to how we can provide this support?

Yes (please add detail below) 75% (9)
No 25% (3)

13th Theatre Company. We give a percentage of our profits to charity, we are working in partnership with the TVACAA. We are also producing a musical called Hooked on Oxford, the musical, it is created to attract tourism to Oxford.

Wilson (Freelance). Addressing the needs of the large proportion of freelance artists (across all disciplines - music, theatre, dance, visual arts). To do this free (or heavily subsidised) training/up-skilling is needed in these areas.

Oxford Methodists. Networking opportunities for those already involved, with scope to share best practice.

Oxford University. Advice and support and other "help in kind"

Oxford Castle Quarter. The HLF workshop at the Museum of Oxford was extremely useful. The cultural organisations across Oxford each have their own area of expertise and individuals with specific skill sets. Further integrated workshops would be helpful. A more comprehensive strategy for data sharing would also be useful.

The Story Museum. Offering grants as matched funding is helpful as well as supporting city-wide collaborative events such as Alice's Day and Christmas Light Festival. Promotion of the city's cultural offer to both tourists and residents is also very valuable.

Arts Council England. The Oxford Cultural Partnership should continue to act as the key strategic partnership for culture in Oxfordshire over 2015-18 and become even more focussed on how the sector can work together to seize joint opportunities e.g. shared audience development or cultural tourism initiatives.

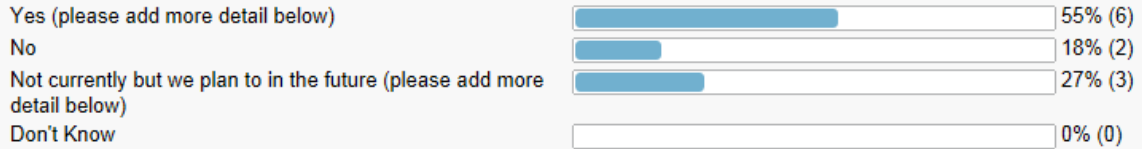
Cowley Road Works. Improve OCC's Streetscene's ability to effectively collect and recycle waste at outdoor events. Provide more and affordable banner and poster sites across the city to enable publicity for events of all kinds. The costs of current provision & commercial distribution are out of reach of many.

Justice in Motion. At this point we do not have suggestions for how the Council can further provide this support. For our purposes the city has been extremely helpful in helping us find funding.

Question 3 and comments.

3

Oxford City Council will support the growth of a diverse cultural workforce through initiatives such as creative and digital skills training, mentoring, professional development, volunteer schemes, creative apprenticeships and paid bursary/internship schemes. Does your organisation promote or deliver such initiatives?



Folk Weekend. Oxford offers volunteer on the job training in various arts management roles, as well as providing general volunteering opportunities during the festival.

Oxford Methodists. We use volunteers to support our existing programmes, and deploy and develop staff to enhance what we are able to do.

Oxford Castle Quarter. O3 Gallery provide volunteer and internship schemes. Oxford Castle Quarter plan to introduce volunteer schemes in 2015.

The Story Museum. employs 6 full-time equivalent staff, several freelance experts, and c100 volunteers donating 60-300 hours a week. We provide work experience placements for 12 local secondary school children and around 8 intern placements for college leavers annually.

Arts Council England. NPOs/MPMs produce diversity action plans and data will be collected annually. The Creative Employment Programme is open till Nov ' 15. ACE is committed to fair payment for artists. Grants for the arts continues to thrive and we are keen to support first-time and diverse applicants.

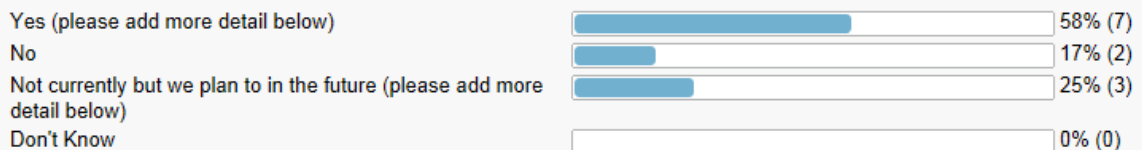
Cowley Road Works. Yes, we work with volunteers & can offer practical professional development. The time & cost of supporting apprentices and providing effective mentoring must be recognised. All of this requires additional financial support. Specific training for mentors & digital skills would be helpful.

Justice in Motion We are looking into providing a paid internship scheme within our company. We are currently in the process of identifying and sourcing payment via grant proposals for this. If there is any financial support from the city for these schemes, we would happy to learn more about that.

Question 4 and comments.

4

Oxford City Council identifies and brokers opportunities for cultural organisations to deliver projects that contribute to City Council and County Council objectives or collaborate with Oxford's two universities, particularly in regards to education and libraries, health and social care, and strong and active communities. Does your organisation deliver such projects?



Wilson (Freelance). I have in the past been involved in these activities.
Folk Weekend. We work in partnership with Oxford Brookes providing work experience for their sound technician students
Oxford Methodists. We are already committed to strong and active communities, and support this through our own activities and through provision of space to other groups.
Oxford University. It would be useful if the strategy could recognise the funding now provided by the University of Oxford for such things as the Cowley Road Carnival and Alice's Day.
Oxford Castle Quarter are working with Oxford University to deliver projects in 2016 with regards to education, outreach, and strong and active communities.
The Story Museum. We enrich children's lives through story with associated benefits in literacy levels. We frequently work in partnership with organisations such as the University Museums, the Bodleian library and the central library. We also co-create new work to deepen young people's involvement with culture.
Arts Council England. We are in discussions with Oxfordshire LEP towards a 'creative and cultural investment plan' and with the University of Oxford about co-investment in culture. We want to influence high level strategic partnerships and funding opportunities for culture in Oxford through various means.
Cowley Road Works. We have worked with students from both universities and seek to do more with them. We work with community groups & would welcome further opportunities to help build strong & active communities.
Justice in Motion We certainly aim to work closely with the health and social sector of Oxford and are very keen on forming relationships to both Universities in that respect too. We are interested in forming stronger connections with researchers and experts from both Brooks and Oxford University. To date, we had several collaborations and will deepen those as well as identifying further ones down the line. Artistic director AnjaMeinhardt also works closely with the Oxford University Drama Society and has been involved in several University productions, which allowed her to form valuable links.
Whilst we do not currently collaborate with Oxford's two universities as such, we do perhaps contribute to the City and County Council objectives as related to the cultural economy. We are not sure however if these objectives are the same as the priorities outlined in this document.

Priority Two.To improve opportunities for Oxford's diverse range of communities to actively engage with and be inspired by culture.

Question 5 and comments.

5

Oxford City Council will support and deliver high quality cultural activities and events that engage and celebrate Oxford's diverse communities, with a focus on increasing the number of people experiencing culture. Does your organisation deliver or support such activities and events?

Yes (please describe below)		82% (9)
No		18% (2)
Don't Know		0% (0)

13th Theatre Company. We fully support such activities and will gladly become a part of them.

Wilson (Freelance). As a freelance performer I have performed in & produced a variety of high-quality cultural events, in partnership with other organisations.

Folk Weekend runs a ceilidh for children with Special Needs - in 2015 we hope to run two, and are also in the early stages of a project combining Makaton signing with performance.

Oxford Methodists. We provide space for a wide variety of groups and individuals.

Oxford Castle Quarter

2015: Oxford Art Prize

2016: Fields of Battle - Centenary project

The Story Museum. We offer workshops, creative activities, performances, skills building, holiday courses and resources for all ages. We anticipate reaching 20,000 people in the first year of opening (April 14- April 15) plus over 5,000 school children and teachers including targeted schools from disadvantaged areas

Arts Council England. NPOs/MPMs will have audience development plans in place for 2015-18. We recognise the importance of large-scale, community events e.g. Christmas Light Night, Alice's Day and welcome conversations with OCC and partners about plans for 2015-18.

Cowley Road Works. Cowley Road Carnival specifically seeks to address this priority, with 45,000 people of all ages and social and ethnic backgrounds attending Carnival 2014.

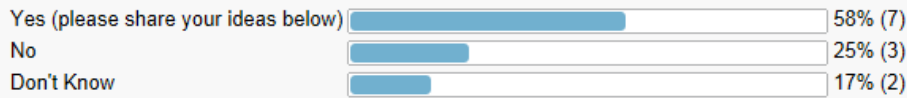
Justice in Motion is proud to work a little differently than other Oxfordshire theatre and dance companies. Our work is specifically aimed at issues of social injustice and as such our target audience engages community activists, policy changers and their constituents, and people who may be vulnerable within our society. In engaging these communities we are actively bringing a new audience into the creative fold, building a bridge between the arts and campaigns.

We currently deliver a series of events about socially relevant issues, and facilitate workshops in the genres that influence the style of our work, supported by the Oxford City's Culture Fund. These events and workshops are open to the wider public.

Question 6 and comments.

6

Oxford City Council will increase the amount of cultural activity that is captured, created, produced, shared and archived through digital technologies and platforms, and support partnerships which will enable more people to access this activity. Is your organisation interested in this activity?



Wilson (Freelance). At present I do not have the capacity to deliver digital projects. Though many freelancers may well be interested in this area.

Oxford Methodists. We plan to develop our existing website to support heritage interpretation and to enable virtual tours.

Oxford University. Could provide partnerships with the University

Oxford Castle Quarter. We are working with Oxford University ITC department and Europeana. We're very pleased to see this is part of Oxford City Council's Cultural Strategy.

The Story Museum is currently planning an exhibition for 2015 in partnership with local digital games companies including Natural Motion, Sega and Rebellion. This will enable us to build new audiences and pilot innovative ways of using digital technologies in our building for the future.

Arts Council England. Oxford is a dynamic hub for the creative industries. We encourage the cultural sector (and this strategy) to position themselves strongly within Oxford's creative economy as a whole and to make the most of new kinds of collaboration and digital approaches to achieving strategic aims.

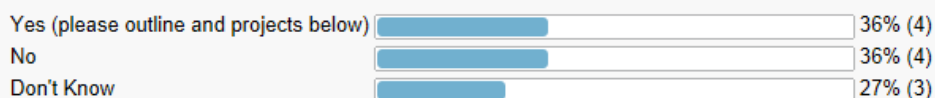
Cowley Road Works. The output of Carnival is particularly strong visually and we are very interested in harnessing the many images and films which are created by the public during the event to share these. Carnival provides opportunities to show case musicians at the event & digitally before & after the event.

Justice in Motion is a multidisciplinary company and as such we work with many artists across many fields. We work with several filmmakers to document our work through a series of short trailers and documentaries, as well create visual projections that are combined with our live performances. We are currently looking at creating another three short trailers that will capture the research and re-development phase for BOUND, while getting ready for our 2015 national tour.

Question 7 and comments.

7

Oxford City Council will invest in projects and organisations which encourage diverse communities to shape and create their own arts and cultural activities. Does your organisation or project fit this description?



13th Theatre Company. Yes, we encourage social inclusion and we are an equal

opportunities theatre company. Our aim is to use drams to break down the barriers caused by discrimination.

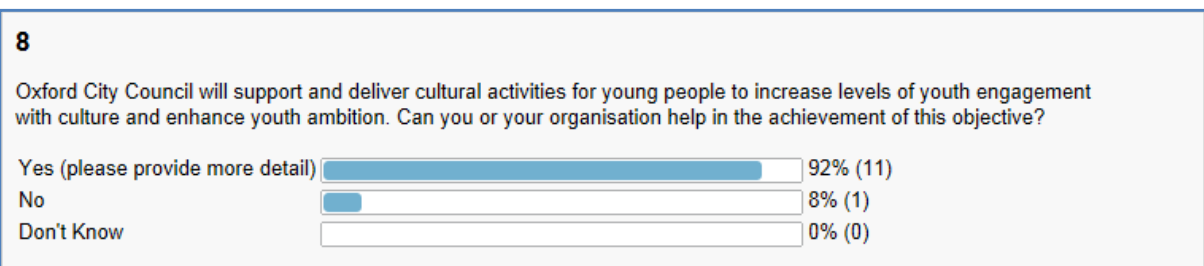
The Story Museum. We are running a pilot project with a group of local teenagers programming a season of events aimed at their peers. Our next major exhibition (summer 2015) will involve a substantial co-curation element and we are holding an access day in January to involve and consult with those with specific needs

Arts Council England. Good practice in Oxford e.g. Old Fire Station, Story Museum, Pegasus, Museum of Oxford and further afield e.g. ACE-funded Creative People and Places projects. Our Engagement & Audiences team can advise further. Libraries should be key partners and our Libraries GFTA fund continues.

Cowley Road Works. Cowley Road Carnival invites diverse communities to show & celebrate their identities through participation in the procession, through food, music, dance and other activity, both at the event and in the lead up to it.

Priority Three. To improve opportunities for young people to access and actively participate in cultural activities.

Question 8 and comments.



Dr Hafiz We can circulate it among young people within BME communities.

Wilson (Freelance). I also work as a lecturer in a UK drama school and have experience in mentoring and training young artists (18-25) inside and outside of my institution.

Folk Weekend. has always held a series of concerts featuring young performers - we have just engaged a new committee member who is planning on expanding this area for 2015. We also run a programme of family events during the festival.

Oxford Methodists. Several of our young people are already engaged with film and music at a high level.

Innovista. We work with disengaged and hard to reach young people, to increase ambition, aspiration and achievement. We'd be very open to exploring how cultural activities could help us do this.

Oxford University. We are looking in to the provision of college and other university space for the communities of Oxford.

Oxford Castle Quarter. The Key Learning Centre within Oxford Castle Quarter is an ideal environment for these activities and we'd be very keen to work with Oxford City Council in developing an outreach programme.

The Story Museum. As well as co-curation projects at the Museum we run outreach projects in schools and community groups. We are in active discussions

with the local library service to run a project with young people celebrating the Magna Carta in 2015 and with the Bodleian Library to celebrate Shakespeare 2016

Arts Council England. Work with young people is a strength in Oxfordshire. We are promoting 7 'quality principles' for CYP work at this time. Artwork continues as the Bridge organisation for the South East over 2015-18 – a key partner. We are positive about the development of the Oxfordshire Youth Arts Network.

Cowley Road Works. The Carnival procession & preceding workshops led by artists & dancers in schools gives hundreds of children the opportunity to take part with confidence & pride in their work. The established youth music stage at Carnival offers young musicians a profile & audience which they really appreciate.

Question 9 and comments.



13th Theatre Company. Young people need support and encouragement and that is an aim of our company to help young people achieve their goals.

Oxford Methodists. See question 8 above.

The Story Museum. We plan to build on our pilot teenage co-curation project for future programming, as well as establishing a young curators group to provide regular input into the Museum's programming

Arts Council England. is funding good models for youth-led cultural planning and participation in Oxford e.g. Pegasus, Oxford Playhouse, University Museums, and further afield e.g. the Art31 Youth Arts programme in Kent. Bicester also aims to develop a youth-led cultural plan.

Cowley Road Works. We would very much like more young people to be involved in the planning of Carnival & seek ways to do this. We work with key partners, Pegasus and Fusion Arts, who are specialists in working with young people. We seek young trustees.

Justice in Motion. We are anticipating working with a younger community as well, and our workshops are open to people from age 14+.

We are likely to be going into schools as well to deliver workshops and meet them where they're at, inviting them too to engage in the debate about relevant issues. We do see the possibility of reaching out into schools in conjunction with OXCAT (Oxfordshire Community against Trafficking) for example, who are planning on educating young people in more creative ways

Question 10 and comments.

10

Oxford City Council encourages the take-up of Arts Award (both primary and secondary) by young people at both primary and secondary schools in the city and support schools wishing to become Artsmark accredited. Is this something that you or your organisation are involved in or interested in pursuing?

Yes - already involved (please add detail below)		9% (1)
Yes - interested in pursuing (please add detail below)		27% (3)
No		45% (5)
Don't Know		18% (2)

13th Theatre Company. Yes, we would gladly be involved in this project, please consider us for this project.

Folk Weekend. We have someone who is trained in Arts Award but don't really know how to persue this as a fairly small, voluntary organisation.

The Story Museum. Our Head of Learning is trained to deliver Arts Award. We made 7 Discover awards through our Digital Storytelling course in the summer and plan to deliver Bronze awards through our teen co-creation project in Spring 2015.

Arts Council England. Arts Award and Artsmark are funded by Arts Council England and a key strategy for increasing youth participation in arts and culture. NPOs/MPMs have objectives related to Arts Award & Artsmark. Artwork as the Bridge organisation can support organisations working with these schemes.

Cowley Road Works. Through partner organisations such as Pegasus, Fusion and OYAP.

Any other comments?

Wilson (Freelance). Key to delivery at ground level will be supporting the range of freelance artists who often undertake this work. Ways to address the development of these artists, in response to their needs, will be key in extending and consolidating current practice.

Oxford University. In all of these priorities the University would be interested in developing advice/support/joint working.

The Story Museum's mission to inspire learning and improve well-being through story, especially for the young and those facing disadvantage, puts us in an ideal position to deliver on all 3 priorities, plus our use of volunteers means that we offer many opportunities for skills development

Arts Council England. 2015-18 ACE Strategic funds (TBA) may offer opportunities for joint approaches from Oxford and Oxfordshire. Over 2015-18 ACE wants to see – and to be part of – highly collaborative approaches to tackling some of the ongoing opportunities/challenges for the culture sector in Oxford.

Justice in Motion. It seems that as a company, JUSTICE IN MOTION, best suits priorities one and two. As we grow in reputation and productivity, we are keen to engage and work with more artists helping to grow Oxford's creative economy. We have been thankful for the city's support we've received so far and are proud to say we've only grown more and more since. We are happy to be engaged and active in the city's support of its creative sector and will help out however we can!

5. Responses via email.

Giles Ingram, Experience Oxfordshire

I thought you may be interested in headline stats from a new VisitBritain survey of international visitors – ‘Leveraging our Heritage & Culture’. 53% of respondents state culture and heritage as their main motive for visiting Britain.

Response from Oxford Preservation Trust

Oxford Preservation Trust is pleased to comment on Oxford City Council’s Draft Culture Strategy 2015-18 and have completed the on-line questionnaire. We would however like to take the opportunity to make the following points.

We welcome Oxford City Council’s vision for culture and the arts and its 3 key priorities for culture and are in accord with the vision which will be “*delivered through partnership working high quality cultural experiences, and a commitment to accessibility.*”

However we are concerned that there are some key gaps and omissions within the delivery mechanisms which could impact on the quality of the cultural experiences and the overall success and sustainability of the strategy. In addition we are concerned that these omissions may also have a negative impact on the success and sustainability of OPT’s own core activities and projects going forward.

Partnership

Given the importance of partnerships to the delivery of the strategy we are extremely concerned to note that Oxford Preservation Trust have not been recognised as a key Cultural Partner and that our projects and Oxford Open Doors in particular is not identified as a major potential vehicle for delivering the strategy nor referenced within any of the case studies – especially the sections on *Cultural Tourism* and *Cultural Events*.

Oxford Preservation Trust has an extensive track-record in delivering cultural partnership projects including; as a key partner in the redevelopment of Oxford Castle; as creator and organiser of Oxford Open Doors as well as project partner and supporter for many national and individual projects including Portrait of a Nation ‘Car to Spire’ (Oxford Centre of Culture 2009) for Discovering Places (Engaging places /Cultural Olympiad 2010-12).

Working in partnership with Oxford University since 2008 we have created the largest Heritage Open Days festival in the country attracting c22, 500 visitors in 2014 the majority of whom were local. The cultural event is recognised for providing a broad showcase for many if not most of the city’s cultural partners who open their doors alongside community faith and businesses to engage with local people and provide access to a cross-section of the city’s tangible and intangible treasures alongside contemporary art, architecture and performance. We work already with both universities on this ‘Festival of Oxford’ and have had considerable support from the County Council. It would

be a major missed opportunity not to endorse and use this city-wide community festival as an important showcase for Oxford's culture and as a vehicle for community engagement. We have had several recent discussions with the City Council about support for Open Doors both financial and in terms of policy and we have raised our concerns that the continued lack of perceived city support will impact on our ability to leverage funds and sustain confidence from potential backers going forward.

We are also disappointed to note that there is limited mention of Oxford Castle (Oxford Castle Quarter, Oxford Castle Unlocked and the O3 Gallery) within the strategy. The Castle has been part of a consistent city cultural offer since the site was redeveloped in 2006 (Ghost Fest, Folk Festival, Dancin Oxford, Theatre Performances, Cinema, Medieval Fair, Britain/Earth from the Air). The redevelopment of the castle has also most importantly created new public space for the city while unlocking the origins of the town story that it contains providing balance and much needed links to the more familiar University story. We have been increasingly concerned that the historic connection between the site and the County Council has meant that the castle is seen as more of a county concern and has not been fully embraced by the city to the detriment of the Castle Quarter and for those for whom Oxford is their city or county town regardless of administrative boundaries.

Building a world class cultural offer for everyone

We welcome the City Council's commitment to building a world class cultural offer for everyone but would wish to see the Cultural Strategy make full reference to the importance and scale of Oxford's rich heritage as a resource for achieving this. Oxford Preservation Trust has been working on a Heritage Plan Framework for the city in partnership with Oxford City Council funded by English Heritage. Oxford City Council, Oxford Preservation Trust and English Heritage *"believe that Oxford's heritage is more than just a tourist attraction; it is an important resource that adds to the quality of our lives in many ways, providing an attractive environment, generating tourism, a catalyst for regeneration and stability in times of change"* (Oxford City Council Website) .

We believe that by understanding more about the history and the development of the city and sharing what they value within it local people will feel a sense of community and belonging and be more connected to their city.

We are also concerned by the definition of arts and culture in the Strategy and the place of heritage within this. It is important that Oxford's cultural heritage is not seen as belonging only to the University and tourists at the expense of local people and the important 'town' story or that contemporary arts are positioned against the city's rich cultural heritage whether that of the University or of the motor industry, May Morning and Cowley Road Carnival. We are keen that the strategy should draw on the widest resource for the cultural offer and provide a full range of opportunities for it to inspire and feed into creative activity and industries.

The Cultural Strategy demonstrates the huge amount that the city council has achieved to date and we are keen to discuss ways going forward how Oxford

Preservation Trust can join up with the city in this endeavour as a proper Cultural Partner.

Appendix 3 Initial Equalities Impact Assessment screening form

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

*The Council is a public authority. All public authorities when exercising public functions are caught by the Equality Act 2010 which became law in December 2011. In making any decisions and proposals, the Council - specifically members and officers - are required to have **due regard** to the **9** protected characteristics defined under the Act. These protected characteristics are: **age, disability, race, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, religion or belief, sex, sexual orientation and marriage & civil partnership***

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

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

The Council will also ask that officers specifically consider whether:

- (A) The policy, strategy or spending decisions could have an impact on safeguarding and / or the welfare of children and vulnerable adults*
- (B) The proposed policy / service is likely to have any significant impact on mental wellbeing / community resilience (staff or residents)*

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

- 1. **The decision maker is responsible for identifying whether there is an issue and discharging it.** The threshold for one of the duties to be triggered is low and will be triggered where there is any issue which needs at least to be addressed.*
- 2. **The duties arise before the decision or proposal is made, and not after and are ongoing.** They require **advance** consideration by the policy decision maker with conscientiousness, rigour and an open mind. The duty is similar to an open consultation process.*
- 3. The decision maker must be **aware of the needs of the duty.***
- 4. **The impact of the proposal or decision must be properly understood first.** The amount of regard due will depend on the individual circumstances of each case. The greater the potential impact, the greater the regard.*
- 5. **Get your facts straight first!** There will be no due regard at all if the decision maker or those advising it make a fundamental error of fact (e.g. because of failing to properly inform yourself about the impact of a particular decision).*
- 6. What does 'due regard' entail?*
 - a. **Collection and consideration of data and information;***
 - b. **Ensuring data is sufficient to assess the decision/any potential discrimination/ensure equality of opportunity;***
 - c. **Proper appreciation of the extent, nature and duration of the proposal or decision.***

7. **Responsibility** for discharging can't be delegated or sub-contracted (although an equality impact assessment ("EIA") can be undertaken by officers, decision makers must be sufficiently aware of the outcome).
 8. **Document the process** of having due regard! Keep records and make it transparent! If in any doubt carry out an equality impact assessment ("EIA"), to test whether a policy will impact differentially or not. Evidentially an EIA will be the best way of defending a legal challenge. See hyperlink for the questions you should consider
<http://occweb/files/seealsodocs/93561/Equalities%20-%20Initial%20Equality%20Impact%20Assessment%20screening%20template.doc>
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 Council's has three key priorities for culture and is committed to high quality experiences and accessibility:

- I. Support the sustainability of Oxford's cultural sector and improve the skills and diversity of the city's current and future creative workforce.
- II. Improve opportunities for Oxford's diverse range of communities to actively engage with and be inspired by culture.
- III. Improve opportunities for young people to access and actively participate in cultural activities.

These priorities will be delivered through a strong partnership model and the Cultural Partnership Group will continue to fulfil a key strategic role: ensuring the development of sustainable initiatives, supporting strong cultural outreach services, increasing (year on year) levels of arts engagement, and financing arts organisations to help them leverage in significant additional funding.

The strategy will have a positive impact on direct job creation and skills development in the creative/ culture/ arts and cultural tourism sectors (through volunteering, community engagement and supporting the development of appropriate skills to expand the sector), the potential to break down cultural barriers at grass roots levels (enabling access to arts and culture for people who would not normally have that opportunity) and increase the sense of local identity and belonging, implement new models for social inclusion, and have a transformative effect through continuing to fund arts and cultural organisations.

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

In order to support its long-term vision the Council will continue to deliver the following mitigating actions:

- Invest public money to help create and sustain cultural experiences and to add two more organisations to the core-funded group in 2014/ 2015 (raising the total funding to £278,000), e.g. in 2013/ 2014 the Council core-funded 10 cultural organisations at a total cost of £274,000, enabling these organisations to leverage in more than £6 million from other sources
- Invest in improving educational attainment
- Continue to invest in Council run cultural facilities so that current trends in increases of visitor numbers (for instance a 20% increase at the Museum of Oxford) are maintained
- Co-ordinate and strengthen cultural provision and strong outreach services through cultural partnerships and share best practice across these organisations
- Support the growth of a diverse cultural workforce through initiatives such as creative & digital skills training, mentoring/ creative apprenticeships, volunteer schemes et al
- Encourage the take up of Arts Award by young people (both primary and secondary) and support schools to become Artsmark accredited

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

Consultation will take place from 17 October – 17 December 2014

Stakeholders have been engaged through the Cultural Partnership Group. The draft Strategy will be available for review by other stakeholders, and interested parties will be able to respond via questionnaire.

The level of impact varies from very high (people whose jobs/ deliverables are affected by the strategy) to no impact (people who do not engage with culture at all). This is reflected in the approach to public involvement.

The priorities in the Culture Strategy have been decided and are derived from the previous Culture Strategy, the City Council's Corporate Plan, independent national research and current Arts Council England priorities. We are consulting in order to solicit comments on how we can best achieve these priorities and objectives over the next three years.

We will develop mechanisms to enable input to the consultation from communities diverse in age, location and ethnicity.

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

The Culture Strategy is explicitly about investing in cultural experiences (through significant funding and partnership working) to create more quality cultural experiences for a more diverse range of communities to actively engage with and participate in cultural activities. No adverse impacts are anticipated, unless there is a significant reduction in arts funding locally or nationally.

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

Delivery will be monitored monthly through CorVu targets, bi annual reporting from funded organisations, and quarterly updates from members of the Cultural Partnership Group

The Council's Cultural Development Manager will undertake an annual review of activity to evaluate performance against the Culture Strategy objectives

Lead officer responsible for signing off the EqIA: Jarlath Brine

Role: Organisational Development & Learning Advisor/ Equalities & Apprenticeships

Date: 18.8.2014

Note, please consider & include the following areas:

- Summary of the impacts of any individual policies
- Specific impact tests (e.g. statutory equality duties, social, regeneration and sustainability)
- Consultation
- 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 or Oxfordshire data observatory information where relevant)

Appendix 4 Risk Assessment

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 Objectives	Gross Risk		Cause of Risk	Mitigation	Net Risk		Further Management of Risk: Transfer/Accept/Reduce/Avoid		Monitoring Effectiveness				Current Risk	
		I	P			I	P	Action	Outcome required:	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	I	P
1.	Change in Central Government and national and regional policy direction	3	4	Central Government policy changes	Mitigating Control: Keep up to date and monitor potential changes and the impact on the Oxford Strategy	2	2	Action Owner: Cultural Development Manager	Outcome required: Delivery of Culture Strategy					3	4
2.	Change in Local Government	3	2	Elections	Mitigating Control: To work closely with all members and Groups	3	2	Action Owner: Cultural Development Manager	Outcome required: Delivery of Culture Strategy					3	2
3.	Lack of resources to deliver strategy	4	3	Staff member/s leaving	Mitigating Control: Appoint new staff Maximise revenue potential and external funding opportunities	3	3	Action Owner: Cultural Development Manager	Outcome required: Delivery of Culture Strategy					3	3
4	Full Council not approving strategy	4	2	Lack of communication with members	Mitigating Control: Continued liaison with key members. Document is properly prepared, consulted upon and supported by evidence.	2	2	Action Owner: Democratic Services Manager	Outcome required: Approval of Culture Strategy					2	2

Performance Summary
Scrutiny Committee

Agenda Item 9

Trends compare relative performance with

Green = target met
Amber = within tolerance
Red = outside tolerance

Prd: previous month

Prev Year End: previous March

Dec-2014

Year on Year: the same period from the previous year

Measure		Owner	Result 2013/14	Latest Data		Year End Target 2014/15	Trends			Comments
Ref	Description			Target	Result		Prd	Prev Year End	Year on Year	
Cleaner Greener Oxford										
ED003	ED003: The number of enforcements carried out as a result of environmental offences	Richard J Adams	1,757 Number	830 Number	1,158 Number	1,100 Number				New CPN warnings are being issued to deal with environmental offences. 17 this month. They appear to be working with no subsequent CPNs issued.
ED004	ED004: The % of OxFutures programme milestones met	Jo Colwell	100%	100 %	100%	100 %				
NI195b	NI195b Percentage of streets with detritus levels falling below Grade B (YTD)	Geoff Corps	2.02%	3.00%	2.80%	3.00%				Year to date 20 out of 712 streets inspected were below grade B. In December none of the 80 streets was below grade B
Corporate Health										
BIT021	BIT021: Number of CIPS licensed practitioners in Service Areas	Caroline Wood	0 Number	0 Number	0 Number	18 Number				There are 35 delegates enrolled on the first two cohorts. The programme continues to receive positive feedback from delegates. However, whilst raising the profile of procurement, there has been a significant increase in referrals being made to the central team which is having a negative impact on resource. This is attributed to delegates realising that past procurements may not be completely compliant with Contract Rules and best practice. A third cohort is now planned for early 2015 to take into account the teams capacity in relation to its heavy work programme.
BIT022	BIT022: Level of efficiency savings, income generation identified through service reviews and process/system improvement projects	Jan Heath	£391,400	£220,000	£180,000	£330,000				No update for this month so figure carried forward from previous month.
CH001	CH001: Days lost to sickness	Simon Howick	7.90 days	5.25 days	5.07 days	7.00 days				
BV016a	BV016a: Percentage of employees with a disability	Simon Howick	8.81%	9.50%	8.30%	10.00%				Numbers remain at 8.3%, with one fewer member of staff declaring a disability (104) compared with last month. The Council has now signed the Mindful Employer Charter and the Time to Change Pledge (in partnership with MIND) and this should raise awareness and perhaps the confidence of staff to declare any previously unreported mental health disabilities
BV017a	BV017a: Percentage of black and ethnic minority employees	Simon Howick	7.0%	7.5%	7.1%	8.0%				Numbers remain the same at 89 BME staff. Anonymised shortlisting has now ended but ongoing recruitment application/ shortlisting/ appointment analysis will continue. There will be some outreach events to promote the City as an employer and to break down any barriers around the application process. These are likely to start in February & March 2015

**Performance Summary
Scrutiny Committee**

Trends compare relative performance with

Green = target met
Amber = within tolerance
Red = outside tolerance

Prd: previous month

Prev Year End: previous March

Dec-2014

Year on Year: the same period from the previous year

Measure		Owner	Result 2013/14	Latest Data		Year End Target 2014/15	Trends			Comments
Ref	Description			Target	Result		Prd	Prev Year End	Year on Year	
Empowerment										
LG002	LG002: Achieve the electoral registration rate target	Jeremy Thomas	95.48%	96.00%	96.60%	96.00%	↗	↗	↗	
Great Customer Contact										
BIT019a	BIT019a: The level of self-service transactions that are carried out using the Council's website	Jane Lubbock	Not Recorded	62,494 Number	68,288 Number	83,325 Number	↗			December is a traditionally a quiet month and submissions were down across all transaction types but the overall total is still on target.
CS001	CS001: The % of customers satisfied at their first point of contact	Helen Bishop	79.00%	77.00%	81.00%	77.00%	↘	↗	↗	Performance remains consistly high in December. Year to date performance for the telephones remains high at 92%. Year to date performance for the web is 46% and face to face 59%.
PC027	PC027: Increase the Number of people engaging with the Council's social media accounts	Chris Lee	48,551 Number	58,000 Number	64,804 Number	61,000 Number	↗	↗	↗	
CS003	CS003: Customers getting through first time on Councils Main Service lines	Helen Bishop	93.13%	95.00%	92.75%	95.00%	↗	↘	↗	
CS004	CS004: Enquiries resolved by customer service centre without hand off	Helen Bishop	93.10%	90.00%	91.90%	90.00%	↘	↘	↘	
Improve Recycling										
NI191	NI 191 The Kg of waste sent to landfill per household (YTD)	Geoff Corps	421.03 kgs	322.47 kgs	320.51 kgs	430.00 kgs	↘	↗	↘	In December, the residual waste per household was 34.42kg; this is an increase of 1.46kg on last month and a year to date increase of 0.73kg. This would be expected over the festive period. The Christmas road shows supported this.
NI192	NI192 Household waste recycled and composted (YTD)	Geoff Corps	44.86%	45.10%	45.85%	45.00%	↘	↗	↗	The overall recycling rate for December is 45.85%, an increas of 0.68% from this time last year.
Participation in Healthy Activities in the most deprived wards										
NI008	NI008 The % increase in the number of adults taking part in sport as measured by Sport England's Active People Survey	Ian Brooke	29.0%	27.6%	29.3%	27.6%	↘	↗	↗	Sport England's Active People survey is an annual survey (December) that measures the percentage increase in numbers of adults taking part in regular sport, an interim result is also published in June. The result shown is the full result of 29.3% which places Oxford City in the top 10% of all districts within the Country and is a 8.6% increase from the baseline figure of 20.7 which was recorded in 2005/6
LP106	To increase participation at our leisure centres by target groups	Ian Brooke	-9%	3 %	7%	3 %	↗	↗	↗	7k more visits year to date when compared to the same period in 2013/14.

**Performance Summary
Scrutiny Committee**

Trends compare relative performance with

Green = target met
Amber = within tolerance
Red = outside tolerance

Prd: previous month

Prev Year End: previous March

Dec-2014

Year on Year: the same period from the previous year

Measure		Owner	Result 2013/14	Latest Data		Year End Target 2014/15	Trends			Comments
Ref	Description			Target	Result		Prd	Prev Year End	Year on Year	
LP120	The number of individual people participating in the City Exercise on Referral scheme	Ian Brooke	143 Number	100 Number	106 Number	140 Number				Measure above target for the reporting period. Data for TCP & LP&LC outstanding (Fusion) for quarter 3.
Reduce Emissions										
ED002	ED002: The reduction in the city council's carbon footprint	Paul Robinson	565 Tonnes	320 Tonnes	226 Tonnes	478 Tonnes				Sheltered Housing LED (Knights House - 6tCO2); Leys leisure centre (Gym LED upgrade 14tCO2; Competition pool changing areas 17tCO2); Horspath Depot (Browns Bros building - ground floor - 15tCO2)= total 52tCO2.
LP008	To reduce the use of utilities in Leisure facilities	Ian Brooke	3 Kgs CO2	2 Kgs CO2	2 Kgs CO2	2 Kgs CO2				TCP & BLP closed from 23 Dec; LP&LC opened the same day.
Youth Ambition										
BI002a	BI002a: The number of training places and jobs created through Council investment projects and other activities	Jane Lubbock	287 Number	372 Number	422 Number	400 Number				8 additional training places and jobs in total for December bringing the total up to 422 This included 2 new apprentices at Northway, 4 new jobs at Northway and 2 apprentices at Minchery Farm.
BI002b	BI002b: The number of Council apprentices created through Council investment for those who live in Oxford	Simon Howick	21 Number	22 Number	24 Number	22 Number				24 apprentices with 20 living locally
LP119	The number of young people accessing youth engagement projects and activities outside school hours	Ian Brooke	5,844 Number	4,625 Number	4,715 Number	5,250 Number				The programme is continuing to perform well and the summer has been a good period. In autumn has been a more tricky period with the declining weather. We have partially added in the YA funded figures. The current breakdown is Youth Voice 221 YA Funded 445 Holiday Activities 1344 Positive Futures 208 CSAF 1049 Free Swimming Lessons 63 Free Swimming Card Holders 1062 Streetsports 323 Giving a total of 4715
PC019	PC019: To achieve results for Oxford city schools that are 10% above the national average for KS2 by April 2015	Anna Wright	62.0%	74.0%		74.0%				
PC004	PC004: Grow level of active participation in dance through programme of events	Claire Thompson	5,956 Number	2,150 Number	6,475 Number	7,000 Number				

This page is intentionally left blank

Scrutiny Work Programme 2014 - 2015

This programme represents the work of Scrutiny, including panel work and Committee items. The work programme is divided under the following headings:

1. Standing Panels
2. Review Panels and Ad hoc Panels in progress
3. Potential Review Panels (to be established if and when resources allow)
4. Items for Scrutiny Committee meetings
5. Draft Scrutiny Committee agenda schedule
6. Items called in and Councillor calls for action
7. Items referred to Scrutiny by Council

247

1. Standing Panels

Topic	Area(s) for focus	Nominated councillors (no substitutions allowed)
Finance Panel – All finance issues considered within the Scrutiny Function.	See appendix 1	Councillors Simmons (Chair), Darke, Fooks and Fry
Housing – All strategic and landlord issues considered within the Scrutiny Function.	See appendix 2	Councillors Hollick (Chair), Sanders, Smith and Wade Co-opted Member – Linda Hill

2. Review panels and ad hoc panels in progress




Topic	Scope	Progress	Next steps	Nominated councillors
Thames Water investment to improve flooding	To continue engagement with Thames Water Utilities (TWU) at a senior level to ensure delivery of the agreements reached.	Data gathering is on-going prior to start of study from April 2015. TWU presentation to be circulated to Panel members.	Panel to provide oversight as project progresses.	Councillors Darke (Chair) Pressel, Thomas and Goddard
Tacking Inequality	To review how the City Council contributes to combatting harmful inequality in Oxford, and whether there is more that could reasonably be done.	Call for evidence has closed and the 30 responses are being analysed. Meeting held on 9 February with Prof. Danny Dorling and Paul Cann of Age UK.	Meeting scheduled for 5 March where the Panel will speak with OCCG, Healthwatch, CAG Oxfordshire and City Council officers.	Councillor Coulter (Chair), Gant, Lloyd-Shogbesan and Thomas
Recycling rates	To review of recycling and waste data rates, and consider community incentives and other recycling initiatives.	Site visit to Cowley Marsh depot held on 16 February. Bid made for DCLG Recycling Reward Scheme funding.	Awaiting comparison data and outcome of bid for government funding.	Councillor Fry (Chair), Simmons and Hayes
Local economy	1. What can the City Council can do to mitigate disruption to the city centre economy while major developments are taking place? How can communication be improved for lasting benefit to residents and visitors? 2. What scope does the City Council have to minimise the time shop units are left empty, and to improve the appearance of empty units?	Evidence gathering has started. Written questions are being circulated to officers.	Panel meeting scheduled for 17 March. Panel to meet with Town Team in May.	Councillor Fry (Chair), Darke, Benjamin and Gotch

3. Potential Review Panels – to be established when resources allow

Topic	Area(s) for focus	Nominated councillors
Cycling	Scope to be determined. Panel to consider area(s) of focus which could include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review cycling funding including City and County Council contributions. Explore progress against sought outcomes and value for money achieved. 	Councillors Upton (Chair), Gant, Hayes and Pressel
Neighbourhood working	Scope to be determined. Could to consider how to address feedback provided to the City Council by the peer review group.	TBC

Indicative scrutiny review timeline 2014-2015 (does not include ad hoc review panels)

Review	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	April	May	June	July
Budget Scrutiny	Scoping	Scoping	Scoping	Evidence gathering and review	Evidence gathering and review	Evidence gathering and review	Reporting				
Inequalities		Scoping	Evidence gathering and review	Evidence gathering and review	Evidence gathering and review	Evidence gathering and review	Evidence gathering and review	Reporting	Reporting		
Local economy					Scoping	Evidence gathering and review	Evidence gathering and review	Evidence gathering and review	Evidence gathering and review	Reporting	
Cycling							Scoping	Evidence gathering and review	Evidence gathering and review	Evidence gathering and review	Reporting

	Scoping
	Evidence gathering and review
	Reporting

4. Items for Committee meetings (in no particular order)

Topic	Area(s) for focus
Discretionary Housing Payments	Quarterly updates on spending profiles within a framework agreed by the Committee.
Performance monitoring	Quarterly report on a set of Corporate and service measures chosen by the Committee.
Educational attainment investment	To consider the academic progress and key stage results at schools operating the KRM model compared to those not.
Fusion Lifestyle contract performance	Regular yearly item agreed again by the Committee to consider performance against contract conditions.
Research on the effects of welfare reform	To consider research into the impact of welfare reforms in the City.
Clean streets	To receive an update on the City Council's approach to keeping Oxford streets clean from graffiti, detritus, littering and waste.
Living Wage	To review how the living wage is enforced through procurement contracts
New controls over anti-social behaviour	To receive an update on the City Council's changing approach to anti-social behaviour.
Low Carbon Oxford	To receive an update on the progress of this scheme and plans to progress the low carbon agenda in Oxford.
Community and Neighbourhood services	To review aims, activities and outcomes; grant distribution; community centres and associations; volunteering; Neighbourhood plans; how better on-going engagement can be established with different communities.
Activities for older residents and preventing isolation	To receive an update on services and activities for over 50s, with a focus on preventing isolation.
Individual voter registration	To receive an update on changes to electoral registration and to monitor how the City Council is maximising registration.
Taxi Licencing	To review rules and processes; to understand driver issues.
Forward Plan items	To consider issues to be decided by the City Executive Board.

5. Draft Scrutiny Committee Agenda Schedule

Date (all 6pm, St. Aldate's Room unless stated)	Agenda Item	Lead Officer(s)
2 March 2015, Long Room	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Living Wage 2. Consultation and Engagement 3. Research into the local impact of Welfare Reform 4. Discretionary Housing Payments (pre-scrutiny) 5. The Culture Strategy 2015-18 (pre-scrutiny) 6. Performance monitoring – quarter 3 	Simon Howick; Jane Lubbock Sadie Paige Paul Wilding Paul Wilding TBC
23 March 2015	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Low Carbon Oxford 2. Cycle City 3. OxFutures programme (pre-scrutiny) 4. Fusion Lifestyle – Annual Service Plan 2015/16 (pre-scrutiny) 5. Safeguarding Children, Young People and Vulnerable Adult Policy 	Jo Colwell Jo Colwell Jo Colwell Lucy Cherry Val Johnson
29 April 2015	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Review of Scrutiny work programme <p style="text-align: center;"><i>Other items TBC</i></p>	Andrew Brown

2015/16 Scrutiny Committee dates:

2 June

30 June

7 September

6 October

2 November

8 December

12 January

2 February

7 March

5 April

252

6. Items called in and Councillor calls for action

None

7. Items referred to Scrutiny by Council

None

Appendix 1 - Finance Panel work programme 2014-15

Items for Finance Panel meetings

Suggested Topic	Suggested approach / area(s) for focus
Budget Scrutiny	Review of the Council's medium term financial strategy.
Budget monitoring	Regular monitoring of projected budget outturns through the year.
Treasury Management	Scrutiny of the Treasury Management Strategy and regular monitoring of Treasury performance.
Capital process	To receive an update on the implementation of the Capital Gateway process.
Maximising European funding	To consider how the City Council can maximise funding opportunities; invite local MEPs to contribute to the discussion.
Municipal / Local bonds	To receive an update on the establishment of a municipal bonds agency and consider whether there is a case for the City Council to generate capital financing locally through bonds or crowd-funding.
Ethical investment	To monitor the City Council's approach to implementing an ethical investment policy.
Council tax exemptions	To receive an update on the financial implications of different types of exemptions.

Draft Finance Panel agenda schedule

Date and room (all 5.30pm, St. Aldate's Room)	Agenda Item	Lead Officer(s)
25 March 2015	1. Municipal / Local bonds	Mark Luntley & Steve Drummond, Low Carbon Hub
	2. Budget monitoring – quarter 3	Nigel Kennedy
	3. Capital Strategy (pre-scrutiny)	Nigel Kennedy
	4. Creation of a Panel to Manage the Council's Investment Portfolio (pre-scrutiny)	Jane Winfield

Provisional 2015/16 Finance Panel dates: 2 July, 3 November, 14 January, 28 January & 7 April.

Appendix 2 - Housing Panel work programme 2014-15

Items for Housing Panel meetings

Suggested Topic	Suggested approach / area(s) for focus
Performance monitoring	Regular monitoring of performance measures for Estates Regeneration, Housing Supply and Welfare Reform and Housing Crisis.
Housing Strategy	Review headline priorities and sought outcomes in Housing Strategy at draft stage, and the action plan post-consultation.
Increasing the provision of affordable housing	Monitoring of performance measures; scrutiny of the Housing Business Plan and the Housing Strategy; consider alternative options e.g. pre-fabs and 'pods'; possible review topic.
Homelessness	Monitoring of performance measures; scrutiny of the Housing Business Plan and Housing Strategy; pre-scrutiny of homelessness grant allocations; possible review topics.
Rent arrears	Monitoring of performance measures; bi-annual update reports.
STAR survey results	Monitoring of results.
Tackling under-occupancy	Report on efforts to tackle under-occupancy; consider in rent arrears reports.
Oxford Standard	To receive a progress update on the delivery of the Oxford Standard through the Asset Management Strategy and Action Plan, including an update on work to improve thermal efficiency in the Council's housing stock.
Private sector licencing	Update report on the scheme; consider views of landlords and PRS tenants.
Unlawful dwellings	A report on the City Council's approach to tackling illegal dwellings e.g. beds in sheds, given that funding ends in April 2015.
Repairs exemptions policy	To scrutinise proposed changes to the current policy.
De-designation of 40+ accommodation	Update report on the final phase of de-designating 40+ accommodation (expected in April 15).
Sheltered Housing	To contribute to and monitor the customer profiling survey of residents in sheltered accommodation and how this data should inform future provision.
Fuel Poverty	To receive an update on the City Council's approach to the issue of Fuel Poverty. Commission/review research; consider during other items; possible review topic.
Supporting people	Verbal updates on the joint commissioning of housing support services.

Draft Housing Panel Agenda Schedules

Date, room and time	Agenda Item	Lead Officer(s)
24 March 2015, Judges Room, 5pm	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Non-statutory homelessness services 2. De-designation review year 4 3. Affordable housing 4. Housing Strategy 	<p>Shaibur Rahman</p> <p>Tom Porter</p> <p>Laura Higgins</p> <p>Stephen Clarke</p>

Provisional 2015/16 Housing Panel dates: 4 June, 9 September, 8 October, 9 December & 9 March.

Date, room and time	Agenda Item	Lead Officer(s)
4 June 2015, Plowman Room, 5pm (Provisional)	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. <i>Private Sector Housing Policy (pre-scrutiny)</i> 2. <i>Houses in Multiple Occupation (HMO) Licensing Scheme (pre-scrutiny)</i> 	<p><i>Ian Wright</i></p> <p><i>Adrian Chowns</i></p>

This page is intentionally left blank

FORWARD PLAN FOR THE PERIOD APRIL - DECEMBER 2015

The Forward Plan gives information about all decisions the City Executive Board (CEB) is expected to take and significant decisions to be made by Council or other Council committees over the forthcoming four-month period. It also contains information beyond this in draft form about decisions of significance to be taken in the forthcoming year.

What is a Key decision?

A key decision is an executive decision which is likely:-

- To result in the council incurring expenditure of more than £500,000 or
- To be significant in terms of its effects on communities living or working in an area comprising of two or more wards.

A key decision, except in special or urgent circumstances, cannot be taken unless it has appeared in the Forward Plan for 28 days before the decision is made.

Private meetings

Some or all, of the information supporting decisions in the Forward Plan may be taken at a meeting not open in part, or in whole to the press or public. Items that contain confidential information that will be excluded from the public are marked in this plan and the reason for doing so given.

If you object to an item being taken in private, or if you wish to make representations about any matter listed in the Forward Plan, then please contact Committee & Member Services at least 7 working days before the decision is due to be made. This can be done by contacting:

Pat Jones, Committee Services Manager

Committee & Member Services
St Aldate's Chambers
St Aldate's Street
Oxford OX1 1DS

01865 252191

cityexecutiveboard@oxford.gov.uk

Inspection of documents

Reports to be submitted to the decision-maker and background papers to those reports are available for inspection at the Council offices and will appear on our website

<http://www.oxford.gov.uk> 5 working days prior to the date on which the decision is due to be made.

The Council's decision-making process

The agenda papers for CEB meetings are available five working days before the meeting on the council website.

Further information about the Council's decision making process can be found in the Council's Constitution, which can be inspected at the Council's offices or online at

<http://www.oxford.gov.uk>

City Executive Board Members and Senior Officers

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

Senior Officers	Job Title
Peter Sloman	Chief Executive
David Edwards	Executive Director of City Regeneration and Housing
Tim Sadler	Executive Director of Community Services
Jackie Yates	Executive Director of Organisational Development and Corporate Services
Jane Lubbock	Head of Business Improvement and Technology
Michael Crofton-Briggs	Head of City Development
Helen Bishop	Head of Customer Services
Graham Bourton	Head of Direct Services
John Copley	Head of Environmental Development
Nigel Kennedy	Head of Finance/ Section 106 Officer
Stephen Clarke	Head of Housing and Property
Simon Howick	Head of Human Resources and Facilities
Jeremy Thomas	Head of Law and Governance / Monitoring Officer
Ian Brooke	Head of Leisure and Communities
Peter McQuitty	Head of Policy Culture and Communications

CEB 2 APRIL 2015

ITEM 20:	AGENCY STAFF CONTRACT AWARD ID: I010929
To award the Agency Staff Contract.	
Is this a Key Decision?	Yes
Is this item open or exempt to the public?	Part exempt - commercially sensitive information
Will this decision be preceded by any form of consultation?	No
Decision Taker	City Executive Board
Executive Lead Member:	Finance, Asset Management and Public Health <input type="checkbox"/>
Report Owner:	Head of Business Improvement and Technology
Report Contact:	Jane Lubbock, Head of Business Improvement and Technology Tel: 01865 252708 jlubbock@oxford.gov.uk

ITEM 21:	APPOINTMENT OF OUTSIDE BODIES 2015/16 ID: I010171
To appoint Council representatives to outside bodies and charities.	
Is this a Key Decision?	Yes
Is this item open or exempt to the public?	Open
Will this decision be preceded by any form of consultation?	Consult with outside bodies and seek feedback from Councillors
Decision Taker	City Executive Board
Executive Lead Member:	Corporate Strategy, Economic Development and Planning
Report Owner:	Head of Law and Governance
Report Contact:	Sarah Claridge, Committee Services Officer Tel: 01865 252402 sclaridge@oxford.gov.uk

ITEM 22:	AWARD OF A FRAMEWORK AGREEMENT FOR SUB-CONTRACTED RESPONSIVE & PLANNED MAINTENANCE ID: I010935
The report will recommend a series of contractors to carry out specialist works on behalf of the Council ranging from general construction services to the maintenance of solar PV.	
Is this a Key Decision?	Yes It is likely to result in the Council incurring expenditure which is greater than £500,000
Is this item open or exempt to the public?	Part exempt Commercially sensitive - affairs of the Council.
Will this decision be preceded by any form of consultation?	None
Decision Taker	City Executive Board
Executive Lead Member:	Housing and Estate Regeneration
Report Owner:	Head of Direct Services
Report Contact:	Nicky Atkin, Business Improvement Tel: 01865 252778 natkin@oxford.gov.uk

ITEM 23:	BLACKBIRD LEYS DISTRICT CENTRE REGENERATION ID: I011042
-----------------	--

To update CEB on feasibilities for regeneration of the district centre and to seek approval to secure a development partner.	
Is this a Key Decision?	Yes It is likely to result in the Council incurring expenditure which is greater than £500,000
Is this item open or exempt to the public?	Part exempt Commercially Sensitive
Will this decision be preceded by any form of consultation?	Formal consultation is underway regarding budgetary provision for this project - to be heard at full Council February. Previous community consultation has taken place on regeneration proposals for the area. Meetings with portfolio holders and key stakeholders have taken place. Further informal consultation is planned following receipt partner bids. Information sharing and marketing planned. Formal consultation will take place as part of town planning processes.
Decision Taker	City Executive Board
Executive Lead Member:	Housing and Estate Regeneration
Report Owner:	Executive Director for City Regeneration and Housing
Report Contact:	Fiona Piercy Tel: 01865 252185 fpiercy@oxford.gov.uk

ITEM 24:	CAPITAL STRATEGY ID: I010207
To adopt the Council's capital strategy	
Is this a Key Decision?	Yes It is significant in terms of its effect on communities living or working in an area comprising two or more wards
Is this item open or exempt to the public?	Open
Will this decision be preceded by any form of consultation?	None
Decision Taker	City Executive Board <input type="checkbox"/> Council
Executive Lead Member:	Finance, Asset Management and Public Health <input type="checkbox"/>
Report Owner:	Head of Finance <input type="checkbox"/> Head of Finance
Report Contact:	Nigel Kennedy, Head of Finance Tel: 01865 252708 nkennedy@oxford.gov.uk

ITEM 25:	CONTRACT AWARD ICT NEW PARTNER ID: I010931
To award a contract to provide Council's ICT services and support.	
Is this a Key Decision?	Yes It is likely to result in the Council incurring expenditure which is greater than £500,000
Is this item open or exempt to the public?	Part exempt - commercially sensitive information.
Will this decision be preceded by any form of consultation?	
Decision Taker	City Executive Board
Executive Lead Member:	Finance, Asset Management and Public Health
Report Owner:	Head of Business Improvement and Technology
Report Contact:	Jane Lubbock, Head of Business Improvement

	and Technology Tel: 01865 252708 jlubbock@oxford.gov.uk
--	--

ITEM 26:	CORPORATE DEBT POLICY ID: I006675
Annual update of policy in relation to the collection of income	
Is this a Key Decision?	Not Key
Is this item open or exempt to the public?	Open
Will this decision be preceded by any form of consultation?	None
Decision Taker	City Executive Board
Executive Lead Member:	Finance, Asset Management and Public Health
Report Owner:	Head of Finance
Report Contact:	Nigel Kennedy, Head of Finance Tel: 01865 252708 nkennedy@oxford.gov.uk

ITEM 27:	CREATION OF A PANEL TO MANAGE THE COUNCIL'S INVESTMENT PORTFOLIO ID: I010348
To create a City Council Property Investment Panel capable of sanctioning (i) the acquisition of residential property for the Homelessness Accommodation Search and (ii) the acquisition of commercial investment property.	
The panel will consist of officers, the Leader and the Board Member for Finance, Asset Management and Public Health.	
Is this a Key Decision?	Yes It is likely to result in the Council incurring expenditure which is greater than £500,000
Is this item open or exempt to the public?	Open
Will this decision be preceded by any form of consultation?	None
Decision Taker	City Executive Board
Executive Lead Member:	Corporate Strategy, Economic Development and Planning
Report Owner:	Executive Director for City Regeneration and Housing
Report Contact:	Jane Winfield, Regeneration and Major Projects - Team Manager Tel: 01865 252551 jwinfield@oxford.gov.uk

ITEM 28:	ENVIRONMENTAL DEVELOPMENT ENFORCEMENT POLICY ID: I003111
Refresh the current enforcement policy to take account of government guidance and corporate priorities.	
Is this a Key Decision?	Yes
Is this item open or exempt to the public?	Open
Will this decision be preceded by any form of consultation?	To be advised.
Decision Taker	City Executive Board
Executive Lead Member:	Cleaner, Greener Oxford, Climate Change and

	Transport
Report Owner:	Head of Environmental Development
Report Contact:	John Copley, Head of Environmental Development Tel: 01865 252386 jcopley@oxford.gov.uk

ITEM 29:	FUSION LIFESTYLE - ANNUAL SERVICE PLAN 2015/16 ID: I010167
To endorse Fusion Lifestyle's Annual Service Plan for the management of the Council's leisure facilities for 2015-16.	
Is this a Key Decision?	Yes
Is this item open or exempt to the public?	Open
Will this decision be preceded by any form of consultation?	None
Decision Taker	City Executive Board
Executive Lead Member:	Leisure Contract and Community Partnership Grants
Report Owner:	Head of Leisure, Parks and Communities
Report Contact:	Lucy Cherry, City Leisure Tel: 01865 252707 lcherry@oxford.gov.uk

ITEM 30:	HERITAGE PLAN FRAMEWORK ID: I011252
Endorsement of the Heritage Plan Framework, which sets out the City Council's intended strategy for management of the city's heritage through the Heritage Plan, and which includes an action plan.	
Is this a Key Decision?	Not Key
Is this item open or exempt to the public?	Open
Will this decision be preceded by any form of consultation?	General public consultation has not been undertaken for this document, as it is a statement of the City Council's intended strategy for management of the city's heritage through the Heritage Plan. However, the document has been informed by intensive consultation events with stakeholders, including key sector champions from the Oxford Strategy Partnership, English Heritage and the Oxford Preservation Trust.
Decision Taker	City Executive Board
Executive Lead Member:	Corporate Strategy, Economic Development and Planning
Report Owner:	Head of City Development
Report Contact:	Sarah Harrison Tel: 01865 252015 sbharrison@oxford.gov.uk

ITEM 31:	HORSPATH ROAD SPORTS PAVILION - REMODELLING OPTIONS ID: I008107
This report will review the options for remodelling the Horspath Road sports pavilion and for improving sports provision at Horspath Road.	
Is this a Key Decision?	Yes
Is this item open or exempt to the public?	Open
Will this decision be preceded by any form of consultation?	

Decision Taker	City Executive Board
Executive Lead Member:	Sports, Events and Parks
Report Owner:	Head of Leisure, Parks and Communities
Report Contact:	Ian Brooke, Head of Leisure, Parks and Communities Tel: 01865 252705 ibrooke@oxford.gov.uk

ITEM 32:	HOUSING STRATEGY 2015-2018 ID: I009802
The Housing Strategy 2015-16 sets out the priorities for the next three years, with a new action plan to help deliver these priorities.	
Approval of the strategy is being requested following consultation.	
Is this a Key Decision?	Yes It is significant in terms of its effect on communities living or working in an area comprising two or more wards
Is this item open or exempt to the public?	Open
Will this decision be preceded by any form of consultation?	Yes
Decision Taker	City Executive Board <input type="checkbox"/> Council
Executive Lead Member:	Housing and Estate Regeneration <input type="checkbox"/>
Report Owner:	Head of Housing and Property <input type="checkbox"/>
Report Contact:	Stephen Clarke, Head of Housing and Property Tel: 01865 252447 sclarke@oxford.gov.uk

ITEM 33:	OXFORD HERITAGE ASSETS REGISTER ID: I005935
The report seeks endorsement of a list of assets to be included on the Oxford Heritage Assets Register from nominations from the East and West Oxford pilot areas. These are assets assessed against the criteria for inclusion on the register.	
Is this a Key Decision?	Yes
Is this item open or exempt to the public?	Open
Will this decision be preceded by any form of consultation?	Consultation is being undertaken currently with a range of organisations in and adjoining the affected area, as well as with city wide stakeholders. The consultation is open to all. The results of the consultation exercise will be reported to a panel (the relevant ward members) and their recommendations, as well as a summary of the consultation exercise, will be reported to Board.
Decision Taker	City Executive Board
Executive Lead Member:	Corporate Strategy, Economic Development and Planning
Report Owner:	Head of City Development
Report Contact:	Sarah Harrison Tel: 01865 252015 sbharrison@oxford.gov.uk

ITEM 34:	OXFUTURES PROGRAMME ID: I008833
Update on progress and risk regarding the EU funded OxFutures programme	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • update on delivery progress • description of delivery pipeline to Nov 2015 	

• discussion of financial risks	
Is this a Key Decision?	Not Key
Is this item open or exempt to the public?	Part exempt Some elements may be exempt from publication as they are commercially sensitive.
Will this decision be preceded by any form of consultation?	None
Decision Taker	City Executive Board
Executive Lead Member:	Cleaner, Greener Oxford, Climate Change and Transport
Report Owner:	Executive Director for Community Services
Report Contact:	Mairi Brookes Tel: 01865 252212 mbrookes@oxford.gov.uk

ITEM 35:	EXPENS DELIVERY STRATEGY ID: I009224
To update CEB on the delivery of the strategy for the Oxpens site and seek approval for stages 2 and 3.	
Is this a Key Decision?	Yes It is likely to result in the Council incurring expenditure which is greater than £500,000
Is this item open or exempt to the public?	Part exempt Commercially Sensitive
Will this decision be preceded by any form of consultation?	Formal consultation is underway regarding budgetary provision- to be heard at full council February. Previous statutory consultation has taken place regarding regeneration of Oxpens through the West End AAP and the Oxpens masterplan SPD.
Decision Taker	City Executive Board
Executive Lead Member:	Corporate Strategy, Economic Development and Planning
Report Owner:	Executive Director for City Regeneration and Housing
Report Contact:	Fiona Piercy Tel: 01865 252185 fpiercy@oxford.gov.uk

ITEM 36:	PARTNERSHIP AGREEMENT WITH JOBCENTRE PLUS TO DELIVER UNIVERSAL CREDIT ID: I005533
The report seeks approval to sign off the Delivery Partnership Agreement which sets out the commitments that the Council is undertaking to support the delivery of Universal Credit	
Is this a Key Decision?	Yes It is significant in terms of its effect on communities living or working in an area comprising two or more wards
Is this item open or exempt to the public?	Part exempt
Will this decision be preceded by any form of consultation?	No
Decision Taker	City Executive Board

Executive Lead Member:	Customer Services and Social Inclusion
Report Owner:	Head of Customer Services
Report Contact:	Paul Wilding, Benefit Operations Manager Tel: 01865 252461 pwilding@oxford.gov.uk

ITEM 37:	SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN, YOUNG PEOPLE AND VULNERABLE ADULT POLICY ID: I008658
To review and refresh the Council's Safeguarding Children, Young People and Vulnerable Adult policy and procedures.	
Is this a Key Decision?	Not Key
Is this item open or exempt to the public?	Open
Will this decision be preceded by any form of consultation?	
Decision Taker	City Executive Board
Executive Lead Member:	Finance, Asset Management and Public Health
Report Owner:	Head of Policy, Culture and Communications
Report Contact:	Val Johnson, Policy Team Leader Tel: 01865 252209 vjohnson@oxford.gov.uk

COUNCIL 13 APRIL 2015 PROVISIONAL REPORTS

To include any reports from CEB

ITEM 38:	CONSTITUTION REVIEW 2015/16 ID: I010173
An annual report to propose any required changes to the constitution.	
Is this a Key Decision?	Yes
Is this item open or exempt to the public?	Open
Will this decision be preceded by any form of consultation?	None
Decision Taker	Council
Executive Lead Member:	Corporate Strategy, Economic Development and Planning
Report Owner:	Head of Law and Governance
Report Contact:	Jeremy Thomas, Head of Law and Governance Tel: 01865 252224 jjthomas@oxford.gov.uk , Emma Griffiths, Law and Governance Tel: 01865 252208 egriffiths@oxford.gov.uk

ITEM 39:	EMPLOYMENT POLICIES ID: I003437
To seek approval for three employment policies and procedures which are Family Leave incorporating Shared Parental Leave legislation, Allegations Policy and Employee Data Monitoring Policy.	
Is this a Key Decision?	Not Key
Is this item open or exempt to the public?	Open
Will this decision be preceded by any form of consultation?	Trade Unions
Decision Taker	Council
Executive Lead Member:	Corporate Strategy, Economic Development and Planning

Report Owner:	Head of Human Resources and Facilities
Report Contact:	Simon Howick, Head of Human Resources and Facilities Tel: 01865 252547 showick@oxford.gov.uk

ITEM 40:	ADOPTION OF THE STREET TRADING POLICY 2015 ID: I009280
Adoption of the Street Trading Policy 2015 following the public consultation	
Is this a Key Decision?	Not Key
Is this item open or exempt to the public?	Open
Will this decision be preceded by any form of consultation?	
Decision Taker	Council
Executive Lead Member:	
Report Owner:	Head of Environmental Development
Report Contact:	Lesley Rennie, Business Regulation Team Manager lrennie@oxford.gov.uk

CEB 14 MAY 2015 PROVISIONAL REPORTS

ITEM 41:	AWARD OF INTERNAL AUDIT CONTRACT ID: I011047
To award the contract for Council's Internal Auditors	
Is this a Key Decision?	Yes It is significant in terms of its effect on communities living or working in an area comprising two or more wards
Is this item open or exempt to the public?	Part exempt Commercially sensitive to the business affairs of the Council
Will this decision be preceded by any form of consultation?	N/A
Decision Taker	City Executive Board
Executive Lead Member:	Finance, Asset Management and Public Health
Report Owner:	Executive Director for Organisational Development and Corporate Services
Report Contact:	Nigel Kennedy, Head of Finance Tel: 01865 252708 nkennedy@oxford.gov.uk

ITEM 42:	CITY CENTRE PUBLIC SPACES PROTECTION ORDER (PSPO) ID: I010939
The implementation of a Public Space Protection Order to effectively deal with a number of City Centre related activities of a few people that affects the general public's freedom to use the City centre freely and safely.	
Is this a Key Decision?	Yes It is significant in terms of its effect on communities living or working in an area comprising two or more wards
Is this item open or exempt to the public?	Open
Will this decision be preceded by any form of consultation?	Yes
Decision Taker	City Executive Board
Executive Lead Member:	Crime and Community Response
Report Owner:	Executive Director for Community Services
Report Contact:	Richard J Adams, Housing and Communities Tel:

	01865 252283 rjadams@oxford.gov.uk
--	------------------------------------

ITEM 43:	HOUSING DEVELOPMENT DELIVERY MODELS ID: I011254
Possible models of development.	
Is this a Key Decision?	Yes
Is this item open or exempt to the public?	Open
Will this decision be preceded by any form of consultation?	No
Decision Taker	City Executive Board
Executive Lead Member:	Housing and Estate Regeneration
Report Owner:	Head of Housing and Property
Report Contact:	Gary Parsons Tel: 01865 252711 gparsons@oxford.gov.uk

ITEM 44:	OXFORD RAILWAY STATION REDEVELOPMENT ID: I010169
To update CEB on the Oxford Station Redevelopment Proposals and seek approval for next stages.	
Is this a Key Decision?	Yes It is significant in terms of its effect on communities living or working in an area comprising two or more wards
Is this item open or exempt to the public?	Open
Will this decision be preceded by any form of consultation?	Formal consultation on this site was undertaken as part of the West End AAP. Significant informal consultation and information gathering has taken place and continues to take place. Formal statutory consultation will be undertaken as part of the town planning processes going forward.
Decision Taker	City Executive Board
Executive Lead Member:	Corporate Strategy, Economic Development and Planning
Report Owner:	Head of City Development
Report Contact:	Fiona Piercy Tel: 01865 252185 fpiercy@oxford.gov.uk

ITEM 45:	PROPOSED LEASE AND MONITORING ARRANGEMENTS FOR COMMUNITY CENTRES ID: I011250
Formalise the approach of the Council to Community Centre lease agreements	
Is this a Key Decision?	Yes It is significant in terms of its effect on communities living or working in an area comprising two or more wards
Is this item open or exempt to the public?	Open
Will this decision be preceded by any	No

form of consultation?	
Decision Taker	City Executive Board
Executive Lead Member:	Culture and Communities
Report Owner:	Head of Leisure, Parks and Communities
Report Contact:	Mark Spriggs, Community Centres Co-ordinator Tel: 01865 252822 mspriggs@oxford.gov.uk

ITEM 46:	STATEMENT OF COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT 2014 ID: I010033
<p>The Statement of Community Involvement (SCI) is a statutory document that sets out how the Council will involve the community and others in planning decisions. It covers development control, policy, and design/conservation decisions. The current SCI was adopted in 2006 (reviewed in 2009) so it is now due to be reviewed to ensure it remains up to date.</p> <p>To approve the Statement of Community Involvement 2014 following public consultation.</p>	
Is this a Key Decision?	Yes It is significant in terms of its effect on communities living or working in an area comprising two or more wards
Is this item open or exempt to the public?	Open
Will this decision be preceded by any form of consultation?	Yes
Decision Taker	City Executive Board
Executive Lead Member:	Corporate Strategy, Economic Development and Planning
Report Owner:	Head of City Development
Report Contact:	Lyndsey Beveridge Tel: 01865 25 2482 lbeveridge@oxford.gov.uk

ANNUAL COUNCIL 18 MAY 2015

ITEM 47:	APPOINTMENT OF COMMITTEES FOR THE YEAR 2015/16 ID: I010361
To appoint Councillors to Council Committees for 2015/16	
Is this a Key Decision?	Yes
Is this item open or exempt to the public?	Open
Will this decision be preceded by any form of consultation?	
Decision Taker	Council
Executive Lead Member:	
Report Owner:	Head of Law and Governance
Report Contact:	Pat Jones, Committee and Member Services Manager phjones@oxford.gov.uk

CEB 11 JUNE 2015 PROVISIONAL REPORTS

ITEM 48:	CORPORATE BIODIVERSITY STRATEGY ID: I010031
<p>This Strategy sets out how the Council aims to fulfil its duties under the Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006.</p>	

To adopt the Corporate Biodiversity Strategy following public consultation	
Is this a Key Decision?	Yes
Is this item open or exempt to the public?	Open
Will this decision be preceded by any form of consultation?	None
Decision Taker	City Executive Board
Executive Lead Member:	Cleaner, Greener Oxford, Climate Change and Transport
Report Owner:	Head of Environmental Development
Report Contact:	Mai Jarvis, Environmental Policy Team Leader Tel: 01865 252403 mjarvis@oxford.gov.uk

ITEM 49:	HOUSING ASSET MANAGEMENT STRATEGY (INCLUDING THE OXFORD STANDARD) ID: I010484
To propose the adoption of a strategy that will determine decisions for the Council's housing stock	
Is this a Key Decision?	Yes It is significant in terms of its effect on communities living or working in an area comprising two or more wards
Is this item open or exempt to the public?	Open
Will this decision be preceded by any form of consultation?	Yes. Consultation has already happened to produce this draft which in turn will be subject to a further 28 day consultation before final consideration by CEB and Council
Decision Taker	City Executive Board <input type="checkbox"/> Council
Executive Lead Member:	Housing and Estate Regeneration <input type="checkbox"/>
Report Owner:	Head of Housing and Property <input type="checkbox"/>
Report Contact:	Martin Shaw Tel: 01865 252775 mshaw2@oxford.gov.uk

ITEM 50:	HOUSES IN MULTIPLE OCCUPATION (HMO) LICENSING SCHEME ID: I005715
<p>The Council designated the whole of the City subject to Additional Licensing of HMOs in 2010 which was phased into effect from the 24th January 2011 and 31st January 2012. Each Phase of the scheme was designated for 5 years and during this time the Council must undertake a review.</p> <p>The report to be submitted to the June CEB will provide findings from a review of the impact of the scheme and seek approval from members to proceed with a consultation exercise regarding the future of the Additional Licensing scheme and to investigate other options for improving the Private Rented Sector in Oxford.</p> <p>The report to be submitted to the October CEB will set out the results of the consultation exercise for Additional Licensing and set out recommendations for the future of the scheme</p>	

and for improving the Private Rented Sector as a whole.	
Is this a Key Decision?	Yes It is significant in terms of its effect on communities living or working in an area comprising two or more wards
Is this item open or exempt to the public?	Open
Will this decision be preceded by any form of consultation?	Consultation will occur after the June report.
Decision Taker	City Executive Board <input type="checkbox"/>
Executive Lead Member:	Finance, Asset Management and Public Health <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>
Report Owner:	Executive Director for Community Services <input type="checkbox"/>
Report Contact:	Adrian Chowns, Team Leader HMO Enforcement Team Tel: 01865 252010 achowns@oxford.gov.uk

ITEM 51:	ICT STRATEGY ID: I002559
This report will propose an ICT Strategy for the Council.	
Is this a Key Decision?	Yes
Is this item open or exempt to the public?	
Will this decision be preceded by any form of consultation?	Internal only.
Decision Taker	City Executive Board
Executive Lead Member:	Cleaner, Greener Oxford, Climate Change and Transport
Report Owner:	Head of Environmental Development
Report Contact:	Mairi Brookes Tel: 01865 252212 mbrookes@oxford.gov.uk

ITEM 52:	LOCAL DEVELOPMENT SCHEME ID: I010035
To adopt the Local Development Scheme	
Is this a Key Decision?	Yes
Is this item open or exempt to the public?	Open
Will this decision be preceded by any form of consultation?	None
Decision Taker	City Executive Board
Executive Lead Member:	Corporate Strategy, Economic Development and Planning
Report Owner:	Head of City Development
Report Contact:	Rona Knott, Planning Officer Tel: 01865 252157 rknott@oxford.gov.uk

ITEM 53:	PRIVATE SECTOR HOUSING POLICY ID: I010352
To set out the future priorities and areas of intervention in the private rented and owner-occupied residential sectors in Oxford.	

Is this a Key Decision?	Yes It is likely to result in the Council incurring expenditure which is greater than £500,000
Is this item open or exempt to the public?	Open
Will this decision be preceded by any form of consultation?	None
Decision Taker	City Executive Board
Executive Lead Member:	Finance, Asset Management and Public Health
Report Owner:	Head of Environmental Development
Report Contact:	Ian Wright, Environmental Development iwright@oxford.gov.uk

CEB 9 JULY 2015 PROVISIONAL REPORTS

ITEM 54:	LEISURE & WELLBEING STRATEGY ID: I009355	
To adopt the Leisure & Wellbeing Strategy following public consultation		
Is this a Key Decision?	Yes It is significant in terms of its effect on communities living or working in an area comprising two or more wards	
Is this item open or exempt to the public?	Open	
Will this decision be preceded by any form of consultation?	Yes	
Decision Taker	City Executive Board	
Executive Lead Member:	Leisure Contract and Community Partnership Grants	
Report Owner:	Head of Leisure, Parks and Communities	
Report Contact:	Ian Brooke, Head of Leisure, Parks and Communities Tel: 01865 252705 ibrooke@oxford.gov.uk	

ITEM 55:	ADOPTION OF NORTHERN GATEWAY AREA ACTION PLAN ID: I008299	
To report the findings of the independent Planning Inspector and adopt the Northern Gateway AAP as council policy (subject to the report's findings)		
Is this a Key Decision?	Yes	
Is this item open or exempt to the public?	Open	
Will this decision be preceded by any form of consultation?	There have been 3 previous stages of consultation/public involvement in the development of the AAP	
Decision Taker	City Executive Board	
Executive Lead Member:	Corporate Strategy, Economic Development and Planning	
Report Owner:	Head of City Development	
Report Contact:	Rachel Williams rwilliams@oxford.gov.uk	

COUNCIL 20 JULY 2015 PROVISIONAL REPORTS

To include any reports from CEB

ITEM 56:	ENERGY AND WATER MANAGEMENT PLAN
-----------------	---

	ID: I010350
To ensure clear roles, responsibilities and controls in place to reduce energy and water consumption and costs in Council buildings and operations; to embed the use of whole life costing approach to decisions making	
Is this a Key Decision?	Yes
Is this item open or exempt to the public?	Open
Will this decision be preceded by any form of consultation?	None
Decision Taker	City Executive Board
Executive Lead Member:	Cleaner, Greener Oxford, Climate Change and Transport
Report Owner:	Head of Environmental Development
Report Contact:	John Copley, Head of Environmental Development Tel: 01865 252386 jcopley@oxford.gov.uk

CEB 10 SEPTEMBER 2015 PROVISIONAL REPORTS

ITEM 57:	REPLACEMENT OF HOUSING COMPUTER SYSTEMS ID: I010933
The Council currently has two housing computer systems, this report details the procurement of one housing computer system to replace the current computer applications.	
Is this a Key Decision?	Yes
Is this item open or exempt to the public?	Part exempt commercially sensitive to the business affairs of the council
Will this decision be preceded by any form of consultation?	
Decision Taker	City Executive Board
Executive Lead Member:	
Report Owner:	Head of Business Improvement and Technology
Report Contact:	Jane Lubbock, Head of Business Improvement and Technology Tel: 01865 252708 jlubbock@oxford.gov.uk

ITEM 58:	INTEGRATED PERFORMANCE REPORT QUARTER 1 2015/16 ID: I011045
Report details the Council's finances, risk and performance as at the end of Quarter 1, 30 June 2015	
Is this a Key Decision?	Yes
Is this item open or exempt to the public?	Open
Will this decision be preceded by any form of consultation?	N/A
Decision Taker	City Executive Board <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> City Executive Board <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> City Executive Board <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> City Executive Board
Executive Lead Member:	Finance, Asset Management and Public Health, Head of Business Improvement and Technology <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>
Report Owner:	Head of Finance <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>

Report Contact:	Nigel Kennedy, Head of Finance Tel: 01865 252708 nkennedy@oxford.gov.uk, Jane Lubbock, Head of Business Improvement and Technology Tel: 01865 252708 jlubbock@oxford.gov.uk
------------------------	---

ITEM 59:	SHELTERED HOUSING REVIEW ID: I010356
Approve outcomes of review, including future of some of the stock	
Is this a Key Decision?	Yes It is significant in terms of its effect on communities living or working in an area comprising two or more wards
Is this item open or exempt to the public?	Open
Will this decision be preceded by any form of consultation?	None
Decision Taker	City Executive Board
Executive Lead Member:	Housing and Estate Regeneration
Report Owner:	Head of Housing and Property
Report Contact:	Gary Parsons Tel: 01865 252711 gparsons@oxford.gov.uk

COUNCIL 21 SEPTEMBER 2014 PROVISIONAL REPORTS

To include any reports from CEB

CEB 15 OCTOBER 2015 PROVISIONAL REPORTS

CEB 12 NOVEMBER 2015 PROVISIONAL REPORTS

COUNCIL 7 DECEMBER 2015 PROVISIONAL REPORTS

To include any reports from CEB

CEB 17 DECEMBER 2015 PROVISIONAL REPORTS

ITEM 60:	DATA PROTECTION POLICY REFRESH ID: I006767
Is this a Key Decision?	Yes
Is this item open or exempt to the public?	Open
Will this decision be preceded by any form of consultation?	None
Decision Taker	City Executive Board
Executive Lead Member:	Finance, Asset Management and Public Health
Report Owner:	Executive Director for Organisational Development and Corporate Services
Report Contact	Lucy Neville Tel: 01864 2086 lneville@oxford.gov.uk

Scrutiny Recommendation Tracker 2014-15

Budget Review 2015/16 = Finance Panel 5 February				
Recommendations	Agreed Y/N	Executive response	Lead Member & Officer	Implemented Y/N / due date
1. That reserves and balances are reviewed with a view to investing any overstated reserves.	Y	Agree. This is something that we are undertaking anyway, as we want to maximise return on investment. It is worth noting that reserves may not be “over-stated” but may still be suitable for investment if they are held against a risk or item of expenditure occurring in a future year.	Cllr Turner	Sept 15
2. That the City Council explores new ways of increasing public engagement in its budget setting process.	In part	We can look at the consultation and welcome suggestions. However, it is important to note that the budget is a politically-led process and that it would need to be consistent with the aims and values of the administration setting the budget.	Cllr Turner	Dec 15
3. That Council Tax is increased by 1.99% (rather than the proposed 1.50%) in 2015/16.	Y	Agreed.	Cllr Turner	Y
4. That the City Council continues to engage constructively with other Oxfordshire Councils in order to optimise any potential benefits available from business rates pooling and distribution arrangements.	Y	Agreed. We already do work with the other councils on this, but at present pooling is not to our advantage.	Cllr Turner	Y
5. That the City Council looks at ways of mitigating the impacts of higher than average rents on those Council tenants who will be most affected.	N	The overall average rent rise for council tenants is 3.49% but the range is -6.58% to 6.25%. If a tenant faces into difficulties, s/he should approach the Council for assistance. For	Cllr Turner	N/A

		instance, there may be tenants who are not receiving all funds to which they are entitled, or in some cases a claim for Discretionary Housing Payment might be appropriate. However, the far bigger issue is for tenants in privately rented accommodation, rather than those paying comparatively low council rents.		
6. That further consideration is given to covering more enforcement costs through higher, related fees and charges. This should include keeping legislation under review and asking the LGA what other local authorities charge for.	Y	We are happy to do this, but it should be noted that some budgets are ring-fenced and there is a limit to what can be charged for.	Cllr Turner	Sept 15
7. That to protect future Park and Ride incomes, the City Council seeks agreement with the County Council on consistent charging rates across all Oxford Park and Rides.	Y	We want to have common charges with the County Council, to avoid extra journeys being made to visit a cheaper park and ride. Ultimately the charges levied by the County Council are a matter for that authority. Our budget figure is our best estimate of the approach to be taken by the County Council.	Cllr Turner	Dec 15
8. That the City Council explores mechanisms for the earlier release of land value locked up in the Barton Park development.	N	This does not look feasible or desirable. If the desire is to release waterfall payments earlier, that would not be possible without renegotiating the whole deal, which would not appear to be an endeavour with great prospect of success. Alternatively, if it is to borrow off the back of the deal, this would present the authority with	Cllr Turner	N/A

		additional risk, and it is not clear what the borrowing would fund. We are already providing well over £100 million of investment over the next ten years, and are borrowing around £232 million.		
9. That the following efficiency savings are re-rated as high risk: a) Shifting services towards community settings and online (£126k from 2017/18 in Customer Services), b) Application portfolio & telephony review (£150k from 2015/16 in Business Improvement & Technology).	N	a) We believe this saving is deliverable and the risk rating is appropriate. b) The applications review should deliver savings through reduced maintenance and reduced staffing resources that's why its medium risk. It doesn't make a difference to the budget since we provide a 40% contingency against unachieved savings for high and medium risks.	Cllr Turner	N/A
10. That there is a re-energising of attempts to identify new invest-to-save opportunities in future budget rounds (see recommendation 17d).	In part	We are very ambitious here already but will continue to look.	Cllr Turner	Dec 2015
11. That sufficient flexibility is in place to mitigate the risk of the City Council having to repay £7m to the Housing Revenue Account.	Y	We will be in a position to mitigate this, but would be undesirable.	Cllr Turner	Y
12. That the City Council explores how it can become a more agile operator in the housing market to ensure it secures best value for new property acquisitions.	In part	We believe we are appropriate and agile in this area of work, but are always happy to receive suggestions.	Cllr Turner	N/A
13. That half of the additional waste disposal costs pressure is re-instated in the budget from 2016/17.	N	Not agreed. It would not be in the interests of the authority to make this change, and if the budget is not deliverable it will be reviewed next year.	Cllr Turner	N/A
14. That off street parking income is re-modelled in light of the most recent parking data and	N	At this stage we do not see any evidence to suggest remodelling is	Cllr Turner	N/A

experience with the temporary Westgate car park.		necessary.		
15. That any savings achieved through lower than assumed energy prices are invested in energy efficiency improvements.	N	We will continue to prioritise energy efficiency regardless of the movement on energy prices.	Cllr Turner	N/A
16. That HRA void losses are modelled at 1.0% (rather than the proposed 1.2%), at least in the early years of the budget period.	N	It would be prudent to retain potential void losses at 1.2%, in case void levels are higher when the Barton development becomes available. The impact upon the budget is minor.	Cllr Turner	N/A
17. That the following areas should be priorities for further spending in the event that additional general fund resources become available (we have identified some options for raising revenue in the short to medium term). These suggested priorities are listed in no particular order: a) Staff Training and Wellbeing – continue funding the training budget increase (£100k) and funding for staff wellbeing (£75k) beyond 2016/17, b) Apprenticeships – reinstate £50k from 2015/16 or a sufficient amount to fund no fewer than 25 apprentices in future cohorts, c) Community Development (Social Inclusion) Fund – reinstate £60k from 2015/16, d) Business Improvement staffing reductions – reverse the £110k cut in 2016/17 in full or in part (see recommendation 10), e) Partnership development – new investment, f) Fund raising – new investment,	In part (N a-f, Y g&h)	On all of these, they are really matters for councillors and groups to take a view of when it comes to budget setting. On “Beds in Sheds”, we are proposing a carry forward to continue to fund some of this work. Discretionary Housing Payments – continue the current level of funding to April 2016. We will, of course, review the situation with respect to DHP in the light of the coalition government’s dramatic, inappropriate reduction of our budget. We could, if needs be, support it from the homeless contingency, in some circumstances from the HRA, and we may also need to revisit the criteria for the scheme.	Cllr Turner	April 2015

<p>g)Planning enforcement – continue funding the Beds in Sheds project at the post April 2015 level to April 2016. A more detailed review of alternative funding streams should be undertaken during this period,</p> <p>h)Discretionary Housing Payments – continue the current level of funding to April 2016.</p>				
Treasury Management Strategy 2015/16 – Finance Pane 6 February				
Recommendation	Agreed Y/N	Executive response	Lead Member & Officer	Implemented Y/N / due date
1. That paragraph 14 in appendix 2 and the title of table 5 are reworded before Council is asked to approve the Treasury Management Strategy.	Y		Cllr Turner	
2. That the City Council considers all options for refinancing the £20m repayment of its external debt, which is due to be repaid in 2020/21.	Y		Cllr Turner	
3. That the City Council pursues ‘real asset lettings’ at a pace. This could be both a good investment and one which supports the City Council’s objectives.	Y		Cllr Turner	
4. That the City Council obtains independent advice on its liquidity and borrowing potential.	Y		Cllr Turner	
Grant Allocations to Community and Voluntary Organisations – Scrutiny Committee 3 February				
Recommendation	Agreed Y/N	Executive response	Lead Member & Officer	Implemented Y/N / due date
1. That the City Council works with OCVA to improve outreach and engagement activities with diverse community and voluntary groups, with a focus on building capacities and supporting bid-writing.	Y	I am happy to accept this recommendation. Given the concerns that were expressed at the meeting about the capacity of overarching support services to reach minority communities, we will also explore other	Cllr Rowley	

		<p>ways of making those communities aware of what we can (and cannot) offer. We will include in the OCVA specification for 15/16 that they must follow up any unsuccessful applicants to any of the grants funding pots to offer them support and guidance. We already offer bid writing workshops for all community groups through OCVA, and this will continue.</p>		
<p>2. That consideration is given to providing a greater separation between grants allocated to smaller, localised community groups and those that seek to achieve wider community benefits.</p>	<p>In part</p>	<p>I agree that full consideration should be given to the difference between larger voluntary-sector organisations and smaller groups based in local communities, and the need to strike a balance, as well as to ensure Oxford retains a wealth of groups that come from within local communities to achieve collective goals.</p> <p>The Council awards grants solely on the basis of the proposal's contribution to achieving the Council's local objectives, as well as evaluating applications on the basis of how closely the applicant works with local communities and how well they establish the specific local need. We also offer dedicated support to community groups in preparing bids, both directly and through OCVA, and this will continue.</p> <p>I am not convinced that a formal separation between different kinds of bidder would help to achieve this. The Council already has different a number of</p>	<p>Cllr Rowley</p>	

		<p>different grants budgets: for commissioning, with no bid limit and divided according to the Council's objectives; open bidding grants up to £10,000, and small grants up to £1,000 both very much aimed at local community-based groups; specific grants budgets for meeting particular needs. I think that considering applications separately according to the type of organisation they come from, rather than simply always bearing in mind the considerations outlined in my first paragraph above, could add complexity and diminish flexibility in achieving the Council's objectives.</p> <p>However, there could be more we could do to ensure that small community-based groups are fully aware of what we can and cannot offer, and have the capacity to make appropriate applications; and our work on Scrutiny's first recommendation will be structured in order to address this.</p>		
Activities for Older People and Preventing Isolation – Scrutiny Committee 3 February				
Recommendation	Agreed Y/N	Executive response	Lead Member & Officer	Implemented Y/N / due date
That a high level review takes place to flag up any issues of non-compliance with the Equalities Act.	Y		Cllr Simm	June 15
Communities and Neighbourhood Services – Scrutiny Committee 3 February				
Recommendation	Agreed Y/N	Executive response	Lead Member & Officer	Implemented Y/N / due date
That the review of priority areas draws on the findings of the Inequalities Scrutiny Panel, as well	Y	I am fully in support of work being undertaken to identify areas deprivation	Cllr Simm	June 15

as the latest social research data.		throughout the City outwith the seven identified areas. Work is underway to provide an evidence based report to identify demographic change and areas of need drawing upon multiple indices of deprivation. The findings of the Inequalities Scrutiny Panel will inform this undertaking and I expect to be able to present a completed report in the summer of this year.		
STAR Survey results – Housing Panel 22 January				
Recommendation	Agreed Y/N	Executive response	Lead Member & Officer	Implemented Y/N / due date
1. That the City Council reviews the methodology used to measure tenant satisfaction, and aims to make personal contact with tenants in future.	Y	Cllr Seamons, Board member for Housing and Estate Regeneration said the Council needed to set out its response to the STAR survey. He asked that Scrutiny assist in reviewing the methodology used to measure tenant satisfaction and said that once the Oxford standard was implemented - it would raise the standard of peoples' homes.	Cllr Seamons	TBC
2. That the City Council sets out its response to the STAR Survey 2014 results, including any improvement measures taken or planned.	Y		Cllr Seamons	Y
Fuel Poverty – Housing Panel 22 January				
Recommendation	Agreed Y/N	Executive response	Lead Member & Officer	Implemented Y/N / due date
1. That tenant-facing staff in Direct Services are encouraged to offer appropriate advice on the use of free electricity.	Y	Cllr Seamons, Board member for Housing and Estate Regeneration agreed the two recommendations and would look into both pieces of work. Cllr Turner explained that the consultation budget recommended a free energy efficiency review for every council home.	Cllrs Turner & Seamons	TBC
2. That the City Council explores the possibility of buying energy in bulk.	Y		Cllrs Turner & Seamons	TBC
Banking Services Provider – Finance Panel 21 January				

Recommendation	Agreed Y/N	Executive response	Lead Member & Officer	Implemented Y/N / due date
1. That the City Council monitors the added social value provided by its new bank.	Y	<p>The Report to Finance Scrutiny Panel gives examples of areas where Barclays bankgave added value in support to local business and communities in Oxford, including :</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Skills based volunteering with schools across Oxfordshire b. Staff volunteering to carry out activities in the local community ofOxford c. Life skills – education programme for 11-19 year olds d. Money skills – supporting disadvantaged people to make financial decisions e. Organising events and workshops for local businesses to help themmarket their products and service and to educate them in such areasas finance <p>Pending the Bank taking over the Council's banking contract in March, the Councilhave already set up a meeting with the internal Welfare Reform Group to examineways in which the bank can help our customers engaged with the Direct PaymentProject on managing basic bank accounts. Over the coming months we will engagewith the bank on other areas that we believe may be of assistance directly orindirectly to the Council.</p>	Cllr Turner	TBC
2. That the terms and conditions for all tenders are revisited to ensure that they fully reflect the Council's ethical policies.	Y	In all of our major procurements (over £100k) the Council requires the following commitment from the successful bidder to;	Cllr Turner	TBC

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Comply with our bribery and corruption policy • Comply with our safeguarding policy • Commit to our Living Wage policy • Identify and report on local jobs and apprenticeships created as a result of the contract • Carbon reduction targets • Arrangement for any prompt payment arrangements for SMEs • Support the Council in creating opportunities within the Social value act • Evidence of their business commitment to corporate social responsibility <p>All of the above form part of the final contract conditions.</p>		
3. That the City Council continues to monitor which banks other former Co-op customers are switching to, and whether 'challenger banks' begin taking on local authority customers.	Y	The City Council will continue to monitor which banks other former Co-op customers are switching to, and whether 'challenger banks' begin taking on local authority customers. The Council obtains some information from trade press from time to time on the movement of local authorities from the Co-Op and the activities of challenger banks. Information to date suggests that most ex local authority Co-Op customers are moving to either Barclays or Nat West. Whilst Challenger Banks have submitted a small number of bids for local authority contracts their activities to date have been limited and represent a 'dipping of a toe in the water', although clearly over time this has the potential to change.	Cllr Turner	TBC

Capital Programme Management – Finance Panel 21 January				
Recommendation	Agreed Y/N	Executive response	Lead Member & Officer	Implemented Y/N / due date
1. That sustainability is formalised throughout the capital gateway process.	Y	The Executive agrees that sustainability is a key consideration for the delivery of our capital investment programme. Sustainability is already an integral part of the key stages of our Gateway delivery process.	Cllr Turner / David Edwards	TBC
2. That the City Council continues to develop a more flexible approach to the delivery of its capital programme.	Y	The Executive will continue to look at ways to improve our overall delivery process and will review the impact of the changes we have already made. Decisions on how we package and procure works in order to make the best use of resources and deliver value for money have been strengthened and are again an integral part of our revised processes.	Cllr Turner / David Edwards	TBC
New Council controls over anti-social behaviour – Scrutiny Committee 19 January				
Recommendation	Agreed Y/N	Executive response	Lead Member & Officer	Implemented Y/N / due date
1. That a Scrutiny Councillor is included in the membership of the oversight group.	Y	Recommendations are fine. Happy to have one member from Scrutiny on the oversight group. Good idea on the LA Forum input.	Cllr Sinclair / Richard Adams	TBC
2. That City Council officers engage with Local Area Forums regarding the application of new anti-social behaviour powers.	Y		Cllr Sinclair / Richard Adams	TBC
Educational Attainment – Scrutiny Committee 19 January				
Recommendation	Agreed Y/N	Executive response	Lead Member & Officer	Implemented Y/N / due date
That any future City Council educational	Y	I welcome the comments of the Scrutiny	Cllr Kennedy /	TBC

<p>programmes are co-designed with schools and are cohesively focused on achieving long term improvements in educational attainment and reductions in inequalities.</p>		<p>Committee and the acknowledgement that the City Council's Programme has raised achievement in schools.</p> <p>I agree with the proposals that any future education attainment programme is planned jointly with schools. This is what we did in setting up the programme being scrutinised and its evaluation. An evaluation of the Leadership for Learning Programme is currently taking place with individual visits to every school in the programme. As part of this school leaders are being asked what support they feel would most help them to continue to raise attainment in future.</p>	Tim Sadler	
---	--	---	------------	--

Oxfordshire Growth Board – Scrutiny Committee 19 January

Recommendation	Agreed Y/N	Executive response	Lead Member & Officer	Implemented Y/N / due date
<p>That the City Council's representative on the Oxfordshire Growth Board conveys the following suggestions to the Board and reports back to Scrutiny:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. That the Growth Board takes a more holistic approach to sustainability, ensuring that it is a key consideration in all planning and development activities. 2. That the Growth Board considers whether it can and should have a wider brief in order to achieve greater benefits from collective working. This could include having scope to promote innovative ways of delivering new affordable housing, and further joint 	Y	<p>The Committee's proposals are very much in line with Oxford City Council's strategic approach to the role of the Growth Board and I am happy to adopt them in the Board's future deliberations.</p>	Cllr Price	TBC

lobbying to Government.				
3. That all reports to the Growth Board are available in document form.				
Older Persons Housing Review – Housing Panel 10 December				
Recommendation	Agreed Y/N	Executive response	Lead Member & Officer	Implemented Y/N / due date
1. That residents are surveyed face to face and that the City Council seeks to involve Oxford Brookes University in conducting these surveys. Tenant volunteers should also be closely consulted throughout the review.		<i>To follow</i>	Cllr Seamons / Allison Dalton	TBC
2. That the scope of this review is expanded to include older persons living in their own homes and to those in privately rented housing. Consideration should be given to how best to do this, perhaps using sample surveys.		<i>To follow</i>	Cllr Seamons / Allison Dalton	TBC
3. That the timescale of the review is extended by 6 months (to September 2015). If required, additional resources should be allocated in the current budget round to enable this.		<i>To follow</i>	Cllr Seamons / Allison Dalton	TBC
4. That the review is focused on understanding the future requirements of people at the younger end of the 'Older Persons' category, so that the City Council can plan to best meet their future needs.		<i>To follow</i>	Cllr Seamons / Allison Dalton	TBC
5. That the Board Member prioritises the creation of new social housing for single older people if the review provides evidence that this could reduce under-occupancy or meet the current or future requirements of older tenants.		<i>To follow</i>	Cllr Seamons / Allison Dalton	TBC
6. That a Steering Group is established to oversee the review, and that this group includes at least two elected members.		<i>To follow</i>	Cllr Seamons / Allison Dalton	TBC

Asset Management Strategy – Housing Panel 10 December				
Recommendation	Agreed Y/N	Executive response	Lead Member & Officer	Implemented Y/N / due date
1. That the City Council reviews whether it is doing all it reasonably can to ensure that tenants leave their homes in good condition before vacating them.	Y	I can agree to all the recommendations for the AMS. Mould would not be covered in detail in a Strategy document but it is important. Information about the National Home Swap Scheme is made available but we can tighten this up.	Cllr Seamons / Martin Shaw	12 Feb 15
2. That the City Council strengthens partnership working to ensure that the advice and materials provided to tenants by the City Council and other agencies is joined up and consistent.	Y		Cllr Seamons / Martin Shaw	12 Feb 15
3. That the City Council reviews whether mould is a recurring issue in the stock condition survey, and ensures that where mould occurs, it is treated effectively.	Y		Cllr Seamons / Martin Shaw	12 Feb 15
4. That the City Council ensures that information about the National Home Swap scheme is made available to tenants who are under-occupying, in addition to other options.	Y		Cllr Seamons / Martin Shaw	12 Feb 15
Oxford Standard – Scrutiny Committee 8 December				
Recommendation	Agreed Y/N	Executive response	Lead Member & Officer	Implemented Y/N / due date
1. To include the Oxford Standard in the developing Asset Management Plan and provide a clear and “action planned” commitment to delivery.	Y	All recommendations are accepted with the exception of some details in recommendation 3. Budgetary constraints ultimately mean the council cannot deliver on all tenant aspirations with regards to bathroom and kitchen specifications, having instead prioritised improvements in energy efficiency. The extensive summer consultation made clear that tenants see delivering	Cllr Seamons / Stephen Clarke	12 Feb 15
2. To include the following categories of work within the Oxford Standard: • Bathrooms • Kitchens • Security • Efficiency and Heating • Environment All these categories of works should include some	Y		Cllr Seamons / Stephen Clarke	12 Feb 15

degree of choice for tenants where this is possible.		energy efficiency measures as a top priority. The kitchen and bathroom specifications will however be upgraded, including with respect to the following points: - Renewal cycle for bathrooms to be reduced from 30 to 25 years. The renewal cycle for kitchens will remain at 20 years in accordance with best practice. - The Council will now provide a shower over bath as standard and only provide a shower instead of a bath where this is required to meet the needs of someone with a disability.		
3. That the following works are included in the Oxford Standard across the categories recommended. The Panel recognise that the view they have taken of best practice, within social housing providers, has been limited by time and therefore wish to propose this Standard as a minimum. This work should be carried out to programme regardless of condition... <i>(detailed proposals)</i>	In part		Cllr Seamons / Stephen Clarke	12 Feb 15
4. The priority for delivering the Oxford Standard should be decided by a combination of significant pockets of disrepair (identified with the stock condition survey) and the views of residents. The Panel was conscious that respondents to the surveys were not necessarily representative geographically so would recommend that more work is done on an area by area basis to determine local priorities.	Y		Cllr Seamons / Stephen Clarke	12 Feb 15
5. Works should be packaged together so that more efficient outcomes for residents and the Council can be achieved. For example: • If we replace windows then doors should be done at the same time (if needed) to give optimum benefits. • If the heating is to be replaced or upgraded we should consider insulation and other connected repairs at the same time. This should be a fundamental part of the planning process	Y		Cllr Seamons / Stephen Clarke	12 Feb 15
6. Delivery of the Oxford Standard should be on an area by area basis with good communication both within and outside of the area so that all tenants can easily access information on when, where, how and why. The Panel would like to review the	Y	Cllr Seamons / Stephen Clarke	12 Feb 15	

proposals for this communication.				
7. Individual tenants should not be able to “opt out” except in very exceptional circumstances. If there are difficulties these should be recognised and support offered so that the work can take place. Properties should be maintained for both the present and the future.	Y		Cllr Seamons / Stephen Clarke	12 Feb 15
8. As the Panel considered their recommendations a number of principles were voiced that can be found in the recommendations but the Panel wanted to put these in one place for clarity. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Homes should be maintained for the present and the future so opt-outs from repairs should not be allowed except in very exceptional circumstances. • Difficulties of individual tenants should be recognised and support offered. • Optimum result for residents for the work commissioned • The “like for like principle” should be removed • Allow “choice” for tenants wherever possible • A joined up approach to delivery • Improved communication plans for tenants on what, where, when and why. Timescale for delivery of the Oxford Standard is available for each area. • The quality of work should be of a high standard judged both by the Council and tenants. 	Y		Cllr Seamons / Stephen Clarke	12 Feb 15

Discretionary Rate Relief Policy – Scrutiny Committee 8 December

Recommendation	Agreed Y/N	Executive response	Lead Member & Officer	Implemented Y/N / due date
1. That non-profit making organisations are clearly encouraged to contact the City Council for an early assessment of whether they may be entitled to discretionary reliefs.	Y	All rate payers receive an annual bill which contains information about reliefs. Smaller start-ups are more difficult to identify but perhaps Scrutiny could help with this.	Cllr Brown / Tanya Bandekar	TBC

Clean Streets – Scrutiny Committee 8 December				
Recommendation	Agreed Y/N	Executive response	Lead Member & Officer	Implemented Y/N / due date
1. That consideration is given to how street cleaning can be sufficiently resourced whilst the Streetscene Service responds appropriately to future flooding events.	N	As the public understands, at times of emergency such as flooding, it is vital that City Council staff are deployed to safeguard life and property. Sometimes this will mean some street cleaning being postponed until after the emergency is over.	Cllr Tanner / Doug Loveridge	NA
2. That the street cleaning service standards are circulated to elected members, so that any Member requests for additional work can be costed and considered within the current budget round.	Y	I am very happy to ask officers to circulate streets cleaning standards to be circulated to all councillors.	Cllr Tanner / Doug Loveridge	Y
3. That clarification is provided as to what legal powers the City Council has to ensure the removal of graffiti from privately owned properties. Any guidance provide (e.g. online, written correspondence) should be reviewed and updated accordingly.	Y	This seems timely and Legal colleagues will review what powers (if any) are available. The Council is also planning to invest in a new officer post to encourage graffiti removal from private properties.	Cllr Tanner / Doug Loveridge	Y
Statement of Community Involvement 2014 Review – Scrutiny Committee 10 November				
Recommendation	Agreed Y/N	Executive response	Lead Member & Officer	Implemented Y/N / due date
1. That the Statement of Community engagement clearly sets out how members of the public can access paper versions of planning documents	Y	Very happy to accept that change to the report	Cllr Price / Lyndsey Beveridge	Y
Towards Mental Health and Wellbeing – Scrutiny Committee 6 October				
Recommendation	Agreed Y/N	Executive response	Lead Member & Officer	Implemented Y/N / due date
2. That the establishment of the Member Challenge Panel for Mental Health and Wellbeing does not divert officer resources	Y	I would anticipate this challenge panel being member led, and operating for the most part informally, rather than drawing	Cllr Turner / Val Johnson	March 2015

away from other Member Services such as Scrutiny. Consideration should be given to whether a budget bid is required to support this new Member Panel.		upon extensive officer support.		
3. That the Action Plan is updated and elaborated upon to include progress made against actions that are due.	Y	These are sensible comments on how to develop the action plan, and we had certainly hoped to update and monitor it.	Cllr Turner / Val Johnson	March 2015
4. That resources required to deliver the Action Plan are fully identified and costed, so that any bids for additional resources can be made as part of the current budget setting process.	Y		Cllr Turner / Val Johnson	March 2015
5. That consideration is given to the role of ethnic minority groups and faith leaders in supporting mental health and wellbeing in Oxford, and to how these can be included in the action plan.	Y		Cllr Turner / Val Johnson	March 2015
6. That consideration is given to how the action plan supports the mental health and wellbeing of service personnel and veterans, and to whether more focus on these specific groups is required.	Y		Cllr Turner / Val Johnson	March 2015

Draft Culture Strategy 2015-18 – Scrutiny Committee 6 October

Recommendation	Agreed Y/N	Executive response	Lead Member & Officer	Implemented Y/N / due date
1. That the Culture Strategy presents the fullest picture of Oxford's cultural offering, including cultural experiences that the City Council is not directly involved in.	Y	The Strategy is focused on cultural offerings and experiences that the Council supports (by funding or partnership working) or delivers. There's no reason why we can't explore these links.	Cllr Simm / Peter McQuitty	Feb 2015
2. That the Culture Strategy sets out how City Council functions such as licencing and planning can play an important role in supporting culture.	Y	Yes	Cllr Simm / Peter McQuitty	Feb 2015
3. That the list of organisations invited to contribute to the Culture Strategy is shared with elected members, so that they can make any further	Y	Yes. Happy for this to be shared with anyone else members think would be helpful.	Cllr Simm / Peter McQuitty	Feb 2015

suggestions.				
4. That consideration is given to how the City Council can encourage visitors to spend more time in Oxford, and to whether increasing visitor length of stay should be made a priority in the Culture Strategy.	Y	This will be considered by Experience Oxfordshire, who are funded by the City Council, and included in their Service Level Agreement. It will also be considered in the action plan under priority one; Support the sustainability of Oxford's cultural sector and improve the skills and diversity of the city's current and future creative workforce.	Cllr Simm / Peter McQuitty	Feb 2015
Budget Monitoring 2014/15 – Quarter 1 – Finance Panel 4 September				
Recommendation	Agreed Y/N	Executive response	Lead Member & Officer	Implemented Y/N / due date
7. That urgent action is taken to avoid a loss of subsidy relating to the overpayment of benefits.	Y	Extra action is already being taken, looking at training and processes. The threshold is more stringent this year due to the removal of Council Tax benefit from this calculation.	Cllr Turner / Helen Bishop	Y
8. If necessary to avoid slippage, a flexible approach should be taken to spending the £2m investment in Homelessness Property Acquisitions in 2014/2015. This could include investing in social housing instead.	In part	Note sentiment but other uses are likely to take longer.	Cllr Turner	N/A
9. The premises for the heavy vehicle testing facility should be flexible enough that it can be used for other purposes in the event that the testing facility is not successful.	Y	The facility is expected to be successful.	Cllr Turner	March 2015
10. The capital programme should be a red risk in performance reports until the new capital gateway process proven to be effective.	N	Risks are measured using the Risk Management Framework agreed by Council.	Cllr Turner	N/A
Treasury Management – Finance Panel 4 September				
Recommendation	Agreed Y/N	Executive response	Lead Member & Officer	Implemented Y/N / due date

1. That consideration is given to how the capital process can be made more flexible so that approved projects can be brought forward to mitigate slippage elsewhere in the programme.	In part	Noted. Where possible a flexible approach will be taken. Changes to the capital programme have to be agreed by Council.	Cllr Turner	N/A
Oxfordshire Growth Board - Scrutiny Committee 23 June				
Recommendation	Agreed Y/N	Executive response	Lead Member & Officer	Implemented Y/N / due date
1. For the Terms of Reference to explicitly set out that meeting agendas and minutes will be publicly available and that access to meetings will be possible for Councillors and members of the public.	Y	This suggestion will be referred to the Board	Cllr Price	Dec 2014
Community Engagement Policy Statement - Scrutiny Committee 23 June				
Recommendation	Agreed Y/N	Executive response	Lead Member & Officer	Implemented Y/N / due date
11. To provide a clear statement in the principles on the ambition for engagement focusing on depth as well as breadth.	Y	Merged with recommendation 3.	Cllrs Price&Simm; Sadie Paige	N/A
12. To provide information on the engagement ambitions set for all consultations during the last year, what was achieved and how this fits with the principles set within the Policy Statement.	Y	To provide this information for all consultations would be a huge piece of work so a sample will be used instead, together with a forward-looking approach.	Cllrs Price &Simm; Sadie Paige	Verbal update on progress expected on 10 Nov 14. Full response to follow.
13. To suggest to the Scrutiny Committee an up and coming engagement/empowerment exercise that can act as a pilot study to demonstrate the effectiveness of the principles within this report.	Y	Two consultations identified as candidates for the pilot as per CEB suggestion. Project brief created for the pilot, which includes the objectives, and a reporting template.	Cllrs Price &Simm; Sadie Paige	2 March 15
14. To provide a table that shows how all comments received during the consultation on this Policy Statement have been handled.	Y	Expected at 10 November Scrutiny Committee meeting.	Cllrs Price &Simm; Sadie Paige	10 Nov 14
End of Year Integrated Report – 2013-2014 - Scrutiny Committee 23 June				

Recommendation	Agreed Y/N	Executive response	Lead Member & Officer	Implemented Y/N
2. The Committee supports the purchase of the Iffley Road building as an asset of value to the community and recognises that negotiations are on-going. There is a gap between the asking price and the money available and the City Executive Board is asked to do what it can within reasonable value for money criteria to secure the purchase of this property.	Y	Noted (£250k has been earmarked for acquisition of property).	Cllr Turner; Nigel Kennedy; Jane Lubbock	N
3. To consider the contingency available to support homelessness in light of county proposals for implementing cuts in the Supporting People and if underspends from 13/14 should be maintained within this budget.	N	Current level of contingency considered to be sufficient.	Cllr Turner; Nigel Kennedy; Jane Lubbock	N/A
Fusion Lifestyle Performance 2013-2014 - Scrutiny Committee 23 June				
Additional information requested	Agreed Y/N	Outcome	Lead Member & Officer	Implemented Y/N
<p>Facility running costs It was agreed at the June meeting in 2013 that the running costs of the facilities would be shown including all capital investment and loan cost in the next report. This hadn't been done.</p> <p>Performance outside of expectations Members asked how poor performance was addressed and asked to see the issues raised and the actions/penalties taken over the last year.</p> <p>Publicity Campaign An issue was raised concerning literature used to highlight the Active Women Campaign. The images used were considered to be too stereotypical and gendered. The Committee asked</p>	N/A	<p>Information papers considered by Scrutiny Committee on 2 September.</p> <p>Meeting offered to Chair to discuss finance investment financing.</p>	Cllr Rowley; Lucy Cherry	Y

that this issue be taken up with Sports England who run this national campaign.

Views of non-card users at facilities

The Committee asked to see any information on the views and experiences of non-card users.

Falling attendance amongst young people

The Committee were concerned to see this and wanted some more detailed data and information to understand more fully the reasons behind it and whether it was a particular set of circumstances or a trend.

Information excluded from the public

The Committee heard a complaint from a member of the public that the information provided outlining the running costs to the Council of each Leisure Facility should be made public because if the Council was still running these centres then the information would be available publically. The Committee heard that this was commercial information but asked that this exclusion is reconsidered by Fusion.

Investment financing

Members were interested in why the City Council financed investment spending that Fusion Lifestyle was originally required to finance, and in how much this saved the partnership.

SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Monday 19 January 2015

COUNCILLORS PRESENT: Councillors Simmons (Chair), Hayes (Vice-Chair), Altaf-Khan, Anwar, Coulter, Darke, Hollick, Henwood, Lloyd-Shogbesan, Smith, Upton, Paule.

BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT: Councillor Bob Price (Corporate Strategy, Economic Development and Planning), Councillor Pat Kennedy (Educational Attainment and Youth Ambition), Councillor Dee Sinclair (Crime and Community Response)

INVITEES AND OTHER MEMBERS PRESENT: Councillor Jean Fooks, Dr Jonathan Solity, KRM: Psychological and Educational Research Consultants

OFFICERS PRESENT: Tim Sadler (Executive Director Community Services), Daryl Edmunds (Anti-Social Behaviour Investigation Team Manager), Simon Manton (Community Response Team Supervisor), Andrew Brown (Scrutiny Officer) and Sarah Claridge (Committee Services Officer)

67. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Fry (substitute Councillor Paule)

68. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest made.

69. UPDATES SINCE THE LAST MEETING

Cllr Simmons updated the Committee on the Finance Panel's work. He explained that they were meeting the Directors and Chief Executive to discuss the budget priorities. The next meeting is on 3 February.

Cllr Hollick updated the Committee on the Housing Panel's work. The next meeting is on 4 February.

The Inequalities Panel's call for evidence had been extended to 31 January. They had received approximately 25 responses from a mix of people. The next meeting is on 9 February.

70. OXFORDSHIRE GROWTH BOARD

The Committee considered the paperwork (previously circulated, now appended) of the minutes of the Oxfordshire Growth Board.

Paul Staines, Programme Manager for the Oxfordshire Growth Board outlined the terms of reference of the Board and its priorities. The Growth Board was formed to oversee the economic development and growth programmes outlined in the City Deal.

The Growth Board works alongside local authorities to understand the needs of housing in their authority, the Board commissioned a study into housing need and then it is up to individual councils to determine where and how that need is met. The Board is was not a planning authority and was not responsible for putting concepts into practice. Dealing with empty properties was not the responsibility of the Growth Board but the individual councils.

Cllr Price explained that in regards to transport infrastructure each authority must bid to the board to get projects funded. The City received funding for the Oxpens and Northern Gateway projects. The work centred on road infrastructure as Council's had more opportunity to bid for road infrastructure than they did for rail.

The Board is encouraging more joint working between the Oxfordshire authorities to deal with cross boundary issues such as housing and infrastructure.

The Committee made the following comments:

Request for written Growth Board reports next time – rather than just the minutes

A broader remit is needed on SHMA with a focus on urgent delivery of affordable housing.

There is a lack of emphasis on sustainable transport links -too much focus on roads and not enough on rail.

More information on Park n Ride.

71. EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT

Dr Jonathan Solity, KRM: Psychological and Educational Research Consultants, made a presentation to the Committee on his findings and conclusions of the KRM strand of the Council's education attainment programme.

Cllr Kennedy, Board Member for Education Attainment and Youth Ambition said that the turnover of staff was significant as it's the school management that drives these programme forward.

The Chair thanked KRM for their presentation. He recognised that measuring education attainment was complicated.

The Committee recommended that

All future education funding from the city should focus on improving inequalities and should be designed in collaboration with teachers.

Anna Wright be given the opportunity to respond to KRMs comments through a circulated response to the committee.

72. NEW COUNCIL CONTROLS OVER ANTI-SOCIAL BEHAVIOUR

The Anti-Social Behaviour Investigation Team Manager presented the report (previously circulated, now appended) on Public Protection Orders and explained the new powers Council has enacted to discourage anti-social behaviour.

Dee Sinclair, Board member for Crime and Community Response said that the Anti-Social behaviour team were currently reviewing the need for a city centre alcohol ban.

The following comments were made:

The Council keeps the money from any fines but legislation restricts the amount of the fine can be.

Is it possible to have a city wide protection order for dog fouling for example? The legislation requires protection orders to be proportionate and reasonable. Council is required to prove there is a need for a protection order through public consultation. It would be difficult to prove that every part of the city requires a city-wide dog fouling order.

Protection orders are required to be reviewed every 3 years.

Officers work closely with Police to share information.

The Executive Director for Community Services has been delegated authority to agree PSPOs for small areas of the city such as NAG areas. All other PSPOs will be decided by CEB.

The Committee made the following recommendations:

To CEB

That a scrutiny member sits on the oversight group.

That officers consult with area forums about these new powers.

To officers

Make information made available to councillors by putting it on the members' page on the intranet.

Requested that officers present an update report to the Scrutiny Committee in 6 months' time.

73. WORK PROGRAMME AND FORWARD PLAN

The Scrutiny Officer presented the work programme and Forward Plan (previously circulated, now appended).

The Committee noted the work programme and the Forward Plan.

74. REPORT BACK ON RECOMMENDATIONS

The Scrutiny Officer presented the report on recommendations (previously circulated, now appended) which details the City Executive Board's response to Scrutiny recommendation.

The Committee noted the report on recommendations.

75. LOCAL ECONOMY SCRUTINY PANEL - DRAFT SCOPE

The Committee considered the proposed scope of the Local Economy Panel (previously circulated, now appended). Cllr Darke presented the Panel's proposed terms of reference. He explained that the Panel is going to centre their work on the geographical area of the city centre ie the area covered by the City Centre Manager. The focus will be on what the Council can do to mitigate disruption to the city centre economy during the re-development. What can the city council do to minimise the time shop units are left empty.

The Committee resolved to APPROVE the terms of reference for the Local Economy Scrutiny Panel.

76. MINUTES

Cllr Smith said her name was missing from the attendees list.

The Committee resolved to APPROVE the amended minutes of the meeting held on 8 December as a true and accurate record.

77. DATES OF FUTURE MEETINGS

Officers were asked to find an alternative date for the May meeting in the week before the General Election.

The Committee noted the next meeting would be held on 3 February.

The meeting started at 6.00 pm and ended at 8.10 pm

SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Tuesday 3 February 2015

COUNCILLORS PRESENT: Councillors Simmons (Chair), Hayes (Vice-Chair), Altaf-Khan, Anwar, Coulter, Darke, Fry, Hollick, Henwood, Lloyd-Shogbesan, Smith and Upton.

BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT: Councillor Mike Rowley (Leisure Contract and Community Partnership Grants)

INVITEES AND OTHER MEMBERS PRESENT: Councillor Jean Fooks

OFFICERS PRESENT: Ian Brooke (Head of Leisure, Parks and Communities), Angela Cristofoli (Communities and Neighbourhoods Manager), Vicki Galvin (Go Active Co-ordinator), Luke Nipen (Communities Specialist Officer), Julia Tomkins (Grants & External Funding Officer), Andrew Brown (Scrutiny Officer) and Sarah Claridge (Committee Services Officer)

78. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

None received.

79. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Cllr Hollick declared a pecuniary interest in item 6 – Grant Allocation to Community and Voluntary Organisations 2015/16 (minute 83).

80. UPDATES SINCE THE LAST MEETING

Cllr Coulter, Chair of the Inequalities Panel stated that the public consultation had now closed, they had received 30 submissions. The next meeting will be held on Monday 9 February.

Cllr Fry, Chair of the Recycling Panel said that the panel was meeting on 16 February at the Cowley Marsh Depot.

81. COMMUNITY AND NEIGHBOURHOOD SERVICES

The Communities and Neighbourhoods Manager presented the report. She outlined the work done by the team to build strong community partnerships with local groups and relevant agencies.

The Council has 7 priority neighbourhoods which the team focuses on.

Cllr Fooks said that although community partnership working sounds good in theory, in Cutteslowe, it didn't work in practice. She asked for more support from officers. Officers agreed to follow this up outside the meeting.

The Committee made the following comments

- A range of data sets are used to provide the make-up and needs of the different communities, these include the index of deprivation and the quality of life survey. The full reports and the performance indicators are available for members to download.
- Monthly updates are sent to Councillors that represent priority areas. The last one was in December 2014.
- The team works closely with the elections department to encourage voter registration.
- Improved IT access and support has been provided to the Blackbird Leys and Barton community centres, Wi-Fi is available at all community centres.
- A review group is working to streamline community centre leases.
- Priority areas were last agreed in 2013 – unsure when review is due.
- Community Development fund will end after 2014/15 year.

Scrutiny recommendations:

To encourage a review of the priority areas (last done in 2013).

Retain the Community Development (formerly Social Inclusion) grant in the budget

Officers to provide to Members:

A summary of the number of computers and usage rate of the IT hubs.

The performance indicators and quality of life survey to members.

82. ACTIVITIES FOR OLDER PEOPLE AND PREVENTING ISOLATION

The Go-Active Co-ordinator presented the report. She outlined the range of projects to tackle isolation being funded by the Council.

Jane Johnson spoke to the Committee. She felt there was not enough activities provided for disabled people and as such, the Council was not meeting the spirit of the Equalities Act 2010.

The Committee noted

That the 1 mile health walks are wheelchair friendly and suitable for the visually impaired.

There is a women only evening run every week at the Barton pool

Officers work closely with Oxford Mind to combat isolation – however there is always more that can be done.

Constant feedback on the programmes run is sought by user and leisure groups to improve services.

Funding and training is available for faith and other groups interested in setting up activities.

The Committee made the following recommendations:

To the Head of Finance:

Does the Council regularly conduct an audit of service provision against legislation? And if so, can it circulate the latest audit to members and to Jane Johnson.

The Communities Specialist Officer to contact the Sweet Memories club about their concerns with the potential closure of the Gladiators Club.

83. GRANT ALLOCATIONS TO COMMUNITY AND VOLUNTARY ORGANISATIONS 2015/16

Cllr Hollick left the room.

The Grants and External Funding Officer presented the report.

Cllr Rowley, Board Member for Leisure Contract and Community Partnership Grants said he had met with the Credit Union to expand their services.

The Chair asked the committee whether they had questions why organisations hadn't received funding.

Cllr Fooks queried why Cutteslowe Community Association has only received a quarter of their requested £10,000. The Grants Officers explained that the scheme appeared overly expensive and that other holiday programmes had been delivered for much less.

The committee made the following comments:

No applications had been received from Asian organisations, officers explained that the grants scheme had been widely publicised and two grant writing workshops were run to help groups apply. The open bidding grants programme and the workshops were promoted by OCVA to all of the groups on their database through their monthly funding newsletter and training updates, they were also advertised and promoted on the Council website and by word of mouth.

There is a belief amongst Asian organisations that because they have not been successful in previous years that they would not get a grant. Officers agreed that more work needed to be done to break down this misconception. Concern over why world class organisations had to compete with groups focused on alleviating poverty. Would it be better to have different grants for these groups?

Grants to community newspapers are reducing every year as the newspapers become more sustainable. This is still a few years away, but it is likely future recommendations will be to reduce grant funding as the newspapers become more sustainable.

The Council has limited amounts of funding available, the policy is not to fund activities which are the responsibility of other public bodies eg the Listening centre should seek funding from the NHS.

Scrutiny recommendations

That CEB consider re-categorising the grants scheme into different components – organisations that have a worldwide reputation and organisations that alleviate deprivation/ build social inclusion.

Interest in why Cutteslowe Community Association was not given their full funding request.

The focus should be on capacity building and sustainability rather than just giving money.

Officers to relay the concerns expressed by Members to OCVA.

84. WORK PROGRAMME AND FORWARD PLAN

Cllr Hollick returned to the meeting.

The Cycling panel will start their work in March; Cllr Upton was nominated the interim chair.

The Committee agreed to pre-scrutinise the following items on the Forward Plan

- Agency Staff contract award
 - Energy and Water Management Plan
 - Oxford Heritage Asset Register
 - Safeguarding Children, Young People and Vulnerable Adult Policy
- Fusion Leisure Service Plan 2015/16

85. REPORT BACK ON RECOMMENDATIONS

The Scrutiny Officer reported back on the Scrutiny recommendations agreed by the City Executive Board. He explained that he was working on a better way to track the implementation of the Committee recommendations.

The Vice Chair suggested that feedback on the influence of the Scrutiny committee be sought from other members, both executive and backbenchers.

86. DATES OF FUTURE MEETINGS

The Committee agreed to move the scheduled May meeting to 6pm Wednesday 29 April.

The next meeting will be held on 2 March at 6pm.

The meeting started at 6.00 pm and ended at 8.00 pm